

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S ISSUES

Date: 26 April 1999

Ref: BG/BT

Re: Beijing questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE ON IMPLEMENTATION IN THE CRITICAL AREAS  
OF CONCERN OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Part one: Overview of trends in achieving gender equality  
and women's advancement

The Third Plan of Action for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, adopted  
on 7 March 1997, for the period 1997-2000, aimed at ..... by the Spanish Government, to promote equal opportunities for the social advancement of women on ..... promoting policies for the social advancement of men. The European Commission's Second Action Programme for the Advancement of Women and Men, adopted on 12 December 1997, aims at ..... by the European Union, to promote equal opportunities for the social advancement of women and men. The European Union's Fourth Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, adopted on 12 December 1997, aims at ..... by the European Union, to promote equal opportunities for the social advancement of women and men.

- Incorporation of a social perspective into government policies.

These goals are pursued in the context of a changing society and of developments in other parts of the world who face threats and who do not enjoy the same rights in our own society.'

On the basis of these assumptions, numerous legislative reforms have been introduced during the period since the Beijing Conference in order to promote equality of opportunity between men and women; there has been a major effort to incorporate a cross-cutting gender perspective into all legislation during this period.

Significant results of the commitments undertaken were achieved in

particular the importance of education as a basic tool for women's development in order to enable them to make choices consistent with their exercise of the rights to which they are entitled - a significant change in our country. In recent years, with regard to the financing of education of women, it is reflected in the total number of girls enrolled in non-compulsory primary and secondary schools and in the fact that the majority of university students are women.

Despite this progress, greater efforts are still necessary in this area.

The female illiteracy rate remains higher than the male rate (15.39 per cent compared to 2.12 per cent). Women are also in the minority in employment in scientific and technological courses (they account for 22.66 per cent of the students in such courses, compared to 65.38 per cent in the humanities), and, while a growing number of women are employed as teachers, they are seriously under-represented in the most prestigious areas and at the highest levels. Therefore, the activities promoted in the Third Plan will continue to favour the promotion of the participation of women in all educational processes by developing models that promote equal access and equality.

In the field of employment, it should be stressed that women's situation is improving, particularly in the labour market. However, while the increasing number of women are being incorporated into the working world, the rate of female employment is 37.2 per cent - 26.18 percentage points below that of men. This reality demonstrates that women lag far behind men in the exercise of their social and economic rights.

Therefore, in addition to improving women's employability, it is necessary

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*Code and improvements in the system of social services that promote flexibility in assignments and working hours in the productive field should enable women and men to recognize work and family responsibilities on an equal footing.*

In this connection, we should also highlight the Employment Action Plan, submitted by Spain to the European Union in June 1992, in accordance with the guidelines of the Luxembourg Summit Meeting, which includes specific activities for the sole purpose of creating stable, high-quality employment in order to ensure that Spain is genuinely on the same level as the rest of Europe, particularly as regards women. The Plan contains specific measures to promote equal opportunities and encourage women's participation in society by

The changes in organizational and productive structures that have taken place in our country have not yet resulted in balanced participation by both sexes in power and decision-making.

Although women's participation in political life has progressively increased, there is an obvious qualitative and quantitative imbalance in this field. Women hold 35.1 per cent of the seats in the bodies of Parishes, 14.9 per cent of the Senate seats and 19.05 per cent of the seats in the autonomous parliaments; they account for 12.3 per cent of Spanish representation in the European Parliament, which is higher than the Parliament's average of 12.6 per cent.

Hence, of the 15000 members of the Spanish Union, Spain ranks seventh, in terms of degree of political participation.

As for the Government, women account for 44.45 per cent of the civil service but only 28.78 per cent of the high-level posts. Similarly, they hold 40.57 per cent of the mid-level government posts and 7.5 per cent of the conciliators of the autonomous governments and 6.1 per cent of municipal posts.

Special mention should be made of the policies developed for the benefit of rural women whose situation has changed considerably in recent years.

