



EUROMEDITERRANEAN CHARTER FOR EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN IN LOCAL LIFE



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INTRODUCTION

The “Euro-Mediterranean Charter for equality between women and men in local life” is a tool that highlights a fundamental Human right. It provides the local authorities with some ethical guidelines and it is a tool for local people a tool in order to ensure the equal rights of women and men are respected.

The “Euro-Mediterranean Charter for equality of women and men in local life” intends to extend the good practice established by the European Charter for Equality drawn up in 2006 by the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR). Likewise, it is addressed to all local governments in Europe and the Mediterranean who undertake to guarantee the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities in their territories.

As the governments closest to the people, local and regional authorities can have a role in combatting and eradicating inequalities and to build a more just society. Additionally, their unique skills and cooperation with all local actors who make up civil society, including associations and NGOs, allow them to be most effective in this work.

The Signatories of the present Charter shall undertake to ensure full respect of one of the basic rights of human beings,

- ◆ by putting into practice the recommendations of the Charter through concrete actions
- ◆ by giving citizens a tool to support them in promoting their rights
- ◆ by dialoguing and cooperating with representatives of civil society

Charter drawn up in the framework of the MedEquality project – "Promotion of policies for equality in Euro-Med Region" – ENPI/2013/311-826, funded by EC, with NSA/LA Programme of DG DEVCO. This Charter is promoted by COPPEM (Standing Committee Partnership Regional and Local Authorities), FACM (Algerian Forum for Citizenship and Modernity), LCA (Association of Local Governments of Malta), APLA (Association of Palestinian Local Authorities) FEMP (Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces).

PREAMBLE

COPPEM -Standing Committee for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Regional and Local Authorities

and its partners:

FACM – Algerian Forum for Citizenship and Modernity

LCA – Association of Local Governments of Malta

APLA – Association of Palestinian Local Authorities

FEMP – Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces

with the backing of:

CEMR – Council of European Municipalities and Regions

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

Bizerte Municipality (Tunisia)

and

Istanbul Aydin University (Turkey)

with the contribution of:

National Association for women and youth promotion – Algeria

national network of listening to women victims of violence – Algeria

Association of Algerian Women – Algeria

Centre of listening to women victims of violence – Algeria

Amusaw Association – Algeria
 Municipality of kouba Alger – Algeria
 Municipality of Sidi m'hamed Alger – Algeria
 National Committee for preventing and fighting illegal migration – Egypt
 Arab Women Organization - Egypt
 National Council of Women of Egypt – Egypt
 Governorate of Alexandria – Egypt
 Women coalition feminist – Egypt
 Comitato Unico di Garanzia della Regione Siciliana (Unified Guarantee Committee for gender equality of Sicilian Region) – Italy
 Department of Extra-Regional Affairs of the Sicilian Region – Italy
 Gender Equality Counselor of Region of Molise – Italy
 Gender Equality Counselor Metropolitan City of Brescia – Italy
 Gender Equality Counselor Province of Caltanissetta – Italy
 Gender Equality Counselor Metropolitan City of Venice - Italy
 ALDA - European Association of Local Democracy - France
 Beit Sahour Municipality – Palestine
 Al Doha Municipality – Palestine
 Al Ubediyeh Municipality – Palestine
 Teqoa Municipality – Palestine
 ALkass village council – Palestine
 Sunflower association for Human and Environment protection – Palestine
 Union of Persons with Disabilities – Palestine
 Friends of the disabled – Palestine
 AL Haq for human rights – Palestine
 TAM (Women Media and development) – Palestine
 Women affair center – Palestine – Palestine
 PWWSD – Palestinian Working Woman Society for development – Palestine
 Alternative information center – Palestine
 Defense for children international – Palestine
 Palestinian union of workers – Palestine
 Andalusian Center – Palestine
 Governorship of Istanbul – Turkey
 Municipality of Sultanbeyli – Turkey
 Municipality of Gaziosmanpaşa – Turkey
 Municipality of Küçükçekmece – Turkey
 Sarıyer Municipality – Turkey
 HAZAR EĞİTİM KÜLTÜR ve DAYANIŞMA DERNEĞİ – Turkey
 UFRAD – Turkey
 İnovasyon Projesi – Turkey
 Young Democrats Association – Turkey
 İstanbul Chamber of Commerce – Turkey
 Genç Demokratlar Derneği – Turkey
 Kemerburgaz University – Turkey
 Dolphin Network – Turkey
 Solarbaba Co. – Turkey

