



LABOUR MARKET AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP OVERCOMING GENDER STEREOTYPES

A TRANSNATIONAL ACTION PLAN
PROMOTED BY BUSINESS WOMEN AND
GENDER EQUALITY ORGANISATIONS

**COUNTRY REPORT
FOR CZECH. REPUBLIC**



This project is co-financed by the European Commission, Directorate General for Employment,
Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities





Labour Market and Entrepreneurship Overcoming Gender Stereotypes

A Transnational action plan promoted
by Gender Equality and Businesswomen organisations

This project has been carried out by AFAEMME
Association of Organisations of Mediterranean
Businesswomen (Barcelona, Spain) in association with:

KARAT Coalition (Central and Eastern Europe)
WAD - Women's Alliance for Development (Bulgaria)
SEGE - Greek Association of Women Entrepreneurs
(Greece)

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Context

A key priority for the European Commission is to create equality for men and women throughout Europe. AFAEMME, Association of Organizations of Mediterranean Business Women (Barcelona) was awarded by the European Commission, in partnership with important organizations in Central and Eastern Europe - KARAT Coalition, WAD - Women's Alliance for Development (Bulgaria) and SEGE, Greek association of Women Entrepreneurs (Greece) to implement a unique project "*Labour Market And Entrepreneurship Overcoming Gender Stereotypes*".

The main objectives of this project are:

- to improve the understanding of the issues underlying gender equality and equal opportunities in the fields of employment and entrepreneurship in this area of Europe
- to strengthen gender equality and businesswomen organizations and their active partnership in influencing decision makers on social and economic policy
- and to improve the general economic status of women.

The project includes the elaboration of 12 national reports from Cyprus, Malta, Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. Which report the obstacles experienced by women in business and assess the impact of EU Employment Strategy on the situation of women in the new ten EU Members states and two candidate countries with case studies of a typical businesswoman in those countries relating to gender stereotypes in the labour market and entrepreneurship, with a final global report containing concrete policy recommendations addressed to European Commission and national governments. The publication is launched at a large scale European conference in Brussels in February 2006.

This report contains the national study from Czech. Republic



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Executive summary

Before the EU accession process started, the Czech law already guaranteed equality for all citizens under its Constitution. However, the Czech Constitution does not explicitly provide specific regulations on gender equality. The main challenge, faced by the Czech Republic, is the achievement of equality between women and men, which is and will continue to be realised by drafting policies and establishing mechanisms for their implementation. At the beginning of 1998, three institutions for implementing the equality of women and men were created. The first was the Department for the Equality of Men and Women, which ensured the establishment of an inter-sector commission for the equal opportunities of men and women. This Department produced the "Priorities and Procedures of the Government When Enforcing the Equality of Men and Women," a proposal for the governmental resolution. The second was one of the eight departments in the Section for Equal Opportunities of Men and Women, the second most important institution in this field which is authorised to monitor and evaluate the observance of human rights, and. The third one was a subcommittee of the Deputies' Committee for Social Affairs and Healthcare, which was established at the initiative of the female deputies. This committee deals with the issues of family and equal opportunities. The Labour Code, which entered into force on 1 January 2001, explicitly requires that employers provide women and men with equality in the work place, specifically with regard to: wages, vocational training and promotion prospects. Even though, the reality is not so rose. We are still far from gender equality in the employment area. The situation of women on the labour market has remained the same for many years. The Czech labour market is characterised by a high employment rate among women, but on the other hand women are often confronted with discrimination from employers, and it is

usually women who take on worst paid jobs in the worst conditions. With regard to unemployment, the situation is similar to that in most other countries in transition; there are more women unemployed than men. The difference between female and male unemployment rates has been growing since the beginning of the nineties and the situation has not improved since 1997. There are large differences in the age group 20-35. It is apparent, that women of this age are most affected by the discrimination, because they either have small children or the employers expect them to be mothers automatically.

Despite this, more than 90% of women work full time. This situation has not changed during the last fifty years. As we can see, part-time work among women is not widespread at all. In comparison with other EU countries, this percentage is very low. In addition to a strong cultural reason, the main reason for the very low figure is that in the Czech Republic, two full-time incomes are necessary for families to maintain a good standard of living. The second reason is the lack of part-time work available, due to employers being burdened with the same administrative costs for full and part-time employees. Women entrepreneurs constitute quite a significant share of all entrepreneurs as compared to other EU25 countries. Approximately 28% of all Czech entrepreneurs are women. It is important to note, however, that the estimate of the "intra-preneurs", i.e. self-employers without any employees working for only one company is especially high among women. This is the hidden discrimination of women, who are "employed" without any "social security" from the side of their "employer". As in many other EU new members countries, Czech Republic still has some progress to make regarding gender equality issues, and has to ensure real equality between women and men in all areas.

Legal framework

Before the EU accession process started, the Czech law already guaranteed equality between men and women. Gender equality is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Czech Republic. Article 3 of Chapter one, incorporates the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms adopted on 16

December 1992 as a component of constitutional order. This Charter, among other important labour rights, guarantees in its title four, to "citizens" economic, social and cultural rights, for example, the right of women to increased safety and health at work ¹.

1 - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/III/observatory/profiles/cz.htm>

Under Article 3 of the Czech's Constitution the following is stated:

> Everyone is guaranteed the enjoyment of her fundamental rights and basic freedoms without regard to gender, race, color of skin, language, faith and religion, political or other conviction, national or social origin, membership in a national or ethnic minority, property, birth, or other status.

> Everybody has the right freely to choose his/her nationality. It is prohibited to influence this choice in any way, just as is any form of pressure aimed at suppressing a person's national identity.

> Nobody may be caused detriment to his/her rights merely for asserting her fundamental rights and basic freedoms" ² .

Moreover, Article 10 of the Constitution provides that "promulgated international agreements, the ratification of which has been approved by the Parliament and which are binding on the Czech Republic, shall constitute a part of the legal order; should an international agreement make provision contrary to a law, the international agreement shall be applied" .

In 1998, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was in charge of acting for gender equality. To fulfil this principle, the Czech Government adopted the National Action plan. This programme document was called "Government priorities and procedures in promoting equality between men and women". It is directed to seven important areas in which barriers that keep women from achieving a status comparable to that of men still exist. This National Action Plan is not unalterable. Every year the Government analyses the performance of the programme and updates the measures as needed.

The seven major areas reflected in the Plan are 4:

1. Governmental policy;
2. Legal guarantees of gender equality and awareness of such legal provisions;

3. Guarantees of equal opportunities for women and men in the economic sphere;

4. Equal social status of women and men caring for children and family members in need;

5. Women's reproductive function and biological differences;

6. Prevention of violence against women;

7. To monitor and evaluate equal opportunities for women and men in practice.

Under area number 4, dealing with the problem of the equal social status of women and men with respect to caring for children or dependent members of families, there is a strategy being implemented step by step through a newly introduced parental leave in an amendment to the Labour Code. The aim of the amendment is to create equal conditions for fathers and mothers in order they may use their leave for taking care of a child in his/her early childhood. Through a partial amendment to the Labour Code within the framework of the above mentioned amendment the status of employed mothers and fathers of small children was equalized in the following areas: sending out persons for business trips, the transfer of employees, the termination of employment and the possible arrangement of working hours ⁵.

