



Brussels, 6.3.2018  
SWD(2018) 65 final

**COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**

**2018 Report on equality between women and men in the EU**

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## FOREWORD

Gender equality concerns us all. It is a fundamental right as well as an internationally agreed Sustainable Development Goal. Having gender balance in politics and in the workplace is an essential feature of stable and transparent democracies. It not only encourages economic development but also promotes overall well-being and leads to a more inclusive and fair Europe for both women and men.

Women across Europe have the right to equality, empowerment and safety, but for far too many these rights are not yet a reality. In some countries, the political and economic participation of women is moving backwards. An abundance of data and statistics show that women, who make up half of our population, are under-represented in decision-making positions in politics and in business and still earn on average 16 % less than men across the European Union. What is more, gender-based violence and harassment remain widespread.

These facts are unacceptable and very much against the fundamental values and principles of the EU. It is of utmost importance that we practise what we preach by taking positive measures to address inequalities between women and men and by tackling all forms of discrimination in our society.

The Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019 sets the framework for the Commission's work to improve equality between women and men in Europe. It focuses on five thematic priorities including increasing women's economic independence, reducing the gender gaps in pay and pensions and addressing poverty among women, while promoting equality between women and men in decision-making. In 2017, a variety of initiatives started in all of these areas. Priority was given to actions on violence against women, work-life balance and gender pay gap. This year's Annual Fundamental Rights Colloquium on 'Women's Rights in Turbulent Times' brought together a large number of high-level politicians, as well as researchers, journalists, NGOs, businesses and international organisations and addressed all these priority topics. The Commission also declared 2017 a Year of Focused Actions on Ending Violence against Women.

The Commission is determined to ensure that the EU continues throughout 2018 and 2019 to deliver on the commitments made in the Strategic engagement to advance and promote equal and inclusive societies in Europe.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**In 2017 the European Commission launched various initiatives to advance gender equality between women and men.**

- In April 2017 the Commission adopted, in the context of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the initiative on **work-life balance for working parents and carers**. The initiative is a comprehensive package of policy and legal measures, including a proposal for a Directive to modernise EU legislation on family-related leave and flexible working arrangements.
- The Commission declared 2017 the **Year of Focused Actions to End Violence against Women**. In this context, the **#SayNoStopVaw** campaign attracted broad public attention.
- On 20 November 2017, the Commission adopted the **2017-2019 Action Plan to tackle the gender pay gap**. It comprises a broad and coherent set of 20 actions to be delivered in the next 2 years.
- On 20 November 2017, together with the Action Plan on the gender pay gap, the Commission adopted an **evaluation report on the implementation of the Pay Transparency Recommendation**.
- On 20-21 November 2017 the Commission held the **Annual Fundamental Rights Colloquium on the topic 'Women's Rights in Turbulent Times'**. The Colloquium addressed violence and harassment against women as well as the economic and political inequalities between women and men, particularly focusing on gender pay gap and work-life balance issues.
- On 19 September 2017, the EU launched together with the UN the so-called **Spotlight Initiative**. With intended budget of EUR 500 million, this is one of the largest initiatives that the EU has launched to address gender-based violence. The EU and UN agreed to work together to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in partner countries from five regions of the world: Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

## **Country codes**

European Union	EU
Austria	AT
Belgium	BE
Bulgaria	BG
Croatia	HR
Cyprus	CY
Czech Republic	CZ
Denmark	DK
Estonia	EE
Finland	FI
France	FR
Germany	DE
Greece	EL
Hungary	HU
Ireland	IE
Italy	IT
Latvia	LV
Lithuania	LT
Luxembourg	LU
Malta	MT
Netherlands	NL
Poland	PL
Portugal	PT
Romania	RO
Slovakia	SK
Slovenia	SI
Spain	ES
Sweden	SE
United Kingdom	UK

## INTRODUCTION

Gender equality is one of the fundamental values of the European Union (EU). The EU is dedicated not only to defending this right, but also to promoting gender equality within the Member States and across the world. This is the core aim of the European Commission's *Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019*<sup>1</sup>. In addition, the Strategic engagement ensures that a gender equality perspective is integrated into all EU policies and EU funding programmes.

This 2018 Report on equality between women and men in the EU takes stock of the main initiatives launched or accomplished in 2017 in the five thematic areas of the Strategic engagement:

- (1) equal economic independence of women and men;
- (2) equal pay for work of equal value;
- (3) equality in decision-making;
- (4) ending gender-based violence; and
- (5) promoting gender equality beyond the EU.

It focuses in particular on:

- key trends and the newest available data on the Strategic engagement indicators;
- actions in the EU, focusing on the achievements by EU Member States and the EU institutions;
- inspiring practices, innovative projects and successful policies.

The Report focuses on short-term developments over the last 12 months, but also on medium-term changes since 2010 which could evolve into longer-term developments.

The European Commission's efforts in 2017 focused on strengthening alliances, giving voice and visibility to women and also men who share a common understanding that the unequal treatment of women in politics, in the economy and in society has to end. A Special Eurobarometer survey on gender equality was released on 20 November 2017<sup>2</sup>. It emphasises that gender equality has still not been achieved in the EU Member States. Although 84 % of the respondents to the survey considered that gender equality is important for them personally (including 80 % of men), the Eurobarometer survey also shows that more than one third of Europeans believe that men are more ambitious than women (35%), and almost seven in ten respondents think women are more likely than men to make decisions based on their emotions (69 %). This is also linked to expectations in the domestic sphere, where women are perceived as carers more than men — a notion that is also further reflected in professional occupations,

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<sup>1</sup> Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/strategic\\_engagement\\_for\\_gender\\_equality\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/strategic_engagement_for_gender_equality_en.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Special Eurobarometer 465 (2017), Gender Equality 2017, [EBS 465], available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/SPECIAL/surveyKy/2154>, hereafter referenced as EBS 465.

in the wider economic dependency of women and in the unequal division of labour and responsibilities within in the household.

This survey reaffirms that a lot of work still needs to be done in all Member States. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) published this year its Gender Equality Index, highlighting that progress is moving forward at a snail's pace and in some domains is even going backwards. Compared to 10 years ago 12 countries have moved backwards when it comes to the gender balance in terms of time spent on care, domestic work and social activities. Only every third man engages daily in cooking and housework, whereas most women do it every day (79 %). With an average score of 66.2 for gender equality, the EU is still a long way from being a gender-equal society<sup>3</sup>.

Equal access to economic resources is not just a matter of women's economic independence but a prerequisite for achieving economic growth, prosperity and competitiveness. Here, the slowdown in progress can be seen in the persisting gender gaps in employment and pay. The persistence of these gaps has also moved the European Commission to act. In November 2017, the Commission announced positive action to **reduce the gender pay gap through an Action Plan** to be delivered between now and the end of the Commission's mandate in 2019. In the Action Plan it urges the European Parliament and the Member States to adopt swiftly the **work-life balance proposal** of April 2017; calls for arrangements to facilitate the adoption of the Directive on gender balance in the largest listed companies; and encourages governments and social partners to adopt measures to improve gender balance in decision-making.

The second line of actions on which the European Commission concentrated its efforts in 2017 was to combat violence against women and girls. The Commission declared 2017 a Year of Focused Actions on Ending Violence against Women (VAW). The actions that were launched aimed at supporting and engaging professionals, Member States and NGOs in combatting violence against women. As part of these actions, the **#SayNoStopVaw** campaign has attracted broad public attention. In addition, other campaigns, some of which started spontaneously, have shown that women's visibility and voice is crucial to address widespread misogynous behaviour in society.

Women's public outcry in 2017 using social media under **#MeToo** to express the sexual harassment and assault they have experienced helped to break the silence. The European Commission also supported the global campaign to end violence against women (**#OrangetheWorld**) during 16 Days of Activism aiming to raise public awareness and mobilise people to end violence against women and girls worldwide.

2017 was a challenging year because of the attempt of extremist and populist movements to further undermine democratic societies through hate speech, racism and specifically gendered discrimination. The EU is committed to addressing these threats to fundamental rights and is aware that all joint efforts need an inclusive approach in order to be successful. The **Annual**

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<sup>3</sup> In the past 10 years, the score has increased only four points. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2017), Gender Equality Index 2017 — Measuring gender equality in the European Union 2005-2015 Report, available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/gender-equality-index-2017-measuring-gender-equality-european-union-2005-2015-report>.

**Fundamental Rights Colloquium on Women's Rights in Turbulent Times**<sup>4</sup> brought together different perspectives and voices to discuss these global challenges.

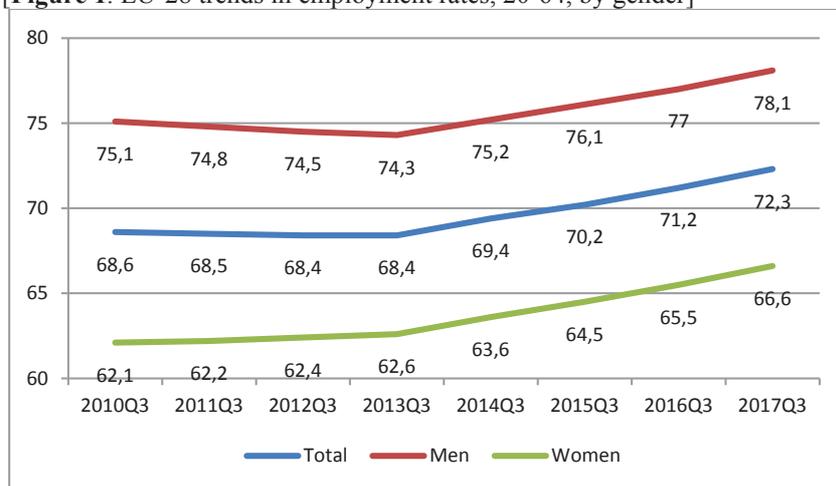
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<sup>4</sup> Women's Rights in Turbulent Times was the title of this year's fundamental rights colloquium that brought together all the stakeholders dedicated to advance the five thematic priorities of the European Union to achieve gender equality. For the web streaming and further details, see: [http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item\\_id=115277](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=115277).

## 1. INCREASING FEMALE LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION AND THE EQUAL ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF WOMEN AND MEN

The EU's aim is to reach a 75 % employment rate for men and women by 2020<sup>5</sup>. In 2017, female employment continued to increase slowly but steadily, similarly to that of men, and reached 66.6 % in the third quarter of 2017. Despite this progress, women are still a long way off achieving full economic independence. In comparison to men, women still tend to be employed less, are employed in lower-paid sectors, work on average 6 hours longer per week than men in total (paid and unpaid) but have fewer paid hours<sup>6</sup>, take more career breaks and face fewer and slower promotions. The available data indicates that among the most common occupational categories, women in EU countries dominate the following: shop salespeople, cleaners, personal care workers, pre-primary and primary school teachers and secretaries<sup>7</sup>. Professions in healthcare, law and human resources are examples of higher-level occupations in which women's presence has greatly increased. On the other hand, the share of women within other occupations, such as engineers or ICT professionals, remains low<sup>8</sup>.