Recalling the international legal framework of human rights of the United Nations;

taking into account Articles 2 and 3 of the European Union Treaty and Article 8 on the Functioning of the European Union and stressing the EU initiatives on equal opportunities between women and men;

taking into account the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of November 2000;

with thanks to the members of COPPEM and participants in the conference "Towards a Euro-Mediterranean Charter for equality between women and men in local life" held in Istanbul in November 2011;

recalling the priorities of the Non State Actors/Local Authorities programme, also named programme for Civil Society and Local Authorities in the framework of which this project is being implemented;

in line with the 5th Sustainable Development Goal on "Gender Equality" identified by the UN as one of the 17 goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all in the framework of the 2030 Agenda;

considering that in the Euro-Mediterranean area local and regional governments play, and must play, a crucial role in the implementation of the right to equality, in particular of women and men, in all areas of their competencies;

considering that international cooperation and exchanges produce positive synergies, contribute to development and boosts local results;

deploring the continuing discrepancy between the de jure recognition of the right to equality and its real application;

considering the results of the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life drawn up with the effort and the coordination of CEMR in 2006 and from which this text is clearly inspired;

having seen the high and worrisome number of murders and the abuses on women that still occur in the European and Mediterranean towns and municipalities, which proves equality has not been achieved yet;

given the very serious situation that women are facing in countries at war and emphasizing the scope of the UN Resolution "Women, Peace and Security" (2000);

taking inspiration for our action in particular from the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1979; the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child of 1989; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the United Nations of 1995 and on Beijing +5 (2000); the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights; the Council Recommendation of December 1996 on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process; the Worldwide Declaration of the International Union of Local Authorities of 1998 on women in local government; the Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa of 2003; the Council of Europe European agreement on the prevention and fighting of gender violence at home in 2011;

have drafted this **Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Equality between Women and Men in Local Life**, and invite local and regional governments from Europe and Mediterranean Countries to sign and implement this Charter

PART I – PRINCIPLES

The Signatories of this "Charter for Equality between Women and Men in Local Life" recognise the following as fundamental principles of good governance:

- 1. Equality of women and men constitutes a fundamental right**
- 2. The contributions of women are crucial to local development**
- 3. Government institutions, local and regional authorities included, have to promote social and political conditions and policies aimed at acquiring both de jure and de facto equality**

4. To ensure equality of women and men, multiple discrimination and disadvantage must be addressed
5. The balanced participation of women and men in decision-making is a pre-requisite of a democratic society
6. The elimination of gender stereotypes is fundamental to achieving equality of women and men
7. women play an important role in conflict resolution, in peacemaking processes and in reconstruction in conflicts
8. A cross-cutting gender perspective must be applied to each administrative and political activity

PART II – COMMON MATTERS

RESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

ART. 1 - Rights to Equality

The Signatory recognises equality of women and men as a fundamental prerequisite of democracy and the contributions that are made by the knowledge, know-how, practices and creativity of women to local life.

GENERAL FRAMEWORK

ART. 2 - General Commitment

1. The Signatory will, in relation to each of its areas of competence, recognise, respect and promote the relevant rights and principles of equality of women and men, and combat disadvantage and discrimination related to gender, especially in light of the recrudescence of the attacks to the identity and to the physical and moral integrity of women, their freedom of opinion, their religious beliefs and their way of dressing
2. The commitments set out in this Charter apply to a Signatory only where they, or relevant aspects of them, fall within its legal powers.

ART. 3 - Gender Assessment

1. The Signatory will undertake, in relation to each of its areas of competence, gender assessments, as set out in this Article.
2. To this end, the Signatory - in accordance with its own priorities, resources and timescales - undertakes to draw up a programme for implementation of its gender assessment.
3. Gender assessments shall include, as relevant, the following steps:
 - ◆ Reviewing existing policies, procedures and practices, in order to assess whether they reveal any discrimination, whether they are based on gender stereotypes, and whether they adequately take into account the specific needs of women and men
 - ◆ Identifying priorities and, as appropriate, targets in order to improve access to resources and women's involvement in democratic life.
 - ◆ Taking into account the needs or interests of those experiencing multiple discrimination or disadvantage.

ART. 4 - Multiple Discrimination or Disadvantage

1. Recalling point 4 of the Principles inspiring the present Charter, the Signatory recognises that discrimination is prohibited.
2. The Signatory further recognises that despite this prohibition, many women and men suffer from multiple discrimination or disadvantage, which has a direct impact on their ability to exercise the other rights set out and referred to in this Charter.
3. The Signatory commits itself, across the range of its competences, to take all reasonable actions to

combat the effects of multiple discrimination or disadvantage including those affecting migrant women and men accommodated in refugee camps or welcomed in local communities.

