

# **Response of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany**

**UNECE QUESTIONNAIRE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION (1995) AND THE OUTCOME OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2000)**

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# 1. Experiences in the implementation of the Platform for Action and the Outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly: Achievements and Obstacles

While Part 2 sets out the individual measures for national implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, this Part 1 contains a summary of the challenges faced, the policy-related priorities set and the key achievements attained.

## General Comments on the Equality Policy of the Federal Government

The Beijing Platform for Action and its follow-on documents are instrumental in German equality policy. The holistic approach of the Beijing Platform for Action is taken up at national level and implemented in numerous measures, laws and activities. Expansion of the gender equality provision in the German Basic Law, “The state shall promote the actual implementation of equal rights for women and men and take steps to eliminate disadvantages that now exist.” (Article 3 (2), second sentence), which the German Bundestag adopted almost simultaneously with the Beijing Platform for Action, has enshrined the equality policy mandate in German law.

The following sets out the main areas of focus in German equality policy and the key measures adopted in associated areas. Work performed within these critical areas of concern are driven by two trains of thought:

1. Gender equality can only be achieved if government policies focus on the real-life situations of both women and men and contain appropriately targeted measures.
2. Gender equality can only be achieved if more men are won over to the cause and involved.

Life course-oriented equality policy plays an increasingly important role. In 2008, the Federal Government set up an Equality Report Commission whose task it was to present Germany’s first national equality report by 2010. Its mandate set out this requirement in more detail by calling for equality policy to be developed from a life-course standpoint.

## Promoting Equal Opportunities between Men and Women in Employment

The employment rate of women in Germany has reached 65.7 %. Despite a five percentage point increase over a three-year period, the job market still has some deeply ingrained gender-specific inequalities that are hard to eliminate. These include occupational segregation, under-representation of women in management positions and an over-representation of women in family-related career breaks and part-time work. These differences consolidate into a gender-specific pay gap which currently stands at 23 percent (gross hourly pay).

The Federal German government follows a strategy which is designed to tackle the above-mentioned inequalities in the job market, promote equal opportunities for women and men in working and family life, and close the gender-specific pay gap.

As early as 2001, the Federal German government entered into an agreement with the central associations of German businesses to promote equal opportunities for women and men in the private sector. The agreement focuses on four target areas: improving vocational training for girls and women, making it easier to reconcile work and family commitments, promotion of women in management positions, and reducing the gender pay gap. The agreement is regularly reviewed and reported on. The third report was published in April 2008 and showed that considerable progress has been achieved as regards the first two target areas.

Improving the reconciliation between work and family life is one of the Federal Government's main objectives. Parental Allowance, which includes two 'partner months', was successfully introduced in 2007 (see Section F). In 2008, the Children's Advancement Act (Kinderförderungsgesetz, or KiFöG) was enacted to enhance childcare services throughout the country (see Section F).

To make it easier for women to return to work after a long family-related break, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) together with the Federal Employment Agency launched the programme Vocational Reintegration as a perspective (Perspektive Wiedereinstieg) in 2008.

To overcome the gender-specific pay gap, the Federal German Government adopts a cause-focused strategy which for the most part aims to level out the differences between women and men in respect of family-related breaks from work and reductions in working hours. The Equal Pay Day scheme promoted by BMFSFJ and held for the second time in 2009 sparked the establishment of a National Alliance for Equal Pay (Nationales Aktionsbündnis zur Entgeltgleichheit). Coordinated by the Business and Professional Women Germany e.V., the Confederation of German Employer Organisations Associations (Bundesvereinigung Deutscher Arbeitgeberverbände), the Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Kommunalen Gleichstellungsbeauftragter (Federal Working Group of Municipal Equal Opportunities Representatives), the Deutsche Frauenrat (umbrella organisation of nation-wide women's organisations) and the German Association of Women Entrepreneurs (Verband deutscher Unternehmerinnen) have joined forces to communicate the causes behind the pay gap and to highlight opportunities for strategic action. The Confederation of German Trade Unions (Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund) is represented by the Deutscher Frauenrat. BMFSFJ supports these efforts, inter alia by programming and introducing of a tool (Logib-D) which enables businesses to examine whether and why a gap exists in pay paid to their male and female employees.

The General Equal Treatment Act (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz or AGG) which entered into force in 2006 enshrines in law among other things the ban on discrimination on the grounds of sex in employment (see Section F). The AGG stipulates sanctions which may be enforced if the ban is breached.

In promoting employment, equality between women and men is an express aim of the Federal German Government. With the restructuring of the policy instruments for pro-active labour market policy, which entered into force in January 2009, the legal mandate to place women in work (minimum quota) was made a priority objective in employment promotion.

### **Protection and Support for Women Who are Victims of Violence**

Building on the First Action Plan of the Federal Government to Combat Violence Against Women and based on the results of representative studies, the Federal Government under the lead of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) adopted the Second Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women in September 2007.

The Second Action Plan consolidates and coordinates over 130 targeted measures, projects and activities. It covers critical areas of concern: greater protection for women migrants who are victims of violence and greater consideration of the particular problems faced by disabled women who suffer violence. The healthcare professions, and particularly doctors, are to be activated to support patients who suffer as victims of violence. Prevention measures are to kick in earlier than has previously been the case and will ideally be coordinated and implemented jointly between youth, women's and healthcare organisations. In line with the findings of the Government report on the impacts of the act concerning prostitutes' legal status and rights, a range of measures to better protect women who work as prostitutes from exploitation and violence will be assessed, for example, to govern the punishability of clients who use the services of women who are subject to forced prostitution and to control brothels under the law relating to trades. In 2009, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth raised the minimum age for paid sexual intercourse and issued calls for tender for model projects that make it easier for women to escape the prostitution trade.

At international level, the Federal German government takes a pro-active approach in providing protection and help for women in crisis. It has adopted a number of measures, for example, to implement Resolution 1325 (see Section E).

### **Support for Women in Pregnancy-Related Emergency Situations**

The Federal German Government aims to put girls, women and their partners in a position to make self-determined, health-focused, informed decisions on matters of family planning and having children. This includes providing help and support for women whose pregnancy throws them into crisis, be it material or psychological. Since 2005, the number of abortions reported in Germany has seen a steady decline: 114,484 cases were reported in 2008. Germany has been particularly successful in keeping teenage pregnancies and teenage abortions at a low level.

In fulfilling its statutory mandate under Germany's Pregnancy and Family Assistance Act (Schwangerschaftskonfliktgesetz), the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) develops strategies and measures on sexual education and family planning and regularly publishes specially designed informational material which targets the respective groups. Information and advice around prenatal diagnostics are getting ever-more weight, not least by promoting cooperation between psycho-social advisory organisations and treating physicians.

When in financial crisis, pregnant women can turn to the Federal Foundation Mother and Child: (Bundesstiftung Mutter und Kind) for help. The Foundation can provide grants in emergency situations. In 2009, it received €97 million in funding from the federal budget, some €5 million more than in previous years.

### **Widening Gender-Specific Role Models / New Opportunities for Boys and Men**

Gender-specific role models restrict people's lifestyles and prevent them from developing their true potential. When women and men are able to exploit their individual potential and are not bound to the restrictions of role model-related expectations, it enriches not only the lives of the women and men involved, but also benefits society as a whole. Effective equality policy must win men over to the cause and provide them with new opportunities that stretch beyond the ingrained stereotypes, thus giving both women and men a real chance of enjoying equality in working and family life.

Thus, in recent years the Federal German Government has placed greater focus on men. It has both initiated a number of research projects and sought close contact with equality-oriented men's organisations.

The partner months under the new Parental Allowance (see Section F) have resulted in a growing number of men taking time out from work to look after their children. In 16 percent of households in which Parental Allowance is claimed, the father receives the benefit either in his own right or together with his child's mother. One aim of the programme Vocational Reintegration as a perspective (see above and also Section F) is to encourage men to support their wives and partners in their attempts to return to work following a family-related career break.

Stereotypical roles are assigned to girls and boys at a very early age and tend to shape their paths for the future. This is why the German Government has launched a range of targeted projects to foster reflection on and expansion of gender-specific male and female roles, both at school age and at the time decisions are made as to what occupation school-leavers wish to pursue. Projects like the Girls' Day programme (see Sections F and L) and New Paths for Boys (Neue Wege für Jungs) (see Section F), the Gleich geht's weiter media set (see Section L), the National Pact for Women in MINT Professions (MINT = Mathematics, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Technology) (see Section B), and a travelling exhibition which uses a series of short video portraits to depict a range of different role models, life situations and opportunities (see Section L).

### **Women in Politics**

That women and men be afforded the same opportunities to take up top positions in political life is an underlying principle of democracy. In Germany, the number of women in political office varies greatly depending on the level involved.

Women are well represented on the federal level. Germany currently has a female chancellor and six out of fourteen federal ministries are headed by female ministers. Germany thus ranks fourth in an EU

comparison. In the German Bundestag (lower house of parliament), 32 percent of MPs are women. This relatively good ratio of women was largely made possible by the proportional representation voting system and the commitment of almost all political parties to have an appropriate number of women among their lists of candidates.

The situation is, however, very different at municipal level. Only five percent of full-time and voluntary mayors in municipalities with over 2,000 inhabitants are women. The number of women in voluntary municipal committees is around 24 percent. For this reason, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth has launched a FRAUEN MACHT KOMMUNE (Womens' Power in Local Councils) campaign, which encourages women who are already active community service volunteers to become involved in local politics. Also, to mark the 60th anniversary of the existence of the German Basic Law, the ministry has created the Helene Weber Prize which is designed to promote upcoming women politicians.

In the Federal Administration, the number of women in top positions (departmental head level) within the highest federal agencies stands at 17 percent (as of 2008). Although the Federal Equality Act (Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz) (see Section G and Part 3) has helped to increase women's representation within federal agencies, when it comes to women holding top positions in the highest echelons of the Federal Administration Germany ranks at the lower end of the field when compared with other EU countries.

## 2. Beijing Platform for Action: Implementing Critical Areas of Concern (with the exception of H)

### A. Women and Poverty

The sections of the German population most at risk from poverty include the unemployed (43 percent), people with no vocational qualifications (19 percent) and single parents (24 percent). Social and family policy transfer benefits such as Unemployment Benefit II, Child Allowance, Supplemental Child Benefit, Housing Benefit and Parental Allowance have lessened the overall risk of income poverty.

But in the longer term, employment which provides an income sufficient to provide financial security is the best way to prevent poverty. The Federal Government places great importance on enabling women and men, be they parents or childless, to participate equally in the working world. Section F addresses this issue in more detail. In the following, two poverty prevention measures are outlined by way of example:

Formal education for girls and women in Germany has reached a high standard (see Section B). Women are starting to catch up with men in terms of their numbers in the labour market. This means more opportunities to obtain livelihood-securing employment and better prevention against income poverty. There remain, however, a large number of structural obstacles which hinder equal participation of women and men in the working world. These are mostly a result of Germany's extremely wide **gender pay gap** (23 percent).

This pay gap presents an ongoing (dis)incentive as regards women's attitude to work. Poorer income opportunities lead to a lower tendency to want to work and longer periods out of work lead to greater pay inequality – a vicious circle. If and as long as women earn less than men, they will be more inclined to leave their jobs to look after the family and thus confirm employers' notions of women as going to work simply to earn 'pin money'. This means that women who become the breadwinner in the family because their husbands are unemployed, their partner dies or they get divorced are often forced to look after their families on a lower women's income. Pay inequality is thus a result of ingrained role models on the one hand and enshrines the gender-hierarchical division of responsibility in partnerships on the other, even if it is not the preferred life model of the men and women involved. It is an economic anachronism and a risk factor, both in societal modernisation and in poverty prevention.

In combating income inequality in particular, numerous initiatives have been launched to encourage young women and men to consider a wider range of occupations and overcome the traditional lines of division drawn in the jobs market. The new Parental Allowance and the partner months it entails help reduce the length of time women take away from work to look after the family. The same applies to the Perspektive Wiedereinsteig programme. The General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) provides opportunities for promotion-related and preference decisions to be reviewed by the courts (for in-depth information see Section F).



