



# Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality

## 2016-2019

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Strategic Engagement  
**for Gender Equality**  
2016-2019



Dear Reader,

As European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, I am very pleased to introduce to you our Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019.

While Europe has made step-by-step progress over recent years, thanks to hard work at local, national and European level, gender equality still remains unfinished business. We are far from reaching equality, in particular in areas such as participation in the labour market, economic independence, pay and pensions, equality in leadership positions, fighting gender-based violence, and gender equality in our external action.

To guide the way forward for the European Union we gathered views from across Europe on gender equality – via a Eurobarometer survey, a Forum on the future of gender equality and an online public consultation. And we evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015).

This Strategic engagement to gender equality 2016-2019 marks a new phase in our efforts to promote equality between women and men while continuing to focus on priority areas for action of particular relevance. It identifies more than thirty key actions to be implemented in five priority areas, with timelines and indicators for monitoring. In addition, it emphasises the need to integrate a gender equality perspective into all EU policies as well as into EU funding programmes. This will be my strategy to ensure that gender equality is promoted across the EU through concrete actions and effective steps.

I look forward to working with you in the coming years to ensure that equality between women and men becomes ever more of a reality.



**Věra Jourová**

*Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Promoting gender equality is a core activity for the EU: equality between women and men is a fundamental EU value<sup>1</sup>, an EU objective<sup>2</sup> and a driver for economic growth<sup>3</sup>. The Union shall aim to promote equality between men and women in all its activities<sup>4</sup>.

The Commission's 2010-2015 strategy for equality between women and men<sup>5</sup> prioritised **five key areas for action**:

- ▶ **equal economic independence for women and men;**
- ▶ **equal pay for work of equal value;**
- ▶ **equality in decision-making;**
- ▶ **dignity, integrity and ending gender-based violence; and**
- ▶ **promoting gender equality beyond the EU.**

Progress has been achieved in recent years<sup>6</sup>, as witnessed, for example, by the highest employment rate ever recorded for women (64 % in 2014) and their increasing participation in economic decision-making. However, this upward trend is offset by persistent inequality in other areas, e.g. in terms of pay and earnings.

All five key areas identified in 2010 remain valid today. Action over the past five years to address gender inequalities needs more time to secure the necessary changes and support in the form of new measures in these areas. At the same time, recent socio-economic changes resulting from the economic crisis, the rapid spread of digital technology and immigration and integration impact on gender equality.

Therefore, as set out in its 2016 work programme<sup>7</sup>, the Commission will continue its practical work to promote gender equality. Action will continue with a focus on all the five priority areas. Efforts are required of all actors if we are to achieve real equality between women and men in all spheres of life within the EU and elsewhere. This “Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019” is a reference framework for increased effort at all levels, be they European, national, regional or local. It continues to corroborate the 2011-2020 European Pact for gender equality<sup>8</sup>.

Member States, the European Parliament and a wide range of stakeholders have all contributed, including through a public consultation which attracted almost 5 000 replies. An overwhelming majority (94 %) of the organisations that replied consider the priorities laid out in the current strategy still to be valid for future engagement.

This view is confirmed by Member States, who also recognise the importance of European-level action in providing a reference framework<sup>9</sup>. More and more Member States are addressing gender equality challenges through national strategies or action plans for equality between women and men (see Annex 5). These vary in focus and ambition, but all (see Annex 6) cover policies on gender-based violence and gender equality in the labour market. Education and training, gender stereotypes and the reconciliation of work and family life are also covered extensively; decision-making is the area addressed least.

1 Article 2 TEU.

2 Article 3 TEU.

3 OECD, *Closing the gender gap: act now*.

4 Article 8 TFEU.

5 *Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015* (COM(2010) 491).

6 See, for example: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/annual\\_reports/150324\\_annual\\_report\\_2014\\_web\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/annual_reports/150324_annual_report_2014_web_en.pdf).

7 COM(2015) 610.

8 See Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council conclusions, 7 March 2011.

9 Opinion of the Advisory Committee on equal opportunities for women and men on *Gender equality in the 21st century: remaining challenges and priorities*.

The “Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019” is based on continuous<sup>10</sup> and *ad hoc* evaluation<sup>11</sup> of the 2010-2015 strategy, which has concluded *inter alia* that it has added value in a number of areas, especially in relation to agenda-setting and learning, by providing a valuable framework for gender mainstreaming in the Commission and for the implementation of a coherent framework for gender-equality policies in the Member States.

Europeans feel strongly about promoting gender equality: three quarters of respondents of a recent Eurobarometer survey (76 %)<sup>12</sup> think that tackling inequality between men and women should be an EU priority. Around nine in ten (91 %) agree that tackling inequality between men and women is necessary to creating a fairer society.

## 2. GENDER EQUALITY IN 2015: CHALLENGES AND GAPS

During the crisis, unemployment reached unbearable levels for both men and women in too many countries. However, across the EU, more and more women are **economically active**. Women’s **employment** reached the highest level ever recorded (64 %)<sup>13</sup> in 2014, while men’s employment (75 %)<sup>14</sup> has yet to regain its pre-crisis level. As a result, more and more families depend financially on women’s work. Women have made inroads into **decision-making positions** in many spheres of life and, although they still represent only 21 %<sup>15</sup> of board members of the biggest listed companies, this constitutes a significant (nine percentage points) improvement over the last five years. The most substantial improvement has been seen in countries that introduced legislative measures. The gender balance in politics has also improved, but at a slower pace: the proportion of women in national parliaments and governments has risen steadily from 22 % and 21 % respectively at the end of 2004 to 29 % and 27 % in 2015<sup>16</sup>. Gender inequalities in decision-making bodies in research organisations have also been reduced: the proportion of female heads of institutions increased in 15 of the 20 EU countries for which 2010 and 2014 data were available<sup>17</sup>.

Attitudes towards equality are evolving, but today’s younger generation is not immune to gender stereotypes and disparities. Gender inequalities in education persist – in terms of study subject preferences, performance and patterns of participation. Boys, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds, drop out of school more than girls and encounter many more difficulties in reading<sup>18</sup>. Women are more likely to have a higher education degree but remain overrepresented in fields of study that are linked to traditional female roles such

10 Mid-term review of the strategy for equality between women and men and annual reports.

11 [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/151120\\_strategy\\_evaluation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/151120_strategy_evaluation_en.pdf).

12 Special Eurobarometer 428 (March 2015).

13 Eurostat.

14 *Idem*.

15 DG Justice and Consumers database on women and men in decision-making, April 2015.

16 *Idem*.

17 SHE figures: 2015 leaflet.

18 See, for example, OECD, 2014, Are boys and girls equally prepared for life? <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/PIF-2014-gender-international-version.pdf>.

as care-related fields and are under-represented in science, mathematics, IT, engineering and related careers. As a result, **inequality in occupations** is taking new forms rather than diminishing and, despite their investment in education, young women are still twice as likely as young men to be economically inactive. Women also represent the biggest untapped source of entrepreneurial potential, representing only 29 % of entrepreneurs.

In terms of access to **financial resources over a lifetime**, gender equality remains elusive. Women (particularly migrant women and women heading single-parent households) still generate a much lower proportion of income on the labour market than men. Women in employment, especially mothers, are much more likely to work part-time and are paid on average 16 %<sup>19</sup> less than men per hour of work. As a consequence, the gender overall earnings gap during active years has reached 41 %<sup>20</sup> and leads to a very wide gender gap in pensions, which today stands at 40 %<sup>21</sup>. Older women are much more at risk of poverty and social exclusion than older men and no mitigating trends have been observed in recent years. Without new action, women are likely to continue to be economically disadvantaged by motherhood during their career and in retirement, in particular as a result of an unequal sharing of care and housework responsibilities (working women still devote two and a half hours a day more to parenting and household duties than men)<sup>22</sup>.