ART. 5 - The Cross-Cutting Dimension of Equality and Gender Budgeting

The Signatory is aware that the issue of gender equality is cross-cutting and has implication for all practices and political decisions taken in public life. Consequently, equality must be taken into account in all areas of intervention that concern the Signatory and its competences, for example through the use of “gender mainstreaming” and “gender budgeting”.

THE POLITICAL ROLE

ART. 6 - Political Representation

1. The Signatory recognises the equal rights of women and men to vote, to be a candidate for and to hold elected office, to participate in the formulation and implementation of policy, to hold public office and to perform all public functions at all levels of government.

2. The Signatory recognises the principle of balanced representation in all elected and public decision-making bodies.

3. The Signatory commits itself to take all reasonable measures in support of the above rights and principles, including:

- ◆ To encourage women's participation in associations, including women living in rural and marginalised areas;
- ◆ To encourage women's commitment through training activities in politics and management of territory, including women living in rural and marginalised areas;
- ◆ To encourage women to register to vote, to exercise their individual voting rights and stand as a candidate for public office;
- ◆ To encourage political parties and groups to adopt and implement the principle of balanced representation of women and men.

To this end, to regulate their own procedures and standards of conduct, so that potential candidates and elected representatives are not discouraged by stereotypical forms of behaviour and language, or by harassment; to adopt measures to enable elected representatives to reconcile their private, work and public life.

4. The Signatory commits itself to promote and apply the principle of balanced representation to its own decision-making and consultative bodies, and in its appointments to external bodies.

5. It furthermore commits itself to ensure that no public or political post to which it appoints or elects a representative is, in principle or in practice, restricted to or seen as the normal role of one gender - due to stereotypical attitudes.

ART. 7 - Participation in Political and Civic Life

1. The Signatory recognises that the equal right of women and men to participate in the conduct of public affairs is a fundamental democratic principle.

2. In relation to the different forms of public participation in its own affairs, the Signatory commits itself to ensure that women and men are able to participate equally in practice.

3. The Signatory undertakes to promote the active participation in its political and civic life of women and men from all sections and groups of the community.

ART. 8 - The Public Commitment to Equality

1. The Signatory shall, as the democratic representative for its community, make a formal public commitment to the principle of equality of women and men in local life

2. The Signatory will use its democratic mandate to encourage other political and public institutions and civil society organisations, to take actions to ensure the right to equality of women and men in practice.

3. The signatory commits itself to make consultation where opinions expressed by those whose views are otherwise least likely to be heard will be taken into consideration.

ART. 9 - Cooperation with Partners and Civil Society

1. The Signatory undertakes to work with all partners in the public and private sector, and in particular with civil society partners, to promote and mainstream greater equality in all aspects of life in its

territory.

2. The Signatory will consult and involve the institutions of civil society for important aspects related to equality.

ART. 10 - Countering Stereotypes

1. The Signatory commits itself to counter and, prevent prejudices, practices and use of language and images which are based on the idea of the superiority or inferiority of either of the sexes, or on stereotyped roles for women and men.

2. To this end, the Signatory will ensure that its own public and internal communications are fully in accordance with this commitment, and that they promote positive gender images and make the diversity of the local population visible (in brochures, posters, etc..).

3. The Signatory will also help its staff, through training and other means, to identify and eliminate stereotypical attitudes and behaviour.

4. The Signatory will conduct activities and campaigns to raise awareness of the detrimental role played by gender stereotypes to the achievement of equality of women and men.

HEALTH

ART. 11 Right to Health

1. The Signatory recognises the right of everyone to the enjoyment of a high standard of physical and mental health, and affirms that access to good quality health care, medical treatment and preventative health care for women and men, including minorities as well as migrants, is essential for the realisation of this right.

2. The Signatory recognises that in securing equal opportunities for women and men to enjoy good health and medical services their different health needs must be taken into account. The Signatory further recognises that these needs arise not only from biological differences, but also from differences in living and working conditions.

3. The Signatory commits itself to take all reasonable actions, within the range of its responsibilities, to:

- ◆ ensure access to hospital facilities for rural and peripheral areas
- ◆ ensure activities aimed at the promotion of the population's health
- ◆ ensure that those involved in the delivery of social care recognise the ways in which gender affects those services, and take into account women's and men's different experience of that care
- ◆ ensure that girls and boys, women and men – including those living in rural and peripheral areas - have access to accurate information on health issues, hygiene and nutrition
- ◆ ensure low cost or free health services and promotion activities for diagnosis and prevention of diseases related to gender
- ◆ ensure the presence of cultural mediators in local health-care services for migrants in order to facilitate the patient's active participation and awareness

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

ART. 12 - Honour Killing

1. The Signatory recognises the “honour killing” as a crime against human beings and consequently proper measures will be taken to discourage the cultural propagation of this practice also by means of education programmes and awareness-raising campaign and initiatives.