Today, almost one in five families in Germany are headed by a single parent. In eastern Germany the figure is as high as one in four. Some 2.18 million minors live with their single mothers or fathers. This means more than every sixth child in the country. Of the single-parent households in Germany, 42 percent receive basic security benefits for job-seekers (Unemployment Benefit II/Social Assistance). A range of benefits and measures are in place which are designed to meet the needs of single parents in Germany (income tax relief, extended period of Parental Allowance, advances on maintenance payments, and additional needs when claiming basic security benefits). But in securing a sustainable means of support, earning a living is of paramount importance. This means providing reliable conditions, sufficient childcare options and a family-friendly working world to allow single parents to go to work and earn a living. In practice, therefore, it is necessary to provide a wide and varied range of services to make it easier for single parents to reconcile their family and work commitments.

Against this backdrop, in February 2009 the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) and the Federal Employment Agency (BA) entered into a strategic partnership **Perspektiven für Alleinerziehende (Opportunities for Single Parents)** which ensures a coordinated and cooperative process in providing opportunities for single parents. In the coming years, cooperation within the partnership – which also involves local government associations – will concentrate on four main areas of activity:

- Initiation and further development of specific network-based cooperation activities to improve work-life balance for single parents
- An ideas competition to devise models for good jobs and working conditions for single parents (Gute Arbeit für Alleinerziehende)
- Improved job placement and case management processes for single parents
- Improved data collation and research findings on the life situations (realities) of single parents

Also the **programme Vocational Reintegration as a Perspective (Perspektive Wiedereinstieg)** (see Section F) that BMFSFJ started together with the Federal Employment Agency is instrumental in preventing poverty among single mothers because it makes it easier for women to return to work after long periods out of work while in a permanent relationship.

In its development cooperation work, the Federal Government places particular importance on ensuring that women who are most affected or threatened by poverty receive equitable access to economic resources.

With the EU Council conclusions on Equal Opportunities and Participation: The Role of Women in Development Cooperation (2007) adopted during Germany's EU presidency, a basis was created for more effective and targeted implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Building on these Council conclusions, in 2010 the Spanish presidency will adopt an EU Gender Action Plan. Preparations are already underway, with involvement by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Also, in the course of international discussions on improving the effectiveness of **development policy** cooperation and development aid, the Federal Government has actively called for gender equality, improved women's rights and a greater role for women to be prominently enshrined in the resulting international agreements – The Accra Action Agenda 2008 and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development 2008.

With its efforts towards implementing the World Bank Generation Action Plan, of which the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development is the patron, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development has made a significant contribution to creating a Gender Law Database. The database provides information on legally recognised forms of gender-specific discrimination against women in the workplace in 181 countries. The knowledge contained in the database can be used to enact targeted reforms to breakdown structure-related discrimination in future.

Providing women with access to financial services plays a central role in development policy cooperation. This was enshrined in, among others, the G8 Summit document from Heiligendamm and is of key importance in Germany's bilateral and multilateral development policy. In particular, Germany is involved in the international Making Finance Work for Africa partnership to support targeted efforts in ensuring women receive access to financial services. In Nepal, BMZ promotes as part of its bilateral cooperation activities the establishment of savings and lending cooperatives for small farmers. The Rural Finance Nepal project encourages and enables these societies to actively include more women in their work, both as borrowers and as decisionmakers.

## **B. Education and Training of Women**

Formal education for girls and women in Germany has reached a high standard. In 2007, some 56 percent of school-leavers who attained a general higher education entrance qualification were female, as were 49.8 percent of university entrants. There are, however, clear gender-specific differences when it comes to choosing a training occupation or course of academic study. Also, the proportion of women decreases at higher academic qualification levels. Taking a career in science as an example, this means that for the year 2007, 24.3 percent of 'Habilitation' papers (qualification to teach at professorial level) were written by women, while 16.2 percent of professorships and a mere 8.4 percent of top positions in extra-university research institutes were held by women. The Federal Government aims to encourage women to consider a broader range of occupations and professions and thus recruit more women to take up training and work in the science and technology sectors or to study one of the future-focused **MINT subjects** (mathematics, informatics, natural sciences and technology). It also aims to boost the number of women researchers and women managers in university and non-university research institutes. Reconciling training and work commitments with those of family life is to be made easier through improved childcare services. Conditions within the science sector will be structured in such a way that they foster women's careers.

The main areas of focus during the current legislative period involve the following measures which will be implemented by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF):

The **Women Professors Programme (Professorinnenprogramm)** is currently scheduled to run for five years with a budget of €150 million (half funded by the federal government and the other half by the German states (Länder)) to finance at least 200 positions for women professors. In line with the Bund-Länder agreement, universities were called upon to submit equality policy proposals as a precondition for the provision of funding. An external review committee passed 79 of the 113 proposals submitted in the first funding tranche. The universities involved will now submit their funding applications for between one and three professorships. Some 140 professors are to be funded in this first tranche. The cut-off date for the second tranche was 2 March 2009. Some 61 universities submitted their equality policy proposals in the second tranche. These will be reviewed at the beginning of June 2009. In each tranche, funding approval is given according to the first come, first served principle, i.e. only as long as funding is available. The applications received so far exhaust the full amount of funds allocated in the budget.

In conjunction with upwards of 40 partners from government, industry, science and research, and the media, the National Pact for Women in MINT Professions was signed on 17 June 2008 as part of the federal Germany government's training and further education initiative. The aim of the Pact is to motivate young women to use their talents in future-focused jobs in the technology and natural science sectors. Apart from sponsoring the Pact secretariat (including a website and a cross-sectoral public relations strategy), the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has also allocated some €3 million to fund between five and eight cooperation projects. Projects already launched include CyberMentor (in which women mentors in the MINT sector support schoolgirls by answering questions on their chosen professions via e-mail) and tasteMINT (an assessment procedure for schoolgirls to gauge their potential in this field). BMBF has also provided funds for the development of a strategy to showcase women role models and for the establishment of junior engineer academies and talent schools for girls. A project to support female MINT students in pursuing a career in small and medium-sized enterprise, for example in electronics and information technology, is also planned. In signing the Memorandum on the National Pact for Women in MINT Careers, also the Federal Employment Agency has agreed to help change society's image of MINT professions, attract more girls and women to work in and study the natural sciences and technology, and to recruit university graduates to careers in the sector. It has already published two special leaflets (abi female and planet-beruf) to inform girls about opportunities in these sectors.

With the launch of the Women to the Top (Frauen an die Spitze) initiative, a wide range of research projects will be funded. These will produce science-based findings on which to generate new action-oriented measures for greater gender equality in industry and in science and research, and thus bring Germany closer to achieving greater participation by women in top management positions and in professions in which they are currently under-represented – particularly the natural science and technology sectors. The launch will also include the development of a set of principles concerning the integration of gender issues into natural science and technology-related research. Two calls for tender have so far attracted upwards of 130 project proposals.

Within the Power to Women Start-Ups (Power für Gründerinnen) initiative, around 20 projects are funded, some of which involve consortiums with a total of 40 sub-projects. Power für Gründerinnen is

designed to motivate and empower women to become self-employed and to provide for research into the structural differences in business start-ups embarked upon by women and men. The projects are designed to close existing research gaps and to develop and test best-practice, innovative approaches to creating a start-up-friendly environment for women-owned businesses in Germany.

One important pillar of the programme is the National Agency for Women Start-Ups (Gründerinnenagentur, or bga). This provides start-up grants provided by BMBF, BMFSFJ and BMWI with cofinancing from the European Social Fund. As a central platform, the agency consolidates information and services designed to assist women's start-ups in all sectors and at every phase of the start-up (see Section F).

The Federal German Government has agreed the following with the aim of improving **the reconciliation of work and family life for parents who work in science and research**:

Trainees and apprentices with children will now enjoy more support: during their training, they will receive a lump-sum supplementary childcare grant in addition to their means-tested training assistance grant (BAföG).

Following the amendment to the labour policy requirements in science and research, universities can now agree with mothers and fathers who in the course of their studies are employed by a university and do not interrupt their term of employment to look after their children to extend the restrictive period by another two years per child. This provides for adequate structural consideration within the respective law of parents' needs in starting a family.

The BMBF Money versus Time (Zeit gegen Geld) programme ensures that scholarship holders with a child are able to finance additional childcare services by allowing them access to scholarship funds in advance. Along with the existing option of extending the funding period, scholarship holders can thus cover the costs of childcare needed at short notice during exams, work placements or periods overseas.

The Federal Government is also committed to providing adequate childcare provision. Since 1999, research institutes have been able to use funds from their budgets to subsidise childcare services as long as their use incurs no additional costs. A large number of research institutes have since made use of this option.

## **C. Women and Health**

Germany operates a healthcare system which gives women and men a legal right to equal access to healthcare services and institutions. Regardless of gender, age, cause of illness or social status, everyone receives the medical care they need. There are no gender-related restrictions.

What must be considered, however, is that women can sometimes suffer from different ailments and illnesses than men. And gender-specific traits may also show up, both as an illness develops and in response to medication. For example, women can react differently to certain health problems and thus need services and treatments that take their specific needs and concerns into account. To close

existing gaps in knowledge, government-funded health research and projects conducted in the health sector should give regular consideration to gender-specific issues.

On behalf of the Federal Ministry of Health (BMG), the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) has launched a **women's health portal ([www.frauengesundheitsportal.de](http://www.frauengesundheitsportal.de))**. The portal went online in 2006 as a service to the general public. It contains quality-assured health information on issues such as breast cancer, sexually transmitted disease and healthy ageing. The women's health portal is subject to systematic development and will be updated and added to with new focus areas. A section on women's mental health is planned for 2009 and will include advice on using and handling medication.

With government measures to maintain and promote reproductive health, which in some instances are carried out in conjunction with the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), it is intended to put young girls and women and their partners in a position to make self-determined, health-focused, informed decisions in matters of family planning and having children. While in the past, BZgA's work has largely focused on the prevention of teenage pregnancies as well as the information and qualification of women and couples in dealing with pregnancy and birth – thus implementing its legal mandate under Section 1 of the Pregnancy and Family Assistance Act for education and family planning - current activities involve more projects which target boys and men. The media and measures concerning family planning and **sexual education** are increasingly being made culture-sensitive, with particular focus being placed on difficult-to-reach groups such as the socially disadvantaged and those with immigrant backgrounds.

The government's activities in this area have proven successful. The number of reported abortions has seen a steady decline since 2005, dropping to 114,484 in 2008. When in financial crisis, pregnant women can turn to the Federal Foundation Mother and Child (Bundesstiftung Mutter und Kind) for help. The Foundation can provide grants in times of crisis. Its budget was increased to €97 million for 2009.

A focal point of the work performed by BZgA in 2009 will involve **prenatal diagnostics (PND)**. In addition to the informational media available to women and couples on this topic (flyers, booklets and a website), a media package containing DVDs, films and background material has been developed for use by doctors, midwives, human geneticists, prenatal diagnostic centres and advisory staff to enable them to improve their counselling skills and services. The government has also introduced measures to foster cooperation between psycho-social counselling services and physicians. Research conducted since 2007 as part of a project on Decisionmaking Processes in Prenatal Diagnostics (Entscheidungsprozesse im Kontext von Pränataldiagnostik) looks at the factors (background, experience with disability, couple dynamics and family influence) that play a role in the decisionmaking processes between mother, doctor and partner.

In the course of the health policy reform in 2007, preventive and rehabilitation care for mothers and fathers were switched from a discretionary to a mandatory status. This improved service benefits both women and men. Statistics on related costs show an increase of 16.7 percent in 2007 and a further 10.6 percent in 2008, providing proof that the improved mother-father-child measures are being successfully implemented.

There are currently about 63,500 people in Germany living with **HIV/AIDS** and of them 11,700 are women. In 2007, some 2,752 new cases were diagnosed in men and 444 in women. The epidemiological level among women is thus comparatively low.

From the outset, the fight against AIDS has taken in women-specific needs, for example with specially designed booklets and websites for women and young girls. Women-specific counselling and support services are well established.

Since 2008, prenatal check-ups must offer women the opportunity to test for HIV free of charge.