Activities to strengthen the role of rural women have intensified since the adoption of the Third Plan, which introduced a section on meeting the needs of these women - not only those living in rural areas but also those living in urban areas who work in the rural areas.

As women are increasingly subjected to physical, psychological abuse which prevents them from enjoying their human rights and fundamental freedoms, the theme of violence is one of the areas to which our Government is devoting special attention.

Over the years, there has been a considerable increase in complaints of violations of sexual freedom, suggesting that women are more aware of individual problems.

In view of this, both the Spanish Government and the European Commission against Violence, in 1993, adopted the Plan of Domestic Violence 1998-2000, which has six main parts: awareness prevention; education and training; social resources; health services; judicial practice; and investigation. With a total budget of approximately US\$ 57 million.

The plan aims to improve the quality of life of women by increasing their access to health services and health care programmes. The plan, however, contemplates various activities aimed at preventive health care for women throughout their life cycle.

The principal measures are aimed at establishing programmes for the preventive diagnosis of disease, providing adequate information to women, conducting studies and collecting gender- and age-disaggregated data for further analysis, while devoting the necessary attention to elderly women who require special care and to young women through campaigns for the adoption of a healthy lifestyle.

In this connection, we should highlight the elaboration by the Ministry of Health, with the cooperation of the Institute for Women's Issues, of the Comprehensive Women's Health Care Plan adopted in 1998 and aimed at strengthening and broadening women-specific services.

eradicating discriminatory advertisements and preventing, as far as possible, sexist distinctions between men and women.

Among the measures summarized above, we can highlight, with regard to the mainstreaming of the gender perspective, the progress achieved as a result of the implementation of the Third Plan for Equal Opportunities in such areas as employment, where great efforts have been made in view of the difficulties women

increased investment in activities to provide social services, to ensure an equal share in the budgetary, human and material resources to guarantee the equality of opportunity between men and women. ! ! ! ! !

ics, such as the environment, which was introduced in the Third Plan; and decision-making, have witnessed major progress and remain

for our Government; thus, strong impetus must be given to

utes in both spheres. ! ! ! !

mentation of the activities included in the Third Plan is

the first quarter of every year. - - - - -

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these activities were carried out or initiated, although they are all in

effort to achieve equality between men and women by implementing

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#### Part two: Financial and institutional measures

  
 During the time period covered by this questionnaire, there was a

increase in the budgetary, human and material resources devoted to ensuring

equality of opportunity between men and women. ! ! ! !

  
 The Government's priority interest in policies to promote equality

reflected in the most recent budgets adopted, which were elaborated as

Budgets but allocated more resources to the Institute for Women's Issues

Institute, particularly in recent years, has resulted in significant

These programmes have been implemented through two mechanisms:

1. Through general programme grants whose purpose is to support the women's association movement and the social participation of women, especially with respect to the labour market, education and decision-making;

2. Through programmes designed to promote equal opportunities for men and women, giving priority through the allocation of 0.52 per cent of the individual

employment budget to education programmes intended to enhance skills and promote their access to the various educational levels, also giving priority to programmes intended to promote the employment and self-employment of women in order to ensure equal opportunities for women in the labour market, as well as increasing by now the contribution training this time being of the Comprehensive Plan of Basic Social Services Benefits, which includes projects for, inter alia, the provision of equipment to social services centres, shelters, hostels and information and other services, on the basis of the agreements concluded between the Ministry of Social Affairs, the autonomous communities and local communities.

In 1996, 987 projects were financed through the Plan, compared to 1,024 projects in 1995, as funding for that purpose has increased in recent years.

The autonomous communities have their own equal opportunity mechanisms,

which are coordinated through the Sectoral Conference of the

Ministries of Labour and Social

Affairs, to which the Institute for Women's Is

lands is answerable, is the engine of the implementation of the equal opportunity policies defined by the autonomous communities, which end plenary meetings are periodically held.

Among the objectives of the Sectoral Conference are the evaluation and implementation of the commitments of the Fourth World Conference on Women and other global conferences relating to the ministerial responsibilities.

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