1. **Basic Information**

1.1. **Publication reference:** EuropeAid/ 135-919/IH/ACT/MK

1.2. **Programme:** Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) - National Programme for 2011 under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component (TAIB)

1.3. **Twinning Number:** MK 11 IB SO 01

1.4. **Title:** “Support to the Implementation of Gender Equality” (SIGE)

1.5. **Sector:** Social sector 03.19.07 Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination

1.6. **Beneficiary country:** The Beneficiary Country ¹

2. **Objectives**

2.1. **Overall Objective(s)**

The overall project objective is to increase the effectiveness of the country's preparation for EU Accession and to ensure efficiency of EU programmes in the country.

2.2. **Project purpose**

Project purpose is to build the capacities with regards to gender equality, as key human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2.3. **Contribution to National Development Plan/ Cooperation agreement/ Association Agreement/ Action Plan**

The priorities listed in the Accession Partnership have been selected on the basis that it is realistic to expect that the country can complete them or take them substantially forward over the next few years. A distinction is made between short-term priorities, which are expected to be accomplished within one to two years, and medium-term priorities, which are expected to be accomplished within three to four years. The priorities concern both legislation and its implementation.

The National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) identifies a series of

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¹ As per Financing Agreement concerning the National Programme Transition Assistance and Institution Building – TAIB 2011 from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance under the Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component – entered into force on 18 November 2012.
measures, on short and medium term, to be taken as regards the political, economic and policy criteria for membership of the European Union. In particular, the NPAA identified public governance, the rule of law and fundamental rights, economic development, agriculture, transport, environment and employment and social policy as major areas of intervention, being in line with the Accession Partnership and the key findings of the last 2012 EU Progress Report. NPAA mid-term priorities are focused on continuous implementation of the activities according strategic documents and action plans in the areas of equality, non-discrimination and gender equality, as well continuous capacity building of mechanisms for gender equality.

In the area of **women’s and gender equality**, in the EU Progress Report for 2013, the following is identified: “A Strategy for Gender Equality for 2013-2020 was adopted by the parliament, together with a National Action Plan for Gender Equality for 2013-2016. Participation by women in the local elections increased. Women’s participation in the labour market remains very low. The capacity of some local commissions on equal opportunity was strengthened, but their overall expertise and activities remain limited. The Sector for Equal Opportunities Policy in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy still lacks adequate resources. Discriminatory customs, traditions and stereotypes remain significant and are open to exploitation and the fostering of regressive trends in society. Implementation of the 2012-2015 National Strategy for Combating and Preventing Domestic violence is slow.” As well, in the area of **equal opportunities**, the following is indentified: “A Strategy for Gender Equality (2013-2020) was adopted, and implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2013-2016) began. The female employment rate remains very low compared to the EU average. The mechanism in place to deal with complaints of unequal treatment does not function properly. There is still a tendency to confuse equal opportunities with anti-discrimination issues. The Department for Equal Opportunities lacks appropriate resources. The activities and capacity of local equal opportunity commissions remain limited, with little improvement in the situation of women in rural areas or of Roma women. Discriminatory customs, traditions and stereotypes remain significant, capitalising on underlying regressive trends in society.”

The **Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)** notes that the overall objectives of the EU assistance, in the form of institution-building and investment, shall contribute to the democratic, economic and institutional reforms, in line with the Stabilisation and Association process. In this respect, financial assistance may cover all areas of harmonisation of legislation and cooperation policies of the SAA, including Justice, Home Affairs and Human Rights.

3. **Description**

3.1. **Background and justification**

Gender Equality is foreseen in Article 9 of the Constitution of the country and is defined as the principle of non-discrimination stipulating that: "Citizens of the country are equal in their freedoms and rights, *inter alia* regardless of gender".

The national authorities, mainly the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) puts efforts to promote gender equality on national level and support the activities on equal opportunities of women and man, in accordance with the aims and the priority activities of the Strategy for Gender Equality 2013-2020 and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2013-2016, as well implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women.
and Men and other relevant gender-related legislation. In the period of implementation of National Action Plan for Gender Equality focus has been put on promotion of equal opportunities at level of local self-government units, however additional efforts were made in order to provide proper capacity building, advocacy and promotion of the issue of gender equality on central and local level.

In January 2012, the new Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (Official Gazette of the RM, No.6/2012) has been adopted by the Assembly of the RM. This law foresees advanced legislative solutions in relation to advancement of the equal opportunities for women and men in all spheres of the socio-economic development and its text is additionally aligned with the EU Directives. The Law strengthens the position of the coordinators in line with the ministries and local self-government units by determining their responsibilities, by which it additionally strengthens the administrative capacities due to gender equality. According to the Governmental Decision, an inter-sectoral and advisory group for equal opportunities for women and men has been formed, with the goal to ensure efficient implementation of the regulatory framework and programmes in the area of gender equality. Provisions of this law require substantial capacity building at national and local level for continuous implementation.

Pursuant to the Article 9, Paragraph 3 of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, the Assembly of the RM adopted the Strategy of Gender Equality, with relevance for the period 2013-2020. According to the Strategy, the National Plan for Gender Equality 2013-2016 and the Operational Plan for 2013 are to be prepared. The Strategy 2013-2020 is a document that ensures a framework for equality of women and men as cross-sectoral, horizontal and policy priority. Furthermore, this document gives basic steps and specific directions for completing the achievement of gender equality in the country.

The Strategy for Gender Responsive Budgeting 2012-2017 is a national document aimed at advancement of gender equality and establishment of equal opportunities for women and men, through adjustment of the existing processes for policy planning and budgeting of budgetary institutions, taking in consideration a variety of implications towards women and men. The necessity for adoption of the Strategy is derived from the fact that it is often needed to work differently with women and men, to recognize the differences and to apply measures for overcoming the inequality and obstacles which they face. Introduction of gender perspective in budgetary policies at national and local level will contribute towards proper and gender responsive division of assets, as well improved transparency and responsibility of state budget from gender perspectives. Due to this, an “Analysis and assessment of the budgetary process and reforms of budgetary policies from gender perspective” has been prepared; as well a “Manual for gender-responsive budgeting” has been published aimed to support the work of public administration employees. Forthcoming activities are related to preparation of methodology for analyzing the budgetary programmes and creation of gender-related indicators on the level of the national budget.

On 9 January 2013, the Government has adopted the 2013-2015 National Action Plan for Implementation of 1325 Resolution for Women, Peace and Security of the UN Council of Security. This action plan is prepared in order to tackle and further fulfill the obligations and needs in the country, as well to efficiently and completely comply with the activities of UN Agencies, EU, Council of Europe, OSCE and NATO. The overall objective of this action plan is mainstreaming the gender perspective in formulation and implementation of the peaceful, security and defensive policies in the country, increasing the participation and
contribution of women in international, civil and military missions in which the country participates, combating the violence against women and protection of women’s rights in situations of peace, conflict and humanitarian disasters. Subsequently to this, an annual operational programme has been prepared which defines the priority activities for implementation as well as the relevant stakeholders involved in its implementation. In relation to the introduction of the implementation process of the UN 1325 Resolution, two-day trainings were held for the representatives of the state institutions.