[Figure 1. EU-28 trends in employment rates, 20-64, by gender]



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

The gender gap in employment is the headline indicator of the European Pillar of Social Rights' social scoreboard for gender equality<sup>9</sup>. It has stagnated for the last few years at around 11 percentage points (11.5 in 2017q3) and has reached more than 18 percentage points in terms of full-time equivalent. No considerable catch-up has been observed between low and high performing Member States. EL, IT, MT and RO are among the worst performers on the gender employment gap, compared to the best performers LV, LT and FI<sup>10</sup>. (see Figure 2)

<sup>5</sup> COM(2010) 2020 final, Europe 2020 A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52010DC2020>.

<sup>6</sup> Eurofound (2016), Sixth European Working Conditions Survey, available at: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/european-working-conditions-surveys/sixth-european-working-conditions-survey-2015>.

<sup>7</sup> OECD (2017), The Pursuit of Gender Equality. An Uphill Battle, available at: <http://www.oecd.org/publications/the-pursuit-of-gender-equality-9789264281318-en.htm>, hereafter referenced as OECD (2017).

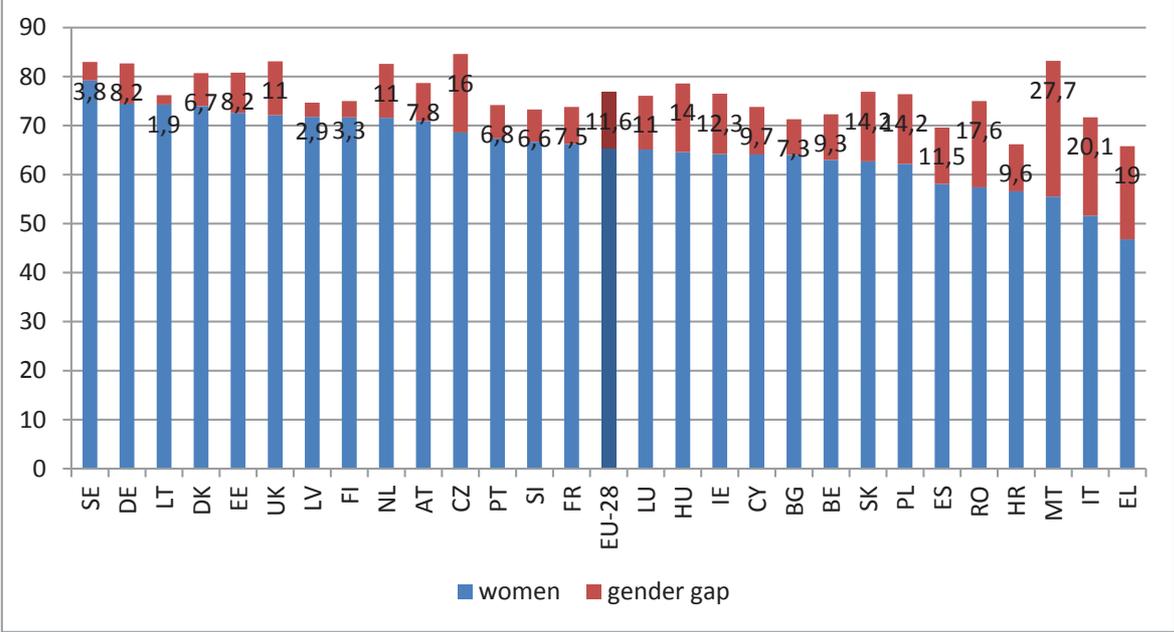
<sup>8</sup> EIGE (2017), Gender segregation in education, training and the labour market, available at: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12-709-2017-ADD-2/en/pdf>, hereafter referenced as EIGE (2017).

<sup>9</sup> COM(2017) 250 final, Establishing a European Pillar of Social Rights, available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2017/EN/COM-2017-250-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>.

<sup>10</sup> COM(2017) 674 final, Draft Joint Employment Report from the Commission and the Council accompanying the Communication from the Commission on the Annual Growth Survey 2018, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2017-comm-674\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2017-comm-674_en.pdf), hereafter referenced as COM(2017) 674 final.

The employment gap is especially high for mothers and women with caring responsibilities. In 2016 more than 19% of the EU inactive women were inactive because of looking after children or incapacitated adults. On average, the employment rate of women with a child under 6 is 9 percentage points less than the employment rate of women without children, and in some countries this difference is over 30 percentage points (SK, CZ, HU).

[Figure 2. Women employment rate and gender employment gap, 20-64, per Member State, 2016]



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

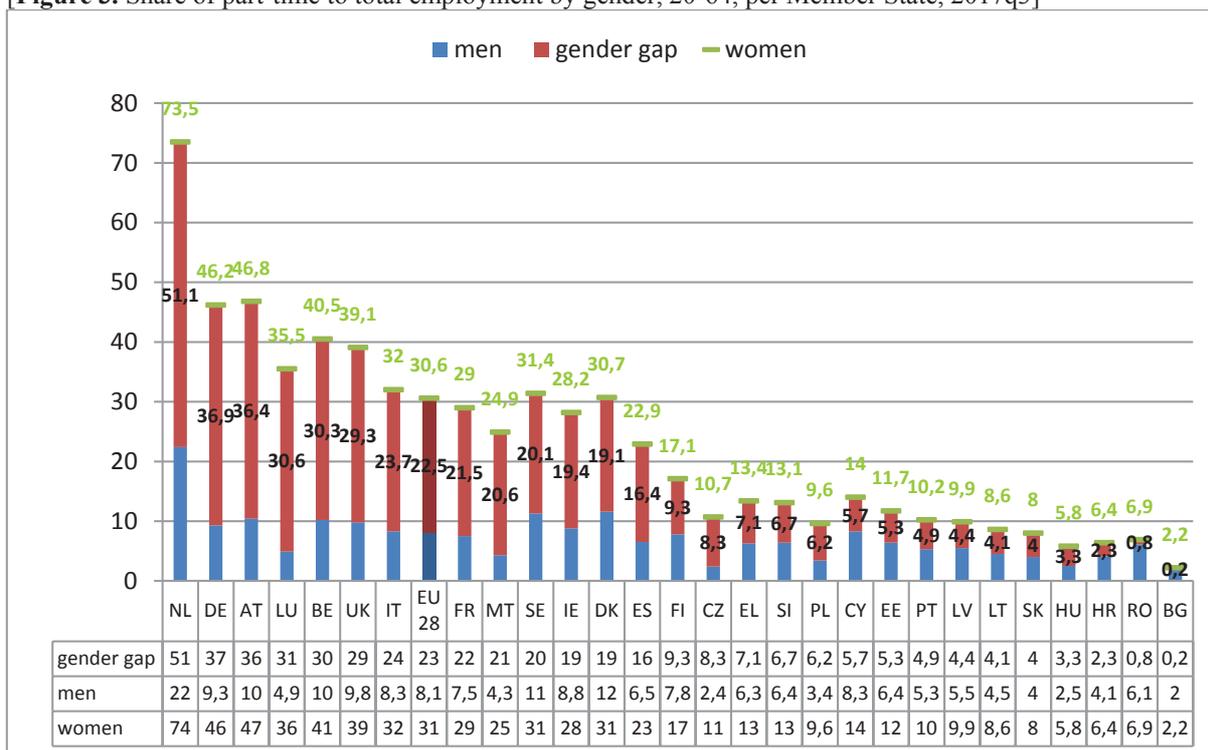
The share of women working part-time is a social scoreboard secondary indicator for gender equality<sup>11</sup>. It remains stable at around 30 %, as compared to 8 % for men, though significant country differences can be observed (see Figure 3). Studies show that gender sorting into part-time work is an important factor keeping women attached to the labour market, especially after they become mothers<sup>12</sup>. But it has a major drawback: part-time work is one of the key factors contributing to the existing gender pay gap, therefore hampering equal economic independence. In Member States with relatively poor work-life balance and little culture of part-time employment, such as for instance HU, HR, IT, PL and RO, it is predominantly women with high earning potential that access the labour market and female employment rates tend to be low overall (below the EU average). In countries with a more widespread culture of flexible working arrangements in terms of part-time employment, such as DE, NL and UK, female employment rates are higher (above the EU average). However, this comes at a cost of wages, as part-time jobs tend to be associated with lower hourly earnings<sup>13</sup> — see ‘hours of work’– Figure 6 in chapter 2. Part time work is also associated with weakened career opportunities and weakened social protection, such as unemployment benefits or pensions.

<sup>11</sup> Social scoreboard headline and secondary indicators are available at: <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/social-scoreboard/>

<sup>12</sup> OECD (2017).

<sup>13</sup> Boll Ch., Lagemann A. (2017), Gender pay gap in EU countries based on SES (2014), *forthcoming*.

**[Figure 3. Share of part-time to total employment by gender, 20-64, per Member State, 2017q3]**

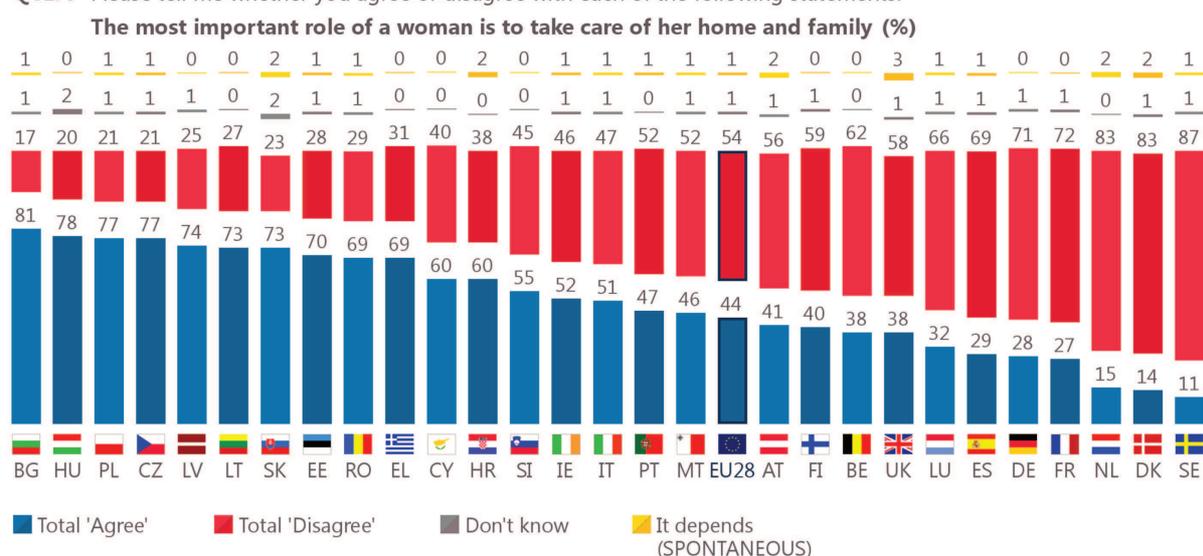


Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

Housekeeping and raising children are still largely considered a woman’s role. More than four in ten Europeans (44 %) believe the most important role of a woman is to take care of her home and family. Moreover, in one third of EU Member States this percentage is even 70 % or more<sup>14</sup>.