In accordance with EU guidelines, a nationwide, quality-assured and population-focused **breast screening programme** for early detection of breast cancer was launched in 2004 and is now fully operational. Every two years, all women between the ages of 50 and 69 receive a written invitation to attend a screening appointment. The findings of recent studies show that screening is well accepted by women. The programme is managed and coordinated by the Coordination Office Mammography Screening in the Ambulatory Care (Kooperationsgemeinschaft Mammographie in der ambulanten vertragsärztlichen Versorgung) as an out-patient service performed by panel doctors.

The Action Plan on Drugs and Addiction (Aktionsplan Drogen und Sucht) launched by the Federal Government's Commissioner on Narcotic Drugs in November 2003 laid down for the first time that addiction prevention measures must be better aligned to gender-related factors because in most cases, girls and women consume addictive substances differently to boys and men, often in a more clandestine way, and are influenced by different role models. This calls for gender-specific prevention, counselling and therapy. For example, addiction to prescription drugs and also eating disorders (for more on the latter see Section L) are typical of women-specific addictive behaviour. Also, women find it more difficult, for example, to give up smoking when compared with men. Women's addictions involve not only their addictive behaviour per se, but the particular health risks to which their unborn and newborn children are exposed. Plus, children born to people with addictions are especially at risk of developing an addiction themselves in adult life.

For some years now, regular statistics on addictive behaviour in Germany have been collated and disaggregated according to gender. Gender must also be taken into account in all model projects and research activities. For example, a current project looks at the gender-specific requirements in treating young people with addictions. The results are made available to organisations who conduct youth work. A range of other studies have been funded to investigate addictive behaviour in women.

In addiction prevention, women-specific prevention measures are playing an increasingly important role. Information on this subject is available, for example, from the German Centre for Addiction Issues (Deutsche Hauptstelle für Suchtfragen, or DHS) and the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA). Addiction counselling organisations offer separate services for women and men. These must be enhanced on an ongoing basis and adapted to meet the needs of a changing society.

In October 2008, a BMG-funded research project concluded in the launch of a publicly accessible online database on drug safety during pregnancy and while breastfeeding. It serves specialists in recognising and preventing risk, and offers guidance for pregnant women and for mothers who are breastfeeding their babies.

Health information on women-specific issues is also available from the new Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Healthcare (IQWiG) and the Federal Health Monitoring reports (GBE). Information contained in GBE reports is disaggregated for women and men whenever data allows.

#### **D. Violence Against Women**

Building on Germany's First Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women (1999), the findings of research conducted under that plan (see the 2006 report) and the outcome of dialogue with practitioners, the Federal Government adopted a **Second Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women** in 2007, which was drafted and presented by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ).

The Second Action Plan of the Federal Government consolidates and coordinates upwards of 130 specific measures, projects and activities implemented by the various federal ministries:

- 1) Prevention
- 2) Law-making by the Federal Government: Legislation and Administrative Regulations
- 3) System of Aid and Support and Counselling for Women Affected by Violence
- 4) National Networks within the System of Aid
- 5) Cooperation between State Institutions and Non-State Services
- 6) Work with Perpetrators
- 7) Training and Sensitisation
- 8) Research
- 9) European and Other International-Level Cooperation
  - a) European Union
  - b) Council of Europe
  - c) Other forms of European Cooperation
  - d) United Nations
- 10) Measures to Support Women Abroad

The Second Action Plan covers areas where action is needed most: greater protection for women migrants who are victims of violence and greater consideration of the particular problems faced by disabled women who suffer violence. The healthcare professions, particularly doctors, are to be activated to support patients who suffer as victims of violence. Prevention measures are to kick in earlier than has previously been the case and will ideally be coordinated and implemented jointly between youth, women's' and healthcare organisations. To better protect women who work as prostitutes from exploitation and violence, in line with the findings of the Government report on the impacts of the act concerning prostitutes' legal status and rights, a range of measures will be assessed, for example, to govern the punishability of clients who use the services of women who are subject to forced prostitution and to control brothels under the law relating to trades. In 2009, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth raised the minimum age for paid sexual

intercourse and issued calls for tender for model projects that make it easier for women to escape the prostitution trade.

To steer the implementation of the Second Action Plan, the Federal Government has created two Bund-Länder working groups (known as BLAGs), one on Trafficking in Women (Frauenhandel) and the other on Domestic Violence (Häusliche Gewalt). The responsible ministries, the competent sector-specific Conferences of the Ministers of the Länder (German states) and the respective NGO coordination offices are all represented in these working groups. They also include practitioners from the sectors involved: a representative from the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) belongs to the working group on trafficking in women and a member of the German Women Lawyers Association (Deutsche Juristinnenbund) to the working group on domestic violence.

With the publication of the Secondary Analysis on Health, Violence and Migration in 2008, which arose from a representative study on women's realities, safety and health in Germany commissioned by BMFSFJ in 2004, key findings were made available for use in improving healthcare for women and girls affected by these issues.

In recent years, related healthcare provision has focused on a range of BMFSFJ-funded measures involved in implementing the SIGNAL programme. Current activities centre on a model project for Medical Intervention Against Violence (Medizinische Intervention gegen Gewalt, or MIGG). MIGG targets medical practices to assist doctors in dealing with patients who are victims of violence and in documenting their cases.

In October 2007, the Federal Ministry of Health (BMG) and the German Medical Association (BÄK) hosted a symposium on the effects of domestic violence on people's health. The symposium was well received and sparked many new ideas. Building on this, BMG joined forces with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and BÄK to organise and host an international symposium entitled Violence Affects Your Health: Challenges to the European Health System, which was held in Bonn from 30 – 31 October 2008. This symposium focused on the effects of domestic violence on women's and children's health, violence against the elderly and people in need of care, and violence against people with disabilities. It also addressed female genital mutilation and dealing with affected patients.

In October 2008, as part of the Federal Health Monitoring Report, the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) published GBE Pamphlet 42 on Gesundheitliche Folgen von Gewalt – unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von häuslicher Gewalt gegen Frauen (Violence and its Effects on Health: Focus on Domestic Violence Against Women). The pamphlet presents the first-ever set of comprehensive statistics on the subject of violence. Prior to publication, the findings were presented at the international symposium mentioned above. An English-language translation is planned.

A representative study commissioned by BMFSFJ in February 2008 on the prevalence and degree of violence against women with disabilities (Ausmaß und Umfang von Gewalt gegen Frauen mit Behinderungen) is designed to close knowledge gaps concerning the situation of women with disabilities, address their experience of violence and offer solutions to tackle the problem.

Since September 2008, BMG has funded a nationwide project to combat violence against women with disabilities and chronic illnesses. The project – Laut(er) starke Frauen (Women with Voices) – is jointly



run by Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft (BAG) Selbsthilfe e.V., Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft Selbsthilfe Behinderter NRW e. V. and NetzwerkBüro für Frauen und Mädchen mit Behinderung. BMG has thus placed the spotlight on women with disabilities and chronic illnesses – a group which to date has received little attention and has largely been excluded when addressing the subject of violence.

Work performed under the BMFSFJ-funded research project SELBST – Selbstbewusstsein für behinderte Mädchen und Frauen (Self-Confidence for Girls and Women with Disabilities) has continued to develop quality criteria and courses to boost self-confidence and has drawn up a set of guidelines in line with the needs of women with disabilities and concerning medically prescribed rehabilitation sport and exercise (Section 44, Book IX of the Social Code).

For the study on violence against women in relationships (Gewalt gegen Frauen in Partnerschaften) published at the beginning of March 2009, comprehensive data from a representative study on women's realities, safety and health in Germany (Lebenssituation, Sicherheit und Gesundheit von Frauen in Deutschland) conducted in 2004 on behalf of BMFSFJ was re-evaluated to obtain more detailed conclusions regarding the prevalence, degree and context of violence committed against women. According to the findings, violence against women occurs in all layers of society. Almost 70 percent of women affected by serious physical, psychological and sexual abuse earn their own living and a good third enjoy an average or high income. More than 60 percent of the women involved completed lower secondary education or higher secondary education and are skilled workers. Some 38 percent of women who suffer abuse possess the highest possible educational and training qualifications. The study contains detailed information on the prevalence of different degrees of violence and the contexts in which violence against women occurs. It looks at the factors that increase or decrease the risk of violence against women and how they impact on the support provided to victims.

Ten months after the Act to Protect against Violence (Gewaltschutzgesetz, or GewSchG) entered into force (1 January 2002) and thus at a relatively early juncture, the Act was reviewed by the State Institute for Family Research at the University of Bamberg. This allowed the implementation process to be monitored.

The review was largely positive. The few recommendations for improvement mostly involved issues concerning court jurisdiction and punishability of **stalkers**. The Act has since been amended on both points:

- The Federal Stalking Act (40. StrÄndG) of 22 March 2007 entered into force on 31 March 2007 and made the act of stalking a punishable offence (Section 238 of Germany's Criminal Code)
- Calls for measures adopted under the Act to Protect against Violence to be consolidated under the jurisdiction of the family courts were recognised in the Family Procedure Reform Act (Gesetz zur Reform des Verfahrens in Familiensachen und in den Angelegenheiten der freiwilligen Gerichtsbarkeit, or FGG-RG) which entered into force on 1 September 2009.

With the 37th Act Amending the Criminal Code dated 11 February 2005 (BGBl. I p. 239), which entered into force on 19 February 2005, criminal law on **human trafficking** was aligned to international requirements, in particular to the EU Council Framework Decision of 19 July 2002 to Combat Trafficking

in Human Beings (entered into force on 1 August 2002) and the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Human Trafficking of 16 May 2005.

To ensure that measures taken to combat human trafficking are based on fact, the Federal Government uses the annual report on human trafficking (Lagebild Menschenhandel) compiled and published every year since 1994 by the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA). The report contains information and suggestions on preventing and combating human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and for labour.

According to the latest report, in 2007 in the course of 454 investigations a total of 689 individuals (95 percent of whom were female) were found to be victims of human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation (Sections 232, 232a of the German Criminal Code).

With regard to human trafficking for the purposes of exploiting labour (Section 233 Criminal Code), police crime statistics for 2007 list 101 victims (62 women and 39 men).

The figures for 2007 show that 27 percent of the victims of human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation were German. The largest number of foreign victims in that year originated from Bulgaria (11 percent) and Romania (10 percent). Most foreign victims now stem from EU member states and may thus enter and remain in Germany legally.

Measures adopted by the Federal Government to combat human trafficking and to support its victims have included or include the following:

Under the Second Action Plan, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) provides funding to the nationwide activist coordination group on combating trafficking in women and violence against women in the process of migration (Koordinierungskreis gegen Frauenhandel und Gewalt an Frauen im Migrationsprozess e.V., or KOK e.V.). This network enables advisory and counselling organisations to air their views with a single voice and to actively participate in coordinating policy to combat human trafficking, not least through KOK membership of the Bund-Länder working group on trafficking in women, which coordinates government policy to combat trafficking in women for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Funding for individual advisory and counselling agencies is the responsibility of the German states (Länder), as decreed by Germany's federal system.

EU Directive 2004/81/EC of 29 April 2004 on residence permits issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings or who have been the subject of an action to facilitate illegal immigration and who cooperate with the competent authorities was transposed into German law with the entry into force in 2007 of the Act Implementing the EU Rights of Residence Directive (Gesetz zur Umsetzung aufenthalts- und asylrechtlicher Richtlinien der Europäischen Union).

In implementing the Directive, residency permits to allow temporary residence for a limited period (covering the period involved in cooperating with the authorities) were incorporated into Germany's Residence Act (Section 24 (4a) of the Aufenthaltsgesetz, or AufenthG). A prerequisite is that the foreigner cooperates with the investigating authorities and declares his or her willingness to give evidence as a witness during the court proceedings. These residency permits are issued with broad exemption to the general criteria, especially as regards securing a living. The preceding illegal entry and illegal residence is not held against the individual. Residency is granted for a period of six months

and may be extended. In justified cases, residency may be granted for longer periods. The right to residency may be withdrawn prior to expiration if the victim ceases to cooperate with the authorities.

German residency law also allows a period of grace in which victims of human trafficking can take time to consider whether they wish to cooperate with the competent authorities. Under the EU Victim Protection Directive, this period of grace is determined by the member states. Section 50 (2a) of German Residence Law allows at least one month. Victims are granted a temporary suspension of deportation during this period.