The aim of this project is to strengthen the national mechanisms for gender equality, such as the relevant Department for Equal Opportunities within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), including the Commissions for Equal Opportunities on the local level and the Commission for Equal Opportunities in the Parliament. Furthermore, the project activities are foreseen to provide capacity building of the relevant institutions in the areas of assessment of the national legislation on gender equality and their capacities to conduct analysis, research, monitoring, and other actions, to be able to make proper legislative proposals and create and implement implementable strategies. In general, the gender equality related legislation has been somewhat improved in the process of approximation with the European standards, but despite a solid legal framework, functional institutional protection and raising policy awareness, promotion of equal opportunities and gender equality needs further to be advanced.

3.2. Linked activities

The below listed projects are complementing, and not overlapping, the activities programmed under this Twinning Fiche in the field of support of implementation of gender equality:

In the area of Gender Equality, IPA Component IV Human Resources Development Component includes a grant scheme in support of integration of women from minority ethnic communities in the labour market, in order to improve their employment potentials through specialised trainings tailored to their needs and potentials and aligned with the labour market needs. In addition, within the same programme, a technical assistance is foreseen for strengthening the capacities for integration of disadvantaged women in the labour market, with special focus on ethnic minority women. The operation encompasses monitoring the situation concerning intensification of employment of disadvantaged women, in particular ethnic minority women, capacity building of ethnic minority women, as well capacity building and strengthening cooperation among employees of relevant stakeholders. Additionally, the Direct Grant Award “Support to the employment of young people, long-term unemployed and women” is focused on increasing the employability of women (among other target groups) by increasing their competences (knowledge, skills and attitude) on the labour market.

The UNDP and UN Agencies with financial support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands are focused on economic empowerment of women – victims of domestic violence during 2008 – 2012 and have supported the process of capacity building of Women and Man Equal Opportunities Commission at Local Self- Government Units during 2009.

During 2005, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Kingdom of Norway supported the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in its implementation of the project

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2 The reference numbers are listed as registered in the Central Donor Assistance Database available at http://cdad.sep.gov.mk/EN/search.aspx.
“Preparation of Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men”. Within the project activities, it was formed a working group composed of representatives from line ministries and the Assembly, who have prepared a draft text of the Law which was later on in May 2006 adopted by the Assembly. Relevant results achieved with this project are adoption of the Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men through transparent and participatory process by involvement of all relevant stakeholders in its preparation, advancement of the regulatory framework in relation to gender equality in practise, preparation of a report on real situation in the country in the area of gender equality as initial basis for preparation of a law, establishment of regulatory basis for legal aid in cases of unequal treatment of women an men and initial approximation of national with the EU regulation as a further step in the Euro-Atlantic integration of the country.

The UN WOMEN initiative “Gender-mainstreaming in budgets (gender budgeting) in the ministries and local self-government units” was focused on introducing the gender concept in the budgets within the ministries and local self-government units (gender budgeting). As a result of all undertaken gender budgeting initiatives during 2008-2012, the Government in November 2012 has adopted Strategy for Gender-Responsive Budgeting 2012-2017.

During 2012, preparation of the 2013-2015 National Action Plan for Implementation of UN 1325 Resolution for Women, Peace and Security by the UN Council for Security is supported by the UN Women, as capacity building in the area of women’s participation in situations of peace, conflict and humanitarian disasters.

As well during 2012, two modules of trainings of trainers for creation and implementation of concepts of equality and non-discrimination were conducted with the support provided by the Office of the British Council. These trainings were part of activities due to capacity building of representatives from relevant institutions.

The project “Social Inclusion and Human Rights” supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) aims at supporting inclusion of human rights, the planning processes of national and local authorities dealing with the issues of social inclusion, social protection and poverty reduction. In particular, it would support the development and refinement of overall strategic goals, institutional mandates, financial and business planning; strengthen information management and technological capacities in social protection institutions; harmonize data systems across key MLSP departments and social protection institutions. On the national level, the specific project aim is to strengthen the accountability of the government with regard to human rights and social inclusion in policy making and monitoring, with a focus on rights-holders and duty-bearers. The project will also foster the coordination of NGOs working on issues related to social exclusion, discrimination and poverty through the establishment of the “National Anti-Poverty Platform” (NAPP).

In the 2009 and 2010, the OSCE SMMS has supported small scaled projects focused on capacity building of the gender machinery at national level and training for the advocates and the office of Public Prosecutor in relation to the CEDAW Convention and the Optional Protocol.

In 2013, the European Institute for Gender Equality has commenced a IPA project financed "Preparatory measures for the participation of candidate’s countries and potential candidates countries in EIGE's work". The main project objective is to strengthen the capacity of candidate countries and potential candidates to comply with the EU policies in the field of
gender equality. It is a pilot project to establish contacts, assess the needs and expectations of candidate countries and potential candidates, and explore ways of cooperation with EIGE in the future.

3.3 Results:

The following mandatory results, which should be jointly achieved by the MS and BC Twinning Partner, will directly support the achievement of the project’s purpose:

Results:

Mandatory result 1: Supported gender equality and the accession process
Under this mandatory result, it is expected at least, to:
- Carry out and deliver comparative analysis of the country legislation and EU legislation (acquis communautaire related to gender equality);
- Deliver a detailed report on what should be improved or changed in the country legislation, and to propose option(s) for aligning the national legislation with EU legislation;
- Support of the alignment process of the national legislation with EU acquis by drafting amendments and/ or drafting guidelines/ procedures.

Mandatory result 2: Supported further implementation of the Law for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, as well as the implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAPGE)
Under this mandatory result, it is expected at least, to:
- Assess the implementation of the Law for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men and the NAPGE, and identify potential bottleneck(s);
- Report on the understanding and the implementation of the principle of gender equality and its mainstreaming within the society (at political, economic, cultural, local, central, ethnical community level, etc.) and to provide recommendations;
- Support national authorities in further implementing the Law for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, as well awareness raising;
- Propose and support the further implementation of the NAPGE, as well awareness raising.

Mandatory result 3: Relevant stakeholders trained to advocate and/or defend gender equality national wide (thought for example: effective lobbying, coordination, etc)
Under this mandatory result, it is expected at least, to:
- Conduct tailored-made training programme on how to promote and implement gender equality at local and central level (local politicians will be targeted as well);
- Train members of the Committee for Protection against Discrimination, members of Assembly and other relevant stakeholders on how to encourage/ foster/ mainstream gender equality in the society;
- Implement trainings for the members of Committee for Protection against Discrimination and other relevant stakeholders on how to identify and to proceed with unequal or potential unequal treatment between women and men.

