

1. FAMILY POLICY: INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 The institutional framework for family policies

ii) Relationship between family policy and other policies (gender policy, social policy, employment policy, etc.). Existence of crosscutting/interdepartmental body.

Austria

Since family Policy is a cross-sectional-matter this area also concerns other ministries. Collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Justice, Women, Labour and Economy, Science and Education exists. The main responsibility lies with the Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth.

Azerbaijan

The family policy in Azerbaijan is being developed and pursued by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs. This Committee is the main coordinating body for dealing with different aspects of family affairs which are also dealt with by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education etc. in related spheres.

Belgium

La communauté flamande.

At the level of the Flemish Government, overall there is a quite close relationship between family policy and other policies (such as Employment, Equal Opportunities, and Housing). A number of issues are labelled as transversal family policy (cf. family impact analysis).

The thematic Interministerial Conference serves as a policy tool to exchange (diverging) views and interests between the federal and the Community-level Governments.

La région wallonne

Au vu des compétences de la Région wallonne, la politique familiale englobe les matières suivantes : action sociale, santé, aide aux personnes, égalité des chances, formation, emploi, logement.

Le Ministère compétent est le Service public de Wallonie (SPW), ancien Ministère de la Région wallonne (MRW).

Il existe une instance transversale -la Direction interdépartementale de la Cohésion sociale (ex-DIIS)- axée sur la promotion de la cohésion sociale et de l'accès aux droits fondamentaux pour tous, qui assure un lien entre les directions générales mais ne les chapeaute pas.

Council of Europe Family Policy Database

www.coe.int/familypolicy/database



Bosnia and Herzegovina

Several ministries are involved.
The RS Government is the principal agent for making family and other policies.
Depending on policy, relevant ministry is tasked with the activities.

Bulgaria

The Minister of Labour and Social Policy is a central one-person body of the executive power with special competence who manages, coordinates and controls the implementation of state policies in the field of incomes and living standards, social security, unemployment protection and employment promotion, labour market, labour migration, occupational safety and health, social investments, social protection, social inclusion, demographic policy, family policy and equal opportunities policy.
Under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy there is an interinstitutional working group on demographic issues. It includes 70 representatives of institutions in this field. As a result of the coordinated work of the interinstitutional working group, a three-year thematic and budgetary framework was developed for the 2007-2009 period. There are also financially supported plans for 2006 and 2007 and a system of indicators for monitoring of the implementation of the National Strategy for Demographic Development of the Republic of Bulgaria 2006-2020. Work is carried out on the coordination of the obligations for data provision to the institutional system – NSI, NHIF, NSI, MLSP, MH, MES as well as all administrations with obligations on the implementation of the yearly plans.

A horizontal approach is applied in respect to children policy – the Chairperson of the SACP develops together with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, the Minister of Education and Science, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Interior, the Minister of Culture, the Minister of Finance, the Chairperson of the SACS, the Head of the National Social Insurance Institute, the Secretary of the Central Commission for Combating the Antisocial Behaviour of Underaged under the Council of Ministers, and the National Association of Municipalities of the Republic of Bulgaria, the state child protection policy.

The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria adopted a National Integrated Plan for the Application of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child for the period 2006-2009. The Integrated Plan aims to guarantee the welfare of children in Bulgaria by uniting national child protection policies and strategies and providing for a longer-term roles and obligations of all institutions responsible for the observation of rights and provision of welfare of children in Bulgaria. It integrates norms, standards and principles of the international system for protection of human rights and their reflection in plans, policies and processes for planning and development; it observes the principles of universality, inseparability, interdependence, non-discrimination, all rights for all children everywhere.

Croatia

Republic of Croatia uses different measures in the area of family, population, health, tax and economy policy to strengthen the family fulfilling its unique social role and providing support to children care. In the part of general social policy, family and population policy, through the benefit system, aim to directly provide material aid to families in its care, upbringing and education of children up to a certain age.