Enhanced employers' possibilities of introducing flexible forms of employment which meet better the adequate requirements of employees caring for children on the arrangement of working hours have been taken into account in the preparation of the new Labour Code, which had started in 2001.

And finally, a subcommittee of the Deputies' Committee for Social Affairs and Healthcare, which was established at the initiative of the female deputies. This committee deals with the issues of family and equal opportunities ⁶.

The Labour Code, which entered into force on 1 January 2001, explicitly requires that employers provide women and men with equality in the work place, specifically with regard to

2 - http://test.concourt.cz/angl_verzel/index_angl.html

3 - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/III/observatory/profiles/cz.htm>

4 - Open Society Institute 2002, *Monitoring the EU accession process: "Equal Opportunities for Women, and Men in the Czech Republic"*, p.13. <http://www.eonet.ro/pdf/Czech.pdf>

5 - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/III/observatory/profiles/cz.htm>

6 - Open Society Institute 2002, *Monitoring the EU accession process: "Equal Opportunities for Women, and Men in the Czech Republic"*, p.13. <http://www.eonet.ro/pdf/Czech.pdf>, ; ?ermáková, Marie et al. (2000) *Relations and Changes of Gender Differences in the Czech Society in the 1990s*, Prague: Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences.

wages, vocational training and promotion prospects. Furthermore, it guarantees that employees cannot be discriminated against on the basis of their sex, marital or family status or family obligations. Also, a definition of sexual harassment (see below) has been introduced and the guidelines on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination and sexual harassment have been adopted. In this context, employers are now prohibited from exhibiting both open and direct as well as indirect discrimination.

Although women activists hoped that these legal changes would prevent all discriminatory practices in the labour market, unfortunately, this has not happened. Up until the first half of 2003, no known court cases have been brought by women or men to challenge discrimination in the work place and only two cases of sexual harassment have been brought before the court. "This leads us to the conclusion that either women are not aware of the new legal possibilities or that they lack the financial resources to initiate a legal process"⁷. The other aspect may be the lack of public and media support during the two previous cases of sexual harassment. Since then, women have preferred to litigate their complaints privately with employers and trade unions.

With the Resolution No 931 of 22 September 2003, the government approved the draft of the general principle for an act guaranteeing equal treatment and protection against discrimination and tasked the Prime Minister for Research and Development, Human Rights, and Human Resources, in cooperation with the Government Commissioner for Human Rights, with the preparation and submission to the government of the bill by 31 October 2004.

The bill implements a number of Community directives, especially Council Directive No 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions, Council Directive No 2000/43/EC, implementing the principle of equal treatment among persons irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin, and Council Directive No 2000/78/EC, establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation⁸.

Since 2001 and thanks to the EU accession negotiations, the national labour law has been strengthened with many provisions concerning equal treatment. The legal framework for

equality and non-discrimination in employment relationships, Act No.65/1965 of the Labour Code, meets almost all formal requirements of the EU Directives. Since 1998 the Czech Republic has established several bodies to deal with issues of equality and discrimination against women⁹.

Labour regulation: Equal treatment

The obligation to ensure equal treatment and protection against discrimination relates to areas in the scope of Article 3 of Directive 2000/43/EC. The law regulates the right to equal treatment in matters of the right to employment and access to employment, access to an occupation, entrepreneurship and other self-employed activities, in matters of working and other dependant activities, including remuneration and membership of trade unions. The law will also lay down the claims which victims of discrimination may seek.

"In accordance with section 1 (3) of the Labour Code the employer has the obligation to ensure equal treatment to all his or her employees in respect of remuneration for work, including other benefits of monetary value, professional training and opportunity for advancement at work. The equal treatment principle relates to all employees' labour relations and to the whole duration of these relations from the start until the termination of the employment relationship. Taking into account the last sentence of section 28 of the Labour Code, negotiations preceding the conclusion of the contract of employment are also covered"¹⁰.

Equal treatment of all employees means, above all, that no direct or indirect discrimination will exist against employees in the areas of working conditions, remuneration for work, professional training and other areas referred to above.

However, there is a special protection of women workers related to pregnancy and maternity, including performance of jobs prohibited to women for health reasons. Equal treatment in matters of working conditions, training and advancement is thus not applied in this case. This also includes more favourable treatment provided to members of the underrepresented sex to enable them to seek employment in certain categories of jobs, or prevention and/or compensation of handicaps concerning promotion in employment. These are the reasons why the Labour Code provides for a basic framework for the definition of cases that are not regarded as discriminatory on the basis of sex. Provisions concerning equal access to employ-

7 - <http://www.svu2000.org/women/wide1.doc>

8 - http://www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/933/plan_2004-6.pdf

9 - http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/articles_publications/publications/equal_20050502/czechrep.pdf

10 - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/III/observatory/profiles/cz.htm>

ment, including prohibition of announcements and advertisements of job vacancies in contradiction with this principle can also be found in Act No. 1/1991 Coll. on employment, as amended. If an employee feels that he or she was victim of unfair and unequal treatment, redress can be sought by means of a complaint submitted to the competent labour office, or court of law. The law concerning judicial proceedings provides that the employer has the burden of proof in all cases dealing with violation of equality of treatment in respect of sex.

As regards training, the employer must apply the equal opportunity and treatment principles to participation of all employees in training courses and studies during employment, the objective of which is acquisition of enhanced or updated skills required for the performance of the job.

The principle of equal treatment must also be observed in respect of opportunities for promotion in employment or possible transfer to more attractive jobs. When deciding about criteria and their application concerning the placement of employees within the organizational structure of the company and for the promotion to higher grades (to various management levels), the employer is required to proceed in such a way that the equal treatment principle is not violated.

Prohibition of discrimination ¹¹

Act No. 46/2004 Coll., effective since 1 March 2004, implementing European Directives 76/207/EEC regarding equal treatment and 2000/78/EC on the prohibition of discrimination into Czech law, introduces new definitions of direct and indirect discrimination.

We speak about direct discrimination when we are in a situation where a discriminating action directly leads to preference or exclusion of persons and results in denying or impairing their equal opportunities and treatment in labour relations. Indirect discrimination means that a specific measure, practice or applied criterion is essentially neutral (i.e. action taken by the employer is, as such, in conformity with law). However, the implication of such measure, practice or action causes total or partial exclusion or preference of certain groups of workers (women and men, young and old, mainstream population and ethnical minorities, etc.).

In accordance with section 1, para.4 of the Labour Code, discrimination against employees is prohibited on the basis of race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, language, creed and religion, political or other opinion, membership and activity in political parties and movements, membership in trade union

organizations and other associations, nationality, ethnic or social origin, property, family extraction, state of health, age, marital or family status, and family responsibilities. Is also prohibited any action taken by an employer, the consequence of which is indirect discrimination against certain groups of employees. Discrimination is understood to mean any distinction, exclusion or preference based on the discrimination criteria referred to above. The enumeration of discrimination criteria in the Labour Code is based on the enumeration of those criteria in article 3 of the Charter of fundamental rights and freedoms.

The prohibition of discrimination against employees based on the above criteria provided by the Labour Code is the result of the application of the principle of equal treatment. Where an employer commits an act of discrimination, an employee who feels hurt by this action may seek redress, as the case may be, in accordance with section 7 (4) to (6) of the Labour Code, or in accordance with sections 11 to 13 of the Labour Code. This does not preclude the possibility to seek protection in accordance with other provisions of the Labour Code.

