



## **Action for gender equal growth policies**

**Summary and analysis of action plans in Winnet 8**

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## Introduction

Winnet 8 is a transnational project funded by the EU Interreg IVC program. Winnet 8 is intended to capitalize previous experiences of integrating a gender perspective in local, regional and national growth policies. These experiences were made in a number of projects exporting the Swedish model of Women Resource Centres (WRCs) to other European Union member states. In Winnet 8, these efforts are to be consolidated by the involvement of local, regional and national actors in eight member states: Bulgaria, Finland, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and UK. The actors in each country are to be engaged in policy development to address the problems with low employment rates among women in combination with horizontally segregated labour markets and the lack of women in entrepreneurship, innovation and technology. These problems are perceived as obstacles for regional competitiveness.

In order to achieve the intended policy development, Multi Actor Groups (MAGs) have been established in the participating regions. These groups include representatives from managing authorities, local and regional authorities, research institutes, social partners and NGOs. The MAGs have used a gender perspective to analyse growth policies in their own regions

and have elaborated action plans in order to improve these policies. In these efforts, the MAGs have been inspired by the other W8 partners' practices of integrating a gender perspective in growth policies. This inspiration has been enhanced by the study visit that each MAG has carried out in another region involved in Winnet 8.

This report summarises and analyses the action plans in order to give an encompassing picture of how the MAGs in Winnet 8 want to influence growth policies in their regions to become more gender equal.

## Data and template

The data informing this encompassing report is constituted by written action plans from the MAGs in Bulgaria, Scotland, Portugal, Greece, Poland, Finland, Sweden and Italy. In Poland, two MAG's have been active in two different regions. This has resulted in two different action plans for Poland. The action plans comprise approximately 10-20 pages each. There are two versions of each action plan (except from Scotland) – one in the language of the specific country and one translated into English.

In order to enhance the development of action plans, the MAG's were provided with a template by the project management. The template is attached in Appendix 1. The template comprised eight themes to be addressed by the MAG's. These themes were:

- Visions
- Objectives/purpose
- Present situation

- Challenges/development points
- Detailed objectives
- Steps/tasks
- Resource allocation
- Expected obstacles

At the Winnet 8 partnership meeting in Scotland, 14 Sep 2010, representatives from the Ruralia Institute in Finland presented a Powerpoint-presentation titled “Winnet 8 action plan preparation” in order to get the process started. There it was stated that the action plans constitute the key product of capitalisation projects such as Winnet 8. The action plans are intended to influence the new policy programs for regional growth being inaugurated in 2014. It was also explained that the action plans would “describe how the good practises will be implemented in the selected (regional) operational programmes”. According to the presentation, the action plans can only identify good practices, not implement them. The implementation must be financed outside the Winnet 8 project. It was stressed that the collection of good practices partly would take place during the study visits that each MAG has carried out to another participating region. Good practices could thereto be identified elsewhere during the course of the project.

The presentation also underlined the importance of involving the managing authorities from the very beginning, thus securing an impact on the upcoming program period. Ultimately, each action plan should be signed by the respective managing authority and relevant regional stakeholders. It was emphasized that there has to be several other local, regional and/or national

stakeholders involved in the development of the action plans, especially those who later will play a key role in implementing the good practices in their regions. The involvement of politicians on different levels was also perceived as crucial, as they will influence the objectives and content of the new policy programs.

The action plans are structured in various ways despite the provided action plan template. Most action plans comprise an initial background, describing the situation in their regions and identifying obstacles and possibilities for gender equal regional growth policies. In the upcoming sections, the action plans are summarized and analyzed in manner that is structured according to the eight themes in the action plan template. Since not all action plans are structured according to the eight themes provided in the action plan template, the information in the eight thematic sections of this report have been identified afterwards.

## Visions

Liisa Horelli, one of two head gender expert researchers in Winnet 8, noted initially that the participants in Winnet 8 had not been particularly engaged in formulating visions for their participation (Horelli 2011). This might have constituted a problem in the Winnet 8 process, since “collectively constructed visions are important, because they are usually built on the basis of shared values and they guide the aim, which again directs the choice of objectives” (Horelli & Lindberg 2011, p 7). The initial lack of visions might have caused the confusion articulated

by several project participants throughout the Winnet 8 process concerning what the project was supposed to attain. The confusion also concerned the role of Women Resource Centres (WRCs) in the project, since such organisations did not exist in all of the participating regions. Such centres had played a crucial role in the development of the Winnet 8 project and the project description stated that Winnet 8 should strengthen WRCs as an actor in the implementation of regional growth policies. In Portugal, representing one of the participants lacking WRCs, this confusion was handled by articulation of the following vision:

“Until 2012, have in Alentejo Central, a Resource Centre for Employment, Entrepreneurship and Gender Equality, working for the promotion of gender equality, promotion of female entrepreneurship and increasing skills in new technologies and innovation.” (Portugal)

In order to reduce the gap between regions with and without WRCs, Horelli (2011) made a survey of the existence of traditional WRCs as well as support structures similar to WRCs in the eight countries. Traditional WRCs were found in Sweden, Finland and Greece. Similar support structures were found in Finland, Poland, Scotland. Italy has had WRCs before, but none of these are presently active. Portugal lacks WRCs altogether. No data was found concerning Bulgaria. The study revealed that the two groups of traditional WRCs and similar support structures have some basic elements in common, e.g. the

ambition to empower women in local and regional development by counselling, networking and projects. The WRCs tend to vary, though, in terms of their organisation, resources, visions, activities, target groups, and outcomes. Horelli (ibid, p 9) concludes that the visions of the identified WRCs “are more or less objectives that deal with the improved gender-aware culture and policies that will enhance the fair distribution of resources for women and even for men in a variety of areas”. These identified themes of gender in cultures/policies and in resource distribution seem to have characterised not only the different types of WRCs in Winnet 8 but also the project as a whole.