There is no crosscutting/interdepartmental body of state administration. The implementation of family policy measures and other policies (gender equality, social policy, and employment policy) include several ministries that coordinate and monitor the implementation of national documents within the scope of their activities.

Ministry of Family, Veterans' Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity undertakes professional counselling and prevention referring to: marriage and reduction of divorces; interpersonal relations of parents and children; maintenance and other circumstances in family that require professional support and assistance; increasing the quality of children, youth and family's lives; monitoring implementation of family and population policy measures from other national documents referring to children and youth, including persons with disabilities; decision making on the establishment of Family Centres and harmonization of their activities, monitoring and supervision of the application of the regulation on child allowance, maternity leaves and benefits, the birth grant and other regulation from the scope of family, etc.

Ministry of Health and Social Welfare performs administrative and professional activities referring to: care for persons and families

Council of Europe Family Policy Database

www.coe.int/familypolicy/database



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

without sufficient resources to satisfy basic living needs or they need aid to remove causes of social endangerment; protection of persons with disabilities; protection of psychologically ill, old and powerless persons; protection of victims of trafficking in human beings; protection of children and younger adults with behavioural disorders; rehabilitation and resocialization of drug addicts, provision of aid in social welfare institutions, apart from Family Centres, and enforcement of administrative, inspection and professional supervision over their work, etc.
Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship performs administrative and other activities referring to work relations, labour market and employment, relations with trade unions and employers' associations, work status of Croatian citizens employed abroad and foreign citizens employed in the Republic of Croatia, protection at work, system and policy of the retirement and disability insurance, etc.
Office for Gender Equality of the Government of Republic of Croatia coordinates all activities aiming to improve gender equality, drafts a comprehensive system of protection and promotion of human rights in the Republic of Croatia and monitors its effectiveness, tailors the national policy for promotion of gender equality and supervises its implementation, etc.
Office of the Ombudsperson was established, and there are different specialized ombudspersons: Ombudsperson for gender equality, Ombudsperson for children and Ombudsperson for persons with disabilities.

Cyprus

Family policy is seen as an integral part of social policy, which encompasses, inter alia, social welfare, social insurance, health, housing, gender issues etc.
There is mutual interaction between social policies, which are reflected in our Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion, and economic and employment policies, which are outlined in our National Reform Programme [Lisbon Strategy]. Both documents are prepared in line with EU requirements.
With regard to social protection and social inclusion objectives, a special working group has been set up, consisting of representatives of different government ministries, NGOs, the social partners, the academia and the media. The group, which relies on horizontal relationships, is involved in the preparation and follow-up of our social protection and social inclusion strategies and ensures transparency through an open dialogue. Coordination of the group has been assigned to a Government department, namely the Social Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance.
As regards the Lisbon objectives, progress reports are prepared on a bi-annual basis, and submitted to the Council of Ministers. A coordinating committee has been established, under the Planning Bureau, which is responsible for the preparation and follow-up of the National Reform Programme (NRP), as well as the coordination of a number of technical committees, which were set up for each group of challenges identified in the NRP. The committees are composed of representatives of various government departments, as well as non-governmental bodies, depending on the function of the committee (e.g. social partners, Central Bank, research bodies, organisations, authorities, associations, academic institutions, etc.).
Furthermore, an Advisory Body for Social Policy was established in 2007 for the evaluation of all programmes, allowances and benefits.

Czech Republic

Family issues fall in its broader sense into the competence of several other state departments which deal with areas that are directly related to families. These departments are namely the healthcare department (for instances in areas of establishment of healthcare facilities such as nurseries), department of education, youth and physical education (for instance in the areas of pre-school and grammar school education and leisure time activities of children and youths), department of regional development (housing policies), industry and trade (for instance in matters of the terms of licensing of care for children), interior (for instance in matters related to the immigrant families, prevention of youth crime, prevention of family violence) and the justice department.
Areas related to family policy are also covered by various advisory bodies of the government (see above). Their activities can be described as providing and initiation proposals to the government.
The overall problem related to the realization of the family policy is the insufficient inter-connection and co-ordination of the activities of the individual departments, but also within the MLSA, which is, for this particular agenda, a key prerequisite of effectiveness.
This situation is presumably influenced by the fact that the family policy is for the Czech Republic a relatively new agenda and thus it does not have a stable place among other more traditional agendas. (The family was formerly addressed more within the scope of