In accordance with section 22 of the Labour Code, trade unions may supervise the respect of labour legislation, and thus of the principle of equality of treatment. Equal treatment is also a distinctive feature in collective bargaining and formulation of individual provisions of collective agreements.

The principle of equal treatment of all employees and prohibition of discrimination does not exclude different treatment of individuals or groups of employees in cases, where objective grounds for such treatment exist, (for example inherent requirements of the job). In addition, these grounds are based on social consensus, cultural, historical or moral development, grounds generally regarded as appropriate and necessary. In most cases, they are defined in various provisions of the Labour Code (provisions concerning protection of adolescents and women, special protection offered to pregnant women and mothers of newly born children, breastfeeding women). Furthermore, appropriate temporary measures designed to redress existing inequalities are generally not classified as being discriminatory in nature (positive discrimination). Such measures designed to provide support to certain groups of workers are referred to in the employment act.

The principle of equality does not mean however that one cannot take into account specific requirements related to the nature of the job. Enforcing these requirements is legitimate and does not amount to discrimination. Thus making a dis-

11 - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/III/observatory/profiles/cz.htm>

inction, exclusion or preference based on required knowledge and skills for a given job cannot be regarded as a prohibited discrimination. However, when defining requirements for the performance of a job the employer must carefully examine whether valid grounds exist, for example, for hiring only a man or a woman worker to fill a given vacancy.

Sexual harassment ¹²

Act No. 46/2004 Coll., effective since 1 March 2004, amends the definition of sexual harassment introduced in the Labour Code in 2000. It stipulates that any act of a sexual character that the employee perceives as unwelcome, unsuitable or insulting, and which might lead to the creation of a hostile humiliating or unpleasant work environment, is an offence. In accordance with section 7 (2) of the Labour Code, it is prohibited to misuse performance of rights and obligations ensuing from employment relationship to the detriment of other employees and to humiliation of human dignity. This category includes abusive or offensive behaviour including comments

and proposals of a sexual nature at work, or behaviour of this nature can be perceived by the victim as a criterion for decisions concerning future working conditions. The basic drawing line to decide whether a given behaviour is or is not sexual harassment is thus whether the person concerned perceives such behaviour as unwanted and offensive. Sexual harassment must be distinguished from mutual informal friendliness. Sexual harassment can include physical, verbal and non-verbal manifestations.

Family Act

The equality in the family is ensured by the Family Act according to which the marriage "shall be based on strong emotional ties between the man and the women, the status of both of whom in the marriage shall be equal" and "shall be entered into by a voluntary decision made by the man and the women..." This act also stipulate that "the man and the women shall both have the same rights and duties in the marriage" ¹³.

Institutional framework

At the beginning of 1998, three institutions for implementing the equality of women and men were created. The first was the Department for the Equality of Men and Women, which ensured the establishment of an inter-sector commission for the equal opportunities of men and women. This Department produced the "Priorities and Procedures of the Government When Enforcing the Equality of Men and Women," a proposal for the governmental resolution.

The second was one of the eight departments in the Section for Equal Opportunities of Men and Women, the second most important institution in this field which is authorized to monitor and evaluate the observance of human rights, and in particular the fulfilment of international obligations. In addition, the Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men is a permanent Government advisory body in the area of creating equal opportunities for women and men. This Council was established by Government Resolution No.1033 of October 10, 2001.

The Council for Equal Opportunities draws up proposals for the promotion and achievement of equal opportunities for women and men. In particular the Council:

- a) discusses and recommends to the Government basic policies for implementing equal opportunities for women and men;
- b) coordinates main directions of ministerial policies in the area of equal opportunities for women and men;
- c) sets a range of priorities for ministerial projects supporting the implementation of equal opportunities for women and men;
- d) identifies current problems in society related to equal opportunities for women and men in the public; and
- e) evaluates the efficiency of the implementation of the principle of equality between women and men ¹⁴.

12 - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/III/observatory/profiles/cz.htm>

13 - <http://www.mpsv.cz/scripts/clanek.asp?lg=2&id=620#II>

14 - http://www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/933/plan_2004-6.pdf

The Council sessions are held when necessary, but at least three times a year. Information about the Council's activities is available for the public on the Government's web pages and the web pages Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The Council does not have the power to investigate citizen complaints on the violation of the principle of the equality for women and men. Organisational, administrative and expert tasks and the releasing and updating of information about the Council's activities is arranged by the Council secretariat, which is part of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs organisational structure.

Trade Unions

Czech Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (CMKOS) (<http://www.cmkos.cz/eng/>)

The CMKOS defines himself as a "voluntary, open, independent, democratic confederation". CMKOS' aims are to protect wage, working and living conditions and rights of employees. It is an important social partner in tripartite negotiations in the framework of the Council of Economic and Social Agreement of the Czech Republic. CMKOS is working in different regions of the Czech Republic through Regional Councils of Trade Unions (RROS) and Regional Offices for Legal Assistance (RPP). CMKOS is a member of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and of the Trade Union Advisory Committee of the OECD (TUAC).

The Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (ĚMKOS) has a specialised Committee for Equality, which is a permanent advisory body of the Council of ĚMKOS. Its role is to support the Trade Unions united in ĚMKOS in all activities and actions promoting equal opportunities, including those for women and men. The representative of this Committee is also a member of the Governmental Council for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men.

Employers' federation

Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic: www.spcr.cz
SPCR is a voluntary organisation uniting employers and entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic in the field of industry and transportation. SPCR defines himself as "fully independent of the government, political parties and trade unions". He is member of IOE (International Organisation of Employers), UNICE (Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederation of Europe), and of BIAC (Business and Industry Advisory

Committee to OECD). Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic: www.hkcr.cz. The Economic Chamber of the Czech Republic is an association of large, medium and small businesses in regional chambers and trade associations. The Chamber's main task is to support the entrepreneurial climate and the development of trade and it focuses most of its products and services on this task. A comprehensive range of professional services in all areas relating to trade, industry and commerce is available to all representatives of the business community in the Czech Republic.

The Association of Business and Professional Women of the Czech Republic ***<http://www.apmcr.cz>***

The Association of Business and Professional Women of the Czech Republic is a non-profit, non-governmental and voluntary organisation of women within the scope of support for development of small and medium sized women enterprises in the Czech Republic together with professional development of business women and women in managerial positions.

Its main aim is to bring together business and professional women and women managers in order to:

- > improve business and management activities
- > create consulting and information networks
- > develop women's business potential through education
- > evolve enterprising ethics and management skills

The Czech Union of Women is an important organisation participating in many projects focused on equal opportunities. The representative of this association is a member of the Council of Government for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men. Women represent half of the population but their political participation is not equal at all. In 2001, there were only two women in the government and in the previous government no women were included at all. The real political participation of women remains low. On examining the following statistics, we note the participation of women has been steadily increasing, but this may be explained by a simple coincidence. For example, the increase in the participation of women in the Chamber of Deputies in the election in June 2002 came about because the Communist Party received 18% of the votes. They traditionally reserve about 25% of the eligible places on the candidate lists for women and this is what led to the increase in the number of women elected¹⁵.