Most action plans developed within Winnet 8 contain clearly articulated visions. The two all-embracing themes (policies and resources) are specified and complemented by a number of visions, such as:

- Gender equality as an essential part of regional growth policies (Finland)
- Awareness of the contribution of gender equality to economic growth (Scotland)
- Gender equal distribution of regional growth funding (Sweden)
- Gender equal allocation of budgetary resources at all levels (Bulgaria)
- Maximized participation of women in the society and the labour market (Greece)
- Extensive use women’s economic potential (Poland West Pomerania)
- Poverty reduction as the majority of the poorest people in the world are women (Bulgaria)

The two main themes of policies and resources are thus complemented by visions concerning women's participation in – and contribution to – society, economy and labour market. These three themes are articulated in the visions of the Swedish and Italian action plans:

"Our vision is for politics and distribution of development funding in the region to be gender-equal and for political discussions to also encompass a social dimension. Women's ideas, innovations and entrepreneurship are utilised and the labour market is no longer gender-segregated." (Sweden)

"A different institutional approach to gender equality issues, based on integrated policies that, rooted in a regional gender equality code, promote a new cultural model, to overcome gender stereotypes and enhance each person for her/himself." (Italy)

In addition, several of the action plans propose a link between gender equality and economic growth/poverty reduction. In the Finnish and Polish action plans, this causality is articulated in the following manner:

"Increasing gender equality is seen as an essential part of regional development and it is recognised as an important contributor to regional growth." (Finland)

"Gender issues will be effectively linked to the area of economic policy, and not only to the social issues" (Poland West Pomerania)

It is not only visions of economic revenues that are emphasised in the action plans. The social results are also advocated, implying improved life quality. In the Polish and Bulgarian action plans, this sort of results is articulated in the following manner:

"Changing the quality of life of women by giving them access to education, training and job." (Poland Leborg)

"The equal participation of men and women in sharing the public and household responsibilities allows for full participation of both genders in the area of social and professional realization." (Bulgaria)

Summarising the visions articulated in the action plans, three main themes appear: regional growth policies, resource distribution and women's participation/contribution. These three themes are connected to two different outcomes: economic and social.

## Objectives

In structural models of project organisation, the formulated visions are supposed to guide the aim of the projects, which in turn are supposed to affect the choice of objectives (Horelli & Lindberg 2011). In the action plans of the Winnet 8 participants, a number of objectives have been formulated. These can

be categorised in three different themes: 1) Changing policies, 2) Achieving gender equality, and 3) Increasing women's participation. Each theme embraces a number of areas, as follows.

#### Changing policies:

- Achieving the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy (Bulgaria)
- Achieving regional growth (Portugal)
- Achieving coordinated actions on gender issues (Italy)

#### Gender equality:

- Gender equality in regional growth policies (Bulgaria, Finland, Sweden)
- Gender equality in the economic, social and political areas (Bulgaria)
- Gender equality in the labour market (Portugal, Sweden)
- Gender equality in economic policy (Poland WP)
- Gender equality in entrepreneurship and innovation (Finland)

#### Increase women's participation:

- Increase women's participation in the labour market (Portugal, Poland West Pomerania, Poland Lebork)
- Increase women's participation in decision making (Greece, Poland West Pomerania)
- Increase women's participation in economic and social life (Greece)
- Integrate women's experiences in regional politics (Sweden)

The three themes and the areas they concern harmonises quite well with the all-embracing ambitions in Winnet 8, to induce policy

development to tackle low employment rates among women, the horizontally segregated labour market and the lack of women in entrepreneurship, innovation and technology. The ambition to change policies is prominent both in Winnet 8's project description and in the action plans. Gender equality is another joint feature since the overall objective of Winnet 8 is to contribute to sustainable gender equal regional growth. This is reflected in the objective presented in the Bulgarian action plan:

“The main objective of this Action Plan is to promote gender equality and the establishment of guarantees of equal treatment, equal access to the resources of society and equal participation of women and men in decision making with a view to their successful personal and social realization and promotion of equality between women and men in all spheres of social, economic and political life.”  
(Bulgaria)

Also the importance of women's participation/contribution is emphasised both in the action plans and the project description, in addressing the under-representation of women in certain parts of the labour market. This is reflected in the action plans of Poland and Sweden:

“Women empowerment and improvement of the quality of women's life in the region as a result of a better financial or economic situation.”

(Poland West Pomerania)

“Women’s experiences be clearly represented in regional politics, women’s ideas, innovations and entrepreneurship is more highly valued and utilised, the division of structural funding is more equally divided than it is today”  
(Sweden)

The focus on labour market is another joint feature. As the project description of Winnet 8 notes, the participants from northern Europe have among the most horizontally segregated labour markets in EU-27, whilst the participants from southern and eastern Europe have less segregated labour markets. On the other hand the employment rates among women are lower in these countries, which probably contribute to their labour markets being less segregated by “hiding” women’s working areas. The labour market focus is reflected in the objective articulated in the Finnish action plan:

“Promote regional development and growth in the South Ostrobothnian region by increasing gender equality on the labour market.” (Finland)

Summarising the objectives articulated in the action plans, three main themes appear: changing policies, achieving gender equality and increasing women’s participation/contribution. These three themes are linked to a number of areas, such as regional growth policies on the regional and European level, decision making, labour market, entrepreneurship, innovation.

## Present situation

The action plans describe the situation in the regions participating in Winnet 8. In general, there are two types of descriptions: one based on areas and another based on incentives. The mentioned areas are mainly coherent with the overall themes of Winnet 8, that is labour market, entrepreneurship, innovation and ICT. In addition, the areas of stereotypes, education, health and violence are mentioned in some action plans. The incentives for integrating a gender perspective in regional growth policies are, according to the action plans, economic growth, resources, democracy, power and policy goals.

Starting with the areas describing the present situation, labour market is the most common area addressed in the action plans. Three aspects of the labour market are emphasised: women’s employment rates, gender segregation and part-time employment. As was stated earlier, women’s employment rates are lowest in the southern and eastern parts of Europe, which is reflected in the Italian and Polish action plans:

“In the Veneto Region: 78% occupied men vs. 52% occupied women.” (Italy)

“Women’s economic activity of in the region, and in Poland in general, has been declining. In 1999 the number of women active in the labour market in the region was 62%. Ten years later, in 2009, there were only 54% of them.” (Poland West Pomerania)

“High level of unemployment among women, the reduction of jobs, lack of access to activating programs, low qualifications, unequal opportunities in the labour market, passivity and helplessness of life of women.” (Poland Leborg)

market and less in transportation.” (Italy)

Part-time employment is another gendered aspect of the labour market, since it seems to determine women’s economic situation. This is addressed by the Polish and Scottish action plans:

According to the Winnet 8 project description, gender segregation in the labour market is most common in the Nordic countries, which is reflected in the Finnish and Swedish action plans, but contradicted by the recent development noted in the Italian action plan:

“The vast majority of all employed women and men are full time workers. In the province 96% of the employed men and 91% of the employed women worked in the full time system.” (Poland West Pomerania)

“Even though women participate actively in the working life, the labour market in Finland is very strongly segregated into female and male jobs.” (Finland)

“Employment rates for women in Scotland and the UK are generally comparatively high amongst other EU Member States but unequal as women’s participation within the labour market tends to be concentrated around low-paid, part time employment.” (Scotland)