**[Figure 4. The most important role of a woman is to take care of her home and family (%)]**

QC1.4 Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.



Source: EBS 465

<sup>14</sup> EBS 465.

Despite various policies and measures to advance gender equality in the European Union and its Member States, women still remain the main carers of children and the elderly and the main contributors to domestic chores. 73 % of Europeans affirm that women spend more time than men on housework and caring activities<sup>15</sup>. This is mostly visible when the care responsibilities are most intense: in couples with the youngest child under 7, women spend on average 32 hours per week on paid work but 39 hours on unpaid work, compared to men who do 41 hours paid and 19 hours of unpaid work per week<sup>16</sup>. Indeed, both men and women increase their unpaid working hours when they have children, but the share of the housework and care is far from equal. This remains true, even towards the end of their working life. The status of women's working life is more likely to be affected by those responsibilities. The negative impact of parenthood on employment has been recognised as a significant challenge in DE, EE, HU, MT, UK, SK, CZ and FI<sup>17</sup>.

**Germany** offers an interesting example of a measure aimed at keeping women in the labour market and supporting the more equal sharing of parenting responsibilities between women and men.

In 2015, Germany introduced the Parental Allowance Plus (*ElterngeldPlus*<sup>18</sup>) and Partnership Bonus (*Partnerschaftsbonus*) measures, which provide financial incentives for both parents to work part-time (between 25-30 hours per week) and share caregiving when children are very young<sup>19</sup>.

The measure is proposed as an alternative to a complete break from employment. Parental Allowance Plus can be used instead of the parental leave allowance. The income replacement rate is 65-100 % for lost earnings due to the part-time work. It amounts to a maximum of half the regular parental allowance that parents would receive if they did not go back to work, i.e. EUR 150 to 900. The timespan of financial support doubles if parents start working part-time (up to 30 hours a week) and request *ElterngeldPlus*. It extends the regular parental allowance (*Elterngeld*) from 12 months (for one parent) or 14 months (for two parents) to 24 months (for one parent) or 28 months if both parents opt for part-time work. The 4 additional months of parental allowance are called the Partnership Bonus.

Good quality, accessible and affordable formal care services are important in enabling men and women with care responsibilities to take up employment. In recent years, the quality of childcare services seems to have improved in several countries where ratings were previously low — this is in particular the case in BG, EL, HU, LV, PL and SK<sup>20</sup>. However, the availability of quality and affordable childcare facilities continues to be a challenge in a significant number of Member States, such as BG, CZ, DE, EE, IE, ES, HR, IT, HU, LV, PL, RO, MT, AT, SK and the UK<sup>21</sup>. Only around one third of the Member States reach or are close to the Barcelona targets<sup>22</sup>. Remarkable differences can be observed between individual

<sup>15</sup> EBS 465.

<sup>16</sup> Eurofound (2016), Sixth European Working Conditions Survey, available at: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/european-working-conditions-surveys/sixth-european-working-conditions-survey-2015>.

<sup>17</sup> See relevant country reports 2017 in the context of the European Semester, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2017-european-semester-country-reports\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2017-european-semester-country-reports_en).

<sup>18</sup> For more details on the *ElterngeldPlus*, see: <http://www.elterngeld-plus.de/>.

<sup>19</sup> OECD (2017): Dare to Share: Germany's Experience Promoting Equal Partnership in Families, available at: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/dare-to-share-germany-s-experience-promoting-equal-partnership-in-families\\_9789264259157-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/dare-to-share-germany-s-experience-promoting-equal-partnership-in-families_9789264259157-en).

<sup>20</sup> Eurofound (2017), European Quality of Life Survey 2016, available at: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eqls2016#7>.

<sup>21</sup> See relevant 2017 European Semester country reports, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2017-european-semester-country-reports\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2017-european-semester-country-reports_en).

<sup>22</sup> In 2002, the Barcelona European Council concluded: 'Member States should remove disincentives to female labour force participation, taking into account the demand for childcare facilities and in line with national patterns of provision, to provide childcare by 2010 to at least

countries. According to the new social scoreboard<sup>23</sup>, CZ, PL and SK are among the worst performers in terms of the availability of formal childcare, compared to BE, DK, LU, PT and SE which perform best<sup>24</sup>. Moreover, increased ageing has also led to a rise in the demand for long-term care services, and this is expected to continue in the future. However, these services remain underdeveloped in many Member States. Lack of formal long-term care arrangements has been shown to negatively affect labour market participation of informal carers, who are disproportionately women<sup>25</sup>.

Women also face strong financial disincentives when entering the labour market or wanting to work more. In some tax-benefit systems, cash transfers and tax-related support weaken financial incentives to work for second earners, most often women. High childcare costs can be a further disincentive to start or return to work for a second earner in a dual earning couple. This is particularly the case in Ireland where childcare-related net costs represent 33% of disposable income for a couple with children with median earnings.

Adding to this, the equally large diversity of family leave arrangements in the EU, the general low take-up of family leave by fathers, the low share of men working part-time, the general culture of long work hours in better paid professions<sup>26</sup>, and little flexibility in working patterns, makes it unlikely, especially in certain Member States, that female labour market participation will increase substantially in the short term and thus achieve the Europe 2020 employment target.

In 2017, a country-specific recommendation on female labour market participation was addressed to 10 Member States in the context of the European Semester: CZ, DE, EE, IE, ES, IT, AT, PL, RO and SK. It related in particular to ensuring the availability of quality childcare facilities, facilitating the take-up of work for second earners, and reducing the gender pay gap.

In 2017, **Malta** broadened a free childcare scheme for children whose parents work or are in education. The scheme provides an incentive for mothers to return to work or to remain in formal employment and aims ‘to make work pay, especially for mothers with lower levels of education and skills and a lower earning bracket’. Through this scheme, the government established public private partnerships with childcare providers which are given a fixed rate of EUR 3 (2015 information) per hour for every enrolled child. Costs are settled by the government at the end of each month. Parents are allowed to send their children to a childcare centre of their choice, and benefit from a number of hours of free childcare ‘equivalent to the hours worked by the parent with the lower workload, plus one hour extra for commuting’.

Furthermore, the Government has implemented additional initiatives as part of a concerted strategy to further facilitate work-life balance:

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*90 % of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33 % of children under 3 years of age*, available at: [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/71025.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/71025.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> The Social Scoreboard, the online monitoring tool developed to accompany the European Pillar of Social Rights—allows tracking the indicators over time and performances across Member States. The Social Scoreboard visualisation tool is accessible at <https://composite-indicators.jrc.ec.europa.eu/social-scoreboard/#>.

<sup>24</sup> COM(2017) 674 final, Draft Joint Employment Report from the Commission and the Council accompanying the Communication from the Commission on the Annual Growth Survey 2018, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2017-comm-674\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2017-comm-674_en.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> ENEPRI Research Report (2011) The Impact of Long Term Care on Caregivers’ participation in the labour market; and Commission (2013) Long Term Care in Ageing Societies.

<sup>26</sup> For instance, women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) work longer hours than women in other occupations. This is due to working cultures in male-dominated occupations where part-time work is often not encouraged and accepted. Men’s average working hours are generally longer than women’s in every occupation, but they work even longer hours in male-dominated occupations, such as science and engineering. Source: EIGE (2017), Work in the EU: women and men at opposite ends.

The Breakfast Club scheme enables working parents to take their children one hour prior to commencement of school time. Children are provided with a healthy breakfast.

The Klabb 3-16 scheme provides working parents with the possibility of engaging in gainful employment on a full-time basis by providing after-school hours' care. Thus parents are not required to pick up their children from school or take them to other child-minding places. Klabb 3-16 doesn't only provide a child-minding service but an environment of informal learning.

### ***Work-life balance policies: new start***

Profound structural changes are needed to the labour markets and the way they function if we are to encourage more female labour market participation and support dual-earning families. Structural changes in terms of work organisation, general work culture and working time flexibility are crucial in achieving this. In addition, well designed family leave can send a signal to the labour market that both men and women are equally 'at risk' of a career break when they have a child and that taking a career break does not signal a lack of ambition or commitment.

Studies show that where new fathers take parental leave, mothers return more easily to work, female employment is higher and the earnings gap between men and women is lower<sup>27</sup>. Evidence from several countries shows that non-transferable periods of parental leave for fathers — designed on a 'take it or leave it' basis — in combination with a high rate of income replacement, increase the take-up of leave by fathers (see examples below).

In order to trigger these structural changes, in April 2017 the European Commission adopted a comprehensive package of policy and legal measures. ***The initiative on work-life balance for working parents and carers***<sup>28</sup> includes a proposal for a Directive that aims at modernising EU legislation in the area of family-related leave and flexible working arrangements.

The proposal for a Directive foresees an EU-wide right to paternity leave and strengthens the existing parental leave. Fathers would be able to take at least 10 working days of paternity leave around the time of the child's birth, compensated at least at the level of sick pay. Also, 4 months of parental leave would be compensated at least at sick pay level and be non-transferable from one parent to the other. Parents would have the right to request leave in a flexible way (part-time or in a piecemeal way). Further, the age of the child up to which parents can take leave would be increased from 8 to 12 years.

The Commission's proposal would further introduce carers' leave for workers caring for seriously ill or dependent relatives. Working carers would be able to take 5 days per year, compensated at least at sick pay level.

Finally, the Directive would adapt to new working time patterns. The proposal includes the right to request more flexible working arrangements for all working parents of children up to

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<sup>27</sup> Economist (2017), The best – and worst – places to be a working woman, available at: <https://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2017/03/daily-chart-0>. See also: SWD(2017) 202 final, Commission Staff Working Document Impact Assessment, Accompanying the document Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on Work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU, available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52017SC0202&from=EN>.

<sup>28</sup> COM(2017) 252 final, 'An initiative for work-life balance for working parents and carers'; available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1311&langId=en>.

12 years and carers with dependent relatives, not only in terms of time (flexible and/or reduced working hours) but also in terms of place of work (teleworking).