Council of Europe Family Policy Database

www.coe.int/familypolicy/database



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

the agenda of social and legal protection of the children, where support was directed, in certain sense to "dysfunctional" or socially endangered families).
Regardless of the above situation there has been a significant progress within the last two years especially in the sense of the increased knowledge of the public and the state administration in relation to issues of family policy and also in the strengthening of mutual (and not only) inter-departmental co-operation.
Czech Republic has not yet established a co-ordinating body in the area of family policy which would ensure an effective co-operation between the various departments of state. However, its establishment is currently under discussion. The plan is to establish such co-ordinating body at the highest possible level.

Denmark

The department of civil society and family affairs in the ministry of social welfare works as a central information body of the overall Danish family policy, in which we attempt to define the overall values and principles the Danish family policy is based on.

Estonia

Family policy unit is part of the gender equality department. High level experts form the Ministry of Social Affairs as well as from other ministries belong to the family policy working group.

Finland

MSAH is the main coordinating body. MSAH is co-operating with other ministries on family policy affairs. The present Government programme contains a specific Policy programme for the well-being of children, youth and families. The children, youth and family policy programme's one objective is to transcending the boundaries between administrative sectors and do crosscutting measures on family policy during present term of office. It also draws up a cross-sectoral programme to prevent the ill health and social exclusion of families.

France

The Interdepartmental task force on family affairs is responsible for conducting and co-ordinating the action of the various ministries concerned with family policies. It is responsible for framing and monitoring family policy. It will have the function of general secretariat for the future Higher Population Council.

Germany

The policy areas listed are closely linked with each other. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth set laws, initiatives, model projects, etc. in motion for the competent areas. Because of demographic and social developments and the definition of a new, sustainable family policy, the Federal Ministry for Families has achieved central significance.
Under the "Common Rules of Procedure" of the Federal Ministries regulating the principles for cooperation between the ministries, the ministries must pursue equality of men and women as a consistent guiding principle (gender mainstreaming).

Greece

Over the last years the aid of family has been placed in high priority in our country, so that we can answer positively in the challenges of poverty and demographic problem. Our approach in the planning and the realisation of family policies is based on the direct and unbreakable relation that they have with those concerning employment, equal treatment, education etc.

The family policies are structured as follows:

- Family and working life reconciliation
- Financial Aid (for example family benefit)
- Tax exemptions
- Access in goods and services (access in programs of housing policy - Workers' Housing Organisation or access in recreation and cultural activities such as social tourism, children's camps, theatre etc. - Workers' Social Benefits Organisation).

Central place in the family policies has the family and working life reconciliation which is promoted through the following policies:

1. Promotion of the employment (energetic policies, education, training, long life learning, promotion of flexible forms of employment provided that these constitute a choice)
2. Extension of structures of keep and care of children or other dependent members
3. Promotion of sex equality and more generally fighting of discriminations.

From the described approach it is obvious that this relation between the family policy and other policies is dynamic, collateral, interdependent and reciprocally strengthening.

The above policies are specialised as follows:

1. All the programs that are realised by OAED, aiming at the fighting of unemployment and the strengthening of employment, include special quotas for the participation of women aiming at:

- a) the acquisition of professional experience (stage),
- b) the creation of new places of work for the promotion of the employment of unemployed women and
- c) the creation of their own enterprise.