15 - <http://www.svu2000.org/women/wide1.doc>

WOMEN IN REPRESENTATIVE BODIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC BASED ON ELECTION RESULTS 1994-2002								
Percentage of elected women by election term								
Body	Nov 94	June 96	Nov 96	June 98	Nov 98	Nov 00	June 02	Nov 02
Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament		15		16			17	
Senate of the Czech Parliament (elected in one third of the seats/total % of women in the Senate)*			11/11		11/11	15/12		11/12
Regional Parliaments (except the Capital Prague)						14		
Municipal, town, district and local authorities	18				21			23

***There are 81 seats in the Senate, and every 2 years there are elections for 27 of these, i.e. one third of them**

Source: Czech Statistical Office, re-written by the author

Issues for women employees

The situation of women on the labour market has remained the same for many years. While high employment among women is a characteristic feature of the Czech labour market, on the other hand women are often confronted with discrimination from employers, and it is usually wo-

men who take on worse paid job in worst conditions. In the following table some of the basic labour market indicators are shown, it is clear that women have less chances of being employed and higher chances of being unemployed. Part time work, although small is also used by more women than men ¹⁶.

16 - http://www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/933/plan_2004-6.pdf

BASIC ECONOMIC ACTIVITY INDICATORS, 2003

	Unit of measure	Women	Men
Employment rate of people aged 15	%	50.8	68.7
Number of employed people	000s	2,271	2,861
Unemployment rate	%	9.9	6.1
Part-time work	%	9.5	2.9

Source: Employment and unemployment in the Czech Republic as measured by the Labour Force Sample Survey, annual average 2003

BASIC ECONOMIC ACTIVITY INDICATORS, 2004

	Unit of measure	Women	Men
Employment rate of people aged 15	%	X	X
Number of employed people	000s	2,247	201,2
Unemployment rate	%	10.6	7.3
Part-time work	%	X	X

Source: Employment and unemployment in the Czech Republic as measured by the Labour Force Sample Survey, annual average 2003

The activity rate of Czech women, as shown in the tables below, is high compared to EU standards. Furthermore, the Czech Republic surpasses the EU as far as activity rates are concerned, but the trend is clearly a diminishing one. In 2003, the economic activity of women older than 15 years was

almost 51% (and around 69% of men). The smallest difference (2.8 percentage points) is in the youngest age group, the largest differences lie in the groups between 20 to 34 years (in the group 25 to 29 years it is 30.3 points).

ACTIVITY RATE - employed persons aged 15-64 as a share of the (total, female, male) population on the same age group

		2000	2001	2002	2003
Total	EU 25	68.6	68.8	69	69.3
	Czech.Rep	71.3	70.9	70.7	70.2
	EU 25	59.8	60.2	60.7	61.2
Females	Czech.Rep	63.6	63.2	62.8	62.5
Males	EU 25	77.4	77.4	77.4	77.4
	Czech.Rep	79.1	78.7	78.7	78

Source: Eurostat (LFS)

The analysis by age of this variable confirms that women return back to work again after 35 and in the age group 45 to 49 their economic activity rate is the highest (91.5% which is only 2.9 points less than men). Most women end their economic activity in the age 55 to 59 (difference compare to men is 41.7 points). Men stop being active after they reach 60; but after 65, men are still three times more active than women. With respect to employment, the table below shows that the Czech Republic also surpasses the EU average and that, unfortunately, the trend is also a diminishing one. Again, the analysis by age shows that the smallest, and diminishing, difference is also in the youngest age group (15-24). Whereas in 1998 here were almost 12 percentage points difference between women and men, by 2003 this difference was only around 5 percentage points mainly due to men's rates falling much quicker than women's. This is usually the result of a combination of two elements in most developed countries which is

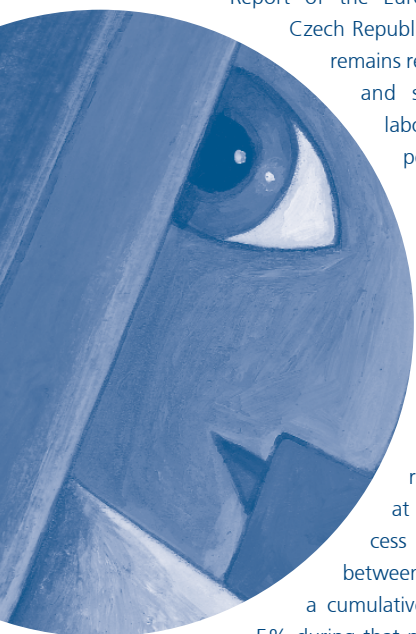
relatively higher youth unemployment (which in the Czech republic is rather low) and increasing educational levels which keep younger people at school for a longer period of time (decreasing both activity and employment). In the case of the 25 to 54 age group is much higher but has remained relatively stable until 2002 at around 15.5 percentage points with a slight increase in 2003 to 16 points difference. In this case it is women's rates which have fallen faster than men's, albeit in a very small amount. In the older age group, reflecting the analysis of the activity rates above, the largest differences are found (around 30 percentage points between 1998 and 2003), but these are actually increasing. This can be due to a cohort effect (more people of this age who are employed) that can change if restructuring of the economy gets under way and would affect mostly men. The large difference is also explained by the fact that women have lower retirement ages.

EMPLOYMENT RATE - employed persons aged 15-64 as a share of the (total, female, male) population on the same age group					
		2000	2001	2002	2003
Total	EU 25	64.4	62.8	62.8	62.9
	Czech.Rep.	65	65	65.4	64.7
Females	EU 25	53.6	54.3	54.7	55.1
	Czech.Rep.	59.9	56.9	57	56.3
Males	EU 25	71.3	71.3	71	70.8
	Czech.Rep.	73.2	73.2	73.9	73.1

Source: Eurostat (LFS)

EMPLOYMENT RATE OF OLDER WORKERS - Employed persons aged 55-64 as a share of the (total, female, male) population of the same age group					
		2000	2001	2002	2003
Total	EU 25	36.6	37.4	38.7	40.2
	Czech.Rep.	36.3	37.1	40.8	42.3
Females	EU 25	26.9	27.8	29.1	30.8
	Czech.Rep.	22.4	23.1	25.9	28.4
Males	EU 25	46.9	47.7	48.8	50.3
	Czech.Rep.	51.7	52.6	57.2	57.5

Source: Eurostat (LFS)



Concerning unemployment and according to the last Regular Report of the European Commission before the Czech Republic joined the EU, the recent level remains relatively high due to restructuring and structural mismatches on the labour market. The 1990 to 1996 period was characterized by a low unemployment level and was succeeded by one of a stagnating economy and dramatically rising unemployment; it has more than doubled, from 4.3% in 1997 to 8.8% in 2000. The unemployment rate reflects the impact of the 1997 crisis and subsequent economic restructuring which only started at a late stage in the transition process ¹⁷. Employment fell each year between 1997 and 2000, amounting to a cumulative loss of employment of nearly 5% during that period. Only in 2001 was there a

small rise in employment of 0.3% registered. The difference between female and male unemployment rates has been growing since the beginning of the nineties and the situation has not improved since 1997. Generally speaking, the unemployment of women has been always larger than that of men during the 90's and the difference is increasing in the 21st century.