The discussions on the proposal in the Council were launched under Estonian Presidency. Progress has been made and discussions continue under the Bulgarian Presidency. For its part, the European Parliament will discuss the text in the Employment, FEMM<sup>29</sup> and JURI<sup>30</sup> committees, and the first reading report in the Parliament is expected by Autumn 2018.

In **Sweden**, there are 180 days of parental leave allocated to each parent, out of which 3 months are non-transferable and paid at sick pay level (almost 80 % of earnings). This non-transferable period was implemented progressively, from 1 month in 1995, to 2 months in 2002 to 3 months in 2016. The introduction of a father's quota led to more fathers taking more leave. In 2016, 45 % of parental leave benefit recipients were men, compared to 55 % who were women; on average mothers took 89 days and fathers 39 days during that one year.

In **Germany**, the 2007 parental leave reform had the explicit aim of raising the take-up of leave by fathers, and data show that the proportion of fathers taking parental leave has risen significantly and steadily since. For births in 2014, parental leave was taken up by 34.2 % of fathers (compared to 3.5 % of fathers in 2006, before the new legislation). The mean duration of parental leave used by fathers was 3.1 months (compared to the mean duration of 11.6 months parental leave taken up by mothers).

In **Denmark**, the government wishes to encourage more fathers to use their right to parental leave schemes. A national campaign is currently under way. Several companies will take part in the campaign, including by signing a declaration of interest and support. A new survey regarding fathers taking parental leave has also been launched.

The initiative on work-life balance for working parents and carers also contains a set of other, mainly non-legislative measures, that translate into 10 actions. These actions focus on a wide range of issues to improve the work-life balance for men and women with caring responsibilities and aim at modernising the existing EU legal and policy framework. For instance:

- Together with the Member States, the Commission launched work to develop new indicators for monitoring the work-life balance initiative.
- The Commission launched a study to map dismissal protection for pregnant workers and workers returning from family leave across countries. It will work with EQUINET<sup>31</sup> to organise a seminar on dismissal protection, targeted at equality bodies and labour inspectorates.
- The Commission will carry out a study on the Barcelona targets and will consider revising these targets.
- The Commission organised a seminar and a series of peer reviews under the Mutual Learning Programme on family-related leaves, formal care services and addressing economic disincentives for second earners to work or to work full time.

<sup>29</sup> Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/femm/home.html>.

<sup>30</sup> Legal Affairs Committee, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/juri/home.html>

<sup>31</sup> European Network of Equality Bodies, <http://www.equineteurope.org/>.

- The Commission provides funding for several actions dealing with work-life balance, such as projects aimed at improving the enforcement of EU law on work-life balance through the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme, and pilot schemes to develop innovative working arrangements under the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation. The Commission also works with the Member States to ensure that the European Structural and Investment Funds and the European Fund for Strategic Investment adequately support work-life balance measures.

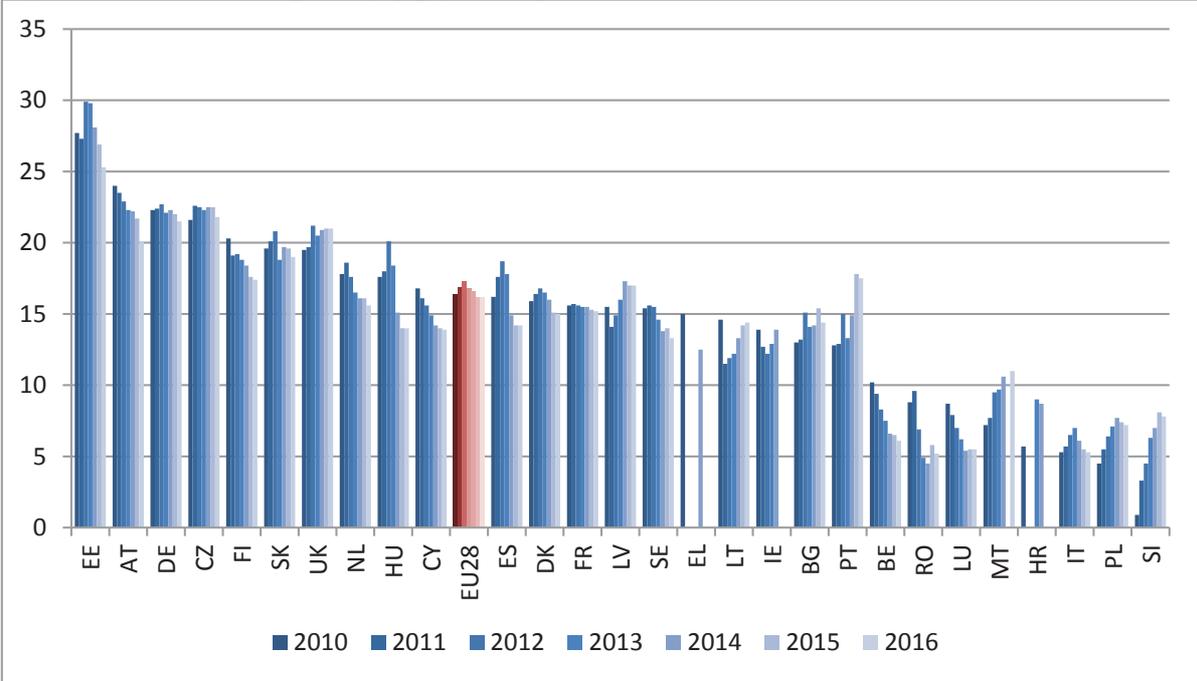
The Commission set up a dedicated Inter-Service Group to follow up the implementation of the work-life balance initiative.

The work-life balance initiative is closely linked to the Interinstitutional Proclamation on a European Pillar of Social Rights endorsed by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission and signed on 17 November 2017. The Pillar enshrines gender equality as one of 20 key principles and rights essential for fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems and stresses that equality of treatment and opportunities between women and men must be ensured and fostered in all areas.

**2. REDUCING GENDER PAY, EARNINGS AND PENSION GAPS AND THUS FIGHTING POVERTY AMONG WOMEN**

Women in the EU, across the economy, earn on average over 16 % less per hour than men. Considerable country heterogeneity can be observed among the EU Member States: the gender pay gap varies from 5.2 % in Romania to 25.3 % in Estonia, which also points to the current trade-off between low gender wage gaps and high female employment rates (see chapter 1 for more details).

**Figure 5:** EU-28 trends in gender pay gap in unadjusted form, 2010-2016

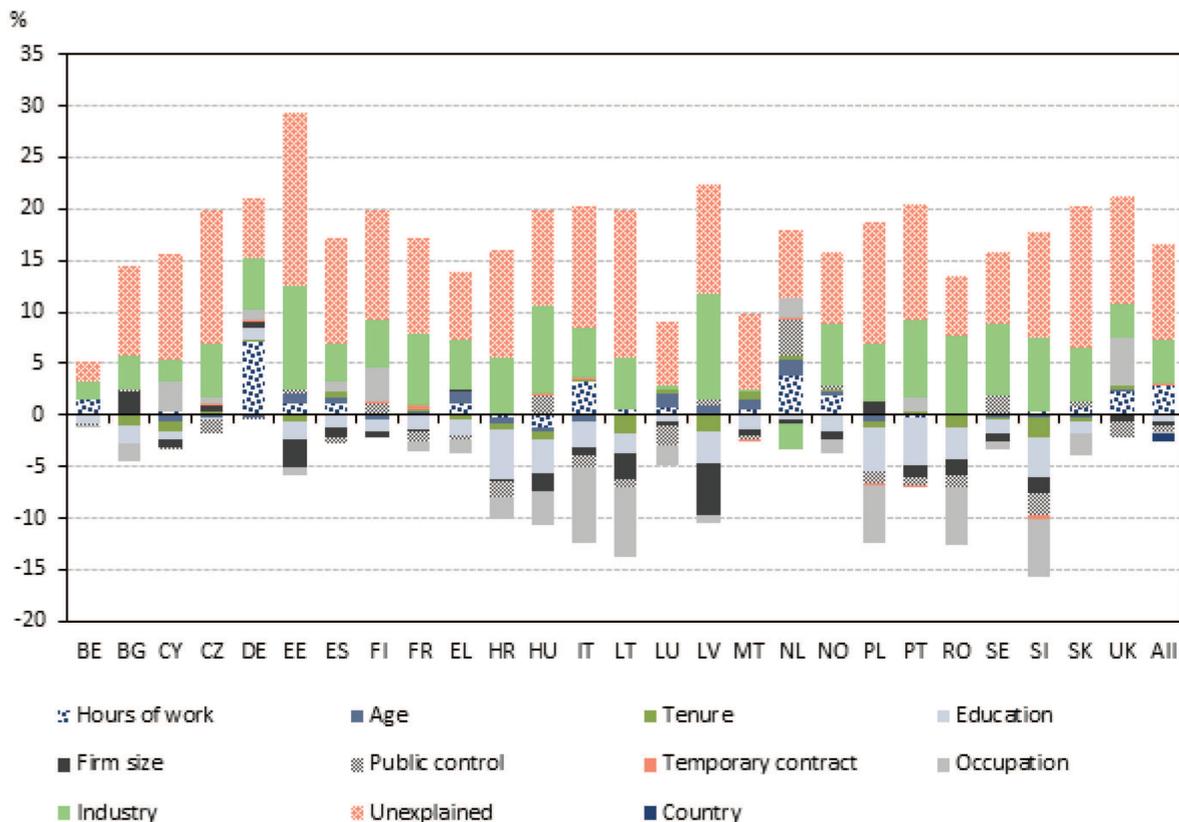


Source: Eurostat

## Two thirds of the gender pay gap in the EU remains ‘unexplained’

Studies<sup>32</sup> on the factors behind the gender pay gap show that a large part of the pay gap cannot be attributed to the differences in average characteristics of working men and women such as: age, education, occupation, industry affiliation, part-time or temporary employment, job tenure, firm size, or employment in private versus public sector (see Figure 6). About two thirds of the pay gap indicator of 16 % (or around 10 % of wage difference) cannot be explained by those explanatory factors. Moreover, looking at individual countries this ‘unexplained’ part is never lower than 5 % (except for BE).

[Figure 6: Decomposition of the explained part of the gender pay gap (in %), 2014]



Source: SES (2014); Boll Ch., Lagemann A. (2017), *forthcoming*

In most countries, it is this ‘unexplained’ residual part that hides the bulk of factors that prevent women from catching up. An important part of the ‘unexplained’ gender pay gap is likely to be caused by women taking career breaks following childbirth. Overall, women’s careers can even be one third shorter than those of men<sup>33</sup>. Due to data limitations<sup>34</sup>, this factor is not taken into account in the ‘explained’ part of the adjusted gender pay gap for EU countries. In Germany, where the career breaks factor has been taken into account, and which is a country with a strong culture of women taking career breaks after having children, gender

<sup>32</sup> Boll Ch., Lagemann A. (2017), Gender pay gap in EU countries based on SES (2014), *forthcoming*.