**Gender-based violence** is still widespread and can take many forms: one woman in three has experienced physical or sexual violence, 5 % have been raped since the age of 15 and 20 % have experienced online harassment<sup>23</sup>. Such violence happens everywhere – at home, at work, at school, in the street or online – regardless of social background. Gender-based violence and negative stereotypes in sport, for instance, are widespread<sup>24</sup>. It harms victims not only in terms of their health and well-being, but also their working lives, thereby damaging their financial independence and the economy in general. It is estimated that 500 000 women and girls in the EU are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM)<sup>25</sup>. In addition, women and girls make up the majority of human trafficking victims (68 % women, 17 % men, 12 % girls and 3 % boys)<sup>26</sup>.

**Worldwide**, women's fundamental rights continue to be violated and they face discrimination in access to education, work, social protection, inheritance, economic assets, productive resources and participation in decision-making and society at large. Women spend two to ten times more time on unpaid work than men, which is one of the main obstacles to economic and political empowerment<sup>27</sup>. About 140 million girls and women are currently living with the consequences of FGM. One girl in nine is married before the age of 15, with many forced into marriage and becoming mothers before the age of 16<sup>28</sup>. This has serious consequences: complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the second biggest cause of death among adolescent girls<sup>29</sup>. Since the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals<sup>30</sup>, progress on maternal health has been disappointingly slow and women and girls are disproportionately affected by HIV. This is also linked to a failure to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services for women and girls.

19 Eurostat, latest available data are from 2012.

20 *Idem*.

21 Social Protection Committee and European Commission (2015) Pension Adequacy Report.

22 Eurofound.

23 Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA).

24 Study on Gender-based violence in sport: [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea/calls-for-tender/study-gender-based-violence-in-sport-eacea201502\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea/calls-for-tender/study-gender-based-violence-in-sport-eacea201502_en)

25 EP Resolution on ending FGM, 2012.

26 Eurostat.

27 [http://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/Unpaid\\_care\\_work.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/Unpaid_care_work.pdf)

28 World Health Organisation, news release, March 2013.

29 <http://who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs364/en/>

30 <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/>



## 3. PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS FOR 2016-2019

In its work programme, the Commission has reaffirmed its commitment to continue its work to promote equality between men and women. This means maintaining the focus of gender-equality policy on the five existing thematic priority areas:

- ▶ increasing female labour-market participation and the equal economic independence of women and men;
- ▶ reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women;
- ▶ promoting equality between women and men in decision-making;
- ▶ combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims; and
- ▶ promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world.

Below we set out key actions, chosen for maximum impact and deliverability during this Commission's mandate, together with indications as to timing. Progress will be measured, in particular, against the indicators in Annex 1 and the targets in Annex 2. Across all priority areas, attention will be paid to the role of men, dismantling gender stereotypes and promoting non-discriminatory gender roles. Particular attention will be paid to the specific needs of groups facing multiple disadvantages, e.g. single parents and older, migrant, Roma and disabled women.

A mix of the following legislative, non-legislative and funding instruments will be used to achieve the objectives under each priority, including:

- integration of a gender-equality perspective into all EU activities (see section 4);
- enforcement of equal treatment legislation;
- EU funding programmes for 2014-2020 (see section 5);
- ongoing improved data collection with the support of Eurostat, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), Eurofound, the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA);
- exchanges of good practice and peer-learning between Member States and cooperation with all actors (see section 6); and
- An annual review of key actions carried out, in connection with the preparation of annual progress reports on equality between women and men, to assess the need for additional action.

### 3.1. Increasing female labour-market participation and the equal economic independence of women and men

#### Objectives:

If we are to achieve the EU's target of 75 % of men and women in employment in 2020 and, in particular, close the gender gap in employment, coordinated efforts will be required to facilitate women's labour-market participation. As underlined in the 2016 work programme, this will involve making it easier to balance caring and professional responsibilities. It also requires a more equal sharing of time spent on care and household responsibilities. The Barcelona targets<sup>31</sup> on childcare must be attained and reflection undertaken with Member States on ways of making them more ambitious and extending them to cover care of other dependants should be considered. Female entrepreneurship, gender equality in research and the labour-market integration of migrant women are further components of equal economic independence.

#### KEY ACTIONS TO REACH THESE OBJECTIVES

Continued action on increasing women's participation in the labour market and combining work and family life, complemented by a new and comprehensive initiative to address the work-life balance challenges faced by working parents and carers<sup>32</sup> (2016-2019):

- modernising the current EU legal framework: ensure better enforcement and where appropriate adapt legislation in the areas of leave and flexible working arrangements, in consultation with the social partners<sup>33</sup>, to provide better work-life balance for parents and people with caring responsibilities (2016-2019);
- setting out a broad policy framework supporting parents' participation in the labour market and a more equal use of leave and flexible work arrangements, including considering possible benchmarking, targeted use of EU financial tools to support Member States and awareness-raising (2016);
- continued monitoring and support for Member States in attaining the Barcelona targets on childcare (annually); taking into account the results of a public consultation on work-life balance<sup>34</sup>, considering consulting Member States and stakeholders on how to make the Barcelona targets more ambitious and consider a more comprehensive approach, e.g. covering care of other dependants, accessibility and quality (2016);
- supporting Member States in their efforts to increase female labour-market participation, close monitoring of national reform measures under the European Semester in line with the employment guidelines<sup>35</sup> and issuing country-specific recommendations where necessary (annually); and
- further supporting companies in their efforts to increase female labour-market participation by facilitating Diversity Charter platforms<sup>36</sup> (ongoing).

<sup>31</sup> Provision of childcare for 33 % of children under 3 and 90% of children between 3 and mandatory school age.

<sup>32</sup> Commission 2016 work programme, Annex I, action 2; [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015\\_just\\_012\\_new\\_initiative\\_replacing\\_maternity\\_leave\\_directive\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015_just_012_new_initiative_replacing_maternity_leave_directive_en.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> European Commission (2015) First-Phase Consultation of Social Partners Under Article 154 TFEU on Possible Action Addressing Work-life Balance Faced by Working Parents and Caregivers, C(2015) 7754 final.

<sup>34</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/opinion/1511\\_roadmap\\_reconciliation\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/gender-equality/opinion/1511_roadmap_reconciliation_en.htm)

<sup>35</sup> Adopted by EPSCO on 5 October 2015.

<sup>36</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/diversity/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/diversity/index_en.htm)

*In addition, efforts will continue to be stepped up, with a focus on:*

- evaluation of the Social Security Directive<sup>37</sup> and follow-up of the outcomes; drafting of a report on implementation of the Self-Employed Directive<sup>38</sup> and possible follow-up action (2016);
- integrating a gender perspective into the implementation of the European Migration Agenda<sup>39</sup>, addressing barriers to the employment and career progression of migrant women; helping Member States to make full use of the possibilities offered by the European Social Fund (ESF) in this area (2016-2019);
- awareness-raising to promote female entrepreneurship, including through the launch of an e-platform for women entrepreneurs (2016), the creation of a European Network of Women Business Angels (2016) and the Network of Women's Web Entrepreneurs Hubs (2016-2017); and
- promoting institutional change in research organisations to remove barriers to gender equality and engage all research organisations to implement gender equality plans (2016-2017).

<sup>37</sup> Directive 79/7/EEC on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security; compare Commission 2015 work programme, Annex III, item 60.

<sup>38</sup> Directive 2010/41/EU on the application of the principle of equal treatment between women and men engaged in an activity in a self-employed and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC  
<sup>39</sup> COM(2015) 240 final.