Mandatory result 4: Monitoring of gender equality in projects and programmes
Under this mandatory result, it is expected at least, to:
• Develop of an action plan for the introduction of the G-marker in the country;
• Introduce the G-marker for all EU projects in the country under indirect management mode (under IPA and IPARD);
• Train national stakeholders on G-marker at local and national level;
• Support the relevant administrations dealing with IPA and IPARD funds to introduce the G-marker and to use it as monitoring tool;
• Integrate the G-marker in the Monitoring Information System(s) of the relevant administrations for all projects;
• Update G-marker in the Monitoring Information System(s) (MIS) of the relevant administrations for all projects;
• Deliver a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the gender equality principle within IPA funds by using the G-marker for each IPA programme under indirect management.

3.4. Activities

The Twinning project shall be implemented as a joint project in which each partner takes on its responsibilities. The selected MS shall transfer the requested hands-on public sector expertise to a Beneficiary Country, support into reinforcement of administrative capacities to meet the obligations of the EU membership by introducing and sharing EU wide best practices in connection with EU legislation and specific needs of the Beneficiary Country in the field of gender equality.

The set of proposed activities will be further developed with the Twinning partners when drafting the Twinning work plan, keeping in mind that the final list of activities will be decided in cooperation with the Twinning partner. The components are closely interlinked and need to be sequenced accordingly.

The proposal made by the MS should include the activities they propose to achieve the results listed in the fiche. Without listing necessarily all the possible activities, the proposal should be detailed enough to respond adequately to the Twinning project fiche.

The Twinning assistance will be provided in the form of know-how transfer. The eligible activities under this Twinning Fiche are:

• **Advice and coaching sessions:** Coaching and advice activities will be the predominant type of activity. They will help for the fine tuning of the whole process of strengthening the capacities and supporting the processes of mainstreaming the gender equality of relevant institutions.

• **Tailor made training programme:** This project will include the development and implementation of a tailor-made training programme for capacity building for gender equality. The programme will take into account the lessons learnt from the previous trainings and will be based on a comprehensive training needs assessment of the target group. The training programme will focus on all aspects pertaining to gender-related issues at national and local level.

• **Seminars, workshops and conferences:** The training programme in the areas of gender equality will involve the organisation of seminars, workshops, conferences etc.

• **Manuals, procedures and check-lists:** The Twinning partner should provide advice on the existing procedures with respect to gender equality, prepare recommendations and support the process of drafting manuals related to the area covered.

• **Study visit:** If relevant, study visit will be organised for representatives of the beneficiary institution and relevant stakeholders to a Member State for exchange of good practices
and experience in connection with the gender equality in line with the European Acquis. The comparative qualitative and economic advantage of a study visit, compared to the activity taking place in the Beneficiary Country, is crucial for its eligibility. Costs for travel by Beneficiary Country officials from their capitals to a Member State in the framework of study visit will be borne by the Beneficiary Country administration as co-financing.

- **Assessment:** Every activity within the training programme shall be assessed though practical tools. The results shall be compiled and presented to the Steering Committee, and integrated in the quarterly reports. When it is relevant and possible, the other activities of the twinning project shall be evaluated in the most relevant way.

3.5. **Means/ Input from the MS Partner Administration**

The project will be implemented in the form of a Twinning Contract between the Beneficiary Country and an EU Member State. Details of implementation shall be agreed during the preparation of the Work Plan. The implementation of the project requires one Project Leader, responsible for the overall coordination of project activities, one (1) Resident Twinning Adviser, responsible for management and implementation of project activities foreseen, related to implementation of activities and a pool of up to 10 Short-Term Experts. It is essential that the team has sufficiently broad expertise to cover all the areas included in the project description. The interested Member State institution shall include in its proposal the CVs of the designated Project Leader and Resident Twinning Adviser, as well providing a list for other outstanding Short-Term Experts if relevant, and the specific tasks to which they could be assigned to. A final decision for including Short-Term Experts in specific activities shall be taken at the time of preparation of the Work Plan.

3.5.1. **Profile and tasks of the Project Leader**

The Project Leader from the Member State must be a high-ranking public servant of a Member State administration, but preferably the Head of a structure engaged in issues related to the area of gender equality and/or equal opportunities within a Ministry (or relevant institution) responsible for gender equality and / or equal opportunities, with relevant working experience of at least 8 years.

The MS Project Leader will continue to work at his/her Member State administration, but will devote some of his/her time to conceive, supervise and co-ordinate the overall thrust of the Twinning Project, and ensure the attainment of the projected outputs. The Project Leader is fully responsible for co-ordination of the work of the experts. The MS Project Leader must have a broad knowledge of all processes in the area of the project and good leadership skills.

The MS Project Leader will manage the implementation of the project with the Project Leader from the Beneficiary Country and is expected to devote a minimum of 3 days per month to the project in his/her home administration with an on-site visit at least every 3 months. The Project Leader’s seniority will ensure his/her ability to mobilise the necessary staff in support of the efficient implementation of the project. In addition, he/she should coordinate, on the Member State side, the Project Steering Committee (PSC), which will meet in Skopje at least every three months. In particular under IPA, the Project Leader must ensure his/her presence at all meetings of each quarterly Project Steering Committee during which the detailed description of activities is updated.
He/she will be supported by his/her Member State administration for logistic, accounting and administrative affairs.

**Qualifications and skills of the MS Project Leader:**
- Be a national of a Member State of the European Union;
- Be a high-ranking civil servant or equivalent staff seconded to work\(^3\) within departments/units related to gender equality and/or equal opportunities in a Member State;
- Have a minimum University degree in related studies (preferably in social sciences, human rights, law etc.); a Master Degree would be considered an asset\(^4\);
- Have minimum of 5 years of professional experience in the fields of gender equality and/or equal opportunities;
- Have managerial, organisational and planning capabilities to manage multi-component projects;
- Be fluent in written and spoken English.

**Tasks of the Project Leader:**
- Conceive, supervise and coordinate the overall preparation of the project;
- Ensure a close political steering;
- Co-ordinate MS experts’ work and availability;
- Communicate with the beneficiary, CFCD and EUD;
- Ensure the backstopping functions and financial management;
- Guarantee from the MS administration side, the successful implementation of the Project’s Work Plan;
- Co-chairing the Project Steering Committee.

### 3.5.2. Profile and tasks of the RTA

One (1) Resident Twinning Advisor (RTA) will be appointed and located in the premises of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) in the Beneficiary Country.

The secondment of the Resident Twinning Adviser will last 18 months, during which the RTA will be responsible for the direct implementation of the project.