Also, participation and cooperation obligations between the immigration authorities, the criminal investigation authorities and the criminal courts are included in the German Residence Act (Section 72 (6), Section 87 (5) and Section 90 (4) of AufenthaltG) to ensure accuracy in residency-related decisionmaking.

The obligation for care and protection under Section 7 and 9 of the EU Victim Protection Directive is secured by means of the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act (Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz).

In Summer 2006, Germany hosted the World Cup. To prevent potential human trafficking and forced prostitution in connection with this huge sporting event, the German government worked with the German states, municipalities and non-government organisations to put a package of appropriate measures in place.

Particularly noteworthy are the creation by women's organisation Solwodi and the Diakonie (Evangelical Church) of a nationwide emergency helpline for victims and the government-funded Abpiff (whistle-blowing) campaign launched by the German Women's Council (Deutscher Frauenrat), the National Security Strategy FIFA WM 2006 and the Framework Plan of the National and Länder Police Forces: WM 2006, which contained uniform standards to manage policing of the event.

Hence, during the World Cup 2006, the German national security authorities in close cooperation with the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA), the police forces in the sixteen German states and international partners successfully countered forced prostitution and human trafficking in connection with the event.

**Genital mutilation** constitutes a violation of the human right to be free from torture and injury which results in serious physical and mental harm. All competent ministries participate in efforts (particularly those implemented under the Second Action Plan) to combat this practice in the countries of origin and in Germany.

The Federal Minister for Health called upon the German Medical Association (BÄK) to issue recommendations on treating patients suffering from genital mutilation. BÄK responded by drawing up a set of recommendations which were published in 2006. The Health Ministry had these translated into English and French and made them available on the ministry website and in the online database maintained by the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA).

At the Health Ministry's initiative, the subject of combating female genital mutilation and dealing with affected patients was selected as a key area of focus at a symposium entitled Violence Affects Your Health: Challenges to the European Health System which was jointly organised and hosted by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the German Medical Association (BÄK) and the German Health Ministry (BMG) in Bonn in October 2008. The organisers worked closely with Terre des Femmes and Forward Germany e.V. in presenting and discussing practicable solutions to tackle this problem.

In its bilateral cooperation activities, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has since 1999 played an active role in international efforts to combat female genital mutilation. BMZ projects are currently underway in Burkina Faso, Benin, Mali, Kenya and Mauretania. The ministry also promotes numerous private initiatives whose work assists in sensitising people to and educating them about this issue. Immigration has made female genital mutilation a problem in Germany. At the ministry's initiative, a Bund-Länder-NGO working group was founded in April 2009 to find ways of combating female genital mutilation.

Under Germany's National Integration Plan, the subject of **forced marriages** plays a key role. Evaluation of knowledge gleaned through existing services and the publication of a reader feeds the debate with relevant facts.

There is as yet no adequate advisory and counselling service in place for young immigrants (male and female) who are at risk of or affected by a forced marriage. By way of compensation, BMFSFJ funds a model project to provide an online advisory service on issues concerned with forced marriage. The easy accessible, anonymous online services provided in line with the project are a good way of reaching those concerned. The project will eventually include advice and counselling for friends of those involved, practitioners and facilitators. The service is currently available in Berlin, Frankfurt and Stuttgart. The findings gleaned from the project evaluation are also valuable in enhancing the advisory and counselling services offered by the various German states and municipalities.

## **E. Women and Armed Conflict**

Effective crisis prevention and conflict management policy is reliant on ongoing and determined consideration of gender equality and gender perspectives. Women and girls are not only victims but also actors and stakeholders. They must thus be protected from crisis-related gender-focused violence such as sexual abuse, which is often used in conflict as a targeted strategy in warfare. But women must also be more involved at all levels and in all stages of the process, both as actors and as stakeholders, in devising crisis management approaches and strategies aimed at rebuilding their societies. This includes increasing women's involvement in institutions and bodies who deal with crisis prevention, and providing targeted training in and promotion of gender-sensitive approaches to crisis prevention and conflict management. The Federal German Government places great importance on pursuing these endeavours and does so with a diverse range of activities.

Gender issues are observed in the development of underlying principles, conflict studies and methods and are considered in the conflict-sensitive structuring of crisis prevention and conflict management projects.

When selecting project staff, deploying peace troops and observers, and appointing working groups like the inter-institutional working group on peace development (FriEnt), achieving a gender balance is a key criterion.

It is also a core selection criterion in allocating funding for conflict management measures initiated by civil society in the countries involved in the conflict.

In addition, the Federal Government is strongly committed to ensuring that ongoing observation of gender issues and balanced participation of both women and men is achieved, including in strategies, missions and measures towards conflict prevention and management, and in humanitarian efforts conducted by the United Nations and its subordinated organisations, the OECD and all other relevant international organisations. The government also ensures ongoing observation of gender issues when cooperating with non-government organisations.

Germany is a member of the UN's informal ad hoc group on women, peace and security (Friends of 1325) and regularly attends informational events and working meetings in New York on implementing **Resolution 1325** and the UN Action Plan to implement the resolution.

Germany is also a regular participant in public debates of the UN Security Council on the status regarding implementing of Resolution 1325.

On 25 November 2007, on the occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Federal Government presented a comprehensive report on measures to implement Resolution 1325. The report highlights a range of projects and measures which serve gender-sensitive crisis prevention policy and focuses among other things on Germany's activities in Afghanistan. It also takes in projects to protect women from gender-specific violence, the provisions of the *Völkerstrafgesetzbuch* of 2002 (the German law governing crimes committed against international law) and cooperation with the International Criminal Court to prosecute crimes of sexual violence and other forms of violence connected with international crime.

Women in armed conflict and their role in conflict management is one of the key issues covered in the Gender Action Plan 2009 – 2012 of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. It comprises measures to support women's groups and networks whose work promotes peace and non-violent conflict resolution, the inclusion of women in peace negotiations and the deployment of female gender advisors and human rights observers in peace missions. The plan also includes projects on trauma healing and counselling, and rehabilitation for victims of violence.

With the adoption of Resolution 1820 in June 2008, the UN Security Council called for an end to sexualised violence against women and girls in armed conflict and threatened to prosecute those responsible for such crimes. The resolution requires the UN Secretary General to submit a report to the UN Security Council by the end of June 2009. Germany is aiding the drafting of this report by providing funding in the amount of €250,000.

Funds from the Federal Foreign Office budget are being used in 2009 to finance the deployment of an advisor to the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations to advise on implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1820.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, BMZ organised a conference on violence against women in armed conflict, the aim being to bring together and foster greater cooperation between decisionmakers from home and abroad who can contribute to implementing Resolution 1820.

Germany also plays an active role in ensuring that gender issues are taken into account in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The Checklist to Ensure Gender Mainstreaming and the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the Planning and Conduct of ESDP Operations of 27 July 2006

has since become instrumental in the planning of ESDP missions. In December 2008, the EU confirmed that women's rights were a priority focus of its human rights policy and adopted directives which make protecting women's rights and protecting women from violence a priority of EU foreign policy.

Under Germany's EU presidency, an EU Council handbook was published on Mainstreaming of Human Rights and Gender into ESDP. The Federal Government provided funding for a seminar on ESDP and Gender held in Budapest in April 2007. The respective EU bodies took up the subject of gender equality. Germany has been pro-active in seeing that gender advisors be deployed in all ESDP missions. A gender advisor was deployed for the first time during the EUFOR mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In cooperation with military forces from friendly nations and other partners, the German Armed Forces participated in peace-keeping, stabilising and peace-enforcing operations and thus assisted in preventing or ending violent conflict.

In connection with these operations, the German Armed Forces currently have 377 women deployed in conflict regions (as of 25 May 2009). This represents 5.3 percent of all German military personnel involved.

Only since 2001 have all careers paths within the German Armed Forces been open to women. Depending on the respective training models and career opportunities, women soldiers have been able to follow the non-commissioned path up to the rank of Oberfeldwebel (Sergeant Major) and in the commissioned officer ranks to Oberleutnant (First Lieutenant). This places them (other than in the medical branch) at a smaller-scale, tactical level (with limited leadership responsibilities). Moving up into more responsible positions within the armed forces will thus take a number of years, but will nonetheless progress as a natural process.

For each humanitarian aid project the Federal German Government launches, a check is made in advance as to whether gender-specific needs have been taken into account. Once they have completed a project funded from the humanitarian aid budget, non-government organisations are under obligation to cover the implementation of associated measures in their final reports. The German government also funds humanitarian aid projects which target the specific needs of women. In more than two-thirds of cases, households run by women are the target in distributing emergency supplies and drinking water or in building shelters and housing. As when building provisional shelters (e.g. sanitary and hygiene areas), women's needs are taken into account when putting together emergency supplies. Measures are also promoted which serve the prevention of violence, especially sexualised violence against women. This involves projects to sensitise police and security personnel in refugee camps to gender issues and to arrange the delivery of firewood to reduce the risk of rape among women who stray beyond the camp perimeter in search of materials to burn. Other projects focus on helping women to become literate and helping them find paid work that does not result in them being exploited.

In an EU context, the German government supports the consideration of women's special needs in times of humanitarian crises. The EU Consensus on Humanitarian Aid signed by the EU Parliament, Commission and Council on 18 December 2007, which the German government was instrumental in

drafting, requires that coverage of humanitarian needs must take account of women's specific needs and has called for the integration of strategies for protection against sexualised and gender-related violence in all aspects of humanitarian aid. In addition, the EU Consensus recognises the importance of active participation by women in humanitarian aid efforts and highlights the signees' commitment to promote women's involvement.

The **Federal Immigration Act** has provided the conditions, alongside existing legal provisions, to recognise legitimate asylum seekers as defined in Section 16a of German Basic Law purely on grounds of their gender and to grant asylum in Germany for non-political refugees (Section 60 (1) of the German Residence Act, or *AufenthG*). In particular, this benefits girls and young women who are at risk of or have been threatened with third-party violence in their countries of origin because they are women.

There is also the option to declare a deportation ban (subsidiary protection) on grounds of gender-specific persecution under Section 60 (7) of the German Residence Act if the respective criteria have been met.

## **F. Women and the Economy**

Women have benefited from the positive trends seen in the labour market in recent years. The steady rise seen in the **employment rate of women** has continued, from 60.6 percent in 2005 to 64 percent in 2007 (Eurostat). This compares with a rise from 71.3 percent to 74.7 percent for men in the same period. The trend persisted in 2008, with some 65.7 percent of women in employment in 2008 (men: 76.8 percent).

The impact the global financial crisis is having on the jobs market affects women and men in very different ways. While in February 2009, male unemployment reached 1.960 million – up by 65,000 (3.4 percent) compared with the same month in the previous year – the number of women out of work in the same period dropped by 130,000 (7.6 percent) to 1.592 million.

The German labour market continues to see strong horizontal and vertical segregation. Women are still under-represented in management positions and progress is slow when it comes to making up the difference: in the private sector, 23 percent of management positions were held by women in 2004. In an EU comparison for 2008, 30 percent of management positions in German economy were held by women, placing Germany marginally above the EU average of 28 percent (Eurostat). Women are, however, over-represented with regard to family-related breaks from work and part-time work. Also, individual and collective wage bargaining have yet to overcome the traditionally poorer image attached to jobs which are deemed to be typically for women. All these differences are consolidated in Germany's gender-specific pay gap, which currently stands at 23 percent.

The Federal Government has adopted a strategy which focuses on the above-mentioned inequalities in the labour market and aims to allow women and men equal participation in working and family life. This will enable the alignment of prevailing pay differences.

As early as 2001, an agreement was signed between the German government and the top industry associations to promote equality between women and men in private industry. The agreement calls upon businesses to implement suitable measures to:

- Provide training and employment opportunities for women
- Improve reconciliation of work and family life for women and girls
- Increase the number of women in management and in future-focused occupations and professions
- Reduce the pay gap between women and men.

Published in 2008, the third report shows that in the past two years, targeted government and industry measures have promoted equal participation of women and men in the working world, and have made balancing work and family commitments somewhat easier. The report also highlights the areas where action is still needed.