## 3.2. Reducing gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women

### Objectives:

The aim of reducing the persisting gender pay, earnings and pension gaps, and thereby inequality in access to financial resources throughout life is reconfirmed. This calls in particular for a substantial reduction of inequality in economic sectors and occupations, an increase in women's overall paid working hours, awareness-raising and effective implementation of equal pay legislation. It also calls for policies and measures for those facing particular barriers to entry to the labour market, such as migrant women and single parents. In addition, the causes and consequences of the gender pension gap need to be addressed, as this is an obstacle to the economic independence of women in old age, when they face a higher risk of poverty than men.

### KEY ACTIONS TO REACH THESE OBJECTIVES

- further improving the implementation and enforcement of the equal pay principle by carrying out an assessment of Directive 2006/54/EC<sup>40</sup> (2016-2017) and considering inter alia:
  - i. strengthening pay transparency on the basis of the report to be drawn up on Member States' measures to implement the Commission Recommendation;<sup>41</sup>
  - ii. the effects of recent case-law of the European Court of Justice regarding use of sex as an actuarial factor influencing statutory pensions and private insurance contracts on the sector of occupational pensions with the possible effect of preventing lower pensions for women on the basis of their higher average life expectancy;
  - iii. sanctions to improve the deterrent effect of the prohibition of pay discrimination; and
  - iv. the efficient and effective functioning of equality bodies to facilitate access to justice for victims of discrimination;
- continuing support for Member States' efforts to ensure equal pay and address the root causes of the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps; use the European Semester (annually);
- cooperating with equality bodies and supporting companies in efforts to ensure equal pay by facilitating Diversity Charter platforms (ongoing);
- continuing to mark European Equal Pay Day with Europe-wide information activities to reach out to Member States; raising awareness of the link between pay, earnings and pension entitlements in old age (annually);
- consider introducing further measures to improve the gender balance in economic sectors and occupations; using the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs<sup>42</sup> to support measures enhancing digital skills among women and girls and promoting female employment in the ICT sector (2016-2017); activities to raise awareness of educational and vocational training choices (2018-2019);
- promoting gender equality in all levels and types of education, including in relation to gendered study subject choices and careers, using existing policy cooperation tools and funding instruments as appropriate, in line with the priorities set out in the "Education and Training 2020" framework (2016-2019);

40 Directive 2006/54/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast).

41 Commission Recommendation C(2014) 1405 final on strengthening the principle of equal pay between men and women through transparency.

42 <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0>

- continuing development of a comprehensive set of measures<sup>43</sup> to tackle the full range of causes of the gender gap in pensions in cooperation with the Member States, including the indicator for measuring and monitoring it and measures to mitigate gender factors, e.g. as regards caring (2016-2017).

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<sup>43</sup> Building on the EPSCO Council conclusions of June 2015 on *Equal income opportunities for women and men: closing the gender gap in pensions*.

### 3.3. Promoting equality in decision-making

#### Objectives:

The goal of a better gender balance in economic leadership positions, in particular at least 40 % representation of the under-represented sex among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges, is reconfirmed. Promoting equality in decision-making also requires a better gender balance among executive directors of major listed companies and in the talent pipeline. These efforts should be complemented with data collection, action to tackle the over-representation of men in decision-making positions in research organisations and measures promoting gender balance in political decision-making and public life, including sports. European administrations will lead by example. The Commission has set itself a target of 40 % women in senior and middle management by the end of 2019 (see Annex 3).

#### KEY ACTIONS TO REACH THESE OBJECTIVES

- continue to support adoption of the 2012 proposal for a Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges by 2016<sup>44</sup>, closely monitor transposition and implementation, and support other targeted initiatives to improve the gender balance in decision-making, including guidance for Member States (ongoing);
- continue to collect and disseminate data on the representation of women and men in high decision-making positions, in close cooperation with the European Institute for Gender Equality (ongoing);
- consider measures to improve the gender balance in political decision-making and continue to encourage Member States and support national authorities' activities promoting gender balance in political and public decision-making positions (2018);
- provide guidance for Member States on a common approach to the implementation of quantitative targets for decision-making positions in research (2016);
- reach the target of 40 % women in the Commission's senior and middle management by the end of its mandate (ongoing).

<sup>44</sup> Commission 2016 work programme, Annex III, item 3.

### 3.4. Combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims

#### Objectives:

Combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims will be a continued priority. Its eradication requires greater efforts from all actors, including the Member States, to improve data availability, quality and reliability, raise awareness, change attitudes, prevent such violence, ensure better victim support and access to justice, and fully transpose and implement relevant EU legislation.

#### KEY ACTIONS TO REACH THESE OBJECTIVES

- EU accession to the Council of Europe convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), to the extent of EU competences and taking into account the legal impact of an accession; implement subsequently its provisions and continue to encourage Member States' progress on ratification (2016)<sup>45</sup>;
- continue to enforce the Victim's Rights Directive and laws on European protection orders, in particular to ensure access to protection and support for those exposed to gender-based violence (ongoing);
- further improve the availability, quality and reliability of data on gender-based violence through cooperation with Eurostat<sup>46</sup>, the European Institute for Gender Equality and the Fundamental Rights Agency (ongoing); continue to gather comparable data on gender-based violence in sport through a specific study (2016);
- continue focused actions to end all forms of gender-based violence and raise awareness (2017);
- continue to promote changes in attitudes and behaviour through awareness-raising activities, including appropriate activities to mark the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (6 February) and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November) (annually);
- continue implementation of measures set out in the Communication *Towards the elimination of female genital mutilation*<sup>47</sup> and use appropriate instruments to eradicate FGM and build on this experience to tackle other harmful practices; develop a web-based knowledge platform on FGM for relevant professionals (2016-2017); and
- take necessary steps to follow up the report assessing Member States' compliance with the Anti-trafficking Directive (2016) and ensure that the gender dimension of human trafficking is addressed (ongoing).

45 [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015\\_just\\_010\\_istanbul\\_convention\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2015_just_010_istanbul_convention_en.pdf)

46 This could require legislation (a statistical regulation), at some point, depending on the outcome of the development work.

47 COM(2013) 833 final.

### 3.5. Promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world

#### Objectives:

The protection and promotion of women's and girls' rights and gender equality is a policy priority for the EU's external relations, and the EU is strongly committed to playing a lead role in this respect. These are essential pre-conditions for equitable and inclusive sustainable development, and important values and objectives in themselves. They are also a pre-condition for peace and security worldwide and help to counter radicalisation and extremism, which denigrate women and violate their rights and dignity. The EU remains fully committed to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and to the full and effective implementation of obligations and commitments to women's rights in all international fora, in particular the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women<sup>48</sup> under the UN Beijing Platform for Action<sup>49</sup> and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Women's and girls' rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are at the core of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both as a stand-alone objective<sup>50</sup> and as a cross-cutting issue integrated into the targets and indicators of all the sustainable development goals<sup>51</sup>. These should also be essential considerations in the use of financial and non-financial means of implementing, and in the review, monitoring and accountability mechanisms of, the 2030 Agenda. Given that the Agenda applies universally to all countries, including EU Member States, it is essential to ensure coherence between EU internal and external policies at all levels. Gender equality and the adoption of the EU gender equality acquis must also continue to be assessed in the accession process.