More specifically, regarding the action of self-employment via the subsidize of Young persons Free Professionals (N.E.E.) for the creation of their own small enterprise, we would like to mention that:

- a) a percentage of at least 60% of these places will be covered by women,
- b) the expenses for children's kindergarten paid by the new young businesswoman for the keep of her children, so that she can be occupied are taken into account as expenses of the enterprise
- c) the operation of the enterprise in a space inside the residence (suitably shaped) is allowed under certain conditions: i) mother of child in preschool age, ii) woman that attends in her residence, first degree relatives with a disability higher than 70% and
- d) in case where the N.E.E. has her residence as the central office of her enterprise the 1/3 of the total of rents and functional expenses (electricity, water bills, etc.) are taken into account.

2. Law 3488/2006 ensures the application of equal treatment of men and women with regard to the access in employment, professional education and evolution, in the terms and conditions of work.

3. Women farmers, insured in the branch of main insurance of Farmers' Insurance Organisation (OGA) (Law 2458/1997), are exempted for one year, for each child they give birth after the first one, from the obligation of payment of contributions to OGA for the contingency of old age and sickness and for the Farmers' Social Benefits Account.

4. Law 3250/2004 which extended partial employment to the public sector, the public law legal entities and the Local Government Organisations, for the cover of needs that aim in providing of services of social character (social care, the guarding of school buildings, the road safety of students, the confrontation of environmental needs, the social inclusion of immigrants etc.) include as special category for those having more than 4 children and the mothers of under age children in a percentage of 10%. Furthermore, it provides that a percentage up to 60% from the various categories of unemployed, which are profited from the hiring, is covered by women, provided that an interest is expressed.

5. According to law 3655/2008, it is recognized to all women insured in institutions of main insurance, belonging to the competency of the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection, except OGA, fictitious time of service for each child they have from 1.1.2000 and henceforth, which amounts in 1 year or 300 days of insurance for the first child, in 2 years or 600 days of insurance for each next child and up to the third child. The right of recognition of the above reported fictitious time if not exercised by the insured mother, can be practised from the insured father.

Council of Europe Family Policy Database

www.coe.int/familypolicy/database



Hungary

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour is responsible all of the mentioned policies. While planning actions, all relevant policies and their interactions are taken into account.

Iceland

The ministry for social affairs and social security is also responsible for gender, social and employment policies.

Ireland

While individual departments may decide on their own policies, there are overarching national policy documents e.g. the Programme for Government (political programme), the National Partnership Agreement (see below), the National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Inclusion, which contain recommendations and commitments in relation to families, which cross government departments. These are co-ordinated and monitored by the Department of An Taoiseach (Prime Minister) (see also – the Family Support Agency above).

Italy

For any policy involving the responsibility of other Ministries, the leading Minister collaborates with them and coordinates activities. In particular, the Department for Family Policies works in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policies.

Latvia

There is no crosscutting/interdepartmental body which has the main responsibility for implementation of family policy in Latvia. The areas of responsibility in the terms of family policy are strictly divided between Ministry for Children and Family Affairs and Ministry of Welfare in accordance with the State Administration Structure Law and statutes of both ministries. Family policy and other policies, which are important for families nurturing children (gender policy, social policy, employment policy, etc.), are interconnected which means that effective implementation of those policy, among them family policy, includes active involvement of several ministries under which competence the policies lie. The managing (highest) institution of the State administration in the field of the child rights protection, child and family rights and the youth is the Ministry for Children and Family Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. The Ministry shall organise and co-ordinate the implementation of laws and other regulatory enactments, it shall participate in the developing of the policy of the sector. In order to promote unity of the state demographic and family support policy (and its implementation) in all levels of state administration, a consultative and coordinating public authority – Council of Demographic and Family Affairs – has been established (Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of 25 June 2003 no.338 “Bylaw of the Council of Demographic and Family Affairs”). Ministry of Welfare is the leading government institution that is responsible for the development and coordination of the policy of the labour, social security and gender equality in the state. In the terms of central mission of Ministry of Welfare – to stabilize persons’ material situation in the case of social risk, decrease possibility of different social risks, encourage the honest and legal employment relationships, provide gender equality, thereby creating conditions in order to ensure sufficient life quality for each person and family in concrete situation – family policy, employment policy, gender policy and some others policies are the integral

