

# ANNEX B. CASE STUDIES

## LIST OF CASE STUDIES

1.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'NORTH WEST ENGLAND': CASE STUDY .....	2
2.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'STOCKHOLM': CASE STUDY .....	13
3.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'SWEDEN-NORWAY': CASE STUDY .....	23
4.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA': CASE STUDY .....	32
5.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'BORDER, MIDLAND AND WESTERN': CASE STUDY .....	43
6.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'SOUTHERN FINLAND': CASE STUDY .....	52
7.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'HEALTH': CASE STUDY .....	58
8.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'PROMOTION OF COHESION': CASE STUDY .....	65
9.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'DIGITAL CONVERGENCE': CASE STUDY .....	74
10.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'LOWER SILESIA': CASE STUDY .....	80
11.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'SOUTH GREAT PLAIN': CASE STUDY .....	89
12.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'CHAMPAGNE-ARDENNE': CASE STUDY .....	97
13.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'BELGIUM-FRANCE': CASE STUDY .....	102
14.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'CANTABRIA': CASE STUDY .....	108
15.	OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'SICILY ': CASE STUDY .....	115

# 1. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'NORTH WEST ENGLAND': CASE STUDY

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007UK162PO008	'Northwest England'	United Kingdom
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Regional Competitiveness and Employment	Regional	Anglo-Saxon
Breakdown of finances		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
756	712	1 468

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund  
 ICT – information and communications technologies  
 MEUR – million euros  
 NGO – non-governmental organisation  
 OP – operational programme  
 SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (analysis method)

## INTRODUCTION

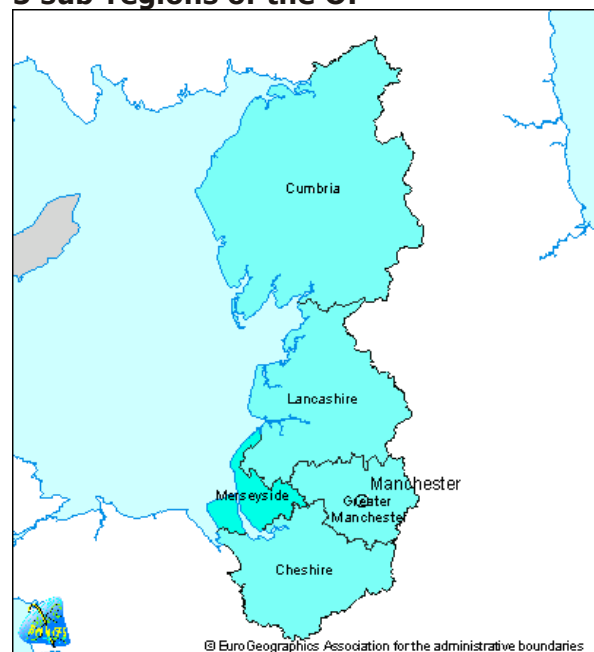
The 'North West England' OP<sup>1</sup> is a regional ERDF programme implemented in five English sub-regions: Cheshire and Warrington, Greater Manchester, Greater Merseyside (includes another regional hub city Liverpool), Cumbria and Lancashire. The designated Managing Authority is the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in London. The implementation of the programme has been entrusted to the intermediate body, the Northwest Regional Development Agency, based in Warrington, Cheshire.

### Priorities, interventions and targets

The OP identifies four thematic priority axes:

- Priority Axis 1: Promoting innovation and knowledge transfer;
- Priority Axis 2: Stimulating enterprise and supporting successful businesses;

**Figure 1. North West England and the 5 sub-regions of the OP**



Source: Inforegio

<sup>1</sup> Northwest Regional Development Agency, *Northwest Competitiveness Operational Programme 2007-2013* [thereinafter OP],

- Priority Axis 3: Ensuring sustainable development, production and consumption;
- Priority Axis 4: Building sustainable communities.

The OP supports various types of intervention, including productive investments (innovations, ICT development, new products development, etc.), development of endogenous potential (business support) as well as investments in infrastructure (transport, environment, energy, tourism and culture). The activities that are financed are directed towards businesses, the unemployed, higher education and the research sector and local inhabitants who will benefit from the development of infrastructure. The implementation of the programme is in its early stages, as the selection and contracting process is still underway.

Three global targets have been set for the region until 2015:

- to support the creation of 26,700 net additional jobs,
- to support the creation of £1,170m of additional annual Gross Value Added and
- to support a 25% reduction in additional CO<sub>2</sub> emissions generated by this OP.

### Integration of Article 16

Analysis of the OP text and its complementing documents shows that the themes of Article 16 have been thoroughly integrated:

- Equality and diversity issues are discussed in a separate section of the **socio-economic analysis**. Equality challenges are identified, and necessary interventions to eliminate disparities are overviewed.
- 'Equality and diversity' is one of the two **cross-cutting themes** (along with environmental sustainability) and is presented in detail in a special section.
- **Special measures** such as equality and diversity officers, trainings and events are planned to support this theme, and separate funding is foreseen for the theme's implementation from the Technical Assistance priority axis.
- **Equality statements** (often emphasizing access of the disabled to infrastructure) accompany each priority axis. Equality and diversity are planned to be mainstreamed in individual projects, and thus project promoters are required to consider it "in the design and the delivery of each project"<sup>2</sup>.
- A **specific measure** (action area) called 'Stimulate Enterprise in Disadvantaged Communities and Under-represented Groups' (4-1) has been designated to target underprivileged groups. The Investment Framework for this action area outlines three strands of activity, namely: enterprise stimulation in disadvantaged communities; practical support for people wishing to start new businesses and businesses established less than three years ago, and support for start-up social enterprises<sup>3</sup>.
- An **Equality Impact Assessment** was carried out for this OP (included in the appendix).

### Socioeconomic context

The UK's socioeconomic landscape is diverse. Eurobarometer data on discrimination for 2007 and 2008 reveals that the average UK citizen has a significantly more diverse circle of friends and acquaintances in terms of their background (ethnic origin and religion or beliefs), sexual orientation and disability than the average European<sup>4</sup>. The region of Northwest England is second only to London in terms of its diversity (which include racial minorities as well as new EU immigrants)<sup>5</sup>. In general, more people in the UK (than on average in the EU) also think that discrimination on the grounds of age, ethnic origin and beliefs is widespread in their country<sup>6</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> ERDF in the Northwest (2008), *ERDF Equality Guidance*  
<<http://www.erdfnw.co.uk/?OBH=80&ID=76&OBT=14&AC=5>>, p. 1. .

<sup>3</sup> Northwest Regional Development Agency, *Investment Framework for Action Area 4-1 – Stimulate Enterprise in Disadvantaged Communities and Under-represented Groups*, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008). *Results for United Kingdom*, p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Sarah Carling, interview, 3/6/2009.

<sup>6</sup> Special Eurobarometer, p. 1.

## Policy context

The national policy and institutional environment is favourable for the implementation of Article 16, as equality and diversity issues are high on the political agenda. Article 16 constitutes additional scrutiny of equality and diversity processes, reinforcing national requirements. In some respects the UK's equality and diversity regulations are even more demanding than those of the EU: while the EU devotes a lot of attention to the *prevention of discrimination*, in the UK a strong emphasis is given to *positive duties*<sup>7</sup> and by implication – pro-active measures to improve the situation of disadvantaged groups. There is also a strong commitment by the regional institutions of North-West England to promote equality and diversity<sup>8</sup>.

All public bodies and non-public sector organisations providing public services have a duty to actively promote equality rather than just ensuring the prevention of discrimination<sup>9</sup>. A new Equality Bill currently going through the Parliament contains a new comprehensive Equality Duty which will also include gender reassignment, age, disability, sexual orientation, race and religion or belief<sup>10</sup>. The statutory duty implies that planning must fully integrate non-discrimination mainstreaming: all authorities must assess the impact of their policy, practice and procedure on race, gender and disability (**equality impact assessment**) and draw up an **Equality Action Plan** (Equality Scheme) specifying how the public authority is going to take the principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity into account in carrying out its functions<sup>11</sup>.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Strategic choices

In the analysis of the equality situation in this OP, it is stated that "some distinctive communities are being left behind, and are suffering from multiple deprivation, entrenched poverty, discrimination, disadvantage and lack of opportunity and are still subject to exclusion from the benefits of economic growth"<sup>12</sup>. The lack of education and lower employment rates are presented as **challenges** faced by such groups as women and black and ethnic minorities. This claim is reiterated in the Equality and Diversity chapter, supported by data on employment by gender, race and ethnicity, disability, age, faith and belief, sexual orientation and transgender, as these are the 'equality communities' recognized by the region's Equality and Diversity Strategy.

The issue of the worklessness of black and ethnic minority groups, the disabled and lone parents is reiterated in the **SWOT analysis** which also argues that "high levels of entrepreneurialism in some ethnic minority groups" is one of the region's strengths<sup>13</sup>. The context analysis states that the under-representation of certain groups in the labour market "will require interventions that match the complex mix of factors that create barriers"<sup>14</sup>.

---

<sup>7</sup> Sarah Carling, interview, 3/6/2009.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (2008), *Gender mainstreaming of employment policies. A comparative review of thirty European countries*, p. 38. <[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/publications/2007/ke8107103\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2007/ke8107103_en.pdf)>.

<sup>10</sup> The Government Equalities Office, *Framework for a Fairer Future – The Equality Bill* (Presented to Parliament by The Lord Privy Seal, Leader of the House of Commons and Minister for Women and Equality by command of Her Majesty), June 2008, p. 12-13. <<http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/FrameworkforaFairerFuture.pdf>>.

<sup>11</sup> European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (2007), *Non-discrimination mainstreaming – instruments, case studies and way forwards*, p. 10. <<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=1426&langId=en>>. For example, the Disability Equality Scheme of the Department of Communities and Local Government which is responsible for the administration of the 'Northwest England' OP is a detailed document that is almost 100 pages long, and discusses such topical issues as suitable housing, accessible physical environment and communications as well as the engagement of disabled persons in the public life and their employment. All these priorities were formulated in consultation with the Department's staff, ministers and disability groups: Communities and Local Government (2006), *Disability Equality Scheme*, p. 11. <<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/doc/153110.doc>>.

<sup>12</sup> OP, p. 21.

<sup>13</sup> OP, p. 57-58.

<sup>14</sup> OP, p. 53.

Worklessness of some groups is the challenge targeted throughout the OP. Overarching programme targets (see Table 1) are set for gross jobs created and safeguarded, and disaggregated by gender. Moreover, there is an equality and diversity statement attached to **each priority axis**, including clauses on women, some disadvantaged groups and often emphasizing access for the disabled, for example: "Any facilities improved will need to be accessible to all (especially people with disabilities) and their use should be encouraged by groups who are under-represented as visitors/users"; "all projects supported have suitable arrangements to ensure access to services for all under-represented groups and that there is no discrimination"; "specific recognition given to managers from under-represented groups" etc. Among the intended **measures** that are mentioned are encouraging the entrepreneurship of disadvantaged groups and helping them to become employed.

Lastly, there is a **special action area** (within the Priority Axis 4) designated "to increase self-employment and enterprise as a route out of unemployment and to improve access to opportunities for people from underperforming communities/groups"<sup>15</sup>. One of the projects funded within this action area is the regional five-year Start up and Support Project that totals 83 MEUR; 10 MEUR from this ERDF OP targets women, racial and ethnic minorities, the disabled and social enterprises as well as deprived communities. It is being delivered locally in co-operation with local government offices and should provide such services as business start-up, advice or facilitating connections. The initiative aims to create 7,140 jobs and support 4,200 trading starts<sup>16</sup>.

### Indicators and targets

As outlined above, the system of indicators and targets is also concerned with employment. Outputs of the programme are to be monitored by gender, disability, age and race (see Reporting), thereby providing a multi-faceted picture of the programme's impact on the employment situation of these groups.

Despite all these complex arrangements, there is some concern among the stakeholders that the top-level disaggregated performance indicators are not sufficient to properly monitor the equality situation in the labour market. They argue that these indicators do not tell anything about the actual position (e.g. senior/junior/manual work etc.) taken up and may conceal the employment structure unfavourable for certain groups. For example, the overall percentage of women employed might be high in some sectors, but they might be still under-represented in higher posts<sup>17</sup>. The OP's Equality and Diversity Manager Sarah Carling confirmed that there was willingness to explore how this might be improved.

In addition to the performance indicators of jobs created and safeguarded, there are two quantified result targets for 2015 set in the OP (see Table 1):

**Table 1. Operational Programme's quantified employment targets**

Gross jobs created	Gross jobs safeguarded
24,300 filled by men	8,000 filled by men
23,900 filled by women	7,900 filled by women

Source: OP

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

Equality and diversity are assessed throughout the project selection process. In their application for funding, all projects are required to undertake an initial equality assessment. The Concept Form filled in by the applicants to present their project for formal consideration

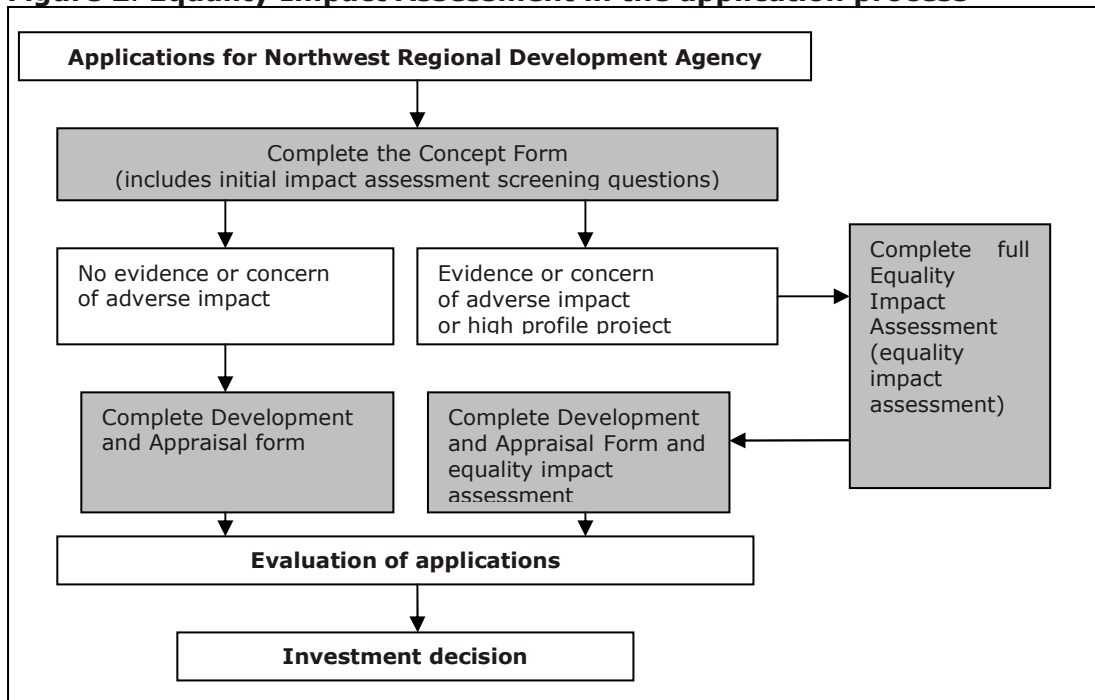
<sup>15</sup> Northwest Regional Development Agency, *Investment Framework for Action Area 4-1 – Stimulate Enterprise in Disadvantaged Communities and Under-represented Groups*, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Alison Smith, interview, 3/6/2009.

<sup>17</sup> Christine Burns, interview, 4/6/2009.

requires an estimation of their project’s likely impact across all 6 equality strands (race, disability, gender, faith/religion, age and sexual orientation, together constituting the equality duty due to become mandatory under national law), stating whether the result is *definite adverse*, *probable adverse*, *positive impact* or *no impact*. They also have to support their claims by analysing the existing data, referring to known precedents and/or reporting a consultation with the groups concerned. The process is illustrated in the flowchart below (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Equality Impact Assessment in the application process**



Source: ERDF in the Northwest, *Guidance Document On How To Conduct An Equality Impact Assessment* <<http://www.erdfnw.co.uk/?OBH=80&ID=77&OBT=14&AC=5>>, p. 11. .

If the project has a high profile (capital project) or an adverse impact is probable/ inevitable, a full Equality Impact Assessment is carried out, which requires additional consultations and/or research. In this assessment, positive and negative impacts are summarized for each group, as well as actions proposed to address any negative impact (lowering it/ ensuring it does not contradict anti-discriminatory law/strengthening the positive impact). The projects also have to describe the equality monitoring/evaluation/review system<sup>18</sup>.

Importantly, the Equality Impact Assessment is not a one-off exercise. The project’s equality and diversity impacts and the quality of the assessment are considered during the project appraisal process. Once funding is allocated, the equality commitments undertaken by the beneficiaries are included in the contract and monitored.

### Management

Substantial attention is being devoted to the integration of the cross-cutting themes into the management system. An ERDF Equality and Diversity Manager has been hired, equality guidance for programme managers, appraisers and applicants developed, appropriate training of the staff is being conducted and special events are being held. These measures are financed from the Technical Assistance priority axis: approximately £45,000 (over 52,000 EUR) per annum is allocated to the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Cross-Cutting Theme (the Equality and Diversity Manager is being paid from this budget, with the relevant events also financed from this budget, though various guidance documents and training are also being

<sup>18</sup> ERDF in the Northwest, *Guidance Document On How To Conduct An Equality Impact Assessment*, p. 23-24. <<http://www.erdfnw.co.uk/?OBH=80&ID=77&OBT=14&AC=5>>.

funded from the Northwest Regional Development Agency budget)<sup>19</sup>. The implementation of the cross-cutting theme is co-ordinated by the Equality and Diversity Manager.

The Equality and Diversity Manager is the focal point in the implementation of the equality and diversity cross-cutting theme of the OP, both for other employees of the implementing body and the applicants/beneficiaries. Her main functions are:

- *Review of Equality Impact Assessments* – the Equality and Diversity Manager reviews all equality impact assessments and approves them, or may make a recommendation to the Programme Monitoring Committee to not fund the project;
- *Advice and consultation* – she consults applicants and project developers on how to mainstream equality within their project or how to conduct equality impact assessments.
- *Publicity, training and guidance* – she is also responsible for organizing events that publicize best practice in equality and diversity, and respective training and guidance both within the Implementing body and for other stakeholders of the programme.

### **Training and guidance**

Training and guidance are well thought-through and tailored to the needs of the target group. **Project appraisal staff** receive practical training on the equality impact assessment process and working with applicants on this matter. Appraisers can also refer to the requirements of the Equality Impact Assessments described in the ERDF Technical Appraisal Guidance<sup>20</sup>. Since the final decision about project financing is taken in the Programme Monitoring Committee and **Performance & Monitoring Sub-Committee**, the (sub-)committee members have been briefed by the Equality and Diversity Manager on the importance of the Equality Impact Assessment<sup>21</sup>. In addition, best practice events and guidance sessions are organized for the **stakeholders**. For instance, training sessions on Equality Impact Assessment were given to the Northwest Regional Development Agency's partners in the five sub-regions of the OP<sup>22</sup>.

Extensive guidance documents are available on-line for **applicants and project developers**. In addition, the equality impact assessment guidance document<sup>23</sup> gives some information on the equality evaluation and beneficiary monitoring. Guidance for projects working with minority entrepreneurs will be developed in the future<sup>24</sup>. The Centre for Construction Innovation in Manchester (an institution attached to the University of Salford) has developed a Sustainable Buildings Equality and Diversity Guidance Note for the Northwest Regional Development Agency within their ERDF-financed 'Sustainable Buildings Awareness Raising and Knowledge Transfer Programme'. The note covers topics of accessibility, inclusive design and community engagement, workforce representation, employment and training. It includes an extensive developer's equality and diversity checklist suggesting possible strategies to accommodate equality and diversity concerns at all stages and ranking them according to their inclusiveness<sup>25</sup>.

### **Partnership**

The principle of partnership is embedded well in the implementation of the programme. When the programme was drafted, a variety of national, regional and local authorities and stakeholders were consulted, including regional, local, urban and other public authorities; economic and social partners; and other bodies representing civil society, environmental partners, non-governmental organisations and bodies responsible for promoting equality between men and women.

---

<sup>19</sup> Sarah Carling, interview, 3/6/2009.

<sup>20</sup> See point 10 in Northwest Regional Development Agency, *ERDF Technical Appraisal Guidance*.

<sup>21</sup> Sarah Carling, interview, 3/6/2009.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. Also: Northwest Regional Development Agency, *North West England ERDF Competitiveness Programme 2007-2013 Draft Annual Implementation Report 2008*, p. 19.

<sup>23</sup> ERDF in the Northwest, *Guidance Document On How To Conduct An Equality Impact Assessment*. <<http://www.erdfnw.co.uk/?OBH=80&ID=77&OBT=14&AC=5>>.

<sup>24</sup> Sarah Carling, interview, 3/6/2009.

<sup>25</sup> Northwest Regional Development Agency, *Sustainable Buildings Equality and Diversity Guidance Note*, p. 45-66. Also: Roy Stewart, Tony Baldwinson, Emma Kyng, Lisa Worell, group interview, 3/6/2009.

The North West's Equality and Diversity Group (a network of about 100 NGOs across all 6 equality strands as well as asylum seekers and economic migrants) participated in the programme preparation from the start of the process. The draft programme was available for review, and members of the Group were free to raise any issues. However, as the OP already had integrated equality and diversity themes comprehensively, the group did not suggest any significant change, and only proposed some minor amendments<sup>26</sup>. The group's chairperson Christine Burns was recruited for the Programme Monitoring Committee as an Equality Champion, and the co-operation is ongoing. North West's Equality and Diversity Group is working with the Northwest Regional Development Agency both within the framework of the programme and outside of it (e.g. in the regional diversity initiative 'Celebr8 (don't discrimin8)'<sup>27</sup>).

The relevant groups will also be consulted in the framework of individual projects undergoing the Equality Impact Assessment process. For example, in some capital projects, consultation with equality communities might be important. Consultations with the local community are strongly encouraged in all cases.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Monitoring

Cross-cutting theme champions are included on the Programme Monitoring Committee and an attempt is made to ensure a reasonable gender balance. Women make up 40% of this committee and 40% in the Performance and Monitoring Sub-Committee, while 43% of the Merseyside Phasing in Sub-Committee is female.

As pointed out above, the equality stakeholders' network is represented by its chair in the Programme Monitoring Committee (1 member out of 30) and has the same rights as all other members in terms of voting and raising issues. The Performance and Monitoring Sub-Committee, which deals with project applications, has one representative for sustainability, equality and diversity (1 member out of 15). This member is delegated by the North West Sustainable Development Group, so equality is not specifically represented. However, the OP's Equality and Diversity Manager attends the meetings in an advisory capacity. The governmental equality body Equality and Human Rights Commission have also expressed an interest in future involvement in this sub-committee<sup>28</sup>.

**At the project level**, monitoring starts already in the application stage (see Project selection). Project appraisers have to evaluate applicants' answers to the equality and diversity questions or Equality Impact Assessments<sup>29</sup>. Projects are required to have "robust monitoring and evaluation processes that include assessing the Programme's key Equality and Diversity objectives"<sup>30</sup>. The existence of equality and diversity policy and whether it is being monitored are the issues verified during Project Engagement Visits and Progress and Verification Visits<sup>31</sup>.

### Evaluation

An **ex-ante evaluation** was carried out for this OP, and as the result the OP text was improved concerning equality and diversity issues: "The section on Equality and Diversity has been expanded and a comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment has been added. More emphasis is now placed on ensuring that the implementation of cross-cutting themes aims and objectives at a project level are monitored and reported, in order to strengthen the focus on 'best practice' during implementation, rather than 'best intentions' at the application stage"<sup>32</sup>.

---

<sup>26</sup> Christine Burns, interview, 4/6/2009.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Catherine May, interview, 3/6/2009; Christine Burns, interview, 4/6/2009.

<sup>29</sup> Northwest Development Agency, *ERDF Technical Appraisal*, p. 9.

<sup>30</sup> ERDF in the Northwest, *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Programme 2007–2013 Project Monitoring Guidance*, p. 23. <<http://www.erdfnw.co.uk/?OBH=80&ID=85&OBT=14&AC=5>>.

<sup>31</sup> Sarah Carling, interview, 3/6/2009.

<sup>32</sup> OP, p. 251.



The 'North West England' OP was one of the few programmes within the scope of this study that had conducted an **equality impact assessment** (as it is compulsory under the national law). The assessment estimated that there should be a positive impact on equality groups. Not only is EU and UK equality legislation complied with, but also good practice and positive action learned from previous programmes in the region will be taken into consideration. First and foremost, the materials used from previous programmes to ensure mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes will be collated and adapted for the new programme.

A separate **evaluation on equality and diversity** is foreseen in the programme's Evaluation Plan. It will be a review of the implementation and effectiveness in project design and delivery, and will include an analysis of data collection at the project level, an examination of the 16 equality and diversity categories (see Reporting), and is expected to provide analysis of the levels of engagement across them and identify actions to address the gaps<sup>33</sup>. So far the evaluation activities have not yet been started, as programme implementation is still in its early stages.

### Reporting and publicity

Since the equality and diversity focus of the programme is so broad, a complex reporting matrix has been developed to obtain information **at the project level**. Sections on cross-cutting themes are to be included in the project reports. Two types of characteristics are monitored in terms of equality: *business characteristics* and *beneficiary characteristics*. The supported businesses have to identify themselves in terms of gender (as female/male-led), disability (if they are disabled-led or not), age (according to four age groups) and race (Black and Minority Ethnic or non-Black and Minority Ethnic-led) (see Table 2).

**Table 2. Business characteristics**

<b>Gender</b>	- Male - Female – a company, business or social enterprise in which at least 51% of owners, partners or directors are female.
<b>Disability</b>	- Yes – a company, business or social enterprise in which at least 51% of owners, partners or directors are disabled people. - No
<b>Age</b> (categorization will not be possible for multi-owner businesses)	- 16-25 - 26-50 - 51-65 - over 65
<b>Race</b>	- Black and Minority Ethnic-led - a company, business or social enterprise in which at least 51% of owners, partners or directors are from a Black and Minority Ethnic (black or minority ethnic) background (defined as any category in Table 3 other than White-British). - Non-Black and Minority Ethnic lead

Source: ERDF in the Northwest, *Northwest Regional Development Agency Output Definitions for Single Programme and ERDF Programme*, p. 3. <<http://www.erdfnw.co.uk/?OBH=80&ID=45&OBT=14&AC=5>>.

In terms of beneficiary characteristics, the matrix is even more complex. Individual beneficiaries (users of services funded by the OP) are asked to fill in an equality monitoring form where they also identify themselves in terms of gender, disability and age group as well as race, selecting one of the 16 UK census categories (see Table 3):

**Table 3. Beneficiary characteristics**

<b>Gender</b>	- Male - Female
<b>Disability</b>	- Yes (defined as a physical impairment or mental health condition which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months and which has an adverse effect on the individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities) - No
<b>Age</b>	- 16-25 - 26-50 - 51-65 - over 65

<sup>33</sup> See Northwest Regional Development Agency, *North West Competitiveness 2007-2013 Programme Evaluation Plan (Draft)*.

<b>Race*</b>	- White	- British - Irish - Other white background
	- Black or Black British	- Caribbean - African - Other black background
	- Asian or Asian British	- Indian - Pakistani - Bangladeshi - Other Asian background
	- Mixed Heritage	- White and black Caribbean - White and black African - White and Asian - Other mixed background
	- Chinese	
	- Any other ethnic group	
	- Not stated	

\* The Northwest Regional Development Agency records only the six categories in the second column, but partners are required to request information using the 16 census categories, which will need to be aggregated for reporting output numbers to the Northwest Regional Development Agency. Partners are expected to store the full information of the 16 categories for use by the Northwest Regional Development Agency if required. ERDF in the Northwest, *Northwest Regional Development Agency Output Definitions for Single Programme and ERDF Programme*, p. 2. <<http://www.erdfnw.co.uk/?OBH=80&ID=45&OBT=14&AC=5>>.

Source: ERDF in the Northwest, *Northwest Regional Development Agency Output Definitions for Single Programme and ERDF Programme*, p. 2-3. <<http://www.erdfnw.co.uk/?OBH=80&ID=45&OBT=14&AC=5>>.

**At the programme level**, the Annual Implementation Reports include sections on the cross-cutting themes. For instance, the Annual Implementation Report 2008 included a review of activities undertaken to embed equality and diversity into the programme cycle: the recruitment of an Equality and Diversity Manager, integration of equality impact assessments into the application process, development of an equality guidance note, training sessions (on equality impact assessment) held in the five sub-regions, briefing of European Programme Executive staff and Performance and Monitoring Sub-Committee members and embedding equality and diversity in the ERDF appraisal framework<sup>34</sup>. It is still too early to speak about the actual achievements in terms of aggregated project-level data, as the projects are just coming into operation.

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the OP 'North West England' has adopted a broad and integrated approach to equality and diversity, giving due consideration to all three equality themes mentioned in Article 16. Equality and diversity cross-cutting theme is mainstreamed into all programme activities, and there are also targeted measures to improve the situation of the groups and communities underrepresented in the labour and skills market.

The strongest points of the implementation system of this programme from the perspective of Article 16 can be summarized as follows:

- Existence of a coordinating officer (Equality and Diversity Manager), which helps the equality mainstreaming process;
- Abundance of guidance and trainings offered on all aspects of equality and diversity to programme and project managers, appraisers, and members of the Programme Monitoring Committee and Performance and Monitoring Sub-Committee. This includes special guidance for construction projects.
- Due to national requirements, extensive monitoring data is collected from the beneficiaries against which their equality and diversity commitments are being verified, as well as the actual equality impact of the projects checked.

<sup>34</sup> Northwest Regional Development Agency, *Northwest England ERDF Competitiveness Programme 2007-13 Draft Annual Implementation Report 2008*, p. 19-20.

- The serious consideration of the Equality Impact Assessment in the application phase and its results are eventually linked to the ERDF contract provisions and monitoring requirements.
- The involvement of a knowledgeable Equality Champion to the Programming Monitoring Committee and the regional equality and diversity stakeholders' group during the various stages of programme implementation, which is beneficial for the partnership process.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

OP 'Northwest England' (and appendices).  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency. *ERDF Equality Guidance*.  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency. *ERDF Technical Appraisal*.  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency. *ERDF Technical Appraisal Guidance*.  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency. *Investment Framework for Action Area 4-1 – Stimulate Enterprise in Disadvantaged Communities and Under-represented Groups*.  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency. *Guidance Document On How To Conduct An Equality Impact Assessment*.  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency. *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Programme 2007–2013 Project Monitoring Guidance*.  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency. *Northwest England ERDF Competitiveness Programme 2007-13 Draft Annual Implementation Report 2008*.  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency. *North West Competitiveness 2007-2013 Programme Evaluation Plan (Draft)*.  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency *Output Definitions for Single Programme and ERDF Programme*.  
 Northwest Regional Development Agency. *Sustainable Buildings Equality and Diversity Guidance Note*.  
 European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, *Gender mainstreaming of employment policies. A comparative review of thirty European countries*, 2008.  
 European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, *Non-discrimination mainstreaming– instruments, case studies and way forwards*, April 2007.  
 Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008). *Results for United Kingdom*.  
 The Government Equalities Office, *Framework for a Fairer Future – The Equality Bill*, June 2008.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of the interview
1.	Baldwinson	Tony	Project Manager	Centre for Construction Innovation	3/6/2009
2.	Burns	Christine	Equality Champion, Chair of North West's Equality & Diversity Group	Plain Sense Ltd., Programme Monitoring Committee	4/6/2009
3.	Carling	Sarah	ERDF Equality Manager	Northwest Development Agency, Warrington, UK	3/6/2009
4.	Dhar-Bhattacharjee	Sunrita	Project Manager	Centre for Construction Innovation	3/6/2009
5.	Kyng	Emma	Project Manager	Centre for Construction Innovation	3/6/2009
6.	May	Catherine	Regional Manager	Equality and Human Rights Commission, Manchester office, UK	3/6/2009
7.	McHugh	Ian	Equality and Diversity Manager [External Strategy]	Northwest Regional Development Agency	3/6/2009
8.	Smith	Alison	ERDF Development and Delivery Manager, coordinator of Regional Start up and Support Project	Northwest Regional Development Agency	3/6/2009

9.	Smith	Pauline	Equality and Diversity Manager	Northwest Regional Development Agency	3/6/2009
10.	Stewart	Roy	Operations Director	Centre for Construction Innovation	3/6/2009
11.	Worrell	Lisa	Project Manager	Centre for Construction Innovation (University of Salford), Manchester, UK	3/6/2009

## 2. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'STOCKHOLM': CASE STUDY

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007SE162PO005	'Stockholm'	Sweden
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Regional Competitiveness and Employment	Regional	Nordic
<i>Breakdown of finances</i>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
38	56	94

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund  
 ESF – European Social Fund  
 ICT – information and communication technology  
 NGO – non-governmental organisation  
 OP – operational programme  
 R&D – research and development  
 SMEs – small and medium enterprises  
 SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (analysis method)

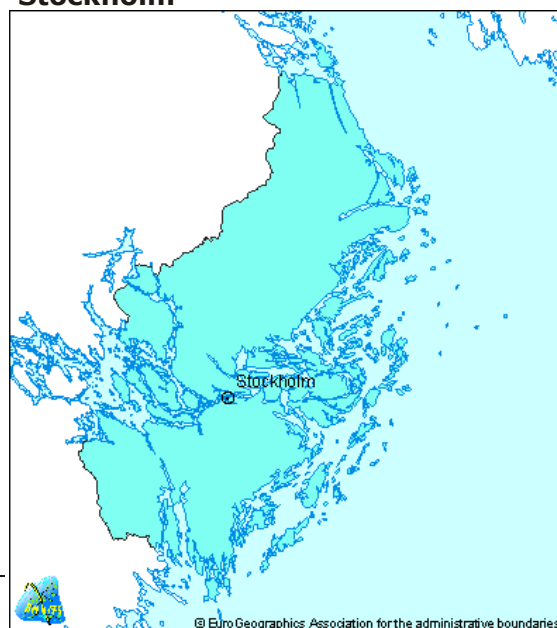
### INTRODUCTION

The 'Stockholm' OP<sup>35</sup> is a regional ERDF programme. Its Managing Authority is the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket) while the implementing body (programme office for the OP 'Stockholm') is a separate unit within this Agency. Steering and Monitoring Committees of the OP are composed of local administrators, local business representatives, labour unions and civil society groups. Many NGOs and advocacy bodies have been consulted during the programme preparation process.

### Priorities, interventions and goals

The programme has the following **priority axes**:

**Figure 3. The area covered by OP 'Stockholm'**



Source: Inforegio

<sup>35</sup> Regionalt strukturfondsprogram för regional konkurrenskraft och sysselsättning i Stockholm 2007–2013. Operativt program [Regional structural funds' programme for regional competitiveness and employment in Stockholm 2007–2013. Operational programme] (hereinafter 'OP'), p. 26.

- Priority Axis 1: Development of innovative environments in the urban area (approximately 40% of total funding);
- Priority Axis 2: Business development (approximately 32% of total funding);
- Priority Axis 3: Accessibility (approximately 24% of total funding);
- Priority Axis 4: Technical assistance (approximately 4% of total funding).

The OP aims to strengthen the international competitiveness of the Stockholm region through interventions such as productive investment (cooperation among industries, academia and the public sector, and SME investments), development of endogenous economic potential (support and services to SMEs, networking and cooperation, and development of financing instruments) and infrastructure (transport). Currently the programme is in the implementation phase: 12 strategically important projects have already been selected, allocated funding, and are being implemented.

### Integration of the Article 16

In the OP text, Article 16 has been referred to in relation to the OP's horizontal objectives<sup>36</sup> (see below). Overall, the provisions of Article 16 are thoroughly integrated into the OP:

- In the **analysis of the situation** (sub-sections Population and labour force, Economy, Current situation) the cross-cutting issues of gender equality, accessibility for disabled persons and anti-discrimination are discussed in detail. The SWOT analysis indicates discrimination and segregated labour market as the key weaknesses of the region. The situation of various disadvantaged groups is also referred to in the description of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Three **horizontal criteria**, relevant for Article 16, are identified in the OP strategy (in the section entitled "Strategic direction"): equality between men and women, integration and diversity, and better environment. The programme aims at making them an integral part of the regional development efforts: references to them are concrete, systematic and detailed.
- **Indicators** of gender equality, integration and diversity are described in a separate sub-section of the section on indicators. There is baseline data relating to enterprises and labour force, most of which gender-disaggregated, while quantified targets are used for measuring outputs and results of the OP (see Table 3).
- Analysis of the situation and sections directly related to the horizontal criteria accompany **each priority axis** except for technical assistance. Gender-disaggregated indicators are used.
- The horizontal criteria are taken into account during the project **selection process**. All projects are required to describe their impact on horizontal issues.
- The horizontal priorities are integrated into **monitoring, evaluation and reporting** practices.

### Socio-economic context

Out of Sweden's 9.2 million inhabitants, 1.2 million are with a foreign background<sup>37</sup>. An OECD report in 2006 found that the share of foreign-born persons in the Stockholm region is larger than in Sweden as a whole<sup>38</sup>. Thus, the focus on gender equality and inclusion of Sweden's large foreign-born population is of key importance for the OP.

Overall, surveys show that Swedish people are more comfortable with having neighbours of different ethnicities, religions, sexual orientation, or with disabilities than the average

---

<sup>36</sup> "When putting this Structural Funds programme into effect, three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – will be taken into account in all stages of implementation, in accordance with Articles 16-17 of Council Resolution (EC) No 1083/2006. The focus will be on equality between women and men, on integration and diversity, and on better environment. It is expected that such a focus will stimulate growth-triggering factors. One aspect of achieving this is that all the projects will deal with the horizontal criteria" (OP, p. 90-91).

<sup>37</sup> Swedish Central Bureau of Statistics (Statistiska Centralbyrån) (2008), *Statistics of Sweden*. An even larger number of persons would be included in another group, often referred-to, - "persons with a foreign background" (at least one of the parents born abroad) or "persons of foreign origin".

<sup>38</sup> OECD (2006), *OECD Territorial Reviews: Stockholm*.

European<sup>39</sup>. However, Swedes also show above-average discrimination awareness among EU Member States<sup>40</sup>. The country also tops the list in terms of the respondents' witnessing someone else being discriminated (46%, in comparison with the EU average of 29%). However, this might be due to extensive discrimination-awareness rather than more widespread discrimination than in other EU countries.

Only 31% of the population think that their country is doing enough to combat discrimination. Therefore, there is a demand for innovative measures to address the issue. Access to employment for immigrants has been identified as a particularly pressing issue in the Stockholm region. The employment gap between the native and the foreign population is large in all sectors. For example "only 40% of foreign university graduates from non EU countries have a qualified job compared to 90% for native Swedes"<sup>41</sup>. Various authorities and NGOs have been implementing measures aimed at addressing this issue.

### **Political context**

Combating discrimination and promoting equality have been reflected as explicit goal in both national and regional programmes in Sweden. Discrimination in employment has been banned since 1991<sup>42</sup>, while discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion or belief<sup>43</sup>, disability<sup>44</sup> and sexual orientation<sup>45</sup> was banned in 1999. However, these laws encompassed only working life, and equality legislation extended beyond work and employment only after 2000. On 1 January 2009 the new Discrimination Act (2008:567) entered into force, which replaced and unified all the diverse anti-discrimination legislation. Simultaneously, in 2009 four different discrimination ombudsman institutions were reorganised into one.

Sweden has been widely reported as having a vibrant civil society with many NGOs campaigning, advocating and supporting the cause for gender equality and equal opportunities. However, anti-discrimination NGOs have historically had diverse and sometimes conflicting interests<sup>46</sup>. For example, the interests of labour unions have often diverged from those of equality bodies: the unions maintain that equality plans covering all discrimination grounds should *not* be required in working life and that positive treatment should *not* be allowed concerning ethnic discrimination<sup>47</sup>. This reflects economic interests of the unions as well as the generally negative attitude of the population towards pro-active measures, as mentioned in the previous sub-section.