#### KEY ACTIONS TO REACH THESE OBJECTIVES

In cooperation with the EEAS and Member States, implement the action plan set out in the joint staff working document on Gender equality and women's empowerment: transforming the lives of girls and women through EU external relations, 2016-2020<sup>52</sup> and, in line with this new framework for the EU's activities on gender equality in external relations, undertake:

- with the EEAS and in cooperation with Member States, to champion the promotion of gender equality and women's rights in the implementation and monitoring of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (ongoing);
- with the EEAS and Member States, to promote gender equality and promote and protect girls' and women's rights through the EU action plan on human rights and democracy, the comprehensive approach to the EU's implementation of UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security and the 2008 EU guidelines on violence against women and girls (ongoing);

48 <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

49 <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>

50 Stand-alone goal 5.

51 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

52 SWD(2015) 182 final, 21.9.2015; endorsed by the Council on 26 October 2015.



- to continue to fund and monitor action promoting gender equality in development and neighbourhood cooperation and humanitarian aid, including through the systematic use of the OECD gender markers<sup>53</sup> in development cooperation and the gender-age marker<sup>54</sup> in all EU-funded humanitarian action, to assess whether the needs and vulnerabilities of males and females of all ages have been identified and addressed (ongoing); and
- to continue to closely monitor and support candidate and potential candidate countries' compliance with the Copenhagen criteria for membership of the EU as regards human rights including equality between women and men; continue efforts to integrate a gender mainstreaming perspective into all relevant programmes funded through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) (ongoing).

53 <http://www.oecd.org/investment/stats/37461060.pdf>.

54 [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender\\_age\\_marker\\_toolkit.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender_age_marker_toolkit.pdf).

## 4. INTEGRATING A GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVE INTO ALL EU ACTIVITIES AND POLICIES

In addition to the key actions set out above<sup>55</sup>, gender equality will continue to be promoted through the integration of a gender equality perspective into every aspect of EU intervention (preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, legal measures and spending programmes), i.e. **gender mainstreaming**<sup>56</sup>. This means assessing the impact of EU action on both women and men and taking responsibility for any readjustment necessary, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

Gender mainstreaming will be continued by incorporating gender equality considerations<sup>57</sup> in impact assessments and evaluations in line with the Better Regulation principles.

In addition, the Inter-Service Group on equality between women and men (in which all Commission departments are represented and which meets at least twice a year) will continue to monitor and steer the integration of a gender equality perspective in policy, legal and spending programme activities, including budgetary matters, across all EU policy areas and will consider issuing a **report on gender mainstreaming in the Commission** in 2017. The report will complete the key actions set out above by presenting sectorial aspects, such as gender equality in transport, energy, education, health, taxation, agriculture, trade, regional policy, maritime affairs and the environment.

<sup>55</sup> Some of which include gender mainstreaming measures in particular policy areas (e.g. employment, migration, external relations).

<sup>56</sup> Article 8 TFEU: 'In all its activities, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality between men and women'.

<sup>57</sup> See in particular tool 16 of the Better Regulation Toolbox: [http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/docs/br\\_toolbox\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/guidelines/docs/br_toolbox_en.pdf).

## 5. EU FUNDING IN SUPPORT OF GENDER EQUALITY

If key actions and gender mainstreaming are necessary, so is the allocation of relevant EU-level funding. Gender budgeting<sup>58</sup> is not applied systematically to the EU general budget<sup>59</sup>, but its 2014-2020 funding programmes provide means of promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in a number of key policy areas; for example:

- the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs), in particular the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, are key financial levers for promoting equality, e.g. in **access to employment, career progression, reconciliation of work and private life, equal pay for equal work, the labour-market integration of migrant women and investment in the provision of childcare infrastructure**;
- the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme will co-finance national projects promoting **equal economic independence, overcoming rigid gender roles and stereotypes, and raising awareness of the gender pension gap and its causes and consequences**. It will also invest in **preventing and combating violence against women** by financing projects supporting victims of violence, training relevant professionals, raising awareness and preventing violence linked to harmful practices;
- through support for the Safer Internet Digital Services Infrastructure financed by the Connecting Europe Facility, helplines in Member States for young victims of **cyberbullying** (who are twice as likely to be girls than boys) will be financed;
- funding will be allocated to gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in the next seven years through the EU Global Public Goods and Challenges thematic programme under the Development Cooperation Instrument supporting **EU external cooperation**; and
- gender equality concerns are mainstreamed in Erasmus+, the EU funding programme for education, training, youth and sport (2014-2020)

Mechanisms provided by the regulations and the relevant programme committees to verify the effectiveness and efficiency of gender equality funding will be used, *inter alia* assessing Member States' implementation reports where appropriate.

Annex 4 provides an overview of EU-level funding of **EUR 6.17 billion** allocated to achieving the targets and objectives of this strategic engagement.

In line with its Treaty obligations, the gender-equality perspective will be taken into account in preparing the post-2020 generation of EU funding programmes.

<sup>58</sup> i.e. a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality.

<sup>59</sup> Note that there is also no specific budgeting for other policies that can be mainstreamed, such as climate and biodiversity.

## 6. COOPERATION WITH ALL ACTORS

Close cooperation with institutions and stakeholders active in the field of gender equality (Member States, the European Parliament, the European External Action Service, social partners, civil society organisations, equality bodies, international organisations and EU agencies) will be continued. This will take many forms, from bilateral and multilateral exchanges to structured dialogues.

National strategy documents and developments in the area of gender equality in the Member States will be followed and exchanges of good practice among Member States will be facilitated through the mutual learning programme. Cooperation with Member States will also continue through the High-Level Group on gender mainstreaming.

The Advisory Committee on equal opportunities for women and men composed of representatives from Member States, social partner organisations and civil society will continue to advise the Commission on policy and legislative initiatives. The European Institute for Gender Equality will continue to play an important role in developing and sharing reliable evidence and data to support evidence-based policy-making, e.g. through its gender equality index<sup>60</sup>.

The European Parliament and the Council are invited to actively engage in this cooperation.

## 7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Implementation of the above actions will continue to be monitored regularly. Progress, including examples of practice in the Member States, will be reported on annually on the basis *inter alia* of the targets and indicators in Annexes 1 and 2.

Subject to the conclusions of the 2017 annual report, a top-level dialogue could take place in 2018 involving the European Parliament, the Council presidencies and key stakeholders, such as the European social partners and civil society, to take stock mid-term, identify challenges and discuss ways forward.

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<sup>60</sup> <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/gender-equality-index-2015-measuring-gender-equality-european-union-2005-2012-report>.