RTA will come from an EU Member State to work on a full time and day-to-day basis with the beneficiary administration. The Resident Twinning Adviser will have a key role in the coordination of the inputs required for the successful implementation of the project activities. He/she shall be supported by up to 10 of short-term experts.

The RTA is bound by the rules on hours of work in force in the host administration. He/she is not authorized to work part-time. Management and control of leave and working time are the responsibility of the MS Project Leaders and their BC counterparts.

**Qualifications and skills of the Resident Twinning Adviser:**
- Be a national of a Member State of the European Union;
- Be a civil servant or equivalent staff seconded to work;

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\(^3\) Please note that the Project Leader cannot come from an ad hoc mandated body.

\(^4\) For reference on equivalent qualification see: EPSO website (http://europa.eu/epso/doc/diplomes-fortheweb_en.pdf)

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• Have a minimum University degree in related studies (preferably in social sciences, human rights, law etc.) (a Master Degree would be considered an asset)⁵;
• Have minimum 5 years of general professional experience in the field of gender equality;
• Have minimum 3 years of professional experience in activities related to the implementation of EU acquis in the area of gender equality;
• Have managerial, organisational and planning capabilities to manage multi-component projects;
• Be fluent in written and spoken English.

Tasks of the Resident Twinning Adviser:

As to the general responsibility of the day-to-day implementation of the Twinning project in the Beneficiary Country, the Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA) tasks will include:

• Provision of technical advice and assistance to the administration or other public sector bodies in the BC in the context of a predetermined work-plan;
• Coordination of all project activities and experts inputs in the BC;
• Ensuring day-to-day implementation of the Twinning project in the BC;
• Developing and maintaining close working contacts and relations with Beneficiary Country officials involved in each of the activities and the project management;
• Ensuring smooth correlation between the activities, deadlines and the envisaged results in the Work Plan;
• Taking corrective actions inside the terms of the signed contract, if necessary.
• Participation in the preparation of all strategic project documents (quarterly monitoring reports, final project report etc.);
• Together with the Project Leader, to nominate, mobilize and supervise the Short-Term experts.

3.5.3. Profile and tasks of the short-term experts

Other specialist staff shall be made available by the MS Twinning Partner to support the implementation of activities. Specific and technical matters not directly covered by the Resident Twinning Adviser can be taken over by up to 10 short-term experts within the limits of the budget. A list for other Short-Term Experts and the specific activities/ tasks to which they could be assigned to, should be an integral part of the MS Offer. The detailed expert input shall be established when drawing up the Twinning Work Plan.

Qualifications and skills of short-term experts:

• Minimum a University-level degree or an equivalent of 5 years of relevant professional experience in the field of gender equality and / or equal opportunities;
• Be civil servants or equivalent staff seconded to work within departments/units/structures related to gender equality and / or equal opportunities in a Member State;
• A minimum of 3 years of practical experience in implementation of institutional aspects related to gender equality and / or equal opportunities;
• Professional experience in developing training programmes and implementation of training sessions directed towards staff members and/or operators in the scope of the project;
• Expertise in the implementation of the EU acquis in the field of gender equality and / or equal opportunities.

⁵ For reference on equivalent qualification see: EPSO website (http://europa.eu/epso/doc/diplomes-fortheweb_en.pdf)
equal opportunities;
- Be fluent in English, both oral and written;
- Prior experience in implementation of twinning projects in other new Member States will be considered as an advantage.

Tasks of the Short-Term Experts:
- Prepare and implement specific tasks based mainly on practical cases and experience in compliance with their mission description and in accordance with project activities in the predefined Twinning Work Plan;
- Provide practical expertise/advices to relevant staff for execution of different tasks related to the project;
- Assist in key tasks, e.g. in the field of gender equality and / or equal opportunities;
- Address cross-cutting issues.

The pool of Short-Term Experts should encompass amongst others, the following expertise:
- Gender mainstreaming and policy advise;
- Gender related analysis;
- Legal expertise in gender equality;
- Monitoring gender equality principle;
- Gender equality co-financed by Structural funds,
- Monitoring and information system expertise.

3.5.4. Profile and tasks of RTA Assistant

The RTA will be provided with full-time RTA assistant acting as assistant for technical and organizational support. The assistant will be contracted according to the Twinning rules and paid from the Twinning budget. The assistant will be selected through an open call. The Contracting Authority and the EUD shall be consulted before finalizing the recruitment procedure.

The role of RTA Assistant is to support the RTA in the project management. In addition, the assistants will be responsible for organisation of meetings, seminars etc. and their logistics. The RTA assistant will also act as translators/interpreters, when necessary.

3.5.5. BC Project Leader

The BC Project Leader will act as the counterpart of the Member State PL and will ensure close cooperation in the overall steering and co-ordination of the project. The PL's seniority will ensure its ability to mobilize the necessary staff in support of the efficient implementation of the project. BC Project Leader will also coordinate the Project Steering Committee (PSC) from the BC side. The role of the BC Project Leader and the MS PL counterpart are complementary. A BC RTA Counterpart will be assigned as well.

3.5.6. BC RTA Counterpart

RTA Counterpart will be assigned by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP), in coordination with the relevant department.

The MS Project Leader and the Resident Twinning Adviser will be supported by the involved institutions in implementation of this project.
Technical implementation of the project which means day-to-day co-ordination and implementation of the project activities will be responsibility of all the institutions.

4. Institutional Framework

Institutional framework in the area of gender equality and equal opportunities is comprised of the Equal Opportunities Department established within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, as well other relevant institutions presented in Annex 4 - Institutional Framework.

Special cooperation and coordination activities should be envisaged with the two following ad-hoc international partners that have mandate in the field of gender equality:
- UN Women and its local office;
- EIGE as European Agency.
This closed cooperation should help to increase efficiency and sustainability of the mandatory results.

4.1. Beneficiary Institution(s)

Main beneficiary and coordinator of the project will be the Ministry of Labour and Social policy (MLSP), the relevant Department of Equal Opportunities.

Other beneficiaries of the project will be:
- Members of equal opportunity commissions;
- Coordinators at local and national level;
- Members of National Parliamentary Commission for Gender Equality and civil society organizations;
- Commission for Protection against Discrimination;
- Social partners and civil society organizations;
- Representatives from state institutions at national and local self-government level working on issues of equal opportunities.

4.2. Project Steering Committee (PSC)

A Project Steering Committee (PSC), comprising of representatives of the Beneficiary Institutions, the Beneficiary Country Project Leader, the Member State Project Leader, and the Resident Twinning Adviser, the RTA counterparts, the Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA), the Delegation of the European Union (DEU), the Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) within the Ministry of Finance (MF) and other stakeholders will be established, to monitor the implementation of the project. The final and exact composition of the SC will be agreed with the Contracting Authority (CA) at the start up of the project. Any observer to the SC should be approved by the CA. The RTA counterparts and principal MS experts can participate as appropriate.