2. In order to fight such a practice the Signatory will put pressure on the central government, individually or in consortium with other local institutions, so to push national institutions to promulgate law for the penalization of the Honour Killing and/or for increasing prison sentences in case of Honour Killing.

ART. 13 - Coercion, Assault and Battery, Stalking and Sexual Abuse

1. The Signatory recognises that gender-based violence constitutes a violation of fundamental human rights and is an affront to dignity and to the physical and emotional integrity of human beings.

2. The Signatory recognises rape and other forms of violence that might not necessarily involve forced penetration as a violation of an individual's human rights; this includes physical, emotional and

psychological violence, including stalking, that compromises a person's psychological and physical integrity through coercion or threats. Additionally, these abuses are considered equally serious when occurring in marriage or family context.

3. The Signatory condemns and recognises abuses and violence against women and girls prisoners in detention as equally serious.

4. The Signatory therefore commits itself to establish and strengthen policies and actions against gender-based abuse by:

- ◆ Providing or assisting specific support structures for victims
- ◆ Providing proper protection for women and children who are at imminent risk of being abused, including detained women and girls and also providing specific shelters;
- ◆ Providing public information, in each of the mainly used local languages, on the assistance available in the area;
- ◆ Ensuring that professional staff (police and health workers), have training in identifying and supporting victims of gender-based violence;
- ◆ Promoting awareness-raising campaigns and educational programmes aimed at potential and actual victims, perpetrators and at the de-stigmatisation of victims.

ART. 14 – Female Genital Mutilation

1. The Signatory recognises that Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a crime against women as well as a violation of the integrity and dignity of girls and women.

2. Under the Section 1 of this Article, the Signatory is committed, as part of its political and institutional power, to:

- ◆ Providing awareness campaigns against FGM;
- ◆ Including training in schools;
- ◆ Providing aid also for victims of FGM (as explained in article 18) in shelters for women victims of violence (as in explained in article 14) and a safe place to report abuse;
- ◆ Putting pressure on the central government, individually or in consortium, so as to push it to enact legal framework for the penalisation and prohibition of FGM.

ART. 15 - Forced Marriage

1. The Signatory acknowledges early, forced and child marriage as an unequivocal violation of human freedom as it is also referred in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Signatory also acknowledges forced marriage as a physical and psychological violence.

2. The Signatory undertakes to establish and strengthen policies and actions against this practice that is damaging to the human dignity of girls and women including:

- ◆ Promoting awareness-raising campaigns and education programmes
- ◆ Promoting aid for women who are subject to pressure from families inside aid structures for victims of abuse

ART. 16 - Trafficking in Human Beings

1. The Signatory recognises that the crime of trafficking in human beings, is a violation of fundamental human rights; it is an offense to the physical and moral human dignity.

2. The Signatory agrees to implement and strengthen policies and actions in order to prevent trafficking as follows:

- ◆ By means of information and awareness-raising campaigns to destigmatise the victims and to impose sanctions on buyers;
- ◆ By means of training programmes addressed to intervention teams (such as the police) to identify and provide appropriate assistance to victims;
- ◆ By means of taking steps to reduce and remove the demand.
- ◆ By means of appropriate measures for victims' support, including health treatment, council housing, cultural mediators and *pro bono* legal assistance.

ART. 17 - Social Assistance Units

With reference to article 12 and articles 14, 15, 16 and 17, within its competences, the Signatory is committed to creating psychological and social assistance units and to creating a protective measure with a task force composed of skilled professionals, who are able to:

- ◆ Provide medical treatment, psychological help and legal aid to women victims of violence and trafficking, giving special attention and consideration to refugee women who have fled armed conflict or experienced persecution;
- ◆ Give psychological help and legal aid to widows, especially to women living in regions experiencing armed conflicts; this includes giving them a chance to re-build an independent, secure existence;
- ◆ Provide prevention services for sexually transmitted diseases given by means of free testing.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

ART. 18 Security Policies

1. The Signatory recognises the right of each woman and man to security of the person, and to liberty of movement.

2. The Signatory therefore commits itself:

- ◆ To analyse from a gender perspective the statistics concerning the volume and patterns of incidents (including crime against the individual);
- ◆ To develop and implement strategies, policies and actions, including specific improvements to the state or design of the local environment (for example, transport interchanges, car parks, street lighting), or to policing and related services, to enhance the practical security and safety of women and men.