## Annex 1: Objectives, Actions, Responsibilities and Indicators

1. Increase female labour-market participation and equality in the economic independence of women and men

### Objectives

- reach the EU target of 75 % of men and women in employment in 2020 and close the employment gap for women;
- more equal sharing between women and men of time spent on care and household responsibilities and improved possibilities for balancing caring and professional responsibilities;
- attainment of the Barcelona targets on childcare and consider serious reflection with Member States on possible ways of making them more ambitious and extending them to cover care of other dependants;
- promotion of female entrepreneurship and gender equality in research;
- better labour-market integration of migrant women.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
<p>Continue action to increase women's participation in the labour market and combine work and family life, complemented by a new initiative to address the challenges of work-life balance faced by working parents and carers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- modernising the EU legal framework: ensure better enforcement, and where appropriate adopt legislation in the areas of leave and flexible working arrangements, in consultation with the social partners, to provide better work-life balance for parents and people with caring responsibilities*;</li> <li>- setting out a broad policy framework supporting parents' participation in the labour market and a more equal use of leave and flexible work arrangements, including considering possible benchmarking, targeted use of EU financial tools to support Member States and awareness-raising**;</li> <li>- continue monitoring and support for Member States in attaining the Barcelona targets on childcare***; taking into account the results of a public consultation on work-life balance, consider consulting Member States and stakeholders on how to make the Barcelona targets more ambitious and consider a more comprehensive approach covering, for instance, care of other dependants, accessibility and quality**;</li> <li>- support Member States' efforts to increase female labour-market participation; closely monitor national reform measures under the European Semester in line with the employment guidelines; issue country-specific recommendations where necessary***;</li> <li>- further support companies' efforts to increase female labour-market participation by facilitating Diversity Charter platforms****.</li> </ul>	COM: JUST/EMPL	* 2016-2019 ** 2016 *** annually **** ongoing
Evaluate the Social Security Directive and follow up the outcomes; draft an implementation report on the Self-Employed Directive and possible follow-up action	COM: JUST	2016
Integrate a gender perspective into implementation of the European Migration Agenda to address barriers to the employment and career progression of migrant women; help Member States to make full use of the ESF in this area.	COM: HOME	2016-2019
Raise awareness to promote female entrepreneurship, including through the launch of an e-platform for women entrepreneurs*, the creation of a European Network of Women Business Angels* and the Network of Women's Web Entrepreneurs Hubs**.	COM: GROW/CNECT	*2016 **2016-2017
Promote institutional change in research organisations to remove barriers to gender equality and engage all such organisations to implement gender equality plans.	COM: RTD	2016-2017

INDICATORS	BASELINE: EU-AVERAGE (YEAR)
Gender employment gap (20-64 years)	11.5 pps (2014)
Gender employment gap (20-64) in full-time equivalents	18.1 pps (2014)
Gender gap in part-time employment among parents	34.8 pps (2013)
Time spent in unpaid care work per week, by gender <sup>61</sup>	Men: 8.9 % Women: 26.4 % (2010)
Involuntary part-time work due to looking after children or incapacitated adults, by gender <sup>62</sup>	Men: 4.2 % Women 27.2 % (2014)
Children cared for under formal arrangements as a proportion of all children in the age-group (0-3 years and 3 years to mandatory school age)	0-3 years: 27 % 3-school age: 82 % (2013)
Proportion of active population (50-64 years) caring for elderly or disabled relatives at least several days a week, by gender <sup>63</sup>	Men: 10 % Women: 17 % (2011)
Gender gap in employment rates among non-EU nationals	19.5 % (2014)
Gender gap in employment rates among recent non-EU nationals	22.3 % (2014)
Proportion of research-performing organisations that have adopted gender equality plans <sup>64</sup>	36% (2014)

61 Eurofound

62 Eurostat ('main reason for part-time employment' — distributions by sex and age (%) [lfsa\_epgar]).

63 Eurofound

64 SHE figures, 2015 leaflet, based on European Research Area Survey 2014 (PCountry, P17, P36) [https://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub\\_gender\\_equality/she\\_figures\\_2015-leaflet-web.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub_gender_equality/she_figures_2015-leaflet-web.pdf).

## 2. Reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women

### Objectives

- continue to reduce the persisting gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thereby gender inequality in access to financial resources through life;
- substantially reduce gender inequality in economic sectors and occupations;
- increase the overall working hours of women; ensure effective implementation of equal pay legislation;
- eliminate barriers to accessing the labour market of vulnerable groups, such as migrant women and single parents;
- address the causes and consequences of the gender pension gap.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Further improve implementation and enforcement of the equal pay principle by carrying out an assessment of Directive 2006/54/EC <sup>65</sup> and considering <i>inter alia</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- strengthening pay transparency on the basis of the report to be drawn up on Member States' measures to implement the Commission Recommendation<sup>66</sup>;</li> <li>- the effects of recent case-law of the European Court of Justice regarding use of sex as an actuarial factor influencing statutory pensions and private insurance contracts on the sector of occupational pensions with the possible effect of preventing lower pensions for women on the basis of their higher average life expectancy;</li> <li>- sanctions to improve the deterrent effect of the prohibition of pay discrimination; and</li> <li>- efficient and effective functioning of equality bodies to facilitate access to justice for victims of discrimination.</li> </ul>	COM: JUST	2016-2017
Continue support for Member States' efforts to ensure equal pay and address the root causes of the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps; use the European Semester (annually).	COM: EMPL/JUST	annually
Continue to mark European Equal Pay Day with Europe-wide information activities to reach out to Member States; raise awareness of the link between pay, earnings and pension entitlements in old age.	COM: JUST/COMM	annually
Cooperate with equality bodies and support companies in efforts to ensure equal pay by facilitating Diversity Charter platforms.	COM: JUST	ongoing

<sup>65</sup> Directive 2006/54/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast).

<sup>66</sup> C(2014) 1405 final



ACTION	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Consider introducing further measures to improve the gender balance in economic sectors and occupations; use the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs to support measures enhancing women's and girls' digital skills and promoting female employment in the ICT sector* and awareness-raising on educational and vocational training choices**.	COM: CNECT/EAC/EMPL/ RTD/JUST/MOVE	*2016-2017 **2018-2019
Promote gender equality in all levels and types of education, including in relation to gendered study subject choices and careers, using existing policy cooperation tools and funding instruments as appropriate, in line with the priorities set out in the "Education and Training 2020" framework.	COM: EAC/EMPL	2016-2019
Continue development of a comprehensive set of measures <sup>67</sup> to tackle the full range of causes of the gender gap in pensions in cooperation with Member States, including the indicator for measuring and monitoring it and measures to mitigate gender factors, e.g. related to caring.	COM: EMPL/JUST	2016-2017

67 Building on the EPSCO Council conclusions of June 2015.

INDICATORS	BASELINE: EU-AVERAGE (YEAR)
Gender pay gap	16.5 % (2013)
Gender overall earnings gap	41.1 % (2012)
Gender segregation in economic sectors and occupations <sup>68</sup>	Sectors: 18.9 % Occupations: 26.9 % (2014)
Gender pension gap	40.2 % (2012) <sup>69</sup>
Gender Coverage gap in pensions	6.8% (2012) <sup>70</sup>
In-work poverty of women and men	Men: 9.3 % Women: 8.4 % (2014)
At-risk-of-poverty rate and social exclusion in old age (65+)	Men: 11.4 % Women: 15.6 % (2014)
Single-parent households at risk of poverty or social exclusion	49.9 % (2013)

68 Including an analysis of percentages of women working in the various sectors

69 For pensioners aged 65-79, Source: Social Protection Committee and European Commission (2015) Pension Adequacy Report

70 For persons aged 65-79, Source: Social Protection Committee and European Commission (2015) Pension Adequacy Report

### 3. Promoting equality between women and men in decision-making

#### Objectives

- continue efforts to improve the gender balance in economic leadership positions, in particular among the non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges (at least 40 % of the under-represented sex);
- improve the gender balance among executive directors of major listed companies and in the talent pipeline;
- improve data collection and gender balance in decision-making positions in research organisations;
- improve the gender balance in political decision-making and public life, including sports;
- reach the target of 40 % women in senior and middle management positions in the Commission by the end of 2019.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Continue to support adoption of the 2012 proposal for a Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges by 2016; <sup>71</sup> closely monitor its transposition and implementation; support other targeted initiatives to improve the gender balance in decision-making, including guidance for Member States.	COM: JUST	ongoing
Continue to collect and disseminate further data on the representation of women and men in high decision-making positions, in close cooperation with the EIGE.	COM: JUST EIGE	ongoing
Consider measures to improve the gender balance in political decision-making and continue to encourage Member States and support national authorities' activities promoting gender balance in political and public decision-making positions.	COM: JUST	2018
Provide guidance to Member States on a common approach to implementing quantitative targets for decision-making positions in research.	COM: RTD	2016
Reach the target of 40 % women in senior and middle management in the Commission by the end of its mandate.	COM: HR	ongoing

<sup>71</sup> See Commission 2016 work programme.