It is the responsibility of the Project Steering Committee, which meets at quarterly intervals, to update the detailed description of activities in a six month perspective, issuing successive operative side letters. PSC meetings are called and co-chaired by both Project Leaders. The Resident Twinning Adviser will be responsible, jointly with the national counterparts, for

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6 More information in Annex 4 – Description of the Institutional Framework
drafting an interim quarterly report. At least ten working days before the meeting of the Project Steering Committee, the RTA circulates to all other participants a draft of the updated details of activities. They will meet to discuss the progress of the project, verify the achievement of the outputs and mandatory results and discuss actions to be undertaken in the following quarter. Project Steering Committee will also discuss the draft of the quarterly report submitted to it beforehand and will recommend corrections. PSC will take the necessary decisions related to project facilitation and progress and will be the forum to discuss any unforeseen difficulties.

4.3. Reporting requirements as per Article 6.4 of the Twinning Manual

The Twinning Partners shall submit reports as according requirements detailed in the Article 6.4 of Twinning Manual.

Reports will follow the templates of Annex C4 of the Common Twinning Manual. In addition to these formal reporting stages, the Twinning Partners are obliged to inform in writing the Contracting Authority, as well as the Final Beneficiary of the Action of any critical aspects or conditions of project implementation, or any amendments/ modifications necessary within the budget.

All reports must be produced in English language in electronic and hard copy. These reports shall be signed by both Project Leaders. Each report must be presented in electronic format at least 5 (five) working days prior to the Steering Committee meetings and in two hard copies to the following address:

Ministry of Finance
Central Financing and Contracting Department
Programme Monitoring Unit
Address: St. Sveti Kiril i Metodij No. 54, 1000 Skopje

The final versions should incorporate any comments and discussions during the Steering Committee meetings.

For monitoring, control and evaluation purposes, 1 (one) copy of all documents during the project implementation should be made available by the MS Twinning Partner for the Senior Programme Officer (SPO) and the Operating Structure in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and archived in the latter.

5. Budget

The project will be implemented through a Twinning Contract estimated at a maximum of EUR 900.000 out of which IPA contribution will amount to EUR 855.000 while national contribution will amount to EUR 45.000.

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</table>
The co-financing requirement foreseen under IPA will be considered fulfilled according to the provision of the relevant Financing Agreement.

In addition to the IPA and National co-financing as part of the Twinning Contract amount, as a rule, all twinning contracts must provide additional co-financing on the side of the Beneficiary Institution, for the purpose of covering costs not covered under the project budget as per Twinning manual, point 5.13, as follows:

- Direct and indirect cost of the Beneficiary administration, civil servants and national private experts working for the project;
- Travel by the beneficiary officials from their capitals to a MS or between MS;
- Organization of seminars/ workshops/ trainings (incl. hall rental, printing seminar materials and other logistical support).
- Facilities for the Member State experts: adequately equipped office space; telephone; e-mail services; fax; photocopiers; computer; internet access; secretarial support; access to information.

The project will be located in the premises of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP). The Ministry will ensure adequate conditions, appropriate facilities and basic equipment for the work of the Resident Twinning Adviser and the Short-Term Experts in performing their work during their mission in the country. This includes administrative support, office space, telephone and fax and other necessary facilities. This contribution should also include logistical support for various training activities, including selection of trainees (in consultation with the Member State experts), as well as providing the Member State experts with the documents necessary for project implementation.

The twinning partner (project beneficiary) shall provide all available assistance to solve unforeseen problems that the Member State twinning partner(s) might face.

6. Implementation Arrangements

6.1. Implementing Agency responsible for tendering, contracting and accounting (AO/CFCU/PAO/Commission)

The Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) of the Ministry of Finance (MF) will be responsible for tendering, contracting, payments, accounting and overall supervision of the implementation of the project, upon conferral of management. The Head of CFCD will act as the Programme Authorising Officer (PAO) of the project:

Ms. Radica Koceva (PAO)
Central Financing and Contracting Department
Ministry of Finance
Phone: +389 2 3106 455
6.2. **Main counterpart in the BC (RTA counterpart and the BC Project Leader)**

The following persons will be counterparts of the key personnel of the MS Partner Administration:

**BC Project Leader:**

Ms. Elena Grozdanova  
State Counselor in MoLSP  
Phone: + 389 2 3128 309  
E-mail: EGrozdanova@mtsp.gov.mk

**RTA Counterpart:**

Ms. Merdita Saliu  
Head of Department for Equal Opportunities in the MoLSP  
Phone: + 389 2 3106 443  
E-mail: MSaliu@mtsp.gov.mk

6.3. **Contracts**

One (1) Twinning Contract is foreseen for the implementation of the above mentioned activities.

7. **Implementation Schedule (indicative)**

7.1. **Launching of the call for proposals**

The estimated date for the launching of the call for proposals is April 2014.

7.2. **Start of project activities**

The estimated date for start of project activities is January 2015.

7.3. **Project completion**

The estimated date for project completion is September 2016.

7.4. **Duration of the execution period (21 months)**

The overall execution period of the Twinning project is 21 months with an implementation period of 18 months. (The duration of the Twinning work plan is increased by 3 months, to cover the initial setting in of the RTA and the proper wrapping up of the Twinning Project).

8. **Sustainability**
The achievements of a Twinning project (mandatory results) shall be maintained as a permanent asset to the Beneficiary administration even after the end of the Twinning project implementation. This presupposes inter alia that effective mechanisms are put in place by the Beneficiary administration to disseminate and consolidate the results of the project.

The Beneficiary administration is fully committed to ensuring a long-term impact of the activities of this Twinning Project. The expected combined impact of this project will bring about significant improvement in the area of gender equality. The project will have impact on improving the systems (strategic planning documents, strategic management), skills, practices, mechanisms, rules, by laws and strategies of the relevant institutions. An ongoing review of key issues impacting on sustainability will start from the beginning of project implementation, based on the results and outcomes that should be achieved over time. The objective of this review is to facilitate the sustainable impact of outcomes beyond the end of the project. After project completion, the key elements of the system are expected to be in place and operational. This in turn, is expected to have a positive impact on socio-economic development in the country.

The Member State Twinning partner shall transfer their best practices and know-how necessary to achieve the mandatory results to the Beneficiary administration. Staff benefitting from trainings shall transfer knowledge through subsequent training to their colleagues. Moreover and at the end of the implementation period a lesson learnt seminar will be held to disseminate the results and the best practices acquired and to foresee future relevant activities.