The Swedish government has thoroughly addressed the issue of accessibility for disabled persons. The Swedish Agency for Disability Policy Coordination (Handisam) has published guidelines on accessibility – a link to them is available in the horizontal criteria guides for project applicants under OP 'Stockholm'. These guidelines provide recommendations on universal design, mobility, independence, publicity measures and other aspects of accessibility<sup>48</sup>. There is a national action plan for disability policy in place, which aims transform people with disabilities 'from patients to citizens' through promoting diversity, participation and societal awareness<sup>49</sup>.

---

<sup>39</sup> Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008). *Results for Sweden*.

<sup>40</sup> Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008), p. 38.

<sup>41</sup> OECD.

<sup>42</sup> Equal Opportunities Act (Jämställdhetslagen) (1991:433).

<sup>43</sup> Act on Measures against Discrimination in Working Life on grounds of Ethnicity, Religion or other Belief (Lagen om åtgärder mot etnisk diskriminering i arbetslivet) (1999:130).

<sup>44</sup> Prohibition of Discrimination in Working Life of People with Disability Act (Lagen om förbud mot diskriminering i arbetslivet av personer med funktionshinder) (1999:132).

<sup>45</sup> Prohibition of Discrimination in Working Life on Grounds of Sexual Orientation Act (Lagen om förbud mot diskriminering i arbetslivet på grund av sexuell läggning) (1999:133).

<sup>46</sup> Human European Consultancy, Migration Policy Group, International Society for Diversity Management, Centrum mot rasism [Centre Against Racism] (2008), *National Activity Report Sweden: Anti-Discrimination and Diversity Training*, p. 15.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p. 35.

<sup>48</sup> Handisam (2007), *Guidelines for accessibility - Break the Barriers*, p. 16-19.

<sup>49</sup> Handisam (2006), *National action plan*. <[http://www.handisam.se/Tpl/NormalPage\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_297.aspx](http://www.handisam.se/Tpl/NormalPage_____297.aspx)>.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Strategic choices

The analysis of the current situation in the OP clearly states the challenges faced by the region, first and foremost unequal access to employment and prevailing discrimination in the labour market. Sweden has one of the highest unemployment rates among foreign-born inhabitants (including Swedish citizens) in comparison to the total unemployed population among OECD countries. The unemployment rate among foreign-born women is even higher than among foreign-born men and among local women.

Much of the context description is structured as a **SWOT analysis**. It identifies discrimination and insufficient integration, as well as a segregated labour market as key weaknesses of the region and provides further details on these things. In addition, over a fifth of the region's adult population, especially various disadvantaged groups, is said to be suffering from psychological health problems and this percentage is rising. Hence, the OP developers see limited access to employment and impaired health as a vicious circle hindering unlocking the full potential of the disadvantaged groups and their full participation in regional development.

The **horizontal criteria** are clearly described at several levels including the OP's overall strategy, strategic commitments, descriptions of priority axes, quantified targets for the priority axes, and specific measures. For example, at the most general level, the OP stresses that "the implementation of the programme will contribute to men and women of foreign origin taking a more active part in the labour market, also to entrepreneurs of foreign origin taking a more active part in business networks, cooperation with R&D sector and clusters"<sup>50</sup>.

All **priority axes** except for technical assistance have, as mentioned above, a section on the horizontal criteria (Table 4). **Women and people of foreign origin are usually the main target groups** of the OP equality measures. Employability (through the creation and strengthening of enterprises, support for the information and communication technologies and the R&D sector) and entrepreneurship (e.g. support for SMEs, especially owned by women, inclusion of entrepreneurs of foreign origin into business networks) is the key focus area of targeted projects aiming to reduce discrimination, pay and opportunity gaps. Table 4 also provides information on the relevant specific measures from the Action Plan for the programme.

**Table 4. Priority axes and horizontal criteria**

Priority axis	Addressing the horizontal criteria	Quantified targets	Specific measures and their quantified targets
Development of innovative environments in the urban area	A special section "Counteracting discrimination" A section on horizontal priorities	Output: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 400 businesses taking part               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of which at least 40% owned by women and at least 40% by men</li> <li>- of which at least 25% owned by men and women of foreign origin</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 45 new business networks</li> <li>• 2 projects directly improving equal opportunities and integration</li> </ul> Result indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 400 new jobs               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of which at least 40% for women/men</li> <li>- 25% for people of foreign origin</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 100 new enterprises               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of which at least 40% owned by women/men</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 25% owned by people of foreign origin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of knowledge in SMEs (75 businesses expected to participate; 40% must be owned by women/men respectively and 25% owned by women/men of foreign origin)</li> <li>• Development of international competitiveness (325 businesses expected to take part, 40% ownership rule applies)</li> <li>• Promotion of integration and diversity (2 projects that promote equal opportunities for persons of foreign origin and young people, 1 project that ensure sustainability and improve attractiveness of towns and neighbourhoods, 50 participating businesses, 50 other actors taking part)</li> </ul>

<sup>50</sup> OP, p. 59.



Development of enterprises	Commitment to "promote entrepreneurship among men and women of foreign origin, and especially among the young", and "support enterprises started by women, their expansion, growth and provision of financial capital to them"	Output: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2400 enterprises having received consultations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of which at least 40% owned by women/men</li> <li>- of which at least 25% owned by people of foreign origin</li> </ul> </li> </ul> Result: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 900 new jobs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of which at least 40% for women/men</li> <li>- 25% for people of foreign origin</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 200 new enterprises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- of which at least 40% owned by women/men</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 25% owned by people of foreign origin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of entrepreneurship and enterprises (2,400 businesses receiving consultations, 40% owned by men/women, 25% by persons of foreign origin)</li> <li>• Capital support (financing mechanisms; 100 enterprises expected to receive assistance, of which 40% are owned by men/women respectively)</li> </ul>
Accessibility	Aims to improve access to services, work and education by improving public transportation networks so that disadvantaged groups could benefit from it	Output: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 projects having increased equality among their main goals</li> <li>• 2 projects having diversity and integration among their main goals</li> </ul>	Improving the availability and conditions of regional development.
Technical assistance	-	-	-

Sources: OP, NUTEK (Agency for Industry and Technological Development) and ERDF (2008). *Åtgärdsdokument. Regionalt strukturfondsprogram för regional konkurrenskraft och sysselsättning i Stockholm 2007-2013*. [Action plan. Regional OP for regional competitiveness and employment in Stockholm 2007-2013].

**Lessons from relevant national and European policies** have been taken into account in the OP. Previous experience was used not only from ERDF programmes: some useful practices have been learned from ESF and EQUAL programmes, as well as from other initiatives. The following lessons were highlighted as especially beneficial:

- Experience from the Objective 2 programme 'The islands' (ESF and ERDF 2000-2006) showed an example of early prioritising, cooperation in local projects, and quantification of goals, as well as a systematic integration of horizontal priorities.
- Experience from the Urban II programme (ERDF, 2000-2006) showed an example of addressing such issues as unemployment, health problems and dependence of social support and taught some partnership principles (complementary competences, partnership in identifying strategic targets, creation of working groups, etc).
- Experience from the EQUAL programme (ESF, 2000-2006) taught the importance of partnership in project implementation and a holistic approach to structural problems in the region. In addition, as the OP stresses, exchange in experience informed the other EU Member States about good practices in Sweden.

The OP has a separate chapter on the **coordination of activities with the European Social Fund (ESF)**. It states that ERDF and ESF funding will be used together for supporting new businesses and upgrading more general skills of entrepreneurs and employees. Regional officials of the ESF will work, as the OP states, in the same areas as the regional offices implementing ERDF programmes in order to provide opportunities for regular consultations, prevent duplication of financing and develop synergies. In addition, Structural Funds Partnerships (which recommend projects for support during the selection process) are the same for ESF and ERDF programmes.

### Indicators and targets

There is an elaborate system of targets and indicators (for measuring outputs and results) both for priority axes and specific measures. The system extends from planning through implementation to monitoring and evaluation.

At the most general level the programme has **quantitative targets** set with regard to the horizontal criteria: 25% of the projects should be directly related to improving the environment, 25% should directly promote gender equality and 25% should be directly related to integration and diversity. Then the OP has strategic targets at the programme level, which

are disaggregated by gender and by one disadvantaged group (people of foreign origin). These targets are:

1. 3150 enterprises which take part in programme activities of which at least 40% owned by women/men and 25% owned by people of foreign origin;
2. 1300 new jobs of which at least 40% for women/men and 25% for people of foreign origin;
3. 300 new enterprises, of which at least 40% owned by women/men and 25% owned by people of foreign origin.

Finally, relevant and disaggregated targets are set at the level of priority axis and specific measures (see Table 4 in the previous section).

Annex 1 of OP is devoted to **indicators** and provides a special section entitled "Horizontal classification criteria" (Table 5), which reflects the number of projects related to specific horizontal themes of gender equality and integration and diversity (aimed directly to increase equality/ diversity, having a positive/negative impact). In order to help estimate the project's impact, various tools such as information materials, instructions/recommendations and training activities are available.

**Table 5. Horizontal classification criteria**

Criterion	Indicator	Definition
Equality between women and men	Number of projects which aim directly to increase equality	Increased equality is one of the main goals of the project, reflected clearly in the project activities, objectives and expected results.
	Number of projects which have a predominantly positive effect from the equality perspective	The project's impact on equality is presented in the project description. The project is deemed to have a predominantly positive effect. Several activities, designed to increase equality, will be carried out in the project.
	Number of projects which have a predominantly negative effect from the equality perspective	The project's impact on equality is presented in the project description. The project is deemed to have a predominantly negative effect. Project contains measures in order to minimise its negative effect.
Diversity and integration	Number of projects which aim directly to increase diversity and integration	Increased diversity and integration is one of the main goals of the project, reflected clearly in the project activities, objectives and expected results.
	Number of projects which have a predominantly positive effect from the perspective of diversity and integration	The project's impact on integration and equality is presented in the project description. The project is deemed to have a predominantly positive effect. Several activities, designed to increase equality, will be carried out in the project.
	Number of projects which have a predominantly negative effect from the perspective of diversity and integration	The project's impact on integration and equality is presented in the project description. The project is deemed to have a predominantly negative effect. Project contains measures in order to minimise its negative effect.

Source: OP

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

It is typical for Swedish OPs that projects have to take into consideration cross-cutting themes in **filling in the application**<sup>51</sup>. Specifically, the applicants are required to assess the impact of their projects on gender equality, integration and diversity and the environment<sup>52</sup>. The applicants also have to specify whether their project is aimed directly at increasing gender equality or inclusion and diversity, has a either positive or negative impact (for definitions see Table 4). Positive impact is not a mandatory requirement, yet measures to minimise the possible negative impact should be mentioned.

<sup>51</sup> Ulrika Hektor, interview, 25/6/2009; Susanna Rockström, interview, 1/7/2009.

<sup>52</sup> Project application form <<http://www.tillvaxtverket.se/download/18.3c4088c81204cca906180002518/14+Projektanskan.doc>>.

An **application guide** is available to assist project applicants in integrating cross-cutting themes, among other things. In this guide questions are asked about each project: specific aims related to gender equality and inclusion and diversity, the means to achieve them and expected results. Indicators relating to the horizontal criteria are suggested as well. The guide points out that the horizontal criteria must be taken into account in all phases of project implementation.

In the evaluation grid the projects which are more ambitious on cross-cutting issues are allocated some extra points. However overall, equality and related questions do not determine selection results; rather this is a complex of various criteria which lead to the final decision.

**Structural Funds Partnerships** recommend projects for funding and their recommendation is binding on the decisions of implementing bodies. These partnerships consist of representatives of local government, labour organisations, county employment services, interest groups and associations. In the case of OP 'Stockholm' none of the structural funds partnership representatives comes from gender or non-discrimination NGOs. However, many of the participating organisations may claim to represent these themes as a part of their broader public mission. Chairpersons of the partnerships are appointed by the government after the region concerned nominates one male and one female candidate.

The OP 'Stockholm' is a relatively small programme. Therefore, there is a commitment to finance a small number of relatively large strategic projects. So far, funding has been allocated to 12 projects. One of these projects, 'Entrepreneur Sthlm', has some of the discriminated-against groups among its target groups (women and immigrants). However most of the projects have been classified as having a '**positive effect**' rather than having 'a direct impact' on the equality as well as on diversity and integration. Yet even if equality and other cross-cutting themes are not the primary goal of a project, it is natural in the Swedish context that the project still takes notice of these themes<sup>53</sup>.

## Management

Some trainings and guidance documents are available to support the mainstreaming process during programme management. **Training for authorities** was carried out in relation to the "integration and diversity" horizontal principle. **Guidance for applicants and project promoters** was provided in the form of guidance documents on the official website of the OP. There are guides specifically aiming at explaining the integration of the horizontal criteria, applicable to all Swedish OPs<sup>54</sup>. Importantly, such training and guidance has become possible due to close coordination of management actions between ERDF and ESF programmes. The management of ERDF-funded OPs has limited resources to provide this type of assistance. Thus, it takes advantage of various ESF-funded measures and initiatives.

However, the extent to which such initiatives can be used has its limits. For example, in ESF projects it is usual to contract an organisation providing 'process support' to projects (including support on the integration of cross-cutting issues). However, such support is not possible in ERDF projects. According to a representative of the implementing body, there was a discussion on using the cross-financing facility for these types of expenses<sup>55</sup>. However, the relevant authorities decided that it would not be feasible due to the fragmentation of the application process and increased administrative burden<sup>56</sup>.

Project beneficiaries have to **report on their progress** on a regular basis. This also includes progress on equality-related goals. Thus, every four months the projects are to present a request for payment; this implies reporting on their achievement. The representative of the OP 'Stockholm' programme office noted that **meetings with each project** are held twice a year

---

<sup>53</sup> Susanna Rockström, interview, 1/7/2009.

<sup>54</sup> Horizontal criteria guides <<http://www.tillvaxtvverket.se/huvudmeny/euprogram/ansokaomprojektmedel/handledningforifyllandeavprojektansokan/kapitelhandledning/11horisontellakriterier/guiderhorisontellakriterier.4.21099e4211fd8a8c87b800016856.html>>.

<sup>55</sup> Susanna Rockström, interview, 1/7/2009.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

where project achievements, progress and relevant issues are discussed. Furthermore, the programme office also initiates a **get-together of all project leaders**. These meetings also take place two times a year and are aimed at exchanging experience and mutual learning. There is an intention to have a separate section discussing horizontal issues during such meetings<sup>57</sup>.

### **Partnership**

Sustainable partnership networks were developed during the early stages of the OP implementation. Several NGOs and associations were included in drafting the OP, including the national village action movement *All Sweden shall live* ("Hela Sverige ska leva"), the Cooperation Authority of Associations of Disabled People (Handikappföreningarnas samarbetsorgan) and the Cooperation Authority of Ethnic Organisations in Sweden (Samarbetsorgan för etniska organisationer i Sverige).

After the approval of the OP only partners representing the broad public interest take part in the processes of project selection and monitoring (e.g., trade unions). As mentioned above, such partners are present in the structural fund partnerships and the Monitoring Committee. According to Ulrika Hektor, a representative of the Swedish Confederation for Professional Employees, social partners tend to agree on equality issues and support each other's causes<sup>58</sup>. During interviews it was noted that some partners find it difficult to take an active part in various stages of OP implementation, as they do not see this as a part of their formal duties. However, according to Hektor, labour unions find it very important to be represented in the management structures of regional OPs<sup>59</sup>.

## **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING**

The system of monitoring, evaluation and reporting is closely linked to the multi-level system of targets and indicators (see Table 4 above). The ex-ante evaluation showed that there was a need for direct and quantitative integration of the horizontal principles. Thus targets measuring gender equality, integration and diversity were introduced on various levels of OP implementation (from the most general strategy to specific measures).

### **Monitoring**

The monitoring process follows the quantitative targets and the horizontal classification criteria (shown by Table 5, which includes the number of projects which have direct/ predominantly positive impact on the horizontal priorities, etc). On the project level, surveys are used to monitor the effects, including the impact on women, persons of foreign origin and others. The monitoring data is put in an IT-based information data base. The data is then used by the Managing Authority<sup>60</sup>, Monitoring Committee or other institutions.

However, this very detailed and precise monitoring system is a mixed blessing<sup>61</sup>. *Firstly*, the targets are many, rather arbitrary and often difficult to collect information. The programme officials see them as a concession to the approach advocated by 'Brussels' rather than a meaningful monitoring and management tool. According to one interviewee, it would be more useful to concentrate on the qualitative meaning of achievements, which should be addressed partly through the evaluation process<sup>62</sup>. *Secondly*, the requirements stemming from the monitoring system are not in line with the respective Swedish regulations. It is not permitted under Swedish law to ask people their country of origin (as this could implicitly lead to discrimination). Thus, the targets of businesses owned by people of foreign origin are very difficult to monitor<sup>63</sup>.

---

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ulrika Hektor, interview, 25/6/2009.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Katarina de Verdier, interview, 22/6/2009.

<sup>61</sup> Susanna Rockström, interview, 1/7/2009.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

The Monitoring Committee of the OP consists of representatives of the Ministry of Industry, municipalities, Stockholm city's environment administration, and county administrative boards, business and SME consulting company and various other organisations. No representatives of disadvantaged groups are present. However, as the OP states, the Managing Authority is responsible for including the horizontal criteria in the monitoring process. Some of the participating organisations may claim to represent the three themes as a part of their broader mission. Following the tradition of Swedish politics, gender balance is respected by the authorities dealing with OP 'Stockholm'.

### **Evaluation and reporting**

The **ex-ante evaluation** recommended a better handling of possible conflicts of objectives in terms of programme goals and horizontal goals. As a result, the goals of the OP were rephrased, clarified and quantified. It was also clarified that the horizontal criteria are among the major selection criteria.

The **ongoing evaluation process** will assess the targets and indicators used for monitoring (see Table 4 and Table 5). There is a joint ongoing evaluation of all the ERDF regional and ESF programmes. Within the remit of this evaluation, there is an obligation to assess gender equality. Another ongoing evaluation will examine the implementation of the OP 'Stockholm'. It requires taking a closer look at the question of 'integration and diversity'.

The **progress report and the final report** templates require project promoters to indicate the number of jobs, businesses and enterprises with gender-mixed ownership the project created (disaggregated by gender and share of men and women of foreign origin<sup>64</sup>). There is a separate section on horizontal criteria which asks for a description of the impact of the project on gender equality, inclusion and diversity and environment. These requirements apply to all Swedish regional programmes.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Overall, the OP 'Stockholm' mainstreams the provisions of Article 16 into all of its implementation stages. It is clearly a good practice example for several reasons:

- There is a comprehensive multi-level strategy which integrates the horizontal priorities, and an ambitious system of targets and indicators.
- A thorough context analysis was carried out and disaggregated statistics by gender (and occasionally by other groups) were used.
- Comprehensive conclusions were drawn from the lessons of the previous programming period, and multi-level cooperation between the ERDF and the ESF is ensured.
- During the stages of project selection, management, monitoring and evaluation the cross-cutting issues are taken into account in trainings, guidance procedures and even the selection of representatives to the various institutions for OP implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The programme follows a mainstreaming approach to gender equality and non-discrimination. It can be seen from the interviews that implementing institutions, as well as social partners representing broad public interests, have internalised the horizontal principles and developed sufficient internal expertise on them. However, more organisations dealing specifically with equality or non-discrimination issues could be included in the partnership process. Currently only partners representing the broad public interest (employers, trade unions) take part in the processes of project selection and monitoring.

---

<sup>64</sup> Progress report <<http://www.tillvaxtverket.se/download/18.3c4088c81204cca906180004558/10+Lgesrapport.doc>> and Final report <<http://www.tillvaxtverket.se/download/8.3c4088c81204cca906180004560/16+Slutrappport.doc>>

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

- Co-financing certificate.  
 Discrimination Act (SFS 2008:567, Published 25 June 2008).  
 Final report form <<http://www.tillvaxtverket.se/download/18.3c4088c81204cca906180004560/16+Slutrapport.doc>>.  
 Göran Brulin (NUTEK), "Multi-level ongoing evaluation: Experiences from the Swedish approach". Presentation at the conference "Evaluation of EU structural funds: reinforcing quality and utilisation". Vilnius, 26-27 March 2009.  
 Guide to project application.  
 Handisam (2006). *National action plan*. <[http://www.handisam.se/Tpl/NormalPage\\_\\_\\_\\_297.aspx](http://www.handisam.se/Tpl/NormalPage____297.aspx)>.  
 Handisam (2007), *Guidelines for accessibility - Break the Barriers*.  
 Horizontal criteria guides <<http://www.tillvaxtverket.se/huvudmeny/euprogram/ansokaomprojektmedel/handledningforifyllandeavprojektansokan/kapitelhandledning/11horisontellakriterier/guiderhorisontellakriterier.4.21099e4211fdb8c87b800016856.html>>.  
 Human European Consultancy, Migration Policy Group, International Society for Diversity Management, Centrum mot rasism [Center Against Racism] (2008). *National Activity Report Sweden: Anti-Discrimination and Diversity Training*.  
 Instruction for filling out the project application form.  
 NUTEK [Närings- och teknikutvecklingsverket – Agency for Industry and Technological Development] and ERDF (2008), *Åtgärdsdokument. Regionalt strukturfondsprogram för regional konkurrenskraft och sysselsättning i Stockholm 2007-2013* [Action plan. OP for regional competitiveness and employment in Stockholm 2007-2013].  
 OECD (2006), *OECD Territorial Reviews: Stockholm*.  
 OP 'Stockholm' (and appendices).  
 Progress report form <<http://www.tillvaxtverket.se/download/18.3c4088c81204cca906180004558/10+Lgesrapport.doc>>.  
 Project application form <<http://www.tillvaxtverket.se/download/18.3c4088c81204cca906180002518/14+Projektanskan.doc>>..  
 Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society Institute (2008), *Processtödande förstudie om integration och mångfald i regionala strukturfondsprojekt* [Process Support feasibility study of integration and diversity in the regional structural fund projects].  
 Special Eurobarometer 263 / Wave 65.4 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2007).  
 Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008).  
 Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008), *Discrimination in the European Union 2008. Results for Sweden*.  
 Statistiska Centralbyrån (2008). *Statistics of Sweden*.  
 Template for risk analysis.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No	Name	Surname	Position	Institution	Date
1.	Katarina	De Verdier	Project manager	Stockholm County Administrative Board	22/6/2009 (by e-mail)
2.	Ulrika	Hektor	Researcher	Social policy unit, Unionen [labour union, member of TCO]	25/6/2009 (by e-mail)
3.	Susanna	Rockström	Head of the office	Programme office for the OP 'Stockholm'	1/7/2009 (by phone)
4.	Gunilla	Thorstensson	Equality officer	Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket)	22/6/2009 by e-mail
5.	Martin	Olauzon	Analyst	Institute for Studies of Development Politics	22/6/2009 by e-mail

### 3. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'SWEDEN-NORWAY': CASE STUDY

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007CB163PO016	'Sweden-Norway	Sweden
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
European Territorial Cooperation	Regional	Nordic
<i>Breakdown of finances</i>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
37	31	68

Information source: Inforegio

#### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund  
 ICT – information and communication technology  
 NGO – non-governmental organisation  
 OP – operational programme  
 R&D – research and development  
 SMEs – small and medium enterprises  
 SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (analysis method)

#### INTRODUCTION

OP 'Sweden-Norway'<sup>65</sup> is a European Territorial Cooperation operational programme implemented in the northern parts of Sweden and Norway. It encompasses three cross-border regions, consisting of 'core areas' and '20% areas'<sup>66</sup>. The county administrative board of Jämtland is the Managing Authority and the implementing body of the OP. The administrative unit in the county administrative board acts as the Managing Authority, while the Structural Funds unit acts as an implementing body.

#### Priorities, interventions and goals

The general objective of the programme is an economically strong region with an attractive living environment. Three **priority axes** were identified for investment:

- Priority Axis 1: Economic growth (56% of the funding);
- Priority Axis 2: Attractive living environment (38% of the funding);

**Figure 4. Areas covered by the OP: red – core areas, yellow – 20% areas**



Source: <<http://www.interreg-sverige-norge.com>>

<sup>65</sup> Interreg Sverige – Norge 2007-2013: Program för Europeiskt Territoriellt Samarbete [Interreg Sweden-Norway 2007-2013: Programme for European Territorial Cooperation], approved by the European Commission on 15/11/2007 (hereinafter OP).

<sup>66</sup> These areas can cooperate with the core areas and receive up to 20% of the funding allocated for joint projects.

- Priority Axis 3: Technical assistance (6% of the funding).

The OP's types of intervention are productive investment (primarily direct aid to investments of SMEs, R&D, innovation and ICT, new product development, sustainable development, tourism and culture services), development of endogenous potential (services to businesses, networking and cooperation among enterprises), and investment in infrastructure (health and social). A round of project selection was completed in 2008 and, according to the information on the official website, 27 projects were selected, with 23 having already received support.

### Integration of Article 16

Article 16 is not mentioned explicitly in the OP. However, its strategy part defines clearly the equality objectives and sets quantified targets for achieving them. Overall, the equality objectives are thoroughly integrated into the OP:

- The section on the **socio-economic analysis** of the region includes a separate sub-section on equality. The different needs, mobility and employment patterns of men and women are identified.
- There were broad and inclusive **consultations** with various groups and associations during the stage of programme preparation.
- The **strategy** part highlights equality: gender impact objectives are presented immediately after the main targets of the programme.
- Following the suggestion of **ex-ante evaluators**, who had stated that the principle of gender equality is not sufficiently developed, the OP included separate sections on equality in each priority axis. There were activities envisaged to improve the lives men and women, as well as measures to help the disabled persons.
- The OP devotes some **indicators** to measure progress in terms of horizontal criteria (specifically, equality between men and women, and ethnic diversity and integration).
- Gender balance is to be respected in **programme management bodies** (Monitoring Committee, Steering Committee and Regional Priority Partnership).
- On the project level, the project promoters take advantage of their own **network of connections and experience** with civil society and target groups.

### Social context

The areas covered by the programme are sparsely populated Northern and Central areas in Sweden and Norway with certain social problems resulting from the low population density and demographic trends. A recent Eurobarometer survey has found that the main concerns of Swedish people are the economy (43%), unemployment (38%), environmental protection (19%), education (18%) (all numbers higher than the EU average) and, notably, healthcare (25%, compared to the 16% EU average)<sup>67</sup>. These areas of concern are reflected in the OP.

Around 40,000 people regularly commute between Sweden and Norway, and approximately the same number relocate every year<sup>68</sup>. The countries have realised long ago that high mobility in the border region enables balancing out each country's labour supply and demand, as educational backgrounds between the countries are similar, and language barriers are minor and can be overcome easily. However, it is important that the opportunities available to border area residents would not exclude certain groups. The access to employment, medical services and education is particularly important for disadvantaged groups.

### Political context

The commitment to facilitate cross-border mobility between Sweden and Norway has a 50 year-long history. The agreement among Nordic countries allowing people to travel without passports has been in place since 1957, while a joint labour market agreement entered into force already in 1954. The Council of Ministers of Nordic countries set up an information service "Hallo Norden" in 1998, which provides answers on unemployment benefits,

---

<sup>67</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 70 / Autumn 2008 "Allmänna opinionen i Europeiska Unionen" [general opinion in the EU], p. 13.

<sup>68</sup> Norden: official co-operation in the Nordic region. "Relocation and commuting" <<http://www.norden.org/en/areas-of-co-operation/moving-and-commuting>>.



healthcare, job search and other aspects of cross-border life. Since then, local and regional services have been set up in border areas<sup>69</sup>.

The governments of both countries have been active in promoting women's entrepreneurship through various special programmes, grants and investments. Ensuring equality in the increasingly converging economies of Sweden and Norway near the border zones has also been of key importance. The new Discrimination Act (2008:567) in Sweden forbids discrimination in employment, education, entrepreneurship, and the provision of services such as healthcare, among other aspects. The Act also defines the main terms, such as direct and indirect discrimination. As most Nordic countries, Norway has worked systematically to develop anti-discrimination legislation, and heighten discrimination awareness since 1999, a trend which, according to some observers, was inspired by the EU's efforts in anti-discrimination policy<sup>70</sup>.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Strategic choices

The **analysis of the situation** points out that there is significant gender segregation in the region: women constitute only 20% of the labour force in the primary sector, and 25% in industry, however they constitute 84% in the healthcare and social care sectors. In the private sector, women make up 34% of employees, while among the employees of local authorities they account for 79%. As a result, the effects of any economic restructuring are different for women and men. Men, who are more likely to own cars, have the opportunity to commute long distances across the border, especially since they are more frequently employed in "commuting-friendly" occupations, while women often work in jobs "tied" to specific locations (schools, care institutions, etc). Therefore the advantages of the joint labour market are not equally distributed among the genders, and public transport plays a major role in equalising their opportunities. The analysis part of the OP also states that women tend to leave the region, especially its rural areas. On the positive side, the interest of women in setting-up businesses has been growing.

The OP includes a summarised **SWOT analysis** from the "Border SWOT analysis" study which was conducted separately from the OP. The full Border SWOT analysis report has a separate section on gender equality, where it states that:

- Strengths of the region include a large share of women among higher education students and a growing interest in gender equality.
- Among the weaknesses there is a tendency of women to leave the region. The labour market is also gender-segregated.
- Opportunities include facilitating women's entrepreneurship and recruitment of women to leading positions, improving distance education opportunities, and upgrading social services, among other things.
- The section on threats point to the imbalances in the labour market and the fact that difficulties encountered by the public sector and the provision of social services disproportionately impact women<sup>71</sup>.

The OP refers to the **lessons learned from the Interreg IIIA programme**: its midterm evaluation in 2003 identified several problems, which were taken into account when drafting the new OP for 2007-2013. The evaluators recommended reviewing indicators and ensuring that the horizontal criteria penetrate more parts of the OP. Methods for identifying and disseminating successful project examples were developed. An **analytical tool "Gender**

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid and the Hallo Norden project <<http://www.hallonorden.org>>.

<sup>70</sup> Nordic gender institute, "Nordic anti-discrimination policy charted". <<http://www.nikk.uio.no/?module=Articles;action=Article.publicShow;ID=667>>.

<sup>71</sup> Cerut – Centrum för forskning om regional utveckling, Karlstads universitet, and Ostlandsforskning (2006). *Gräns-SWOT: Analysen av gränsregionen i Sverige-Norgeprogrammet* [Border SWOT: analysis of the border region of the OP Sweden-Norway]. Karlstad, p. 17.

**equality reflection**” was created for the period of 2004-2006 and it was included in the Programme manual for applicants of the 2007-2013 programme (see “Management”).

Many relevant groups are expected to benefit from the interventions funded by the OP. There are direct or indirect references to these groups within each priority axis (see Table 6 below).

**Table 6. Priority axes, impact objectives, areas of intervention and their benefit to disadvantaged groups**

Priority axis	Impact objectives	Intervention	Target groups that are relevant from the perspective of Article 16*
Economic growth	Increased accessibility to and within the region (the term “accessibility” means better connections to and from the region)	Removal of border obstacles: student exchanges, services to cross-border job-seekers, improvement of social services, development of systems for the recognition of skills in another country, etc.	Potential benefit to all groups due to better social services, and easier cross-border mobility**
		Infrastructure (traffic, IT, etc)	Potential benefits to women, the elderly and disabled persons, but they are not mentioned explicitly as target groups
	Integrated labour market with competitive labour force	Development of competences, research and development (including support for traineeships and mentoring)	Young people
	Increasing number of competitive businesses with attractive working environment	Development of business and entrepreneurship: tourism, cultural industry, small-scale food products, environment and energy, forestry	Disabled and elderly people
Attractive living environment	Improved utilization, management and development of natural & cultural resources	Natural resources, environment and energy: environment-friendly technologies in transport, construction, industry, etc, networking and cooperation in related fields	
	Improved cooperation in order to minimise negative impact on the environment		
	Increased cultural diversity and quality of life	Culture and creativity: music, theatre, media, film industry, etc	Young women and men
	Developed methods and cooperation for local and urban development	Development of townscape and countryside	
	Better social services		Women***
	Better cooperation in order to improve public health, counteract risks and increase security	Public health	Women***

\* I.e., each objective has more target groups. The table shows only the groups that are relevant from the perspective of Article 16

\*\* Not mentioned in the sections on priority areas/activities, but referred to in other parts of the OP.

\*\*\* “Issues relating to services, labour market and public health determine women’s conditions to a large extent”<sup>72</sup>.

Source: OP

### Indicators and targets

The overall OP strategy takes into account the need for contribution from both men and women to bring about economic growth in the region. The OP has a **quantified equality target**:

- At least 40% of participants in project activities will be women and at least 40% will be men.

This proportion should be respected in each priority axis, except Technical Assistance. Baseline context indicators, such as employment, are gender-disaggregated. Indicators for the

<sup>72</sup> OP, p. 61.

horizontal criteria were selected in accordance with the definitions and measuring methods established by the Swedish government for the Regional Competitiveness and Employment programmes in order to enable comparisons across OPs. It is advised that all indicators should be disaggregated by gender, the share of participants aged 15-24, persons with a foreign (non-Scandinavian) background<sup>73</sup>, etc<sup>74</sup>.

The following indicators concerning equal opportunities are collected and monitored on the programme level:

- the number of projects which are **directly aimed** at increasing equality and/or diversity and integration (such an aim has to be identified in the project's goals, activities and expected results);
- the number of projects which will have an **overall positive impact** on equality and/or diversity and integration (some project activities are designated at promoting equality/diversity and integration);
- the number of projects which have a **largely negative impact** on gender equality and/or diversity and integration (the projects must include measures to minimise this negative impact).

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

The OP indicates that the **horizontal selection criteria** have to be observed when selecting project applications. According to Anita Sandell, a representative of the Managing Authority, the horizontal issues constitute only one of the criteria for selection, yet they cannot be left blank in project applications – some measures to address them have to be envisaged<sup>75</sup>. In addition, these criteria are important in prioritising projects if they contribute to the region's development priorities (for example, women's entrepreneurship).

The above-mentioned priorities are set by Regional Priority Partnerships. These Partnerships have been established for each of the three geographical areas of the OP and are of key importance in project selection. They consist of regional officials, representatives of businesses and relevant institutions and their mission is to ensure the regional focus of the OP. Only projects approved by the Partnerships can advance further to the Steering Committee for approval.

The project application form requests the applicants to indicate the numbers of men and women (and young people) who will take part in the project. There is also a separate question about the impact of project on the horizontal principles (gender equality, environment, diversity and integration).

A project manual has been prepared, which among other things gives guidance to project developers on horizontal issues. For example, it suggests to take both **qualitative and quantitative** aspects of gender equality into account<sup>76</sup>. In addition, it provides working definitions for diversity and integration and encourages to identify the excluded groups as well as to include measures to improve their situation. The project developers are also asked how the competences for promoting diversity and integration will be developed in project organisation<sup>77</sup>.

---

<sup>73</sup> There is a variety of classifications of this group: foreign-born persons, persons of foreign origin (whose parents were born abroad), persons with a foreign background (at least one of the parents born abroad)... Typically this term encompasses first- and second-generation immigrants, both with and without Swedish citizenship. Implicitly, "abroad" or "foreign" excludes other Scandinavian countries. In this case study report, the terms appearing in the actual text are used, without attempt to harmonise them or choose one of the terms.

<sup>74</sup> *Programme manual*, Annex 3, p. 3.

<sup>75</sup> Anita Sandell, interview, 26/6/2009.

<sup>76</sup> *Programme manual*, p. 23.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid* 4, p. 24.

As a result, **projects directly addressing inequalities** in the region have a good chance of being selected. Indeed, some among the currently implemented projects are of direct relevance to the themes of Article 16, specifically: "Social integration of people with mental health problems" (Östersund municipality in Sweden and the 'TISIP Foundation' in Norway), "Increased quality of life for people with impaired functioning through physical activity" (Jämtland county council in Sweden and 'SINTEF Health' in Norway), "Border region's philosophy of care" (Strömstad municipality in Sweden and Fredrikstad municipality in Norway), "Meeting place for citizens (MSM)" (Uddevalla municipality in Sweden and Fredrikstad municipality in Norway), and "Diversity Competence in companies providing increased competitive capacity" (the Minerva foundation in Sweden and Trondheim municipality in Norway)<sup>78</sup>.

## Management

The OP states that there are gender experts working in county administrative boards and municipality institutions. These human resources should be used during the implementation of the OP. The special advisor on gender equality in the Jämtland administrative board Lillemor Landsten provided comments on the draft of the programme. She says that she focused on SWOT and context analysis, especially the tendency of women to leave the area and the demographic implications of this trend. She recommended that additional effort has to be undertaken in creating jobs for women and helping them to reconcile their professional and private life<sup>79</sup>.

The Steering Committee, the Monitoring Committee and Regional Project Partnerships for each of the geographical areas must respect gender balance among its members, following the **40-60% interval rule for both genders**.

An **analytical tool called "Gender equality reflection"** was developed for the period of 2004-2006. It was also included in the Programme manual for applicants of 2007-2013 programme. The tool has relevant questions for different stages of project implementation:

- Will the project affect both women and men?
- What is the impact of the project on the three regions: representation (in management, etc), resources and results?
- What gender differences are the most prominent in the region, including opportunities, competences, and structures?<sup>80</sup>

Projects directly addressing the horizontal themes are typically implemented by institutions with long-term experience in the field. Therefore in addition to the support they receive from programme implementing bodies, such projects undertake management initiatives, whose benefits spill over beyond the limits of these projects.

For example, the project "Increased quality of life for persons with impaired functioning through physical activity" improved sports equipment (skating, skiing and biathlon) in order to make it usable for people with disabilities. The Jämtland county representatives of this project have been working with disability NGOs for over 25 years. They have not received any guidance from the Managing Authority or the implementing bodies when preparing or implementing the project, but, according to one interviewee, the long experience of her institution contributes to the successful implementation. The **project promoters have prepared their own guidelines** with regard to gender equality and other horizontal criteria. They are also planning to collect relevant statistics and conduct surveys of the target group<sup>81</sup>.

The project "MiA – Diversity Competence in companies providing increased competitive capacity" (Mangfoldskompetanse i bedriftene gir økt konkurranseevne) focused on educated

---

<sup>78</sup> Michael von Essen, email interview, 11/6/2009.

<sup>79</sup> Lillemor Landsten, email interview, 9/6/2009.

<sup>80</sup> Programme manual, p. 24.

<sup>81</sup> Ewa Lundberg, email interview, 16/6/2009.

unemployed immigrant women. The goal was to facilitate their employment in their field of education through a **special method** of mentoring. As the previous project, this project, according to its manager Marianne Lundberg, also developed its own equality practices<sup>82</sup>.

The "Border region's philosophy of care" (Gränsregional omsorgsfilosofi) project aims to "educate healthcare personnel about the palliative care philosophy" in order to address the needs of people with dementia and their relatives in the large border zone region. The project manager mentioned that they received some assistance from the Interreg Sweden-Norway Managing Authority<sup>83</sup>. According to the manager of the OP, there is always room for improvement of the guidelines prepared by the authorities. These guidelines are not very detailed, and disability questions are not included, thus project developers have more to say from their experience. However, the task of guidance from the Managing Authority is to ensure that projects not directly related to the horizontal criteria also address them, as it is required for all Swedish programmes<sup>84</sup>.

## MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

### Monitoring

The Monitoring Committee is composed of both Swedish and Norwegian members delegated by their respective governments. The committee approves the selection criteria and yearly progress reports, as well as a final report. The OP points out that the Monitoring Committee **collects statistics** on the programme implementation which, whenever possible, should be gender-disaggregated. Each country appoints 12 persons to the Monitoring Committee. The **40-60% gender intervals** must be respected on both sides.

### Evaluation

Ongoing evaluation will include study visits: a representative sample of projects will be subject to detailed analysis. It is in this way **good practice examples**, also in terms of the integration of the horizontal criteria, can be identified and catalogued, as it was done in the previous programming period. Good practice examples are also used in information and publicity campaigns<sup>85</sup>.

The Trondheim University is following the project "Diversity competence in companies providing increased competitive capacity" and evaluating its achievements. According to the manager of the project "Border region's philosophy of care", a university in Norway is also following and evaluating this project<sup>86</sup>, showing the great **interest of academic institutions** in analysing projects and their implications for policy and the society.