A decisive step in providing women and men with more freedom of choice in reconciling work and family life was made with the introduction of an income-linked parental benefit scheme. The **Parental Allowance** is paid to the father and mother for a maximum period of 14 months and the couple can split the time between them. One parent can take a maximum 12 months' parental leave, with the remaining two months being reserved for the other parent. By compensating for the loss of income, the parent who remains home with the child is able to retain his or her financial independence and the parent with the higher income can make use of his or her entitlement to parental leave without having to worry about family finances.

One of the interesting and pleasing effects of the Parental Allowance is the growing number of fathers who take an active part in bringing up and caring for their children on a daily basis. An increasing number of men are taking career breaks or reducing their working hours in order to make use of their entitlement to parental leave and benefit. In 16 percent of German households in which Parental Allowance is claimed, the father either receives the benefit in his own right or jointly with the child's mother. This compares with only 3.5 percent of fathers who claimed the benefit in 2006. More than a third of men receiving Parental Allowance take parental leave for longer than the two official partner months and one tenth take between three and six, or between seven and eleven months. Some 14 percent of fathers who claim Parental Allowance do so for between 12 and 14 months, the maximum allowable period of parental leave.

A key component in enabling ongoing employment biographies for mothers and fathers involves the expansion of childcare and daycare facilities. The **Children's Advancement Act (Kinderförderungsgesetz, or KiföG)** that was adopted in 2008 serves in accelerating the expansion of high quality childcare and daycare services and gives parents real choices rather than facing them with the alternative of children versus a career. The legal right to a crèche or nursery school place for all children from the age of one, which will take effect in 2013, will provide good quality and reliable childcare and daycare services for one third of small children and their parents. This paves the way for a new generation of well-educated and trained women and the increasing number of active fathers to reconcile family and work commitments.



The Business Programme Success Factor Family (Erfolgsfaktor Familie) launched in close strategic cooperation with the industry associations and unions at the beginning of 2006, served in making family friendliness a hard locational and competition factor for German business. Many newly introduced measures allow for better work-life balance compared with the situation years ago. Companies have become far more aware of the importance of this issue. The range of family-friendly measures thus stretches from flexible working hour models and teleworking, company-supported childcare and financial assistance for employees, to managers who set an example in living out the work-life balance lifestyle themselves. Support comes in the form of networks and alliances which provide forums for exchange and mutual learning (give and take).

Many women in Germany (especially in western Germany) take a (temporary) break from work to look after the family. For one in three mothers, starting a family means leaving their jobs for several years. By way of contrast, between 80 and 90 percent of fathers pursue their careers regardless of whether they have small children. Trying to return to work after bringing up a family represents one of the typical challenges in a woman's biography.

The **programme Vocational Reintegration as a Perspective (Perspektive Wiedereinstieg)** supports women who for family-related reasons have been away from their jobs for a number of years and now wish to return to work. The idea is to encourage men to support their wives or partners in returning to work after a period of childrearing. The broad-based initiative is designed to provide comprehensive information and support in several areas:

- A model employment policy programme (in conjunction with the Federal Employment Agency and using funds from the European Social Fund)
- A web-based portal with a piloting function (leads users to the advisory and counselling services provided at national, Länder and municipal level)
- The integration of local-level actors by addressing Local Alliances, Multigenerational Homes (Mehrgenerationenhäuser) and Information Exchanges for women (Infobörsen für Frauen), the latter offering a dedicated information day on returning to work (Infotag Wiedereinstieg).

In Germany, it is solely the responsibility of the collective bargaining partners to negotiate wages and salaries. Given the clear legal situation – the principle of equal pay has long been enshrined in German law – differences in average pay paid to women and men cannot generally be blamed on direct discrimination against women but on indirect causes. These largely involve the gender differences outlined in the introduction to this section. Another factor, especially as regards women with family commitments, is the different way women negotiate pay issues compared with men.

With a series of research projects, the Federal Government contributes to improving knowledge on **equal pay** and thus to achieving more accurate strategies and options for action (summarised in the BMFSFJ Dossier on Equal Pay Day, March 2009). These focus on overcoming three main causes:

- The lack of women in certain jobs and sectors, and at the upper end of the career ladder.
- Women take family-related career breaks more frequently and for longer periods than men.
- Typical women's jobs are seen as less valuable than typical men's jobs and individual and collective wage bargaining has done little to change this.

A targeted instrument with which to support the social partners and all those involved in pay negotiations involves the Guide on Fair P(l)ay: Entgeltgleichheit für Frauen und Männer (Equal Pay for Women and Men), which was published in 2007 for use in applying the equal pay for equal work principle. This takes in the particular use of transparent, non-discriminatory (analytical) work evaluation processes in collective bargaining in order to halt the perpetuating stereotypical lower pay levels for women.

The Business and Professional Women Germany e.V. (BPW) held Germany's first Equal Pay Day on 15 April 2008. BMFSFJ promoted the event with funding, assistance in its organisation and a dedicated study. It was actively supported by the Deutscher Frauenrat (umbrella organisation of nation-wide women's organisations) and numerous women's organisations. The aim was to disseminate information on the gender pay gap and to encourage women to take the initiative and become proactive in bringing pay differences to people's attention. The second Equal Pay Day on 20 March 2009 was sponsored by the National Alliance for Equal Pay (Nationale Aktionsbündnis zur Entgeltgleichheit), whose aim is to sensitise and mobilise all those involved in the issue. The alliance comprises the Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Kommunalen Gleichstellungsbeauftragter (Federal Working Group of Municipal Equal Opportunities Representative), BPW as the coordinator, the Confederation of German Employer Organisations (Bundesvereinigung Deutscher Arbeitgeberverbände, or BDA) the Deutscher Frauenrat and the German Association of Women Entrepreneurs (Verband deutscher Unternehmerinnen, or VdU). The German government has allocated funding for the project through to 2011 to assist the coordination of the national alliance, support the organisation of Equal Pay Day on the basis of a broad alliance and create the conditions to ensure the measures are implemented.

On the occasion of the second Equal Pay Day, BMFSFJ launched a tool (**Logib-D**) which enables businesses to examine whether and why a gap exists in the pay paid to their male and female employees. Logib-D builds on a similar tool devised and used in Switzerland.

The aim of the German government is to bring all relevant actors together in a future-focused strategic alliance to ensure they take action wherever they can instigate change. For some years, the government has gone to great lengths to cooperate with strategic partners and these cooperation efforts will now give greater attention to the issue of equal pay.

The government's efforts in promoting employment are also structured to improve equality between women and men, both in the workplace and in family life. As part of these efforts, the Federal Government commissioned a detailed scientific evaluation of the four laws on modern services in the labour market which entered into force between 2003 and 2005. The results of the study formed the basis for a restructuring of labour policy instruments in 2008. The resulting law entered into force on 1 January 2009, thus taking labour policy reform a step further. In line with these new employment promotion objectives, a legal mandate was adopted to promote employment quotas for women along with the equality provision contained in Section 1 of the German Social Code Book Three (SGB III). Section 1 SGB III defines Germany's labour market and employment policy objectives. The promotion of women in the labour market is thus a key objective. The Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs (BMA), within its area of jurisdiction, oversees the Federal Employment Agency to ensure it fulfils this legal mandate. The policy instruments were also given new flexibility which allows local jobs

centres and the basic benefit offices to provide targeted support for each and every jobseeker and thus to take account of the individual needs of women looking to enter the jobs market.

The General Equal Treatment Act (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz - AGG) which entered into force on 18 August 2006 transposes four EU equality directives into national law. The AGG, whose scope of application includes labour law and in some instances civil law, thus provides Germany's first ever holistic anti-discrimination law (see Section I).

To combat discrimination in the workplace, the AGG contains a general provision banning discrimination. This anti-discrimination provision states that no-one should be disadvantaged on grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

The AGG lays down associated bans on discrimination, sets out sanctions which apply if the law is breached and defines the conditions under which different treatment is justified on grounds of a discrimination trait. Anti-discrimination organisations are authorised under certain circumstances to represent victims of discrimination in court. The AGG contains provisions which ease the burden of proof for victims and sets out conditions concerning the establishment and responsibilities of an anti-discrimination agency.

The Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes - ADS), an independent agency set up by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), can be contacted by all people who believe they are the victims of discrimination on grounds of sex or other forms of discrimination. The Agency is responsible among other things for providing free advice, disseminating information and performing public relations work concerning both the General Equal Treatment Act and its own work and activities.

Given their interdependencies, changing role models play a key role in overcoming vertical and horizontal segregation. As is the case with career aspirations and opportunities, the choices involved in certain professions or sectors are shaped by ingrained stereotypical thinking. Even today, more than half of the young women applying for apprenticeships and vocational training (55% in 2008) tend to opt for one of the top ten occupations (e.g. hairdresser, sales assistant, medical assistant). Thus, with its equality policy approach, the Federal Government contributes to broadening the range of jobs chosen both by women and men, and in improving their overall chances of finding employment and embarking on a career (see Section L).

Projects, like Girls' Day (see Section L) and the National Pact for Women in MINT Professions (see Section B), conducted in cooperation with a range of different partners are designed to broaden girls' and young women's employment horizons by encouraging them to work in sectors they had not previously considered and which are not generally deemed as typical women's sectors.

Since 2005, the New Paths for Boys (Neue Wege für Jungs) network launched by BMFSFJ has sparked local initiatives to provide male students with services that are tailored to the needs of boys in negotiating the transition from school to the working world. In the second funding phase which started in 2008, the project targets boys in years 5 to 10 (aged 10 to 16). Services specifically aimed at boys are developed to broaden their scope for choice and to tackle the issues of socially-assigned gender roles, identities and opportunities.

The Federal Employment Agency publishes two magazines for teenagers: *Style Your Future* for girls and *Ready for Job* for boys. Both publications are useful sources of information for children approaching school-leaving age and use appropriate language to present 'men's jobs' as an option for girls and 'women's jobs' for boys.

A travelling exhibition presented by BMFSFJ in cooperation with Federal Employment Agency (*Rollenbilder im Wandel – Changing Role Models*) uses a series of brief video portraits to look at changing role models and to present modern role models, real-life situations and opportunities. By pointing the finger at socially-assigned, stereotypical gender roles and attempting to break these down, it also highlights the need to overcome out-dated gender role assignments and provide new opportunities in working and family life.

The media set *Gleich geht's weiter* (*Equality Helps us Along*) launched by BMFSFJ in early 2009, promotes schools in integrating the subjects concerned into the school curriculum (see Section L).

A web-based portal, [www.frauenmachenkarriere.de](http://www.frauenmachenkarriere.de) (careers for women) created by BMFSFJ offers women accurate and easy-to-find information on jobs and careers. The information is grouped by subjects such as occupations and professions, self-employment, work-life balance, equal pay and women in Europe. The portal targets self-employed and employed women who are starting out in working life, attempting to climb the career ladder or wanting to return to work after a family-related break. It also focuses on women who are trying to start their own business.

Around 30 percent of self-employed people in Germany are women. Self employment plays an increasingly important role for women and offers a prime alternative to working for an employer. The number of self-employed women has risen steadily in recent years and the increase has been significantly higher than among men. To make it easier for women to start their own business, the Federal Government (BMBF, BMFSFJ, BMWi and funds from the European Social Fund) promotes the work of the **National Agency for Women Start-Ups (bundesweite Gründerinnenagentur - bga)**. As a centralised platform, the agency consolidates information and services designed to assist women's start-ups in all sectors and in every phase of start-up. It forms a network hub for women-owned start-ups and offers interested parties, actors and project participants a forum for exchange and cooperation. bga regional offices have been in place in all 16 German states since August 2006, thus intensifying the agency's cooperation activities with local points of contact and start-up promotion partners.

In conjunction with the bga, the Federal German Government has initiated a nationwide campaign (*Nachfolge ist weiblich – Succession is Female*) to encourage more women to take over a business. In 2006, a task force was called into being and some 100 business succession experts have since joined its ranks.

As part of the campaign, a travelling exhibition – *Women in Business Succession in Germany (Unternehmensnachfolgerinnen in Deutschland)* was opened in 2007 and has since been shown around the country. Its aim is to sensitise the general public to the subject of women in business succession and to present positive role models. Germany's first National Women and Business Succession Day (*Nationaler Aktionstag zur Unternehmensnachfolge durch Frauen*) was held on 12 June 2009 with over 70 different events country-wide.

