

Equal Opportunities for  
Women and Men:  
Monitoring the Law and  
Practice in New Member  
States and Accession  
Countries  
of the European Union

## FACT SHEETS - 2005

BULGARIA

CZECH REPUBLIC

ESTONIA

HUNGARY

LITHUANIA

POLAND

ROMANIA

SLOVAKIA

TURKEY

### WHAT IS THE SITUATION IN HUNGARY?

With regard to equal treatment between women and men, the most important advance in Hungarian legislation in the past two years was the adoption of Act CXXV of 2003 on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunities. The Act prohibits discrimination on all grounds, including sex, but there are no special provisions concerning gender discrimination. The law is relatively progressive in its definitions and the forms of discrimination it covers, but the Equal Treatment Authority (which began operating in February 2005), judges and law enforcement professionals are to play an active role in the future to interpret and complete the content of the definitions. There remain some gaps and discrepancies with regard to compliance of Hungarian legislation with EU Directives.

The change and restructuring of the government in 2004 brought yet another change to the gender equality mechanism. A new ministry called the Ministry of Youth, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities is now led by the previous Minister (without portfolio) for Equal Opportunities. Only one small department deals with gender equality issues in the Ministry, under the supervision of a deputy state secretary in charge for strategic development and international affairs.

### WHAT DO THE FACTS SAY?

- Women's gross average income is 19% lower than men's. In comparable positions both in the private and state sectors, women are paid an average of 13-14% less than men;
- Women are over-represented in poorly paid state sector jobs such as healthcare and education;
- Women are very under-represented in national politics. 9.1% of all MPs are women;
- In 2003, men comprised only six percent of persons receiving a childcare benefit, and 0.7 percent of persons who received a childcare allowance.

For more information  
about the full reports see:

[WWW.SOROS.ORG/WOMEN](http://WWW.SOROS.ORG/WOMEN)

## WHAT IS

### DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN?

“Discrimination against women” shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

(*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Article 1.*)

### WHAT IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE EU TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY?

“The EU has a long-standing commitment to promoting gender equality, enshrined in the Treaty since 1957.

The Community legal framework ensures that women and men are equal before the law. [...] Moreover, equal treatment legislation is a firmly established integral part of the *acquis communautaire* that countries applying for EU membership have to respect.” (Proposal by the Commission for a Council Decision on the Programme relating to the Community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005); Introduction)

### WHAT IS THE ACQUIS COMMUNAUTAIRE?

The *acquis communautaire* is the body of common rights and obligations which binds all Member States within the European Union. It comprises Community law, all acts adopted under the second and third pillars of the European Union and the common objectives laid down in the Treaties.

## WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?

- Gender equality concerns are not high on the policy agenda in Hungary;
- Although gender mainstreaming has been mentioned in the strategic policy documents in Hungary lately, these documents cannot be considered really mainstreamed or their formulation is too general;
- Concerning equal treatment and gender equality, the situation in Hungary is characterized by the lack of or sporadic nature of comprehensive, informative, awareness-raising programs and campaigns, as well as materials and wide-ranging training programs for policymakers and law enforcement officials.

## A WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- The gender equality mechanism should have an independent and distinctive structure and sufficient human and financial resources. The Minister for Equal Opportunities should keep the issue of gender equality as high on the agenda as equal opportunity concerns on other grounds;
- The mechanism should develop a comprehensive strategy or action plan for promoting and implementing a gender equality policy in Hungary for the short-term and long-term. This plan should contain awareness-raising activities and training programs both for professionals and the general public;
- The separate regulation of sexual harassment and the review of provisions concerning shifting the burden of proof are necessary in order to fully meet the requirements of the *acquis communautaire*.

## DID YOU KNOW:

Hungarian women spend the most time in Europe doing household work. In Hungary, 45% of employed persons are women; 96% of office workers are women; 65% of assistant positions requiring higher education are women; 10% of managers in the private sector and 30% of entrepreneurs are women.

## MORE INFO:

[www.mona-hungary.org](http://www.mona-hungary.org); [www.icsszem.hu](http://www.icsszem.hu)