### Reporting

The project **progress report** form requires project developers to report on:

- the number of women and men (aged 15-24) taking part in the project;
- the number of women and men beyond this age group;
- the number of businesses owned by men/women and of mixed ownership taking part in project activities;
- the number of women and men who take part in the education and training activities;
- the number of women and men going to study across the border.

There is also a separate question in the progress report form about the impact of the project on the horizontal criteria<sup>87</sup>. The section on horizontal criteria in the final report also asks how the project contributed to diminishing discrimination and promoting diversity and integration<sup>88</sup>.

---

<sup>82</sup> Marianne Lundberg, email interview, 22/6/2009.

<sup>83</sup> Maria Solbo Hansson, interview, 23/6/2009.

<sup>84</sup> Anita Sandell, interview, 26/6/2009.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Maria Solbo Hansson, interview, 23/6/2009.

<sup>87</sup> Mall för läges/statusrapport [progress report form].

<sup>88</sup> Mall för slutrapport [final report form].

## CONCLUSIONS

The OP 'Sweden-Norway' integrated the aspects of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility for disabled persons without referring explicitly to Article 16. The programme represents a good mix of non-discrimination (gender-balance in OP management) and proactive policy (priority for projects addressing inequalities). The strongest points, worth highlighting as good practices in the OP, are:

- a thorough context analysis and inclusion of gender-disaggregated statistics (occasionally the statistics on foreign-born beneficiaries is also provided);
- clearly stated horizontal objectives and indicators to measure them;
- commitment to promote gender balance within the programme's management structures;
- a system of tools, indicators and tips that is the result of a long tradition of integrating the horizontal criteria into regional programmes, as well as national programmes. Guidance materials have been provided for applicants and project promoters. However, some project promoters noted that they do not rely much on these materials and take advantage of their own experience and networks.

Overall, the programme is a good example of thorough integration of the three equality dimensions of Article 16.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

- CEDAW (2006), *Implementation of the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Norway's seventh periodic report.*
- Cerut – Centrum för forskning om regional utveckling, Karlstads universitet, and Ostlandsforskning (2006), *Gräns-SWOT: Analysen av gränsregionen i Sverige-Norgeprogrammet* [Border SWOT: analysis of the border region of the OP Sweden-Norway]. Karlstad.
- Christina Skantze, Mattias Ankarhem (2006), *Förhandsbedömning av Sverige-Norge programmet Strukturfondsperiod 2007-2013* [Ex-ante evaluation of the OP 'Sweden-Norway for the structural funds' period 2007-2013]. ITPS – Institutet for tillvaxtpolitiska studier (2006).
- Gender in Norway: Information and resources on gender equality and gender research in Norway* <<http://gender.no>>.
- Hallo Norden project <<http://hallonorden.org>>.
- Handisam (2006). *National action plan.* <[http://www.handisam.se/Tpl/NormalPage\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_297.aspx](http://www.handisam.se/Tpl/NormalPage_____297.aspx)>.
- Interreg Sverige-Norge 2007-2013 Programmanual* Version 4, 2009-04-24.
- Mall för läges/statusrapport [progress report form].
- Mall för slutrapport [final report form].
- Norden: official co-operation in the Nordic region < <http://www.norden.org>>.
- Nordic gender institute, "Nordic anti-discrimination policy charted." <<http://www.nikk.uio.no/?module=Articles;action=Article.publicShow;ID=667>>.
- OP 'Sweden-Norway' (and appendices).
- Projektansökan / Søknad initieringsprojekt [project application form: initial project<sup>89</sup>].
- Projektansökan / Søknad project [project application form].
- Projektansökan / Søknad smaprojekt [project application form: small project].
- Standard Eurobarometer 70 / Autumn 2008 " Allmänna opinionen i Europeiska Unionen" [general opinion in the EU].

---

<sup>89</sup> A smaller scale project which aims to facilitate other projects and initiatives.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No	Name	Surname	Position	Institution	Date
1.	Lillemor	Landsten	Special advisor on gender equality	Jämtland county administrative board	9/6/2009 (by e-mail)
2.	Ewa	Lundberg	Coordinator of disability policies	Jämtland county council	11/6/2009 (by e-mail)
3.	Michael	von Essen	Managing officer	Secretariat for Nordens Gröna Bälte region, Interreg Sweden-Norway	16/6/2009 (by e-mail)
4.	Marianne	Lundberg	President	Minerva Foundation	22/6/2009 (by e-mail)
5.	Maria Solbo	Hansson	Project manager	EU-project: "Gränsregional omsorgsfilosofi", Strömstad municipality	23/6/2009 (by e-mail)
6.	Anita	Sandell	Programme manager	Interreg Sweden-Norway	26/6/2009 (by telephone)
7.	Ingela	Pihl	Project manager	UTCED	e-mail consultation, 16/06/2009
8.	Gunilla	Thorstensson	Equality officer	Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket)	e-mail consultation, 4/6/2009

## 4. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA': CASE STUDY

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007DE162PO007	'North Rhine-Westphalia'	Germany
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Regional Competitiveness and Employment	Regional	Continental
Breakdown of finances		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
1,283	1,013	2,297

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund  
 ESF – European Social Fund  
 MEUR – one million Euros  
 NRW – North Rhine-Westphalia  
 OP – Operational programme

### INTRODUCTION

The regional OP 'North Rhine-Westphalia'<sup>90</sup> is aimed at the development of the most densely populated German Land (18 million inhabitants)<sup>91</sup>, the capital of which is Düsseldorf and which includes the industrial hub of Ruhr Metropolis. The designated Managing Authority is the Ministry for Economy, Middle-sized Enterprises and Energy of North Rhine-Westphalia (thereinafter the Ministry for Economy), although other ministries and various other bodies of regional governance are also involved in the implementation process of the OP. The Department for Women in the Ministry for Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration supervises the cross cutting-principle 'Gender Equality' and works together closely with the Managing Authority. The ministry's work is supported and the activities of involved bodies are coordinated by the special Objective 2 Secretariat under the Ministry for Economy. There are still calls for proposals to be announced for this OP, and the

**Figure 5. North-Rhine Westphalia and the sub-regions of the OP**



Source: Inforegio

<sup>90</sup> Ziel 2 Sekretariat im Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Mittelstand und Energie des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, *Operationelles Programm (EFRE) für das Ziel „Regionale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Beschäftigung“ für Nordrhein-Westfalen* [thereinafter OP]. <[http://www.ziel2-nrw.de/1\\_Ziel2-Programm/3\\_1\\_Programmtexte/Operationelles\\_Programm\\_13\\_08\\_20071.pdf](http://www.ziel2-nrw.de/1_Ziel2-Programm/3_1_Programmtexte/Operationelles_Programm_13_08_20071.pdf)>.

<sup>91</sup> Die Landesregierung Nordrhein-Westfalen, „Nordrhein-Westfalen“. <<http://www.nrw.de/Nordrhein-Westfalen/index.php>>.



implementation of selected projects has started recently.

The OP's priority axes, measures and the allocation of funding are presented in Table 7. It can be also seen from the table that 'equality of men and women and non-discrimination' is identified as one of the programme's cross-cutting themes. This horizontal priority is explicitly related to Article 16 in the programme strategy.

**Table 7. OP 'North Rhine-Westphalia': priority axes, allocation of funding and the cross-cutting themes**

Priority axes	Strengthening the entrepreneurial basis	Innovation and knowledge-based economy	Sustainable urban and regional development
<b>Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial facilities for the SMEs and start ups;</li> <li>Advice facilities for the SMEs and start ups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support of innovations, clusters and networks;</li> <li>Application-oriented technology and research infrastructure;</li> <li>Innovative services;</li> <li>Inter- and intraregional co-operation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated development of urban problem areas;</li> <li>Opening up of development bottlenecks in industrial regions</li> </ul>
<b>Percentage of funds allocated</b>	20%	50%	30%
<b>EU funds allocated</b>	254 MEUR	635 MEUR	381 MEUR
<b>Cross-cutting themes</b>	Sustainable and environmentally-friendly development Equality of men and women and non-discrimination		

Source: OP; Ziel 2 Sekretariat im Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Mittelstand und Energie des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, „Übersicht zur Programmstruktur“ <[http://www.ziel2-nrw.de/1\\_Ziel2-Programm/1\\_Programmziele/Programmstrategie.pdf](http://www.ziel2-nrw.de/1_Ziel2-Programm/1_Programmziele/Programmstrategie.pdf)>; „Übersicht Finanzmittelverteilung“ <[http://www.ziel2-nrw.de/1\\_Ziel2-Programm/1\\_Programmziele/Finanzmittelverteilung.pdf](http://www.ziel2-nrw.de/1_Ziel2-Programm/1_Programmziele/Finanzmittelverteilung.pdf)>.

No explicit reference is made throughout the programme to the third dimension of Article 16, which is accessibility for the disabled. However, there is a national regulation that already embraces this aspect comprehensively and whenever a public building is being constructed, equal access must be guaranteed<sup>92</sup>. The non-discrimination principle is also first of all understood as non-discrimination by gender, although there are some initiatives that integrate the ethnicity dimension and deal with urban areas experiencing social problems (programme 'Stadtteile mit besonderem Entwicklungsbedarf – die Soziale Stadt' – 'Social city'). Alternatively, multiple discrimination is tackled, focusing on women with a foreign background (there is a mentoring project for young immigrant women helping them to shape their career path, namely, 'Neue Wege in den Beruf - Mentoring für junge Frauen mit Zuwanderungsgeschichte'<sup>93</sup>).

The gender equality theme is addressed throughout the text of the programme:

- Gender equality and non-discrimination is designated as the **cross-cutting principle** of the programme. The situation of women in the labour market is presented in the **context analysis** part by describing the **challenges** that are to be addressed in the framework of this programme: employment, unemployment, access to jobs and career and the reconciliation of work and family life. In addition, the programme also provides statistical information on the situation of non-German inhabitants.
- An overarching **target** is set for the programme to achieve that "40% of all jobs created shall be those of women"<sup>94</sup>. The indicator of 'jobs created' disaggregated by gender is used both on the programme level as well as on the project level to quantify the outputs.

<sup>92</sup> Nullbarriere.de - the Webseite for accessible planning, construction and living conditions theme, „Landesbauordnung Nordrhein-Westfalen (BauO NRW)“ <<http://nullbarriere.de/bauordnung-nrw.htm>>. See § 55: Barrierefreiheit öffentlich zugänglicher baulicher Anlagen [Accessibility of public works].

<sup>93</sup> See the project website for more information: <<http://www.mentoring-neue-wege.de/>>.

<sup>94</sup> OP, p. 86.

- The importance of equality between men and women is then reiterated under the **priority axes** either while defining the target groups (among others, women/migrants), highlighting specific inequalities (such as the low share of women in science and technical occupations) or elaborating specific action.
- There is a centre of gender competence ('Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik') supporting the Managing Authority and the Ministry for Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration in the sphere of gender equality and providing **consultancy** to the involved agencies and project managers, organizing related **trainings, networking** between the institutions and **publicising** the equality opportunities of this OP.
- The **partnership** principle is invoked at different levels, aiming at consultations, networking and synergy between different bodies and projects, and encouraging sharing **good practices**.

### Socioeconomic context

The context analysis of the OP points out that women still encounter difficulties in the labour market despite recent improvements. Women take up less leading positions, and there are fewer women in science and technical occupations. While the overall employment rate is not far from the Lisbon strategy's target (at 56.4% in 2005), female employees dominate part-time/temporary jobs that cannot guarantee the same level of social security as full-time employment. The burden of reconciling the work and family life also usually lies upon women as care facilities for children under three years old are lacking, and even the tax system is designated to support a male bread-winner model<sup>95</sup>.

Therefore, the equality challenge in North Rhine-Westphalia is not just to increase the number of working women but also to increase the quality of their employment. It should be noted, however, that the initiatives do not only simply target women as an underperforming group. The reconciliation of work and family life is also an issue for men who want to engage themselves actively as fathers, as this is made extremely difficult by German cultural and societal norms<sup>96</sup>. Therefore, a special call for proposals has been announced that attempts to create a family-friendly work environment in the region's enterprises and to cater to the needs of working parents.

### Policy context

Compared to the European average, the Germans seem more reluctant to support targeted measures in the field of employment based on gender, ethnic origin, religion/belief and sexual orientation<sup>97</sup>. A human rights-based non-discrimination approach implying only negative measures seems to be more appropriate in this context. However, institutions actively engaged in the issues of gender equality (a network of equal opportunity officers called 'Frauenbeauftragten', which are women's representatives) have already been present in NRW communities for decades. These representatives oversee and advice on the activities of the community (city/town municipality) that have an impact on women's issues, gender equality or the recognition of the equal status of men and women in the society<sup>98</sup>. Hence the importance of equal opportunities is recognized politically and is being discussed at the highest level, the responsible ministry in NRW being Ministry for Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration.

---

<sup>95</sup> Ingrid Wawrzyniak, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>96</sup> Hildegard Kaluza, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>97</sup> Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008). *Results for Germany*, p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft kommunaler Frauenbüros, „Wofür ist die kommunale Gleichstellungsbeauftragte zuständig?“ [Federal Association of Women's municipal offices, "What is the municipal equality officers responsible for?." <<http://www.frauenbueros-nrw.de/Antworten.htm#Anchor--%20Wo-65163>>.

**PROGRAMME DESIGN**

**Strategic choices**

Stemming from the description of inequalities between male and female employees, there are four main gender equality topics recognized in the OP as requiring action. These are:

- Female entrepreneurs;
- Reconciliation of work and family life;
- Women in leading positions;
- Women in engineering and mathematics (technical fields)<sup>99</sup>.

These topics are not organized as special targeted measures, but rather as special action areas reserved within the general measures of the three OP's priority axes as shown in Table 8. Meanwhile, the third priority axis is most closely related to 'hard infrastructure' investment, thus the equality dimension can be taking into account when making efforts to mainstream the themes of gender and ethnicity.

**Table 8. Priority axes and the equal opportunities' theme**

Priority axes	Strengthening the entrepreneurial basis	Innovation and knowledge-based economy	Sustainable urban and regional development
<b>Proposed instruments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for female and migrant entrepreneurs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women in leading positions</li> <li>• Women in engineering and mathematics (technical fields)</li> <li>• Reconciliation of work and family life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of gender and racial equality in urban and regional development</li> </ul>

Source: PPMI

**Indicators and targets**

All the data required from the individual projects (which are then aggregated according to the level of the programme) referring to people is disaggregated by gender as well as by ethnicity in some cases<sup>100</sup> (see Table 9 for details). The main indicators in terms of equality are '**jobs created**' and '**jobs safeguarded**' for men and women and numbers of enterprises by gender.

However, when it comes to measures related to the support of entrepreneurship, **business start-ups by women** (financed or advised) are monitored. Since the programme is also oriented towards encouraging women to work in technical fields, **jobs created for women** and **business start-ups by women in technology and knowledge-intensive sectors** are also specifically included among the indicators of relevant measures. At the level of results, **training places for women** are also measured. Meanwhile, at the level of outputs, the number of **consultations offered** is also recorded and disaggregated appropriately. These indicators are applied to projects depending within which priority axis and measure they are being funded and according to the obligations they undertake in their applications.

<sup>99</sup> Officer [Gender in Work and Structural Policy] at 'Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik' and member of Programme Evaluation Committee Bettina Vaupel, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>100</sup> In the third priority axis, some programmes ('Soziale Stadt') are co-financed by applying infrastructural measures and social projects in quarters with social problems (deprived areas). One of the conditions to apply for a programme like this is a high percentage of immigrant inhabitants. Bettina Vaupel, interview, 16/6/2009.

**Table 9. Equality-related indicators and their disaggregation**

Indicator	Jobs created	Jobs safeguarded	Start-ups (financed or consulted)	Training places	Consultations offered
Type of indicator	Result	Result	Result	Result	Output
Disaggregation levels	For women	For women	By women	For women	For women
	For women in technology and knowledge-intensive sectors		By women in technology and knowledge-intensive sectors		For women in technology and knowledge-intensive sectors
			By persons with immigrant background		For persons with immigrant background

Source: OP

The programme sets four overarching quantified targets (see Table 10). One of them is specifically related to gender equality and concerns newly-created jobs newly for women in particular. The target value for this indicator is set in the range of 32,000-44,000 jobs.

**Table 10. Quantified targets of the programme**

Goal/Category	Baseline value (Objective 2 programme of 2000-2006)	Target value	Indicator
Investment	~450 MEUR a year	~715 MEUR a year In total: ~5,000 MEUR	Induced investment (public/private)
Jobs (new)	~8,500 a year	~11,000-16,000 a year In total: ~80,000-100,000	Number of jobs created
Jobs for women (new)	~2,800 a year	~4,500-6,300 a year In total: ~32,000-44,000	Number of jobs created for women
Jobs (safeguarded)	~9,000 a year	~13,000-17,000 a year In total: ~90,000-120,000	Number of jobs safeguarded

Source: OP.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

Regarding equality issues, the procedures of project selection within the framework of the OP 'North Rhine-Westphalia' comprise both elements of **minimum requirements** and **prioritisation**. However, there are also targeted calls for proposals that are related to specific themes of gender equality, and it is these that are probably having the most direct impact.

Most of the funding from the OP is distributed via thematic calls for proposals. The selection criteria include **considerations of the cross-cutting themes** of the OP. The applicants are asked to state whether the proposed project is related to equal opportunities or non-discrimination and how it is related. The projects are then evaluated in terms of what impact they are expected to have on the programme targets and on the cross-cutting themes (strong positive contribution, positive contribution on average or no positive contribution)<sup>101</sup>. In all calls for proposals, the contribution to the cross-cutting themes makes up 10% of the overall project scoring scale which means a project may get up to 5% of the scoring for contributing to equal opportunities<sup>102</sup>.

*Secondly*, there is also the rule of **prioritisation** ('Vorfahrtsregelung'). This means that if two projects with the same scoring differ regarding their contribution to the cross-cutting themes,

<sup>101</sup> Bettina Vaupel, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>102</sup> Ziel 2 Sekretariat im Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Mittelstand und Energie des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, *Projektauswahlkriterien*, p. 12-13. <[http://www.ziel2.nrw.de/1\\_Ziel2-Programm/4\\_1\\_Auswahlkriterien/Auswahlkriterien.pdf](http://www.ziel2.nrw.de/1_Ziel2-Programm/4_1_Auswahlkriterien/Auswahlkriterien.pdf)>.

the one with a higher score for the cross-cutting themes should be given priority in making a funding decision. However, this rarely happens in practice.

Hence the most direct way to address equal opportunities is to organize **specific or targeted calls for proposals** (though it cannot be said that equality promoting projects do not get selected in other calls). There have been two targeted calls within this OP: 'Gründungen.NRW' and 'familie@unternehmen.NRW'.

'**Gründung.NRW**' was organized by the Ministry for Economy and aimed at supporting female entrepreneurship. Seven projects were selected, offering consultancy and training (on a regional or local level) to women considering starting their own business. Among the winners there was also one even more precisely targeted project, which helped disabled and chronically ill women in becoming self-employed ("GO! unlimited MOBILE – Behinderte und chronisch kranke Frauen in die berufliche Selbstständigkeit")<sup>103</sup>.

The second call for proposals, '**familie@unternehmen.NRW**', was organized by the Ministry for Generations, Family, Women and Integration. It encouraged initiatives within enterprises that would help their male and female employees reconcile their work and family life, which included helping women to return to work after childbirth, and offering new opportunities for fathers and possibilities to reconcile work and care of their dependents. A total of 19 projects were selected in two rounds<sup>104</sup>, among them a twinning initiative by two different sized enterprises in Bielefeld to make their working environment for accommodating family concerns better<sup>105</sup>.

The projects are selected by a project selection committee appointed by the respective ministry that organizes the call for proposals. They include people who are knowledgeable about the topic of the call: entrepreneurs, university professors, consulting firms and other experts from outside NRW if possible. In nearly all of the committees, there is at least one woman, while sometimes women make up around 1/3 of the committees. In some calls they comprise even more of the members<sup>106</sup>.

## Management

The strength of the implementation of this regional OP is that considerable gender equality competence is available at the 'Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik' (Centre for Women in Occupation and Technology). This Centre was established by the town of Castrop-Rauxel and conducts projects promoting equal opportunities. It has not been institutionally integrated into the implementation system of the OP and receives no funding from the Technical Assistance priority axis, but its involvement in the implementation of the gender equality cross-cutting theme has been framed in the project 'Wirtschaftsfaktor Frau' ('Woman as An Economic Factor'). This project encourages networking between public agencies, business organizations, enterprises and women's groupings in the region as well as offers consultancy and training on gender issues in selected themes within the priority axes<sup>107</sup>.

The Centre for Women in Occupation and Technology offers its expertise in a **thematic seminar series** 'Ziel 2 +Frau' ('Objective 2 +Woman') where they invite potential project applicants or beneficiaries to attend. These seminars explore how to incorporate the dimension of gender in various fields of OP implementation. For example, there have been trainings on

---

<sup>103</sup> Ziel 2 Sekretariat im Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Mittelstand und Energie des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen [Objective 2 Secretariat in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy of North Rhine-Westphalia], *Sieben Sieger im Wettbewerb „Gründung.NRW“ – Land will Umsetzung der besten Ideen zur Förderung von Gründerinnen und Unternehmerinnen unterstützen* [Seven winners of the tender "Gründung.NRW" - the county wants to implement the best ideas for the promotion of female entrepreneurs, and women entrepreneurs to support it], p. 2-4. <[http://www.ziel2.nrw.de/2\\_Wettbewerbe\\_und\\_weitere\\_Foerdermoeglichkeiten/2\\_Wettbewerbe\\_2007\\_2008/Grue ndung\\_NRW/100\\_Die\\_Wettbewerbssieger/Grue ndung\\_Pressemitteilung\\_Sieger\\_2008\\_07\\_03.pdf](http://www.ziel2.nrw.de/2_Wettbewerbe_und_weitere_Foerdermoeglichkeiten/2_Wettbewerbe_2007_2008/Grue ndung_NRW/100_Die_Wettbewerbssieger/Grue ndung_Pressemitteilung_Sieger_2008_07_03.pdf)>.

<sup>104</sup> Hildegard Kaluza, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>105</sup> Angelika Filius, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>106</sup> Bettina Vaupel, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>107</sup> Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik [Centre Woman in Occupation and Technology], „Wirtschaftsfaktor Frau“ [Economic Factor Woman]. <<http://www.zfbt.de/gem/wirtschaftsfaktor-frau/index.htm>>.

gender in product design, on the phenomenon of migration as seen from the perspective of gender, on gender in calls for tender for urban planning, and on diversity management in business<sup>108</sup>. The officials and representatives of institutions/enterprises implementing the programme are also invited to take part in the seminars<sup>109</sup>.

However, the Centre interacts with the stakeholders in all three thematic priority axes more directly as well, offering **gender trainings** and **consultancy**. For example, within the first priority axis (Strengthening the entrepreneurial basis) it co-operates with the 'Startercenters NRW' (regional infrastructure of centres for business support and providers of micro-credits) in order to help them adjust to the needs of female entrepreneurs<sup>110</sup>. In the second priority axis, there is an initiative of evening events organized with the Chambers of Commerce in North Rhine-Westphalia (the so-called 'Managerinnen-Talks') where only female managers and entrepreneurs discuss economic issues<sup>111</sup>. Meanwhile, in the third priority axis the centre has embarked on a gender mainstreaming process, with two towns running projects worth 20 MEUR within the programme 'Soziale Stadt'. The Centre also liaises with organizers of calls for proposals in the ministries and may be consulted when the members of the project selection committee are being nominated<sup>112</sup>.

It can be thus said that the Centre, possessing a considerable amount of gender competence, is an active participant in the process of OP implementation. However, its influence relies on informal methods. Its advice is not compulsory; therefore, the extent to which gender equality is taken into consideration depends largely on the interests and initiative of public agencies and individual projects.

As for cross-financing, an agreement was initially reached between the Ministry for Employment and Ministry for Economy not to use this facility, but now it is to be allowed for applicants and project managers. They will now be able to integrate ESF-type activities such as trainings. This could also present an opportunity to better address equality issues, however this depends on the plans of applicants and of the selection committees<sup>113</sup>.

### **Information and publicity**

The **information functions** of the OP on the theme of gender equality are in large part fulfilled by the above-mentioned Centre for Women in Occupation and Technology. Its newsletter and events regularly inform the aforementioned network of equal opportunities' officers in public institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia and other regional women's organizations (such as those of female entrepreneurs and women in leading positions) about the opportunities offered by the programme<sup>114</sup>.

There is no overarching campaign to **publicise** the OP's contribution to equality, but high-ranking officials such as North Rhine-Westphalia's Minister for Economy Christa Thoben are keen to emphasize the opportunities this OP opens up for promoting gender equality. Equality between men and women is referred to as an important cross-cutting theme<sup>115</sup>.

Publicity is, of course, also organized at the level of certain calls for proposals – the ministries hold events and run related websites, provide information to the press and appropriate

---

<sup>108</sup> Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik [Centre Woman in Occupation and Technology], „Ziel 2 +Frau“ [Objective 2 + Woman]. <<http://www.zfbt.de/gem/wirtschaftsfaktor-frau/ziel2plusfrau.htm>>.

<sup>109</sup> Bettina Vaupel, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>110</sup> Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik [Centre Woman in Occupation and Technology], „Der Blick auf Unternehmerinnen“ [A glance at women entrepreneurs']. <[http://www.zfbt.de/gem/wirtschaftsfaktor-frau/blick\\_auf\\_unternehmerinnen.htm](http://www.zfbt.de/gem/wirtschaftsfaktor-frau/blick_auf_unternehmerinnen.htm)>.

<sup>111</sup> Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik, „ManagerINNEN-Talk“ [Women managers talk]. <<http://www.zfbt.de/gem/wirtschaftsfaktor-frau/managerinnen-talk.htm>>.

<sup>112</sup> Bettina Vaupel, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

associations about opportunities for funding in thematic calls for proposals<sup>116</sup>. Networking and initiatives to share the good practices are described in the next section.

As for individual projects, they also use the media (radio, newspapers, and TV) to publicize their contribution to equality and to reach their target groups. For instance, the project 'Unternehmerinnenschule Paderborn' ('Paderborn Businesswomen School') financed under the 'Gründungen.NRW' call for proposals uses these channels to spread the message about its consultancy and training services for women considering establishing their own enterprise. Various conferences communicate the results of the project to institutions and consultants working with start-ups<sup>117</sup>. All of this publicity contributes to the more positive image of women entrepreneurship which is not yet as respected as male entrepreneurship.

### Partnership

Partnership is well-embedded in the implementation of OP 'North Rhine-Westphalia'. The stakeholders have been involved in stable co-operation with one other for a number of years (dating back to the previous financial framework) and new initiatives are planned to entail serious follow-up/networking tools that would help disseminate their experience on gender issues and good practice.

As for the **drafting** of the OP itself, the Centre for Women in Occupation and Technology participated to the extent that it was commissioned to prepare a feasibility study on how to implement equal opportunities in the framework of this programme<sup>118</sup>. Then one of the Centre for Women in Occupation and Technology officers for work and structural policy was included in the Programme Evaluation Committee on behalf of the Ministry for Generations, Family, Women and Integration<sup>119</sup>. The regional network of equal opportunities' officers was involved, and delegated one person to the Programme Monitoring Committee<sup>120</sup>. In addition, individual experts were also consulted regarding this topic<sup>121</sup>. However, the interviewed representatives of the main stakeholders felt the theme could have been even more thoroughly integrated into the OP, and the obligatory nature of minimum equality criteria for projects more consistently enforced.

As for individual projects, an important aim is to have long-lasting effects after they are completed. The Ministry for Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration (NRW) plans to build up **a network of the projects** that are being funded within the 'familie@unternehmen.NRW' call in order to disseminate their experience in work and family reconciliation to wider business circles. The network will include: 1) the projects themselves; 2) enterprises willing to receive information; and 3) research institutions or other actors working with the issues of reconciliation. Finally, in order to promote this culture and exchange experience and good practice, this grouping will be bridged to other networks of German companies that aim to create a family-friendly environment. This is first of all the network of 2,218 firms participating in the programme 'Erfolgsfaktor Familie' ('Success Factor Family') funded by the German federal government<sup>122</sup>.

---

<sup>116</sup> Hildegard Kaluza, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>117</sup> Uwe Schoop, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>118</sup> See a short description at: Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik [Centre Woman in Occupation and Technology], „New Gen(d)eration: Empfehlungen zur Erhöhung der Geschlechtergerechtigkeit im neuen Ziel 2-Programm NRW 2007-2013. Eine prozessbegleitende Machbarkeitsstudie zur Implementierung von Gender Mainstreaming in strukturpolitische Instrumente“ [New gen(d)eration: recommendations for increasing gender equity in the new Objective 2 NRW program 2007-2013. A process-feasibility study for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in structural instruments]. <<http://www.zfbt.de/gem/dokumente/new-generation.pdf>>.

<sup>119</sup> Bettina Vaupel, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>120</sup> Ingrid Wawrzyniak, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>121</sup> Bettina Vaupel, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>122</sup> Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend [Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth], „Erfolgsfaktor Familie: Über das Programm“ [Family as success factor: about the programme] <<http://www.erfolgsfaktor-familie.de/default.asp?SID={D0B7BCFD-6B60-4117-BB7F-8EE269B0C08A}&id=2>>; „Erfolgsfaktor Familie: Über das Netzwerk [same as above, „about the network“]“ <<http://www.erfolgsfaktor-familie.de/default.asp?id=106>>.

The information exchange has already started between companies participating in the networks of 'Erfolgsfaktor Familie' and 'familie@unternehmen.NRW'. However, there are further plans, such as organizing a special event in Düsseldorf, and also publicizing the two large studies on childcare in the companies and reconciliation or work and care of dependants, which were also commissioned within the framework of the 'familie@unternehmen.NRW' call<sup>123</sup>. This should facilitate knowledge transfer in bringing about change in the German workplace.

**Guidelines** being prepared by the aforementioned project 'Unternehmerinnenschule Paderborn' provide another example of synergy that can be achieved for the benefit of women as an underperforming group when the achievements of a certain project are applied in activities that are not a part of it. These guidelines will help adjust the services of the Paderborn 'Startercenter' (consultancy, mentoring and training) for the specific needs of women as a target group. Moreover, the guidelines will be made public so that other institutions/consultants can access and use them in their work<sup>124</sup>.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Monitoring and reporting

Monitoring of the programme is primarily the responsibility of the Objective 2 Secretariat, as it is the institution where all the data from the projects is gathered and the reports are produced. The Secretariat reports to the Programme Monitoring Committee ('Begleitausschuss') that consists of representatives of the ministries, regional parliament ('Landtag'), the sub-regions, associations and higher education institutions<sup>125</sup>. Speaking about representatives of gender equality in particular, it includes an equal opportunity officer from the network of Women's Offices. Once a year the monitoring results are reported to the European Commission (according to the indicators and targets described previously), while the Programme Monitoring Committee receives reports twice a year<sup>126</sup>.

The project monitoring process starts at the project selection phase and ends after its wrap-up. 'Monitoringbogen', an additional form used in the application process about project specifications and targets, includes questions on their contribution to gender equality and non-discrimination. The data provided becomes the benchmark to monitor the project. Once the project is finished, another form ('Abschlussbogen') is to be filled in, providing data concerning to what extent the project's targets were achieved<sup>127</sup>.

### Evaluation

The implementation of the cross-cutting themes will be evaluated<sup>128</sup>. The Programme Evaluation Committee, of which an officer of the Centre for Women in Occupation and Technology is a member, has chosen some specific themes for evaluation instead of deciding to evaluate the whole programme<sup>129</sup>. For instance, not all, but only 3 out of 16 clusters (regional hubs bringing together the activities of research, development and business and seeking synergy effects) in North Rhine-Westphalia are to be evaluated and gender-disaggregated data is to be provided. In the process of evaluation, it will be also estimated if there are any differences between clusters, where the percentage of female employees is higher, and the more 'male' clusters. Micro-credit services have also been chosen for

---

<sup>123</sup> Hildegard Kaluza, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>124</sup> Uwe Schoop, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>125</sup> Ziel 2 Sekretariat im Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Mittelstand und Energie des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, *Förderhandbuch: Operationelles Programm (EFRE) 2007 - 2013 für das Ziel „Regionale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Beschäftigung“ für Nordrhein-Westfalen* [Funding Guide: ERDF 2007-2013 Regional competitiveness and employment operational programme for North Rhine-Westphalia], p. 5. <[http://www.ziel2.nrw.de/1\\_Ziel2-Programm/4\\_Foerderhandbuch/index.php](http://www.ziel2.nrw.de/1_Ziel2-Programm/4_Foerderhandbuch/index.php)>.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid, p. 75.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, p. 76.

<sup>128</sup> Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Mittelstand und Energie des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, *Operationelles Programm „Regionale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Beschäftigung 2007-2013 (EFRE)“: Jährlicher Durchführungsbericht 2007* [Annual implementation report], p. 11.

<sup>129</sup> Bettina Vaupel, interview, 16/6/2009.



evaluation, as micro-credits are a business funding instrument particularly favourable to women who usually need lower amounts of money to realise their business ideas<sup>130</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

The approach of this OP to Article 16 contrasts the comprehensive approach of some other programmes, as it concentrates on gender equality, and occasionally twinning it with a focus on ethnic background. Although the relevant cross-cutting theme is called 'Equality of men and women and non-discrimination', the scope of the non-discrimination principle is limited to gender and ethnicity issues.

There are elements of gender mainstreaming (such as specific trainings and consultancy offered in the field of gender competence). However, according to the interviewees the targeted initiatives where women are the direct beneficiaries (i.e. female entrepreneurship or reconciliation of work and family life) are more effective. The reason is that the overall implementation system of the cross-cutting themes is not too strong: the level of enforcement of the equality obligations of projects that do not target the underperforming groups varies and the implementation of gender equality and non-discrimination as a horizontal theme is in some cases voluntary.

Nevertheless, gender equality is strengthened by some positive features of programme implementation which include:

- An appropriate set of indicators and targets;
- Stable and long-running partnerships - the principle of partnership has not only been applied during the programme drafting stage: partnership goes on in programme and project implementation, integrating the existing networks and creating new ones for the sake of synergy between different initiatives;
- Sharing of good practices between programme beneficiaries encouraged by the managing institutions;
- Provision of a wide range of trainings and consultations on gender mainstreaming in specific projects.

### LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

*Die Landesregierung Nordrhein-Westfalen* (Northrhine-Westphalian Government)

*Erfolgsfaktor Familie, Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend* (Programme 'Success Factor Family' financed by the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth) <<http://www.erfolgsfaktor-familie.de/>>.

*Förderhandbuch: Operationelles Programm (EFRE) 2007-2013 für das Ziel „Regionale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Beschäftigung“ für Nordrhein-Westfalen* (Guide for Beneficiaries).

*Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft kommunaler Frauenbüros* (Regional Association of Communal Women's Offices) <<http://www.frauenbueros-nrw.de/>>.

nullbarriere.de - die Webseite zum Themenkreis Barrierefreies Planen, Bauen und Wohnen (The website on the German accessibility regulations for planning, construction and living) <<http://nullbarriere.de/bauordnung-nrw.htm>>.

*Operationelles Programm (EFRE) für das Ziel „Regionale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Beschäftigung“ für Nordrhein-Westfalen* (OP 'Northrhine-Westphalia').

*Operationelles Programm „Regionale Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und Beschäftigung 2007-2013 (EFRE)“: Jährlicher Durchführungsbericht 2007* (Annual Implementation Report 2007).

Project 'Neue Wege in den Beruf' ('New Ways to the Occupation') <<http://www.mentoring-neue-wege.de/>>.

*Projektauswahlkriterien* (Project Selection Criteria).

Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008). *Results for Germany*.

*Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik* (Centre for Women in Occupation and Technology) <<http://www.zfbt.de>>.

*Ziel 2 Sekretariat im Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Mittelstand und Energie des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen* (Objective 2 Secretariat in the Ministry for Economy, Middle-sized Enterprises and Energy) <<http://www.nrw.de/>>; <<http://www.ziel2-nrw.de/>>.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of the interview
1.	Filius	Angelika	Project Coordinator	Energie Impuls OWL, Bielefeld, Germany	16/6/2009
2.	Kaluza	Hildegard	Group Manager [Family and Senior Citizens]	Ministry for Generations, Family, Women and Integration North Rhine-Westphalia, Düsseldorf, Germany	16/6/2009
3.	Schoop	Uwe	Project Manager	Business Support Association ('Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Paderborn mbH'), Paderborn, Germany	12/6/2009 (by telephone)
5.	Vaupel	Bettina	Officer [Gender in Work and Structural Policy]	'Zentrum Frau in Beruf und Technik', Castrop-Rauxel, Germany; Programme Evaluation Committee	16/6/2009
6.	Wawrzyniak	Ingrid	Equal Opportunities Officer	Women's Office, Hattingen, Germany; Programme Monitoring Committee	16/6/2009

## 5. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'BORDER, MIDLAND AND WESTERN': CASE STUDY

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007IE162PO001	Operational Programme 'Border, Midland and Western (BMW)'	Ireland
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Regional Competitiveness and Employment	Regional	Anglo-Saxon
<b>Breakdown of finances</b>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
228.8	343.1	571.9

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

BMW - Border, Midland, Western

EC – European Commission

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

ICT - Information and communication technologies

MEUR – million euros

NGO – Non-governmental organisation

– National Strategic Reference Framework – National Strategic Reference Framework

OP – Operational programme

R&TD – Research and technological development

SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (analysis method)

### INTRODUCTION

The Operational Programme (OP) 'Border, Midland and Western (BMW)<sup>131</sup> is an Irish regional programme, which encompasses the Border, Midland and Western sub-regions (see Figure 6). The Managing Authority of the OP 'BMW' is the Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly, based in Ballaghaderreen, Co Roscommon, Ireland. Various Intermediary Bodies (i.e., Government Departments and Agencies, mainly located in Dublin) are responsible for the specific priorities of the OP and should ensure their effective implementation.

#### Priorities, interventions and targets

This programme aims to: support competitiveness and entrepreneurship, learning and knowledge, develop a world-class infrastructure, and support a sustainable environment. Its three priorities are:

- Priority Axis 1: Innovation, Information and communication technologies (ICT) and the Knowledge Economy;
- Priority Axis 2: Environment and Risk Prevention;
- Priority Axis 3: Urban Development and Secondary Transport Networks.

<sup>131</sup> BMW Regional Assembly. *BMW Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013* [thereinafter OP] <[http://www.bmwassembly.ie/NEWOP\\_2007-2013/NewOP\\_Docs/BMW%20OP%20\(6-12-07\).pdf](http://www.bmwassembly.ie/NEWOP_2007-2013/NewOP_Docs/BMW%20OP%20(6-12-07).pdf)>.

The OP supports various types of interventions, including productive investments (innovation, adoption and use of ICT, new product development, etc.), development of endogenous potential (development of funding sources and networking between businesses) as well as investments in infrastructure (urban infrastructure, transport, environment, energy, information society, innovation and science). Currently the OP is in an early stage of implementation (some projects were already selected and are under implementation).

The programme is expected:

- to create an additional 4,000 jobs in assisted companies;
- to support 2,500 micro enterprises;
- to provide management support and mentoring to more than 35,000 people in micro enterprises;
- in addition, it will help in the provision of broadband to over 8,000 businesses in the BMW Region.

**Figure 6. Irish sub-regions targeted by the OP 'Border, Midland and Western'**



Source: BMW Regional Assembly.