“Northern Middle Sweden has a strongly gender-segregated labour market. This means that the women and men in our region live such different lives – different workplaces and networks – that they cannot expect to fully represent one another politically.” (Sweden)

The action plans thereto describe some of the initiatives that have been taken in their regions to address the labour market issues presented above. In the Scottish and Finnish action plans, such initiatives are described in the following manner:

“Women are increasingly required to work in the care and educational services systems and less in the secondary industrial sector, while men are increasingly required to work in the ICT and in the qualified mansions of the construction

“Close the Gap, the Scottish Trade Union Congress (Women’s Committee) and work in partnership with government to positively influence the pay gap and address occupational segregation.” (Scotland)



“Within the Equalities Unit of Scottish Government some research and policy development has been undertaken to identify progress made by Scottish public authorities in tackling occupational segregation to enable Scottish Ministers to report against the requirements of the Gender Equality Duty.” (Scotland)

“The experiences gained via these projects proved that the sectors – transport and metal industry – that are traditionally seen as male jobs – are actually suitable for women also, and in the work itself there are no grounds as such for gender segregation.” (Finland)

Another area commonly mentioned in the action plans is entrepreneurship. The importance of entrepreneurship for women is underlined, levels of entrepreneurship among women and men are presented and initiatives to promote women’s entrepreneurship are depicted. The importance of entrepreneurship for women is described in the following manner by the Greek action plan:

“During periods of increased unemployment, entrepreneurship could be a significant source for reinforcing employment.” (Greece)

Levels of entrepreneurship among women and men are presented in a number of action plans, e.g. the Finnish one:

“The female entrepreneur activity (6, 9 %) is significantly lower than that of men (13, 2 %).” (Finland)

Initiatives to promote women’s entrepreneurship are depicted in the following manner by the Finnish, Scottish and Swedish action plans:

“Promotion of women’s entrepreneurship has been included in the national level policies as well as in the structural fund strategies”. (Finland)

“Current supporting measures are aimed at entrepreneurs in general, disregarding the clear need for tailored support for male and female entrepreneurs.” (Finland)

“The economic case promoting women in enterprise and innovation has never featured in the Scottish Government’s mainstream economic strategies.” (Scotland)

“Business Gateway services across Scotland are managed through the Local Authorities. None of the Business Gateways in Scotland have dedicated services for women or specific

targets to increase women's entrepreneurship." (Scotland)

"Our action plan is not aimed at actual support of women's entrepreneurship but rather to ensuring that women's entrepreneurship and ideas are valued as highly as men's." (Sweden)

Another area addressed by the action plans is innovation and ICT<sup>1</sup>. Some of the highlighted aspects concern women's contribution to innovation – particularly when working in the service sector – and the importance of ICT for women and society. The first-mentioned aspect is present in the Finnish, Polish and Swedish action plans:

"Women contribute only with a very minor share to all innovations." (Finland)

"Service sector in West Pomerania is, in many aspects, less innovative than in other Polish regions." (Poland West Pomerania)

"The gender-segregated labour market, in combination with that gender stereotypes affect choice of strength areas, means that women's opportunities to further develop their companies and innovation are fewer than men's." (Sweden)

The last-mentioned aspect is present in the Greek and Polish action plans:

"Information Communication Technologies (ICT) play an increasingly important role in today's life, particularly in connection with employment and entrepreneurship. Women, even at European level, are lagging behind in the use of new technologies, research and innovation." (Greece)

"ICT is one of the most dynamic sectors of economy and participation in this sector enables women to influence economic growth and alleviate the effects of the economic crisis." (Poland West Pomerania)

In addition to the three areas of labour market, entrepreneurship and innovation/ICT – all describing the present situation in the participating regions of Winnet 8, four less commonly mentioned areas are present in some of the action plans. These are stereotypes, education, health and violence. The Bulgarian and Greek action plans describe the issues of stereotypes and education in the following manners:

"Drastic cases of gender discrimination in the country are rare. However, the old stereotypes about the role of men and women in public and in private life still exist." (Bulgaria)

<sup>1</sup> ICT= Internet and Communication Technologies

“Eliminate stereotypes of teachers and to promote the choice of further studies and/or career, for both boys and girls, based on their interests and inclinations.” (Greece)

Moving on to the incentives for integrating a gender perspective in regional growth policies, four different types are mentioned in the action plans. These are economic growth, resources, policy goals and power/democracy. Existing research reveals that the choice of incentives affects the prospects of achieving long-term results (Brulin & Svensson 2011). There are mainly three types of incentives when initiating projects with ambitions to change present structures: opportunistic incentives, instrumental incentives and organisational development incentives. Opportunistic incentives are those following prevailing, dominant trends of concepts, models, ideals etc. Such incentives are particularly perceivable in projects striving to induce economic growth, since that is a concept and a societal ideal that has become very trendy lately. It is also a concept and ideal that has been characterised by consensus in the sense that everyone is supposed to agree with its prominent position as important political ideal. Instrumental incentives are those intended to achieve something else than the specified objective. Such incentives are particularly perceivable in projects striving to realise policy goals, since such goals are set in order to achieve certain things in a number of areas other than policy. Organisational development incentives are those intended to evoke structural change in organisations, implying re-orientation of existing activities.

Such incentives are particularly perceivable in projects striving to attain an equal resource distribution or focusing power/democracy. This is since both resources and power imply deconstruction of existing norms and thus expose the need for thorough re-orientation of values, goals, implementation, work division, evaluation etc.

According to Brulin & Svensson (2011), it is primarily the third type of incentives – organisational development incentives – that evoke long-term changes of prevalent structures. The other incentives tend to evoke results that sustain only for a limited time, followed by a restoration of the earlier organisational order (cf. Abrahamsson 2000). This indicates that the incentives with the highest prospects of long-term change are resources and power/democracy. Resources are mentioned as a motive in several of the action plans. The term resources is then interpreted as labour force supply, economical assets, distribution of public funding and priority areas of regional growth. Resources in terms of labour force supply are mentioned in the Swedish and Finnish action plans:

“We are facing a growing need for specialised skills at the same time as a large part of the current workforce retires. It is easier to find the right person for the right job if recruitment is carried out based on the whole population.” (Sweden)

“Regions with high labour segregation are slow to react to

the swift changes of the global market economy.” (Finland)

Resources in terms of economical assets are mentioned primarily in the Bulgarian action plan:

“Today the world is going through economic recession and often women are most affected by the crisis due to the pre-existing inequality, which means that they have fewer assets, such as education and resources, to protect them from financial and environmental shocks.” (Bulgaria)