Council of Europe Family Policy Database

www.coe.int/familypolicy/database



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

parts of social policy what implements Ministry of Welfare. Family policy is tightly connected with 5 main social policy areas which are in the competence of the Ministry of Welfare:

- state social insurance what guarantees persons paying social insurance contributions a definite amount of compensation (e.g. maternity benefit, paternity benefit, parent's benefit) for loss of income in certain situations, including the pre-natal and post-natal maternity periods and period of child care;
- state social benefits which complement the state social insurance system and provide universal state support in the form of cash payments to certain population groups in situation of social risks and income reductions: 1) to persons who are not covered by social insurance (state social security benefit for uninsured disabled persons, persons who are past the retirement wage, children who have lost their provider); 2) in cases when additional expenditure is needed but the state social insurance system does not envisage any protection (e.g. state family benefit, child care benefit, disabled child care benefit and others);
- social assistance, social services and social inclusion in what terms are provided: 1) support in cash or in kind to persons (families) lacking means to meet their basic needs (food, housing, health care, compulsory education); 2) long-term social care and social rehabilitation, providing housing, full care and social rehabilitation to persons who have difficulties in taking care of themselves due to old age or poor health as well as to children without parental care; 3) social inclusion and integration of persons subjected of the risks of poverty and social castaway into the socially economical and cultural life of society;
- labour market and employment in what terms are provided employment and unemployment policies, labour legal relations and social dialogue, labour remuneration and labour protection policy;
- gender equality in what terms the possibility of reconciling family and work life for both men and women are ensured. Parents are free to reconcile their work and family obligations without a state-infringed loss in the amount of childcare-related benefits. This greatly improves the possibilities for reconciliation of work and private life. It is intended (but yet to be confirmed) that the recent changes in the social protection system could also promote a more active participation of fathers in family life and child care (taking into account that monthly working wage is higher for males). It is relatively easy for women to exit and re-enter the labour market, however the policy makers are aware that a higher qualification and more skills can be retained if absence from the labour market is shorter.

Lithuania

For time being in 2009 MoSSL is responsible for family issues, gender and equal opportunities for all, social protection (financial assistance and social services), employment, social insurance policies. These policies are set up in different departments of the Ministry (see on www.socmin.lt/Structure)

The Ministry of Environment is responsible for housing policies (social housing is included) and urban planning;

Ministry of Education and Science together with the municipalities is responsible for the kindergartens, preschool and after-school services for children.

There is no single body (intergovernmental commission or interdepartmental body) which would be assigned to coordinate all cross-sectoral questions related with the family policies. Usually questions of different competence are solved by ad hoc working groups or commissions. Since now family policy was mainly assumed as the questions of gender equality. For instance, all ministries carry responsibility for the implementation of the National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2005-2009, as well as social partners (women NGO's and gender studies centres) are involved. The coordinating body of the mentioned programme is the Commission for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men. The main objectives of the commission are: to coordinate the activities of implementation of gender equality policy of the governmental institutions; to make proposals in regards to gender equality policy implementation and to promote equal opportunities of women and men. Women NGO's delegate their official representatives as actual members of this Commission.

Luxembourg

Mme la Ministre de la Famille est également ministre de l'Égalité des Chances.

Comme la politique familiale recouvre également d'autres domaines qui ne relèvent pas principalement des compétences du Ministère de la Famille, les ministres s'entendent ensemble sur la voie à suivre resp. discutent des modalités ou des approches dans le cadre du Conseil de Gouvernement, qui siège, sous la présidence du Premier Ministre, Ministre d'Etat, au moins une fois par semaines. S'il y a des problèmes techniques à résoudre un groupe de travail interministériel pourrait être institué.

Council of Europe Family Policy Database

www.coe.int/familypolicy/database



Malta

The family policy is at the heart of the social policy as it is one of the main drivers in the policy. The family policy was directly affected by the gender in policy, where family had to be amended to recognise more the role of women in society. The employment law also recognises the family with new arrangements being made with regards to reduced working hours, parental leave and other incentives.