But if we look at the numbers broken down by age in the table below, we see enormous differences in the age group 20-35. It is apparent, that women of this age are most affected by the discrimination, because they either have small children or the employers expect them to be mothers. If we take into account that in the Czech Republic women can stay at home for four years and continue to receive parental benefit from the state (approximately 83 Euros per month) then we can understand why they are unlikely to register as unemployed as they would lose their right to receive this benefit. Therefore, it can be assumed that the true level of women's unemployment in this age group is much higher than the officially recorded. These issues also highlight the serious discrimination faced by women ¹⁸.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE - Unemployed persons as a share of the (total, females, males) active population

		2000	2001	2002	2003
Total	EU 25	8.7	8.5	8.9	9.1
	Czech.Rep	8.7	8	7.3	7.8
	EU 25	10.2	9.7	9.8	10
Females	Czech.Rep	10.4	9.7	9	9.9
Males	EU 25	7.7	7.6	8.1	8.3
	Czech.Rep	7.3	6.7	6	6.2

17 - <http://www.newr.bham.ac.uk/pdfs/Social/Czech%20report.pdf>

18 - <http://www.svu2000.org/women/wide1.doc>

AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN PERCENTAGE AND BY AGE GROUPS BETWEEN 20-34 YEARS								
Age group	20 - 24		25 - 29		30 - 34		Average	
Year	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
1995	6.2	5.2	8.5	3.4	5.5	2.6	4.8	3.4
1996	5.6	4.9	7.7	3.3	5.7	2.2	4.7	3.3
1997	7.3	5.7	9.4	3.7	7.5	3.2	5.9	3.9
1998	10.9	7.8	11.6	5	9.8	4	8.2	5
1999	14.7	12.8	14.4	6.6	13.3	6.2	10.5	7.3
2000	13.8	14.5	13.7	6.5	13.6	6	10.6	7.3
2001	13.8	13.7	13	6.6	12.1	5.1	9.9	6.8

Source: Czech Statistical Office

Finally, as far as long-term unemployment is concerned, the rate for men is lower than the EU average, but higher for

women. In any case, as the table below shows, the rate has been steadily falling.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE - Unemployed persons as a share of the (total, females, males) active population					
		2000	2001	2002	2003
Total	EU 25	4	3.8	3.9	4
	Czech.Rep	4.2	4.1	3.7	3.8
	EU 25	4.7	4.5	4.5	4.5
Females	Czech.Rep	5.1	5.1	4.5	5
Males	EU 25	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.6
	Czech.Rep	3.4	3.4	3	2.9

Source: Eurostat (LSFS)

Conditions of work/quality of employment

Women's involvement in full-time/part-time contracts employment

In the Czech Republic, more than 90% of women work full time. This situation has not changed during the last fifty years ¹⁹. As we can see, part-time work among women is not widespread at all. In comparison with other EU countries, this percentage is very low. In 2002, 33.5% of women worked part-time in the EU15, compared with 29.8% in the countries now forming the EU25.

Besides the strong cultural drive for working full time, the main reason of that really low figure is that in the Czech Republic, two full-times incomes are necessary for families to maintain a good standard of living.

The second reason is the lack of part-time work ²⁰. Women working full time work five hours less than men in one week; and women working part-time work 2,5 hours per week more than part-time working men. (Czech Statistical Office, 2003).

Access to training

The level of education of the Czech population is relatively high. The Czech system involves:

- > a general access to education, which is cost-free at every level, including universities.
- > an equal access to education regardless of sex, nationality, religious affiliation etc.
- > the elementary education (nine years) is mandatory.
- > a secondary education system in which girls account for 52% of students.
- > A multi-level university education system, where girls represent 44% of students ²¹.

In the tables below, although not containing the same information, give an idea of what the latest evolution of the educational attainment of the working population in the Czech Republic has been since 1988.

ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY THE HIGHEST EDUCATION ACHIEVED (%)						
Education level	1988		1994		1998	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Elementary education	15.9	31.2	8.7	16.3	6.8	12.3
Vocational training	49	30.6	47.4	31.3	46.8	31.2
Secondary professional education			5.7	6.1	5.6	5.8
Vocational training + secondary school - leaving exam	23.3	30.9	1.9	0.8	2.4	1.2
Complete professional secondary education			21.8	31.1	23.5	34.1
Complete general secondary education			2.5	5.9	2.6	5.7
University education	11.8	7.2	12	8.6	11.9	9.3

Source: Microcensus 1989, Selective Labour Surveys (Czech Bureau of Statistics)

19 - <http://www.svu2000.org/women/wide1.doc>

20 - <http://www.eurofound.eu.int/lewco/2004/11/CZ0411NU01.htm>

PUPILS, STUDENTS AND GRADUATES IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 2002/2003		
	% of women	% of men
Nursery schools	48	52
Specials schools	39	61
Primary schools	49	51
Secondary vocational	35	65
Secondary technical and grammar schools	58	42
Higher professional	67	33
University	48	52
Graduates higher professional	73	27
Graduate university bachelor degree	57	43
Graduate university master degree	51	49
Graduate university PhD degree	34	66

Source: Czech Statistical Office, 2003

Gender segregation can be seen already at secondary schools: more girls are enrolled in secondary technical schools, grammar schools and mainly higher professional schools; more boys are so in secondary vocational schools and special schools, mainly those connected to institutions for young criminals. Girls as university students are slightly more among those who leave after bachelor degree; only one third of women are among PhD students.

When looking at the share of females among pupils on the 1st and 2nd level of education and among students on the 3rd educational level in the EU member and candidate countries, the Czech Republic has apparently very bad results: the number of women in 3rd level students per 1000 population is 17,1 (among the member states, the lowest number is in Germany - 22,9 and highest in Finland - 43; among the accession countries, just Cyprus with 14,1 is behind the Czech Republic) (Czech Statistical Office, 2001) ²².

Pay-gap

The wage gap between men and women has been growing steadily since the beginning of 90's and it continues even after

1996, when the EU accession process started; the growth of the gap only stopped in 2000 but since then the situation has not improved much. Women earn less than men regardless of the same level of education. The average wage of women in 2002 reached just 74% of men's. The smallest difference has been found by employees with secondary education with GCSE (76%), the largest by women and men with secondary education without GCSE and with university education (both 71%) (Czech Statistical Office, 2003) ²³.

Much larger differences can be seen if we divide the wages according to age: the smallest gender differences are until the age of 30. After that, women earn only 69% of men's salary. Whilst after the age of 40 the gap closes and women reach 76% of males, after 60 the differences are largest - women earn only 66% of men's wages.

The main cause is that women in the age 60-64 are already being retired and if they continue work, they usually only earn little additional money next to their pension (part-time basis). On the other hand, men in this age group still work full time when they continue after pension age. (Czech Statistical Office, 2003) ²⁴.

22 - <http://www.newr.bham.ac.uk/pdfs/Social/Czech%20report.pdf>

23 - <http://www.newr.bham.ac.uk/pdfs/Social/Czech%20report.pdf>

24 - <http://www.newr.bham.ac.uk/pdfs/Social/Czech%20report.pdf>

PROPORTION OF WOMEN'S AVERAGE WAGE COMPARED TO MEN (IN %) ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

Education	1996	1998	1999	2000	2001
Basic	76.3	74.6	74.7	74.3	74.9
Secondary	69.9	71.6	68.4	70.1	70.8
Secondary with GCSE	78.1	72.9	72.7	72.7	74.5
University	74.6	65.2	62.5	63.4	65.4

Source: Czech Statistical Office website, VIII/2003

As we can see in this table, the categories of employment according to education and occupational status: the higher the education and post, the larger the gender wage gap (Czech Statistical Office, 2002). The average wage level of women in 2003 accounted for only 74.6% of that of men. The highest differences were discovered among women who had a university education (65.3%).