INDICATORS	EU-AVERAGE (YEAR)
Proportion of women among members of the highest decision-making body of the largest nationally registered companies listed on the national stock exchange	21.2 % (April 2015)
Proportion of women among presidents and CEOs of the largest nationally registered companies listed on the national stock exchange	Presidents: 7.1 % CEOs: 3.6 % (April 2015)
Proportion of women among executive and non-executive members of the two highest decision-making bodies of the largest nationally registered companies listed on the national stock exchange	Non-executive directors: 22.5 % Senior executives: 13.7 % (April 2015)
Proportion of women heads of higher education institutions <sup>72</sup>	15.5 % (2010)
Proportion of women in the single/lower houses of the national/federal Parliaments of the Member States and in the European Parliament	29% (May 2015) EP: 37%
Proportion of women in the single/lower houses of national/federal governments and the European Commission	27 % (May 2015) EC: 32 %
Proportion of women in Commission senior / middle management <sup>73</sup>	28 % / 32 % (February 2015)

72 SHE figures 2012.

73 DG HR.

## 4. Combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting its victims

### Objectives

- combat gender-based violence; protect and support the victims;
- improve data availability, quality and reliability;
- raise awareness, promote attitudinal change and foster prevention;
- improve victim support and access to justice;
- eliminate FGM.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
EU accession to the Council of Europe convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) to the extent of EU competences and taking into account the legal impact of an accession; implement subsequently its provisions; continue to encourage the Member States to make progress on ratification.	COM: JUST	2016
Continue to enforce the Victim's Rights Directive and laws on European protection orders, in particular to ensure access to protection and support for those exposed to gender-based violence.	COM: JUST	ongoing
Further improve the availability, quality and reliability of data on gender-based violence through cooperation with Eurostat, EIGE and FRA; also continue to gather comparable data on gender-based violence in sport through a specific study*.	COM: JUST/Eurostat EIGE FRA *EAC	ongoing  * 2016
Continue focused actions to end all forms of gender-based violence and raise awareness.	COM: JUST	2017
Continue to promote attitudinal and behavioural change through awareness-raising activities, including appropriate activities to mark the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (6 February) and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November).	COM: JUST	annually

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Continue to implement the measures set out in the Communication <i>Towards the elimination of FGM</i> ; use appropriate instruments to eradicate FGM; build on this experience to tackle other harmful practices; and develop a web-based knowledge platform on FGM for relevant professionals.	COM: JUST	2016-2017
Take necessary steps to follow up the report assessing Member States' compliance with the Anti-trafficking Directive*; ensure that the gender dimension of human trafficking is addressed**.	COM: HOME/JUST	*2016 **ongoing

INDICATORS	EU-AVERAGE (YEAR)
Proportion of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence	33% (March 2014)
Proportion of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner	22% (March 2014)
Proportion of women who have experienced psychological violence by a partner	43% (March 2014)
Proportion of women who have been sexually harassed	55% (March 2014)

## 5. Promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world

### Objectives

- promote, protect and fulfil all human rights; fully and effectively implement obligations and commitments to women's rights in all international fora, in particular the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;
- ensure that women's and girls' rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are an essential element of financial and non-financial means of implementing, and of the review, monitoring and accountability mechanisms of, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- ensure that gender equality and the adoption of the EU gender-equality acquis are assessed in the accession process.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
In cooperation with the EEAS and Member States, implement the action plan set out in the joint staff working document <i>Gender equality and women's empowerment: transforming the lives of girls and women through EU external relations 2016-2020</i> <sup>74</sup> ; in line with this new framework, undertake to:	COM: DEVCO/ECHO/ NEAR/FPI EEAS	2016-2019
- with the EEAS and in cooperation with Member States, champion the promotion of gender equality and women's rights in the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and implementation of the Beijing Platform;	COM: DEVCO EEAS	ongoing
- with the EEAS and Member States, promote gender equality and promote and protect girls' and women's rights through the EU action plan on human rights and democracy, the comprehensive approach to EU implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820, and the EU guidelines on violence against women and girls;	COM: DEVCO/ECHO EEAS	ongoing
- continue to fund and monitor action promoting gender equality in development and neighbourhood cooperation and humanitarian aid, including through systematic use of the OECD gender markers in development cooperation and the gender-age marker in all EU-funded humanitarian action, to assess whether the needs and vulnerabilities of males and females of all ages have been identified and addressed;	COM: DEVCO/ECHO	ongoing

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
- continue to monitor closely and support candidate and potential candidate countries' compliance with the Copenhagen criteria for membership of the EU as regards human rights including equality between women and men; continue efforts to integrate a gender mainstreaming perspective into all relevant programmes funded through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).	COM: NEAR	ongoing

### Indicators (cf. goal 5 of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)

End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences

- Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws
- Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
- Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels



## 6. Gender mainstreaming, funding for gender equality and cooperation with all actors

**Objectives**

- continue to integrate a gender equality perspective into every aspect of EU intervention (effective gender mainstreaming);
- continue to ensure effective and efficient EU funding for gender equality;
- cooperate closely with all stakeholders active in the field of gender equality.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Continue to provide guidance and ensure close cooperation between Commission services on gender equality issues through the Inter-Service Group on equality between women and men.	COM: JUST / all DGs	ongoing
Consider issuing a report on gender mainstreaming in the Commission.	COM: JUST / all DGs	2017
Continue to provide funding for gender equality through relevant EU programmes.	COM: funding DGs	2017-2019
Take into account the gender equality perspective in preparations of the post-2020 generation of EU funding programmes.	COM: funding DGs	2017-2019
Follow national strategic documents and developments in the area of gender equality.	COM: JUST	2017
Continue to facilitate exchanges of good practice among Member States through the mutual learning programme.	COM: JUST	three times a year
Organise regular meetings of the High Level Group on gender mainstreaming and the Advisory Committee on equal opportunities for women and men.	COM: JUST	twice yearly
Continue to issue a Report on progress in gender equality in the EU.	COM: JUST	yearly
Prepare an internal report on implementation of action.	COM: JUST / all DGs	yearly

**INDICATORS**

Report on gender mainstreaming published

Regulations of relevant future funding programmes

Analysis of national strategic documents carried out

Number of exchanges of good practice

Number of meetings organised

Reports on progress published

Reports on implementation prepared

## Annex 2: Selected targets

### 1. EU-level targets

The Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019 will contribute to reaching the following existing targets:

TARGETS:	SOURCE:
0 % gender employment gap (20-64 years)	EU2020 strategy: 75 % employment target for both women and men
Provision of childcare for 33 % of children under 3 and 90 % of children between 3 and mandatory school age	Objectives set at the 2002 Barcelona European Council and reconfirmed by the 2011-2020 European Pact for gender equality <sup>75</sup>
40 % of the under-represented sex in non-executive board-member positions in publicly listed companies (except SMEs)	November 2012 proposal for a Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges

<sup>75</sup> [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/119628.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/119628.pdf).

## 2. Internationally agreed targets

On 25-27 September 2015, the UN member states adopted an ambitious new post-2015 agenda<sup>76</sup> which seeks to end poverty by 2030 and promote shared economic prosperity, social development and environmental protection for all countries. It is based on 17 goals, including a stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, with specific targets and indicators, and gender-sensitive targets in other areas.