As a rule, women need less capital than men to start a business. Some 80 percent of women (compared with 47 percent of men) interested in starting a business stated that they needed less than €50,000 for their start-up (Country Report Germany, ifm Mannheim 2005). However, new entrepreneurs with minimal financing needs experience problems in obtaining bank loans because small loans are less attractive to banks. This is why the KfW SME Bank offers small-scale start-up loans of up to €50,000 (known as KfW-StartGeld).

With the announcement of the Power für Gründerinnen (Power to Women Start-Ups) campaign, around 20 projects will be funded some of which involve consortiums involving a total of 40 sub-projects (see Section B).

On 1 August 2006 funding for start-ups for the unemployed was subjected to fundamental reform. The Ich AG (Me plc) scheme and transition grants (Überbrückungsgeld) were replaced by a single start-up grant instrument (Gründungszuschuss). While overall take-up was lower than had previously been the case, over 35 percent of the start-ups funded under the new scheme were started by women.

With regard to development policy, it can be assumed that women will be badly affected by the global financial crisis. It is all the more important therefore that women receive equal access to vocational training and education, to the labour market, to production materials, to land and to loans, as set out in the Development Policy Action Plan 2009 – 2012 of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

## **G. Women in Power and Decisionmaking**

In Germany, women's representation in government varies considerably depending on the level involved.

Women are comparatively well represented on the federal level. In the German Bundestag (lower house of parliament), 32 percent of MPs are female. Germany currently has a woman chancellor and six of its 14 federal ministries are headed by women. This relatively good ratio of women in national government was largely made possible by the proportional representation system in combination with commitments by almost all political parties to ensure adequate positioning of women in their lists of candidates.

The situation is, however, very different at municipal level. Only five percent of full-time and voluntary mayors in municipalities with over 2,000 inhabitants are women. The number of women in voluntary municipal committees is around 24 percent. For this reason, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth has launched a **FRAUEN MACHT KOMMUNE (Women's Power in Local Councils)** campaign, which encourages women who are already active community service volunteers to become involved in local politics.

The campaign aims to increase the ratio of women in municipal administrations. It appeals to women's sense of civil engagement and calls for grassroots organisations to support women's efforts in local politics. The campaign runs from September 2008 to May 2009 and is accompanied and supported by

parallel research on the conditions and obstacles facing women in local politics. In 2009, to mark the 60th anniversary of the German Basic Law, the ministry created the Helene Weber Prize which is awarded to outstanding local woman politicians and provides an ongoing means of promoting the cause.

Equality between women and men within the Federal Administration is governed by a central instrument, the Federal Equality Act (BGleiG). In December 2006, the German government publishes its first status report on the situation concerning women as compared with that of men in the Federal Administration and in other bodies covered by the Act (see Part 3 for details on the contents of the Federal Equality Act).

The ratio of women among civil servants rose from 45.6 to 46.9 percent during the reporting period. With regard to management or supervisory positions, supplementary data effective 30 June 2008 provides the following picture compared with the above reporting period: current figures show that 17 percent of the heads of department are women and 23.6 percent of units are headed by women.

The Act on Appointing and Seconding Women and Men to Committees and Bodies within the Remit of the Federal Government (Bundesgremienbesetzungsgesetz, or BGremBG) aims to give women equal access to such committees and bodies. A report on trends in women's representation on such committees is presented to the German Bundestag during each legislative period. (See Part 3 for more on the contents on the Federal Act on Appointment and Secondment to Committees and Bodies with the Remit of the Federal Government see Part 3).

For the current fourth committees and bodies report (cut-off date 30 June 2005), a total of 309 committees and bodies within the remit of the federal government were analysed. Of these, 14.2 percent still comprised only male membership, although the share of such committees and bodies has significantly declined since the third report (21.4 percent in 2001). Since then, the number of women in key federal committees and bodies has risen by 3.8 percentage points, to 19.7 percent.

## **I. Human Rights of Women**

The Federal German Government is proactive worldwide and at all levels in efforts to improve human rights in general and to protect women's human rights in particular.

In international committees and forums of the United Nations, the EU, the European Council, the OECD, G8 and other multilateral formations, the German government is committed to ongoing efforts to lay down standards concerning women's rights and to implement existing standards. This involves the creation and reinforcement of international monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. Germany believes the means of intervention and influence open to the above-named institutions and their respective committees are key in dialogue with those states in which women's human rights are constantly, excessively and systematically abused.

The government is itself under obligation through the provisions of international conventions and resolutions – not least the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (**CEDAW**) – to guarantee the human rights of women and girls and to implement measures to ensure

equality between women and men. Article 3 (2) of the German Basic Law (Grundgesetz) states that: "Men and women shall have equal rights. The state shall promote the actual implementation of equal rights for women and men and take steps to eliminate disadvantages that now exist." Thus, the German government goes to great lengths to ensure that women in Germany are protected against violations of their human rights, are not disadvantaged and are afforded equal participation in all areas of life.

Germany plays a pro-active role within the United Nations in matters concerning greater protection of the human rights of women and children who fall victim to trafficking. Building on these activities, it was possible to achieve a unanimous decision at the sixtieth session of the Human Rights Commission to adopt a cross-regional initiative to establish a special mechanism on human trafficking and on trafficking in women and children in particular. Also, on 14 June 2006 Germany ratified the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and its Optional Protocol on Contraception and Combating and Punishing Human Trafficking, Especially Trafficking of Women and Children.

Important resolutions on women's human rights were adopted at the 63rd General Assembly of the United Nations. Germany put forward both the resolution to combat violence against women and the resolution on trafficking in women and girls at the November/December meeting in 2008.

Via the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Geneva, Germany funds both projects to protect women's human rights and the mandates of the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Its Causes and Consequences and of the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons.

The Federal Government supports non-governmental organisations worldwide (in Africa, Asia, America, Eastern Europe and the CIS states) whose work involves heightening people's awareness to the importance of women's human rights and showing them the legal and political options available in enforcing them; this is especially the case concerning the fight to eliminate all forms of violence against women (including harmful traditional practices, domestic violence and trafficking in women and children).

The Development Policy Action Plan on Human Rights 2008 – 2010 of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development contains a clear commitment to implement international conventions and agreements to empower women and enforce their rights. The plan states that: "We assist partner countries to develop and implement national strategies and action plans to prevent discrimination and human rights violations against women and girls. We target support on institutions to protect and strengthen the rights of women. In particular, we finance measures aimed at combating female genital mutilation, promoting the economic, legal and social empowerment of women and girls and abolishing gender-related discrimination and violence. In this context we also promote awareness-raising, gender-sensitive education and public relations work for young males. It is an important step forward that the perpetration of rape in armed conflict can now be tried as a war crime and a crime against humanity in cases brought before the International Criminal Court. Our response to attempts to use religion to dispute the universality of human – and hence women's – rights is a clear and unmistakable commitment to those rights, to which the vast majority of our partners have also made a legally binding commitment. We cooperate with international and regional organisations, for example the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to combat trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation. The EU Council conclusions on "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in

Development Cooperation” adopted under the German EU presidency and the Council conclusions on employment promotion, trade-related assistance and recently emerging issues regarding HIV/AIDS commit the EU and its member states to increase their promotion of the rights and role of women in development cooperation. Strengthening the economic and political participation of women is the objective of our cooperation with UNIFEM, the World Bank, the African Union and NEPAD.”

In 2008, Germany again funded projects to protect women’s human rights in war zones and conflict regions, with particular importance being placed on implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1820 on Women, Peace and Security (addressed in Section E). These include a project on the legal and psychological rehabilitation of female victims of sexual violence in Congo and a project on protecting women refugees and expellees in Chechnya. Prevention and educational measures are being implemented by means of human rights projects for women, for example with events to promote women’s right to vote in Côte d’Ivoire and informational work on the subject of domestic violence in Zambia. When carrying out projects in sensitive countries like Afghanistan, attention is paid to ensuring that as many women as possible are involved. Activities performed by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) take this into account when building things like girls’ schools.

Participation by women in the political process is promoted by the Federal Foreign Office with educational projects concerning the election process, particularly the electoral register and police preparation measures concerning human rights in the election process. In 2008, the Federal Foreign Office provided some USD 10 million in funds to the United Nations to support its election-related activities and plans to increase this to USD 13.4 million in 2009. The funds will be used among other things to promote women’s participation in the election process. The Federal Government promotes the secondment of German election observers to international election monitoring missions. The number of women involved is especially high, particularly in the political and organisational positions at management level within the core team. Improving women’s access to justice is another key area of focus. In 2008, the Federal Foreign Office funded projects in this vein in an amount of €439,633. This included structural reform measures to ensure women’s rights issues receive adequate treatment by the judiciary – for example, the Fair Trial Project conducted by the Max Planck Institute in Heidelberg and the United Nation Development Programme judicial reform advisory services for provincial governments. Other activities included the provision of legal advice for women such as via the Medica Mondial project on Improved Access to Justice for Afghan Women and Girls, for which the Federal Foreign Office some €343,199.85 in funding.

Also, on behalf on the Federal Foreign Office, the following projects were launched in Afghanistan to promote women’s rights and are expected to continue in 2009:

- A Medica Mondiale project to promote Afghan women’s health (funding = €139,930.00).
- Training and psychological counselling for women in the Kabul region, in cooperation with the Social Safety and Protection Organisation (SSOP) (funding = €15,171.19).
- Financial support (€10,169.30) to assist the building of a nursery school at the Afghan foreign office to enable mothers to go work.



The Federal German Government submitted its sixth report on the Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to the UN Secretary General in September 2007. The report set out in detail Germany's measures to implement the convention during the reporting period 2002 – 2006. It was presented to the CEDAW Committee on 2 February 2009.

The Federal Government works on the basis of human rights and fundamental freedoms as set out in the CEDAW Convention and has used a range of different instruments to highlight awareness to the Convention (such as a CEDAW booklet published in 2007).

The measures adopted by the Federal Government to combat violence against women and which were consolidated in and coordinated under the Second Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women (see Section D) serve in protecting women's right to a life free of violence.

The German government also promotes the nationwide coordination agencies on combating trafficking in women (KOK e.V.), women's helplines and counselling services (bff), and the women's refuge coordination agency (Frauenhauskoordinierungsstelle) to consolidate practical knowledge, foster information exchange and simplify cooperation with government agencies (see Section D).

Part of the package of measures contained in the Second Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women (see Section D 3) involves the development and publication of materials and the promotion of activities to disseminate basic legal knowledge for victims and to inform the general public of the scope of issues covered by the plan. Particularly noteworthy in this regard is the promotion of the bff campaign *Standpunkte gegen Gewalt an Frauen* (Arguments Against Violence Towards Women), the publication of booklets on the Federal Anti-Violence Act, stalking, speaking out (*Mehr Mut zum Reden*) – which targets women and children who have suffered abuse, the publication of the outcome of the conference on *Frühzeitige Prävention bei häuslicher Gewalt – Was kann Schule machen?* (Domestic Violence: Early Intervention – The Role of Schools), a reprint of the CD-ROMs issued with the 2006 report (*Anti-Violence.Awareness*) and funding of the KOK book on trafficking in women and action by women to combat it (*Frauenhandeln in Deutschland*, published in January 2009).

Building on a compilation on forced marriage in Germany (*Zwangsverheiratung in Deutschland*), a scientific study has been commissioned on the prevalence and degree of forced marriage in Germany. It will provide reliable quantitative evidence on the structure, degree and forms of forced marriage. The study will place equal focus on the situation concerning victims of both sexes. Results are expected in Autumn 2010 (see Section L).

Germany's General Equal Treatment Act (*Allgemeine Gleichbehandlungsgesetz*, or AGG), which entered into force on 18 August 2006 (see Section F), is a key measure in enforcing equality between women and men and transposes four EU equality directives into German law.

## **J. Women and Media**

Although women are well represented in various branches of the media, they rarely hold top positions. An increasing number of women are starting to take the higher positions in the print media sector. It is rare, however, to find a woman in a top position at one of Germany's super-regional or national newspapers.