### Integration of Article 16

The OP gives due consideration to the three themes of Article 16. These themes are further elaborated in various implementation documents. The most notable practices in this respect are:

- During the OP preparation phase, the **partnership principle** was thoroughly implemented. Partners representing horizontal interests (gender, equality and social inclusion) were involved in the preparation of the programme and are currently represented in the OP Monitoring Committee.
- A separate chapter entitled '**Cross-cutting themes: Equality and Sustainable Development**' is devoted to horizontal issues. There is a declaration that all these issues will be respected and promoted throughout the programme's implementation stages.
- In the chapter on the **regional profile** the levels of employment (disaggregated by gender) are reviewed and the proportion of women in business and research sectors is discussed.
- For relevant horizontal issues, the programme mostly refers to the promotion of **social inclusion and gender equality**<sup>132</sup>. The programme also states that "Intermediary bodies will be required to incorporate **accessibility for disabled persons** as a criterion to be observed in co-funded public facilities. This is to be included in project specifications, as appropriate"<sup>133</sup>. Accessibility should always be respected under national law – all public buildings must be accessible for the disabled<sup>134</sup>.
- There is one intervention – 'Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship' – which has **performance indicators and targets disaggregated by gender**.
- Each project has to integrate at least one (but not more than two) horizontal principles. The implementation of these principles has to be reported in the progress reports.

<sup>132</sup> "The Managing Authority has given due consideration to the incorporation of social inclusion considerations in the selection of interventions where appropriate and will continue to engage with Intermediary Bodies on the contribution of interventions for promoting social inclusion and gender equality objectives in the implementation of interventions." OP, p. 52.

<sup>133</sup> OP, p. 109.

<sup>134</sup> Pauline Moreau, interview, 18/6/2009.

## Policy and socio-economic context

**Irish legislation** bans discrimination on more grounds<sup>135</sup> than outlined in Article 16. The country has also developed substantial experience in combating discrimination and mainstreaming equality. The main national documents on the relevant themes are:

- *Gender equality*: the National Women's Strategy and Promoting Equality for Women 2007-2016<sup>136</sup>. Government policy in this area includes a double strategy consisting of a legal framework which provides for equal treatment for women and men and positive action initiatives for women and men.
- *Non-discrimination (broader equality grounds)*: the Employment Equality Acts (1998; 2004) and the Equal Status Acts (2000 to 2004).
- *Social inclusion*: the new partnership agreement *Towards 2016*, the National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion (2006), the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016<sup>137</sup>, the Social Inclusion and Human Capital Chapters and other relevant elements of the National Development Plan 2007-2013<sup>138</sup>. These documents form the strategic framework for social inclusion policy on both strategic and operational levels.

The **Irish institutional framework** for mainstreaming gender equality is well-developed. It consists of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and Equality Authority that support the implementation of the legal non-discrimination requirements and promote equality on the nine grounds set in Irish law.

Although much has been done on anti-discrimination issues (EU support during the previous programming periods also made a positive contribution), the **problem of inequality persists**. A perception of discrimination on the basis of gender as being widespread in Ireland has dropped in the last two years (26% in 2006, 20% in 2008)<sup>139</sup>. Eurobarometer data on discrimination (2008) shows that the perception of ethnic discrimination as being widespread in Ireland has decreased slightly, from 57% in 2006 to 52% in 2008 (the EU level on this issue reaches 62%)<sup>140</sup>. Meanwhile, 40% of Irish would feel uncomfortable having a Roma neighbour (EU27 – 24%)<sup>141</sup>. This figure for Ireland is among the highest in Europe. Overall, ethnic immigration is a relatively recent phenomenon in Ireland; it followed rapid economic growth and reached substantial levels in the late 1990s.

---

<sup>135</sup> There are nine categories: gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief and membership of the traveller community. Meanwhile, Article 16 foresees fewer categories for discrimination: on sex, age, race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

<sup>136</sup> These are two Equality Sub-Programmes of the *National Development Plan 2007-2013, Transforming Ireland* with a total of 148 MEUR allocated to them. "The mainstreaming of gender equality continues as a priority of the Government and, accordingly, the National Development Plan 2007-2013 will continue to focus on gender equality as a horizontal issue. The Plan also includes a range of positive actions which invest in the development of women in preparation for and as participants in the labour market and in all levels of decision-making in order to achieve true gender equality in Ireland". *National Development Plan 2007-2013, Transforming Ireland*, p. 265 <<http://www.ndp.ie/documents/ndp2007-2013/NDP-2007-2013-English.pdf>>.

<sup>137</sup> The *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016* (Irish Government, February 2007) foresees a lot of targeted actions and interventions focused at various disadvantaged groups, including people with disabilities, older people, travellers, etc. OP, p. 24.

<sup>138</sup> The Social inclusion priority (where investments reach 49.6 billion EUR in related programmes and policies) of the National Development Plan has a number of programmes and sub-programmes targeted at various disadvantaged groups (children, older people, unemployed, people with disabilities, lone parents, Travellers, ex-offenders, women, older workers, part-time workers, migrants, etc.). *National Development Plan 2007-2013, Transforming Ireland*, p. 21, 43. <<http://www.ndp.ie/documents/ndp2007-2013/NDP-2007-2013-English.pdf>>.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, p. 75.

<sup>140</sup> Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008), p. 38.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid, p. 44.

### Strategic choices

Compared to the EU financial assistance in 2000-2006, the **level of ERDF funding** for 2007-2013 for the BMW region is modest (about 2% of the total planned public investments<sup>142</sup>). The BMW region faces significant economic challenges (a continuing shift away from agriculture and traditional manufacturing) and structural deficits (structural unemployment; a lag behind the South and East Region in a number of areas such as company start-ups and expansion, inward investment and product innovation). Therefore, the challenge for this OP is to focus on **a limited number of targeted interventions**<sup>143</sup> that will have the greatest impact. Most of these interventions do not aim to address the issues of equal opportunities directly. This theme is rather approached as a cross-cutting principle.

The context analysis of the OP (regional profile) does not focus on the themes of Article 16, but discusses the levels of employment in the labour market and the proportion of women in business and research sectors. For example, data shows that there is a **gender gap** in labour force participation rates (female – 48.9%, male – 71.4%) in the BMW region compared to the national average. Notably, the declining sectors tend to be comprised mainly of male employees, while expanding sectors (with the exception of construction) tend to be more gender balanced. However, “the proportion of women who have recently set up new businesses is low compared with the number set up by men and is also low by international standards”. On the other hand, “Ireland performs better than the EU average in terms of <...> the proportion of women researchers in the research community, but falls short of the Barcelona targets”<sup>144</sup>.

The **SWOT analysis** of the OP does not emphasise any particular aspects in the field of gender equality, non-discrimination or accessibility for the disabled. “Insufficient affordable and accessible childcare facilities”<sup>145</sup> are identified as one of the weaknesses of the BMW region. However, this OP does not foresee any investments targeting childcare infrastructure; this issue was addressed during the last programming period of 2000-2006 and will be financed under the current National Development Plan through national resources<sup>146</sup>.

The **overall strategy** and the description of **priority axes** of the OP do not focus on gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility for disabled persons. There is a separate chapter entitled ‘**Cross-cutting themes: Equality and Sustainable Development**’. However, it is a stand-alone chapter, as there are few cross-references to it or indeed any of the equal opportunities related themes in the OP text.

**One intervention** called ‘Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship’ under the first priority axis ‘Innovation, ICT and the Knowledge Economy’ targets start-ups and micro-enterprises. It also aims to increase the number of **female entrepreneurs** and **non-traditional entrepreneurs** (e.g., migrant entrepreneurs)<sup>147</sup>. It supports a number of intervention measures relevant from the perspective of Article 16:

---

<sup>142</sup> According to Mr Kieran Moylan, in the National Development Plan 2007-2013, investment worth 184 billion EUR is planned in various sectors. Among them, less than 3 billion EUR, i.e. about 1.6% of public investments, come from the EU rural development programmes and structural funding. Kieran Moylan, interview, 17/6/2009.

<sup>143</sup> Research and technological development (R&TD), innovation and entrepreneurship (R&TD activities in research centres, R&TD infrastructure and centres of competence in a specific technology, other investment in firms) – 60.6 MEUR; information society (telephone infrastructures (including broadband networks) – 20 MEUR; transport (railways) – 6.4 MEUR; energy (energy efficiency, co-generation, energy management) – 28 MEUR; environmental protection and risk prevention (promotion of clean urban transport) – 6.4 MEUR. – OP Financial Plan.

<sup>144</sup> OP, p. 35.

<sup>145</sup> OP, p. 61.

<sup>146</sup> 12 billion EUR are foreseen for Children’s Programme. – see *National Development Plan 2007-2013, Transforming Ireland*, p. 21. <<http://www.ndp.ie/documents/ndp2007-2013/NDP-2007-2013-English.pdf>>.

<sup>147</sup> Kieran Moylan, interview, 17/6/2009.

- Start-Your-Own-Business training courses (where participation of women, minority and Traveller communities, and people with disabilities is encouraged<sup>148</sup>).
- Business-Women's-Networks initiative, which is aimed to contribute to enhancing the level of women participation in enterprise creation and employment.
- In addition, all the other initiatives supported under this intervention claim to take into consideration the necessity to prevent discrimination, accommodate diversity and support equality<sup>149</sup>.

### Indicators and targets

The 'Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship' intervention under the first priority axis has more detailed **performance targets by gender** at the output and result-level (see Table 11). No indicators monitoring the situation of non-traditional entrepreneurs (e.g. migrants) are included, although the Implementation Plan indicates that "data on the broad equality principles may be collected in these initiatives where feasible"<sup>150</sup>.

**Table 11. Performance indicators to be monitored periodically for the period 1 January 2007 – 31 December 2013 under the intervention 'Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship'**

Class	Indicator	Baseline	Mid-term Dec '09	Final	
Output	1	No. of micro-enterprises supported	2,511	3,582	5,011
		Of which Male Promoters	1,792	2,556	3,576
		Of which Female Promoters	608	868	1,213
		Of which promoter is company/partnership/other	111	158	222
2	No. of training days provided	35,572	71,572	119,572	
Result	1	No. of jobs created in assisted micro-enterprise since 2000	16,684	18,484	20,884
		Male full-time	10,460	11,589	13,093
		Female full-time	4,324	4,790	5,412
		Male part-time	1,401	1,553	1,757
		Female part-time	2,399	2,657	3,001
	2	No. of training recipients:	26,550	41,550	61,550
	Of which Male	12,059	18,872	27,562	
	Of which Female	14,239	22,394	33,688	
	Of which company/partnership/other	252	284	300	

Source: *Border, Midland, Western Region Programme Complement. Implementation Plan for the Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship.*

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

The OP states that equality and accessibility for the disabled are the **horizontal themes** to be integrated in various stages of programme implementation. Therefore, during the project selection stage the projects are assessed on the basis of their compliance with **equal opportunity requirements** and their **promotion of gender equality**. The OP also foresees a requirement for the Intermediary bodies to incorporate accessibility for disabled persons in project specifications as a criterion to be observed in co-funded public facilities.

The OP's Annual Implementation Report 2008 states that all co-financed operations have to respect national and EU rules and guidelines. The **principle of prioritisation**, which was established as a result of the mid-term evaluation of the National Development Plan /Community Support Framework in 2004 applies, whereby all interventions have to indicate

<sup>148</sup> Eilis Duffy, interview, 30/6/2009.

<sup>149</sup> *Border, Midland, Western Region Programme Complement. Implementation Plan for the Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship.*

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

which of the **horizontal principles** (one or two) is/are the most important to the project<sup>151</sup>. The implementation of these prioritised principles has to be accounted for in project reports.

The Managing Authority prepared a **guidance document** on the incorporation of selection criteria related to the horizontal issues of gender equality and non-discrimination concerning the preparation of Implementation Plans for each intervention and provided it to Intermediate Bodies in the spring of 2008<sup>152</sup>. Various Intermediate bodies used this guidance document differently.

The Implementation Plan of the intervention 'Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship' indicates that "the selection of projects for support or financial assistance will be monitored for gender balance" or "a systematic approach to equality presents should be a consideration in project selection"<sup>153</sup>. One of the intervention's **selection criteria** is "adherence to cross-cutting themes"; this requirement should also be taken into consideration during the selection of training providers<sup>154</sup>. However, a project's adherence to the cross-cutting themes does not have a decisive influence on the project selection decision.

## Management

At the OP level, there is a **favourable institutional structure** for ensuring an adequate administrative overview of the themes of Article 16. For example, the Equality Authority, which has a statutory responsibility to promote equality, provides support to Intermediary Bodies in assessing the impact of their measures on the nine equality grounds and incorporating an equality dimension in project design and delivery. A representative of the Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform is involved into the monitoring of the OP, and can provide relevant guidance upon request. There are also **administrative agreements** among the Managing Authority and Intermediate Bodies which require the Intermediate Bodies to report annually on the implementation of horizontal principles in an agreed format.

**In the previous programming period** Irish ERDF OPs implemented many important practices in the field of equal opportunities. There were relevant guidelines and manuals available, and trainings for Intermediary Bodies and beneficiaries that were carried out. Many of these activities did not carry over to the programming period 2007-2013. Many of the employees who were in charge of relevant issues in 2000-2006 are not dealing with the 2007-2013 OP. As a result valuable experience in terms of the horizontal principles was not kept for the implementation process of the current OP.

During the planning stage each of the Horizontal Principle Units<sup>155</sup> in relevant Departments (ministries) provided inputs on the **guidance** aimed to assist officials involved into the development of the Implementation Plans. In addition, the Managing Authority prepared a **guidance document** on the integration of horizontal principles which was issued to all Intermediary Bodies<sup>156</sup>. These guidance documents are not mandatory; however, they provide a useful supplement to the obligations stemming from national law<sup>157</sup>.

---

<sup>151</sup> BMW Regional Assembly. *BMW Regional Operational Programme Annual Implementation Report 2008*, p. 14.

<sup>152</sup> These specific selection criteria for individual interventions were drawn up in consultation with the relevant Intermediate Bodies in spring 2008 and were set out in the selection criteria document which was approved by the OP Monitoring Committee and submitted to the EU Commission in April 2008. - Answer of Mr Kieran Moylan to the e-mail survey of the managing authorities on implementation of Article 16; received on 15/4/2009 by e-mail.

<sup>153</sup> *Border, Midland, Western Region Programme Complement. Implementation Plan for the Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship.*

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Environment*: Environmental Policy Unit of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government; *Gender Equality*: Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform; *Social Inclusion*: Combat Poverty Agency; *Broad Equality*: Equality Authority [Thereinafter – Horizontal Principle Units].

<sup>156</sup> BMW Regional Assembly. *BMW Regional Operational Programme Annual Implementation Report 2008*, p. 14; answer of Mr Kieran Moylan on e-mail survey of the MAs on implementation of Article 16; received on 15/4/2009 by e-mail.

<sup>157</sup> For example, the National Women's Strategy contains mechanisms to foster gender mainstreaming at all policy formation and implementation levels in the National Development Plan 2007-2013 and under this Programme. - OP, p. 108.



## Information and publicity measures

The Ireland National Strategic Reference Framework & ERDF Communication Plan lists the key target groups for communication activities. Among others, these target groups include individuals, businesses, NGOs, trade unions, employers and business groups, farming organisations and the community and voluntary sector, academics, and researchers<sup>158</sup>. Thus, according to a representative of the Managing Authority, "this would encompass NGOs that represent and work with women's groups, the disabled, etc."<sup>159</sup>.

## Partnership

The partnership principle is well-developed and was present both in designing and implementing the programme. The programme was drafted following consultation with national regional and local authorities, representatives of economic and social partners and non-governmental organisations. This builds on the well-established institutional arrangements that have been put in place as part of the Irish social partnership process (up to and including the current agreement *Towards 2016*), and which was successfully applied during the previous programming periods. Draft copies of the OP were sent and replies received from various partner organisations, including the three 'horizontal interests' (*gender, equality, and social inclusion*). Also in mid-2007 meetings were held with the officials of the Horizontal Units of various Departments to discuss the integration of the horizontal principles<sup>160</sup>. Other social partners representing community/voluntary pillar were involved as well. Their comments were taken into account while formulating the final text of the OP.

The partners most involved in the programme implementation are the public institutions. For example, a meeting took place with the four Horizontal Units in June 2008, during which the reporting template for progress reports to the OP Monitoring Committee was agreed upon along with the process for the assessment of these reports<sup>161</sup>. This structure of partnership is reflected in the membership of the OP Monitoring Committee: the 'horizontal interests' institutions are represented there as full members.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Monitoring

A provision has been included in the administrative agreements between the Managing Authority and each Intermediate Body requiring Intermediate Bodies to report annually on the horizontal principles in an agreed format: "Intermediate Bodies shall ensure that the applicable prioritised horizontal principles [see 'Project selection'] are fully integrated into the implementation and monitoring of the projects/interventions under their responsibility or under the responsibility of public beneficiary bodies under the aegis of the Intermediate Body"<sup>162</sup>. The **project beneficiaries** report regularly on the integration of the horizontal principles in their projects as well. Actual implementation of these commitments is checked during on-the-spot visits. For example, on-the-spot checks carried out by the Enterprise Ireland on Management and Control Systems of various regional implementing bodies include the procedures to verify (among other things) the implementation of the horizontal principles<sup>163</sup>.

The OP states that gender balance is promoted in the OP Monitoring Committee. A 40-60% distribution by gender of representatives of each sex is a desirable target but not mandatory. A

---

<sup>158</sup> *Border, Midland, Western Region Programme Complement – Ireland National Strategic Reference Framework & ERDF Communication Plan, 2008, p. 4.*

<sup>159</sup> Answer of Mr. Kieran Moylan on e-mail survey of the MAs on implementation of Article 16; received on 15-4-2009 by e-mail.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> BMW Regional Assembly. *BMW Regional Operational Programme Annual Implementation Report 2008*, p. 14.

<sup>162</sup> Answer of Mr. Kieran Moylan on e-mail survey of the MAs on implementation of Article 16; received on 15-4-2009 by e-mail.

<sup>163</sup> *Border, Midland, Western Region Programme Complement. Implementation Plan for the Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship.*

total of 35% of full-members<sup>164</sup> and 33% of advisors and observers of the OP Monitoring Committee are women<sup>165</sup>.

## Evaluation

An **ex-ante evaluation** of this OP was conducted by Fitzpatrick Associates in parallel with the drafting and finalisation of the OP between July 2006 and February 2007. One of its recommendations was to define and integrate the horizontal principles better. A specific recommendation was to "ask Implementing Bodies to monitor participation and beneficiaries from a gender and wider equality perspective, and to explore measure-specific actions to address equality issues where appropriate and feasible and in accordance with national policy"<sup>166</sup>. The Managing Authority accepted these recommendations.

The OP and its implementation documents do not include any specific provisions for evaluating the progress of OP in terms of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility for the disabled. There is an option to undertake **thematic evaluations** during the implementation, although the Managing Authority has not yet decided if among these evaluations there will be any aimed specifically at the horizontal principles.

## Reporting

**At the programme level**, the annual implementation reports include sections on the promotion of equal opportunities and application of the horizontal principles. For example, the Annual Implementation Report 2008 briefly describes the progress made in following these principles.

**At the project level**, the Intermediary Bodies are required to produce a report on the impact on cross-cutting themes (i.e. gender and broad equality). For example, in the case of the intervention 'Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship', the County Enterprise Boards will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the intervention **locally** while Enterprise Ireland will monitor the intervention **regionally**. Enterprise Ireland will compile reports of the County Enterprise Boards and prepare a report on performance against agreed objectives and targets and performance on the horizontal principles<sup>167</sup>. Intermediate Bodies shall liaise with the Managing Authority and the specialist Horizontal Principles Unit on the integration of the prioritised horizontal principle and the reporting of horizontal impacts<sup>168</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the regional OP 'Border, Midland, Western' applies **some important practices** aimed to better integrating **equality and diversity**. Most consideration is given to gender equality and broader equality issues. Accessibility for disabled people is respected in line with the mandatory requirements and standards stemming from the national law.

The strongest points of programme design and implementation are:

- The compulsory nature of the horizontal priorities with each of the priority axes. All the interventions have to indicate which of the horizontal priorities is/are the most important for them and to report on the progress in pursuing them.
- Under the first priority axis there is a significant intervention ('Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship') which targets female entrepreneurs and non-traditional entrepreneurs.
- The representatives of the horizontal interests were involved in the designing phase of the OP.

<sup>164</sup> BMW Regional Assembly. *BMW Regional Operational Programme Annual Implementation Report 2008*, p. 151.

<sup>165</sup> Membership of the Operational Programme Monitoring Committee. – Information received by e-mail from Mr. Kieran Moylan on 23-6-2009.

<sup>166</sup> OP, p. 63.

<sup>167</sup> *Border, Midland, Western Region Programme Complement. Implementation Plan for the Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship.*

<sup>168</sup> Answer of Mr. Kieran Moylan on e-mail survey of the MAs on implementation of Article 16; received on 15/4/2009 by e-mail.

However, the actual implementation of the Article 16 principles is encountering difficulties:

- Compared to the previous programming period, emphasis given to the horizontal principles has decreased. The interviewee from the Managing Authority explained that this is due to the significantly lower level of funding from the ERDF<sup>169</sup>.
- As a result, the themes of Article 16 are not thoroughly integrated into the priorities of the OP. Some of the practices of integrating the horizontal principles (for example, relevant guidelines, manuals, trainings) during the previous programming period were discontinued in 2007-2013.
- Regardless the inclusive partnership framework during the OP designing phase, non-governmental partners representing the equality questions are not involved into the programme monitoring process. Only the representatives from public institutions (including the institutions and units representing the "horizontal" principles) are members of the Programme Monitoring Committee.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

BMW Regional Assembly website (<http://www.bmwassembly.ie/>).

BMW Regional Assembly. *BMW Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 (and appendices)*.

BMW Regional Assembly. *BMW Regional Operational Programme Annual Implementation Report 2008*.

BMW Regional Assembly. *BMW Regional Operational Programme Annual Implementation Report 2007*.

Border, Midland and Western and Southern and Eastern Regional Assemblies. *Submission on the Future of EU Cohesion Policy*, November 2008.

*Border, Midland, Western Region Programme Complement – Ireland – National Strategic Reference Framework & ERDF Communication Plan*, 2008.

Fitzpatrick Associates (2007), *Border, Midland and Western Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013: Ex Ante Evaluation (Final report)*, February 2007.

*National Development Plan 2007-2013, Transforming Ireland*.

Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008) European Commission. *Special Eurobarometer 296. Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitude (Report)*, July 2008.

*Border, Midland, Western Region Programme Complement. Implementation Plan for the Micro-Enterprise – Innovation and Entrepreneurship*.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of the interview
1.	Baxter	Carol	Head of Development	Equality Authority	18/6/2009
2.	Duffy	Eilis	EU Structural Funds Executive of the County Enterprise Board Coordination Unit	Enterprise Ireland	30/6/2009 (by e-mail)
3.	O'Leary	Patrick	Assistant Principal Officer of the Gender Equality Division	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	18/6/2009
4.	Moreau	Pauline	Head of the Gender Equality Division	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	18/6/2009
5.	Moylan	Kieran	Assistant Director	BMW Regional Assembly	17/6/2009 (face-to-face and by e-mail)

<sup>169</sup> Kieran Moylan, interview, 17/6/2009.

## 6. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'SOUTHERN FINLAND': CASE STUDY

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007FI162PO004	Operational Programme 'Southern Finland'	Finland
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Regional Competitiveness and Employment	Regional	Nordic
<b>Breakdown of finances</b>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
138.1	207.1	345.2

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

ESF – European Social Fund

IT – information technology

MEUR – million euros

NGO – non-governmental organisation

OP – Operational Programme

SWOT – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (analysis method)

### INTRODUCTION

In Southern Finland the ERDF focuses on improving the quality of the living environment, business environment and educational, entrepreneurial and innovation spaces. The OP 'Southern Finland' has four priority axes:

- Priority Axis 1: The promotion of business activity;
- Priority Axis 2: The promotion of innovation activity and networking, and reinforcing knowledge structures;
- Priority Axis 3: The improvement of regional accessibility and operational environments;
- Priority Axis 4: The development of larger urban areas.

The Managing Authority is the Ministry of Employment and Economy. The implementing regional body is the Regional Management Committee, which coordinates the implementation of Structural Fund programmes and other development strategies in the region. The Regional Management Committee consists of the representatives of the Regional Council, state bodies in the region and social partners<sup>170</sup>. Meanwhile, the Regional Councils, various ministries, their subject bodies and their central administrative authorities act as the intermediate bodies of the

<sup>170</sup> Other regional bodies include for example the Employment and Economic Development Centres, the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (*Teknologian ja innovaatioiden kehittämiskeskus*), which is the main public R&D funding organisation, and *Finnvera*, which is a state-owned company offering financing services and environmental and other state authorities with decentralised bodies.

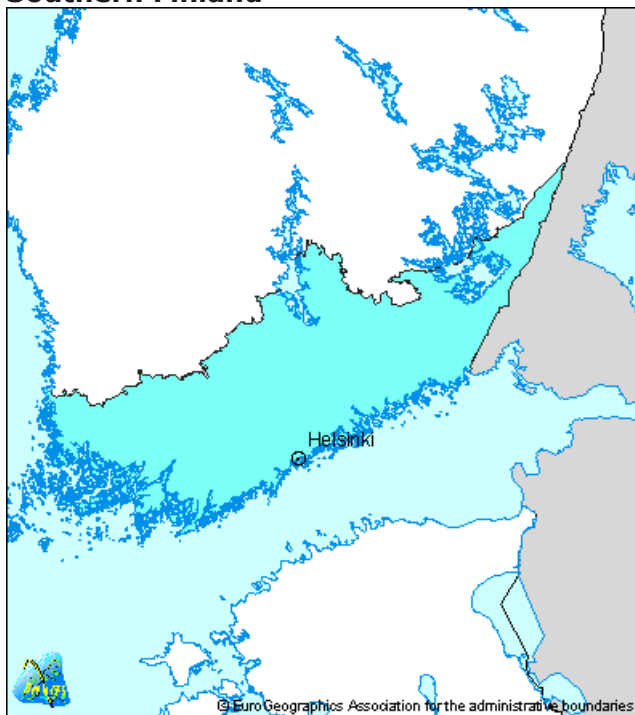
ERDF programmes. A round of project selection under this programme has already been completed. The contracts have been signed and the selected projects are being implemented.

### Integration of Article 16

In the OP text, Article 16 is not mentioned explicitly. However, in the OP as well as during the actual process of programme implementation, some practices show that the themes of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility have been taken into account:

- the relevant issues are mentioned in the **context analysis** of the OP and there are some relevant **interventions** (e.g. women's entrepreneurship, accessibility of services for the elderly, and labour market participation for immigrants);
- there is a specific **target/ indicator** on equality issues;
- the **organisations** representing equality issues (NGOs) are consulted during the process;
- **evaluation instruments** were used (ex-ante evaluation, Environment Impact Assessment, Strategic impact assessment, all covering issues related to equality).

**Figure 7. The region covered by the OP – Southern Finland**



Source: Inforegio

Overall, both the analysis of secondary sources and the interviews showed that among the three themes of Article 16, the OP tends to emphasise gender equality. The other target groups in the OP are immigrants and the elderly.

### Socio-economic and policy context

In Finland anti-discrimination legislation and institutional infrastructure are well-developed. The issues of relevance for Article 16 are addressed through various national policy instruments. For example, the regional development strategy of Southern Finland seeks among other things to increase female entrepreneurship and access to the labour market. The national broadband strategy discusses IT-solutions aimed at improving accessibility for persons living in remote areas, older persons, etc. National strategy on sustainable development also stresses the importance of diversity and participation.

The Finnish population seems to be well aware of the phenomenon of discrimination and the importance of addressing it. According to a recent Eurobarometer survey, the Finns came first (at 66%) in terms of percentage of people who feel that enough effort was made to fight all forms of discrimination<sup>171</sup>. They also claimed to be particularly aware of their rights in cases of discrimination (62% of Finnish respondents)<sup>172</sup>. Furthermore, a vast majority of the Finns (81%, second only to Swedes) believed that people of different ethnic origin than the rest of the population enrich the culture of these countries<sup>173</sup>.

---

<sup>171</sup> Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008), p. 20.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid, p. 23.

<sup>173</sup> Special Eurobarometer 263 / Wave 65.4 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2007).

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Strategic choices and targets

In the **context analysis** part of the OP, three issues stand out as being of prime importance to the region:

- an ageing population;
- the integration of immigrants;
- female entrepreneurship.

The programme indicates that the level of women's entrepreneurship is relatively low and this should be addressed in the programme. Ageing population is referred to as one of the threats to region's development in the SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis also mentions the intolerant attitude to immigrants as one of the weaknesses. The fact that Southern Finland is a 'multi-cultural' region is also presented as an opportunity. However, the OP needs some further targeted actions so that it could contribute to the development of the region.

At the very general **strategic level**, the programme states that it will follow the principle of equal opportunities and will avoid any discrimination. In the description of a specific priority axis it also mentions that women's entrepreneurship will be encouraged through awareness raising, networking and other measures. Tailored business services for immigrant population will be supported as well. Accessibility to services (of those living in remote areas and older persons) will be improved by developing IT-based solutions.

The OP sets one **target** related to the horizontal issues:

- 17.4% of total project volume should be used for gender equality projects.

The target is unusually precise, but the OP as well as some interviewees argue that it is based on the experience of previous ERDF programmes<sup>174</sup>.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

Formally, the promotion of equality (with a very strong emphasis on gender equality) is one of the project selection criteria. However, it is not included among the 'primary' criteria that provide a basis for decision on project selection. Instead, it is one of 12 'additional' or 'non-compulsory' criteria that may be used, in cases which received a similar assessment on the 'primary' criteria. The project applicant has to associate his/her project with one of the two project types:

#### Type A projects:

- a) are implemented by women's NGOs, female entrepreneurs or a clear female majority of those involved in implementation; or
- b) target and have women as their main final beneficiaries (e.g. jobs, businesses, trainees or other beneficiaries).

**Type B projects** are 'equality oriented', i.e.:

- a) have an interest that is of clear relevance to women (or the gender representing a minority in that particular issue);
- b) promote equal opportunities across society in its different functions.

Typically the relevance to equality goals should be assessed by project promoters. Larger projects have to provide an Environmental Impact Assessment which among other criteria has to consider 'impacts on individuals'. This potentially can encourage the applicants as well as project appraisers to take a look at the issues such as the integration of minority groups, the

---

<sup>174</sup> Sanna Kantonen, Marja Koivula, interviews, 17/6/2009.

elderly, etc. Yet overall, the final decision to grant support is determined by the overall quality of application and not by the extent to which it considers equality issues.

### **Management**

Various umbrella and special-interest NGOs are represented in the Regional Management Committee and monitoring committees (but no organisation working specifically on either of the themes of Article 16). The shared networks and the perception of easy access for all stakeholders to the policy process (due to low hierarchies in the Finnish public sector) are usually seen as an advantage in ensuring a balanced representation of all interests<sup>175</sup>. Gender balance in the programme institutions was taken into account, as this was required by national equality legislation<sup>176</sup> (each gender should be represented within the range of 40-60% of all members of the specific body/ committee).

No special guidelines, methodological support or training on equality issues were offered to the beneficiaries. The project managers that were interviewed mentioned that they already had considerable experience of working with equality topics, as they have often been active in previous ERDF programmes (1995-1999, 2000-2006), or through the ESF and EQUAL programmes (2000-2006)<sup>177</sup>. However, the interviewees also felt that some training on equality impact assessment could be useful<sup>178</sup>. Some interviewees mentioned that national equality legislation is seen as sufficient to ensure non-discrimination, and additional contribution from the structural funds in this area is not considered to be of prime importance<sup>179</sup>.

### **Partnership**

The OP states that its final version is a result of an extensive consultation process. The representation of gender equality stakeholders was particularly effective. A local network organization of women entrepreneurs was actively involved during the preparation process. The sections of the programme which deal with the equality questions were written in collaboration with this body.

The Programme Monitoring Committee has about 30 members, most of whom represent ministries and regional councils. The National Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations has one representative in the Committee. The NGOs from the healthcare and social sectors which are knowledgeable about the needs of various social service users (including the disadvantaged groups) are represented in various stages of the programme cycle.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Various ex-ante and ex-post, self-assessment and external evaluation instruments have been or are to be used during the implementation of the programme. The ex-ante evaluation drew some attention to the issue of gender equality and concluded that the draft OP clearly focused on the equal treatment of immigrants. Other instruments used for the OP include an Environmental Impact Assessment (which includes Social Impact Assessment) and Strategic Impact Assessment (entailing assessment of equality impacts).

The interviewees mentioned the Human Impact Assessment (which takes into account different types of final beneficiaries and analyses the project impact in terms of age, gender, special needs, etc.) and **Gender Impact Assessment** as potentially useful tools. These assessments are not compulsory but the applicants are asked in the application form (and later at the reporting stage) whether they have carried them out. Their answer does not affect the number of points of their applications score, as it is a secondary criterion. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has published a guide on how to conduct the Gender Impact Assessment, but some of the interview participants mentioned that they would need some training on how to conduct

---

<sup>175</sup> This came across in all the interviews undertaken during the data collection stage.

<sup>176</sup> Act on Equality between Women and Men, 2005.

<sup>177</sup> Leskelä, interview, 12/6/2009; Töyli, interview, 16/6/2009.

<sup>178</sup> All interviews.

<sup>179</sup> Paula Lehto, interview, 12/6/2009; Leskelä, interview, 12/6/2009; Töyli, interview, 16/6/2009.

this assessment<sup>180</sup>. However, the project 'Ikihyvä Päijät-Häme' (Good Ageing in Lahti region; Ikihyvä) concerned with developing models and concepts for public sector health and social care had a similar assessment built into its activities. A follow-up study was carried out, in which the impact of the project was studied according to gender and age cohorts<sup>181</sup>.

The evaluation plan of the OP 'Southern Finland' does not provide for any separate evaluations of equality-related issues. However, an ongoing evaluation of the activities within all four priority axes will have to discuss issues concerning equality and non-discrimination. Implementation of the equality and non-discrimination principles will be evaluated through an assessment of the project selection procedure, of the types of supported projects and of good practice examples.

When it comes to monitoring and reporting, the indicator of funding volume allocated to gender equality projects will be monitored. However, the templates for annual reports and the intermediate reports have not yet been completed. Overall compliance with equality legislation and guidelines has to be monitored following the requirements of national legislation. The national monitoring system monitors the implementation of equality measures in the area of employment.

## CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the programme does not have many practices that are relevant for the implementation of Article 16. It follows the negative (or rights-based) approach which is based on the principle that any discrimination is unacceptable. This principle is embedded in national law and supported by a strong tradition of tolerance and an awareness of human rights. To the extent that the OP does elaborate on equality issues, it devotes most attention to gender equality. Immigrants and elderly are mentioned among the other (potentially) disadvantaged groups. The aspect of accessibility of disabled is not integrated; however the projects are obliged to follow technical standards of accessibility that are established in national regulations.

In the selection process, projects with an equality focus are not given special priority. The most visible practices of integrating the provisions of Article 16 are:

- A target for gender equality projects: a rather large share (17.4%) of programme's budget will be allocated to gender equality projects;
- Involvement of relevant partners in programme preparation and monitoring: a local network organization of women entrepreneurs actively participated in the drafting of the OP; the National Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations is being represented in the Programme Monitoring Committee;
- A variety of tools is available for impact assessment, self-assessment and evaluation, which, among other questions ask explicitly about the impacts of project/ programme on various target (and, potentially, disadvantaged) groups. While these tools are not compulsory, some stakeholders use them on their own initiative.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

Act on Equality between Women and Men (of 2005, 232/200).

Act on Equality between Women and Men.

Fogelholm *et al.* (2002). *Ikihyvä Päijät-Häme – tutkimus*, Peruseraportti 2002.

Leverage from the EU for a future of equality, Information booklet on the principle and application of equality in the Structural Funds in 2007-2013.

Liisa Horelli and Milja Saari (2002). *Tasa-arvoa valtavirtaan. Tasa-arvon valtavirtaistamisen menetelmiä ja käytäntöjä*. Helsinki: STM, [Equality through mainstreaming, Report from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.]

<sup>180</sup> Sanna Kantonen, Marja Koivula, interviews, 17/6/2009. See also Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriön (2002) opas sukupuolivaikutusten arvioimiseksi lainsäädäntöhankkeissa (suvaopas) [Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2002). *Guide for Gender Impact Assessment*.

<sup>181</sup> Töyli, interview, 16/6/2009.



*Mainstreaming equal opportunities in Structural Funds*, Research commissioned by DG Regio in 2007, CSIL.

Mikael Fogelholm *et al.* (2005). *Ikihyvä Päijät-Häme tutkimus*, peruseraportti 2005.

Ministry of the Interior (2006). Finland's Structural Fund Strategy.

OP 'Southern Finland'.

Participation and evaluation plan, 28.6.2006 *Etelä-Suomen kilpailukyky- ja työllisyystavoitteen EAKR-ohjelma 2007-2013, Osallistumis- ja arviointisuunnitelma.*

Project applications, reporting and other publications from two projects where equality and various aspects of *Article 16* are addressed specifically, i.e.:

- \* Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriön opas sukupuolivaikutusten arvioimiseksi lainsäädäntöhankkeissa (suvaopas), Guide for Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2002). *Gender Impact Assessment.*

and <http://www.turvallinenkotihanke.fi/>.

Web-pages of these projects available at: <http://www.palmenia.helsinki.fi/ikihyva/InEnglish.html>

Sanna Kantonen (2004). *Päijät-Hämeen Yhteistyöryhmä Rakennerahasto-ohjelmien Hallinnoinnissa, Kolmikantayhteistyön ja rakennerahastolain tavoitteiden toteutumisen tarkastelua.* [Päijät-Häme Regional Management Committee in the management of the Structural Funds, Observations on tri-partite partnership cooperation and effectiveness. Master's thesis].

Special Eurobarometer 263 / Wave 65.4 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2007).

Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008).

TASA-ARVOSTA *lisäärväo alueiden hyvinvointiin*, "Equality as a means towards regional welfare", Workbook from a seminar on Equality in the Structural Funds, Ministry of the Interior, 2004.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of the interview
1.	Kantonen	Sanna	Project Coordinator	Regional Council of Päijät-Häme	17/6/2009
2.	Koivula	Marja	Development Manager	Regional Council of Päijät-Häme	17/6/2009
3.	Lehto	Paula	Research director	Laurea Polytechnic, Espoo	12/6/2009
4.	Leskelä	Johanna	Project manager	Laurea Polytechnic, Espoo	12/6/2009
5.	Töyli	Pasi	Project manager	Palmia Polytechnic, Lahti	16/6/2009

## 7. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'HEALTH': CASE STUDY

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007SK161PO005	Operational Programme 'Health'	Slovakia
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Convergence	National	Eastern European
<i>Breakdown of finances</i>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
250	44.1	294.1

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF - European Regional Development Fund

ESF - European Social Fund

MEUR – million euros

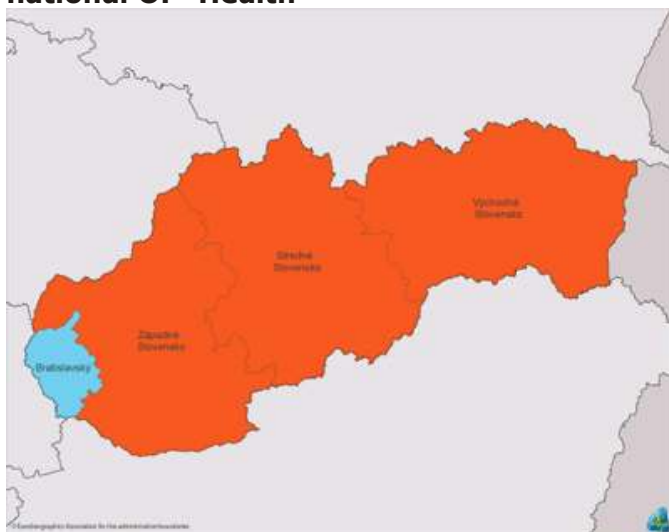
OP – Operational Programme

SWOT – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (analysis method)

### INTRODUCTION

The Operational Programme 'Health' (2007-2013) is the programme document of the Slovak Republic which directs ERDF investments to the healthcare sector. Its Managing Authority is the national Ministry of Health.

**Figure 8. The sub-regions of the Slovakian national OP 'Health'**



Source: [Inforegio](#)

### Priorities, interventions and targets

The Operational Programme has two main thematic priority axes:

- Priority Axis 1: Modernization of hospitals – building, reconstructing and modernising health infrastructure of general and specialised hospitals (30 projects to be supported);
- Priority Axis 2: Support of health and prevention of health risks – renovating and modernising health infrastructure of ambulatory care and purchase of technical equipment (28 projects to be supported).