“Women and men have unequal access to resources and their management, including money, education, land property and assets, decision making and political power.” (Bulgaria)

Resources in terms of distribution of public funding and priority areas of regional growth are mentioned primarily in the Swedish action plan:

“Research shows that women are disadvantaged in a number of areas regarding division of structural funding. The one-sided investment in male-dominated areas of business means that those areas that are female dominated do not receive the same opportunities.” (Sweden)

“To find and highlight productive business areas outside the steel and engineering industries, paper/pulp and timber industries could lead to the identification of new areas of strength and subsequently give a better use of resources.” (Sweden)

Democracy and power are mentioned as incentives in a few of the action plans, primarily in the Bulgarian and Italian ones:

“Promoting gender equality and women's rights are not only of critical importance, but they are also a fundamental human right and a matter of social justice.” (Bulgaria)

“Any denial of human rights just because of gender is pure injustice.” (Bulgaria)

“Women lack a fundamental tool to improve life – power.” (Bulgaria)

“We have a low rate of women participation in democratic life and decision making roles” (Italy)

Proceeding to those incentives categorised as opportunistic and instrumental and thus not as obviously connected to long-term change – that is economic growth and policy goals – it can be concluded that both occur in several of the action plans. Sometimes these two incentives are combined, as in the action plans of Bulgaria and Scotland:

“Gender equality is also strongly addressed in the Europe 2020 strategy, which reflects the desire for growth.” (Bulgaria)

“Higher growth, employment rates and social cohesion are unthinkable without the equal participation of women in all areas of public life. Creation of such guarantees is becoming one of the prerequisites for successful implementation of the Lisbon Strategy.” (Bulgaria)

“The message that equality makes economic sense needs to be mainstreamed across the all Government Departments and across their partner agencies, especially those concerned with economic and business development and cascaded downwards through local authorities.” (Scotland)

Other action plans primarily advocate the importance of women’s participation for growth, as the Finnish and Swedish action plans:

“Increasing the participation of women in innovation and technology is not only an issue of equality but according to studies it also has a positive effect on economic growth.” (Finland)

“Potential of female entrepreneurship as one of the contributors in increasing

employment and supporting economic growth.” (Finland)

“Both genders’ experiences must be included when decisions are made as to which direction our region is heading and which areas are to be prioritised, that is if we are to increase growth.” (Sweden)

It can be concluded that none of the action plans question the common strive for economic growth, hence reinforcing its categorisation as an opportunistic incentive. However, the interpretation of the concept is challenged by the Swedish action plan, even if the prominent position of economic growth as a policy goal still prevails:

“The interpretation of growth cannot only be measured in terms of market economy as this excludes discussions about equality – clarify the role of equality in its contribution to growth.” (Sweden)

Some of the action plans mention certain policy programs and policy goals as incentives for integrating a gender perspective in regional growth policies. The Lisbon Strategy, the Europe 2020 strategy, the European Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men and the Women’s Charter adopted by the Beijing Action Platform mentioned in the Bulgarian and Swedish action plans. Other action plan mention national policies reinforcing gender equality, such as the Italian one:

“Gender equality are widely acknowledged and promoted in Italian laws, starting from the Italian constitution dated 1948.”  
(Italy)

Other action plans underline the importance of joint policy goals for initiating gender equality measures, such as the Bulgarian one:

“In the context of Bulgaria's membership in the European Union and in order to achieve compliance with the national legislation and practice with the European Community legislation and the Member States good practices, the municipal policy is oriented towards creating conditions for a general approach to promote equality between women and men and equality for all members of the society as well as increasing women's employment.” (Bulgaria)

“The presence of solid European standards on the equal gender treatment issue is an self-evident indicator of the need to establish separate and specific national policy for the creation of guarantees of equal treatment, equal access to society resources and equal participation of women and men in Bulgaria in the decision making process, with a view to their successful personal and social realization.”  
(Bulgaria)

The incentives discernable in the action plans – that is economic growth, resources, policy goals and power/democracy – are similar to those identified by Burman et al (2011). They highlight three different arguments that have been employed to justify the integration of gender equality in regional growth initiatives: the democracy argument, the resource argument and the growth argument (cf. Lombardo 2005, Walby 2005, Stensöta 2009). The democracy argument is based on the equal rights and protection against discrimination. All citizens should have the same right to influence societal issues and benefit from public policy strategies and programs. This argument appears both in the action plans that refer to human rights and in those that refer to policy goals. The resource argument implies that all human resources ought to be utilized in the society – otherwise it would be a waste of resources. This argument appears in those action plans arguing that women's resources should be utilized in terms of labour market, entrepreneurship and innovation. The growth argument implies that gender equality is presented as a means of achieving another political goal, namely the goal of economic growth. This means that growth is positioned as a universal goal that is not questioned. Instead, growth is even reinforced since gender equality measures are employed *in order to* achieve this goal, not for the sake of gender equality. This kind of argument occurs in several of the action plans.

Summarising the accounts of the present situation in the action plans, three main themes appear: labour market, entrepreneurship and innovation/ICT. In

addition, four smaller themes appear in a few action plans: stereotypes, education, health and violence. Within the theme of labour market, three aspects are focused in the action plans: women's employment rates, gender segregation and part-time employment. Within the theme of entrepreneurship, three aspects can be identified: importance of entrepreneurship for women, levels of entrepreneurship among women and men, as well as initiatives to promote women's entrepreneurship. Within the theme of innovation and ICT, two aspects are discernable: women's contribution to innovation as well as the importance of ICT for women and society. The account of the present situation also includes four incentives for integrating gender in regional growth policies: economic growth, resources, policy goals and power/democracy.