<sup>33</sup> OECD (2017).

<sup>34</sup> Structure of Earnings Survey, based on which the calculation is made, does not include career breaks among its variables.

differences in employment answer for 5.6 percentage points out of the over 22.8 % gender pay gap<sup>35</sup>.

The ‘unexplained’ gender pay gap is also likely to include discrimination in hiring, career progression and opportunities in the labour market<sup>36</sup>. For instance, a recent survey conducted in Ireland demonstrated that women are almost twice as likely as men to experience discrimination at work, in terms of pay and promotion<sup>37</sup>. Research by EIGE suggests that women tend to obtain less challenging positions and to be offered fewer opportunities for career progression. The gender gap in bonuses is found to be the greatest gap across different remuneration sources, both in terms of the share of women and men receiving them and in terms of the generosity of bonuses<sup>38</sup>.

In April 2017, **Poland** published a user friendly free internet application which allows measuring the pay gap between women and men<sup>39</sup>. The methodology used in the tool enables to estimate the adjusted pay gap indicator taking into account the different characteristics of the workplace, employees and employers. It can be used both by the private companies and in public administration.

### *Pay transparency: still in the dark ages*

The lack of transparency in wages does not help shed light on the reasons for pay inequalities. 64 % of employees in the EU are in favour of publishing average wages by job type and gender at their company<sup>40</sup>.

This lack of pay transparency has been recognised<sup>41</sup> as one of the major obstacles to victims of pay discrimination effectively enforcing their rights: pay transparency may help in obtaining the information necessary to prove discrimination. Pay transparency can enable employees, employers or social partners to take appropriate action. An awareness of different pay levels within a company can make it easier for individuals to challenge pay discrimination before national courts. Currently, only very few claims of gender-based pay discrimination reach the national courts<sup>42</sup>.

On 20 November 2017, together with the Action Plan on the gender pay gap (see following section on Gender pay gap: a renewed commitment), the Commission adopted an **evaluation report on the implementation of the Pay Transparency Recommendation**<sup>43</sup>. The report shows that despite the adoption of the Recommendation in 2014<sup>44</sup>, only 11 Member States

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<sup>35</sup> Boll Ch., Rossen A., Wolf A. (2017), The EU Gender Earnings Gap: Job Segregation and Working Time as Driving Factors, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1515/jbnst-2017-0100>.

<sup>36</sup> OECD (2017).

<sup>37</sup> ESRI (2017), Who experiences discrimination in Ireland? Evidence from the QNHS Equality Modules, available at: <http://www.esri.ie/publications/who-experiences-discrimination-in-ireland-evidence-from-the-qnhs-equality-modules/>.

<sup>38</sup> EIGE (2017).

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.mpips.gov.pl/narzedzie-do-mierzenia-luki-placowej>

<sup>40</sup> EBS 465.

<sup>41</sup> European Network of Legal Experts in Gender Equality, The enforcement of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value (2017), European Commission.

<sup>42</sup> European Network of Legal Experts in Gender Equality and Non-discrimination (2017), The enforcement of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, available at: <http://www.equalitylaw.eu/downloads/4466-the-enforcement-of-the-principle-of-equal-pay-for-equal-work-or-work-of-equal-value-pdf-840-kb>.

<sup>43</sup> COM(2017) 671 final, Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee, Report on the implementation of Commission Recommendation on strengthening the principle of equal pay between men and women through transparency; available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?action=display&doc\\_id=48361](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?action=display&doc_id=48361).

<sup>44</sup> The 2014 Recommendation followed the evaluation of Recast Directive 2006/54/EC demonstrating a visible problem with the enforcement of the equal pay principle. The Recommendation invites Member States to choose and implement, in light of their domestic circumstances, at

currently have legislation on pay transparency in place<sup>45</sup>. Furthermore, only a small group of Member States have used the opportunity of the Recommendation to review their national legal systems in order to strengthen the principle of equal pay between men and women by introducing pay transparency measures, either as suggested in the Recommendation or otherwise. Only six (DE, FR, FI, LT, UK and SE) have either adopted new pay transparency measures or improved existing measures. In three Member States (IE, IT and NL) new measures on pay transparency are under preparation, with some at the initial stages of negotiation and others close to being adopted by the national parliaments.

Interestingly, in countries with more pay transparency, a larger proportion of employees have a tendency to negotiate their salary. For instance, in SE 76 % of employees tried to negotiate their salary, 61 % in DK, 57 % in FI, 52 % in AT, 47 % in IE and in the UK, against the EU-28 average of 45 %<sup>46</sup>. All these countries have pay transparency measures in place.

In **Germany**, on 6 July 2017 the **Act to promote transparency in wage structures** (*Entgelttransparenzgesetz*) establishing transparency in wage structures between women and men came into force.

From 6 January 2018 onwards, it provides an individual right to obtain information on pay levels for employees in establishments with more than 200 employees. Such information comprises the median monthly gross salary of at least six employees of the other gender who perform the same work or work of equal value. Also, employees can ask to be provided with information about up to two remuneration components (e.g. bonuses) and the criteria and procedure for the determining the remuneration.

Private sector employers with more than 500 employees are called on to regularly carry out pay reviews to verify and create equal pay. These pay reviews are implemented involving the employees' representatives. Employees and the works council have to be informed of the outcome.

Lastly, the Act introduces an obligation to report on equality and equal pay of women and men for employers with more than 500 employees if they are obliged to file a management report in accordance with the Commercial Code (*Handelsgesetzbuch*).

In the **UK**, the gender pay gap reporting obligation requires companies with over 250 employees to publish the figures for pay gaps and bonus pay gaps by April 2018. The companies will need to publish data using six different measures: mean gender pay gap; median gender pay gap; mean bonus gap; median bonus gap; bonus proportions (coverage); and quartile pay bands. It will cover nearly half of the UK workforce.

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least one of the following measures: (i) allowing employees to request information on pay levels, broken down by gender, for categories of employees doing the same work or work of equal value; (ii) regular reporting by employers on wage structures by category of employee or position, broken down by gender (limited to large and medium companies); (iii) pay audits in large companies; and (iv) a discussion of equal pay issues at the appropriate level in collective bargaining.

<sup>45</sup> AT, BE, DE, DK, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, SE and UK.

<sup>46</sup> EBS 465.

### *Horizontal segregation: the second biggest factor of the gender pay gap*

Across the EU, women have better educational outcomes than men (44 % of women aged 30-34 in the EU completed tertiary education, compared to 34 % of men<sup>47</sup>). Women have a higher average level of education in most EU countries, and since a higher level of education is associated with higher average wages, this mitigates the gender pay gap. However, it does not prevent women in the EU from being over-represented in industries with low pay levels, and being under-represented in well paid industries. Sectoral segregation continues to be one of the most significant contributing factors to the gender pay gap in the EU [on average 4.2 percentage points of the wage gap can be explained by industry affiliation] — see Figure 6.

A report on gender segregation<sup>48</sup> prepared by the EIGE shows that in all EU Member States men dominate specific fields, such as engineering and technology, but are much less present in others, such as teaching and care work. A number of jobs are still commonly considered as ‘women only’, for example pre-primary education, nursing or midwifery, secretarial and personal care work, domestic and related help. Indeed, 80 % of those working in the health and social work sector are women.

From August 2017, **Estonia** is changing its career counselling system with the aim of tackling stereotypes. The changes will bring gender aspects into the basic career counselling system and provide training to help all career counsellors take gender aspects into account in their work. A pilot tailor-made training course for career counsellors working with young people has been organised by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The EIGE report also demonstrates that chances of employment for women graduating from male-dominated fields of education are significantly lower than those of men. In 2014, the employment rate of women graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) at tertiary level was 76 % in the EU. This is more than 10 percentage points lower than the employment rate of men with the same qualification and 3 percentage points lower than the average employment rate of women with tertiary education.

The chances of finding a job matching their educational profile are higher for women graduates in education, health and welfare (EHW) than for women STEM graduates, and the opposite holds true for men graduates in these fields. At tertiary level, only one third of women STEM graduates work in STEM occupations, compared to one in two men. Among vocational education graduates the gap is even greater, with only 10 % of women but 41 % of men working in STEM occupations. Among those moving away from STEM, 21 % of women with tertiary-level education work as teaching professionals and 20 % of women with vocational STEM education work in sales.

### *Working conditions at the higher ends*

The ease of combining work and family life differs between the STEM and EHW fields. Having children is still noted as a barrier to women’s chances of working and progressing in

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<sup>47</sup> Eurostat, 2016.

<sup>48</sup> EIGE (2017).

STEM careers, which is not generally the case for men. It also seems to be less of a problem for women in the EHW field<sup>49</sup>.

Across the EU, only 20 % of women aged 30 and over who hold ICT-related degrees decide to stay in the technology industry. Research on women's motives for leaving STEM jobs points to the effects of workplace culture<sup>50</sup>.

This year, the Ministry of Social Affairs in **Estonia** issued the first 'family-friendly employer' labels. The labels acknowledge employers who have made efforts to ensure a family-friendly environment and equal treatment of their employees.

As part of the recently adopted **Bulgarian** Gender Equality Act, the Minister of Labour and Social Policy is preparing a label for major accomplishments in the implementation of the gender equality policy. The first procedure to select and reward companies will be launched in 2018, during Bulgaria's Presidency of the EU.

As part of carried REC project, **Poland** prepared a practical on-line platform<sup>51</sup> for employers and employees, which provides updated and comprehensive information on work-life balance instruments available in Poland, best practices from different types of companies, detailed information on how to implement the work-life balance instruments, as well as what are the potential costs and benefits of such implementation both for employers and employees. The portal enjoys high interest of its target group – 6 months after its publication over 24 thousand individual users has benefited from the platform.

A number of **Member States** have introduced or extended leave entitlements for parents to support workers in reconciling their professional and caring responsibilities. Some have also extended financial incentives to encourage a better sharing of caring responsibilities between women and men (CZ, CY, DK, PT, LU, DE, AT, IT and ES)<sup>52</sup>.

The **2018 Annual Growth Survey** published in November 2017 and launching the 2018 European Semester further called for more work-life balance measures, noting that they are crucial for gender equality and increasing female labour market participation. It reiterated the importance of ensuring everyone has access to quality services, such as childcare and early education, and the need to provide suitable family leave and flexible working arrangements for parents and carers.

Under the Estonian Presidency, the **Council** further called on the Member States and the Commission to help both women and men reconcile work, family and private life by introducing well designed work-life balance measures and ensuring they are as widely available as possible in all sectors and occupations<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>49</sup> EIGE (2017), Work in the EU: women and men at opposite ends, available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/work-eu-women-and-men-opposite-ends>.