9. Crosscutting issues

Cross cutting issues have to be systematically addressed during the project lifetime. Up to 10% of the budget for capacity building – through short-term expertise - may be allocated to assist the beneficiary to comply with European standards and best practices, implement relevant existing Government strategies and develop internal measures to ensure each cross-cutting issue is appropriately mainstreamed.

The mainstreaming of the cross cutting issues is regarded on two different levels:

1. Ensuring that the internal policies, structure or operating procedures of the beneficiary agency will conform to and promote the relevant principles outlined per section below.
2. Ensuring that the products, outputs produced by the beneficiaries (e.g. laws, regulations, policies, and strategies) will conform to and promote the relevant principles outlined per section below.

9.1. Civil Society development and dialogue

Having in mind the important role of the social partners and the civil society, especially in the fields related to the gender equality, equal opportunities, anti-discrimination, social inclusion etc., substantial efforts will be dedicated with the purpose of regular informing and involvement, regarding the project implementation, outcomes and achieved results.

9.2. Environmental considerations
The environmental issue will be taken into account in the implementation of the project, where relevant, having in mind that the project mainly includes capacity building activities. Furthermore, all activities carried out in the framework of this project should be carried out in compliance with EU environmental legislation.

9.3. Equal Opportunity and non-discrimination

Equal opportunity principles and practices in ensuring equal gender participation in the Project will be guaranteed by taking into consideration that the main scope of activities shall be focused on related issues of gender equality. As well, the beneficiary institutions will ensure equal access of men and women to the project activities and results and all other forms of discrimination will be eliminated.

Moreover, the mainstreaming equal opportunities will be considered and monitored in the process of implementation, i.e. the outputs and results indicators, will be broken down by gender, where appropriate, for the purposes of project monitoring.

9.4. Minority and vulnerable groups

Whereas the main reference in the country in relation to minority groups is the Ohrid Framework Agreement, in an EU context, reference is made to the “Race directive” of 2000 (200/43/EC of 29 June), is a crucial aspect of the acquis. The beneficiary will be assisted to implement an ‘internal minority and vulnerable group assessment’ to identify areas where it could improve its internal performance vis-à-vis minorities or other vulnerable groups. In view of the specific sector, it is not expected that the minority aspects will be of prime relevance for the outputs of this project.

Equal representation of minorities and vulnerable groups will be the guaranteed project principle. The institutions involved in the project execution will observe equal opportunity for all citizens regardless of their ethnic, religious background or other type of social risk they face.

9.5. Good governance, with particular attention to fight against corruption

Specific action instruments for the good governance, with particular attention to fight against corruption, will be incorporated on a horizontal basis, as part of the training activities. To this aim, particular attention will be put in the prevention of corrupt practices, mainly through the raising political and public awareness.

The Government is strongly determined to fulfil all criteria needed for EU accession and membership, and all the necessary actions are being taken to reach the aim. Through transparent policies and involvement of different stakeholders in the process of policy design the accountability and responsiveness vis-a-vis the citizens will be being strengthened.

9.6. Communication and publicity
All requirements to ensure the visibility of EU financing will be fulfilled in accordance with Regulation (EC) N. 718/2007.

10. Conditionality and sequencing

10.1. Conditionality

The project includes the following conditionalities:
- Timely endorsement by all key stakeholders of the twinning fiche;
- National co-financing available;
- Appointment of counterpart personnel by the beneficiary institutions before the launch of the tender process;
- Allocation of working space and facilities by the beneficiary for the RTA before the award of the contract;
- Participation by the beneficiary in the selection process as per EU regulations;
- Organisation, selection and appointment of members of working groups, steering and coordination committees, seminars by the beneficiary as per work plan of the project;
- Appointing the relevant staff by the beneficiaries to participate in training activities as per work plan;
- Sufficient managerial and technical human resources allocated to the relevant Departments;
- EU procedures strictly adhered to with regards to the contracting of technical assistance and training financed from the pre-accession funds.

10.2. Sequencing

Key milestones will be:
1) Approval of the Twinning project fiche;
2) Circulation of the Twinning Project Fiche to Member State National Contact Points;
3) Completion of the selection of the twinning partner;
4) Signature of the Twinning contract, including the Twinning Work Plan;
5) Commencement of the implementation of the twinning (inter alia, the arrival in the country of the Resident Twinning Adviser);
6) End of the implementation period;
7) Submission of the final report.

ANNEXES TO TWINNING PROJECT FICHE:

Annex 1 - Logical framework matrix;
Annex 2 - Contracting and disbursement schedule by quarter for full duration of programme (including disbursement period);
Annex 3 - List of relevant Laws and Regulations;
Annex 4 - Description of institutional framework.

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7 See Article 62 and 63 of Regulation(EC) N. 718/2007
## Annex 1 - Logical framework matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Log frame</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall objective</strong></td>
<td>Positive opinion of the EC about the achieved progress in the country in implementation of pre-accession commitments in the field of gender equality.</td>
<td>Regular annual progress reports of the European Commission; Regular national reports - contribution to the Progress Report; Monthly monitoring progress report from SPO to CFCD.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project purpose</strong></td>
<td>Timely preparation of tender dossiers; Percentage of available funding for EC programmes absorbed; Degree of approximation of national legislation with Directives and EU standards; Reduced backlog of cases related to disrespect of unequal treatment based on gender.</td>
<td>Project reports; SPO’s Annual/ Final Progress Reports; Records and reports form the relevant institutions; European Commission reports; National Statistics and other data; Consultants reports, workshop outputs and / or evaluation reports from the organised trainings for the staff from the relevant institutions. Monthly monitoring progress report from SPO to CFCD. Management Information System (MIS) managed by CFCD/MF and used by IPA structures.</td>
<td>Timely preparation of tender dossiers; Provision of sufficient resources to support management of EU programmes/projects by the Government; Continuous commitment to EU accession by the Government; Government commitment in promoting Gender Equality; Good cooperation between institutions in particular with mainstreaming gender issues; Efficient co-ordination by different counterparties; Reasonable office space in the beneficiary for recruited assistance; Commitments from key personal; Increased interest by the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results</strong></td>
<td>It is expected at least, the following OVis to achieve, but not limited: One assessment of the existing legislation related to gender equality finalized; One comparative analysis of EU Member States and national practice in promoting gender equality conducted; Round tables on promotion of methodology for optimal procedure in the issue of promotion of gender equality and number of attendees; Training programme curricula developed; Number of tailor-made trainings delivered for relevant counterparts and different stakeholders (members of equal opportunity commissions, coordinators at local and national level, National Parliamentary Commission for Gender Equality and civil society organizations; representatives from state institutions at national and local level);</td>
<td>European Commission annual progress reports; Annual revisions of the NPAA; Project reports and other project documents; Reports and attendance lists from the organised training events; Reports and information from the relevant national institutions; Mission consultants reports, workshop outputs. Management Information System (MIS) managed by CFCD/MF and used by IPA structures.</td>
<td>Government preparedness and absorption capacities do not dramatically reduce; Continuous commitment to EU accession by the Government; Provision of sufficient resources by the Government to support management of EU programmes / projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Activities

**Mandatory result 1:** Supported gender equality and the accession process, it is expected at least, to:
- Carry out and deliver comparative analysis of the country legislation and EU Law (acquis communautaire related to gender equality);
- Deliver a detailed report on what should be improved or changed in the country legislation, and to propose option(s) for aligning the national legislation with EU law;
- Support of the alignment process of the national legislation with EU acquis by drafting amendments and/or drafting guidelines/procedures.