The programme is in the early stages of implementation. The projects under the 2008 call for proposals have already been contracted and are being implemented. The 2009 calls are being prepared.

## Integration of Article 16

Article 16 is mentioned explicitly in the text of the OP. All three dimensions of Article 16 are touched upon in the OP:

- **Gender equality** – in addition to the general focus on employment of women in newly created jobs, the programme includes a special section on the prevention of breast cancer.
- **Non-discrimination** – the programme comprehensively focuses on the needs of the marginalised Roma group.
- **Accessibility for disabled persons** – the programme requires that construction and renovation projects comply with the requirements of access for the disabled.

## Legal and social context

The national legal framework on non-discrimination is relatively well developed. The Antidiscrimination Law bans any discrimination based on gender, religion, race, nationality or ethnic group, disability, age, sexual orientation, colour, language, political or other ideas, marital status, national or social origin, wealth, family history or any other status. It also puts a strong emphasis on the prevention of any discrimination. However, not all formal requirements are consistently implemented. The most difficult of these is the Roma issue: despite some progress, social exclusion of Roma and segregation of their children is evident<sup>182</sup>.

The National Centre for Human Rights has carried out a survey of access to public buildings. The findings provided a mixed picture: most social care offices already comply with standards of access for disabled persons, but for example police stations do not. There is no comprehensive data on healthcare institutions; partial findings indicate that barrier-free access is not provided everywhere<sup>183</sup>.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Strategic choices

All the three themes of Article 16 are reflected in the context analysis and SWOT analysis of the OP. The theme of **non-discrimination** with a focus on the **Roma community** is the most detailed:

- The marginalised Roma ethnic group, its health situation and perspectives are dealt with in a special subchapter of the **context analysis** (3.3.2). It indicates that Roma living in isolated settlements make up the most disadvantaged ethnic group in Slovakia and their health status is significantly below the national average.
- This issue is mentioned in the **SWOT analysis**.
- There is a **special cross-cutting theme** entitled 'Marginalized Roma Communities'.
- Within the Priority Axis 2 there are plans for the implementation of **healthcare infrastructure projects in segregated Roma settlements**. Such activities may also be carried out in remote regions with a high concentration of marginalised Roma communities facing multiple deprivation and social exclusion and as a result have limited access to public services.

As for the issue of **gender**, the OP devotes considerable attention to it, shown by the examples below:

- The specific needs of women are discussed in the '**Prevention**' section (3.3.4). Among other things, this part deals with the prevention of gynaecological and cancer diseases of women. Data provided indicates that the number of preventive mammography screenings in all convergence regions is significantly below the necessary level. This causes a relatively high number of deaths from breast cancer.

---

<sup>182</sup> Slovenské národné stredisko pre ľudské práva, *Správa o dodržiavani ľudských práv vrátane zásady rovnakého zaobchádzania v slovenskej republike za rok 2008*. Bratislava, 2009, p. 42.  
<[http://www.snspl.sk/rs/snspl\\_rs.nsf/0/f048c56cb73e748bc1256fc600380c2f/\\$FILE/Sprava%20LP%202008%20-%20Final.pdf](http://www.snspl.sk/rs/snspl_rs.nsf/0/f048c56cb73e748bc1256fc600380c2f/$FILE/Sprava%20LP%202008%20-%20Final.pdf)>.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., p. 75-76.

- As a response to this challenge, a **targeted measure** has been planned under the Priority Axis 2, namely, the purchase of mobile mammography units and the training of the personnel to operate these units.

**Accessibility for the disabled** is discussed within the context of the 'Equal Opportunities' horizontal priority. Furthermore:

- The calls for proposals within the Priority Axis 2 aim to provide support for investments which would contribute to the elimination of barriers and enhance the access of disabled people to reconstructed, modernized or newly built healthcare facilities.
- This theme also appears in the **project eligibility and selection criteria**.

### Indicators and targets

Firstly, there are three specific indicators for the horizontal priority 'Marginalized Roma Communities':

- 'Value of projects identified by The Slovak Government Office as focused on marginalized Roma communities'. A total of 8 MEUR was allocated, but according to the interview with the MA, it was increased to 10 MEUR<sup>184</sup> to reflect better the actual value of activities to be implemented;
- 'Number of projects identified by The Slovak Government Office as targeted at marginalized Roma communities'. There are 8 projects planned.

Secondly, quantified targets for both priority axes are disaggregated by gender:

- Priority Axis 1: 30 jobs in total, 15 for men and 15 for women;
- Priority Axis 2: 28 jobs in total, 14 for men and 14 for women.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

The OP states that consideration of the project's impact on the Equal Opportunities horizontal priority is mandatory for all applicants. In the application form applicants have to assess whether their project impacts equal opportunities (positively or negatively). During the selection process, the projects which are considered advantageous from the equality perspective may receive up to 8 points:

- The support of non-discrimination and of equal opportunities – up to 4 points (out of 156);
- The impact of the project on the marginalised Roma community – up to 4 points (out of 156)<sup>185</sup>.

**Accessibility for the disabled** is explicitly included as an eligibility criterion in calls for proposals within Priority Axis 2. For instance, the call for proposals aimed to upgrade ambulatory equipment states that only the complex projects of reconstruction where 'barrier-free' access is ensured are eligible<sup>186</sup>.

In addition to the universal criteria (applicable to all calls for proposals), two initiatives targeted specifically vulnerable groups. Lack of appropriate equipment to diagnose breast cancer causes a gender gap in patient treatment in Slovakia, as this disease contributes significantly to a higher female mortality rate. Therefore, the first of these initiatives is a national project on the prevention of breast cancer (mobile mammography units are to be procured and put into operation). The call was launched in 2009<sup>187</sup>. Another measure is a call aimed at projects focusing on improving health in the marginalised Roma communities<sup>188</sup>.

<sup>184</sup> Marek Vanko, interview, 18/6/2009.

<sup>185</sup> See, for instance, Ministerstvo zdravotníctva [Ministry of Health] (2008) "Výzva v rámci prioritnej osi 2, opatrenia 2.1 OPZ pre zariadenia ambulancnej zdravotnej starostlivosti [The challenge within the Priority Axis 2 measures 2.1 OPZ for outpatient health care facilities] <<http://opz.health-sf.sk/archiv-vyziev/vyzva-v-ramci-prioritnej-osi-2-opatrenia-21-opz-pre-zariadenia-ambulantnej-zdravotnej-starostlivosti>>.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Ministerstvo zdravotníctva [Ministry of Health] (2009), "Výzva OPZ 2009/2.2/01 na predloženie žiadosti o poskytnutie nenávratného finančného príspevku pre národný project" [OPZ 2009/2.2/01 Call for applications for

## Management

In this section three programme management dimensions are explored: (a) assistance to stakeholders, (b) control measures and (c) the cross-financing option.

**Advice and assistance** is available for project applicants, project managers, contractors and/or beneficiaries to take better into account the principles of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility. The Managing Authority gets some support from the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, which is responsible for implementing national policy in the field of equal opportunities. An Equal Opportunities Support Centre was established in the ministry. One official in this centre has a responsibility to act as the focal point (contact person) for the Managing Authority (Ministry of Health) on issues concerning the integration of equal opportunities dimension into the design and implementation of the OP. The ministry also organises seminars on the 'equal opportunities' dimension of operational programmes.

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family has published **two brochures**, which are relevant from the perspective of equal opportunities:

- 'Guidelines on how to incorporate the principle of equal opportunities into the projects co-financed from the EU funds'<sup>189</sup> (for applicants and beneficiaries). This brochure provides guidelines for the application, monitoring and evaluation phases.
- 'Guidelines on how to incorporate the horizontal priority 'Equal Opportunity' in the structural funds'<sup>190</sup>. This brochure is aimed to assist project evaluators as well as officials working in public agencies which manage the implementation of the OP.

There are no procedures dedicated specifically to checking the performance of projects in terms of equal opportunities. However, if a project undertook a commitment in the application to achieve a certain result relevant from the perspective of equal opportunities, this is treated as a formal obligation by the institutions in charge of the OP. The project has to report on its progress with regard to this result, and would face sanctions if the result is not achieved.

The accessibility aspect should be of major importance for an infrastructure-oriented programme such as 'Health'. Therefore when conducting this case study, interviews were carried out in the MA and with some randomly selected beneficiaries<sup>191</sup> to see if all the projects take this aspect into consideration. The findings revealed a mixed picture. Some projects did have provisions for accessibility (such as the reconstruction of elevators to improve the disabled access in the 'ZILPO polyclinic' in Zilina). Meanwhile, some other projects did not include any direct measures to improve access for the disabled.

The **cross-financing facility** has been used within the framework of this OP. It is planned to allocate up to 2% of the budget of Priority Axis 2 to ESF-type expenditures. This funding is aimed to publicise the mobile screening units under the mammography project and to provide training to specialists working with these units.

## Partnership

The principle of partnership was followed during the preparation of the OP. The Office of the Government's Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities was involved in the drafting process. This Office also has a representative in the Programme Monitoring Committee. The preparation phase included consultations with the regional government, with selected NGOs working in the field of healthcare (such as the Slovak Medical Chamber, Slovak Hospital Association and

---

non-repayable financial contribution to the national project]. <<http://opz.health-sf.sk/aktualne-vyzvy/vyzva-opz-20092201-na-pripravu-narodneho-projektu>>.

<sup>188</sup> Marek Vanko, interview, 18/6/2009.

<sup>189</sup> Bratislava: Ministerstvo práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny Slovenskej republiky (Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family), 2008.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Marek Vanko, interview, 18/6/2009; Edmund Skorvaga, interview, 18/6/2009; Milan Filip interview, 17/6/2009; Vladimír Olear, interview, 17/6/2009; Maria Parakova, interview, 20/6/2009; Alexander Berc, interview, 22/6/2009.

Association of Academic Hospitals) and with the representatives of the Council of Government for NGOs.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Monitoring and reporting

The Programme Monitoring Committee consists of the representatives of the Ministry of Health, other related ministries and public agencies, regions, hospitals, medical practitioners and a delegate from the Office of the Government's Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities<sup>192</sup>. No NGOs promoting gender quality, non-discrimination, accessibility or human rights in general are represented as full members, only the Council of Government for NGOs is included. However sometimes representatives from organisations such as the Union of Disabled Organisations in Slovakia are invited to contribute to the discussion. The committee is balanced in terms of gender: 13 out of 28 its members are women.

The monitoring process begins at the project level. The projects have to report data that they are obliged to by their contract. Data obtained from projects is then aggregated to the level of measure, priority axis and the OP. Monitoring of the implementation of horizontal priorities relies on the set of indicators mentioned in the section of this case study on targets and indicators. Specific projects have to adapt programmes' indicators to their specific purposes. Table 12 presents the examples of indicators used for various calls for proposals. The OP's performance in the field of horizontal priorities is to be **reported** on in annual implementation reports.

**Table 12. Examples of monitoring indicators used for calls for proposals in areas, which are relevant from the equality perspective**

Indicator	Definition
<b>Measurable indicators, 'Mammography' project</b>	
Number of new jobs for men	Number of new working places for men created by the project
Number of new jobs for women	Number of new working places for women created by the project
<b>Measurable indicators horizontal priority 'Marginalized Roma Communities'</b>	
Number of modernised health establishments in marginalised Roma areas	Number of modernised health establishments in marginalised Roma areas
<b>Measurable indicators horizontal priority 'Equal Opportunity'</b>	
Number of measures to improve access for the disabled, creating secure access, allowing the disabled to use the service	Number of measures to improve access for the disabled/ creating secure access and/or number of measures allowing the disabled to use the service

### Evaluation

The OP envisages ongoing evaluations of the success rate and efficiency of the implementation of each horizontal priority and on the assessment of outputs and results of the projects in relation to these horizontal priorities. In addition, an ex-post evaluation is planned regarding the horizontal priorities.

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the OP 'Health' adopts a relatively comprehensive approach to the incorporation of equality concerns. The targeting method is represented by specific measures aimed at the Roma ethnic group and women in the healthcare sector:

- Support for marginalised Roma communities has been designated as a special horizontal priority cutting through all the Slovakian OPs and has been assigned a relatively high amount of funding;
- A national project for the prevention of breast cancer that caters for the special needs of the female population is being carried out.

<sup>192</sup> Ministerstvo zdravotníctva [Ministry of Health] (2009), "Zoznam členov Monitorovacieho výboru pre OPZ" [List of members of the Monitoring Committee for OPZ]. <<http://opz.health-sf.sk/zlozenie-mv-pre-opz>>.

Other arrangements to integrate concerns for equality and accessibility for the disabled include:

- Special selection criteria – universal and specific;
- Assistance and guidance opportunities;
- Using the cross-financing facility for publicizing the mammography project and for providing training to the personnel participating in it.

The most important partner of the Managing Authority is the Office of the Government's Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities (which is a public agency, but whose representatives are nominated by the Roma community); the representative of this agency is a member of the Programme Monitoring Committee. The NGOs promoting equality or non-discrimination are not represented as members of this Committee; however the representatives of NGOs are sometimes invited to take part in the discussions.

To conclude, the Slovak OP is elaborate in terms of project selection criteria and guidance and advice available for stakeholders. Given its explicit concern for equality issues and special measures for the benefit of the disadvantaged in the healthcare sector, the targeting approach prevails. The OP plans continuous assessment as to how the horizontal priorities are being implemented. Though it is too early to estimate the results at this point, it can be seen that the accessibility aspect has not been taken into account in some cases.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

Antidiskriminačný zákon (Antidiscrimination Law).

Gender Mainstreaming pre Slovensko <<http://www.gender.gov.sk>>.

*Guidelines on how to incorporate the equal opportunities principles in the projects co-financed from the EU funds.*

*Guidelines on how to incorporate the horizontal priority 'Equal Opportunity' in the structural funds.*

*Národná správa SR o implementácii Pekingskej Akčnej platformy*, 2000 (Slovak national report on the implementation of the Being Action Platform. Bratislava: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, 2000). <<http://www.employment.gov.sk/print.php?SMC=1&id=734>>.

OP 'Zdravotníctvo' ('Health').

*Projektové ukazovatele pre dopytovo - orientované projekty* (Design parameters for the demand - oriented projects).

Publications of the Institute for Public Affairs (Inštitút pre verejné otázky):

\* Martina Jurásková (2003), *Rómovia na ceste do Európskej únie* (Roma on the road to the European Union); <[http://www.ivo.sk/buxus/docs/publicistika/subor/produkt\\_2228.pdf](http://www.ivo.sk/buxus/docs/publicistika/subor/produkt_2228.pdf)>;

\* Martin Bútora, Miroslav Kollár, Grigorij Mesežnikov (2009), *Slovakia 2008*. Bratislava.

Publications of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights (Slovenské národné stredisko pre ľudské práva):

\* *Diskriminácia osôb so zdravotným postihnutím: Vybrané prípadové štúdie Slovenského národného strediska pre ľudské práva* (Discrimination of disabled: Selected case studies by the Slovak national centre for human rights). Bratislava, 2006.

\* *Rasová diskriminácia* (Racial discrimination).

<[http://www.snslp.sk/rs/snslp\\_rs.nsf/0/401F7E8B4C420BBAC12571A0002D965D?OpenDocument](http://www.snslp.sk/rs/snslp_rs.nsf/0/401F7E8B4C420BBAC12571A0002D965D?OpenDocument)>

\* *Správa o dodržiavaní ľudských práv vrátane zásady rovnakého zaobchádzania v Slovenskej republike* (Slovak National Centre for Human Rights Report on the Observance of Human Rights in the Slovak Republic for the year 2007. Bratislava, 2008).

Special Eurobarometer 263 / Wave 65.4 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2007).

Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008).

The website of the OP (Ministry of Health) <http://opz.health-sf.sk/>.

*Zákon o poskytovateľoch zdravotnej starostlivosti, zdravotníckych pracovníkoch, stavovských organizáciách v zdravotníctve* (Law on Health Care Providers, Medical Staff and Professional Organizations in the Health Service Sector (Nr. 578/2004)).

*Zákon o rozsahu zdravotnej starostlivosti uhrádzanej na základe verejného zdravotného poistenia a o úhradách za služby súvisiace s poskytovaním zdravotnej starostlivosti* (Law on the Extent of Health Care Financed from the Public Health Insurance System and on Compensation for Related Medical Services (Nr. 577/2004)).

*Zákon o zdravotnej starostlivosti, službách súvisiacich s poskytovaním zdravotnej starostlivosti* (Law on Health Care and Related Medical Services (Nr. 576/2004)).

*Zákon o zdravotnom poistení* (Law on Health Insurance (Nr. 580/2004 as amended)).

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of the interview
1.	Berc	Alexander	Director	East Slovakia oncology institute, Kosice, Slovakia	22/6/2009
2.	Cizmarik	Pavol	Manager for EU funds	Regional government office, Banska Bystrica, Slovakia	12/6/2009 22/6/2009
3.	Filip	Milan	Director, Health department	Regional Government Office, Košice, Slovakia	17/6/2009 (by phone)
4.	Olear	Vladimir	Manager	ZILPO (polyclinics), Zilina, Slovakia	17/6/2009 (e-mail)
5.	Parakova	Maria	Medical doctor	Poprad, Slovakia	20/6/2009
6.	Pisar	Peter	Director	Regional EU Information Centre, Banska Bystrica, Slovakia	11/6/2009
7.	Škorvaga	Edmund	Director, Department of EU programmes	Ministry of Health, Bratislava, Slovakia	18/6/2009
8.	Vanko	Marek	Director-General, Section of EU programmes	Ministry of Health, Bratislava, Slovakia	18/6/2009
9.	Vrablova	Monika	President	Slovak Union of Physically Disabled People, Bratislava, Slovakia	22/6/2009 (e-mail)



## 8. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'PROMOTION OF COHESION': CASE STUDY

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007LT161PO001	Operational Programme 'Promotion of Cohesion'	Lithuania
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Convergence	National	Baltic
<b>Breakdown of finances</b>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
2,648.3	397	3,045.3

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund  
 ESF – European Social Fund  
 ICT - Information and communication technologies  
 MEUR – million euros  
 NGO – Non-governmental organisation  
 OP – Operational programme  
 SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (analysis method)

### INTRODUCTION

The OP 'Promotion of Cohesion 2007-2013'<sup>193</sup> is a national Lithuanian ERDF programme. The designated Managing Authority is the Ministry of Finance. However, some of the Managing Authority's functions are delegated to various intermediate bodies, such as the Central Project Management Agency, the Lithuanian Business Support Agency and the Environmental Project Management Agency.

#### Priority axes, interventions and target groups

The overall vision of the OP is to ensure a good quality of life in all regions and in this way to contribute to the development of a more cohesive society in Lithuania. The OP has three priority axes:

- Priority Axis 1: Local and urban development, protection of cultural heritage and nature, and development of tourism;
- Priority Axis 2: The improvement of quality and availability of public services: healthcare, education and social infrastructure;
- Priority Axis 3: The environment and sustainable development.

The OP supports various types of interventions, such as the development of tourism and cultural services, and investments in infrastructure (urban infrastructure, transport, environment, energy, education and science, tourism and culture, health and social

<sup>193</sup> Operational Programme for Promotion of Cohesion 2007-2013 [hereinafter – OP], p. 60.  
 <[http://www.esparama.lt/ES\\_Paramam/angliskas\\_medis/programming\\_for\\_2007\\_2013\\_tree/front\\_page/files/OP\\_PoC\\_1.doc](http://www.esparama.lt/ES_Paramam/angliskas_medis/programming_for_2007_2013_tree/front_page/files/OP_PoC_1.doc)>.

infrastructure, housing infrastructure, childcare infrastructure, etc.). The activities target small and medium businesses, the tourism sector, education and healthcare institutions, scientists, patients, the disabled, employed people and youth. The public at large will benefit also from the improvement of infrastructure. The programme is in the early stages of implementation, as the selection of projects has not yet been completed.

**Figure 9. The national programme 'Promotion of Cohesion' covers the entire territory of Lithuania**



Source: Inforegio

### Integration of Article 16

There is **no direct reference to Article 16** in the OP. However, the main principles of Article 16 have been well-integrated:

- Equality (gender equality and equal opportunities) and accessibility for the disabled are presented among the main challenges and discussed thoroughly in the **analysis of current socio-economic conditions**. The OP provides a number of relevant statistics concerning disadvantaged groups. Some of the relevant challenges are dealt with in the SWOT analysis.
- **Priority Axis 2 of the OP** puts a strong emphasis on ensuring the availability and high quality of public services (healthcare, education,

social care) to **the disabled and other disadvantaged groups**. Other priority axes also make some relevant references. For example, under Priority Axis 1 it is mentioned that "social housing will have to be made accessible to people with special needs"<sup>194</sup>.

- A separate chapter entitled '**Compliance with horizontal themes and their implementation**' explains in greater detail how each of the priority axes contribute to the implementation of the cross-cutting themes, including the theme of 'Equal Opportunities'.
- **Guidelines** and a **practical manual** have been prepared for the implementation of the horizontal priorities on the programme and project levels.
- Programme and project-level **reports** cover implementation of the horizontal themes.

### Socio-economic and policy context

The **Lithuanian legislative framework** regarding the 'horizontal issues' has been developing over the last decade, with the process of joining the EU having significant influence on this process. The most important national legal acts on equal opportunities are the *National Social Integration Law* and the *Law on Social Integration of the Disabled*. The latter introduced the concept of disability, which was new in the Lithuanian context: it dealt with integration through employment. Other documents, such as the *Social Services Law* and the *Regional Development Law* also include relevant provisions on the social integration of disadvantaged groups and access to social services.

The Lithuanian **institutional framework** in the field of equal opportunities is also well-developed. There is a Department of the Affairs of the Disabled, which implements *the National Program for Social Integration of People with Disabilities*. Many other institutional organisations, technical centres (for example, the Centre of Technical Aid for Disabled People, and translation centres of sign language) and NGOs operate in this field and promote principles of equality and accessibility. However, the technical basis of most of these organisations is underdeveloped or outdated.

In the **Lithuanian society** the perception of discrimination is among the lowest in the EU based on some grounds (ethnic origin<sup>195</sup>, religion and belief<sup>196</sup>, sexual orientation)<sup>197</sup> and has

<sup>194</sup> OP, p. 72.

declined over the last years. This shows a low level of awareness and understanding with regard to these types of discrimination rather than a low level of discrimination. Lithuanians are relatively more aware of gender- and disability-based discrimination than discrimination on other grounds (respectively 30% and 43% of the respondents say that it is widespread)<sup>198</sup>.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Strategic choices

The analysis part of the Lithuanian OP provides **a lot of statistics** on some of the groups mentioned in Article 16 (women, the disabled and the elderly). Data is presented on the accessibility of the disabled to transport, healthcare or other public infrastructure and on the accessibility of women and older persons to the labour market. Data is also provided on the availability of nursery education services for children, of schools and vocational training institutions for disabled children and youth with special needs and of social services for social risk families and of out-patient institutions to families with members in need of constant care. Other potential grounds for discrimination, namely, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation, are not discussed in the programme and thus are not considered relevant for the infrastructure-related investments.

Important **challenges** were identified based on this data: an unfavourable position for women in the labour market, low levels of employment among the disabled and other disadvantaged groups, low participation of discriminated-against groups in education and training and insufficient accessibility of infrastructure and various services to the disabled. The **SWOT analysis** summarises these challenges. Among the weaknesses that exist in Lithuania are the lack of childcare facilities, insufficient availability of education services for persons with special needs and those experiencing social exclusion and lack of quality vocational rehabilitation services and infrastructure for the disabled. The lack of day-time care options of the dependent family members is seen as a barrier preventing many persons from joining the active labour force.

A special section in the OP is devoted to **equal opportunities**. It describes the contribution of each priority axis to this theme (including the aspects of integration of the gender dimension and accessibility for the disabled). In addition, the '**Information society**' sub-chapter notes that the needs of the disabled will be taken into consideration when investing in information technology projects, e.g. within the field of healthcare.

The OP strategy pays due attention to certain horizontal issues. **Priority Axis 2** in particular is dedicated to ensuring accessible and high-quality public services in the areas of healthcare, education, state employment policy, social care (non-stationary), and professional rehabilitation for the disabled. **Relevant measures** have been identified and are currently being implemented in developing the infrastructure that benefits those who are mentally or physically disabled<sup>199</sup> and the persons who belong to social risk groups<sup>200</sup>. Other priority axes

---

<sup>195</sup> Discrimination on the ground of ethnic origin is among the lowest in Lithuania (23%), while the EU-27 average is almost three times higher (62%). The average Lithuanian is comfortable with having someone from a different ethnic origin than theirs as a neighbour (9,1; EU average – 8,1). – see European Commission. *Special Eurobarometer 296. Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitude (Report)*, July 2008. – p. 34-36.

<sup>196</sup> In Lithuania discrimination based on religion and belief is considered to be significantly less widespread (11%) than in the EU-27 (42%); the proportion of respondents witnessing discrimination on the basis of religion and belief in the country is among the lowest (1%; EU average – 6%). – Ibid, p. 66-70.

<sup>197</sup> See Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008)., p. 34-36, 66-70, 56.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid, p. 73, 49.

<sup>199</sup> Non-competitive selection procedure has been mostly used to allocate resources. Examples: No. VP3-2.1-SAM-05-V "Creation of complex psychic health care centres for children and families"; No. VP3-2.1-SAM-08-R "Creation of psychic health day out-patient centres"; No. VP3-2.1-SAM-09-R "Creation of crisis intervention centres". - see Government of the Republic of Lithuania. *Decision on the approval of the Complement of the Operational Programme for Promotion of Cohesion*. – 23 July 2008, No. 727. [hereinafter – OP Complement] – <www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc\_l?p\_id=325963>. No. VP3-2.2-ŠMM-06-R "Investments into

also make some contribution in terms of equal opportunities. For example, under Priority Axis 1 the social housing stock is to be developed; one of the aims is to make it more accessible for the disabled<sup>201</sup>.

### Indicators and targets

The OP has a complex system of indicators. The indicators relevant from the perspective of Article 16 are set at the Priority Axis level rather than at the programme level. Most of them are concentrated under Priority Axis 2.

Priority Axis 2 puts forward indicators at three levels: context, result and output. The context indicators concern the whole of Priority Axis 2, while the output and result indicators are intervention-specific (e.g. healthcare services, education services, vocational training services, etc.). Most of the relevant context indicators concern employment and labour market performance of the groups mentioned in Article 16. At the intervention level, the availability of infrastructure is measured (see Table 13). Other priority axes also have some relevant indicators. Priority Axis 1 will disaggregate the indicator of 'new jobs created' by gender (in the tourism sector).

**Table 13. Equality-related indicators and targets of the Priority Axis 2**

Indicator type	Priority Axis/ Measure/ Action	Indicator (assessment unit)	Baseline value (year)	Target value (projected for 2015)
Context	Priority Axis 2	Women's employment level (percent)	59.4 (2005)	61.5
Context	Priority Axis 2	Employment level of older persons (aged 55-64) (percent)	49.2 (2005)	52
Context	Priority Axis 2	Children in day-time care institutions: (a) under 3 years of age (percent) (b) over 3 years and until school-age (percent)	(a) 21.3 (2005) (b) 69.6 (2005)	(a) 30 (by 2010) (b) 90 (by 2010)
Context	Priority Axis 2	Disabled people who have employment (percent)	20 (2003)	30
Context	Priority Axis 2	Remuneration gap between men and women (percent)	16 (2004)	<10
Result	Priority Axis 2 (investment area: non-stationary care institutions)	Number of the disabled, persons who experience social exclusion or those to whom social exclusion threatens and who obtained direct benefit from investments in development of infrastructure of out-patient social services and infrastructure designed for the disabled	225,000 (2005, 2006)	390,000
Output	Priority Axis 2, (investment area: non-stationary care institutions)	Number of constructed or reconstructed objects or objects where equipment was renewed (institutions providing social services and services to the disabled)	346 (2005, 2006)	114

Source: OP.

The result and output level indicators will contribute to the achievement of context-level indicators. The socio-economic analysis of the OP explains this. For example, the "insufficient availability of nursery education services in rural areas also prevents parents who look after the children from returning to the labour market"<sup>202</sup>. In addition, "there is a lack of social services to families, members of which need constant care; as a consequence, those who have to stay home to take care of these people in practice can not actively participate in the labour market"<sup>203</sup>. These factors have a negative impact on the level of employment of women.

preschool education institutions"; No. VP3-2.2-ŠMM-09-R "Reorganisation of special schools, creation of methodical centres".

<sup>200</sup> No. VP3-2.4-SADM-01-R "Development of Infrastructure of Out-patient Social Services"; No. VP3-2.4-SADM-02-V "Development of institutions providing services, including professional rehabilitation, for the disabled". - see *OP Complement*.

<sup>201</sup> No. VP3-1.1-VRM-04-R "Development and Quality Improvement of Social Housing". - see *OP Complement*.

<sup>202</sup> OP, p. 29.

<sup>203</sup> OP, p. 36.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

**Two project selection procedures** are applied in the implementation of the Lithuanian OP: a) *non-competitive selection* (pre-selected bodies are requested to submit a project application for a restricted tender; the application is prepared in close cooperation with the Implementing Body) and a b) *call for proposals* (all potential applicants can submit applications, which are assessed on a competitive basis). In order to be eligible for funding, all project applications have to comply with nine general criteria<sup>204</sup>. Among them there is a criterion of compliance with the **principles of gender equality and non-discrimination**. The compliance with this criterion has to be explained in the project application. If a project does not comply with at least one of the nine criteria, it is not eligible for funding.

An additional set of criteria is used at the level of priority axis and intervention type. At this level there are additional eligibility criteria (e.g. compliance with the relevant national rules and laws, such as the Law on Social Integration of the Disabled). If the procedure of the competitive call for proposals is applied, then the funding decision is made on the basis of assessment of the project's performance on terms of a set of selection criteria, which are intervention-specific.

### Management

There is a common institutional framework for management and co-ordination of the horizontal themes among all the Lithuanian OPs. In April 2008 a **working group**<sup>205</sup> was created to monitor and to facilitate the implementation of the horizontal themes (i.e., sustainable development, equal opportunities, informational society, and regional policy). The mission of the group is to analyse trends in the horizontal fields and to provide suggestions to the Managing Authority and to other bodies involved in implementation of the OP. So far this group contributed to the preparation of two documents concerning implementation of horizontal policies (guidelines and practical manual, see below). The group consists of representatives of public agencies as well as NGOs. 3 out of its 34 members represent the theme of equal opportunities (representatives from the Gender Equality Division of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour; the Women's Centre of the Lithuanian Trade Union Confederation; and the Gender Studies Centre of Šiauliai University)<sup>206</sup>. A training seminar was conducted for the members of this group concerning the definition, implementation and management of the horizontal themes in the 2007-2013 period.

Currently the *Guidelines on the implementation of horizontal priorities in the use of EU structural assistance in 2007-2013* are being prepared for implementing bodies of the OP and institutions responsible for the implementation of horizontal priorities<sup>207</sup>. These Guidelines were drafted by the working group (for monitoring and implementation of the horizontal themes) and approved at its meeting in April 2009. The Guidelines (available at [www.esparama.lt](http://www.esparama.lt)) provide definitions of horizontal themes, their main aims, target groups, indicators and examples on how a project could better contribute to their implementation.

In addition, the publication *Horizontal priorities: a practical manual for applicants and beneficiaries of support* has been prepared recently in close cooperation with the above-

---

<sup>204</sup> Joint Monitoring Committee to monitor implementation of the OPs 'Human Resources Development', 'Economic Growth', 'Promotion of Cohesion' and Technical Assistance Operational Programmes, implementing the Strategy for the Use of EU Structural Funds in 2007-2013. Decision of the meeting of 30 October 2007. – 21 December 2007, No. 1, p. 2.

<sup>205</sup> The group reports to the Co-ordinating Authority.

<sup>206</sup> Although in the OP it was foreseen to set up four groups for horizontal priorities (one group for each priority), it was decided to establish one working group, taking into account that almost the same institutions' representatives and partners would participate in those groups. However, a possibility is foreseen to have subgroups of the working group (one sub-group for each priority) if needed. – Information received from Mr. Darius Trakelis on 3/7/2009 (by e-mail).

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

mentioned working group. It will be also available on the websites of the ministries and other institutions implementing the OP. Moreover, there are a number of public institutions and NGOs on the national level which work on equal opportunities and could provide consultations or other assistance in this area (such as the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, the Lithuanian Centre for Human Rights, the Lithuanian Coalition of Non-Governmental Organisations for Protection of Women's Human Rights, the Centre for Equality Advancement, the Women's Issues Information Centre, among others). However, at present this remains more of a formal possibility and is not used during the process of the management of the OP.

### **Information and publicity measures**

There are no **special information events** targeting the groups mentioned in Article 16. However, these groups are informed extensively together with the other members of the society about upcoming calls for proposals and the programme's achievements. Various communication tools are used, such as media advertisements, email groups, and various websites (including the EU support portal [www.esparama.lt](http://www.esparama.lt)).

There are special publications promoting the opportunities of EU support under the OP 'Promotion of Cohesion' and its specific measures. They give a due account to the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Most of the interviewees confirmed that the information events, seminars and conferences are organised in places where accessibility for the disabled is ensured.

### **Partnership**

The partnership principle has been thoroughly integrated in the implementation of the programme. Three working groups<sup>208</sup> were established during the drafting process of the OP. The working group 'Quality and availability of public services' worked on the development of Priority Axis 2. It included the representatives from various relevant NGOs, such as the Lithuanian Disabled People Union, the Association for the Physically Disabled of Lithuania, and the Lithuanian Social Workers' Association, among others. Public hearings on the OP were organised to consult society at large. Some of the suggestions made during these hearings were integrated into the text (including the ones concerning equality themes).

The most important mechanism of partnership during the **OP implementation stage** is the above-mentioned working group for the monitoring and implementation of the horizontal themes. This working group discusses the implementation of the horizontal themes and prepares information for the Annual OP Implementation Report. The group includes representatives of the government authorities as well as social, economic and regional partners. Three of the members represent interests of women and equal opportunities for genders<sup>209</sup>. Women make up 53% of the members in this working group<sup>210</sup>.

Two representatives of equality NGOs are members of the Programme Monitoring Committee (the Lithuanian Union of People with Disabilities and the Women's Issues Information Centre). Furthermore, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman is also a member of this committee. A total of 33% of the members of the committee are women<sup>211</sup>, although there is no legally binding rule to respect a gender balance.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The **ex-ante evaluation** made a number of recommendations on mainstreaming the horizontal themes:

---

<sup>208</sup> 'Local development', 'Quality and availability of public services' and 'Environmental quality and efficiency of using energy'.

<sup>209</sup> See Order of the Minister of Finance on the Creation of working group for monitoring implementation of horizontal priorities, No. 1K-138 of 15 April 2008 and Order of the replacement of the latter Order, No. 1K-116 of 16 April 2009.

<sup>210</sup> Darius Trakelis, interview, 3/7/2009.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

- to set up working groups to monitor the integration of the horizontal themes in the planning and implementation of the 2007-2013 OPs;
- to highlight the projects which advanced the horizontal themes in the 2004-2006 Programme and to make available their case studies to applicants for OPs implemented in 2007-2013;
- to commission an external organisation to produce practical guidance for project applicants on how to take the cross-cutting themes into consideration both at the application stage and during project implementation<sup>212</sup>.

These recommendations have been taken on board and included in the text or implementation practice of the OP. However, one may argue whether the implementation of some of these recommendations was indeed genuine (e.g., the latter one). As for good practice examples, a **thematic evaluation on the implementation of horizontal priorities** in the programme of 2004-2006 has been carried out. It identified and described the cases of good practice and provided recommendations for 2007-2013 (for example, to better integrate the horizontal principles into OPs by coordinating 'soft' and 'hard' measures, to establish a working group on horizontal priorities, to organise trainings on these issues, and to monitor implementation of the horizontal principles through various measures, among others). Most of the recommendations have been already fully or largely implemented. The Evaluation Plan for 2007-2013 indicates that an evaluation of the horizontal themes is among the possible options; however, no decision has been taken yet. Meanwhile an evaluation on using the 2007-2013 funds to target the needs of socially vulnerable groups has been contracted under the ESF OP 'Development of Human Resources'.

### Reporting and monitoring

Reporting on the implementation of the horizontal themes is done both on the programme and the project level by using the indicators described earlier. **At the programme level**, strategic context indicators under Priority Axis 2 are reviewed and reported annually (see Table 1). Annual Implementation Report of the OP has a chapter on the implementation of horizontal priorities and partnership. For example, the Annual Implementation Report 2008<sup>213</sup> mentioned that a working group on the horizontal themes was created and described its functions. It also informed on trainings on horizontal issues and guidance documents under preparation (see the 'Management' section of this case study). As the implementation of the OP only actually started in 2008, no achievements of projects were reported.

The OP Monitoring Committee monitors the implementation progress of the OPs, and assesses, checks and approves relevant documents (including selection criteria of the interventions) concerning the OP implementation. It may suggest changes to the OP. The above-mentioned working group on implementation of the horizontal themes may provide suggestions to the Monitoring Committee.

**At the project level**, information on the implementation of the horizontal themes is provided in the interim and final project implementation reports. The reported data has to be disaggregated by gender where possible. The Guidelines on the implementation of horizontal priorities<sup>214</sup> include a detailed **questionnaire on horizontal themes**. After the finalisation of these guidelines, all the final beneficiaries of EU support have to fill in this questionnaire and attach it to the final project implementation report<sup>215</sup>. This information is summarised by the implementing bodies and presented in the OP Annual Implementation Reports.

---

<sup>212</sup> Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services LLP, JSC Economic Consultations and Research. *Ex Ante Evaluation of the Lithuanian Operational Programmes 2007-13: Final Ex Ante Evaluation Report, April 2006*, p. 41-43. <[http://www.esparama.lt/es\\_parama\\_pletra/failai/fm/failai/Vertinimas\\_ESSP\\_Neringos/Final\\_Report\\_Ex\\_ante\\_integruotas\\_2007\\_May.pdf](http://www.esparama.lt/es_parama_pletra/failai/fm/failai/Vertinimas_ESSP_Neringos/Final_Report_Ex_ante_integruotas_2007_May.pdf)>.

<sup>213</sup> Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania. *Operational Programme for Promotion of Cohesion Annual Implementation Report 2008*.

<sup>214</sup> See Annex 5 of the draft *Guidelines on implementation of horizontal priorities in the use of EU structural assistance in 2007-2013*, p. 30-33.

<sup>215</sup> Darius Trakelis, interview, 3/7/2009.

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the OP 'Promotion of Cohesion' is well focused on the needs of the disabled, i.e., professional rehabilitation and better access to public services. Some attention is also devoted to other groups such as women, aged people, youth, and socially-excluded persons. The 'Equal opportunities' cross-cutting theme is mainstreamed into most programme activities and there is a separate priority axis dedicated mostly for improving access to services (healthcare, education, vocational training, and non-stationary social care) by various disadvantaged groups.

Overall, the strongest points of this OP in terms of promoting the themes of Article 16 are the following:

- A developed system of indicators and targets, designed to monitor the situation of (potentially) discriminated-against groups (including the disabled);
- Compliance with equal opportunities and non-discrimination figures among the eligibility criteria, applicable to all project applications;
- A working group that was created to facilitate and to monitor progress with regard to the horizontal themes;
- Guidelines and Practical Manual on the implementation of the horizontal themes on programme and project levels currently under preparation (the Guidelines will be finalised in 2009);
- The principle of partnership has been followed throughout the implementation of the OP. The organisations representing gender equality and various disadvantaged groups were included into this process.

It is still too early to assess the management of projects and their outcomes. Although the implementation system of the 'Equal Opportunities' horizontal priority is well developed, it is too early to make a definite assessment of its actual performance. There is no evidence so far that the guidelines and manual will actually be used to promote equality. The risk of a formal approach is illustrated by the example of various institutions officially available to give advice on equal opportunities' issues; however there is no demand for this.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

*Operational Programme for Promotion of Cohesion for 2007-2013 (and appendices).*

Government of the Republic of Lithuania. *Decision on the approval of the Complement of the Operational Programme for Promotion of Cohesion.* – 23 July 2008, No. 727.

Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services LLP, JSC Economic Consultations and Research. *Ex Ante Evaluation of the Lithuanian Operational Programmes 2007-13: Final Ex Ante Evaluation Report, April 2006.*

Joint Monitoring Committee to monitor implementation of the Human Resources Development Programme, Economic Growth Operational Programme, Promotion of Cohesion and Technical Assistance Operational Programmes, implementing the Strategy for the Use of EU Structural Funds in 2007-2013. Decision of the meeting of 30 October 2007. – 21 December 2007, No. 1.

Working group on horizontal priorities (2009). *Guidelines on implementation of horizontal priorities during absorption of EU structural assistance in 2007-2013 (draft).*

Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania (2009). *Horizontal priorities: practical manual for applicants and project recipients.*

Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania. *Operational Programme for Promotion of Cohesion Annual Implementation Report 2008.*

Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania. *Operational Programme for Promotion of Cohesion Annual Implementation Report 2007.*

Order of the Minister of Finance on the Creation of working group for monitoring implementation of horizontal priorities, No. 1K-138 of 15 April 2008 and Order of the replacement of the latter Order, No. 1K-116 of 16 April 2009.

EU structural support website (<http://www.esparama.lt/2007-2013/lt/>).

Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008).



## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of the interview
1.	Denisovienė	Dainė	Chief Specialist of Programme Monitoring Sub-Division, EU Management Division	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania	2/7/2009
2.	Grigolovičienė	Danguolė	Advisor (on law issues)	Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman	2/7/2009
3.	Juršėnienė	Vanda	Head of the Gender Equality Division, Department of Equal Opportunities and Social Integration	Ministry of Social Security and Labour	7/7/2009 (by telephone)
4.	Kavaliauskaitė	Rasa	President; member	Lithuanian Union of People with Disabilities (president); Council for the Affairs of Disabled at the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania (member)	2/7/2009
5.	Kuodytė-Kazeliienė	Rasa	Senior Specialist of Programme Planning Sub-Division, EU Management Division	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania	2/7/2009
6.	Muliulis	Vytis	Advisor (on law issues)	Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman	2/7/2009
7.	Sabaliauskaitė	Živilė	Senior Specialist of Programme Monitoring Sub-Division, EU Management Division	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania	2/7/2009
8.	Selenienė	Raimonda	Chief Specialist of the Structural Support Policy Division, Department of EU Structural Support	Ministry of Social Security and Labour	7/7/2009 (by telephone)
9.	Smirininkaitė	Indrė	Senior Specialist of Programme Monitoring Sub-Division, EU Management Division	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania	2/7/2009
10.	Trakelis	Darius	Head of the EU Cohesion Policy Division	Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania	3/7/2009 (face-to-face and e-mail)
11.	Vengalė	Laima	Advisor (on law issues)	Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman	2/7/2009

## 9. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'DIGITAL CONVERGENCE': CASE STUDY

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007GR161PO002	Operational Programme "Digital Convergence" 2007-2013	Greece
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Convergence	National	Southern European
<b>Breakdown of finances</b>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
860	215	1.075

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ICT - Information and communication technologies  
 MEUR – million euros  
 NGO – Non-governmental organisation  
 OP – Operational programme  
 SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (analysis method)

### INTRODUCTION

The Greek national OP 'Digital Convergence 2007-2013' is to a large extent a continuation of the OP 'Information Society' from the previous financing period (2000-2006). The strategic objective of the current OP, defined as the "Digital convergence of the country with the EU, capitalizing on the use of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT)". It reflects the strive of the *Greek Digital Strategy 2006-2013* for effective and efficient use of ICT in the Greek economy and society in the context of respective European strategies such as the European Strategy i2010, *Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion* and *Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs 2005-2008*. This objective is derived from the fact that the position of Greece in the ICT sector (e.g. broadband networks penetration) is significantly below that of many other developed countries. The Ministry of Economy and Finance is the designated Managing Authority.

**Figure 10. Area of OP 'Digital Convergence'**



Source: Inforegio

At the time of conducting the case study, the implementation of the OP had only started. Five calls for proposals were launched until May 2009; however, no projects were contracted.

### Priorities, objectives and target groups

The OP is structured around two priority axes:

- Priority Axis 1: Productivity enhancement with the efficient use of ICT.
- Priority Axis 2: ICT and quality of life improvements.

On the one hand, the OP supports interventions related to the ICT contribution to **productivity improvements**, thus providing targeted support for enterprises, the workforce and the public sector (Priority Axis 1). Among the specific measures for this axis are

promotion of ICT use in enterprises, procurement of digital services and promotion of entrepreneurship in the sectors using the ICT. On the other hand, the OP also concerns the ICT contribution to ensuring **accessibility** to new technology and knowledge, the availability of digital services and closing the digital divide (Priority Axis 2). The effort within this priority axis is hence directed towards the improvement of daily life through the spread of ICT use and the development of public digital services.

### **Integration of Article 16**

The OP gives importance to two of the three dimensions of Article 16: **gender equality** and **accessibility for disabled persons** (with disability being understood not only in terms of mobility difficulties, but also visual or mental disabilities, hearing difficulties and other aspects). Specifically, the following features could be singled out:

- The **context analysis** provides statistical data showing differences in the use of ICT, e-commerce and the Internet by gender. The difficulties faced by the disabled in accessing ICT-based services are also discussed. Both gender equality and accessibility themes are reflected in the **SWOT analysis**.
- Measures were undertaken to facilitate integration of the aspect of accessibility into the management process (the creation of a special advisory committee; accessibility requirements followed in providing information on the OP).
- An intensive **partnership** process took part on the national as well as on the regional level during the stage of OP design and elaboration. An ongoing partnership has developed with the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and a NGO representing the disabled (the National Confederation of People with Disabilities). Evidence suggests that partnership and lobbying were vital to ensure systematic integration of the two themes of Article 16.

However, the principle of non-discrimination is referred to neither in the context analysis part nor in the SWOT analysis of the Operational Programme. When mentioned, it actually implies the difficulties encountered by women and insufficient accessibility for the disabled rather than the equal treatment of other groups of population often subject to discrimination. For example, the digital gap is wider for immigrants<sup>216</sup> who make up to 10% of the Greek population (considering legal foreign residents and illegal migrants together)<sup>217</sup>. The aspect of non-discrimination is not sufficiently addressed due to the absence of a legally binding requirement, segmentation and lack of institutional coordination of the bodies promoting equality (with the partial exception of gender equality) and the lack of mainstreaming culture in Greece. Conservative attitudes and reluctance to undertake measures to boost equality prevail in Greek society.

## **PROGRAMME DESIGN**

### **Strategic choices**

The **context analysis** devotes some attention to the difficulties faced by disabled persons and women. For instance, the data of 2008 shows that the percentage of women using standard ICT applications is lower than that of men across all age groups (with the difference ranging from 2% to 18%) even though the situation of women has been improving. The analysis also highlights the difficulties faced by the disabled in accessing ICT. These two themes are wellreflected in the SWOT analysis.

Among the two **priority axes**, the second one provides for some important targeted interventions. It foresees regionally targeted measures aimed at population groups with a limited access to digital technologies. These interventions aim to (a) ensure access of all citizens to new technologies and knowledge, and (b) increase the availability of digital services and elimination of all aspects of the digital divide (in terms of geographical, age, gender,

---

<sup>216</sup> Greek Observatory for the Information Society (2007). *Assessment of digital gap for people with disabilities, migrants and aged workers; results, conclusions, recommendations*.

<sup>217</sup> The findings of the Greek national census 2001 show there are 800,000 people of foreign nationality living in Greece. According to a recent study of the Institute of Migration Policy, the number of illegal immigrants is estimated between 172,250 and 209,402.

disability and other inequalities). Furthermore, these interventions will (c) help the development of applications that would ensure uninterrupted, high quality, and safe digital public services. ICT accessibility provisions for the disabled will be pursued, based on internationally recognized guidelines and standards (the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and the Web Accessibility Initiative).

### Indicators and targets

No indicators and targets have been disaggregated by gender (or any other of the groups mentioned in Article 16) and no specific equality indicators have been set.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

During the project appraisal process, each application is checked for compliance with national and EU legislation. This section examines whether the application respects the rules for public procurement, environmental protection, gender equality and accessibility for the disabled<sup>218</sup>. There are two selection criteria dealing with the equality-related themes. The criterion B-3 asks if there are any measures taken to ensure the **prevention of discrimination** related to disability, race, ethnic origin, religion, belief, age and sexual orientation. Another criterion (B-4) deals with **accessibility** and requires the projects to ensure:

- suitable access of persons with any kind of disability to the physical and/or built environment;
- suitable access of these persons to the available services;
- access to information via ICT according to international standards, and available equipment and notional interpretation<sup>219</sup>.

If a proposal undertakes commitments in the area of the prevention of discrimination and accessibility and is approved for support, these commitments become a part of its contractual obligations and are monitored during the implementation process.

### Management

The Guidebook to the Management and Control Systems discusses the questions of ensuring the compliance of operations with the national and EU rules on equality (adhering to the rules dealing with public procurement, state support, and environmental protection). It states that during the implementation of projects the principles of gender equality, non-discrimination, and accessibility for disabled persons have to be observed and checked (this also includes on-site controls)<sup>220</sup>.

There are also institutional mechanisms to ensure the integration of the dimensions of Article 16:

- A **technical advisory committee** consisting of the representatives of the Managing Authority and of the National Confederation of Persons with Disabilities. The committee tackles the difficulties identified in integrating equality provisions (the aspect of the accessibility for the disabled) into the implementation of all Greek OPs.
- The **Special Service for Institutional Support** under the Ministry of Economy and Finance provides advice regarding implementation of the OP (e.g. the publishing of various guidelines and documents on OP implementation). Among other questions, this Service provides advice on equality and on access for the disabled<sup>221</sup>.

---

<sup>218</sup> Ministry of Economy and Finance (2008), *Guidebook to the Management and Control System of EU Co-financed Operations*.

<sup>219</sup> The Assessment Criteria for the Approval of Operations within OP 'Digital Convergence'.

<sup>220</sup> *Guidebook to the Management and Control System of EU Co-financed Operations*.

<sup>221</sup> Official Gazette No 333 / February 29<sup>th</sup> 2008 on the establishment of National Strategic Reference Framework Special Service of Institutional Support.

The **cross-financing** option will be used for training under both priority axes. However, it is yet not possible to say if this will be used by projects to address equality issues, as the OP is still in its initial stages. There is also an intention to devote a certain share of the overall OP budget for the promotion of gender equality (this provision was introduced at the request of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality). The actual amount of this funding allocation will be defined later by the Monitoring Committee.

### **Information and publicity measures**

As the implementation of OP is still in its early stages, publicity events have not been numerous. The most important publicity events aimed at presenting the OP to various stakeholders. Among them, women organizations and organizations of the disabled were invited to participate (on both national and regional levels). In addition, upon the recommendation of the National Confederation of People with Disabilities, the Managing Authority intends to organise a new workshop targeting all categories of the disabled.

The websites presenting the OP and the Managing Authority have versions adapted for disabled. Furthermore, the Terms of Reference for the service contract to publicize the OP also include the provision that publicity material should be accessible to the disabled.

### **Partnership**

Various potential final beneficiaries and economic and social partners took part in the consultation process on the preparation of the OP (which included meetings and workshops). A number of useful proposals were received from the women's representative bodies and the disabled persons' organisations, and the official position is that they were taken into consideration.

Among the most active organisations in preparing and lobbying for their proposals were the General Secretariat for Gender Equality under the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Public Administration and the NGO National Confederation of People with Disabilities, which has been representing the disabled in Greece since the late 1980s. As a result, both the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and the National Confederation of People with Disabilities had contributed significantly to the OP drafting process and the OP implementation. These two bodies also delegate permanent voting members to the Monitoring Committee.

## **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING**

### **Monitoring**

The bodies promoting equal opportunities are represented in the Monitoring Committee. Among its members, there is one representative from the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and one from the National Confederation of People with Disabilities. Both of them have full voting rights. Furthermore, a representative from the Roma population network is invited to take part in Monitoring Committee meetings, yet only on certain occasions as s/he is not a permanent member with voting rights. The Ministerial Act on the establishment of Monitoring Committee states that effort will be made to ensure gender balance among the members of the Monitoring Committee<sup>222</sup>. This has been achieved as the number of men is only slightly higher than that of women in the Committee.

### **Evaluation**

The summary of ex-ante evaluation is provided in the OP text. The evaluation noted the commitment of the OP to take up positive actions in favour of women and people with disabilities. It also emphasised the possible positive contribution of the technical committee on the inclusion of the disabled (see the section entitled 'Management').

According to the Terms of Reference for ongoing evaluation of the OP (the service provider is to be selected by the end of summer 2009, for at least two years), there will be specific

---

<sup>222</sup> Official Gazette No 203 / February 08<sup>th</sup>, 2008 on the establishment of OP 'Digital Convergence' MC.

requirements to assess to what extent the three equality dimensions of Article 16 have been addressed. This evaluation is to be carried out at the sub-measure level of the OP.

## Reporting

Given the recent start of the OP implementation process, there has not been so far any reporting done on the project level. Nevertheless, the 'Guidebook to the Management and Control System of EU Co-financed Operations' says that all project beneficiaries will have to report on the implementation of Article 16 based on disaggregated information (the aspects of gender equality and inclusion of the disabled (i.e., accessibility)).

The progress in terms of equality promotion will be reflected in the Programme Annual Implementation Report. There is a requirement to provide information in this Report on the measures taken to address equal opportunities, their effectiveness, and the fulfilment of the criteria of accessibility for the disabled during the selection process<sup>223</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

The OP goes beyond the general statements about the right to equal opportunities for all, and foresees ways to make this a reality through positive measures, especially targeting women and the disabled. This is mainly because of the very active involvement of relevant stakeholders: the state equality institution (the General Secretariat for Gender Equality) and of the non-governmental organization representing all the categories of the disabled population (the National Confederation of People with Disabilities).

Meanwhile, only limited reference is made to other vulnerable groups who have marginal or no access to ICT (namely immigrants, Roma etc.). National legislation does not provide an effective framework to protect of these groups (i.e. legally-binding rules). The representatives of these groups have not been involved into the process of OP implementation.

Although it is still difficult to say how the actual implementation of projects will proceed, some good practices can be already identified at this stage:

- The wide consultation process held on the national as well as on the regional level during the OP design and elaboration;
- The inclusion of representatives of a national body for gender equality and an organization of disabled persons in the Monitoring Committee;
- The creation of a technical advisory committee (which includes the representatives of the National Confederation of Persons with Disabilities) for advice on accessibility;
- The ongoing partnership with the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and National Confederation of People with Disabilities, especially in the identification and elaboration of the criteria for project assessment, selection and implementation (including on-site visits).

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

Assessment of digital gap for people with disabilities, migrants and aged workers; results, conclusions, recommendations. Greek Observatory for the Information Society, October 2007.

Decree on the Annual Implementation Report of 2007-2013 OPs / National Strategic Reference Framework Special Service for Strategy, Planning & Evaluation of Development Programmes.

Greek National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013 / Ministry of Economy and Finance.

Greek Observatory for the Information Society (2009). *Greek female population and new technologies*.

Ministry of Economy and Finance (2008). *Guidebook to the Management and Control System of EU Co-financed Operations*.

National Strategy for Equal Opportunities 2007.

Official Gazette No 203 / February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 on the establishment of OP 'Digital Convergence' MC.

Official Gazette No 267 / December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007, Volume I, on Law 3614/2007 for the National Strategic Reference Framework management.

---

<sup>223</sup> Decree on the Annual Implementation Report of 2007-2013 OPs / National Strategic Reference Framework Special Service for Strategy, Planning & Evaluation of Development Programmes.

Official Gazette No 333 / February 29<sup>th</sup> 2008 on the establishment of National Strategic Reference Framework: National Strategic Reference Framework Special Service of Institutional Support. OP "Digital Convergence 2007-2013" and annexes (including simplified version of non-compulsory Programme Complement).  
 Social Inclusion Strategy for Greece 2008-2010.  
 The Assessment Criteria for the Approval of Operations within OP 'Digital Convergence'.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of interview
1.	Zervou	Maria	Specialist of Documentation & Information Directory	General Secretariat for Gender Equality, Hellenic Republic	24/6/2009
2.	Kantsos	Leonardos	Specialist of Special Service for Strategy, Planning & Evaluation / Development Programmes	Ministry of Economy and Finance	25/6/2009
3.	Triantafyllou	Matthoula	Head of National Coordination Unit / Special Service of Institutional Support	Ministry of Economy and Finance	26/6/2009
4.	Vardakastanis	Yannis	President; Member of the Monitoring Committee	National Confederation of Persons with Disabilities	26/6/2009
5.	Logaras	Dimitris	Manager	National Confederation of Persons with Disabilities	26/6/2009
6.	Yiavouras	Emmanouil	Head of the Managing Authority of OP 'GC' / Planning Unit	Ministry of Economy and Finance	30/6/2009 2/7/2009*
7.	Tsoumanis	Panayotis	Head of the National Coordination Unit / Unit for Cash-flow and Specific Issues	Ministry of Economy and Finance	1/7/2009*
8.	Skiri	Aliki	Head of the Special Applications Service – an Intermediate Body; surrogate member of the Monitoring Committee	General Secretariat for Gender Equality, Hellenic Republic	1/7/2009 2/7/2009*
9.	Sakelis	Yannis	Deputy Ombudsman (for social protection, health and social solidarity issues)	Greek Ombudsman Office	2/7/2009
10.	Koliva	Vasiliki	Head/ Managing Authority of OP 'GC' / Publicity Unit	Ministry of Economy and Finance	2/7/2009*

\* Phone interviews. All other interviews have been conducted face-to-face.

## 10. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'LOWER SILESIA': CASE STUDY

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007PL161PO005	Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013	Poland
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Convergence	Regional	Eastern European
<i>Breakdown of finances</i>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
1,213	186	1,400

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

ESF – European Social Fund

ICT – Information and communication technologies

MEUR – million euros

NGO – Non-governmental organisation

OP – Operational programme

SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (analysis method)

### INTRODUCTION

The Regional Operational Programme of Lower Silesia<sup>224</sup> is one of 16 regional voivodeship-level<sup>225</sup> ERDF Operational Programmes implemented in Poland during the 2007-2013 programming period. Functions of the Managing Authority are performed by the Government of the Lower Silesian Voivodeship, an institution of local self-government.

By mid-2009, 87 support contracts had been signed under this Programme, which account to only a relatively small part of its activities<sup>226</sup>. The latest approved report was for 2007, while the report for 2008, approved by the Programme Monitoring Committee was pending approval of the European Commission. Annual Implementation Report 2008 states that some progress was made, for instance in terms of the commitment to create a specific number of jobs for women in approved projects<sup>227</sup>.

<sup>224</sup> Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, p. 59.

<sup>225</sup> An administrative unit in Poland, comparable to county.

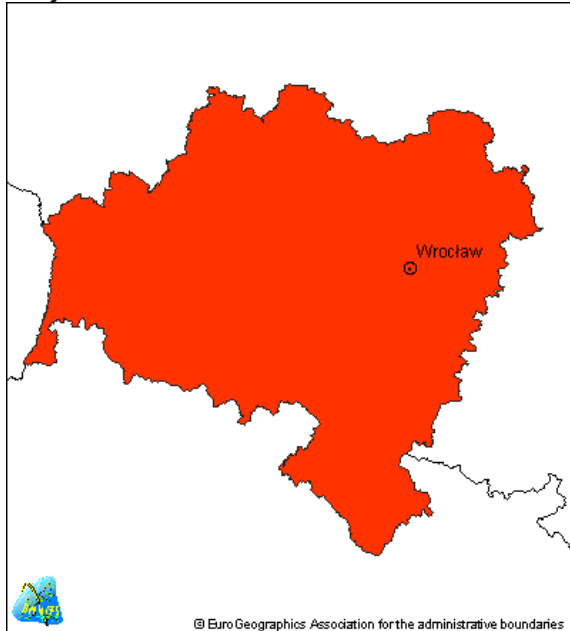
<sup>226</sup> <http://www.mapa.fundusze-strukturalne.gov.pl>.

<sup>227</sup> Annual Implementation Report of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013: Year 2008.



As a programme under the Structural Funds' objective of 'Convergence', it covers a relatively wide scope of intervention areas. The strategy of the Programme is organised around three strategic goals:

**Figure 11. Lower Silesia (geographical area covered by the OP)**



Source: Inforegio

infrastructure;

Priority Axis 9: Revitalisation of degraded urban areas;

Priority Axis 10: Technical assistance.

- Development of economic activity, based on knowledge and innovation;
- Development of physical infrastructure (more specifically: areas of environment, investment conditions and business activity);
- Development of social infrastructure.

These three overarching goals are broken down into **10 priority axes**:

Priority Axis 1: Growth of competitiveness (support to enterprises);

Priority Axis 2: Development of information society;

Priority Axis 3: Development of transport infrastructure;

Priority Axis 4: Improvement of natural environment, improvement of ecological and flood safety;

Priority Axis 5: Environmentally-friendly energy infrastructure;

Priority Axis 6: Development of tourism and cultural spa potential;

Priority Axis 7: Development and modernisation of education infrastructure;

Priority Axis 8: Modernisation of health

### Integration of Article 16

The OP takes the aspects of gender equality and accessibility for disabled persons into account:

- Context analysis describes the situation of women and disabled persons;
- Equal opportunities are among the horizontal (cross-cutting) principles;
- Gender-disaggregated indicators are used, and there are targets for addressing the needs of other disadvantaged groups;
- All projects are required not to have a negative impact on Article 16 themes, while projects addressing Article 16 themes get additional points during selection;
- There are provisions for integrating the equality and non-discrimination concerns into the process of programme management (on-the-spot checks), partnership and monitoring (the groups representing gender and the disabled are involved), and reporting (there is a section on equal opportunities in the Annual Implementation Report).

### Socio-economic and policy context

The Polish socio-political context in terms of equality is complex. Poland ranks among the most tolerant countries in the EU in ethnic and religious dimensions. The Poles claim to be comfortable having a person from a different ethnic origin or a different religion or belief as a neighbour<sup>228</sup>. They also report a tolerant attitude towards Roma: a majority of respondents (58%) say they would feel comfortable having a Roma neighbour<sup>229</sup>.

<sup>228</sup> Respective national scores are 9.1 and 9.2 (when 10 is „totally comfortable“). Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 “Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes” (2008), p. 41, 71.

<sup>229</sup> The average score in the country is 7.5, while the EU average equals 6.0. Ibid., p. 43.

The 2008 Eurobarometer public opinion survey also reveals that 36% of Polish respondents know their rights in case of discrimination or harassment (this is slightly higher than the European average of 33%)<sup>230</sup>. They also do not think that discrimination on the basis of gender or ethnic origin is a serious problem (only 25%-28% respectively say that such discrimination is widespread)<sup>231</sup>. The level of perceived discrimination is higher with regard to age (34% say age discrimination is widespread), disability (38%) and sexual orientation (52%)<sup>232</sup>.

However, the institutional framework for countering discrimination and ensuring equality has weaknesses. Until 2005 Poland had an equality body (Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men). This body reported to the Prime Minister not only on gender equality issues, but also on other grounds of discrimination<sup>233</sup>. However, the equality body was abolished and its functions were taken over by the Department of Women, Family and Counteracting Discrimination of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy<sup>234</sup>.

The Polish national bill on the equal status of women and men has not been adopted by the Parliament yet, although its first reading was held in as early as 1997<sup>235</sup>. In May 2009, the Commission referred Poland to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) as it had not transposed the EU rules prohibiting gender discrimination in access to and supply of goods and services (Directive 2004/113/EC) to the national law. The deadline to bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with the Directive expired on 21 December 2007<sup>236</sup>.

Polish non-governmental organizations working in the field of equal opportunities are outspoken and critical of the government's equality policies. In Lower Silesia, there are representatives of the big national advocacy organizations such as the Polish Democratic Women's Union as well as bodies working specifically in this region. The organisations which promote women's rights co-operate under the Lower Silesian Platform of Women's Groups and Associations.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Context analysis

In the analysis part of the OP there are several issues identified that are related to groups which fall within the scope of Article 16. The two most important groups in this respect referred to in the document are (a) **women** and (b) **disabled persons**.

The unsatisfactory situation of women is discussed, and includes an analysis of several spheres of socio-economic life, especially the labour market situation and unemployment figures. For instance, it is stated that unemployment rate among women is higher than the average; this is also mentioned as a weakness in the SWOT analysis. An entire sub-section in the analysis chapter is devoted to the analysis of the situation of the disabled. The Programme underlines the following issues: disabled persons make up 15% of the total regional population and are in a disadvantaged position in a number of spheres of social-economic life, including things such

---

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., p. 35-36; 75.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., p. 61, 48, 54.

<sup>233</sup> Eleonora Zielinska, "Equal Opportunities for Women and Men: Monitoring law and practice in Poland". International Women's Programme, 2005, p. 24, 26. <[http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/articles\\_publications/publications/equal\\_20050502/eowmpoland\\_2005.pdf](http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/articles_publications/publications/equal_20050502/eowmpoland_2005.pdf)>.

<sup>234</sup> Maria Kahlau, "Gender mainstreaming in Polish practice". Conference "For Diversity against Discrimination – The EU Equality-Acquis: Experiences, Problems and Opportunities", GenderKompetenzZentrum, Berlin, 19-21<sup>st</sup> of April 2007, p. 3-4. <[http://www.genderkompetenz.info/w/files/gkompzpdf/taixex\\_maria\\_kahlau.pdf](http://www.genderkompetenz.info/w/files/gkompzpdf/taixex_maria_kahlau.pdf)>

<sup>235</sup> Śląska strefa gender, "Projekt ustawy o równym statusie kobiet i mężczyzn". <[http://www.gender.pl/readarticle.php?article\\_id=36&rowstart=0](http://www.gender.pl/readarticle.php?article_id=36&rowstart=0)> Gender equality principle is, however, postulated in the Polish Constitution and the Labour Code.

<sup>236</sup> European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, "Commission refers Poland to European Court of Justice on gender equality legislation". 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

<<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=511&furtherNews=yes>>

as employment, enrolment in educational institutions, and participation in professional activities, among others.

### **Strategic choices**

The Operational Programme mentions Article 16 explicitly in its strategy section. The theme of "equal opportunities" is presented as one of the cross-cutting horizontal priorities of the programme. It is formulated both as a response to the issues identified in the analysis section as well as a principle aimed at ensuring compliance with the horizontal policies of the EU. In addition to women and disabled persons, ethnic minorities are mentioned as another group whose interests need to be taken into account.

### **Indicators and targets**

The aspect of equal opportunities between men and women is reflected by the **disaggregation** of one of the most basic result indicators applied by the Programme, which is the number of created jobs. Hence, from the level of each activity and upwards, one of the result indicators is the above-mentioned number of created jobs, which is disaggregated to present separately the number of jobs for women.

There are some variations here **depending on the nature of the specific intervention area**. For example:

- The number of jobs in the R&D sector in Activity 1.1. "Investment for enterprises"<sup>237</sup> and Activity "1.4. Infrastructure, supporting innovativeness and entrepreneurship in the region"<sup>238</sup>;
- The number of jobs in SMEs in the above-mentioned Activity 1.1 "Investment for enterprises"<sup>239</sup>;
- The number of jobs in the tourism sector applied throughout separate activities of Priority 6 ("Tourism").

In all these cases the number of created jobs is disaggregated by gender.

Some indicators reflect how the Programme responds to the needs of **disabled people**. For instance, in all of the separate activities under Priorities 6 ('Tourism'), 7 ('Education') and 8 ('Healthcare'), one of the output indicators is "number of objects/facilities adapted to the needs of disabled people". Moreover, under Priority 7, there is a result-level indicator referring to disabled persons: the number of disabled students/people benefiting from infrastructure created by the project<sup>240</sup>.

Activity 9.1 ("Revitalisation of degraded urban areas in cities/towns having over 10 thousand inhabitants") has an indicator aimed towards **other disadvantaged groups**, showing the number of projects which offer services, promote equal opportunities and prevent social exclusion of national minorities and young people<sup>241</sup>.

## **PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Project selection**

All projects must have **at least a neutral impact** on the three prioritised 'horizontal themes' of the Programme (equal opportunities for men and women; the environment; and the information society). Hence it can be assumed that all the operations financed under the Programme undergo this basic check for compatibility with the policy of equal opportunities.

<sup>237</sup> Detailed Description of Priorities of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, p. 194.

<sup>238</sup> Detailed Description of Priorities of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, p. 197.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid, p. 194.

<sup>240</sup> Criteria of Selection of Operations Financed under the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, p. 216.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

Infrastructure projects have to take into account the needs of the disabled (in activities '3.2. Rail transport', '3.3. Urban and suburban transport').

Moreover, in certain programme areas, **additional evaluation points** are given for the project's positive impact on equal opportunities. Hence, in two activities under Priority 1 ('1.1. Investment for enterprises' and '1.2. Consulting services for firms or support to institutions of business environment') an additional point is awarded if a project "has a positive impact on the policy of equal opportunities"<sup>242</sup>. In the case of 'Activity 9.2. Support to enterprises in the sector of accommodation in towns with less than 10 thousand inhabitants', a project's positive impact on the policy of equal opportunities can fetch up to 2 points<sup>243</sup>.

In some cases, the application of specific criteria related to dimensions of Article 16 are not entirely direct, but rather implemented through **additional clarification**. For instance, the Detailed Description of Priorities mentions that, under Priority 9 ('Revitalisation of Urban Areas'), preference will be given to projects which relate to the improvement of living conditions of immigrants, national and ethnic minorities or refugees<sup>244</sup>. This is not presented as a specific selection criterion, but expressed via the "project's compatibility with the provisions of the Regional Operational Programme", with a special explanatory note in the annex explaining this connection<sup>245</sup>. In a similar vein, an additional explanatory note in the annex clarifies that in the case of 'Activity 2.1. Infrastructure of information society', the "policy of equal opportunities" (featured in the selection criteria) must take into account the needs of disabled people<sup>246</sup>.

Given the available information, it is not easy to judge to what extent these principles are implemented. An NGO (the Democratic Union of Women – Wrocław Club) that was interviewed expressed the opinion that the issue of equal opportunities should be given more prominence at the project selection stage and at various other stages of programme implementation, especially in terms of involvement of various organisations working in the area of women's rights, which are among the most active in all of Poland. This organisation shared the impression that the members of project selection committees are not well aware of equal opportunities and should therefore be trained on this<sup>247</sup>.

## Management

The main institution having an overall responsibility for the implementation of the principles of equal opportunities, non-discrimination and accessibility for the disabled is the Managing Authority. For instance, the Managing Authority organises the **training of officials** of relevant institutions engaged in the Programme implementation. Topics dealt with in these trainings include relevant horizontal EU policies, such as equal opportunities and non-discrimination<sup>248</sup>. The central coordination and supervision is carried out by the Polish Ministry of Regional Development (for instance, this Ministry organised a training for Managing Authorities (including the Lower Silesian Voivodeship), encompassing, among other things, areas relating to Article 16)<sup>249</sup>.

Within the Managing Authority (or in the framework of the Programme as a whole), there is no person or a special body appointed specifically for questions of equal opportunities. Instead, the supervision of the application of such policies is undertaken by several officials throughout

---

<sup>242</sup> Criteria of Selection of Operations Financed under the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, p. 16.

<sup>243</sup> Criteria of Selection of Operations Financed under the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, p. 97.

<sup>244</sup> Detailed Description of Priorities of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, p. 164.

<sup>245</sup> Criteria of Selection of Operations Financed under the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, p. 142.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid, p. 124.

<sup>247</sup> Communication with Ms. Renata Berent- Mieszczanowicz, Head of Wrocław Club of the Polish Democratic Women's Union.

<sup>248</sup> Communication with Ms Maja Łukaszewska-Krawiec, 7-14/7/2009.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

the Programme implementation process. At the stage of project selection, it is done by officials who make a formal assessment of applications, or by experts who perform a content evaluation of formally eligible projects.

The typical support contract with a beneficiary includes a **standard clause**, by which the beneficiary undertakes to respect the principles of equal opportunities, non-discrimination and access for the disabled. The typical contract also includes a clause, allowing the Managing Authority to terminate the contract in case of a breach of its provisions by the beneficiary (which would imply also any breaches of commitments in the area of equal opportunities). Up to now, no such contract terminations have occurred under the Programme<sup>250</sup>.

In the course of project implementation these aspects are supervised by the Operations Control Unit of the Managing Authority. Among the procedures of this Operations Control Unit, there is a **check-list for horizontal policies** of the Community on the basis of which officials may ask project beneficiaries to provide information on such things as the implementation of the principles of equal opportunities, non-discrimination and accessibility of project activities to disabled people, among other things<sup>251</sup>.

Declarations of project beneficiaries concerning the project's impact on equal opportunities (neutral or positive) are later verified by **on-the-spot checks** carried out by representatives of the Intermediate Body (either regular checks at project completion or unplanned checks of selected projects). Control Teams of the Intermediate Body acting on the basis of their check-lists check aspects such as removal of physical obstacles, removal of job duties which are overwhelmingly difficult from the physical point of view, facilitation of servicing of machines and equipment, criteria of employment and remuneration of workers. In case of detected discrepancies relevant recommendations are provided to beneficiaries, who must take the necessary corrective steps. The above-named Control Teams are responsible for the overall implementation of this control process<sup>252</sup>.

### **Use of cross-financing instrument**

The use of the instrument of cross-financing (limited ESF-type support) is provided for in several specific activities of the whole Programme (a total of 8 activities out of 30)<sup>253</sup>. At the moment (as of 30 June 2009) **cross-financing is planned** in 11 projects under 'Activity 1.1. Investment for enterprises' where support contracts have already been concluded. It is not clear, however, whether and how this instrument will contribute to the dimensions of Article 16. Priority 9 ('Revitalisation of urban areas') is another area where an active application of this instrument is envisaged. Concerning the nature of this priority (orientation towards degraded urban areas and disadvantaged groups), one could expect that the cross-financing instrument might be useful for the promotion of equality, non-discrimination and accessibility for the disabled, but at the current date, data is too scarce to draw more definite conclusions, as no contracts have been concluded<sup>254</sup>.

### **Information and publicity measures**

In the area of information and publicity, the Managing Authority follows an approach of equal and non-discriminating provision of information to all groups of society, social-economic partners, etc. This means that none of the groups in society may be discriminated in providing information, but there are no positive information and publicity actions envisaged specifically for groups mentioned in Article 16<sup>255</sup>. The lack of targeted information and publicity measures was mentioned by the interviewee from the Democratic Union of Women – Wrocław Club<sup>256</sup>.

---

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Detailed Description of Priorities of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013.

<sup>254</sup> Communication with Ms Maja Łukaszewska-Krawiec, 14/7/2009.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> Communication with Ms. Renata Berent- Mieszczanowicz, Head of Wrocław Club of the Polish Democratic Women's Union.

## Partnership

Various social-economic partners took part at various stages of Programme preparation and implementation, including preparation of the draft Operational Programme itself, the indicative list of key projects, project selection criteria, and preparation of specific applications (including, for instance, the Unit of Affairs of Disabled Persons in the Government of Lower Silesian Voivodeship). Social-economic partners are consulted during the programme implementation, as pointed out by the Managing Authority, with a large part of this communication taking place via e-mail and on special internet forums<sup>257</sup>.

Representatives of two organisations working on issues related to Article 16, are included in the Programme Monitoring Committee: Democratic Union of Women – Wrocław Club and the Wrocław Sejmik of Organisations of Disabled Persons.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Monitoring

As mentioned above, representatives of the Democratic Union of Women – Wrocław Club and the Wrocław Sejmik of Organisations of Disabled Persons are members of the Programme Monitoring Committee. Out of the total 47 members of the Monitoring Committee, 10 are women. This means the principle of balanced representation is not observed, although a tentative plan of the OP was to ensure an “adequate proportion of women” in the Committee. Discussion on equal opportunities has been lacking in the Monitoring Committee, according to the representative of the above-mentioned women’s organisation, the Democratic Union of Women – Wrocław Club<sup>258</sup>.

### Evaluation and reporting

Overall, the aspects of equal opportunities, non-discrimination and access to the disabled have received relatively limited coverage in the evaluation and reporting activities thus far. The **ex-ante evaluation report** of the Programme provides rather scant coverage in this respect. The conclusion is that issues related to Article 16 are not addressed in this stage.

**Annual Implementation Reports** include a subsection regarding the “Impact on the policy of equal opportunities” in the description of each priority. At the moment, the latest approved Report is for the year 2008. Due to the lack of data at the current stage, the Report does not provide much relevant information, yet there is some progress reported, such as the commitment to create a specific number of jobs for women in approved projects. One could expect that, as time passes and more projects get under way, these sub-sections will become expanded upon with relevant information<sup>259</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

All in all, the OP made relevant steps to integrate such themes as gender equality and accessibility to disabled persons:

- The programme requires **consistent application** (or mainstreaming) of the cross-cutting themes “at each stage of the programme implementation”<sup>260</sup>;
- In operational terms, this is expressed by inclusion of the **obligatory criterion** of the “Impact on the policy of equal opportunities” in the selection of all the projects – i.e., all the projects are required to have at least a ‘neutral’ impact;
- Project indicators are **disaggregated** by gender; there are output-level indicators devoted to the disabled and other disadvantaged groups;

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Communication with Ms. Renata Berent- Mieszczanowicz, Head of Wrocław Club of the Polish Democratic Women’s Union.

<sup>259</sup> Annual Implementation Report of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013: Year 2008.

<sup>260</sup> Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, p. 59.

- The social partners representing women and the disabled **were consulted** during the programme's drafting process, and take part in the Programme Monitoring Committee;
- Annual Implementation Reports of the programme **will provide information** on the achievements in terms of equal opportunities under each of the programme's priorities.

The programme also has some gaps and weaknesses. It takes a narrow approach with regard to discriminated groups (only gender and disability aspects are given consideration, while limited attention is given to ethnicity/ immigrant background). It remains to be seen whether or not the diversified system of project selection ensures that funding is given to projects beneficial for the equality situation. Despite the requirement to contribute to equal opportunities (or at least not to infringe them), no advice or guidance arrangements have been envisaged. Few relevant management actions were undertaken and the questions of equality/ non-discrimination are not addressed in the process of evaluation so far. In addition, gender balance is not observed in the Programme Monitoring Committee.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

- Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013 (Regionalny Program Operacyjny dla Województwa Dolnośląskiego na lata 2007-2013)
- Description of Management and Control System of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013 (Opis systemu zarządzania i kontroli Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego dla Województwa Dolnośląskiego na lata 2007-2013)<sup>261</sup>
- Detailed Description of Priorities of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013 (Szczegółowy opis priorytetów Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego dla Województwa Dolnośląskiego na lata 2007-2013)<sup>262</sup>
- Criteria of Selection of Operations Financed under the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013 (Kryteria wyboru operacji finansowanych w ramach Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego dla Województwa Dolnośląskiego na lata 2007-2013)<sup>263</sup>
- Guide to the Criteria of Selection of Operations Financed under the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013 (Przewodnik po Kryteriach wyboru operacji finansowanych w ramach Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego dla Województwa Dolnośląskiego na lata 2007-2013)<sup>264</sup>
- Annual Implementation Report of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013: Year 2008 (Sprawozdanie roczne z wdrażania Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego dla Województwa Dolnośląskiego na lata 2007-2013: rok sprawozdawczy 2008)<sup>265</sup>
- Annual Implementation Report of the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013: Year 2007 (Sprawozdanie roczne z wdrażania Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego dla Województwa Dolnośląskiego na lata 2007-2013: rok sprawozdawczy 2007)<sup>266</sup>
- Beneficiary's Guide under the Regional Operational Programme for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2007-2013, with the Exclusion of Activities 1.1 and 1.2 and the Priority 10: Version No 6 (Poradnik dla Beneficjenta w ramach Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego dla Województwa Dolnośląskiego na lata 2007-2013 z wyłączeniem Działania 1.1 i 1.2 oraz Priorytetu 10: Wersja nr 6)<sup>267</sup>
- Official website of the Lower Silesian Regional Operational Programme (<http://dolnyslask.pl/default.aspx?docId=3560>)
- Database of SF-supported projects of the Polish Ministry of Regional Development (<http://www.mapa.fundusze-strukturalne.gov.pl/>)

<sup>261</sup> Provided by the Managing Authority.