ART. 19 - Women and Conflicts

The Signatory recognises the particular situation of women in countries at war and their role in the return to dialogue, conflict resolution and reconstruction after the war and as a consequence, the Signatory commits itself :

1. To collaborate and to work with States, international organizations and NGOs to solve the problems affected women during and/or after conflicts and to meet their particular needs, such as those of widows and/or of women who are heads of the household and who care children and elderly people while her husband is at war, detained or disappeared;
2. to take steps to empower and train women, of all ages, to take active part in the building of peace and dialogue, and to encourage them to participate in any initiative or process aimed at resolving any existing conflict especially at the local level;
3. To promote initiatives aimed at training women to participate in the process of reconstruction after conflict and especially to participate in political life in particular at the local level.

ART. 20 - Situation of Refugee Women

The Signatory recognises the serious situation of women refugees, forced to leave everything behind to escape the conflict and persecution and seek refuge in the neighboring countries, in Europe and in the rest of world, alone, with their children, or accompanied by the rest of their family.

The Signatory therefore undertakes:

- ◆ to undertake specific measures to duly welcome and meet the needs of refugee women (such as need for psychological, social, medical support and so on – see Art.28).
- ◆ to counter all forms of exclusion and exploitation, particularly prostitution, and to take appropriate action to combat all forms of violence perpetrated against refugee women, for example by providing shelters;
- ◆ to undertake special initiatives aimed to foster the social and professional integration of refugee women in its territory, for example, through vocational training, enhancement of their skills, vocational guidance and support, language learning, care services for children
- ◆ to facilitate family reunification for women refugees (upon analysis of each single case)
- ◆ to promote the integration of refugee women and facilitate the dialogue and interaction with the local population, for example through the transmission and enhancement of their culture, their knowledge and their experience and by training them so that they can have an active role in society.
- ◆ to launch new and original initiatives in order to train refugee women to political activity and to take an active role in the reconstruction of their countries of origin;

ART. 21 - Refugee minors and minors in Countries at war

1. The Signatory recognises the unacceptable situation affecting refugee minors who have left their mothers and/or their families to escape war, persecution and who are desperately searching for a better life.

2. To address this situation, the signatory agrees to:

- ◆ Combat all forms of exploitation and/or violence perpetrated on refugee minors, girls and boys, such as prostitution, child labor, early marriage, etc.
- ◆ Take specific measures focused on refugee minors, and especially unaccompanied children who arrive from a country at war for example by setting up shelters which could provide the necessary support for them also at psychological, legal and educational level and by monitoring the correct working of such shelters.
- ◆ Ensure the education and training for refugee children (girls and boys) and/or for children in countries in conflict and ensure the learning of the language of the hosting Country.
- ◆ with specific reference to refugee teenagers, activate educational trainings aimed at the job placement or at the integration in higher education before the majority ;
- ◆ Improving the social inclusion of refugee minors and their access to social and cultural facilities on the territory and exchanges with the local population;
- ◆ Facilitate contacts between minors in hosting countries and their families in their countries of origin; enable international channels aimed at facilitating the reunification of refugee minors with their kins who live in Europe (after analysis of the individual case)
- ◆ Support the cultural expression of the refugee minors, girls and boys, (for example by including the cultural mediator among the shelter staff) and facilitate the transmission and valorisation of their culture and their knowledge and encourage interaction and dialogue with the local population thus contributing to fight against stereotypes and racism.

3. The Signatory commits itself to extend the above mentioned measures also to stateless minors; it also commits itself to work through international cooperation in order to raise awareness of countries where nationality is acquired only through father about the importance to acknowledge acquisition of nationality also through the mother in order to avoid that children born illegitimately would consequently become stateless.

EDUCATION

ART. 22 - Equal Access to Education

1. The Signatory recognises the right to education for everyone, girls and boys, women and men, including students with disabilities and undertakes to promote equal access to education. Where, in accordance with its institutional authorities, the Signatory undertakes to promote actions aiming at:

- ◆ closing the gap between city centres and outskirts, urban and rural areas
- ◆ Creating conditions for students to reach schools easily and in case of students with disabilities, provide the proper supplies (reducing architectural barriers, providing materials for special needs, etc..)

2. The Signatory recognises the need to eliminate any stereotyped concept of the roles of women and men in all forms of education. In order to do this it undertakes to carry out or promote, as appropriate, the following measures:

- ◆ Promoting women's education and fighting illiteracy especially in marginalised areas and undertaking actions aimed at reducing the rate of girls dropping out of school;
- ◆ Promoting anti-stereotype courses for teachers, students and education workers;
- ◆ Revising educational materials and methods, to ensure that they combat stereotypical attitudes and practices, and promoting extra-curricular activities aimed at opposing stereotyped practices;
- ◆ Promoting non-formal learning preferably in cooperation with civil society or supporting non-formal initiatives carried out by civil society;
- ◆ Undertaking specific actions to encourage non-traditional career choices ;
- ◆ The specific inclusion in school curriculum, of elements that emphasise the importance of the equal participation of women and men in democratic processes
- ◆ Providing equal access to scholarships and other grants for women and men

3. The Signatory undertakes to promote the balanced representation of women and men at all levels of school management and governance.