**Mandatory result 2:** Supported further implementation of the Law for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, as well as the implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAPGE), it is expected at least, to:
- Assess the implementation of the law for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, and the NAPGE, and identify potential bottleneck(s);
- Report on the understanding and the implementation of the principle of gender equality and its mainstreaming within the society (at political, economic, cultural, local, central, ethnical community level, etc.);
- Support national authorities in further implementing the Law for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, as well awareness raising;
- Propose and support the further implementation of the NAPGE, as well awareness raising.

**Mandatory result 3:** Relevant stakeholders trained to advocate and/or defend gender equality national wide (thought for example: effective lobbying, coordination, etc.), it is expected at least, to:
- Conduct tailored-made training programme on how to promote and implement gender equality at local and central level (local politicians will be targeted as well);
- Train members of the Committee for Protection against Discrimination, members of Assembly and other relevant stakeholders in how to encourage/ foster/ mainstream gender equality.

### Means

- Guideline for promotion of gender equality issues disseminated at national and local level;
- One PR training for ministerial personnel and representatives from relevant institutions for media coverage of discriminatory practices based on gender;
- One National Interactive Conference held on Gender Equality Policy for 100 different representatives from relevant institutions.

### Assumptions

- Adequate and timely technical assistance and expertise is provided by twinning partner;
- Nominated representatives from the relevant institutions are available and willing to actively cooperate with the project team;
- Good cooperation among the relevant stakeholders in implementation of project activities;
- Good quality training is made available to line institutions.

#### Twinning contract
- 1 Member State Project Leader;
- 1 Member State Resident Twinning Adviser;
- Up to 10 short-term experts.

#### Twinning Contract: 900.000 EUR
- IPA funds: 855.000 EUR
- National co-financing: 45.000 EUR

#### National co-financing: 45.000 EUR
equality in the society;
Implement trainings for the members of Committee for Protection against Discrimination and other relevant stakeholders on how to identify and to proceed with unequal or potential unequal treatment between women and men.

**Mandatory result 4: Monitoring of Gender equality in projects and programmes** it is expected at least, to:
- Develop an action plan for the introduction of the G-marker in the country;
- Introduce the G-marker for all EU projects in the country under indirect management mode (under IPA and IPARD);
- Train national stakeholders on G-marker at local and national level;
- Support the relevant administrations dealing with IPA and IPARD funds to introduce the G-marker and to use it as monitoring tool;
- Integrate the G-marker in the Monitoring Information System(s) of the relevant administrations for all projects;
- Update G-marker in the Monitoring Information System(s) (MIS) of the relevant administrations for all projects;
- Deliver a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the gender equality principle within IPA funds by using the G-marker for each IPA programme under indirect management.
Annex 2 - Contracting and disbursement schedule by quarter for full duration of programme (including disbursement period)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracted</td>
<td>900,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twinning</td>
<td>900,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contract</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulated</td>
<td>900,000.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disbursed</td>
<td>576,000.00</td>
<td>234,000.00</td>
<td>90,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>324,000.00</td>
<td>90,000.00</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure/Component</td>
<td>Line Ministry/Institution</td>
<td>Contract Type</td>
<td>Award Procedure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 3: Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents:

Reference list of relevant laws and regulations in the gender area:
- Law on equal opportunities between men and women (Official Journal of the RM, No. 66/06 as of 29.05.2006) is adopted regarding establishment and further development of the gender mechanisms;
- Law on equal opportunities between men and women (Official Journal of the RM, No. 06/12 as of 11.01.2012);
- Amendments to the Law on equal opportunities between men and women, aimed at alignment of the definitions entailed in the law with the definitions for discrimination and harassment encompassed in the European legislation (Directive 2002/73/EC dated 23 September 2002);
- Amendments to the Law on equal opportunities between men and women (Official Journal of the RM, No. 117/2008 dated 18.09.2008), regarding alignment of the penal provisions foreseen in the existing legislation on equal opportunities between women and man;
- Amendments to the Law on Family (Official Journal of the RM, No. 84/08), aimed at alignment the Penalty law, as well introduction of provisions for improvement of the protection from domestic violence and providing the opportunity for active involvement of the non-governmental sector, improvement of the child protection from trafficking in human beings and initiating the application of the misdemeanour provisions;
- Amendments to the Law on Family have added a new chapter IV – Custody of juvenile persons – victims of trafficking in human beings. These changes for the first time define and protect the category ‘child – victim of trafficking in human beings’;
- Law on prevention and protection against discrimination (Official Journal of RM, No. 50 as of 13.04.2010);
- Law on labour relations (Official Journal of RM, No. 54 as of 15.04.2013);
- Law on protection against mobbing on working place (Official Journal of RM, No. 79 as of 31.05.2013).

The Beneficiary Country is a democratic and social state in which everyone is equal before the law wherein one of the fundamental values of the constitutional order is the respect of the democratic principles and the human rights.


The United Nations and the Council of Europe documents pertaining to the human rights:
- United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- European Convention on Human Rights;
- Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Declaration on the Right to Development;
The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as the Agreed Conclusions of the Special Session of the General Assembly of the UN in 2000 (Beijing+5);
- European Social Charter;
- International Civil and Political Rights Pact;
- International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- Conventions of the International Labour Organisation.

The European Union Regulations / Directives:
- Directive 97/80/EC on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex;
- Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation;
- Directive 2004/113/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between man and women in the access to and supply of goods and services;
- Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.

Relevant national strategic documents:
- Strategy for Introducing Gender Sensitive Budgeting 2012-2017;
- National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination based on Ethnic, Age, Mental and Physical Disability and Gender Equality 2012-2015;
- Strategy for Gender Equality 2013-2020;
- National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2012-2015);
- National Strategy for Alleviation of Poverty and Social Inclusion 2010-2020;
- Programme for Development of Social Protection 2011-2021;
- Annual Programmes adopted for Social Protection;
- National Strategy for Elderly Persons 2010-2020;
- Action Plan for Prevention and Combating Sexual Miss-use of Children and Pedophilia;
- Annual Programmes Adopted for Child Protection;
- Strategy for intensifying of the social inclusion of Roma in the system of social protection 2012-2014.
ANNEX 4: Description of Institutional Framework

First efforts to establish national gender machinery was done in January 1997, which resulted with adoption of the Decision on forming the Unit for Promotion of Gender Equality within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP).