<sup>50</sup> World Economic Forum (2017), The Global Gender Gap Report 2017, available at: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-report-2017>.

<sup>51</sup> <https://rodzinaipraca.gov.pl/>

<sup>52</sup> For more details, see: COM(2017) 674 final.

<sup>53</sup> Enhanced measures to reduce horizontal gender segregation in education and employment — Council Conclusions, available at: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15-468-2017-INIT/en/pdf>.

### *Remuneration at the lower ends*

A recent EIGE study<sup>54</sup> shows that out of all employees aged 15-64, 27 % of women and 15 % of men across the EU work in precarious jobs (understood as jobs with very low pay, very short hours and low job security). The largest gender difference can be seen in pay. Among employees, almost every fifth woman and every twelfth man receives very low pay.

Almost every second woman (45 %) and every fifth man (26 %) with low qualifications works in a precarious job. Of people with low levels of education, 36 % of women and 16 % of men receive the lowest income.

Minimum wages can be powerful tools in raising wages in low-paid sectors or occupations with a predominantly female workforce and can therefore help reduce the gender pay gap. The **proposal for the 2018 Employment Guidelines adopted in the context of the European Semester** stipulates that Member States and social partners should ensure adequate minimum wage levels, taking into account their impact on competitiveness, job creation and in-work poverty (guideline 5)<sup>55</sup>.

In 2017, eight **Member States** with high gender pay gaps, to a large extent caused by sectoral segregation, implemented policies to set or increase minimum wages: DE, HU, IE, LT, LV, PT, SK, UK. These policies should benefit women. For instance, the introduction of a minimum wage in Germany is estimated to reduce the gender pay gap by 2.5 percentage points<sup>56</sup>. In Ireland, 9 % of all female employees receive the national minimum wage, compared to less than 3 % of men<sup>57</sup>.

Skills stereotypically attributed as natural to women can often be invisible, and are therefore often undervalued. It is important to recognise that the work mainly performed by women in areas such as care and education is indeed work that requires skills obtainable through formal education and that has an economic value. The undervaluation of traditionally female-dominated occupations is reflected in underpayment, a form of inequality that also reduces men's motivation to move into and remain in such occupations.

In the second half of 2017, under the Estonian Presidency, the **Council** called on the Member States to re-evaluate care-related paid work and review wage structures and remuneration in all female-dominated jobs and occupations. The aim is to break down gender stereotypes linked to the pay gap, and improve pay in EHW sectors<sup>58</sup>.

### *Gender pay gap: a renewed commitment*

The stagnation of the gender pay gap in recent years pleads for further policy measures. The Commission drew attention to the size and general inertia of the gender pay gap in the EU by marking the **European Equal Pay Day**. On 3 November 2017, across the EU women symbolically stopped earning for the rest of the year in comparison to men. First Vice-

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<sup>54</sup> EIGE (2017), Gender, skills and precarious work in the EU: Research note, available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/gender-skills-and-precarious-work-eu-research-note>.

<sup>55</sup> For more details, see: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-european-semester-employment-guidelines\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-european-semester-employment-guidelines_en).

<sup>56</sup> Boll Ch., Hüning H., Leppin J., Puckelwald J. (2015), Potential Effects of Statutory Minimum Wage on the Gender Pay Gap: A Simulation-Based Study for Germany, available at: [https://www.diw.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=diw\\_01.c.509.916.de](https://www.diw.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=diw_01.c.509.916.de).

<sup>57</sup> ESRI (2017), A study of minimum wage employment in Ireland: the role of worker, household and job characteristics, available at: <http://www.esri.ie/publications/a-study-of-minimum-wage-employment-in-ireland-the-role-of-worker-household-and-job-characteristics/>.

<sup>58</sup> Enhanced measures to reduce horizontal gender segregation in education and employment — Council Conclusions, available at: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15.468-2017-INIT/en/pdf>.

President Timmermans and Commissioners Thyssen and Jourová issued a joint statement calling for stepped up policy efforts to fight this injustice<sup>59</sup>.

Subsequently, on 20 November 2017, the Commission adopted an **Action Plan to tackle the gender pay gap 2017-2019**<sup>60</sup>, reaffirming the Commission’s commitment to improving gender equality.

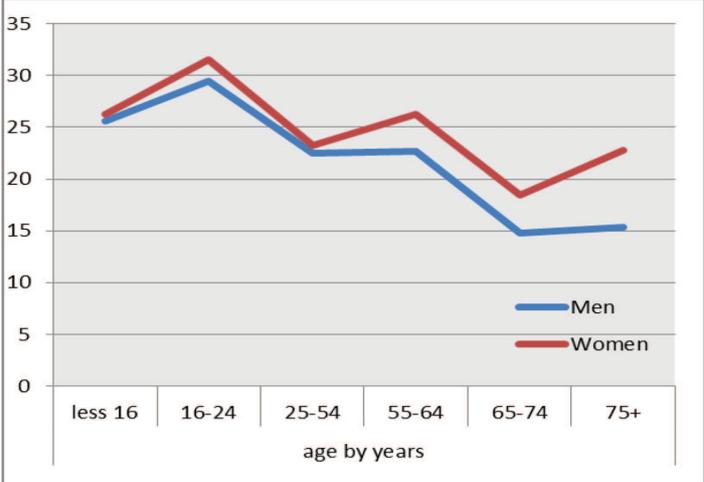
The Action Plan takes a holistic approach and addresses all the different root causes of the gender pay gap: sectoral segregation, vertical segregation, prevailing stereotypes, a lack of work-life balance, and proper enforcement of the equal pay principle.

It comprises a broad and coherent set of 20 concrete actions to be delivered in the next 2 years, namely in 2018-2019. It will therefore require the effort and commitment of all players, including decision-makers at EU and at national level.

***Gender gaps grow into a lifetime pay penalty***

Gender gaps in terms of participation (employment rate and hours worked) and pay (hourly earnings) widen with age. They translate into a significant lifetime pay penalty and a significant gap in pensions at retirement. The gap between the share of women and men at risk of poverty and social exclusion grows with age and is the highest among the oldest women (75+).

**Figure 7:** At risk of poverty and social exclusion (%), by gender and age, EU-28, 2016

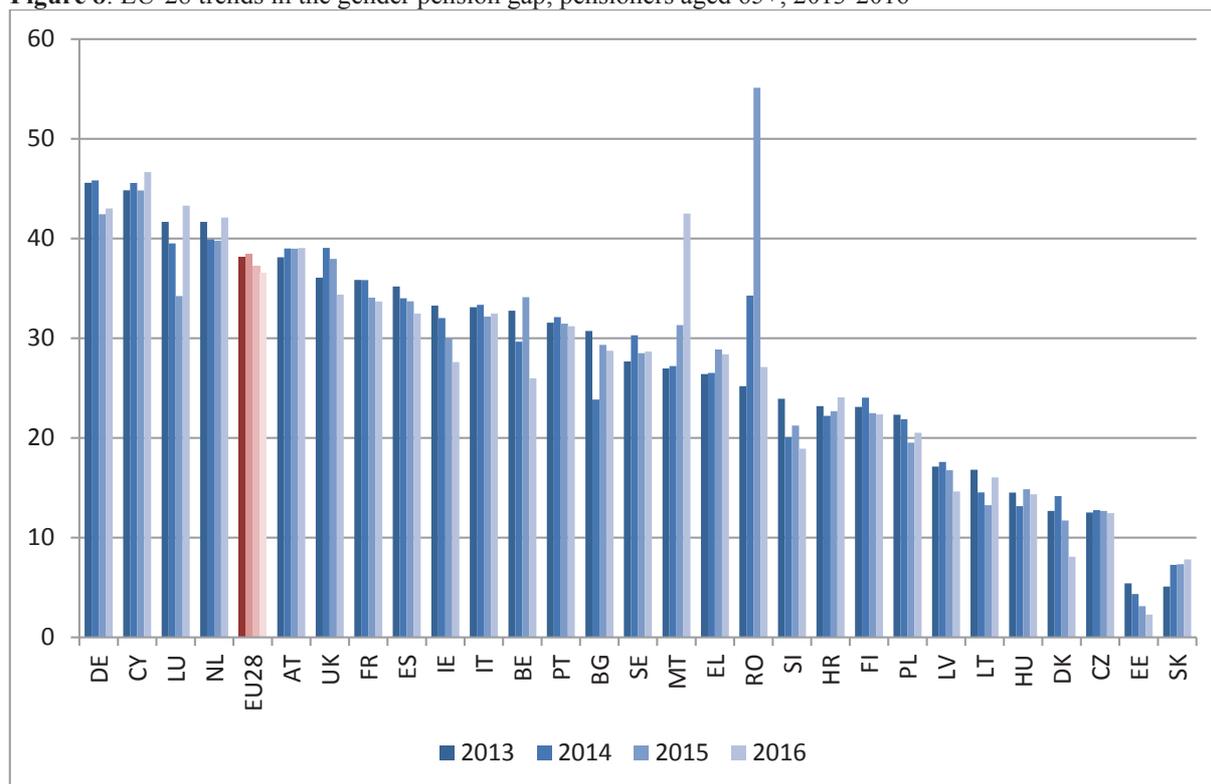


Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

<sup>59</sup> Equal Pay Day (October 2017): Statement by First Vice-President Timmermans and Commissioners Thyssen and Jourová; available at: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_STATEMENT-17-4241\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-17-4241_en.htm).

<sup>60</sup> COM(2017) 678 final, available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2017/EN/COM-2017-678-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>.

**Figure 8:** EU-28 trends in the gender pension gap, pensioners aged 65+, 2013-2016



Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

In 2016, the gender gap in pensions (65+) stood at 36.6 %. Figure 8 shows the divergence in the pension gap among EU countries. While the gap is increasing in only a minority of Member States and there is some indication that it might be shrinking in other Member States, there have been no significant improvements at aggregate EU level.

The **Pension Adequacy Report 2018** will focus on the gender pension gap, its causes and how it is likely to develop in view of trends in the labour market and pension systems. It will also focus on groups at risk of low pension adequacy and high old-age poverty, among which women are most present.

### 3. PROMOTING EQUALITY IN DECISION-MAKING

Women continue to be under-represented in decision-making positions at all levels, even in the sectors and occupations where they dominate in terms of numbers. Despite numerous actions to address gender imbalances in decision-making, the rate of progress in most Member States is low. This may be due to a lack of comprehensive strategies aimed at improving gender equality at all levels of society, including education, employment, family and private life.

According to the Gender Equality Index<sup>61</sup> published by EIGE, the biggest gains for gender equality in the past 10 years have been in decision-making (domain of power), but women remain largely left out and do not make it to the top. The domain of power still has the lowest

<sup>61</sup> EIGE (2017), The Gender Equality Index 2017: Measuring Gender Equality in the European Union 2005-2015, available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index>.

equality score overall: 48.5 points, where 100 points means full gender equality and 1 means full inequality.