As the agenda was negotiated by all UN members, including the EU and its Member States, and applies to all for the next 15 years, this strategic engagement will contribute to achieving its gender-sensitive targets, in particular the following targets under goal 5:

- 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere;
- 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation;
- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- 5.4 Recognise and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate;
- 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life;
- 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences;
- 5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws;
- 5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women;
- 5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

<sup>76</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

## Annex 3:

# Integrating a gender equality perspective into all human resource practices and policies in the European Commission

The concept of diversity recognises the wide variety of qualities among staff in terms of skills, competences, attributes, personality and knowledge also in the Commission. Therefore, diversity management will be strategic for the institution and enjoy strong political support. In this context, a particular focus will be on senior management's responsibility to secure results at this level.

Three priority areas will be considered:

- an inclusive and results-oriented working environment benefiting all staff;
- achieving 40 % female representation in middle and senior management by the end of the mandate; and
- achieving excellence in attracting and retaining staff with a disability.

The Commission working environment needs to be results-oriented, so that staff is free to organise their work autonomously and manage the relationship between work and other activities (work-life balance). There could be several communication initiatives and a learning and development framework to trigger and sustain the shift to a genuinely inclusive workplace.

## Annex 4:

# 2014-2020 EU funding programmes contributing to reaching the targets and objectives of this strategic engagement

A number of EU funding programmes in 2014-2020 allow for the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming; these include:

- the European Structural and Investment Funds;
- the Asylum, Migration and Integration Funds;
- the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme;
- the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation;
- Erasmus + (EU programme for education, training, youth and sport);
- the Connecting Europe Facility (EU programme to co-fund trans-European network projects);
- the Development Cooperation Instrument;
- the European Neighbourhood Instrument;
- the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights; and
- the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation.

**Indicative funding** for gender equality can be provided for programmes that include a gender equality objective and use gender equality indicators allowing for the specification of allocated amounts.

## European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs)

The 2014-2020 ESIFs, in particular the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), are key financial levers for the promotion of equality between women and men. On the basis of the operational programmes agreed between Member States and the Commission, it is estimated that approximately **EUR 5.85 billion** will be spent in 2014-2020 on measures promoting gender equality.

Approximately **EUR 4.6 billion** in ESF spending in 2014-2020 is programmed for gender equality, of which EUR 1.6 billion under the 'equality between men and women in all areas, including in access to employment, career progression, reconciliation of work and private life and promotion of equal pay for equal work' investment priority chosen by 12 Member States<sup>77</sup>.

77 AT, CZ, DE, ES, FI, GR, HU, IT, PL, PT, SK and UK.

Approximately **EUR 1.25 billion** from the European Regional and Development Fund is programmed for investment in childcare infrastructure.

## Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme

Around EUR 440 million is allocated to the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme, which has nine specific objectives, including one for gender equality and another for preventing and combating violence against women, children and young people, and protecting victims and groups at risk. These two objectives currently account for around **35 % of the REC funds**.

## Development Cooperation Instrument

Among many other targeted actions, **EUR 100 million** will be committed to improving the lives of girls and women through the **2014-2020 Global Public Goods and Challenges specific thematic programme**. Of this, EUR 70 million is earmarked for the 'gender, women empowerment and girls rights' budget line and EUR 30 million for the 'child well-being' line, which will include EUR 18 million to tackle harmful practices such as FGM and child marriage.

In addition, gender equality will be mainstreamed in bilateral and regional geographical programmes. Examples include the DCI-Asia Latin America programme which will dedicate EUR 16 to 18 million to specific actions on gender equality or the EUR 2 million Gender Equality Facility in Albania.

## Horizon 2020

Gender equality is promoted in three ways under Horizon 2020:

- gender balance in advisory groups (50 % target) and evaluation panels (40 %) — data will be published in Horizon 2020 monitoring reports;
- grant beneficiaries are encouraged to aim at gender balance and equal opportunities in research teams engaged in projects; and
- gender dimension in research content (i.e. taking account of women's and men's biological characteristics and social/cultural factors).

In addition, within the 'science with and for society' work programme 2014-2017, a budget of about **EUR 43 million** will be allocated **to projects promoting awareness and implementation of gender equality in the research system and research organisations**.

## Annex 5:

# National gender-equality strategies/action plans (September 2015)

The adoption by an increasing number of Member States of national strategies or action plans (NAPs) addressing gender equality in a coherent and coordinated framework is a positive development. In addition, many Member States have adopted thematic action plans addressing particular challenges, such as gender-based violence. Actual implementation of gender equality policies is uneven across Member States and policy areas, due to the variation in socio-economic, cultural and institutional conditions. The design and the implementation of national strategies and action plans have been influenced by past European frameworks for gender equality, which Member States see as a strong driving force for national developments.<sup>78</sup>

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Austria	NAP for the equality of women and men in the labour market	AG <sup>79</sup>
	NAP to combat violence against women (2014)	AG
	4th NAP on combating human trafficking (2015-2017)	AG
	Revised NAP on implementing UNSC Resolution 1325 (revised NAP from 2012)	AG
	NAP on Women's Health	D

<sup>78</sup> *Recent developments and current priorities in the field of gender equality*, European Network of Experts on Gender Equality (ENEGE), 2014.

<sup>79</sup> The NAP was initially set up for 2010-2013; the government programme confirms an extension for 2013-2018.



ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
<b>Belgium</b>	4th NAP to fight against violence between partners and other forms of intra-family violence (2010-2014) <sup>80</sup>	AG
	NAP on the fight against gender-based violence (2015- 2019)	
	Federal action plan for gender mainstreaming (2015-2019)	AG
	2nd NAP on 'women, peace and security' (2013-2016) implementing UNSC Resolution 1325	AG
	3rd NAP to combat trafficking in human beings and human smuggling (2015-2019)	AG
<b>Bulgaria</b>	National strategy for the promotion of gender equality (2009-2015)	AG
	Annual NAP to promote gender equality (2009-2015)	AG/AP
<b>Croatia</b>	National policy for gender equality (2011-2015)	AG/AP
	Women's entrepreneurship development strategy (2014- 2020) and action plan for implementation	AG
	National plan for combating discrimination (2015-2020)	D <sup>81</sup>
	National protection against family violence strategy (2011-2016)	AG
	NAP for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security (2011-2014)	AG
	National human rights protection and promotion programme (2013-2016)	AG
	National plan for the suppression of trafficking in human beings (2012-2015)	AG
<b>Cyprus</b>	NAP on preventing and combating domestic violence (2010-2013)	AG <sup>82</sup>
	Action plan on equality between men and women (2014- 2017)	AG
	NAP on gender equality in education (2014-2017)	AG
	NAP on trafficking in persons (2013-2015)	AG

80 The NAP was primarily designed to fight domestic violence, but now also addresses FGM, forced marriages and honour-related violence.

81 The working groups drafting the plan have started to identify the problems and set goals in the area of labour and employment.

82 The advisory committee is currently preparing the 2nd action plan, for 2016-2018, which will cover actions not covered by the first plan, such as the creation of a unified central database.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Czech Republic	National gender equality plan – Government priorities and procedures in the promotion of equality for women and men (every year since 1998)	AG
	Strategy for equal opportunities for men and women (2014-2020)	AG
	Action plan for equal representation of women in politics and decision-making positions (2015)	AG
	2nd NAP for the prevention of domestic violence (2015-2018)	AG
Denmark	Annual gender equality NAP <sup>83</sup>	AP
	Gender mainstreaming NAPs (2007-2011; 2012 onwards)	AG
	Children and families strategy (2012-2020)	
	Action plan on combating domestic violence (2014)	AG
	Action plan to combat human trafficking (2015-2018)	AG
	NAP on honour-related violence (2012 onwards)	AG
Estonia	Action plan to reduce the pay gap between women and men (2012-2016)	AG
	Development plan for children and families (2012-2020)	AG
	Development strategy for preventing violence (2015- 2020) <sup>84</sup>	AG
	Development plan for welfare (2016-2023) <sup>85</sup>	D
Finland	Government action plan for gender equality (2011-2015)	AG
	NAP to reduce violence against women (2010-2015)	AG
France	Action plan for gender equality; bill for gender equality (since 2012)	AP
	Three-year action plans to combat violence against women (2008-2010; 2011-2013; 2014-2016)	AG <sup>86</sup>
Germany	Action programme on prospects of re-entering the labour market (since 2008)	AG
	First report on gender equality (frame of reference for the Federal Government's gender-equality policy) (2011)	AG
	2nd Government action plan to combat violence against women (since 2007)	AG

83 The action plan is presented and discussed in parliament each year.

84 Aimed at reducing domestic violence, violence against children, gender-based violence and trafficking in human beings.