There has been a steady rise in the number of women among the staff at public radio and television broadcasting companies. With regard to management positions, two director-general posts are held by women.

Around 25 percent of top management positions at private radio and television broadcasting companies are held by women, although in contrast with the public broadcasting sector, no minimum quotas have been prescribed under women's promotion plans.

Women take centre stage in just a small section of news reports. The highest quota is found in newspapers. Most women portrayed in the news are depicted as victims. Reports on natural disasters, violent crime and accidents are given a high profile. Women are most frequently reported on when they fall victim to events of this nature. And women's marital or family status is mentioned in the news far more frequently than that of men.

Since 1982 and at the initiative of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and the Deutscher Frauenrat (umbrella organisation of nation-wide women's organisations), the German Advertising Standards Authority (Deutscher Werberat), a self-monitoring standards watchdog set up by the German advertising industry, has acted as a complaints body with the aim of reducing the number of advertisements which discriminate against women and ensuring women's issues are taken into account in the analysis of advertising activities.

At EU level, the amended directive on television broadcasting activities (2007/65/EC) broadened the ban on sexual discrimination in advertising to all types of audiovisual media services. In Germany, this was implemented by the German Länder (states) in their respective state treaties on broadcasting services.

Given the huge importance of fictional media in girls' decisions on career choices, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is funding a TU Berlin project of the Technical University of Berlin on popularising occupations and professions via entertainment formats (Berufsorientierung im Unterhaltungsformat). The project is based on the results of previous studies and projects which showed that media producers have paid little attention to the (working) world of natural science and technology and, if at all, have largely depicted it using stereotypical gender roles. The aim of the project is to exploit the potential for using fictional TV films and series to popularise jobs in natural science and technology. It will include two 'treatment' (short film script) competitions which allow experienced script-writers to work with broadcasters and research organisations to develop innovative films and programmes.

## **K. Women and the Environment**

In activities involving the German government, appointments to environmental committees and bodies, care is taken to ensure the adoption of a balanced approach. However, achieving a gender balance in such appointments often proves extremely difficult in practice. The German Environment Ministry has for many years used four-year equality plans with the aim of appointing and promoting women to top management positions. Annual mentoring projects for women are conducted each year to support this endeavour.

The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) applies gender mainstreaming in its environment policy and has transferred this to environmental and nature conservation organisations. The ministry fosters regular exchange with organisations who have made it their goal to combine gender issues with those of protecting the environment and achieving sustainable development. It has also funded and promoted associated projects conducted by such NGOs. The ministry has sent out a fundamental message, calling upon all environment protection and nature conservation organisations to give greater consideration to gender issues in their projects and in their other activities.

The BMU-funded Communication Strategy on Women and the Environment (Kommunikationsstrategie Frauen und Umwelt) is designed to sensitise women's organisations to environmental and sustainability issues with the ultimate aim to achieve optimal sustainability communication by focusing exactly on the target group. Also, target group-specific standpoints will be identified and developed to lend transparency to the uses and benefits of gender mainstreaming for all concerned.

Studies show that the majority of women in Germany object to the use of nuclear energy. A BMU-funded project will lay the groundwork to allow this criticism to be transformed into action and foster efficient, low-consumption attitudes to energy use. At the same time, women are to be empowered so they can put their views across in debates, participate in local and regional-level activities that attract public attention, and make their voices heard to influence decisions on the use of nuclear energy.

Gender-specific challenges and answers to climate change is a thematic focus of the German Development Ministry's Gender Action Plan 2009 – 2012 (see Section E). In implementing the plan, BMZ will systematically analyse the risks posed to women as regards water management, agriculture, infrastructure and health, and will integrate German-backed bilateral and multilateral adaptation strategies and measures.

## L. The Girl-Child

Efforts towards true gender equality must target girls and boys equally and at an early age because their paths in adult life are largely preprogrammed by the experiences and opportunities of childhood and youth, and also by other's expectations.

On the occasion of the annual meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2008, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) together with the German Youth Institute (Deutsches Jugendinstitut) studied the current situation concerning girls and boys in Germany. A booklet on Girls and Boys in Germany: Realities, Differences and Similarities (Mädchen und Jugend in Deutschland – Lebenssituationen – Unterschiede – Gemeinsamkeiten) summarises the outcome of the meeting and provides a disaggregated insight into the diverse lives of girls and boys around the country. It also compares the similarities and the differences that exist between girls and boys.

One example of a BMFSFJ measure to encourage girls and boys to discuss and reflect on their gender role models comes in the form of the media set Frauen und Männer – Gleich geht's weiter (Women and Men - Equality Helps us Along). The media set is designed to assist young people in recognising the risks involved in ingrained (rigid) roles and attitudes, and to heighten their awareness to the benefits to be had from a gender-sensitive society. It provides teachers of years 9 through 12 with a wide range of material for use in the classroom – film clips, tips on role playing and postcards. The core component of the media set is a DVD entitled Frauen und Männer – Gleich geht's weiter (Women and Men – Equality Helps us Along), which contains five film clips on gender equality. The set also contains a booklet with background information and a workbook which accompanies the film. The package is rounded off with a CD-Rom which among other things explains in teenager-appropriate language the law on matters such as Parental Allowance.

The following lists some of the Federal Government's initiatives and measures which focus on girls' issues.

Since 2001, the fourth Thursday in April every year has been dedicated to **Girls' Day**. Technology firms, companies with technology departments and vocational training centres, universities, colleges and research institutes open their doors to school girls in years 5 to 10. With a wide range of dedicated events, the girls are treated to an insight into the working world and have the opportunity to make contact with those responsible for approving work placements and recruitments. A growing number of businesses and organisations participate in Girls' Day each year. Between 2001 and 2008, no less than 900,000 girls attended associated events. Since 2003, the number of Girls' Day networks involving representatives from local chambers of commerce and industry, employers' associations, trade unions, equal opportunity offices, employment agencies and many more organisations has more than doubled.

In almost 10 percent of companies, young women have been recruited who learned about the company at a Girls' Day event. This figure is remarkable given the young age of most of the girls who attend

these events. For more and more young women, transition into the working world now begins with an apprenticeship or vocational training in a technology-related field. Repeated participation in the annual Girls' Day campaign has a positive effect on corporate culture overall and boosts awareness as regards gender equality.

Initiatives such as those outlined in Section B are pursued in order to attract more girls to specialise in mathematics, informatics, natural sciences and technology (MINT professions) and embark on a career in the natural sciences and technology sectors.

Measures to combat violence against girls are included in the prevention section of Germany's Second Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women (see Section D). Further strategies and protective measures are contained in the National Action Plan to Protect Children and Teenagers from Sexualised Violence and Sexual Exploitation (Aktionsplan zum Schutz von Kindern und Jugendlichen vor sexueller Gewalt und Ausbeutung) and in the Action Plan for a Child-Friendly Germany (Aktionsplan für ein kindergerechtes Deutschland).

Measures to combat female genital mutilation and to support women and girls who are victims of or vulnerable to the risks of forced marriage are addressed in Section C.

**Eating disorders** like anorexia nervosa and bulimia are an increasing cause for concern. They are among the most under-estimated diseases and affect girls and young women in particular. Launched by the Federal Government on 13 December 2007, an initiative to combat the size zero trend (Leben hat Gewicht – gemeinsam gegen den Schlankeitswahn) (Lend Weight to Life: Alliance to Combat Slimming Madness) sparked broad public debate. The aim is to sensitise people to the problems of eating disorders and to effect a change which projects a healthy body image as the norm. A web-based portal ([www.leben-hat-gewicht.de](http://www.leben-hat-gewicht.de)) provides a platform for networking and linkage of associated activities and actors.

The Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) has for many years published a range of materials for sufferers, their families and counsellors, and also provides a helpline which people can call to ask for support and advice.

Implementing the UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child and its core working standards, including the combating of the worst forms of child labour, the right to education and physical integrity, and especially the combating of female genital mutilation and protection of minors against sexual exploitation in countries with whom Germany engages in development cooperation, are seen as part of the human rights approach to German development policy. Activities to protect minors against sexual exploitation constitute a pro-active contribution in implementing the optional protocol under the UN Convention on the Rights of Children to combat child trafficking, child prostitution and child pornography in selected partner countries. This includes measures to train police and the judiciary, social workers and health and education professionals, and others who work in primary prevention and victim protection.

Education for girls and thus the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 2 also play a key role in bilateral and multilateral development policy. The German Development Ministry sensitises partner governments to targeted promotion of girls and supports equal access to education for both sexes.

### **Measures to Promote Equality for Women Who Belong to Minority Groups or are Endangered to Become Victims of Multiple Discrimination**

At the invitation of the German Chancellor, the first ever German Integration Summit was held on 14 July 2006. The invitation went out to representatives from government, immigrant organisations, employers' associations, trade unions, sports associations and the media. During the summit, ten working groups focused on issues such as integration courses, learning German from day one, education and vocational education and training, and the jobs market. One working group tackled the problem of improving the situation for women and girls and achieving true equality and formed two sub-groups (UAGs): UAG 1 worked on integration by means of the law, participation, while UAG 2 concentrated on empowering women in the family and social environment, health-related sexual education, and caring for the elderly. The National Integration Plan which resulted from this working process was presented by the Chancellor on 12 July 2007. It contains a set of clear goals, specific measures and commitments by all involved and these will be subject to monitoring and evaluation in the course of their implementation. They include numerous measures which are suited to improving the situation of women immigrants. The first progress report was presented on 6 November 2008.

German equality policy strategies are starting to pay greater attention to **women with immigrant backgrounds**. As this happens, it becomes more evident that available knowledge of their situation, needs and desires must be broadened to allow the development of more effective and targeted policy measures. This is why BMFSFJ places particular importance on research and on networking with and of immigrant organisations. The Federal Government also promotes projects to improve equal opportunities in the workplace for women with immigrant backgrounds and to combat violence against women with immigrant backgrounds. Examples of such projects are outlined as follows:

A Sinus study on the lives of immigrants in Germany aims to produce a detailed insight into life planning and aspirations of immigrants. Differing situations and sub-cultures of immigrants are to be identified using a life-style research/situational research approach. The conditions, goals and values of people with immigrant backgrounds and their role models will be highlighted. The study has since been quantified and was officially presented at a press conference in December 2008.

As non-governmental organisations, women's organisations play a key role in policymaking. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of independent groups and associations set up by women immigrants in Germany. These take various organisational forms and offer a wide range of activities. They have received little attention so far and equally little is known about them. A newly commissioned study is designed to close existing knowledge and research gaps. Results are expected in Spring 2010.

Twice a year, BMFSFJ and the Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration send out invitations to a dialogue forum with around 25 representatives from Muslim umbrella associations and women's organisations.

The NetWork.21 project funded by BMFSFJ and the European Social Fund and conducted by the Thomas Morus Academy provides a mentoring programme for women and girls with and without immigrant backgrounds, and also for young men, to simplify their entry into the working world and assist them in making choices regarding the labour market and career options. The mentoring programme is supplemented by a package of training, seminars and forums, and provides a variety of opportunities to cooperate and get involved.

Under the Power für Gründerinnen (Power to Women Start-Ups – see Sections B and F), the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) promotes a joint project on business start-ups for women immigrants which looks at process-related start-up research and at best practice development and testing of innovative advisory and consulting strategies.

The Second Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women targets areas where action is needed most: providing greater protection for women immigrants who are victim to violence and giving greater consideration to the particular problems faced by disabled women who suffer violence.

Most **women and girls with disabilities** find it extremely difficult to make use of their entitlement to take part in society as they come up against multiple forms of discrimination. They are disadvantaged on two counts: one because of their disability and two because they are women.

To improve available data on the situation of disabled women in Germany and to develop more targeted support measures, the German government has commissioned a special evaluation of the 2005 microcensus based on selected criteria.

In improving the situation for disabled women, it is also of key importance that they bring both the many forms of discrimination and the difficulties they face to light, and that they speak for themselves when it comes to defining their needs and ensuring they are met. Thus, since 2003, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) has provided funding to support the activities of a disabled women's interest group (Weibernetz e. V.- Bundesnetzwerk von Frauen, Lesben und Mädchen mit Beeinträchtigung). In May 2007, the government provided support for a European Conference to Establish an EU Network for Disabled Women.