In the 2017 Index, the domain of power covers political, economic and social power in sports, media and research funding organisations. The deeply entrenched vertical segregation by gender found in research funding organisations, public broadcasters and major sports federations shows that women can only progress to a certain point in their careers before reaching a glass ceiling. These inequalities mark a democratic deficit in EU governance and represent missed opportunities for achieving inclusive economic growth.

**Women in politics: segregation and uneven progress**

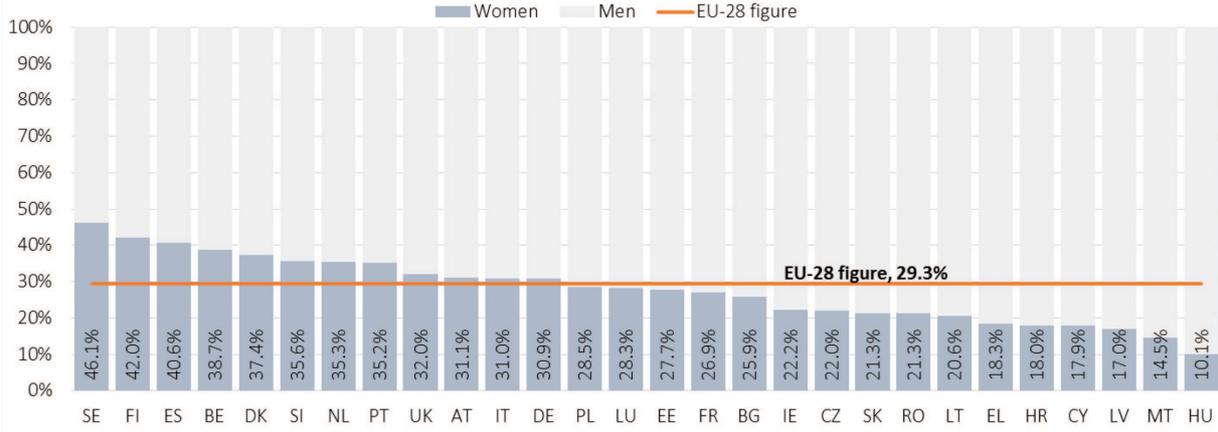
The glass ceiling is not only an EU problem. Around the world, women are under-represented in politics. Although numbers have doubled in the last 20 years, only 23.6 % of all members of parliament worldwide are women<sup>62</sup>. This situation looks only slightly better in the EU.

Women currently account for 36.1 % of the members of the **European Parliament**, a figure that is slightly down compared to the peak of 37.3 % reached at the end of 2016. The representatives of nine Member States include at least 40 % of each gender (EE, IE, ES, FR, HR, LV, AT, MT and SE). In all other countries except Finland (61.5 % women), the majority of members (more than 60 %) are men.

Although the proportion of women members in the single/lower houses of **national parliaments** in the EU increased from 22.1 % in October 2004 to 29.3 % in November 2017<sup>63</sup>, the rate of progress is far too slow. Moreover, women accounted only for 16.9 % of leaders of major political parties<sup>64</sup>.

There is, however, a considerable variation between Member States (Figure 9). Parliaments in SE, FI and ES included at least 40 % of each gender, while in EL, LV, HR, CY, MT and HU women accounted for less than 20 % of members.

**Figure 9:** Representation of women and men in single/lower houses of parliament, November 2017



Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database.

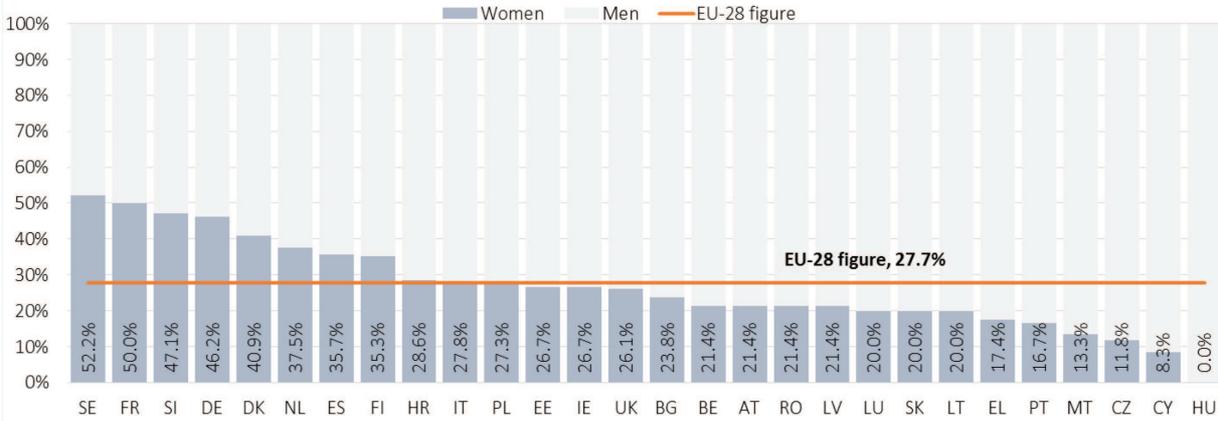
<sup>62</sup> IDEA (2017), Regional Organisations, Gender Equality, and the Political Empowerment of Women, available at: <https://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/regional-organisations-gender-equality-and-political-empowerment-women>.

<sup>63</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality Statistical Database.

<sup>64</sup> Major political parties are those with at least 5 % of seats in any national level parliament.

The proportion of women among the senior ministers in **national governments** across the EU was 27.7 % in November 2017, slightly lower than the equivalent figure in national parliaments (29.3 %). Governments were gender balanced (at least 40 % of each gender) in SE, FR, SI, DK and DE, while women accounted for less than 10 % of government members in Cyprus and were completely absent from the Hungarian government (Figure 10).

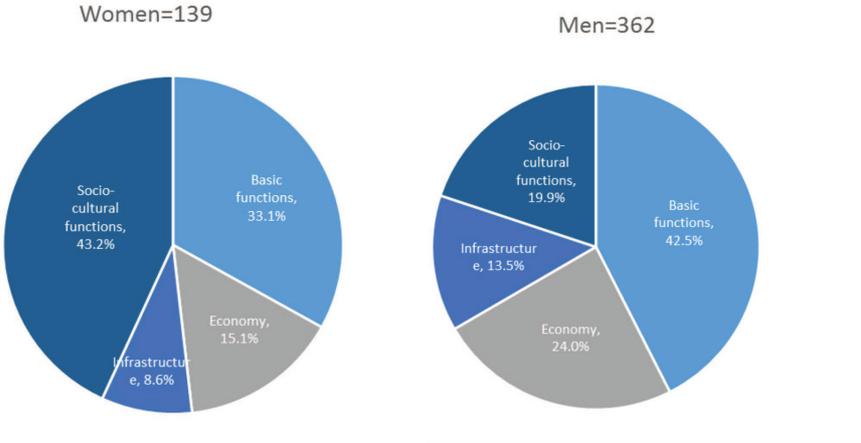
**Figure 10:** Share of women and men in governments (senior ministers), November 2017



Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database

The analysis of the type of **portfolio allocated to senior ministers** also shows clear gender segregation. While men are most often assigned portfolios with a high profile such as foreign and internal affairs, defence and justice, finance and industry, women are more likely to be given socio-cultural portfolios such as health, education or social affairs (Figure 10a).

**Figure 10a.** Women and men by function<sup>65</sup> in government, November 2017



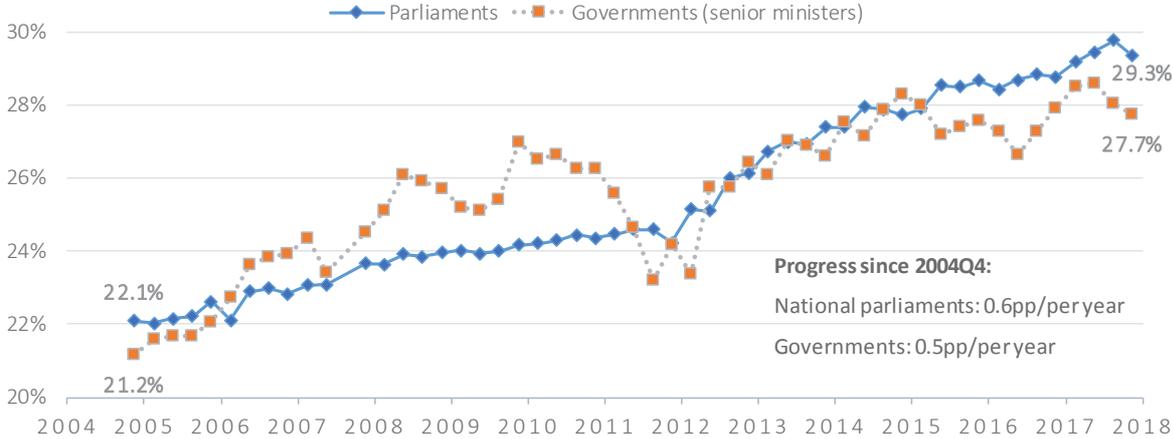
Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database

It is noticeable that the latest data collection for parliaments and governments shows a downturn from peak figures. For parliaments, the decline of 0.4 percentage points in the last

<sup>65</sup> Typology of government functions: Basic functions: Foreign and internal affairs, defence, justice; Economy: Finance, trade, industry, agriculture; Infrastructure: Transport, communications, environment; Socio-cultural functions: Health, education, social affairs, employment, family, culture, sports.

quarter of 2017 is the largest quarterly decline since 2006 and is to a great extent attributable to the result of the German elections in September, which saw the share of women in the Bundestag fall from 37.1 % to 30.9 %. For governments, there was a progressive decline during the year with the share of women senior ministers falling from an all-time high of 28.5 % in February 2017 to 27.7 % in November.