The amendments to the Rulebook of systematization in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) made in March 2007, has established the Department of Equal Opportunities. The Department of Equal Opportunities functions with 2 units: the Unit on gender equality and the Unit on protection and prevention from discrimination.

The Department of Equal Opportunities actively promotes a clear policy on gender equality, establishment of mechanisms on equal opportunities for women and men and elimination of any form of discrimination based on sex, ethnicity, age, persons with disabilities, as well as double discrimination against individuals caused upon the unequal treatment in the field of labour, social protection and social insurance.

Entering into force of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, in accordance of its Articles 11, 13, 16 and 17, there have been appointed coordinators for equal opportunities for women and men in 13 ministries within the Government with the role to monitor and advocate for gender mainstreaming. The coordinators are public senior servants, mostly involved in the area of human rights and among other tasks have an obligation to follow the activities in terms of respecting the equal opportunities for women and man and to inform the Department for Equal Opportunities for specific proposals and solutions in the field of gender equality.

The Assembly in September 2006 has established a Commission for equal opportunities for women and man with the task to monitor the legislation proposed by the Government in terms of gender equality.

In order to incorporate the concept of equal opportunities and gender equality in local policies, advancing the status of women at the local level and implementation of the national strategic objectives on gender equality and the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Man as of February 2014, has formed and are functional 78 Commissions on Equal Opportunities for women and man. The committee members are man and women councillors in the municipal councils of different political parties. The main task of the committees is to positively influence upon the decision-making processes and policies at local level in terms of gender equality, in order to overcome the specific problems faced by women and man at the local level. Few local commissions have prepared local action plans defining specific objectives and needs of each individual municipality.

According to the Law on Equal Opportunities, as of February 2014, there have been appointed 78 persons as coordinators for equal opportunities for women and man who have the status of civil servants and they have an obligations to continuously strive to promote gender equality, establishment of equal opportunities for women and man at the local level and to cooperate with other municipal committees on equal opportunities for women and man.
Pursuant to Article 23 of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Man, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) has appointed a person as civil servant designated to conduct a procedure for determining the unequal treatment of women and man.

**Equal Opportunities Department**

With reference to issues relating to the equality of genders and equal opportunities, the Equal Opportunities Department was established within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Two divisions operate within the foregoing Department:
- Gender Equality Unit;
- Unit for prevention of and protection from any kind of discrimination.

Activities and tasks are performed within the Department which pertain to the promotion of the status of women and establishment of equal opportunities for man and women in accordance with the Law on Equal Opportunities for Man and Women, the standards and the principles of the international conventions and documents which the Beneficiary Country has ratified or signed, and which refer to equal opportunities and protection from discrimination (gender, ethincal, age, physically or mentally challenged persons, as well as double discrimination of individuals due to unequal treatment) in the sphere of labour, social protection and social insurance; coordination is performed of all activities in the sphere of gender equality, equal opportunities for man and women and protection from discrimination (gender, ethincal, age, sexual orientation, physically or mentally challenged persons, as well as double discrimination of individuals due to unequal treatment) in the sphere of labour, social protection and social insurance at a national, local and international level; initiating and proposing the adoption, modification and amendment of the legal regulations in terms of gender equality, equal opportunities and protection from discrimination (gender, ethincal, age, sexual orientation, physically or mentally challenged persons, as well as double discrimination of individuals due to unequal treatment) in the sphere of labour, social protection and social insurance; provision of legal assistance to persons discriminated upon gender-related basis, and cooperation with all the institutions competent in this sphere.

**Commission for Protection against Discrimination**

Pursuant to the Article 16, of the Law on prevention and protection against discrimination (Official Journal of RM, No. 50 as of 13.04.2010), the Commission for Protection against Discrimination is autonomous and independent body that works in accordance with the competences determined within the law. The assets for operation of the Commission are provided from the National Budget. The Commission may provide assets from other sources. Pursuant to the Article 17 of the same law, the Commission is consisted of seven members who are appointed by the National Assembly with a five-year mandate.

Pursuant to Article 24 of this law, the competences of the Commission are:
1. Acts upon complaints, gives opinion and recommendations for the concrete cases of discrimination;
2. Gives information to the submitter of the complaint for his/her rights and opportunities for starting a court or other procedure for protection;
3. Starts initiative for starting a procedure in front the competent bodies because of done infringements to this law;
4. Submits annual report to the Assembly;
5. Informs the public for the cases of discrimination and undertakes activities for promotion and education of equality, human rights and non-discrimination;
6. Monitors the implementation of this Law, initiates amendments of regulations because of implementation and improvement of the protection against discrimination;
7. Establishes cooperation with the bodies authorised for establishing equality and protection of the human rights in the local self-government;
8. Gives recommendations to the state bodies for undertaking measures for administration of equality;
9. Gives opinions upon draft laws significant for the protection against discrimination;
10. Collects statistical and other data, forms data bases, conducts studies, researches and trainings in relation to the discrimination;
11. Cooperates with adequate national bodies of other countries, as well as with international organisations in the area of protection against discrimination and
12. Adopts the rules of procedure and other acts for internal organisation of the work.

**Inter-sector Consultative and Advisory Group of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men**

According the paragraph 10 of Article 10 of the Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, the Government has established an Inter-sector Consultative and Advisory Group of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men composed of representatives from the relevant ministries (civil servants), representatives from the civil society organization, employers’ organizations and experts. According the paragraph 7 in same article 10 of the Law, it is stated that the Government determines the number of members and composition of this group.

Therefore, pursuant to the Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, the Government has made a Decision for establishment of an Inter-sector Consultative and Advisory Group of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men (Ref. No.41-8487/1 as of 24.11.2012) and a Decision for nomination of members in the Inter-sector Consultative and Advisory Group of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men (Ref. No.41-8487/2 as of 24.11.2012) (Official Journal of the RM, No.150/2012). The Inter-sector Consultative and Advisory Group is composed of 26 members. This group has adopted a Rulebook for its work; as well it has adopted a Working Programme for 2014.

According the Article 3 of the Decision for establishment of an Inter-sector Consultative and Advisory Group of Equal Opportunities of Women and Men, its tasks are to:
- Promote the concept of mainstreaming the gender aspects in general policies in all public institutions;
- Monitor the integration of the concept in sector policies in cooperation with social partners and institutions in different areas;
- Monitor the progress of harmonization of national legislation with the EU legislation and standards on gender-related issues;
- Participate in preparation and provide guidelines in the preparatory process of the Gender Equality Strategy;
- Monitor based on periodical reports submitted by the institutions;
- Report to the Government on annual basis in relation to its work.