All these policies and their governing bodies fall under the same Ministry for Social Policy and hence there is interdepartmental communication.

Moldova

Elaboration, implementation and evaluation of policies in the field of family is acted in coordination with other policies and common or related policy areas (gender policies, etc).

Monaco

La Direction du Travail et la Direction de l'Action Sanitaire et Sociale sont placées sous l'autorité du Conseiller de Gouvernement pour les Affaires Sociales et la Santé.

Montenegro

1. Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Welfare
 - department for social and child protection
 - department for labour market and employment
 - department for labour relations
2. Gender Equality Office

3. Ministry for Human and Minority Rights Protection

There is no coordinating body; departments are supervising the implementation.

Netherlands

The main responsibility for family policy lies with the Interministerial Programme for Youth and Families, which collaborates closely with the Ministries mentioned under 1.1.ii. It is to be expected that its views on the relationship between family policy and other policies will be stated in the policy document due for publication in autumn 2008.

Council of Europe Family Policy Database

www.coe.int/familypolicy/database



Norway

The Norwegian family policy has been carried out in close connection with gender equality policy and with policies towards children – both child care services and child protection. Other ministries have the responsibility for social policies- more directed towards persons/families with problems (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion) – and labour market policy (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion). From 2005 Kindergarten policy is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Research.

There is no permanent interdepartmental body, but coordination ad hoc on important themes in form of plans of action etc.

One person families, families without children etc are considered relevant to family policy as well as the traditional nuclear family.

Poland

Not mentioned/not applicable.

Portugal

The Ministry for Labour and Social Solidarity is the main coordinating body for family policy. This ministry is responsible for social policy, employment and professional training policies, family policy, gender equality in work and employment, policies for disabled people and for children at risk. The Ministry is divided into three Secretariats of State: Secretariat of State for Social Security, Secretariat of State for Employment and Professional Training and Deputy Secretariat of State and for Disability. The latter acts as the main crosscutting, interdepartmental body for family affairs.

The articulation of different policies, in particular between social policy, employment policy, gender equality policy, educational policy and family policy, is one of the main functions of the entities coordinated by the Deputy Secretariat of State. Moreover, as a result of the emphasis of the current Socialist party programme on the important connections between family policy and gender equality policy, particular attention is given to the articulation between these two policy areas and to the cooperation between the two members of government responsible for family policy (Minister of Labour and Social Solidarity) and for gender equality policy (Secretary of State attached to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers).

We also must refer that there is a Commission for Equality on Labour and Employment (CITE), a tripartite body, established in 1979, constituted by government representatives and social partners. Its main objectives are the promotion, in private and public sectors, of equality and non-discrimination between women and men at work, employment and vocational training, the protection of maternity and paternity and the reconciliation of work and family life. CITE responds to the hearings and debates promoted by public and private entities as well as monitories and registers the results of inspections and of court decisions concerning discriminatory employment practices.

CITE is attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

Russian Federation

In the Russian Federation the initial point by elaborating strategic documents in above mentioned spheres is understanding the close correlation and the interdependency of family, gender and social policies.

In this connection, family policy is realized according to principles of gender equality, by realisation of gender policy a special attention is paid to the necessity of gender equality in the family. The objectives of family and gender policies are also taken into account by elaborating the objectives of social policy.

The Ministry of Economic Development has the main responsibility for the realization of macroeconomic policy, including social policy. The Ministry of Health Care and Social Development has the main responsibility for the realization of gender policy, family

policy and employment policy. All matters in the mentioned spheres are dealt in coordination of these two ministries. If necessary, other ministries are included into the process, primarily the Ministry of Finance. There is no interdepartmental body in the mentioned spheres. If required, joint work groups and provisional consulting bodies are created.