ART. 23 - Lifelong Learning

1. The Signatory recognises the right to education literacy for everyone undertaking, within the range of its competences, to secure or promote equal access to education, vocational and continuing training for women and men, girls and boys, including those with disabilities.

2. The Signatory commits to facilitating women's class attendance by the provision of social services and care for children and dependent relatives.

3. The Signatory recognises the importance of training in order to boost women's entrepreneurial activity in rural areas and consequently to benefit from the inclusion in the economic and production cycle. To this end, the Signatory commits itself to providing, organising and offering training courses to strengthen and empower women entrepreneurs, including women with disabilities.

WORK

ART. 24 - Active Employment Policies

The Signatory recognises the right to equal access to work for women and consequently it commits itself to implement active employment policies to the benefit of women.

ART. 25 - Role as Employer

1. In its role as employer, the Signatory recognises the right to equality of women and men in regard to all aspects of employment, including remuneration. Therefore, the Signatory commits itself to use the same evaluation rules in the selection and recruitment of personnel.

2. The Signatory recognises the right to the reconciliation of professional, social and private life and the right to dignity and security in the workplace.

3. The Signatory commits itself to take all reasonable measures, in support of the above rights. The measures referred to in (3) include the following:

(a) a review of relevant policies and procedures relating to employment within its organization, and inter alia covering:

- ◆ Equal pay for work of equal value;
- ◆ Arrangements for regular review of pay, remuneration, pay systems and pensions;
- ◆ Measures to ensure fair and transparent advancements at work;
- ◆ Measures to ensure a balanced representation of women and men at all levels;
- ◆ Measures to tackle any sex-based job segregation;
- ◆ Measures to ensure fair recruitment;
- ◆ Measure to ensure the re-entry of the labour force after giving birth and caring for children;
- ◆ Measures to ensure appropriate, healthy and safe working conditions;
- ◆ Procedures to ensure balanced participation of women and men in any consultative or negotiating body.

(b) opposing the crime of sexual harassment in the workplace by adding disciplinary sanctions, even including dismissal, in the internal regulation of the local institution; by supporting victims, by introducing and implementing transparent policies to deal with perpetrators, and by raising awareness of the issue;

(c) Supporting the reconciliation of professional, social and private life by:

- ◆ introducing policies which allow, where appropriate, adjustments of working time and arrangements for care for dependants of employees;
- ◆ encouraging men to take up their entitlement to leave to care for dependants.

ART. 26 - Childcare

1. The Signatory recognises the essential role that good quality, affordable childcare, available to all parents and careers, plays in promoting true equality between women and men and in enabling them to reconcile their work, public and private lives and active participation in political life. The Signatory further recognises the contribution that childcare makes to the economic and social fabric of the local community and of society at large.

2. The Signatory commits itself to make the provision and promotion of such childcare, directly or through other providers, one of its priorities.

3. The Signatory further recognises that the upbringing of children requires a sharing of responsibility between men and women and society as a whole, and undertakes to counter gender stereotypes according to which child care is seen as being mainly the task or responsibility of women.

SERVICES

ART. 27 - Service Providers

1. The Signatory recognises that, in carrying out its tasks and obligations in relation to public procurement, including contracts for the supply of products, the provision of services, or the execution of works, it has a responsibility to promote equality of women and men.

2. The Signatory recognises that this responsibility is of particular significance where it proposes to contract out the provision of an important service to the public to another legal entity, for which the Signatory is by law responsible. In such cases, the Signatory will ensure that the legal entity that wins the contract (whatever its type of ownership) has gender equality ethical standards in its internal regulation and that such standards will be respected also by possible sub-contractors.

ART. 28 - Social Care

1. The Signatory recognises that everyone has the right to necessary social services and to benefit from social assistance when needed.

2. The Signatory recognises that women and men have different needs which may arise from differences in their social and economic conditions and other factors. Therefore the Signatory will take all reasonable measures to:

- ◆ Incorporate a gender-based approach to the planning, resourcing and delivery of social care and social services;
- ◆ Ensure that those involved in the delivery of social care and social services recognise the ways in which gender affects those services.