### Challenges/development points

After having described the present situation, the action plans proceed with an estimation of challenges due to each region's specific characteristics. Three main categories of challenges can be identified in the action plans: structures, awareness and gender specific needs. The category of structures embraces both policy institutions/proceedings and coordination/cooperation between different actors. Structures for policy institutions and proceedings are called for in order to facilitate the integration of gender in regional growth policies. Coordination and cooperation is also called for in order to unify the initiatives of different actors. In the

Greek, Italian and Bulgarian action plans, the issue of structures is formulated as follows:

"The need for new and permanent structures able to facilitate and influence the policy production for gender equality and the coordination and implementation of projects, actions and activities." (Greece)

"To define shared aims and strategies (agreement, partnership, meeting, networks) among institutions, actors and stakeholders dealing with gender equality issues" (Italy)

"There are still unregulated issues such as a mechanism for coordinating of unified national policy on equal opportunities for women and men, there is still no legal framework for achieving equality as consistency or substantive equality by implementing special measures in this area." (Bulgaria)

"Local authorities need to recognize the experience of the civil society, including that of women's organizations and the important role played by NGOs and national platforms for NGOs development in the process of development cooperation in order to increase the responsibility regarding gender equality." (Bulgaria)

Awareness is a second theme of challenges mentioned in some action plans. This awareness concerns gender issues and their importance in regional growth policies. The awareness also concerns the power distribution in such policies, highlighting the preferential right of interpretation in the formulation and implementation of policies. In the Polish and Swedish action plans, the issue of awareness is articulated in the following way:

“The greatest challenge may be the lack of public awareness of gender issues.” (Poland L)

“Women’s experiences are not utilised to the full in politics – who has the preferential right of interpretation? Which subjects are to be raised? Who is to be listened to?” (Sweden)

Gender specific needs form a second theme of challenges mentioned in some action plans. It is primarily women that are depicted as in need of certain measures and support. Such efforts are mainly designed to increase women’s skills and competences in order for them to be better suited for the labour market or entrepreneurship. This is articulated in the following manner in the Finnish and Greek action plans:

“To elevate the number of women entrepreneurs, we need specific actions and support that will better meet the challenges of female entrepreneurship.” (Finland)

“Increase the skills and competences of the women and consequently their participation in the employment and business creation.” (Greece)

The Finnish action plan thereto underlines the need to support men in order to increase their feasibility with the labour market:

“When dismantling gender segregation in the labour market, training men to female dominated sectors, e.g. social, education and health sectors, is equally important.” (Finland)

Other action plans advocate measures adapted to gender specific needs, but do not specify the gender of the target group, as in the Italian and Portuguese action plans:

“Promoting the knowledge and respect of gender differences and the empowerment of each person.” (Italy)

“Weak entrepreneurial spirit and risk aversion, Low demand and sufficient supply, Lack of some support services” (Portugal)

The three themes of structures, awareness and gender specific needs reflect the categorisation of gender mainstreaming efforts made by Squires (2005). She discerns three types of strategies when mainstreaming gender: inclusion, reversal and displacement. She connects the strategy of inclusion to a liberal type of feminism,



seeking gender-neutrality and conceiving people as autonomous. What is mainstreamed in this category is primarily formal equality of opportunities, realised by bureaucratic policy processes. Some of the identified structural challenges might adhere to this category, alongside those challenges concerning gender specific needs without specifying target groups. The strategy of reversal is associated to the stream of radical feminism, seeking recognition for a specifically female gendered identity and explicitly talking of “women” as a category. Mainstreaming is here seen as a way to include women’s voices. Those challenges concerning gender specific needs among women might adhere to this category. Squires links the third strategy – displacement – to a post modern type of feminism. There, “gender” is used as a verb instead of a noun. It is problematized how discourses ascribe gender to people, attributes and activities. Gender mainstreaming is then equivalent to norm diffusion, acknowledging a broad spectrum of identities, experiences and visions. This category of gender mainstreaming is most obvious in the challenges concerning awareness of gendered structures and power distribution. In addition, the identified structural challenges might adhere to this category. Squires underlines that the three strategies are to be regarded as complementary rather than competing or incompatible. She predicts that gender mainstreaming is most likely to be truly transformative when all three strategies are implemented side by side.

Summarising the challenges perceived in the action plans, three main themes appear:

structures, awareness and gender specific needs. Structures imply both policy institutions/proceedings and coordination/cooperation between different actors. Awareness concerns gender issues and their importance in regional growth policies as well as the power distribution in such policies. Gender specific needs includes primarily support to women but in some cases also support to men.

### Detailed objectives

The main objectives are specified in more specified objectives in the action plans. In this section, these detailed objectives will be categorised and analysed. The three main objectives of the action plans were: changing policies, achieving gender equality and increasing women’s participation. The detailed objectives primarily correspond to two of these main objectives, namely changing policies and increasing women’s participation. This does not mean that the objective of achieving gender equality is left unnoticed, but rather that it is implicit in the other two objectives. The main difference between the main and the detailed objectives is that the latter presents more details concerning measures, target groups and implementation.

The theme of changing policies includes the following detailed objectives:

- Legislation and guidelines for gender equal rights (Bulgaria)
- Integrate gender in strategic regional documents (Poland Lebork)

- Broader policy discussions, programme compositions and implementation (Sweden)
- Develop a new social and institutional approach to gender issues promoting gender mainstreaming (Italy)
- Develop methods for long-term involvement in bringing gender issues into economic policy (Poland West Pomerania)
- Priority for gender equal projects in Regional Operational Programs (Finland)
- Increase gender awareness among politicians, civil servants and business advisors (Sweden)
- Integrate women's enterprise into mainstream policies and strategies (Scotland)
- Highlight women's entrepreneurship and female-dominated business areas (Sweden)
- Increase participation of women in regional politics (Sweden)
- Increase entrepreneurship among women (Finland, Greece)
- Increased innovation and participation in technology among women (Finland, Greece)
- Promote women in science, engineering and technology sectors (Scotland)
- Increase women's participation in Decision Making Centers (Greece)
- Reduction of women's unemployment (Greece)

The list reveals that the theme of changing policies comprises a number of aspects in addition to policy programs and strategies, such as achieving gender equality, highlighting/integrating women's entrepreneurship and coordination of measures and actors. This reflects the challenges discussed in the previous section, where policy institutions/proceedings and coordination/cooperation between different actors are included alongside increased awareness of gendered structures and measures tailored for gender specific needs.

The theme of increasing women's participation includes the following detailed objectives:

The list exposes that the theme of increasing women's participation concerns a number of areas, such as regional policies, entrepreneurship, innovation, technology, decision making and labour market. In addition, some action plans mention the areas of violence, health and sexual harassment. The areas of the detailed objectives are thus similar to those mentioned in the accounts of the regions' present situation and thus cohere with the overall themes of the Winnet 8 project.