Serbia

There are a few ministries included at the moment. Until the last year, the department that was dealing with employment matters was a part of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and now it is a part of the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development. Since parliamentary elections in Serbia are planned for 11th of May, there is a possibility that after formation of a new government ministries become reorganised again. Therefore, it is to be concluded that employment might again be adjoined to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, but there is also a possibility that social policy issues might be detached in a separate ministry. It is necessary to wait until the end of the summer in order to have a more precise answer to this question, at least when it regards Serbia. Coordination body, as such, doesn't exist. Each ministry carries out matters from its own jurisdiction, but in cooperation with and by gaining opinions from other responsible ministries in whose jurisdiction the matters in question could fall under. Within Ministry of Labour and Social Policy there is a Department for Family Care and Social Protection which deals with issues regarding protection of family and children, from drafting laws, strategies and action plans to conducting more concrete measures such as providing financial assistance, overseeing the work in social centres and improvement of their working standards. Note: the Population Policy Department has been dissolved. Its mandate has been delegated to the Section for Population Policy and Income Support for Families with Children) There are separate organisational units – marriage and family counselling services - attached to bigger centres for social work. The basic scope of their activities include:

1. Counselling and therapy services offered to families, couples and individuals. The overview of the issues on account of which clients turn to the units for assistance indicates that in major cases the clients are concerned with matters related to family, including various parent-child relation problems, disruption of family patterns and roles, and behaviour of the child, and the issues concerning period ahead of divorce. Then, there are challenges are partnership issues (different types of marital crises, problems in communication and of reserved demeanour (disengagement) in partnership relations). Also, there are cases to which divorce therapy was applied, and those that have mostly been referred to from centres for social work. Fifth group of issues include cases of domestic violence.

2. Prevention is extremely important activity of counselling services, and takes the form of the following:

- a) Counselling and therapy to prevent further disfunctioning of family and stimulate healthy and sound development of family strengths;
- b) Research of in-house practice regarding therapy process offered, its effects and of the clients' specific needs;
- c) Dissemination of information to general public on services offered by the counselling services for their more effective application, public awareness raising on the need for improved and holistic support to contemporary family, and promotion of sound principles underpinning family life;
- d) Training for professional staff focused to advancement of in-house practices offered to families, and establishment of peer and institutional networks to address contemporary family concerns. To date, effective co-operation has been established with a number of organisations and institutions addressing family issues, both taking concrete steps towards solutions, and organising activities carried out by the network to provide more efficient assistance to clients.

More specifically, prevention activities offered in the marriage and family counselling services consist of concrete prevention programmes. As services are offered in specific context, therefore there is unique opportunity to recognize and understand challenging trends of family functioning and creation of thematically focused and targeted prevention programmes. These programmes (e.g. school for parents, development of partnership relations, and prevention of problem development related to behaviour of the youth, etc.) are aimed to prevention of further development of problems in different areas of family functions.

Council of Europe Family Policy Database

www.coe.int/familypolicy/database



Slovakia

Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic is responsible for coordination of state family policy. Family policy creates one part of the policies within the framework of ministry responsibilities. Other relevant ministries cooperate mutually.
Governmental Council for children and youth is non-functional this time.
Establishment of Governmental Council for gender policy was approved by the Slovak Government in 2007.
The first common session of executive and consultation committee of the Council took place in April 2008.

Slovenia

Family policy is implemented, on the basis of the Resolution on the Principles of Family Policy (The Resolution on the Principles of Family Policy in Slovenia in 1993 (Ur.L. RS 40/1993), a planning-strategic document which determines the values and goals of development of individual parts of family policy within the competence of various ministries and governmental offices.

The coordination of measures with regard to equal opportunities policy is the responsibility of the Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Equal Opportunities. Article 13 of the Act on Equal Opportunities for women and men, stipulates that ministers shall appoint for their respective fields of work an official within the ministry who shall perform the duties of a co-ordinator for equal opportunities for women and men. The co-ordinator shall be responsible for the implementation of duties within the competence of the ministry on the basis of this Act and shall co-operate for this purpose with the Office for Equal Opportunities.

Other mentioned policies (employment and social protection policy, etc.) are coordinated inside the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs.