Women with disabilities are highly vulnerable to violence and require special protection. The Second Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women thus dedicates some of its focus to women with disabilities. Numerous measures have either already been implemented or are scheduled for implementation (see Section D).

To improve conditions for women in workshops for the disabled and adjoining residential centres, since Autumn 2008 a practical project has been funded to appoint women's representatives in such (rehabilitation) centres. Among other things, the project will focus on highlighting the prevalence of violence and on violence prevention.

As part of a research study on Preventive Healthcare for Women Over Fifty (Gesundheitliche Prävention bei Frauen in der zweiten Lebenshälfte), a comprehensive report was prepared on the potential for preventive health measures for women over fifty and the needs of such women in this regard. The results were discussed at an expert symposium in 2006 and published in March 2008. A separate booklet provides women with guidance on the subject.

The **Equality Report Commission**, which will present its first report on Gleichstellung unter Lebensverlaufsperspektive (Gender Equality in a Life-Course Perspective), will also look at the situation of older women. The impact of pension reforms, re-integration of women into the labour market after a period of childrearing and following a phase caring for a dependent relative constitute key challenges in this regard.



### 3. Institutional Mechanisms (Section H)

#### The Federal Level

Within the constitutional bodies of the German Federal State, the following public institutions are responsible for securing and implementing measures to achieve equality between women and men:

- Bundestag Committee on Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
- Bundesrat Committee on Women and Youth
- Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

The German government's obligation to implement effective equality policy arises from Article 3 (2) of German Basic Law (Grundgesetz, or GG). With the cabinet decision of 23 June 1999, the government recognised equality between women and men as an underlying principle of its governance (gender mainstreaming).

The Federal Government will continue to pursue gender mainstreaming as a policy programme and to implement it in practice. It thus makes sense to replace (as other countries have done) the term gender mainstreaming with a German equivalent. To this end, the government is consulting the Sinus studies and the Gender Competence Centre in Berlin. A new communication on Gender Mainstreaming calls for making transparent the benefits of policymaking which a) integrates the gender perspective into all areas of action and thus takes a preventive approach and b) ensures that equality policy focuses on women and men.

The government-funded Gender Competence Centre was opened in 2003 at the Humboldt University in Berlin. Its activities support the implementation of gender mainstreaming within the Federal Administration.

The Federal Equality Act (Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz, or BGleiG) which governs gender equality within the Federal Administration and the federal courts replaced the Women's Promotion Act (Frauenfördergesetz) of 1994 and contains a range of provisions on equality between women and men within the federal administration. These include a performance-related, open quota rule and an obligation both to consider gender issues in all areas and to foster gender equality. The new law boosted the rights of equal opportunities representatives, for example with binding requirements on release from other duties, earliest possible involvement, and a right to appeal and take a case before the courts.

In December 2006, the German government presented its first status report on the situation of women compared with men in the federal administration and in other institutions covered by the Federal Equality Act (see Section G). The report must be presented once every four years and is a key instrument in equality monitoring and control by the German Bundestag.

The monitoring and flexibilisation options provided by the Federal Equality Act, to allow equal opportunity representatives and human resources managers to promote gender equality (particularly as regards reconciling work and family life) are fully accepted in practice. The anti-discrimination provision

contained in the Act (see the Fifth Report, Part 2, 2.6) and which applies to the German civil service has heightened people's awareness to the need for non-discriminatory selection decisions.

Particularly when it comes to the reconciliation of work and family life, the highest federal administration has significantly improved the level of flexibility in working hours and work locations (e.g. with the introduction of teleworking). However, these new opportunities are largely taken up by women so that further efforts are needed to encourage men to make use of available options for flexibility in the interest of their families.

The Federal Equality Act's scope of applicability was broadened to take in federal government funded research institutions, with agreements in which they agree to apply the principles contained in the Act.

Building on the Federal Equality Act, the Federal Act on Gender Equality in the Armed Forces (Soldatinnen- und Soldatengleichstellungsgesetz, or SGleiG) entered into force in 2005. It serves in securing gender equality between male and female members of the German armed forces and eliminates or prevents future discrimination on grounds of gender. Under the Act, women soldiers' concerns are promoted in order to break down existing disadvantages. A key aspect in this regard is the elimination of under-representation in the areas listed in the Act. Another aim of the Act is to improve soldiers' (male and female) opportunities to attain a better balance between military and family commitments.

Under the Federal Act on Gender Equality in the Armed Forces, the Federal Government is required to report on the situation for women soldiers as compared with their male counterparts once every two years. The government presented its second status report under the Act in June 2009.

The Federal Act on Appointment and Secondment to Committees and Bodies within the Remit of the Federal Government (Bundesgremienbesetzungsgesetz – BGremBG) focuses on equal access for women in these committees and bodies. The Act covers over 1,000 such committees and bodies in the form of advisory councils, commissions and committees in which the federal government either appoints members (federal bodies) or seconds members to bodies not within the federal administration's remit.

A key instrument is a provision on dual appointments. A report on trends in the number of women in committees and bodies within the remit of the federal government is submitted to the German Bundestag in each legislative period (see Section G).

In June 2008, the Federal Government called a Scientific Commission into being in June 2008 which will work on a set of recommendations for gender policy action. The Commission's report will be presented to the German Bundestag together with a government statement in 2010.

### **German States (Länder)**

The governments of all German states have equality policy units (either as an independent entity or within their hierarchies) in each of their ministries.

The Länder ministers and senators responsible for gender equality attend annual conferences at which they exchange experience and views on equality policy and agree on action to be taken on equality

related issues. The resolutions and decisions made are addressed to the federal government, other ministerial conferences, the social partners and the Länder-specific equality ministries or departments. The federal government attends the conferences as a guest. Working relations between the Länder and federal governments are also maintained at lower administrative levels.

The German states have their own equality laws which all aim to achieve gender equality within their administrations.

In 2009, with support from the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), the 16 German states published an atlas on gender quality in Germany. The atlas uses 28 indicators to compare equality ratios between the various states. The indicators can be divided into four categories:

- Participation (in government, administration, science and research, and industry)
- Education (including school leaving qualifications, career choice and academic achievements)
- Employment (including part-time work, childcare quotas, unemployment, pay gaps)
- Lifestyles and living environment (including longevity)

### **Municipalities**

There are upwards of 1,900 municipal equal opportunities and women's representatives throughout Germany. They are part of a network of working groups organised at both Länder and federal level.

The federal constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany assigns the powers to grant authority and delegate responsibility to the municipal equal-opportunities and women's representatives of the Länder governments and municipal authorities.

### **Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organisations and Women's Organisations**

The Federal Government promotes non-governmental organisations and works closely with them in matters concerning gender equality. It allows them to play an active role, including through regular consultation, membership of cross-sectoral working groups and involvement in the legislative process.

### **Dissemination of UN Equality Policy**

The German government disseminates the UN conventions and policies on gender equality via the internet and to relevant addressees.

Germany's report to the UN on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action has been published in booklet form.

### **CEDAW**

In September 2007, the German government submitted its sixth report on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to the UN Secretary General. The

report sets out the measures adopted by Germany in implementing the Convention during the reporting period (2002 – 2006). It was published as a Bundestagsdrucksache (Bundestag official publication) and debated by the respective Bundestag committees. At the time the sixth national report was published, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) published a revised booklet containing information on the CEDAW Convention and its optional protocol. The sixth national report was presented to the CEDAW Committee on 2 February 2009. The Bundestag Plenary discussed the report and the findings of the presentation of 5 March 2009.

## 4. Remaining Challenges, Further Action and Initiatives

Part 1 set out the principles, focus and aims of German equality policy. In line with these principles and aims, Part 4 outlines selected measures and initiatives which the German government plans for the future.

The reader is reminded that the German Bundestag will be re-elected on 27 September 2009 and will then appoint a new government.

In drafting Germany's first National Equality Report, the German government called a Scientific Commission into being in June 2008. The Commission will work on a set of recommendations for gender policy action and its report will be presented to the German Bundestag together with a government statement in 2010.

With regard to gender equality policy, the German government sees a particular challenge in ensuring that equality policy remains a policy both for women and for men. **Men's involvement** is thus of great importance. We have seen success in this regard, with the partner months under the parental allowance scheme and the associated attempt to stamp out ingrained, stereotypical role assignments. Further efforts will follow. Here in Germany, the respective decisions of and consultations held by the UN Commission on the Status of Women (e.g. 2008) have fallen on fertile soil.

### Promoting Gender Equality in Employment

In reporting on the agreement signed in 2001 between the Federal Government and the central associations of German business on promoting equal opportunities for women and men in the private sector (see Section F), the measures already implemented and the progress made must be collated and a report published every two years. The fourth equality report will be published in 2010.

The German government will continue its intensive efforts toward eliminating gender-specific inequalities in the labour market and with them the main causes of the gender pay gap.

- The reconciliation of work and family life will be improved through further expansion of childcare services (see Section F), careful evaluation of the impacts and further enhancement of the parental allowance scheme (see Section F), intensification of family-focused services and the introduction of tax concessions on childcare costs. The government aims to create further targeted incentives to encourage men to engage in both public and private care.
- The programme Vocational Reintegration as a Perspective (see Section F) will continue and be developed further. The import support from women's spouses or partners will be structurally secured. Employers will be addressed directly and recruited as important partners for women wishing to return to work.

- The Federal German Government will intensify its efforts in assisting women who are either the main or the only breadwinners in their family. The work of the Perspektiven für Alleinerziehende (Opportunities for Single Parents) partnership (see Section A) will be expanded under the heading of Women as Breadwinners (Frauen als Familienernährerinnen).
- The German government will pursue its strategy of cause-related elimination of the gender pay gap. In doing so, it will directly influence causes which lie within its own remit and continue to take a pro-active stance by providing its strategic partners with the necessary instruments and data to achieve this goal (see Section F). Aside from introducing the Logib-D tool, other measures will be adopted to ensure greater transparency in wage negotiations (e.g. in cooperation with [www.frauenlohnspiegel.de](http://www.frauenlohnspiegel.de)). Efforts will also be made to step up exchange at international level.

Improving women's access to management positions involves two types of measures: those concerning supervisory bodies and those to boost the number of women at operational level. The Corporate Governance Code can serve as a launch pad in this regard, as can further requirements regarding the content of annual reports.

The German government has commissioned an impact assessment study to evaluate the Basic Benefit for job seekers as set out in the Social Code Book II (SGB II). The study will assess both the gender equality perspective and workplace integration of women and men with immigrant backgrounds. The results of the impact assessment study are expected to be available some time in 2009. They will then be used to analyse the need for further policy-based and legal action.

### **Protection and Support for Women Who are Victims of Violence**

Implementation of the Second Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women (see Section D) will continue.

### **Support for Women in Pregnancy-Related Emergency Situations**

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and Federal Foundation Mother and Child (Bundesstiftung Mutter und Kind) will work together (including on associated public relations campaigns) to make the Foundation more widely known to the general public and to those who allocate public funds (Länder-based foundations and institutions, and pregnancy advisory services), thus making it more of a door-opener for holistic early intervention measures (targeting pregnant women). Because assistance from the Foundation must be applied for through the pregnancy advisory services, applications can lead to pregnant women who are in crisis receiving comprehensive counselling.

The Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) (see Section C) will place greater focus on women immigrants as a target group in matters concerning sex education and family planning, and will step up research on the causes of abortion at various stages of life and in differing sets of circumstances.

The Gender Action Plan 2009 – 2012 of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development enhances and underpins development policy activities and the portfolio to promote gender equality and improve women's rights and roles in our partner countries. In the coming years, measures will be adopted which focus on economic empowerment of women, women in armed conflict and their role in conflict management, gender-specific challenges and answers to climate change, and sexual and reproductive health and rights, and family planning.

The German government will continue to speak out in favour of implementing UN Resolutions 1325 and 1820. The UN Secretary General's report due at the end of June 2009, as required by UN Security Council Resolution 1820 and which is financially supported by Germany, will be an important step towards future measures. Germany also sees the tenth anniversary of UN Resolution 1325 in 2010 as a fitting occasion on which to intensify cooperation between BMVg, BMFSFJ, BMZ and AA in implementing the resolution.