One of the detailed objectives surpasses the delimitations of the two themes of changing policies and increasing women's participation. That is the objective regarding the existence of Women Resource Centres (WRCs). Six out of nine action plans mention this as one of their detailed objectives. These action plans derive from Greece, Italy, Finland, Poland West Pomerania, Portugal and Scotland. Either they want to establish WRCs in their country or they want to secure the existence of present WRCs. Sweden does

not mention the existence of WRCs as a detailed objective in their action plan, but represents one of few countries with several active WRCs and mentions WRCs as an important actor in the implementation of their plan. The abundance of ambitions to establish or secure WRCs in the participating regions reflects the aspiration of the Winnet 8 project to strengthen WRCs as an actor in the implementation of regional growth policies. The historical development and the main characteristics of the WRC model will be briefly accounted for here, since it constitutes a crucial part of the action plans' suggestions for mainstreaming gender in regional growth policies. The origin of the WRC model can be traced back to the early 1990s when public funds were initiated to encourage the establishment of WRCs in Sweden. The aim of the funds was to increase women's participation in regional development policies. Since their initiation, WRCs in Sweden have systematically organized themselves at the local, regional and national level in Sweden by linking public, private and non-profit sector and academia around different topics such as entrepreneurship, labour market participation, new technologies (e.g. ICTs), services and creative industries. They have operated with a double strategy of support and counselling to individual women, on the one hand, and strategic actions intended to evoke structural change in policies, on the other (Lindberg 2010 & 2011). Gradually, the Swedish WRC model has been adopted internationally supported by various European Union funds. An important first step towards a European network for WRCs was the European Network of Resource Centers for Women (ENREC) funded by the

EU programme RECITE II within the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The network was led by an Italian organisation and involved partners from Sweden, Greece and Finland. Some of the partners involved in ENREC were later – in 2003 – granted funding from the ERDF programme Interreg III C for the project European Network of Women Resource Centres (W.IN.NET). Similar to ENREC, the project aimed at creating a European network of WRCs. Another international WRC project was Female Entrepreneurs' Meeting in the Baltic Sea Region (FEM), funded by the Interreg III B Baltic Sea Region (BSR) program, 2004-2007. The participating organisations came from Sweden, Finland, Norway, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. Subsequently, the association WINNET Europe was formed in 2006, gathering WRCs from 21 EU countries (Lindberg et al 2011). As Horelli (2011) and Lindberg (2010) have exposed, different WRCs vary considerably in their organisational forms, focus, activities and funding. Irrespective of this variation, the main functions of a WRC are generally to empower women and to support them in their efforts to realize their ideas of new businesses, employment or projects by counselling and networking (Lindberg 2011).

Summarising the detailed objectives of the action plans, three main themes appear: changing policies, increasing women's participation and existence of WRCs. The two first-mentioned themes are the same as the general objectives of the action plans. The theme of changing policies includes: policy programs and strategies, achieving gender equality, highlighting/integrating women's entrepreneurship as well as coordination of

measures and actors. The theme of increasing women's participation concerns the areas: regional policies, entrepreneurship, innovation, technology, decision making and labour market.

## Steps/tasks

The detailed objectives scrutinised in the previous section are specified even more in the steps/tasks presented in the action plans. These steps/tasks can be classified according to the same themes as the detailed objectives, but specified as three types of measures: measures for gender aware policies, measures for increasing women's participation and measures for establishing or securing WRCs.

Some of the measures for gender aware policies include a re-direction of the content of policy programs and strategies:

- Integrate gender equality in all policies and programs (Bulgaria)
- Integrate a gender perspective in innovation policies and strategies (Finland, Sweden)
- Re-think and widen the concept of innovation to cover also other fields than just technology. Highlight the importance of innovations in the private and public service sector. (Finland)
- Inventory of women's entrepreneurship, their networks and sectoral clusters (Sweden)
- Implementation of good practices from other Winnet 8 countries

(Poland West Pomerania, Poland Leborg, Scotland)

Other measures for gender aware policies include a re-direction of the proceedings when developing and implementing policies:

- Carry out gender analyses and incorporate gender equality principles in all laws, programs and plans adopted and implemented by the executive and local authorities (Bulgaria)
- Define of common set of indicators for policy texts, implementation and results (Bulgaria, Finland)
- Establish methods to quantify impact i.e. positive impact of gender equality and negative impact in business and economic terms of inequality (Scotland)
- Analysis on the effects and expenses of occupational gender segregation (Finland)
- Project applicants to ROP should be demanded to do a gender analysis (Finland)
- Promote gender equality via requirements when contracting service providers (Italy)
- Establish a "Regional Gender Umbrella" with a framework for planning policies and capitalising results (Greece)
- Establish networks across relevant sectors and areas including government and public sector, business, NDPBs, academia and NGOs (Scotland)

- Establish formal and inclusive spaces for dialogue with civil society (Bulgaria)

Some of the measures for gender aware policies are specifically targeted towards politicians, civil servants and other public employees:

- Implement a gender perspective into the everyday work of local and regional authorities (Poland West Pomerania)
- Create a training package to raise gender awareness among authorities, employers and business advisors (Sweden)
- Include gender equality as a part of training courses for regional employees and teachers (Italy)
- Interventions at primary and secondary education in order to eliminate stereotypes of teachers and to promote the choice of further studies and/or career, for both boys and girls, based on their interests and inclinations (Greece)
- Lobbying directed at authorities to address occupational segregation and promote female entrepreneurial activity (Scotland)

Proceeding to the measures suggested in the action plans for increasing women's participation, these include services such as counselling mentoring and networking; occupational, entrepreneurial and technical training; motivation of employers/businesses to recruit more women. This kind of measures is constituted by the following:

- Counselling services to unemployed and employed women by the Regional Women's Recourse Centre, aiming at personal development: self empowerment, self awareness, encouragement, self esteem etc (Greece)
- Counselling, mentoring, networking to potential women entrepreneurs (Finland, Greece, Poland West Pomerania, Portugal)
- Information, orientation and training for potential, new, existing and retiring entrepreneurs by cooperation between public sector and existing business advisors or by a virtual Resource Centre for Women Entrepreneurs (Finland)
- Establish women-only business angel syndicates (Scotland)
- Training of women in politics, EU knowledge and project design (Sweden)
- Motivation, support and occupational development of women in sectors dominated by male workers (Poland Leborg)
- Encouragement of young women to pursue science and technology studies (Finland)
- Promoting the use of computers, internet, new technology applications and research data among women (Greece)
- Training, qualifications and progression opportunities for women with the skills and confidence to pursue further education or employment in the ICT sector (Poland West Pomerania)

- Encouragement of innovation sectors to recruit more women (Finland)
- Direct work with existing employers/business in segregated sectors (Scotland)

The third type of measures – establishing or securing WRCs – includes:

- Establish and/or secure existence of a local/regional Women Resource Centre supporting women (Greece, Italy)
- Establish local, regional and national WRCs (Poland West Pomerania)
- Explore opportunities for Women’s Resource Centres as a method of achieving gender equality and economic growth (Scotland)
- Establish a virtual Resource Centre for Women Entrepreneurs (Finland)
- Establish a “Resource Centre for Employment, Entrepreneurship and Gender Equality” (Portugal)