Impact of tax and benefit system on women employees

Czech legislation has implemented only one Directive about social security schemes (79/7/EEC). This means that only a statutory social security schemes exist in the Czech Republic. There is no direct discrimination on the basis of sex contained in the laws regulating social security. Moreover, the legislation does not distinguish between male or female participants of the scheme concerning either access to the schemes or calculation of contributions. However, a significant example of discrimination is the lower amount of pensions payments that women receive compared with men. The retirement age has been rising since 1996, so that as of 1 January 2007 it will be 62 years of age for men and 57 to 61 years of age for women, depending on the number of children she has. The planned increase will hit the female population the hardest, since they

will work four years longer than at present ²⁵. The basic principle of the whole system of state social support is a principle of participation. This means that the Government subsidises families in certain social situations, which they are unable to resolve by their own force or through their own resources. The state social support is aimed at strengthening incomes of families in predefined situations in which the incomes of families relatively decrease or their costs increase.

The unified concept of benefits is based on the minimum living standard (MLS) stipulated by law from which individual benefits and grants are calculated. The minimum living standard is defined according to household size (number of the household members) and age profile of the household members. The amount of benefits based on the minimum living standard is kept at a real level related to the development of the cost living. If the minimum living standard changes, all benefits (allowances and grants) are recalculated without the necessity to file a new application.

Some individual types of state social support are provided with and some without testing the applicant's incomes. Currently, the group of income-tested benefits includes child allowances, maintenance benefits (support of families of those in compulsory military services), housing allowance and transportation benefit (to assist children commuting to school, partially tested), the group of non-income tested benefits includes paren-

25 - <http://www.eurofound.eu.int/ewco/2004/11/CZ0411NU01.htm>

tal benefits, charitable benefits, foster care benefits, birth grant, funeral benefit. About 66 percent of these benefits are subject to income testing ²⁶.

Pensions

Also, the Czech Republic was the first of the transition countries to introduce, in 1994, a system of voluntary supplementary pension insurance (by Law No. 42/1994 Coll.). In consequence to this manner of reform, the basic pension architec-

ture distinguished the Czech Republic from most EU countries, where the standard structure is considered to be the three-pillar system (basic mandatory system, occupational system - usually funds, and individual insurance).

The occupational component was lacking altogether in the Czech pension system at the time. Supplementary pension insurance with an added contribution from the state was considered more an individual form of pension provision ²⁷.

PENSION SYSTEM ARRANGEMENTS IN USE				
Criterion	Variant 1	Variant 2	Variant 3	Variant 4
State guarantee	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Individual scope	All gainfully employed persons	All gainfully employed persons	All gainfully employed persons	Groups of individuals according to occupation
Participation of individuals	Obligatory	Obligatory	Obligatory	Voluntary
Financing	Pay-as-you-go	Pay-as-you-go	Capital	Capital
Relation between contributions and benefits	Defined benefit	Defined contribution	Defined contribution	Defined contribution and benefit
Benefit structure	Fixed amount or tied to past earnings and period of insurance	Tied to the amount of contributions paid and age of retirement	Tied to amount of contributions paid	Tied to amount of contributions paid
Solidarity	Among generations and income-related	Among generations and income-related	None	None
Tax advantage	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Administration of the system	State or public	State or public	Private	Private

26 - Open Society Institute 2002, "Monitoring the EU accession process: Equal Opportunities for Women, and Men in the Czech Republic", p.8.
<http://www.eonet.ro/pdf/Czech.pdf>

27 - <http://www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/2629/2629.doc>

Reconciliation of work and family life

The network of state and public pre-school care facilities and facilities providing care of children in their free time meets partly the demand on this kind of services. The care of small children ensured from their birth to the age of 3 years is provided in nurseries, which are included in the system of health care facilities.

The care of needy members of families of employed citizens and families in difficult situations is ensured through the following ²⁸ :

1) social care services aimed at removing barriers which have resulted from social disadvantages due to a handicap and at equalizing opportunities of persons for their equal participation in economic and social life. These services are provided mostly for a long-term period.

2) social intervention services aimed at easing or eliminating temporarily unfavourable social situation which has resulted from a personal or relationship crisis or from the way of life. These services are provided temporarily as usual.

3) services of a community character, contributing to an improved quality of life. At present, developed are the types of services enabling members of a family who take care of a child in his/her early childhood not to lose competitive position in the labour market.

Social services provided by the state have mostly an institutional character. Other services are ensured by district offices, communities and municipal magistrates as well as by the non-governmental sector.

The aim of social services is to support families in their difficult situations and to strengthen their own competence. They should be considered as a reaction to an unsatisfactory situation of families, not as a direct prevention of the existing burden.

In 1999 a Republic's Committee for Children, Youth and Family was established, which as an advisory body of the Government has formulated priorities in public services for endangered families, their future and the future of their children.

Parents taking care of children have also financial support provided through the social security system (benefits of the pension system and the sickness insurance system, social care benefits) and through the state support system.

Maternity protection and maternity leave

Women, are entitled, but not obliged to take maternity leave in the Czech Republic. The Labour Code (section 157) provides that maternity leave connected with childbirth may be no less than 14 weeks and till 28, and may be completed or interrupted within six weeks of the birth. The right to maternity leave is stipulated in the provisions of the Labour Code, and the financial contributions during maternity leave are stipulated by Act No. 88 of 1968 on the Extension of Maternity Leave, Benefits in Maternity and Contributions to Children from the Health Security and by the Act on State Social Security ²⁹ .

The employees concerned have a right to maternity benefit ("cash assistance in maternity") in accordance with the sickness insurance legislation. The financial contributions in pregnancy and maternity offered by health security include the compensatory contribution in pregnancy and maternity, and financial assistance in maternity. The compensatory contribution in pregnancy is granted in accordance with Section 153(3) of the Labour Code ³⁰. Working conditions of pregnant women and employees who have given birth are regulated by chapter VII of the Labour Code. In accordance with section 161 of the Labour Code, the employer is obliged to grant a breastfeeding mother, in addition to breaks for meals and rest, additional daily breaks for breastfeeding ³¹.

Chapter V dealing with health and safety at work contains special obligations on employers regarding protection of pregnant women and mothers up to the ninth month after having given birth, or who are breastfeeding (section 133 (1) a) and (2)), such as the obligation to provide them with rest areas at the workplace.

Parental leave

The provisions concerning parental leave were included in the Labour Code in accordance with EC directive No. 96/34/EEC concerning parental leave. In accordance with this directive, parental leave is an individual and non-transferable right of each parent, which enables the child to be cared for by his or

²⁸ - <http://www.mpsv.cz/files/clanky/2629/2629.doc>

²⁹ - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/III/observatory/profiles/cz.htm>

³⁰ - Open Society Institute 2002, "Monitoring the EU accession process: Equal Opportunities for Women, and Men in the Czech Republic", p.28. <http://www.eonet.ro/pdf/Czech.pdf>

³¹ - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/III/observatory/profiles/cz.htm>

her mother, father, or alternately both parents, on the grounds of birth or of adoption of a child (sections 159 and 160 of the Labour Code). Parental leave is granted to a mother after termination of her maternal leave, or to a father after the birth of the child, until the time when the child reaches three years of age. During parental leave, parental benefit is provided only to one of the two parents, in accordance with Act No. 117/1995 on state social support, as amended.