<sup>262</sup> <http://dolnyslask.pl/default.aspx?docId=3517>.

<sup>263</sup> <http://dolnyslask.pl/default.aspx?docId=3760>.

<sup>264</sup> <http://dolnyslask.pl/default.aspx?docId=3760>.

<sup>265</sup> <http://dolnyslask.pl/default.aspx?docId=3816&mId1=3579>.

<sup>266</sup> <http://dolnyslask.pl/default.aspx?docId=3816&mId1=3579>.

<sup>267</sup> <http://dolnyslask.pl/default.aspx?docId=3779>.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

<b>No.</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Date of the interview</b>
1.	Ratuszniak	Ireneusz	Director	Department of Regional Operational Programme, Government of Lower Silesia	17/6/2009 and 7/7/2009 (by phone and e-mail)
2.	Łukaszewska-Krawiec	Maja	Head of Programming and Evaluation Unit	Department of Regional Operational Programme, Government of Lower Silesia	7/7/2009 and 14/7/2009 (by phone and e-mail)
3.	Berent-Mieszczanowicz	Renata	Head	Wrocław Club of the Polish Democratic Women's Union	9/9/2009 (by phone)



## 11. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'SOUTH GREAT PLAIN': CASE STUDY

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007HU161PO004	'South Great Plain'	Hungary
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Convergence	Regional	Central European
Breakdown of finances		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
749	132	881

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund  
 ESF – European Social Fund  
 MEUR – million euros  
 NGO – non-governmental organisation  
 OP – operational programme

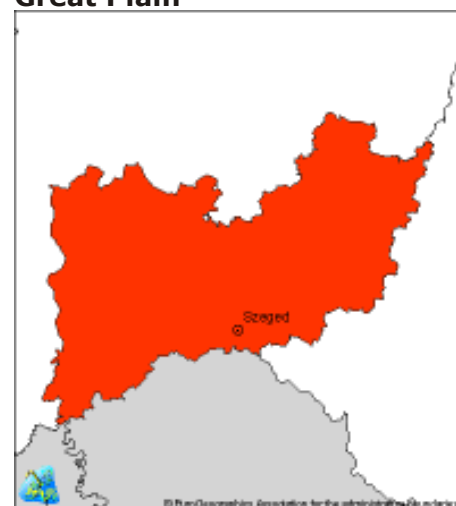
### INTRODUCTION

The OP 'South Great Plain'<sup>268</sup> is a regional ERDF programme implemented in three counties of Hungary (Bács-Kiskun, Békés and Csongrád). The centre of the region is Szeged, located in Csongrád County. The Managing Authority of the programme is a unit within the National Development Agency. There are two intermediate bodies: South Great Plain Regional Development Agency Ltd. (a non-profit organisation) and the VATI Hungarian Non-Profit Company for Regional Development and Town Planning Ltd.

#### Priorities, interventions and targets

The **overall objective** of the programme is to ensure sustainable growth and increased employment, as well as to redress regional imbalances. The OP contributes to the implementation of the so-called 'flagship programmes' that propose targeted solutions to complex problems and are financed from different OPs. The flagship programmes of the South Great Plain region are: 'The Competitiveness Pole Programme'; 'The School of the 21st Century'; 'No

**Figure 12. Geographical area covered by the OP 'South Great Plain'**



Source: Inforegio

<sup>268</sup> South Great Plain Operational Programme (henceforward: OP), p.4.

One Left Behind' (convergence of regions currently lagging behind); 'Chance for Children'; and 'Barrier-free Hungary'. By mid-2009, 614 projects have been selected for funding<sup>269</sup>.

The OP has six **priority axes**:

- Priority Axis 1: Regional economic development;
- Priority Axis 2: Development of tourism;
- Priority Axis 3: Development of the transport infrastructure;
- Priority Axis 4: Human infrastructure development;
- Priority Axis 5: Regional development actions;
- Priority Axis 6: Technical assistance.

### **Integration of Article 16**

The analysis conducted for this case study showed that the three themes of Article 16 have been integrated to some extent:

- The **context analysis** mentions several relevant issues (providing a table on employment rate by gender, and a few health indicators). There is a separate section devoted to Roma issues.
- **Horizontal objectives** (including equal opportunities) are mentioned repeatedly in the text. There are separate sub-sections devoted to these objectives in the sections on strategy, descriptions of each Priority Axis, and in the implementing provisions. However, the statements appearing in the description of priority axes are standard, formal and lack argumentation. Priority Axis 4 is different in this respect and makes more consistent references to equality themes.
- The OP undertook a number of relevant commitments in the section on **implementing provisions** (guidelines for the integration of the horizontal principles, dissemination of good practices, taking the equal opportunities aspect into consideration during the selection process, inclusion of relevant partners, and monitoring and special reports on achievements). However some of these commitments proved difficult to implement in practice.

### **Socio-economic and policy context**

The South Great Plain is a predominantly agricultural region which produces 10% of Hungary's GDP and accounts for 13.2% of the population (1.4 million inhabitants). The level of GDP per capita is significantly lower than that of the rest of Hungary and is about 44.2% of the EU average. Five of the most disadvantaged micro-regions of the country are in the South Great Plain. According to Eurobarometer, the self-reported level of discrimination (on the grounds of ethnicity and age) in Hungary is high and has been on the rise during the last 5 years<sup>270</sup>. There is no data specifically on the South Great Plain in this respect.

Formally, numerous anti-discrimination regulations were enacted, with an institutional framework now in place. For instance, organisations applying for EU funding must prepare Equality Action Plans. However implementation remains complicated and discriminatory opinions and practices are visible, especially against the Roma minority.

## **PROGRAMME DESIGN**

### **Strategic choices**

There is a special section in the **analysis part** on the 'Situation of the disadvantaged groups and Roma people'. On the one hand, this demonstrates that Roma issues are indeed considered important and are given special attention. On the other hand, the text itself is short and superficial, providing statistical data rather than an analysis of important challenges.

In the **strategy section**, the OP states explicitly that the provisions of Article 16 will be pursued. In order to do so, a number of measures will be initiated such as: (a) each project

<sup>269</sup> Information on <<http://www.ropter.nfu.hu/index.php>>

<sup>270</sup> Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008).

application has to address equal opportunities; (b) each applicant is expected to introduce equality measures within its organisation. The Roma minority is given the strongest emphasis. It is stated that the integration of this minority will be promoted “through complex social and economic policy interventions rather than through one-off actions”<sup>271</sup>. The OP mentions that it will support measures listed in the programme ‘Decade of Roma Integration’ and other relevant programmes.

In the description of each priority axis there is a section on horizontal issues. It states that equal opportunities are important and have to be pursued, but without providing any details (Table 14).

**Table 14. References to equal opportunities in the description of Priority Axes**

Priority Axis 1	Priority Axis 2	Priority Axis 3	Priority Axis 4	Priority Axis 5
It is necessary to consider equal opportunities for women and for other disadvantaged social groups	Attention must be paid to equal opportunities, especially to encouraging the return of women to employment  Access of disabled persons has to be ensured	Development of transport infrastructure will help disadvantaged people from peripheral regions to access services and workplaces  When investing into transport infrastructure, accessibility for disabled persons has to be considered	Development of human infrastructure will benefit women, men, children and young people, minorities, people with disadvantages, people living in villages and people with disabilities	Development of human infrastructure will benefit women, men, children and young people, minorities, people with disadvantages, people living in villages and people with disabilities

Source: OP.

Priority Axis 4 (Human infrastructure development) takes into consideration the needs of the groups mentioned in Article 16 quite comprehensively. It has three measures, and each of them make relevant points. When investing in the healthcare infrastructure the OP claims to develop an integrated system of healthcare **for the elderly**. In the field of education infrastructure, “special importance will be attached” to integrated education of children with multiple disadvantages “with particular attention to reducing the segregation of the **Roma**”. Furthermore, investments in social infrastructure will allow improvement of family services (including care for the elderly) and will create opportunities for **women** to return to the labour market (taking advantage of child welfare projects and development of daytime social services). In the description of this priority axis, there is a section giving an explicit commitment to ensure **accessibility**: “provision of disabled access and the removal of information communication barriers will enable people with disabilities to use public services”<sup>272</sup>.

Four Priority Axes (1, 2, 4, 5) indicate that they would use **cross-financing**, thus allowing to cover some ESF-type investments in ERDF projects. However, not much detail is provided and it is not clear if any of this cross-financing will actually be used to finance actions aimed at improving equality or preventing discrimination.

### Indicators and targets

Regarding the themes relevant to Article 16, the programme used two types of indicators:

- Indicators on the level of priority axes; Achieving these targets may have indirect impact, e.g. the number of people receiving social services and the increase in the number of children in nurseries.
- Three specific indicators on horizontal priorities at OP level. (see Table 15).

<sup>271</sup> OP, p. 70.

<sup>272</sup> OP. p. 88-91.

The former indicators are

**Table 15. Indicators and targets for the horizontal priorities**

Indicator	Type	Target	Frequency of assessment
Number of women employed full time in jobs created by the programme	Core indicator	435	Annually
Number of disadvantaged people employed full time in jobs created by the programme	Core indicator	150	Annually
Number of disadvantaged students in schools which received support	Result indicator	5000	Annually

Source: OP

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

The OP states that in order to be considered eligible for support, all project applications have to demonstrate respect towards equal opportunities and non-discrimination. In the strategy section, the programme also mentions that applicants "must take steps towards implementing equal opportunities in their organisation"<sup>273</sup>.

The project selection system is designed as follows:

- a) in order to be considered for funding a project has to address **at least one** aspect of equal opportunities;
- b) if a project is considered to have a positive influence on more aspects of equal opportunities, it may **score some additional points** (up to 5 points from a total of 100).

The above-mentioned aspects of equal opportunities are the following:

- 1) the general application of the principle of equal opportunities in the activities, organisation and management of the applicant;
- 2) the reduction of gender gaps and differences;
- 3) a barrier-free environment to enable access for people with disabilities;
- 4) the improvement of the quality of life and labour market integration of people with disabilities;
- 5) the improvement of the quality of life and labour market integration of Roma people;
- 6) the creation of family-friendly workplaces<sup>274</sup>.

All projects applying for support in the field of **education infrastructure** (Priority Axis 4) have to conduct a situation analysis and prepare an operational plan for the promotion of equal opportunities. This measure is important, as it gives for the authorities' financial leverage to prevent segregation of Roma children into separate facilities or classes/ groups<sup>275</sup> which so far has been a rather frequent practice. Furthermore, institutions providing integrated education for children who are (a) with special needs, (b) in disadvantageous situations or (c) in the most disadvantageous micro-regions receive **priority** during the selection process<sup>276</sup>. A somewhat similar practice is applicable to projects submitted for funding under the measure called 'Integrated urban rehabilitation with a social focus' (Priority Axis 5). Each applicant must prepare an urban equal opportunities plan and an anti-segregation plan. The measures for accessibility for disabled persons must also be identified.

<sup>273</sup> OP, p. 69-70.

<sup>274</sup> *Report on the implementation of the OP ' South Great Plain'*, 2008. Approved by the Convergence ROP Monitoring, Committee on June 11, 2009.

<sup>275</sup> Gábor Daróczi, interview, 19/6/2009.

<sup>276</sup> *Guidelines for bidding for projects to improve primary school and general secondary school infrastructures within the South Great Plain Operative Programme*. Project code number: DAOP-2007-4.2.1/2F.

The interviews carried out for this case study showed that in practice this system encounters difficulties. *Firstly*, claims that a project will include Roma as project participants of final beneficiaries (e.g. will generate employment for a certain number of Roma people) are difficult to implement. Hungarian data protection and privacy law is very strict on ethnicity questions: it is forbidden to advertise a job stating that Roma applicants will have priority. *Secondly*, although there are efforts to provide investments aimed at improving access for the disabled, there are cases where buildings or services financed from the OP are not accessible because the surrounding environment (built many years ago, including pedestrian pavements or public transport) does not fulfil accessibility standards. The national legislation in Hungary have provisions on accessibility<sup>277</sup>, yet they are not rigorously enforced.

A network of **local coordinators** (40 persons) was set up in March 2008 to encourage disadvantaged groups to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the OP. Since 2007, these networks provided counselling and help on project application and implementation. They also facilitated activities such as partner search and the creation of consortia<sup>278</sup>. Some of these coordinators specifically target the Roma population. However, Roma people themselves are poorly represented within this network<sup>279</sup>.

## Management

**A Guide on Equal Opportunities** (including accessibility for disabled persons) has been prepared for all the OPs. The OP mentions that each Managing Authority has a responsibility to adapt this Guide to the context of the OP it is responsible for<sup>280</sup>; however there is no evidence that this has been done for OP 'South Great Plain'. The intermediate bodies (along with their other responsibilities) are in charge of providing consultations on integrating the aspects of equal opportunities and accessibility. The network of local coordinators (including those dealing with Roma projects and Roma beneficiaries) gives advice to projects under implementation. It is stated in the OP that the Managing Authority is in charge of supporting and disseminating good practices<sup>281</sup>. Furthermore, there is a commitment in the OP to provide training for public officials on equal opportunities<sup>282</sup>, but the officials interviewed mentioned that such training has not taken place yet (at least for the employees of the intermediate bodies).

Both intermediate bodies have **adapted their websites** to accommodate blind and visually impaired people. However, the building of the South Great Plain Development Agency (Szeged) is not sufficiently accessible for disabled persons. Therefore, the Agency uses what it calls a 'mobile office' (i.e. all the disabled clients are served on the ground floor). The Váti (Békéscsaba) offices are located in building which is accessible to people with physical disabilities.

## Partnership

The OP stated that the National Development Agency "invites comments from social partners and NGOs not just during the preparation of the New Hungary Development Plan and the OPs, but also when elaborating the action plans and calls for proposals"<sup>283</sup>. As a result, a variety of national, regional and local authorities, economic and social partners, representatives of the civil society and other stakeholders were consulted during the **preparation of programme**. The Managing Authority conducted a survey (of local governments, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and business representatives) which, among other questions, asked about the integration of the horizontal criteria.

---

<sup>277</sup> Resolution of the Parliament No 10/2006. (II. 16.) on the New National Programme of Disability Affairs (Based upon the Act No. XXVI. of 1998 on provision of the rights of persons living with disability and their equal of opportunities; Act LXXVIII of 1997 on the formation and protection of the built environment (and its amendment in Act XLIX of 2008).

<sup>278</sup> National Development Agency (2009), "Micro-regional Coordinators had an Eventful and Successful Year." <<http://www.nfu.hu/content/2765>>.

<sup>279</sup> Endre Baráth, interview 19/6/2009.

<sup>280</sup> OP, p. 135.

<sup>281</sup> OP, p.135

<sup>282</sup> OP, p.135.

<sup>283</sup> OP, p. 114.

The representatives of gender equality organisations **lobbied actively** for the integration of the gender dimension in all OPs. They were successful to some extent (e.g. gender equality is among the project eligibility criteria). These organisations initiated training courses aimed at sensitising all stakeholders (including public bodies) on gender equality issues.

The Roma Civil Rights' Foundation was highly critical of the OP. The main argument of this criticism was the fact that Roma ghettos outside towns were made ineligible for urban rehabilitation support programmes (only inner city areas are eligible for these programmes).

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There are two types of monitoring committees: the Convergence Monitoring Committee which deals with all the OPs, and the Regional Monitoring Committee, which was set up specifically for the OP 'South Great Plain'. Three umbrella organizations representing people with disabilities, Roma people, and gender equality are full members of the Convergence Monitoring Committee (the National Disability Council, the Roma Integration Council and the Council for the Social Equality of Men and Women respectively)<sup>284</sup>. These three groups also participate in the work of the Regional Monitoring Committee<sup>285</sup>, i.e.:

- People with disabilities are represented by the delegate of the Békés County association of the Hungarian Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted;
- Ethnic Roma are represented by the head of the office of the National Roma Authority;
- Gender-related issues are represented by the Great Plain Research Institute.

During the interview, the coordinator of the Regional Monitoring Committee mentioned that the Committee does discuss issues which are relevant from the perspective of Article 16 (specifically, the accessibility aspect of projects was discussed)<sup>286</sup>.

The **ex-ante evaluation** provided suggestions concerning the integration of the principle of equal opportunities<sup>287</sup>. The environmental impact assessment of the OP raised some doubts regarding the indicators on sustainability, equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policies<sup>288</sup>. Furthermore, a special ex-ante evaluation of horizontal issues in all Hungarian OPs was prepared<sup>289</sup>. It provided many relevant recommendations but did not discuss specifically the OP 'South Great Plain'. The OP itself does not make any reference to this evaluation.

The intention to provide targeted **information** and to support services for disadvantaged groups is stated in the OP. In practice, when a call for proposals is published the intermediate bodies have a responsibility to inform all the stakeholders and organisations which may be interested in the project (e.g. by e-mail). When it comes to **reporting**, the Annual Implementation Report 2008 states: "The realisation of the horizontal objectives cannot be assessed yet due to the small number of concluded contracts and completed projects"<sup>290</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

Formally, the OP text signals good intentions with regard to integration of equality and non-discrimination, with the Roma minority emphasised in particular. However, not many relevant practices have been actually implemented (this can be partly attributed to the early stage of programme implementation) and the implementation of Article 16 has encountered difficulties.

---

<sup>284</sup> Briefing on the rules governing the choosing of civil members of the monitoring committees (2007) <<http://www.nfu.hu/content/169>>.

<sup>285</sup> Mónika Bullás, interview, 17/6/2009.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> Terra Studio Kft - KSZI Kft. Consortium (2006). *South Great Plain Regional Development Operative Programme (11-28-2006 version), Ex Ante evaluation, 2nd report.*

<sup>288</sup> *South Great Plain OP environmental study, Final report v. 3., Budapest, 2007.*

<sup>289</sup> TÁRKI (2007). *Horizontal ex-ante evaluation of the New Hungary Development Plan Operative Programme.* <<http://www.tarki.hu/en/>>.

<sup>290</sup> *Report on implementation of the South Great Plain OP for 2008*, p. 18.

The strongest points of the OP from the perspective of Article 16 are:

- The integration of horizontal priorities within each priority axis;
- A broad partnership network (the latter extends to both the national and the regional monitoring committees) that includes organisations acting in the field of gender equality, integration of the disabled and integration of Roma;
- An innovative approach of creating a network of local coordinators to help potential applicants from disadvantaged groups;
- Some interventions (in the field of education and social infrastructure) are targeted so that they support the integration of Roma and other discriminated-against groups. The applicants for these priority axes have to prepare operational plans that give consideration to the needs of these groups.

However, many statements still have to be put into practice:

- Mainstreaming is still in the early stages of development. While legal procedures and implementing institutions are in place, enforcement is rather weak, especially in the most disadvantaged regions. The disabled persons are still "invisible citizens" due to an inaccessible environment.
- Personal data protection regulations (while necessary to protect privacy rights) make it more difficult to collect statistical data on some aspects of programme implementation.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

1998. évi XXVI. törvény a fogyatékos személyek jogairól és esélyegyenlőségük biztosításáról [Act XXVI of 1998 on the rights of, and on providing equal opportunity for persons with disabilities].
2003. évi CXXV. Törvény az egyenlő bánásmódról és az esélyegyenlőség előmozdításáról [Act CXXV. of 2003 on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunities].
- A dél-alföldi régió területfejlesztési koncepciója* [Regional Development Concept of the South Great Plain Region];
- Act LXXVIII of 1997 on the formation and protection of the built environment (and its amendment in Act XLIX of 2008);
- Administrative Information on the OP and the Type of Intervention;
- Esélyegyenlőségi Útmutató a Regionális Fejlesztési Programok keretében kiírt Pályázatokhoz, 2008* [Equal Opportunities Guidelines for the Regional Development Programmes, 2008];
- European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Gender mainstreaming of employment policies (2008). *A comparative review of thirty European countries*.
- European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (2007). *Non-discrimination mainstreaming- instruments, case studies and guidelines*.
- Guidelines for bidding for projects to improve primary school and general secondary school infrastructures within the 'South Great Plain' Operational Programme. Project code number: DAOP-2007-4.2.1/2F;
- Jegyzőkönyvek a Konvergencia Regionális Fejlesztési Program Monitoring Bizottság üléseiről. [Minutes of the of the Convergence Regional Development Monitoring Committee meetings];
- Jelentés a Dél-alföldi Operatív Program 2008. évi megvalósításáról* [Report on the Implementation of the OP 'South Great Plain', 2008];
- National Action Programme for Growth and Employment 2008-2010;
- National Development Agency (2009), "Micro-regional Coordinators had an Eventful and Successful Year." <<http://www.nfu.hu/content/2765>>;
- National Strategic Reference Framework, Hungary;
- Operatív programok társadalmi egyeztetése: Op partnerségi kérdőívek és szöveges értékelések* (42 darab) [Social dialogue on the operational programmes. Partnership questionnaires and written evaluations. 42 units] <[http://www.nfu.hu/operativ\\_programok:egyeztetese](http://www.nfu.hu/operativ_programok:egyeztetese)>;
- Resolution of the Parliament No 10/2006. (II. 16.) on the New National Programme of Disability Affairs (Based upon the Act No. XXVI. of 1998 on provision of the rights of persons living with disability and their equal of opportunities;
- Segédlet a komplex akadály-mentesítés*
- South Great Plain OP environmental study*, Final report v. 3., Budapest, 2007.
- South Great Plain Operational Programme;
- Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008).
- TÁRKI (2007). *Az Új Magyarország Fejlesztési Terv Operatív Programjainak horizontális ex-ante értékelése*. [Horizontal Ex-ante Evaluation of the Operational Programmes of the New Hungary Development Plan];

Terra Stúdió Kft. - KSZI Kft. Konzorcium (2006.11.28. - változat). *Dél-Alföldi Regionális Fejlesztési Operatív Program Ex-Ante Értékelése. II. Jelentés.* [Ex-ante Evaluation of the OP 'South Great Plain'. II. Report];

The New Hungary Development Plan 2007-2013;

*Városrehabilitáció 2007-2013-ban. Kézikönyv a városok számára. Területfejlesztési és Építésügyi Szakállamtitkárság.* Budapest, 2007. október 5. [Urban Rehabilitation in 2007-2013. Handbook for Cities. Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development];

*megvalósításához* [Manual to Assist the Implementation of Complex Accessibility for Disabled Persons].

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of the interview
1.	Kovács	Katalin	Representative of the Council for Social Equality of Men and Women	Convergence Monitoring Committee	10/6/2009
2.	Velkey	Gábor	Member	South Great Plain Regional Development Committee	12/6/2009
3.	Herczeg	Tamás	Member of the assembly, responsible for social affairs	Békéscsaba, local government	8/6/2009
4.	Bullás	Mónika	Coordinator of the Regional Monitoring Committee	South Great Plain Regional Development Agency, Szeged	17/6/2009 (by phone)
5.	Szittner	Péter	Operations Director	South Great Plain Regional Development Agency, Szeged	19/6/2009 (by phone)
6.	Kónya	Mónika	Head of the group responsible for communication	South Great Plain Regional Development Agency, Szeged	17/6/2009 (by phone)
7.	Haladi	Andrea	Customer service	South Great Plain Regional Development Agency, Szeged	17/6/2009 (by phone)
8.	Tapasztó	Dénes	Planner	South Great Plain Regional Development Agency, Szeged	17/6/2009 (by phone)
9.	Baráth	Endre	Coordinator	Micro-region Coordination Network, Szentes	19/6/2009 (by phone)
10.	Tenczer	Tamás	Representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour	Convergence Monitoring Committee	9/6/2009
11.	Daróczi	Gábor	Equal opportunities expert	National Development Agency	19/6/2009 (by phone)



## 12. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'CHAMPAGNE-ARDENNE': CASE STUDY

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007FR162PO008	Operational Programme 'Champagne Ardenne'	France
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Regional Competitiveness and Employment	Regional	Continental
<b>Breakdown of finances</b>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
185.6	496.2	681.8
Information source: Inforegio		

### List of Abbreviations

ICT - Information and Communication Technologies  
 EAFRD - European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development  
 ERDF - European Regional Development Fund  
 ESF - European Social Fund  
 MEUR - million euros  
 R&D - research and development

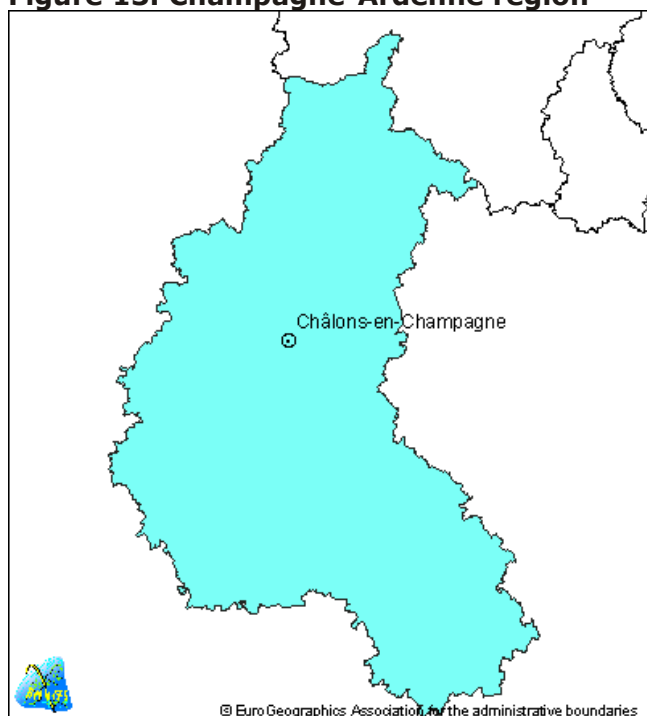
### INTRODUCTION

Champagne-Ardenne is a French region situated at the country's North-eastern frontier. The Operational Programme is designed to help this region to overcome the structural challenges caused by the strong presence of the agricultural sector and the decline of previously prominent steel and textile industries<sup>291</sup>. Productive investments, development of endogenous potential and investments in infrastructure are planned in fields ranging from research and development and ICT to transport, environment and energy. The designated Managing Authority of this OP<sup>292</sup> is the prefect of the Champagne-Ardenne region. The programme is the early stage of implementation: in May 2009, 14% of its budget was allocated to projects.

<sup>291</sup> Regional Policy-Inforegio, "Operational programme 'Champagne-Ardenne'". ([http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/country/prordn/details\\_new.cfm?qv\\_PAY=FR&qv\\_req=580&qv\\_PGM=1151&LAN=7&qv\\_PER=2&qv\\_defL=7](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/prordn/details_new.cfm?qv_PAY=FR&qv_req=580&qv_PGM=1151&LAN=7&qv_PER=2&qv_defL=7)).

<sup>292</sup> Programme Opérationnel Compétitivité régionale FEDER 2007-2013 'Champagne-Ardenne', 14 septembre 2007, p. 20-21.

**Figure 13. Champagne-Ardenne region**



Source: Inforegio

© Euro Geographics Association, for the administrative boundaries

Investments of the OP follow four **priority axes**:

- Priority Axis 1: To consolidate and develop links between research, innovation and businesses.
- Priority Axis 2: To improve the performance of businesses and support entrepreneurship.
- Priority Axis 3: To make full use of the environment and promote sustainable development.
- Priority Axis 4: To strengthen territorial cohesion and accessibility.

#### **Integration of Article 16**

The OP refers to Article 16 in the strategy section, and gender equality is designated as a cross-cutting theme. The aspect of gender equality is regularly mentioned throughout the text. Article 16 is quoted in the regional management guide<sup>293</sup>, which serves as a daily programme implementation tool for all the

stakeholders and in the Measure Descriptions<sup>294</sup>.

## **PROGRAMME DESIGN**

### **Strategic choices**

The context analysis of the OP provides statistical data defining the equality situation in the labour market. **The female employment** rate is lower than that of men, though it varies in different sub-regions. Meanwhile, the number of female jobseekers is slightly higher than that of male jobseekers (according to data from 2005) while female unemployment is higher in the southern part of Champagne-Ardenne. Analysis of the patterns of **apprenticeship** training reveals the professional segregation by gender. Entering the labour market is more difficult for women (46%) than for men (55.6%). Moreover, few women risk becoming entrepreneurs and running their own business: the level of **female start-ups** is 31%, which is the same rate than that of 8 years ago.

In the strategy section and in the description of all the priority axes, the activities for integrating the aspect of gender equality are outlined. For instance, Measure 1-1 (Promotion and support of large research projects of national and regional character) under Priority Axis 1 should be implemented with due attention to the employment of women in the field of science. The same goes for Measure 1-2 (Stimulating R&D for the benefit of enterprises). Measure 2-3 (Strengthening regional economic attractiveness) envisages the development of childcare services in business centres and conducting a survey of the employees of business parks (focused on the needs of women). In Measure 4-1 (Increasing economic value of territories for better competitiveness) additional points are envisaged for projects targeting unemployed women and the reduction of gender inequality.

<sup>293</sup> Secretariat general aux affaires regionales de Champagne-Ardenne, *Document de mise en oeuvre (DOMO). Partie 2: Fiches-mesures comprenant les criteres de selection des projets*, p. 1. <[http://www.champagne-ardenne.pref.gouv.fr/index.php/europe/media/files/domo\\_partie\\_1\\_guide\\_de\\_gestion](http://www.champagne-ardenne.pref.gouv.fr/index.php/europe/media/files/domo_partie_1_guide_de_gestion)>.

<sup>294</sup> Secretariat general aux affaires regionales de Champagne-Ardenne, *Document de mise en oeuvre (DOMO). Partie 1: Guide de gestion FEDER 2007-2013*, p. 24. <<http://www.champagne-ardenne.pref.gouv.fr/index.php/europe/content/download/2270/10523/file/DOMO%20fiches%20mesures%2018%2006%2009.pdf>>.

Some other relevant groups are also sometimes mentioned in the description of priority axes. Measure 4 (Encouraging the development and use of environmentally-friendly commuting modes) states that when developing transport infrastructure, accessibility for the disabled should be taken into account. Within the scope of Measure 4-4 (Observing the territorial dynamics and developing the engineering of urban governance) it is intended to disseminate good practice examples regarding equal opportunities through the resource centres.

### Indicators

The programme intends to monitor the **number of jobs that the programme will have created/safeguarded for men and women**. The applicants are asked in the project application form to estimate the expected impacts of their project and calculate the jobs that would be created/ safeguarded, disaggregated by gender<sup>295</sup>. Later on, they have to report their progress towards this target in their activity reports. In addition, the **number of projects investing into services promoting equal opportunities** and countering social exclusion of the youth and minorities will be measured.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

A number of questions in the application form ask about equal opportunities<sup>296</sup>. The applicants have to indicate:

- If they have conducted an **analysis** regarding the inclusion of the principle of equal opportunities (of women and men in particular) in their project;
- In case they have conducted such an analysis, whether they have defined any quantitative or qualitative **targets/ objectives** in order to address the existing inequalities between men and women;
- Do these objectives take into account the different **needs** of each gender and the different difficulties they face;
- Whether any objectives of their project (whether related to equality or not) **do not violate** the principle of equality.

'**Involvement or participation of women**' is a selection criterion for Action 2 ('Supporting the economic regeneration of neighbourhoods and entrepreneurship') under Measure 1 and Action 1 ('Development of services and means of social inclusion') under Measure 2 (both within Priority Axis 4)<sup>297</sup>. The OP stated that projects integrating the equality dimension have the possibility to receive **additional funding** (higher rate of support) to cover the costs arising from the implementation of this principle.

The winning applications are chosen by a selection committee after their evaluation by the administrative bodies. The Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and Equality (Déléguée régionale aux droits des femmes et à l'égalité) receives a copy of every application file, and projects which can have an impact on equal opportunities are specifically evaluated by the delegate<sup>298</sup>. A one day **training session** on equal opportunities for project appraisers was organised.

---

<sup>295</sup> Secretariat general aux affaires regionales de Champagne-Ardenne, *Le dossier type de demande de subvention*, p.8. <<http://www.champagne-ardenne.pref.gouv.fr/index.php/europe/content/download/982/4329/file/dossiertypedemandesub2.pdf>>.

<sup>296</sup> Secretariat general aux affaires regionales de Champagne-Ardenne, *Le dossier type de demande de subvention*, p. 9.

<sup>297</sup> See Secretariat general aux affaires regionales de Champagne-Ardenne, *Document de mise en oeuvre (DOMO). Partie 2: Fiches-mesures comprenant les criteres de selection des projets*, p. 102, 113. <[http://www.champagne-ardenne.pref.gouv.fr/index.php/europe/media/files/domo\\_partie\\_1\\_guide\\_de\\_gestion](http://www.champagne-ardenne.pref.gouv.fr/index.php/europe/media/files/domo_partie_1_guide_de_gestion)>.

<sup>298</sup> Béatrice Paillard, interview, 30/6/2009.

## Management

The project appraisers and beneficiaries can ask the Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and Equality to give advice on relevant issues<sup>299</sup>. In order to help the beneficiaries to include equal opportunities in ERDF projects, the Managing Authority and the Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and Equality have designed a **special handbook on how to integrate gender equality in ERDF projects**. This tool includes an explanation of the main concepts and a questionnaire that helps to identify how the project is taking into account the issue of gender equality. The questionnaire is not mandatory, but is strongly recommended for projects which have a potential impact on gender. The preparation of the guidance material was funded from the Technical Assistance budget.

## Information and publicity

The OP mentions that it will provide support to publicity activities aimed at raising the awareness on the importance of equal opportunities, such as **campaigns sensitising the enterprises** with regard to this issue. Special publicity is envisaged for projects that can be considered exemplary in terms of the integration of the equality theme.

Furthermore, the Managing Authority publishes a quarterly newsletter on European funds in Champagne-Ardenne. The next issue will be dedicated to equal opportunities within the funds, largely based on the contributions of the Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and Equality. This Regional Delegate itself **disseminates information** on EU funds and the importance of gender issues in implementing them<sup>300</sup>.

## Partnership

In France, there is a widely shared attitude that regional gender equality bodies should participate at all stages of preparation of operational programmes and later in their implementation. This case study demonstrates that the Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and Equality has been involved throughout implementation of the OP 'Champagne-Ardenne'.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There is one Monitoring Committee for all the OPs implemented in Champagne-Ardenne (ERDF, ESF and EAFRD). A representative from Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and Equality is a member of this committee. However, no formal procedure has been set up to ensure a gender balance among the Committee members.

In the OP there is a synthesis of the main issues raised by the ex-ante evaluation. This evaluation led to the inclusion of a separate chapter on cross-cutting themes in the OP text. A reference to equal opportunities was added in the description of every measure.

## CONCLUSIONS

The OP 'Champagne-Ardenne' has important practices aimed at integrating the gender equality principle:

- The employment situation of men and women has been described in the context analysis, and the potential gender impact of each priority axis has been considered.
- Equal opportunities has been designed as a cross-cutting theme with a fair implementation system in place;
- There are relevant information and publicity measures envisaged.
- The competence of the regional gender equality agency is being employed by ensuring representation in all the committees and has been used in the programming as well as the management stage.
- The presence of diversified guidelines (a handbook for project managers, a guidance sheet for appraisers), advice (from the Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and

<sup>299</sup> Béatrice Paillard, interview, 30/6/2009, Emmanuel Weistroffer, interview, 30/6/2009.

<sup>300</sup> Béatrice Paillard, interview, 30/6/2009.

Equality) and trainings is one of the strong points of equality implementation within the framework of this OP.

It is important to note that the measures described concern only the integration of the gender aspect, though difficulties experienced by some other groups (such as the youth and the elderly) are also mentioned. The envisaged measures are mostly positive actions, targeted to improve the situation of women, including special representation of a women's body in the programme's implementation cycle and the prioritizing of projects where women are involved. Institutional, procedural and even financial incentives are planned to encourage beneficiaries to integrate equal opportunities. Interviews show that at least some of them have been implemented, such as trainings for project appraisers and information material on gender dimension for stakeholders. However, as a matter of concern, there is a lack of arrangements on equal opportunities during the stages of reporting, monitoring, evaluation. The lack of control and monitoring may lead to only formal implementation or non-implementation.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

*Fiches-mesures comprenant les criteres de selection des projets* (Measure Descriptions Including the Selection Criteria).

*Guide de gestion FEDER 2007-2013* (ERDF Management Guide 2007-2013).

*Programme Opérationnel Compétitivité régionale FEDER 2007-2013 'Champagne-Ardenne'* (OP 'Champagne-Ardenne').

Regional Policy-Info region website on Development Programmes:

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/country/prordn/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/country/prordn/index_en.cfm)

Secretariat general aux affaires regionales de Champagne-Ardenne, *Document de mise en oeuvre (DOMO). Partie 2: Fiches-mesures comprenant les criteres de selection des projets*, p. 102, 113.

<[http://www.champagne-ardenne.pref.gouv.fr/index.php/europe/media/files/domo\\_partie\\_1\\_guide\\_de\\_gestion](http://www.champagne-ardenne.pref.gouv.fr/index.php/europe/media/files/domo_partie_1_guide_de_gestion)>

Secretariat general aux affaires regionales de Champagne-Ardenne, *Le dossier type de demande de subvention*. <<http://www.champagne-ardenne.pref.gouv.fr/index.php/europe/content/download/982/4329/file/dossiertypedemandesub2.pdf>>

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of the interview
1.	Paillard	Béatrice	Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and Equality	Regional Delegation for Women's Rights and Equality / Prefecture of Champagne-Ardenne	30/6/2009 (by phone)
2.	Weistroffer	Emmanuel	Coordinator of the Europe Department	Prefecture of Champagne-Ardenne / Secrétariat General for Regional Affairs (Managing Authority)	30/6/2009 (by phone)
3.	Renneson	Reynald	Delegate for Innovations	OSEO Champagne-Ardenne (innovation and SME support agency for Champagne-Ardenne region)	15/9/2009

## 13. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'BELGIUM-FRANCE': CASE STUDY

CCI No	Title	Member States
2007CB163PO063	Operational Programme 'Belgium - France'	Belgium, France
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
European Territorial Cooperation	Regional	Continental
Breakdown of finances		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
138.1	110.4	248.5

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ICT – information and communication technologies

MEU – million euros

OP – Operational Programme

R&D – Research and Development

SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (analysis method)

### INTRODUCTION

The Operational Programme 'Belgium-France'<sup>301</sup> concerns 3 border regions of France and Belgium (Wallonia and Flanders) which encompass ca. 10 million people:

- French Départements of Nord-Pas de Calais, Picardie, Champagne Ardennes;
- Provinces of Hainaut, Namur, Luxembourg in Wallonia (Belgium);
- Western and Eastern Flanders (Belgium).

The target region covers an area of more than 60,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The programme area is characterised by:

- A GDP per capita lower than the EU15 average (with some differences between the regions);
- An annual growth rate lower than the EU 15 average (2.40% vs. 2.55%).

<sup>301</sup> Programme Transfrontalier Objectif 3 "Coopération Territoriale Européenne" INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen [thereinafter – OP], 19th September 2007, p. 36-37, 31.

Geographically it is a very diverse area that includes coastline and rural zones, as well as zones under industrial transformation and the large metropolitan area of Lille-Tournai-Courtrai cross-cutting the border of two Member States.

The programme identifies four thematic **priority axes**:

- Priority Axis 1: Promoting economical development of the zone;
- Priority Axis 2: Developing and promoting a cross border territory identity;
- Priority Axis 3: Reinforcing the feeling of belonging to a common entity;
- Priority Axis 4: To make the common management of the territory more dynamic.

This OP is focused on the types of activities having a more direct impact on the population such as training, health services and cross-border mobility. In particular, investment is planned in the fields of promotion of a regional image and identity, R&D, innovation, adoption and use of ICT, new product development, sustainable development, tourism and culture and health and social infrastructure. By mid-2009 the programme had already launched 7 calls for proposals, with a total of 114 projects selected. The implementation of some of the projects has already begun.