Spain

The responsibility for policies related to gender equality is cross-cutting. There exists a division in each ministry in charge of the policies.

All of Government plans which may affect social policy, employment, health, and education, take into account attention to families as an important variable.

In 2007 the State Council and Observatory for Families was created, attached to the Ministry of Education, Social Policy and Sport. In this Council, all ministerial units of Government with responsibility in family matters are represented. The Council and the Observatory have the responsibility and the goal to establish the collaboration and participation of families through the represented associations.

Sweden

As regards the main responsibility, see above.

The Government Offices is nonetheless a single authority and the different ministries cooperate in various issues that concern family policy.

The Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality is a crosscutting ministry dealing with overall gender issues which may have an impact on family policy, but the main responsibility lies with the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

There is a coordination office at the Prime Minister's Office for the four different government parties, i.e. the Moderate Party, the Liberal Party, the Centre Party and the Swedish Christian Democrats, where issues that concern several different ministries are coordinated.

Council of Europe Family Policy Database

www.coe.int/familypolicy/database



Switzerland

Au niveau de l'administration fédérale, plusieurs services s'occupent directement ou indirectement des questions familiales et/ou d'autres politiques apparentées. Mis à part le domaine FGS susmentionné, les principaux services concernés sont les suivants:

- l'Office fédéral des assurances sociales (OFAS) s'occupe de la prévoyance vieillesse et survivants et de l'assurance-invalidité, ainsi que de la politique sociale en général;
- l'Office fédéral de la justice (OFJ) est compétent pour le droit de la famille (droit matrimonial, droit de la filiation, protection de l'enfance, etc.), pour les questions touchant l'adoption internationale et l'enlèvement international d'enfants, pour le droit pénal, ainsi que pour l'aide aux victimes d'infractions;
- le Bureau fédéral de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes (BFEG) s'occupe de l'égalité des sexes, de la compatibilité entre vie professionnelle et vie familiale, ainsi que de la violence conjugale;
- le Secrétariat d'Etat à l'économie (seco) s'occupe de la compatibilité entre vie professionnelle et vie familiale et, d'une manière générale, de la politique économique et de l'emploi;
- le Secrétariat d'Etat à l'éducation et à la recherche (SER) et l'Office fédéral de la formation professionnelle et de la technologie (OFFT) traitent des questions de formation professionnelle et de formation en général;
- l'Office fédéral de la santé publique (OFSP) est compétent pour l'assurance-maladie et la promotion de la santé. Il tient une liste des centres de consultation familiale et de consultation en matière de grossesse;
- l'Administration fédérale des contributions (AFC) est compétente pour l'imposition des familles.

Les services précités sont soumis à plusieurs départements (ministères) différents. Il n'existe pas d'instance intersectorielle mais le domaine FGS de l'OFAS a une fonction de coordination et veille à ce que les intérêts des familles soient pris en compte et respectés dans les projets législatifs fédéraux.

Turkey

Family policy is part of social policy in our country and closely related with others which are concerning gender, employment policies. Directorate General of the Status and Problems of Woman is responsible for gender policies, Ministry of Labour and Social Security is responsible for employment policy. Each unit is the coordinating body and there is not any crosscutting body.

Ukraine

Under the Ministry of Ukraine for Family, Youth and Sport Affairs are working Coordination Council for Gender Issues and Family problems. There are many ministries involved in it, a specially, Ministry of Economic, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Science and Education, Ministry of Finances and some other. Ministry of Ukraine for Family, Youth and Sport is the main responsibility one and it is coordinator of activities.

United Kingdom

Government departments leading on other functions important to families and children include:

- The Department for Work and Pensions - child poverty, welfare to work conditions and child maintenance payments
- The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (formerly the Department for Trade and Industry) - employment law including parental leave
- HM Treasury - tax and benefits
- Ministry of Justice - Youth Justice Board

There is a cross-departmental Ministerial Sub-Committee on Families, Children and Young People to consider policy affecting families, children and young people. HM Treasury also plays a strong role in setting the priorities for spending on family policy.