Scrutinising the three types of measures presented in this section – for gender aware policies, increasing women’s participation and establishing or securing WRCs – a difference can be perceived in the way that gendered notions are handled. The measures for gender aware policies mainly reflect a view where gender is treated as a verb (rather than a noun), encouraging efforts to reach beyond dualistic notions of “women” and “men” for the benefit of more nuanced perceptions of gender. The measures for increasing women’s participation, on the other hand, underline the necessity to hang on to the concept of “women” in order to

compensate for unequal policies where this group is continuously marginalised and disadvantaged. Specific measures for women are suggested in eight of the nine action plans (Greece, Bulgaria, Italy, Finland, Poland West Pomerania, Poland Leborg, Scotland and Sweden). Only two action plans suggest measures targeting men (Bulgaria, Finland). The Italian action plan tries to balance between these two target groups by aspiring to:

“Empower and support each person, irrespective of their gender, and at the same time recognise that men and women need different kinds of support to reach their full potential.” (Italy)

In the light of this discussion about gender specific versus gender integrated measures, it is relevant to compare the suggested measures of the action plans with Squires’ (2005) categorisation of different types of gender mainstreaming. The various types differ in their potential to challenge and change the gendered structures of regional growth policies. As presented earlier, she discerns three types of strategies when mainstreaming gender: inclusion, reversal and displacement. The measures harmonising with the strategy of inclusion are more likely to be integrated in the policy agenda since they “only” demand formalised rights to gender equal influence and benefit from regional policy programs and projects. They do not promote a gender perspective on the goals of regional growth policies, nor do they challenge the segregating notions of “women” and “men” as homogenous and distinguishable groups. However, there are

few of the suggested measures in the action plans that harmonise with this type of gender mainstreaming. Possibly, some of the measures for gender aware policies might adhere to this strategy.

The measures intended to increase women's participation – as well as the measures for establishing or securing WRCs – are both coherent with the strategy of reversal. This strategy underlines the importance of women's contribution to regional growth. It thus recognises the importance of including a multitude of experiences and perspectives in regional growth policies. Measures coherent with this strategy tend to reinforce those very dualistic notions of gender that constitute the base of segregating gender orders, though, leaving them in a somewhat dubious position when striving to challenge normative concepts of gender. Hudson & Rönnblom (2007) conclude that women often are depicted as needy, lacking and deviant in regional development policies. Gender is thus constructed in a manner that separates women and men in their assumed need of public assistance, in relation to e.g. entrepreneurship and employment. Consequently, this segregating gender construction creates a subject position for men as a self-evident – more heterogeneous – actor in regional growth policies. This is a relevant concern for those measures intended to increase women's participation. Measures directed to women as a group are usually motivated by the predominance of men as clients and beneficiaries from the general public promotion on the areas of labour market, entrepreneurship and innovation. The way of solving this problem determines whether these gendered patterns

are challenged or reinforced, however. If the solution one-sidedly intends to remove barriers for helping individual women rather than changing gendered prejudices among policy makers, civil servants and business advisors, it is unlikely to change things in the long run (cf. Fältholm et al 2010) The design and motivation of measures specifically directed to women thus determines to what extent they reinforce or challenge prevalent gender structures of segregation and hierarchy.

Some of the steps/tasks suggested in the action plans for attaining gender aware policies appear to be in line with the strategy of displacement. This strategy questions the separation of "women" and "men" in two homogenous and distinguishable groups. Instead, it assumes that there are so many individual variations within each of these categories that it is more fruitful to analyse how gender is "done" in each situation when women and men are *ascribed* different attributes, competences and interests. This strategy thus has the greatest potential to challenge and change gendered norms in regional growth policies. But as Squires (2005) concludes, all strategies are needed in order to integrate gender in policies in an effective way. Walby (2005) thereto notes that strategies operating with more dualistic gender concepts are less likely to be rejected than those aspiring to re-orient existing gendered norms.

Summarising the steps/tasks suggested in the action plans, three types of measures are distinguishable: measures for gender aware policies, measures for increasing women's participation and measures for establishing

or securing WRCs. The measures for gender aware policies concern three aspects: content of policy programs and strategies, proceedings when developing and implementing policies, and targeting politicians, civil servants and other public employees.

### Resource allocation

Not even half of the action plans deal with the topic of resource allocation regarding their suggested measures. Some of the action plans that actually address this issue simply list those organisations and funds that might provide human or financial capital. Human resources are e.g. to be found among the MAG members and in local/regional authorities, employment offices or NGOs. Economic resources are to be found in regional and national programs as well as EU funds. The Italian action plan proposes a threefold division of funding: existing resources, existing laws and extra resources. The Bulgarian action plan stresses the need to acknowledge the unequal distribution of resources in the society:

“Today the world is going through economic recession and often women are most affected by the crisis due to the pre-existing inequality, which means that they have fewer assets, such as education and resources, to protect them from financial and environmental shocks.” (Bulgaria)

“Women and men have unequal access to resources and their

management, including money, education, land property and assets, decision making and political power.” (Bulgaria)

### Expected obstacles

About half of the action plans describe expected obstacles when implementing the suggested measures for integrating gender in regional growth policies in each region. Some of the main types of obstacles mentioned are resistance, power relations, mobilisation, financial resources and time-frame. Resistance is foreseen in the Italian, Polish, Swedish and Portuguese action plans:

“Resistance towards a change perspective” (Italy)

“Resistance to implementing the gender perspective into all the activities of the local, and regional authorities” (Poland West Pomerania)

“Unwillingness by some municipalities to adhere to the requests to cooperate in the implementation of the WRC” (Portugal)

“Lack of knowledge and understanding from involved actors” (Sweden)

“Backlash against ‘women only’ training from local councillors” (Poland West Pomerania)



Power relations are acknowledged in the Italian and Swedish action plans:

“Gender and power conflicts” (Italy)

“Men have the preferential right of interpretation and power, even in partnerships” (Sweden)

Mobilisation is perceived as a possible constraint in the Italian and Polish action plans:

“Difficulties in involving each actor and stakeholder” (Italy)

“The experts may come from different organizations and companies what may cause a problem with the implementation of a system of support and guidance.” (Poland Lebork)

Financial constrains are foreseen in the Portuguese and Scottish action plan:

“Financial constraints” (Portugal)

“Securing funding” (Scotland)

Time-frames are perceived as a plausible obstacle in the Scottish, Italian and Swedish action plans:

“Sustainability as long term commitment i.e. gender equality not just a flavour of the month but ongoing” (Scotland)