**Figure 14. The cross-border area covered by the OP**



Source: Inforegio

### Integration of Article 16

The OP does not make an explicit reference to Article 16, but states that equal opportunities are a horizontal priority and identifies relevant target groups (men and women, the disabled, and the elderly). Some relevant practices are envisaged (in project selection, management, monitoring, evaluation, and partnership) but most of these practices are not yet under implementation.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Strategic choices

The OP's **context analysis** identified equality-related structural features of the regional labour market. Men benefit from cross-border employment more than women; also women are less likely to create their own businesses. It is assumed that the development of childcare services could increase the economic rates of women. Nevertheless, the representatives of programme authorities acknowledged that that more gender-disaggregated statistics could be provided<sup>302</sup>.

The programme has a separate **SWOT table** on social integration. It states that one of the strengths of the region is the high level of mobility of certain population groups (older persons and the disabled). One of the opportunities is the development of an inclusive society for senior citizens. Among the identified weaknesses two are the most relevant: (a) the presence of vulnerable groups, and (b) limited cross-border mobility of some vulnerable groups.

<sup>302</sup> Sabina Curzi, interview, 26/6/2009; Eric Delecosse, interview, 26/6/2009.

The **strategy part** indicates that one of the horizontal priorities is 'pursuing the objective of equal opportunities: fight against any type of inequality'. Among the programme's target groups are the disabled and the people from different locations as "particular attention must be paid to the respect of different cultures, including the promotion of knowledge of several languages"<sup>303</sup>. Throughout the programme, emphasis is also put on the elderly. The 'equal opportunities' horizontal priority is also mentioned in the *Practical guide* which gives detailed guidance on the implementation of the Operational Programme<sup>304</sup>. The importance of equality is mentioned in many parts of this Guide, including the strategy of the programme (Document 2), the description of the project (Document 4), note on indicators (Document 5 and 17), commitment letter of the beneficiary (Document 8), selection process (Document 11), report on activities (Document 16) and in the note on impact indicators (Document 18).

**Actions** related to the implementation to Article 16 are concentrated within Priority Axes 1 and 3. Priority Axis 1 focuses on measures aimed at promoting the economic development of the region, with its Measure 1.2 devoting special attention "to vulnerable groups of population in terms of their inclusion into the labour market, via, particularly, the sector of social economy"<sup>305</sup>. At least one large project under Priority Axis 1 specifically targets the disabled. The project entitled 'TransFormation'<sup>306</sup> aims to facilitate the **mobility of disabled persons** across the border in order to receive vocational training and access to employment. Its activities include publicity events, job coaching and initiatives to sensitize the companies of potential employers<sup>307</sup>.

In Priority Axis 3, Measure 3.1 (Optimizing the access to services and equipment in healthcare and social services for the border populations) supports agreements to provide services to people from the other side of the border. Its description specifically cites older persons and people with disabilities among its target groups.

### Indicators and targets

The OP and the *Practical guide* set only one indicator specifically for equal opportunities, i.e. the **number of actions on equal opportunities** (equal opportunities for men and women, the disabled, the elderly etc.). The project report form in the Practical Guide asks the project beneficiaries to provide information on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities<sup>308</sup>. On the programme level a target has been set to achieve an aggregated number of 75 actions in favour of vulnerable groups<sup>309</sup>.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection and management

A special document in the Practical Guide provides a detailed explanation on how to develop a project application (Document 1). It includes a special section on cross-cutting themes. The applicants have to choose at least two out of the three cross-cutting criteria (job creation/preservation, environment and equal opportunities). As for compliance with equality, the applicants have to indicate **what effect their project is going to have** on marginalized groups and to justify their response. The project application form proposes four answers: a project focused on equal opportunities, a project with a positive, neutral or potentially negative

<sup>303</sup> OP, p. 70.

<sup>304</sup> INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, *Le guide pratique à destination des porteurs de projets INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen*. <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=310>>. The Guide is a very detailed set of 23 documents covering all stages of project implementation with relevant technical documentation.

<sup>305</sup> OP, p. 75.

<sup>306</sup> Total value of the project is 1.3 MEUR and half of it is provided by ERDF.

<sup>307</sup> INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, 'TransFormation'. <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/projet-detail.php?projectId=69>> [Accessed 22-07-2009].

<sup>308</sup> INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, *Le guide pratique à destination des porteurs de projets INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen*, Document 5, p. 4, 12; Document 18, p. 4. <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=310>> [Accessed 20-07-2009].

<sup>309</sup> OP, p. 102.



impact on equal opportunities<sup>310</sup>. If a project risks to have a negative impact, project applicants are required to develop measures to compensate it and describe them<sup>311</sup>.

Projects are selected according to five aspects: aspects: project content, budget, environmental impact, cross-border dimension and equal opportunities. Assessment of the equality aspect has to be carried out by respective external partners<sup>312</sup> (see 'Partnership').

There was no **training or detailed guidance** for the applicants, project managers, the MA or implementing bodies on integration of the equality issues. However, the interviewees felt that this could be useful<sup>313</sup>.

Two **performance assessment** visits will be conducted by a special committee (Comité d'accompagnement de projets) for each project under implementation. Representatives of all partners are invited for these visits. During the visit compliance with the ERDF contract and accuracy of the activity reports are examined. The visit is also an opportunity to ask for advice and guidance<sup>314</sup>. The checklist for performance assessment asks "to what extent the project contributed to promoting equal opportunities of the vulnerable groups (women, persons with low education, the disabled)?" and the answer should be given on scale from 0 to 10 (with 0 as having no effect and 10 having an exemplary impact on all levels) along with a justification<sup>315</sup>.

A representative of national or regional institutions responsible for environment and equal opportunities participates as an observer in the Programme Steering Committee. The environmental and equal opportunities' authorities are thus engaged in the stages of preliminary assessment of the applications, management, and monitoring of projects (see 'Monitoring').

### **Information, publicity and partnership**

The Practical Guide includes a note on "Rules for publicity on European support" (Document 19) but it does not contain any reference to Article 16 or to equality issues in general. However, the OP itself mentions that NGOs, especially organisations promoting the equality of men and women (and bodies working in the field of protection and improvement of environment) are among the **target groups**. One of the objectives of the information and publicity policy is to reach potential and final beneficiaries, as well as NGOs.

**Extensive consultations** with various stakeholders were held during the programming phase (there is an extensive list of these stakeholders attached to the OP). Interviews were organized with officials and experts on the French, Walloon and Flemish sub-regions and four thematic workshops took place. In the first workshop 'Local and healthcare services, everyday life and social inclusion' a representative of 'Infor Jeunes Tournai' (the Youth Information Centre of Tournai) took part, as the disadvantaged youth is an important target group for this OP.

The bodies promoting gender equality participate as partners during the whole cycle of programme implementation. The Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and Equality (of the French Region Nord-Pas-de-Calais) and the Walloon Council of Equality between Men and Women are involved in the equality impact assessment of project applications, and take part in the activities of the Steering Committee and in the Programme Monitoring Committee.

---

<sup>310</sup> INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, *Le guide pratique à destination des porteurs de projets INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen*, Document 4, p. 11. <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=310>>.

<sup>311</sup> INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, *Le guide pratique à destination des porteurs de projets INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen*, Document 1, p. 11; Document 4, p. 12. <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=310>>.

<sup>312</sup> INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, *Le guide pratique à destination des porteurs de projets INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen*, Document 11, p. 1. <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=310>>.

<sup>313</sup> S. Curzi (interview), 26/6/2009; E. Delecosse (interview), 26/6/2009.

<sup>314</sup> INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, *Le guide pratique à destination des porteurs de projets INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen*, Document 16, p. 11-12. <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=310>>.

<sup>315</sup> INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, *Le guide pratique à destination des porteurs de projets INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen*, Document 18, p. 4. <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=310>>.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There are project and programme level **monitoring arrangements** to ensure compliance with the principle of equal opportunities. Concerning projects, the beneficiaries will file activity reports (their form is presented as Document 16 of the Practical Guide) twice a year. A table of indicators is included in it and the beneficiaries are expected to provide data on cross-cutting criteria: the value achieved during the last six months and since the start of the project (of measures implemented for the promotion of equal opportunities in this case). In addition, there is a chapter on compliance with Community rules, which among other questions asks how the principle of gender equality is taken into account<sup>316</sup>.

The Programme Monitoring Committee is composed of representatives of partner institutions minding the gender balance. It includes a delegate of gender equality institutions who attends the meetings as an observer. However, so far gender equality or non-discrimination have not been discussed in this committee<sup>317</sup>.

The implementation of equal opportunities will also be examined in the **ex-post evaluation** of the programme but at the present time no further information is available. The programme text does not mention to what extent the theme of equal opportunities has been addressed in the **ex-ante evaluation**.

## CONCLUSIONS

The programme does not put a strong emphasis on any of the three themes of Article 16. There are no deliberate measures to target some interventions towards resolving gender inequalities or improving the situation of vulnerable groups. There is an attempt to introduce some mainstreaming at various stages of programme implementation. The applicants are offered an option to choose equal opportunities as one of their horizontal priorities (and then to explain this), and this choice is then considered during the project selection process, on-the-spot checks and reporting. The strongest point among these practices is the fact that the authorities in charge of the questions of gender equality (the Regional Delegate for Women's Rights and Equality of the French Region Nord-Pas-de-Calais and the Walloon Council of Equality between Men and Women) are involved in assessing project applications from the perspective of equality. However, there is no evidence that any relevant practice in programme management, reporting, evaluation, information and communication has been implemented. Overall, there is a risk that programme authorities will undertake only a formal approach with regard to equal opportunities. There is a lack of more pro-active practices, such as guidance materials, training, advice, exchange of good practices, consultation groups, and network development. There are no practices addressing the issue of accessibility.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

Description of the project 'TransFormation' <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/projet-detail.php?projectId=69>>.

*Le guide pratique à destination des porteurs de projets INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen* (Practical guide for project managers - set of 23 documents) (<<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=310>>).

Official web-site of the programme France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen

Programme Transfrontalier Objectif 3 "Coopération Territoriale Européenne" INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen (OP 'Belgium-France' ('France-Wallonia-Flanders')).

<sup>316</sup> INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen, *Le guide pratique à destination des porteurs de projets INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Vlaanderen*, Document 15, p. 1. <<http://www.interreg-fwvl.eu/fr/page.php?pageId=310>>.

<sup>317</sup> J.Maurel (interview), 14/9/2009.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

<b>No.</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Date of the interview</b>
1.	Curzi	Sabina	Communication Officer	Managing Authority, WBI Brussels	26/6/2009 (by phone)
2.	Delecosse	Eric	Director	Technical team, Wallonia, Charleroi, Belgium	26/6/2009 (by phone)
3.	Maurel	Jeanne-Marie	Deputy Director	Direction for European Affairs, Contracts and Projects of Regional Council of Nord-Pas de Calais, France	14/9/2009 (by phone)

## 14. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'CANTABRIA': CASE STUDY

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007ES162PO001	Operational Programme 'Cantabria'	Spain
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Regional Competitiveness and Employment	Regional	Southern European
<i>Breakdown of finances</i>		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
89	89	178

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

ESF – European Social Fund

ICT – information and communication technologies

R&D – research and development

SWOT – Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (analysis method)

### INTRODUCTION

#### Priorities, interventions and targets

The Operational Programme 'Cantabria' is a Spanish regional operational programme co-financed by the ERDF. The designated Managing Authority is the Ministry of Economy and Estate, and the intermediate body is the Department of Economy of the Council of Economy and Estate, based in Santander (Cantabria).

The OP identifies four **priority axes**:

- Priority Axis 1: Knowledge economy, innovation and enterprise development (79.84% of the allocated funding);
- Priority Axis 2: Environment and prevention of risks (15.65% of the funding);
- Priority Axis 3: Sustainable local and urban development (3.27% of the funding);
- Priority Axis 4: Technical assistance (1.24% of the funding).

The OP supports various types of interventions that fall under the categories of productive investment and investment into infrastructure. Productive investment is directed towards the fields of research and development, innovation, adoption and use of information and communication technologies, and new product development as well as sustainable development, tourism and culture services. The

**Figure 15. The Cantabria region**



Source: Inforegio

infrastructure investment is also allocated to these fields, first and foremost the environment and information society<sup>318</sup>. By mid-2009 there were no projects selected for support.

### Integration of Article 16

The OP text and the supplementing documents attach more importance to 'equal opportunities' (understood as gender equality) than to the other two themes of Article 16 (non-discrimination and accessibility for disabled persons). Gender equality is considered a **cross-cutting theme of** this OP rather than as a special priority. Some **tools** are used to implement gender equality at the programme and project level (e.g. guidelines). The Department for Gender Equality of the government of Cantabria (Dirección General de la Mujer del Gobierno de Cantabria) and the Spanish Women's Institute (Instituto de la Mujer) are represented as **partners** at various stages of programme design and implementation.

### Socio-economic and policy context

In recent years, gender equality has become an important topic in **national** political debates. A number of public policy measures were undertaken to promote the participation of women in political, cultural, economic and social life. In March 2007, the Spanish parliament adopted a law on gender equality, with a goal of fighting discrimination of women in work, politics and family life. At **regional** level, the Government of Cantabria approved a strategy for gender mainstreaming in May 2007 for the period 2007-2015<sup>319</sup>. However, disparities remain between the situation of men and women, for example:

- Women's employment rate in Spain is significantly lower compared to that of men, with full-time equivalents being 72.5% for men and 41.8% for women (2003)<sup>320</sup>. This figure thus falls significantly below the Lisbon target of 60% to be achieved by 2010.
- The employment rate of women of the age group of 25-49 tends to decrease depending on the number of children, whereas this rate for men is more stable.
- Many women are employed part-time, and this share is much higher than that of men<sup>321</sup>.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Strategic choices

The **context analysis** and **SWOT analysis** of the OP discuss the issue of equal opportunities in detail. In the context of this OP, the notion of equal opportunities is synonymous with gender equality. In the description of the labour market situation all figures such as the employment rate, the share of people working part-time, wages, and unemployment in general (further broken down by sector, education and training) are gender-disaggregated. The context analysis identifies the employment gap between men and women as one of the key issues. In addition, it highlights that women constitute only 33% of employees in the R&D sector. These issues are reiterated in the **SWOT analysis**.

In the **strategy part** of the OP there is a separate section devoted to horizontal principles. This section states that equal opportunities is one of these principles. Each priority axis sets some aims concerning gender equality:

- Priority Axis 1: the reduction of gender gap in using information and communication technologies and the increase of participation of women in research and development activities.
- Priority Axis 2: the increase of accessibility for men and women to infrastructure, more job opportunities for women in the environment sector.
- Priority Axis 3: the development of jobs in urban areas and the promotion of equal access to employment for men and women.

<sup>318</sup> See the detailed description of priority axes on p. 68-101 of the OP.

<sup>319</sup> Summary on implementation of ERDF 2007-2013 in the OP 'Cantabria' sent by the Managing Authority to PPMI.

<sup>320</sup> See EC (2006). *The gender pay gap – Origins and policy responses. A comparative review of 30 European countries*, p. 81.

<sup>321</sup> Instituto Nacional de Estadística [National Institute of Statistics] (2009). *Mujeres y hombres en España 2009. Empleo* [Women and men in Spain 2009. Employment] <[http://www.migualdad.es/mujer/publicaciones/docs/Mujeres%20y%20hombres\\_09.pdf](http://www.migualdad.es/mujer/publicaciones/docs/Mujeres%20y%20hombres_09.pdf)>, p. 35-38.

The programme also states that its text was revised in order to ensure that the phrases and ideas are not gender-biased.

### Indicators and targets

There are two types of indicators which are relevant from the perspective of Article 16: strategic and operational. The table of strategic indicators includes baseline measures and targets for 2010 and 2013 (see Table 16).

**Table 16. Targets and indicators**

Priority axis	Relevant indicator	Baseline	Target for 2010	Target for 2013
1 – strategic indicator	Women employed in ICT and R&D sector / as a percentage of total employment in these sectors	41.1%	45.8%	48.09%
1 - operational indicator	Employment created (women)	-	222	505
1 - operational indicator	Associate employment. Number of women participating in projects	-	635	1,553
3 - operational indicator	Number of projects that promote equal opportunities and social inclusion for minorities and young people	-	2	3
3 - operational indicator	Associate employment. Number of women participating in projects	-	2	20

Source: OP

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

The themes of Article 16 are considered in the project selection process. They are formulated both **positively** (as the promotion of equal opportunities) and **negatively** (as the prevention of discrimination). The list of project selection criteria approved by the Programme Monitoring Committee states that "in application of the mandate contained in the Article 16 of the corresponding regulation, the process of selection of the actions [to be supported] will avoid any discrimination based on sex, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Gender equality has to be promoted and accessibility for disabled persons is to be taken into account"<sup>322</sup>. These criteria will be considered along with other selection criteria<sup>323</sup>. However, the horizontal principles are not the determining factors in the allocation of support, especially when it comes to infrastructure projects<sup>324</sup>.

More specific project selection criteria related to Article 16 appear in three of the four priority axes (see Table 17).

**Table 17. Selection criteria for priority axes**

Priority axis	Priority	Criteria
1	'Services for the citizens'	Projects / actions have to be focused on persons or zones at risk or in a situation of socioeconomic exclusion
3	'Promotion of social integration and equal opportunities'	Relevance to social integration and equal opportunities

Source: Project selection criteria of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013.

<sup>322</sup> Project selection criteria of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013, p. 2.

<sup>323</sup> Project selection criteria of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013, p. 2.

<sup>324</sup> Jesus Bedoya Vega from the Intermediate body, interview, 23/6/2009.

## Management

Several **guides** on gender equality have been developed by the Spanish Women's Institute that can be used for practical advice. These guides are not specific to ERDF programmes and have not been designed for the implementation of Structural Funds, but could be useful nonetheless both at the programme and project level<sup>325</sup>. The interviewees suggested that these guides helped in drafting the OP and in integrating the horizontal principles. A non-exhaustive list of these guides includes:

- a guide on awareness-raising and training on the gender equality issue;
- a manual for designing a gender equality plan in companies: basic aspects;
- A guide on integrating the gender equality principle;
- a module for raising awareness and permanent training on equal opportunities between women and men for staff of the public administration, etc<sup>326</sup>.

There will be a set of **thematic networks** to act as a forum for cooperation between authorities responsible for management, programming and evaluation of programmes financed from EU funds. Among the five networks, two are of importance from the perspective of Article 16: the Policy Network for Equal Opportunity, and the Social Inclusion Network. These networks have not started operating yet, however it is expected that the former network will be up and running by the end of 2009<sup>327</sup>. The networks will play a role in facilitating the exchange of experience and dissemination of good practice<sup>328</sup>. Such networks will provide suggestions with regard to more efficient resource management. They will also produce analysis of technical problems resulting from community and national legislation on equal opportunities, and discuss the contribution of community funds to the promotion of equal opportunities in various fields of intervention.

## Coordination of ERDF and ESF interventions

The OP envisages cooperation between the ERDF and ESF in relation to the ESF Priority Axis 2, ("Promoting employability, social inclusion and gender equality") with regard to the following specific measures:

- active and preventive measures in the labour market;
- measures for improving the sustainable participation of women in employment;
- specific action to increase participation in the employment of migrant workers, and thereby strengthening their social integration;
- pathways to integration and reintegration into employment for people with disabilities, elimination of discrimination in the labour market and promotion of acceptance of diversity in the workplace.

## Information and publicity measures

The website of the Cantabrian OP presents this programme from the perspective of the fields of intervention (such as technology, innovation, research, environment protection, and urban development) and thematic priorities. There are no evident references to equal opportunities or to gender equality issues<sup>329</sup>. However, one of the partner organizations (the Spanish Women's Institute) runs a special section on its website called 'Equal opportunities in the Structural Funds'. This section is not focused on the ERDF only. In other cases, the Department for Gender Equality of the government of Cantabria acts as a relay of information about all operations and policies related to the ERDF and aimed at achieving greater gender equality<sup>330</sup>.

---

<sup>325</sup> It is an autonomous organisation accountable to the Equality department of the General Secretariat of Policies of Equality, responsible for promoting gender equality policies in Spain. It provides, among others, technical support to ERDF managers, with regard to the introduction of gender equality principles in interventions.

<sup>326</sup> The guides are available on the website <<http://www.migualdad.es/mujer/publicaciones/catalogo/guias.htm>>.

<sup>327</sup> Jesus Bedoya Vega, interview, 23/6/2009.

<sup>328</sup> Implementation report 2008 of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013, p. 14.

<sup>329</sup> See website <<http://www.federcantabria.es/ESP/e/32/Publicidad-del-POC/Publicidad-del-POC>>

<sup>330</sup> See document, *Communication plan of ERDF Spain, OP Cantabria 2007-2013*, p. 23.

## Partnership

The Managing Authority has involved two gender equality bodies in the partnership process. The Department for Gender Equality participated actively in the programming phase and provides advice to the ERDF programme's managers during the programme implementation process. This Department aims at integrating the principles of gender equality into public policies, organises trainings and gives advice. Furthermore, the above-mentioned Spanish Women's Institute has been involved in the following activities:

- Providing suggestions for the Programme Annual Reports, which are presented to the Monitoring Committee.
- Participating in the Consultative Committee of monitoring and evaluation as a member of this Committee.
- Providing suggestions to be included in the methodological guides, such as the Guide for Thematic Evaluation of Gender Equality.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Monitoring

The Programme Monitoring Committee consists of representatives of central administration, programme managers of European funds in Cantabria, trade unions and business associations, as well as representatives of the equality and environmental organisations. One member is delegated by the Department for Gender Equality. The role of this representative is to ensure integration of the gender equality principle in the implementation phase and to monitor related indicators<sup>331</sup>.

### Evaluation and reporting

Gender equality was discussed in the **ex-ante** evaluation and, as the OP states, the recommendations were taken into account. One of the recommendations for the programming period 2007-2013 was to ensure a better integration of the horizontal priorities. Further on, an **ongoing evaluation** concerning the principle of equal opportunities in OPs co-financed by the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund (2007-2013) should be carried out during 2009<sup>332</sup> (the interviewees did not provide definite information whether this would actually occur). There are some evaluation tools developed by the Spanish Women's Institute, but they are not specific to the ERDF. These tools are used by OP's evaluators to assess the actual integration of the gender equality principle<sup>333</sup>.

The Annual Implementation Report 2008 mentions the establishment of five thematic networks (see the section on Management), including the network for equal opportunities. This network will study the progress in integrating the aspect of gender equality and will suggest technical tools for advancing it<sup>334</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS

Among the three themes of Article 16, the OP devoted most of its attention to gender equality. It was defined as a horizontal principle and was mentioned in the description of each priority axis. There are relevant practices concerning gender equality at each stage of programme implementation, in particular concerning the system of targets and indicators, project selection, management, monitoring and evaluation, partnership, and information. However, given the early stage of programme implementation (there are no projects under implementation), many of these practices are not yet in operation. In the opinion of the representative of the intermediate body, in 2007-2013 the principle of equal opportunities has been integrated better in comparison to the previous programming period<sup>335</sup>.

<sup>331</sup> OP, p. 120, and Jesus Bedoya Vega, interview, 23/6/2009.

<sup>332</sup> OP, p. 101 and Implementation report 2007 of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013; p. 13.

<sup>333</sup> Jesus Bedoya Vega, interview, 23/6/2009.

<sup>334</sup> Implementation report 2008 of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013, p. 15.

<sup>335</sup> Jesus Bedoya Vega, interview, 31/8/2009.



The strongest points of the Operational Programme are:

- a well-developed partnership with organisations working in the field of gender equality: the Department for Gender Equality of the government of Cantabria (Dirección General de la Mujer del Gobierno de Cantabria) and the Spanish Women's Institute (Instituto de la Mujer). These organisations provided their suggestions during the programme preparation process. They will also have a role in programme management (guidelines, advice to programme managers) and monitoring.
- the programme's mixed approach combining gender mainstreaming and targeting. While there are relevant practices at each stage (mainstreaming), the programme also has specific targets (Priority Axis 1). There is an ambitious result/ impact level target aimed at increasing the share of women employed in the ICT and R&D sector.
- the idea to create thematic networks to foster co-operation between programme authorities dealing with various programmes at different levels. The networks will work on more efficient resource management, conduct analysis, discuss technical issues, and provide a forum for exchange of experience. There will be networks on equal opportunities and social inclusion, however they have not started operating yet.

As for the aspects of the OP that are underdeveloped from the perspective of Article 16, the programme mentions non-discrimination only a few times and does not consider accessibility. No organisations representing minorities, immigrants and other groups that are (potentially) discriminated-against are involved in the partnership process (except for the afore-mentioned organisations working with gender equality). It is unclear to what extent the equality considerations will play a role in the project selection process, whether the available guidance resources will be used, and whether the monitoring information of equal opportunities will have any influence on the programme's implementation.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013;

*ERDF in Spain, Cantabria region*: <http://www.federcantabria.es/ESP/m/1/Inicio/Inicio>;

Project selection criteria of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013;

Implementation report 2007 of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013;

Implementation report 2008 of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013;

Communication plan of ERDF OP Cantabria 2007-2013;

'European Funds in Cantabria' (General information about European programmes and funds) <<http://www.cantabriaeuropa.org/ESP/e/81/Programas-Europeos/Programas-Europeos>>.

EC Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (2006). *The gender pay gap – Origins and policy responses. A comparative review of 30 European countries*.

<<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=748&langId=en&furtherPubs=yes>>.

Instituto de la Mujer [Women's Institute under the Ministry of Equality] (<http://www.migualdad.es/mujer/publicaciones/catalogo/guias.htm>) guides for training and awareness raising:

- *Módulo de sensibilización y formación continua en igualdad de oportunidades entre mujeres y hombres para personal de la Administración Pública* [Module for awareness training on equal opportunities between men and women for public administration staff];

- *Guía de sensibilización y formación en igualdad de oportunidades entre mujeres y hombres* [Guidance for awareness training on equal opportunities between women and men];

Guides for programme or projects managers:

- *Guía de buenas prácticas para garantizar el derecho a la igualdad en los procedimientos* [Good practice guidance to ensure the right to equal treatment in the procedures];

- *Guía para la elaboración de informes de impacto de género de las disposiciones normativas que elabore el Gobierno* [Guidelines for reporting on gender impact of legislation prepared by the Government];

- *Guía para la incorporación de la perspectiva de género* [Guidelines for the incorporation of the gender perspective];

- *Manual para elaborar un plan de igualdad en la empresa. Aspectos básicos*

Instituto Nacional de Estadística [National Institute of Statistics] (2009). *Mujeres y hombres en España 2009. Empleo* [Women and men in Spain 2009. Employment]

<[http://www.migualdad.es/mujer/publicaciones/docs/Mujeres%20y%20hombres\\_09.pdf](http://www.migualdad.es/mujer/publicaciones/docs/Mujeres%20y%20hombres_09.pdf)>.

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

<b>No.</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Date of the interview</b>
1.	Bedoya Vega	Jesús	General assistant director of Economy Head of the Department	Economy Council of Economy and Estate Government of Cantabria (Intermediate body for ERDF in Cantabria)	23/6/2009 (by phone)
2.	Martínez Bueno	Helena	Coordinator of the Gender equality Unit	Department for gender equality Government of Cantabria	24/7/2009 (by phone)
3.	Moneo	Rosa Marina	Chief of Service of the European programs	Sub General Directorate of programs Spanish Women's Institute	04/9/2009 (by phone)

## 15. OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 'SICILY': CASE STUDY

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CCI No	Title	Member State
2007IT161PO011	Operational Programme 'Sicily'	Italy
Objective	National/ sectoral or regional	Welfare regime
Convergence	Regional	Southern European
Breakdown of finances		
EU contribution (MEUR)	National public contribution (MEUR)	Total public contribution (MEUR)
3 269,8	6 539,6	9 809,4

Information source: Inforegio

### List of Abbreviations

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

ESF – European Social Fund

OP – Operational Programme

VISPO – Strategic Gender Impact Assessment of Equal Opportunities [methodology used in Italy]

### INTRODUCTION

The OP 'Sicily' is a regional Italian OP. The Managing Authority for the OP is the Regional Department for Programming of the Sicily Region (Dipartimento regionale della Programmazione Regione Sicilia).

#### Priority axes, interventions and target groups

The overall objective of the programme is to increase and stabilise the growth rate of the regional economy by creating conditions to attract productive enterprises. The regional programme for Sicily has seven **priority axes**:

- Priority Axis 1: Mobility networks;
- Priority Axis 2: Efficient use of natural resources;
- Priority Axis 3: Exploiting cultural and environmental resources to attract tourism and promote development;
- Priority Axis 4: Dissemination of research and innovation, and Information Society;
- Priority Axis 5: Development of enterprises and competitiveness of local production systems;
- Priority Axis 6: Sustainable urban development;
- Priority Axis 7: Governance, institutional capacity-building and technical assistance.

**Figure 16. Area covered by the OP**



Source: Inforegio

The programme is in its early stage of implementation: by mid-2009 there were no projects selected for implementation.

## Integration of Article 16

The analysis of the OP text and complementing documents as well as the interviews showed that the programme does have some relevant practices from the perspective of Article 16, although these practices are not many. In addition to **gender equality** (which was emphasised during the 2000-2006 programming period), **non-discrimination** appeared on the agenda of the ERDF OP for 2007-2013. The issue **of accessibility for disabled persons** is mostly dealt with under Priority Axis 6 (sustainable urban development).

The OP states that gender equality and non-discrimination are cross-cutting principles applicable to all priority axes. The **socio-economic analysis** has a specific section on equal opportunities. There are **intervention measures** aimed to address equal opportunities (benefiting women, immigrants, and disabled people). There are some relevant selection criteria and institutional arrangements. A guidance document on equal opportunities was prepared to support the management process, and the principle of partnership was promoted.

## Socio-economic and policy context

According to Eurobarometer<sup>336</sup>, 76% of Italians think that discrimination based on gender, disability, age or the origin is widespread. Italy is one of the two countries where people think that multiple discrimination is prevalent. An average Italian is more uncomfortable with the idea of having a neighbour of a different ethnic origin than an average European. This trend is even more prominent when it comes to having a neighbour from the Roma population. In addition, an average Italian is less comfortable with women holding the highest political offices than an average European.

The main socio-economic features of Sicily region are the following:

- a very low rate of women's employment (28,2%);
- few services available for the conciliation of family and working life;
- pervasive forms of multiple discrimination;
- a high level of domestic violence against women and children;
- numerous problems related to the new waves of migrants from outside the EU<sup>337</sup>.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

### Strategic choices

The **analysis of the equality situation** in the OP is mostly focused on women:

- women in the labour market: a low employment rate, flexible contracts, overrepresentation in the service sector, responsibility for the care for elderly persons, children and the disabled;
- women with disabilities: they suffer from multiple discrimination;
- women in urban areas suffering from domestic violence;
- immigrant women: they are mostly unemployed or employed in inferior-level jobs.

The **strategy** part of the OP identifies equal opportunities and non-discrimination as cross-cutting themes for all priorities of the OP. It also states that in order to ensure the proper application of these themes, competent organisations must be involved in the implementation of the OP. Some **priority axes** defined targeted actions to tackle discrimination, improve life conditions for women and contribute to the accessibility for disabled people. In particular, Priority Axes 5 and 6:

- promote women and immigrants' participation in business start-ups;
- invest in the reconciliation of family and working life, the development of childcare facilities, and the promotion of the right to study, linguistic and cultural mediation;
- improve accessibility to social services;
- develop systems of pedestrian mobility for people with sensory disabilities.

<sup>336</sup> Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008).

<sup>337</sup> Sicily Region and Department for Equal Opportunities, Presidency of the Council of Ministers (2008). *Vade Mecum: Equal opportunities in the 2007-2013 Structural Funds programming period*, p. 10.

**Other priority axes** contribute to the themes of equality and accessibility for the disabled to a lesser extent. The relevant interventions under Priority Axis 3 are: improvement of life quality and development of tourism infrastructure and services, including those for disabled persons.

### Indicators and targets

Priority Axis 6 ('Sustainable urban development') has some indicators which indirectly measure progress in terms of equal opportunities<sup>338</sup>. The following three targets for 2015 have been set:

- an increase by 15% of the extracurricular opening hours for schools (which is potentially a help for women to reconcile work and family commitment);
- 4000 new users for social services that received support from the OP;
- an increase by 12.3% of the number of children under three years of age who benefit from childcare facilities.

## PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

### Project selection

During the 2000-2006 programming period the Managing Authority established a **network of referents on equal opportunities**. These referents (a group of experts, one from each operational unit of the Sicily Region) were responsible for carefully examining the calls for proposals of all ERDF interventions from a gender perspective and providing relevant suggestions. There are plans to create such a network for the 2007-2013 period on gender and discrimination issues but at this point this network have not been set up yet<sup>339</sup>.

The Managing Authority approved a document describing **selection criteria** (i.e. general criteria) for all seven priority axes in May 2009. One of the criteria stipulates that the project must be compliant with European policies concerning equal opportunities. In addition, some priority axes will **give priority** to projects aiming to promote equal opportunities over ones which do not<sup>340</sup>:

- Priority Axis 5: priority is given for projects submitted by enterprises with predominantly female ownership or management;
- Priority Axis 6: particular attention will be given to the immigrant population and to the most disadvantaged groups in the population<sup>341</sup>.

### Management, publicity and partnership

The integration of the equal opportunities principle in the **management** of the OP will be entrusted to an organisation which will be contracted to provide technical assistance. A tender will be completed by September 2009. There were **trainings** on equal opportunities during the period of 2000-2006; it is expected that such trainings will also take place during the current programming period<sup>342</sup>. In 2000-2006 programming period there was a task force in each Italian region which was in charge of providing advice to Managing Authorities on the integration of equal opportunities. In Sicily this task force prepared a **guideline** document for the integration of equal opportunities into the programmes financed by structural funds<sup>343</sup>. However the task force itself is no longer operational in 2007-2013.

When it comes to **publicity**, the public website on European funds in the Sicily region<sup>344</sup> has a special section on equal opportunities which contains relevant documents and legal acts.

Various partner organisations were involved during the drafting process of the OP<sup>345</sup>. There is a **consultation group** composed of economic and social partners<sup>346</sup> that receives all the drafts

<sup>338</sup> Emanuele Villa, interview, 29/6/2009.

<sup>339</sup> Maria Cianciolo from the Sicily Region administration, interview, 7/7/2009.

<sup>340</sup> Emanuele Villa, interview, 29/6/2009.

<sup>341</sup> ERDF OP, *Requirements for eligibility and selection criteria*, No. 188 of 22/5/2009.

<sup>342</sup> Emanuele Villa, interview, 29/6/2009.

<sup>343</sup> Sicily Region and Department for Equal Opportunities, Presidency of the Council of Ministers (2008), *Vade Mecum: Equal opportunities in the 2007-2013 Structural Funds programming period*.

<sup>344</sup> See website: <<http://www.euroinfosicilia.it>>.

of the official documents for discussion. In this group two NGOs represent the gender equality cause: the Gender Observatory (Arcidonna Onlus) and Le Onde Onlus, an organisation that combats violence against children and women<sup>347</sup>. This group provide advice for the MA, especially on monitoring, but does not have any decision-making powers.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The OP states that the **Monitoring Committee** will be informed on the implementation of the horizontal themes on a regular basis, i.e., at least once a year. The OP also mentions that a gender balance is to be ensured in this committee. However, in practice balanced participation is not ensured: the Committee is composed of 38 men (82%) and 8 women (18%). However, organisations working with equal opportunities have representatives in the Committee. These are the Operative Unit on Equal Opportunities of the Sicily Region, the Department for Rights and Equal Opportunities of the presidency of the cabinet (national level), and NGOs Arcidonna (Gender Observatory) and Le Onde (an organisation combating violence against children and women).

On the **project level**, only the projects which undertook a commitment to achieve specific outputs and results in terms of gender equality or non-discrimination are monitored against these targets. The reporting template itself does not contain any question on equal opportunities<sup>348</sup>.

The **ex-ante evaluation** devoted a special chapter to the theme of equal opportunities. It based its assessment on the VISPO methodology (Evaluation of the strategic impact on equal opportunities)<sup>349</sup>. The evaluation concluded that the OP will contribute to advancing equal opportunities in a number of fields (e.g., business development, access to public services infrastructure) and provided suggestions for management. Following the recommendation of this evaluation it is planned for 2007-2013 to contract an organisation responsible for qualitative monitoring of OP progress.

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the OP 'Sicily' does intend to apply some practices aimed at better integrating the aspect of equal opportunities (first and foremost gender equality). However these practices are not many; most of them are still 'on paper', and their implementation has not started yet. The programme follows an approach of partial gender mainstreaming (there are relevant practices at some stages of implementation) and weak targeting (under two priority axes some priority will be given to projects benefiting women or some disadvantaged groups).

Three points that are the most relevant from the perspective of Article 16 may be singled out:

- Important experience with regard to the integration of equal opportunities was accumulated in 2000-2006 (a network of referents, trainings, and a task force). However it remains to be seen if this experience will be used in 2007-2013.
- A well developed partnership with organisations working on gender equality. Two organisations, The Gender Observatory (Arcidonna Onlus) and Le Onde Onlus, an organisation combating violence against women and children) were consulted during the drafting of the OP, and are members of the consultation group and Programme Monitoring Committee.
- A detailed evaluation of the aspect of equal opportunities (between men and women) in the ex-ante evaluation report. The evaluation stated that the programme will

---

<sup>345</sup> Maria Rosa Lotti from the NGO Le Onde Onlus, interview, 30/6/2009.

<sup>346</sup> Il Forum della concertazione.

<sup>347</sup> Maria Rosa Lotti, interview, 30/6/2009.

<sup>348</sup> Emanuele Villa, interview, 29/6/2009.

<sup>349</sup> VISPO: Strategic Gender Impact Assessment of Equal Opportunities in Italy. For more see *Evaluating Socio-Economic Development, SOURCEBOOK 2: Methods & Techniques: Gender impact assessment*, December 2003, <[http://ec.europa.eu/regional.../sb2\\_gender\\_impact\\_assessment.doc](http://ec.europa.eu/regional.../sb2_gender_impact_assessment.doc)>.

(potentially) have an impact on gender equality, however adequate steps will have to be taken at the implementation stage.

At the moment the identified risk is that the Programme will undertake a formal approach with regard to equal opportunities and thus no genuine integration of this principle. While the OP calls for a gender balance in the OP, this principle has not been observed in practice. It is not clear to what extent the programme management will use the experience accumulated in 2000-2006 in integrating the aspect of equal opportunities; no evidence was found that any steps have already been taken to do this. The programme gives little attention to the aspects of equal opportunities other than gender equality and does not address the question of accessibility to the disabled. No NGOs representing such groups as immigrants, minorities and the disabled take an active part in the partnership process.

## LIST OF SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS USED

Regione Siciliana. Programma Operativo Regionale FESR 2007-2013, 2 agosto 2007 [The region of Sicily. ERDF Regional Operational Programme for 2007-2013, approved 2 August 2007];  
 Sicily Region and Department for Equal Opportunities, Presidency of the Council of Ministers (2008). *Vade Mecum: Equal opportunities in the 2007-2013 Structural Funds programming period*;  
*ERDF OP Requirements for eligibility and selection criteria*, No. 188 of 22-5-2009;  
 EU funds in the Sicily region <<http://www.euroinfosicilia.it>>;  
 Equal opportunities in the Sicily region;  
 Directive on Equal opportunities for 2008 (21/12/08);  
 Strategic planning an equal opportunities (Nov. 2007);  
 Internal regulations of the Monitoring Committee for the ERDF 2007/2013;  
 Deliberation CIPE No. 166 of the 21/12/07 concerning the implementation of the National Strategic Framework.  
 Special Eurobarometer 296 / Wave 69.1 "Discrimination in the European Union: Perceptions, Experiences and Attitudes" (2008).

## LIST OF INTERVIEWS

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Institution	Date of the interview
1.	Cianciolo	Maria	Referent equal opportunities ERDF OP Sicily 2007-2013	Sicily Region	7/7/2009 (by phone)
2.	Lotti	Maria Rosa	President	NGO Le Onde Onlus	30/6/2009 (by phone)
3.	Vila	Emanuele	Human Resources, Research and Horizontal Policies Manager	Sicily Region	29/6/2009 (by phone)