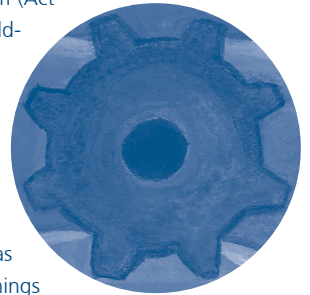
Other allowances for parents and children

> Childbirth allowance

Until October 1, 1995, this used to be a one-time only sickness insurance contribution and was called "support upon the birth of a child." As of October 1, 1995, this contribution was inser-

ted into the state social support system (Act No. 117/1995) and is now called a "child-birth allowance".

The purpose it serves has not changed. It is to contribute to a partial coverage of costs arising in connection with the birth of a child. In the nineties, it has increased several times as a result of the growing prices of things required for new born children. The contribution is a one-time only payment to the mother who gave birth to the child, to the father if the mother died, or an individual who takes care of the child up to one year of age ³².



Stereotype of working women

Over the last 50 years the families in the Czech Republic were used to a double income because one income was not sufficient to cover all family expenses. This trend prevails today and majority of women go to work to provide finances for their families. Many times they are reluctant to take higher positions, because they have to fulfill their role as mothers first.

Usually women receive smaller salaries than men, and they get less promotion in their positions at work than men. Smaller average salaries are evident in the industries, where female employees prevail, as health care nurses, school teachers, textile workers etc.

There are two main groups of working women who face discrimination on labour market:

> Problems of young women and mothers:

Young women have difficulties in obtaining a job because employers expect them to become mothers and take maternity leave. The employers are afraid to hire young mothers, because they expect that their children will be sick and the young mothers will not work regularly or that they will give birth to another child and will take maternity leave again.

Some young women after graduation from schools cannot get any employment because they lack working experience. Some

of them are forced to take inferior jobs as a temporary solution, which in turn can become permanent. In the 90's a lot of young people postponed their decision to have children. The pre-school nurseries and kindergarten run by state or municipalities were closed due to the lack of children.

Now the trend has changed and there are more new-born children in last years. However, the number of nursery schools and kindergarten diminished in last 5 - 7 years and those, which still operate, are completely full and only admit a limited number of children. Many young women, who are lucky to get the job have the alternative to pay babysitters approximately half of their income for caring for their children during working hours. Some of them who have more luck can rely on grandmothers, if they are available. A limited number of nurseries and pre-school kindergartens will become more and more crucial in the next few years.

> Discrimination with employment of older women

If older women 45+ become unemployed, they face difficulties in finding a new job. They are regarded to be "old", "non-perspective" and/or "overqualified". The unemployment rate of older women is high especially in the regions where traditional industries, e.g. textile or shoe making industry are collapsing. The new coming industries, if there are any, prefer to hire young people, preferably men with limited experience and those who are willing to work for a lower salary.

32 - <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/ifpdial/III/observatory/profiles/cz.htm>

Issues for women entrepreneurs

The first table shows us the number of women and men entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic. The second one, is much more precise, and describes in which areas entrepreneurs (men and women) are more active. As we can see, approximately 28% of all the Czech entrepreneurs are women who run their own enterprises. As in many other countries, women are mostly active in commerce and services. Women mostly begin to be active in the business sphere at the age of 30 to 35³³. The research of Anna Putnová, which was conducted at the Faculty of Business and Management, indicates a "huge potential and preparedness of Czech women to take advantage of the job opportunities. Czech women are

'still in the doorway' but a huge potential is forming among them. The fact that, in the past, Czech women managed to do all the household chores while being full-time employed, which required maximum workload, should be a good enough reason for expecting them to be equally efficient in the business sphere"³⁴. The next table shows the percentage of women who became successful in top management positions. Anna Putnová used the CZECH TOP 100 as a list of companies, in the Registry of Companies valid as of 1st January 2002, went through the statutory bodies of all these 100 companies to see how many women were on the boards of directors and supervisory boards and set up the following Top 100 statistic.

NUMBER OF WOMEN AND MEN ENTREPRENEURS	
Men	498.100
Women	192.400
Total	690.500

Source: "Czech women's entrepreneurship", by Anna Putnová, http://ejbo.jyu.fi/index.cgi?page=articles/0801_5



33 - "Czech women's entrepreneurship", by Anna Putnová, http://ejbo.jyu.fi/index.cgi?page=articles/0801_5

34 - See footnote 33

Labour Market and Entrepreneurship overcoming Gender Stereotypes
A Transnational Action Plan Promoted by Business Women
and Gender Equality Organisations

		Men entrepreneurs				Women entrepreneurs			
		without employees		with employees		without employees		with employees	
Industry Branch	Total 000's CZK	000's CZK	%	000's CZK	%	000's CZK	%	000's CZK	%
TOTAL including	690.5	346.2	100	151.9	100	145.2	100	47.2	100
Commerce, repairs of cars and consumer goods	167.7	66.2	19.1	43.2	28.4	41	28.2	17.4	36
Construction	136.9	103.5	29.9	28.6	18.8	2.7	1.9	2	4.1
Real estate, real estate rentals, services for businesses, research and development	90.5	37.7	10.9	13.8	9.1	34.5	23.8	4.4	9.4
Processing industry	80.6	39.0	11.3	23.8	15.7	15.4	10.6	2.4	5.1
Other public, social, and personal services	48.2	17.8	5.1	3.2	2.1	24.6	17	2.6	5.5
Transport, storage, postal facilities and telecommunications	41.3	26.1	7.5	11.1	7.3	2.7	1.9	1.4	3
Restaurants, accommodation	32.5	9.4	2.7	11.3	7.5	5	3.4	6.7	14
Agriculture	27.9	15.7	4.5	6.1	4	5	3.5	1	2.2
Health and veterinary services, social activities	23.9	4.2	1.2	6.5	4.3	5.3	3.7	7.9	16

Source: "Czech women's entrepreneurship", by Anna Putnová, http://ejbo.jyu.fi/index.cgi?page=articles/0801_5

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN IN THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND SUPERVISORY BOARDS			
Field	Number of position	Number of women	%
Activities related to financial market	27	0	0
Mining	65	5	7.69
Transport	33	4	12.12
Wood-processing, paper and printing industries	40	2	5
Electrical engineering and electronics	17	1	5.88
Power engineering	91	10	10.99
Metallurgy and metal processing	51	6	11.76
Chemical, pharmaceutical and rubber industries	52	2	3.85
Information technologies and systems	12	4	33.33
Commerce	29	2	6.90
Other processing industries	19	6	31.58
Finance and insurance	70	3	4.29
Food processing and tobacco industries	25	3	12
Glass, ceramics and building materials	41	3	7.32
Services	24	2	8.33
Construction	22	1	4.55
Mechanical engineering	53	2	30.77
Telecommunications and postal services	36	0	0
Textile, clothing, and leather manufacture	41	6	14.63
Agriculture and wood exploitation	34	5	14.71

Source: "Czech women's entrepreneurship", by Anna Putnová, http://ejbo.jyu.fi/index.cgi?page=articles/0801_5

As Anna Putnová put it: "Self-fulfilment of women through their careers changes not only the life of women and their families, but also the life of society. The degree of women's involvement in business is a barometer of the democratic life of the country. The first generation of the Czech women entrepreneurs can offer their maximum commitment. Their activities are admirable and significant in that they create and positively influence the so-called role. They demonstrate that this can be done".