“Long time to achieve results” (Italy)

“Training in equality makes only a short-term difference” (Sweden)

The issue of obstacles in terms of resistance and power is somewhat of a never-ending story in the Winnet 8 project, as well as in previous efforts to establish and secure the existence of WRCs. Throughout the project, the participants and the project management have been challenged by altered policy conditions as well as by lack of understanding for and long-term funding of WRCs and other gender equality efforts. At the same time, they have enjoyed the support from several powerful policy institutions, as the European Commission and national/regional authorities, and from individuals on different levels. It is not surprising, though, that the project has met resistance in various forms. This is common in gender equality projects, since they aim to challenge and change existing gendered norms (cf. Eduards 1992, Smirthwaite 2009). Ambitions to change evoke various types of resistance and power demonstrations from those who prefer to keep things like they are. Efforts to redistribute power and resources can evoke strong reactions, which Smirthwaite (2009, p 15) notes:

“The greatest resistance in a change process for increased gender equality is perhaps [...] the reactions that may be expressed when resources and power are to be redistributed.”

Gender *inequality* is the root of economic and social revenue for some individuals and organisations, which must be acknowledged in order to unveil the dynamics of how gender is produced in ways that benefit certain groups of people and marginalise others. Since Winnet 8 aims to redistribute power and resources in regional growth policies, resistance is to be expected from those who benefit from keeping the prioritisation pattern unaltered.

## Good practices

In the Winnet 8 project, the participating regions have been encouraged to be inspired by good practices from each other's countries. Such practices concern the main topic addressed by Winnet 8 – that is gender mainstreaming in regional growth policies – but also the specific areas of labour market segregation and women's participation in entrepreneurship, innovation and ICT. In the action plans, the following good practices are esteemed as potentially fruitful to implement in the own region:

Girl Geek thematic events from Scotland (Finland, Sweden)  
 Women onto Work from Scotland (Greece)  
 Women@Work from Scotland (Italy)  
 WIT - Women's Technology Centre & Women Into Technology from Scotland (Poland WP)  
 Peterborough Women's Enterprise Center from UK (Finland, Scotland)  
 Integrated Perspective from Greece (Italy)  
 Ergani Centre from Greece (Poland L, Portugal)  
 MIRABAL from Portugal (Italy)  
 Naisway from Finland (Scotland)

JAKK – Adult education centre of Jalasjärvi from Finland (Poland L)  
 FEM - Female Entrepreneurs' Meetings in the Baltic Sea Region from Finland (Poland WP)  
 Women into local decision making from Finland (Sweden)  
 Gävleborg Jämt - Achieving an Gender Equal County of Gävleborg from Sweden (Poland WP)  
 Women Ambassadors for Entrepreneurship from Sweden (Finland)  
 På Lika Villkor (Equal Opportunities) from Sweden (Italy)  
 Fiber Optic Valley from Sweden (Scotland)

More information about the good practices can be found in the handbook published by the Winnet 8 project.

## Summarising the action plans

The list below summarises the Winnet 8 action plans and their visions, objectives, present situation, challenges, detailed objectives and steps/task.

*The visions* articulated in the action plans concern three main themes: regional growth policies, resource distribution and women's participation/contribution. These three themes are connected to two different outcomes: economic and social.

*The main objectives* articulated in the action plans concern three main themes: changing policies, achieving gender equality and increasing women's participation/contribution. These three themes are linked to a number of areas, such as regional growth policies on the regional

and European level, decision making, labour market, entrepreneurship, innovation.

*The accounts of the present situation* in the action plans reveal three main themes: labour market, entrepreneurship and innovation/ICT. In addition, four smaller themes appear in a few action plans: stereotypes, education, health and violence. Within the theme of labour market, three aspects are focused in the action plans: women's employment rates, gender segregation and part-time employment. Within the theme of entrepreneurship, three aspects can be identified: importance of entrepreneurship for women, levels of entrepreneurship among women and men, as well as initiatives to promote women's entrepreneurship. Within the theme of innovation and ICT, two aspects are discernable: women's contribution to innovation as well as the importance of ICT for women and society. The account of the present situation also includes four incentives for integrating gender in regional growth policies: economic growth, resources, policy goals and power/democracy.

*The challenges* perceived in the action plans concern three main themes: structures, awareness and gender specific needs. Structures imply both policy institutions/proceedings and coordination/cooperation between different actors. Awareness concerns gender issues and their importance in regional growth policies as well as the power distribution in such policies. Gender specific needs includes primarily support to women but in some cases also support to men.

*The detailed objectives* of the action plans concern three main themes: changing policies, increasing women's participation and existence of WRCs. The two first-mentioned themes are the same as the general objectives of the action plans. The theme of changing policies includes: policy programs and strategies, achieving gender equality, highlighting/integrating women's entrepreneurship as well as coordination of measures and actors. The theme of increasing women's participation concerns the areas: regional policies, entrepreneurship, innovation, technology, decision making and labour market.

*The steps/tasks* suggested in the action plans regard three types of measures: measures for gender aware policies, measures for increasing women's participation and measures for establishing or securing WRCs. The measures for gender aware policies concern three aspects: content of policy programs and strategies, proceedings when developing and implementing policies, and targeting politicians, civil servants and other public employees.

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### Appendix 1

#### WINNET 8

#### Action Plan model:

**Regional Action Plan for....(the objective of the AP specified by the region (if possible); e.g. “for supporting entrepreneurship of your persons” )**

#### The region:

##### **The Vision for the Action Plan:**

*What do you want to be achieved, changed and different in connection to sustainable gender integration (Winnet 8-objective) after you have implemented your Action Plan*

#### **General objectives and purpose of the Action Plan:**

description of the reasons why the AP has been chosen to be created and what is hoped to be achieved through the activities described in it

#### **Description of the present situation in connection to the objectives of the AP:**

- policy documents, programmes, strategies
- research available

- best practises already created and used in the region
- SWOT –analyses of the region

#### **Identified challenges and development points:**

- what are they
- how they were identified

#### **Detailed objectives based on the identified challenges:**

#### **Steps and tasks for meeting the objectives:**

- definitions and descriptions of the good practises to be transferred; what form they will take and how their implementation will be evaluated
- details on how the implementation will take place; description of the transfer process

#### **Resource allocation for the tasks:**

- organisations; names and roles of the main stakeholders in the region that will need to be involved in the implementation process
- competences needed for carrying out the implementation
- funding; identification of the relevant priority and measure concerned in the regional operational programme, along with the budget required to fund the implementation
- tools and methods

#### **Expected obstacles of completing the tasks:**