ART. 29 - Women with Disabilities

Recalling article 4, the Signatory recognises that everyone has the right to the same resources and opportunities, including women with disabilities. In order to ensure the compliance with this right the Signatory commits itself to counter inequality arising from disabilities by, as appropriate:

- ◆ Taking measures to enhance physical accessibility;
- ◆ Promoting access to job opportunities and encouraging women cooperatives;
- ◆ Promoting an inclusive education that reflects different kinds of disabilities;
- ◆ Ensuring easy access to information about social services;
- ◆ Disseminating awareness-raising campaigns about disabilities to fight cultural stigma;
- ◆ Fighting against sexual and psychological abuses.

ART. 30 - Care of Other Dependants

1. The Signatory recognises that women and men have responsibilities to care for dependants other than children and that this responsibility may affect their ability to play a full role in economic and social life.

2. The Signatory further recognises that such caring responsibilities fall disproportionately to women.

3. The Signatory commits itself to counter this inequality by, as appropriate:

- ◆ Making the provision of high quality, affordable care for dependants, directly or through other providers, one of its priorities and those services should cover the whole territory under its jurisdiction, rural and suburban areas included;
- ◆ Providing support for those suffering social isolation as a result of their caring responsibilities;
- ◆ Campaigning against stereotypes which assumes that caring for dependants is primarily the responsibility of women.

ART. 31 - Social Inclusion

1. The Signatory recognises that everyone has the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion and furthermore that women, are more likely to suffer from social exclusion because they have less access to resources, goods, services and opportunities than men.

2. The Signatory therefore undertakes, across the full range of its services and activities, and working

with social partners, to take measures within the framework of an overall co-ordinated approach to:

- ◆ Promote the effective access of all of those who live or risk living in a situation of social exclusion or poverty, to employment, housing, training, education, culture, information and communication technologies, social and medical assistance
- ◆ Recognise the particular needs and situation of women experiencing social exclusion
- ◆ Recognise the particular needs of women with disabilities and promote their social inclusion by means of social, economic and cultural activities
- ◆ Promote the integration of migrant women and men, taking into account their specific needs

ART. 32 - Housing

1. The Signatory recognises the right to housing, and affirms that access to good quality housing represents one of the most essential human needs.

2. The Signatory recognises further that women and men often have specific and distinct needs in relation to housing which must be taken fully into account, including the fact that:

- ◆ On average, women have less income and resources than men, and therefore require housing that is affordable for them;
- ◆ Women are the head of household in most single parent families, with consequent needs for access to social housing.

3. The Signatory therefore commits itself, as appropriate:

- ◆ To provide or promote access to housing of an adequate size and standard and with accessible to essential services;
- ◆ To take steps to prevent homelessness, and in particular to provide assistance to the homeless, based on criteria of need, vulnerability and non-discrimination.

4. The Signatory also undertakes to ensure or to promote the equal right of women and men to be the tenant, owner, or other form of property-holder, of their home, and also, to that end, to use its powers or influence to ensure that women have equal access to mortgages and other forms of financial assistance and credit for housing purposes.

CULTURE & RECREATION

ART. 33 - Culture and recreation

1. The Signatory recognises the right of everyone to take part in all aspect of cultural life: in arts, sports and recreational activities.

2. The Signatory furthermore recognises the role that sport plays in contributing to the life of the community and to securing the rights to health as outlined in article. Therefore the Signatory commits itself to promoting campaigns on the beneficial effects of sport on the health of women, men and children.

3. It also recognises that women and men have an equal right to access cultural, recreational and sporting activities and facilities.

4. The Signatory recognises that women and men may have different experiences and interests in relation to culture, sport and recreation and that these may be the result of gender-stereotyped attitudes, and therefore commits itself to promote measures including, as appropriate:

- ◆ Ensuring that women and men, boys and girls have equal provision and access to sporting, recreation and cultural facilities and activities;
- ◆ Encouraging and supporting cultural and recreational initiatives;
- ◆ Encouraging women and men, boys and girls to take part equally in sports and cultural activities, including those traditionally seen as predominantly "female" or "male" rural and suburban areas included;
- ◆ Encouraging artists, cultural and sporting associations to promote cultural and sporting activities which challenge stereotypical views of women and men;
- ◆ Encouraging public library services to challenge gender stereotypes in their stock of books and other materials and in their promotional activities;
- ◆ Modernising sport centres above all in rural areas by increasing their number also through the contribution of the private sector.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ART. 34 - Sustainable Development

1. The Signatory recognises that, in planning and developing strategies for the future of its territory, the principles of sustainable development must be fully respected, involving the balanced integration of economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions, and also, in particular, including the need to promote and achieve equality of women and men.
2. The Signatory therefore commits itself to take into account the principle of equality of women and men as a fundamental dimension of all its planning and development of strategies, for the sustainable development of its territory.
3. The Signatory commits itself to guarantee and promote equal right to food as a crucial policy in strategies for sustainable development