> *An example of promotion of Czech women entrepreneurs: APM Prague*³⁵

APM CR as a voluntary and independent association of business and professional women provides consultancy and expertise for their members and for all women in the Czech Republic, interested in improving their professional and business skills. Members of APM CR may receive advice and valuable information in the Financial Club of APM CR, targeted at business women and women managers in accounting and taxation sectors. The Club for New Business Women or in the Club of APM CR provide services for all women who are considering to start a new business, as an information service, management advice, marketing analysis etc. A Consultation Cabinet of APM CR, which provides individual information in fields of taxation, accounting and commercial law is also available from 1997. APM CR gives its members the possibility to consult their particular problems with experts in the above mentioned professional areas. Equally important is the cooperation with ministries, embassies, local administration offices, private companies, associations etc. APM CR works closely together with the Union Manager Foundation in the election of candidates for the competition "Manager of the Year" and with the Agency for Business

Development by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce on a consulting programme. Within the latter programme, professional qualified advisors of APM CR may provide subsidized consulting to entrepreneurs in form of training or guidelines. The regional Clubs of APM CR are in Liberec, Slany, Most, Vysoke Myto, and in other regions.

> *An example of promotion of Czech women entrepreneurs: BIC Plzen*

The region of Pilsen (Plzen) is situated in the South-West part of Czech Republic, next to the borders with Germany. Pilsen is the administrative, economic and industrial centre. BIC Plzen was founded in 1992 by the own city with the aim of supporting the creation and development of SMEs, providing advisory and information services for enterprises, promoting trans-national cooperations in innovating and technology. As the weight of women's entrepreneurship is quite new, BIC Plzen's task is to promote women entrepreneurship in general, to disseminate foreign experience and success stories, to provide advisory services for potential women entrepreneurs.

> *Self - employed women*

The next table shows the development of self-employment in the Czech Republic. Although in both cases of women and men the number and their respective weights in the total male and female workforce has increased, the gap has increased (from around 6 points to 9) in the period that the table shows an has increased to more than 10 points by The estimate of the number of "intrapreneurs", i.e. self-employed persons without any employees working for only one company is especially high among women. This is the hidden discrimination of women, who are "employed" without any "social security" from the side of their "employers".

STATUS OF SELF-EMPLOYED PERSONS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC					
	1993	1995	1997	1998	1999
Total					
000s	634.4	687.6	687.4	727.1	739.9
% of total workforce	13.2	13.9	14.1	15.1	15.8
Men					
000s	425.6	470.8	482.4	509.9	521.3
% of total men	15.9	17.2	17.6	18.8	19.7
Women					
000s	208.7	216.9	205.1	217.2	218.6
% of total women	9.8	9.9	9.5	10.4	10.5

Source: The Czech Statistical Office (2000)

35 - www.apmcr.cz

36 - Taken from: Open Society Institute 2002, *NMonitoring the EU accession process: "Equal Opportunities for Women, and Men in the Czech Republic"*

Stereotype of women entrepreneurs

Women entrepreneurs usually have difficulties in starting their business because they are expected to take care of their families first. If they start a business, they usually cannot expect full support for their business activities from their partners and families. They have to manage both roles, mother and businesswoman. Many times women decide to create their own business, because they lose their job, or their employers refuse to employ them at the same position and salary as they had had before they left for maternity leave, or because they cannot find any job with the position they expect according to their qualification and skills. Businesswomen have difficulties in getting a starting capital (loans), as the banks do not trust their business plans. Many

women prefer to borrow the initial investment capital from their families. Women are more reluctant to expect a quick and efficient business; their motivation is to create a stable business and to earn money to cover family expenses. The situation for small and medium enterprises is getting worse despite the proclamation of "support" from the government. More and more administrative and financial regulations are imposed on the entrepreneurs in last years which further complicate the way of doing business in the Czech Republic. Business women are not entitled to get any social payments for caring for sick children as other employees do, despite the same premiums to social security system being paid by them and the other employees.

Case studies

Case Study 1: Discrimination of older women employees

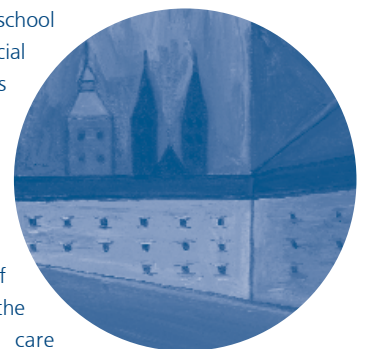
Jana is a 51 year old woman, a high school educated accountant, divorced with two 25 and 19 year old daughters from Northern Bohemia. The older daughter has finished her studies and lives and works in Prague. The younger daughter wants to continue her studies at the university level. Five months ago Jana lost her job because her employer - a private company - reduced its activities and laid her off, along with other 15 employees (all women). Since then she cannot find a new job, because she is "overqualified" and "old" and the unemployment rate in her region is high. As she says, all positions she applied for were open only for young people, preferably men with limited experience and willing to work for a lower salary. Jana is frustrated living on social benefits, which are not sufficient to cover her monthly expenses and her daughter's studies. She is looking for an opportunity to change the field of her expertise and get training in another profession. She is considering in becoming self-employed. **Source: interview conducted by the APM in Northern Bohemia in May 2005.**

Case study 2: Problems for young mothers

Marta is a 32 year old women, with a university degree, single, with one 4 year old child. She was working in the private sec-

tor as a financial adviser. She stopped for 3 years maternity leave and wanted to continue her professional work, but she could not find any kindergarten for her son. As the number of nursery schools and kindergartens diminished over the last 5 - 7 years, those, which still operate are completely full and admit only a limited number of children. Marta was lucky to return to her previous job, but now she has to pay a childminder approximately half of her income to ensure care of her son during working hours.

A limited number of nurseries and pre-school kindergartens will become a more crucial problem in the next few years. In the 90's a lot of young people postponed their decision to have children and pre-school nurseries and kindergarten run by the state or municipalities were closed due to the lack of children. Now there is a new "baby boom" and the number of new-born children is raising again in the Czech Republic. But, the pre-school care system is limited and young mothers have to decide, if they stay at home with their children or continue their professional careers and pay the child minders. **Source: interview conducted by the APM in Prague in June 2005.**



Case study 3: Problems for young business women

Anna is 35 years old, with high education, married, an owner of a small shop with 2 employees. She has a 7 years old son. She took 4 years of maternity leave. Then, because her previous employer refused to employ her at the previous position and with the previous salary, she decided to open her own shop. She had to borrow the investment capital from her family, because banks were not willing to give her, as a young mother, a loan. If her son is ill and needs special home care, she has to hire a babysitter. As a self-employed person, she is not entitled to get any social payments for caring for sick children or elder family members, as her female employees are. In the meantime she, as an employer pays the same premiums for social security for her and her employees.

Source:
interview conducted by the APM in Prague in June 2005.