85 This will cover labour, employment, social security, social inclusion, gender equality and equal opportunities.

86 The plans are presented by the Government as guidelines, without a framework law.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Greece	National programme for substantive gender equality (2010-2013, extended until 2015) <sup>87</sup>	AG
	National plan on social inclusion (2014), also promoting gender equality and combating discrimination	AG
Hungary	Government Resolution No 1004/2010 (I. 21.); national strategy for the promotion of gender equality – guidelines and objectives 2010-2021	AG
	Strategy to fight trafficking in human beings (2013-2016)	AP
Ireland	National women's strategy (2007-2016)	AG
	2nd NAP on women, peace and security (2015)	
	National strategy on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence (2010-2014) <sup>88</sup>	AG
	NAP to prevent and combat trafficking of persons (2009) <sup>89</sup>	AG
Italy	National reform programme with rules on tackling gender-based violence and abuse within the family (2014)	AG
	Extraordinary action plan against sexual violence and stalking (since 2010)	AG
Latvia	Plan for implementation of gender equality (2012-2014)	AG
	State family policy guidelines (2011-2017), which cover domestic violence	AG
	Guidelines on equal opportunities and rights for women and men (2016-2020)	D
Lithuania	National programme on equal opportunities for women and men (2010-2014)	AG/AP
	National programme on equal opportunities for women and men (2010-2014) implementation report (2015)	AG
	National programme on equal opportunities for women and men (2015-2021)	AG/AP
	NAP for national programme implementation (2015-2017)	AG

87 A working group on updating the programme was established in July 2015.

88 The Government is expected shortly to approve the 2nd national strategy.

89 The drafting of a successor NAP is at an advanced stage.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Luxembourg	NAP on equality of women and men (2009-2014, updated for 2015-2018)	AG
	Strategy to improve gender representation in decision-making (2014)	AG
	Government programme on reconciliation (2014-2019)	AG
	Government strategy to achieve a better balance between men and women in economic and political decision-making bodies (2014)	AG
	NAP on sexual and emotional education (2012)	AG
Malta	NAP on violence against women (2013-2015) <sup>90</sup>	AG
	Government policy on gender mainstreaming in practice (2012) <sup>91</sup>	AP
Netherlands	Headlines emancipation policy (2013-2016)	AG
	Specific plan for women in the senior levels of the national administration (2013)	AG
Poland	NAP for equal treatment (2013-2016)	AG <sup>92</sup>
	National programme counteracting violence in the family (2006-2013, updated for 2014-2020)	AG
	Human capital development strategy (2020)	AG
Portugal	5th national plan for gender equality, citizenship and non-discrimination (2014-2017)	AG
	5th national plan for preventing and combating domestic and gender violence (2014-2017)	AG
	3rd national plan against trafficking in human beings (2014-2017)	AG
	3rd action programme for the prevention and elimination of FGM (2014-2017)	AG
Romania	National strategy for equal opportunities between women and men (2010-2012, updated for 2014-2017)	AG
	National strategy for preventing and combating domestic violence (2013-2017) and operational plan	AG
Slovakia	NAP for the prevention and elimination of violence against women (2014-2019)	AG
	National strategy for gender equality (2014-2019)	AG
	NAP on gender equality (2014-2019)	AG

<sup>90</sup> The plan was announced in 2012.

<sup>91</sup> This policy reiterates that Government departments and public-sector organisations are responsible for implementing gender-equality policies and gender mainstreaming.

<sup>92</sup> The preparation of the NAP is required by the Anti-discrimination Act.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
Slovenia	Resolution on a national programme for the prevention of family violence (2009-2014)	AG
	Draft resolution on a national programme for equal opportunities for women and men (2015)	D <sup>93</sup>
Spain	Strategic equal opportunities plan (2014-2016)	AG
	Special plan on the equality of women and men in the labour market and against wage discrimination (2015- 2017)	D
	2nd action plan on equality between women and men in the information society (2014-2017)	AG
	National strategy for the eradication of violence against women (2013-2016)	AG
	Plan for the promotion of women in rural areas (2015- 2018)	AG
	Comprehensive family support plan (2015-2017)	AG
	Comprehensive plan to fight trafficking of women and girls for purposes of sexual exploitation (2015-2018)	AG
Sweden	National protocol against FGM (2015)	AG
	Government Communication 2011/12:3 on The objective of gender equality (2011-2014)	AG
	Government Communication 2008/09:198 on A strategy for gender equality in the labour market and the business sector (2009)	AG
	Government Communication 2007/08:39 on an Action plan to combat men's violence against women, honour-related violence and oppression, and violence in same-sex relations (2008, updated for 2011-2014)	AG
	Action plan to prevent and hinder young people from marrying against their will (2010)	AG
Gender mainstreaming strategy for Government departments (2012-2015)	AG	

93 The draft resolution was discussed at the Expert Council for Gender Equality in February 2015 and has been in public discussion since 2 April 2015.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES	TIMING
UK	Equality Act 2010 (public-sector equality duty incorporated in 2011)	AP
	The Equalities Strategy: building a fairer Britain (2006- 2016)	AP
	A call to end violence against women and girls (action plans reviewed annually; latest March 2014)	AP
	Action plan to address violence against women and girls (since 2011)	AG
	FGM prevention programme (2014)	AG

Sources: ENEGE country experts (country fiches, February 2015), EIGE, EC, EP.

\* AP: approved by Parliament, AG: approved by Government, D: draft.

## Annex 6: Main policy fields addressed by Member States' gender equality strategies/action plans (September 2015)

Initially, national gender equality strategies were focused on the labour market, with the introduction of legislation and regulatory measures on the equal treatment of women and men in terms of employment. In more recent years, socio-economic changes have led to intervention being extended to other relevant fields, both in the labour market (pay gaps, working time, work-life balance) and other areas, such as violence against women, health, and economic and political decision-making<sup>34</sup>. The fields are covered in the Member States' strategies and action plans as follows:

	Social inclusion and poverty	Education and Training	Access to Health	Gender based violence	Economy and Labour market	Gender stereotypes	Reconciliation of working and family life	Decision making
Belgium	x			x	x			x
Bulgaria	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Czech Republic	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Denmark	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Germany	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Estonia		x		x	x	x	x	
Ireland	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Greece	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spain	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
France	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Croatia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Italy	x			x	x	x	x	x

	Social inclusion and poverty	Education and Training	Access to Health	Gender based violence	Economy and Labour market	Gender stereotypes	Reconciliation of working and family life	Decision making
Cyprus	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Latvia				x	x	x	x	
Lithuania		x	x	x	x		x	
Luxembourg	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Hungary	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Malta	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Netherlands	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Austria	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Poland	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Portugal	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Romania	x	x		x	x	x	x	
Slovenia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Slovakia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Finland	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sweden	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
UK	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Sources: ENEGE country experts, EIGE, EC, EP





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