ART. 35 - Economic Development and access to microcredit

1. The Signatory recognises that balanced and sustainable economic development is vital and that its activities and services in this field can contribute significantly to the advancement of equality of women and men.
2. The Signatory recognises the role women play in the family's economic survival, non-monetary economic sectors included, and therefore commits itself to adopt suitable measures in order to increase the women's contribution to the economy and to local development, according to its own institutional powers.
3. The Signatory recognises that where armed conflict and wars are occurring women suffer direct and indirect consequences and therefore commits itself to help women as direct or indirect victims of war to achieve socio-economic autonomy.
4. The Signatory recognises the need to increase the rate and quality of employment for women, and further recognises that the risk of poverty linked to long term unemployment and unpaid work is particularly high for women.
5. The Signatory commits itself to take fully into account the needs and interests of women and men, and the opportunities to advance equality between them, and to take the appropriate actions to this end. Such actions may include:
 - ◆ Assistance to women entrepreneurs and to women's cooperatives that have a strong women's presence including during the inception and start-up phase;
 - ◆ Promoting and helping women access information and training for starting up economic activities;
 - ◆ With reference to rural areas, developing training courses for farming using modern techniques and promoting women cooperatives and enterprises;
 - ◆ Ensuring that financial and other support for enterprises promote gender equality;
 - ◆ Encouragement to women trainees to learn skills and achieve qualifications for jobs traditionally seen as "male" and vice versa;
 - ◆ Encouraging legal forms of microcredit to accommodate entry into the labour force;All these actions will be carried out with a special focus on women who are heads of the household.

ART. 36 - Urban Planning

1. The Signatory recognises the importance of its spatial, transport, economic development and land use policies and plans in creating the conditions within which the right to equality of women and men in local life may be more fully achieved.
2. The Signatory commits itself to ensure that, in drawing up, adopting and implementing such policies and plans, it takes into account:
 - ◆ The specific needs of women and men, in relation for example to employment, access to services and cultural life, education and family responsibilities;
 - ◆ High quality design solutions which take into account the specific needs of women and men.

ART. 37 - Mobility and Public Transport

1. The Signatory recognises that access to means of transport is an essential condition for women and men to be able to exercise many of their rights, tasks and activities.
2. The Signatory further recognises that women and men often have, in practice, different needs, as

well as patterns of usage, in relation to mobility and transport. It also recognises that women frequently form a greater proportion of users of public transport than men.

3. The Signatory therefore commits itself:

- ◆ To take into account the relevant mobility needs, and the patterns of transport usage, of women and men respectively, including those from urban and rural communities
- ◆ To ensure that the transport services available to women and men in the Signatory's territory meet the specific as well as common needs of women and men

4. The Signatory further commits itself to promote the progressive improvement of the public transport services in and for its area, including rural and suburban areas.

ART. 38 - Environment

1. The Signatory recognises its responsibility to work towards a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment in its area. It recognises the equal right of women and men to benefit from its services and policies in relation to the environment.

2. The Signatory recognises that in many places the lifestyles of women and men differ and that women and men may tend to differ in their use of local open spaces, or confront different environmental problems.

3. The Signatory accordingly commits itself, in developing its environmental policies and services, to have full and equal regard to the specific needs and lifestyles of women and men.

THE REGULATOR ROLE

ART. 39 - Regulator Role

The Signatory commits itself, in carrying out its regulatory tasks, to respecting and putting into practice women's rights and the articles of the present Charter.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

ART. 40 - The importance of International Cooperation

The Signatory recognises the role and the value of international cooperation and development cooperation. The exchange of experiences and best practices, of knowledge and culture, at all levels and in all fields, are key-factors to build a better world for all and are also ways to promote dialogue and understanding between countries and people in the world.

The Signatory recognises the fundamental rights for humanity including equality between men and women. The Signatory commits itself:

- ◆ to actively and concretely participate to the pursuit of sustainable development objectives for the UN set for 2030;
- ◆ to incorporate a gender perspective in all international cooperation project in which it will take part;
- ◆ to encourage the balanced participation of women and men in international cooperation projects;
- ◆ to promote twinning and the exchange of experiences as an irreplaceable means for cooperation and development and to promote the putting in value of results;
- ◆ to give recognition to projects and initiatives concerning women's rights and equal opportunities between women and men;
- ◆ to raise awareness of the entire population, including women of all ages, about the importance of cooperation and dialogue;
- ◆ to recognise the value and the role of international organizations and to participate in the achievement of their objectives and their programs.