**Figure 11:** Share of women in national parliaments (single/lower house) and governments (senior ministers), EU28, December 2004-November 2017



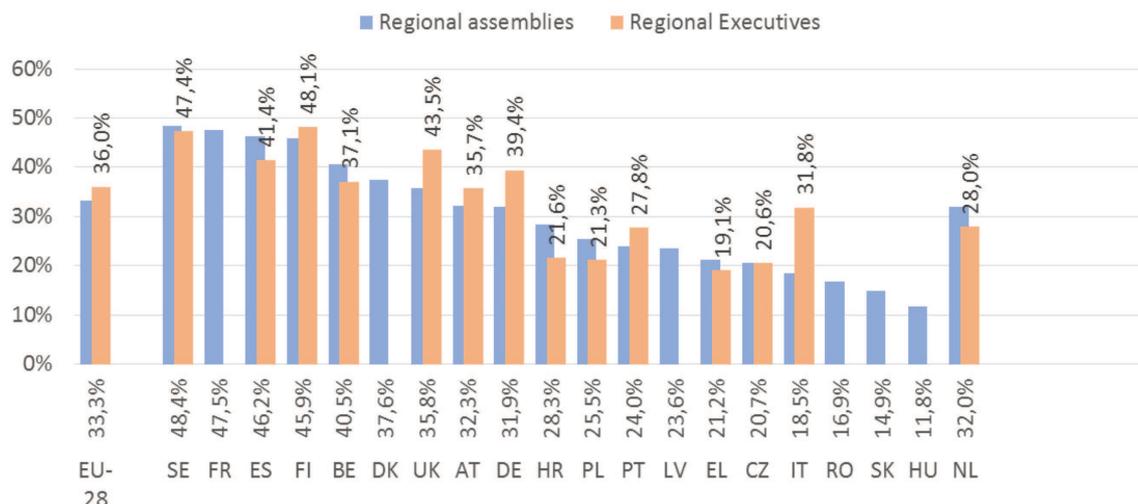
**Source:** EIGE Gender Statistics Database: national parliaments, national governments

*Note:* Figures cover all 28 EU Member States from 2007 onwards. No data were collected for Croatia in 2004-2006.

The representation of women in **regional assemblies** across the EU continues to improve, albeit at a slow rate. In November 2017, the proportion of women members reached one third (33.3 %) for the first time, an improvement of 0.5 percentage points compared to the previous year. The proportion of women leading regional assemblies also increased to a new high of 21.5 %. Regional assemblies include at least 40 % of each gender in five Member States (BE, ES, FR, FI and SE), but in four Member States (IT, RO, SK, HU) men continue to occupy more than four out of every five seats (Figure 12).

The situation is similar for **regional executives** — the representation of women is improving steadily but slowly. In November 2017, women accounted for 36.0 % of the members of regional executives and 14.4 % of their leaders, both figures being new highs.

**Figure 12:** Share of women members of regional assemblies and regional executives, November 2017



**Source:** EIGE Gender Statistics Database: regional assemblies, regional executives

Note: members of regional executives not applicable in DK, LV, RO, SK, and HU.

The **Council of Europe** report on the third round of monitoring the implementation of its Recommendation Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making<sup>66</sup> corroborates the EIGE's data. The report warns that the change towards gender balance is not linear. In the legislative power, overall, the Council's report points towards a slight improvement for some indicators, but also to stagnation in several areas. The average proportion of elected women stayed around 25 %<sup>67</sup> and was consistent across the legislative assemblies surveyed (lower/single houses, upper houses and regional parliaments). The report found a strong correlation between the strength of legislative quotas and the percentage of women elected in national elections. The strength was measured in terms of quota percentage, whether the lists include a rank order for women and men, and whether sanctions are imposed and the type of sanction. Countries with political party quotas, rules or regulations, either for national elections or for internal party decision-making bodies, had on average higher levels of women in national lower houses, among party executives and among party members than countries without such measures. This finding shows that political will and commitment towards more women in politics is essential to achieve results.

### ***Boosting gender equality in politics***

Despite the persistent under-representation of women in decision-making in politics, Europeans support a fairer distribution of power. According to the latest **Special Eurobarometer Survey on Gender Equality**<sup>68</sup>, 70 % of Europeans are in favour of legal measures to ensure parity between women and men in politics and 86 % think that they can be represented by female politicians. The majority of respondents (54 %) think that there should be more women in political decision-making positions. However, gendered stereotypes continue to persist explaining the low numbers of women in politics. At least 35 % of Europeans believe men are more ambitious than women and 34 % think that women are less interested than men in positions of responsibility in politics.

<sup>66</sup> Council of Europe Recommendation (2003), Balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making, available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680519084>.

<sup>67</sup> Figures relate to 2016 and to Council of Europe Member States.

<sup>68</sup> EBS 465.

In its opinion adopted in December 2017 on ‘Gender balance in decision-making in politics’, the **European Commission’s Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men**<sup>69</sup> identified the remaining key challenges and recommended a set of measures to achieve equal representation in politics. It stressed, for instance, that:

- political parties’ processes, procedures, structures and culture can hinder women’s participation in politics;
- candidate selection within parties often leads to male-focused recruitments;
- some electoral systems have a negative impact on the political representation of women<sup>70</sup>; and
- women candidates tend to have less access to campaign funding from political parties and more limited personal financial resources that will impact their electoral success.

**2019 will be an important year for politics and for women in Europe:** a new European Parliament will be elected, a new European Commission will be appointed and various high-profile posts will need to be filled across the EU institutions. It will be an opportunity for the Member States and all those in charge to put forward, elect or appoint candidates to such posts to demonstrate their commitment to gender equality and gender-balanced representation in top positions at European level. In view of the European elections, in 2018 the Commission will be promoting best practices which help citizens vote and stand for EU elections and will hold a high-level event to support a higher turnout and broad democratic participation, particularly for under-represented groups such as women.

In **Belgium**, equal representation of women and men on electoral lists is foreseen by law since 2002 for all levels of election. Recently, the Brussels-Capital Region and the Walloon Region have more strictly enforced this obligation for the municipal elections of 2018 via an obligation to place women and men alternately throughout the electoral lists.

In **Ireland**, a platform ‘Women for election’<sup>71</sup> trains candidates, campaign leaders and works in universities to encourage young women to enter politics.

**France** has introduced a system of binomial candidates for departmental<sup>72</sup> elections: you no longer vote for one candidate, but for a team of female and male candidates. This guarantees gender parity at departmental level, but also establishes shared decision-making positions in territorial politics, introducing the potential of shared responsibilities and improving the possibilities of work-life-balance for politicians.

**Slovenia** has imposed gender quotas for national elections, local elections and elections to the European Parliament, and the party list can be rejected if it does not meet the gender quota<sup>73</sup>.

<sup>69</sup> The proposed recommendations addressing the gender gap in political decision-making are available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/advisory-committee/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/advisory-committee/index_en.htm).

<sup>70</sup> Council of Europe (2009), Impact of electoral systems on women’s representation in politics, available at: [http://assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2009/20\\_090\\_908\\_aegadoc32rev.pdf](http://assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2009/20_090_908_aegadoc32rev.pdf).

<sup>71</sup> For more details, see: <http://www.womenforelection.ie/>.

<sup>72</sup> The department is a territorial authority, ranking between local and regional assemblies. There are 101 departments in France.

<sup>73</sup> More information on the adoption and the implementation of the legislation is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/exchange\\_of\\_good\\_practice\\_si/summary\\_report\\_si\\_2016\\_final\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/exchange_of_good_practice_si/summary_report_si_2016_final_en.pdf).

Capacity-building, mentoring and networking is provided for women politicians. The mentoring day with a woman politician<sup>74</sup>, training on efficient media communication and use of social networks for journalists and politicians<sup>75</sup>, and awareness-raising campaigns (such as ‘Towards equalising power relations between women and men’) could also inspire other countries.

**The EIGE’s online tool for gender-sensitive parliaments** is to be launched in 2018. The tool is part of a wider effort by EIGE to provide European and national public institutions with practical instruments to bring about and strengthen gender-oriented institutional change. The tool’s primary function is to allow parliaments in the EU to assess themselves by responding to an online survey that measures the level of gender-sensitivity and progress over time. The tool was developed in partnership with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the European Parliament.

### *Women in economic decision-making: progress is slowing*

Equal treatment between women and men is a fundamental value of the European Union and implies that women must have the same opportunities as men to reach leadership positions, including in the economic area. Furthermore, the economic and business case for gender diversity in corporate leadership is well recognised<sup>76</sup>.

Nevertheless, data collected by the EIGE show that in October 2017 women accounted for just a quarter (25.3 %) of **board members in the largest publicly listed companies** registered in EU Member States. France (43.4 %) was the only Member State in which there was at least 40 % of each gender at board level, a figure that has been achieved by introducing a legislative quota in 2011 requiring companies to meet a 40 % target by January 2017. A further nine countries had at least 25 % women on boards (SE, IT, FI, DE, BE, DK, NL, LV and the UK). Progress was made in just a few Member States, principally as a result of legislative or other forms of positive measures to promote gender balance, and much more still needs to be done to achieve further and sustainable progress. In half of the Member States (14), men still outnumber women in the boards of large companies by at least 4 to 1 (i.e. less than 20 % women), while in Malta and Estonia women account for less than 10 % of board members (Figure 13).

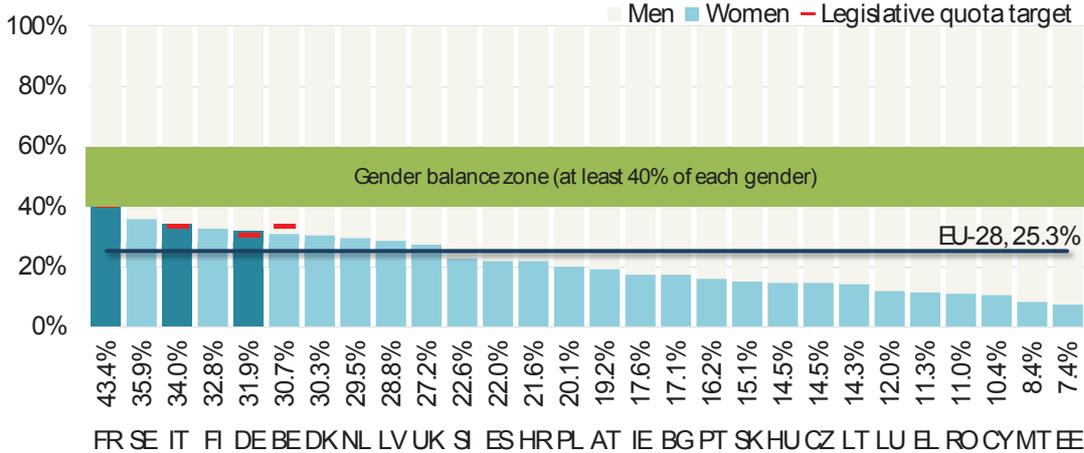
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<sup>74</sup> Publication in Slovene: <http://www.arhiv.uem.gov.si/fileadmin/uem.gov.si/pageuploads/MestaPolititnegaOdlocanja/MentorskiDan.pdf>), Network of Women Mayors (Project OPENN: <http://www.mirovni-institut.si/en/projects/obtaining-political-equality-new-names-openn>).

<sup>75</sup> Meta Women workshops: <http://eeagrants.org/project-portal/project/SI03-0014>.

<sup>76</sup> World Economic Forum (2017), The Global Gender Gap Report 2017, available at: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-report-2017>.

**Figure 13:** Representation of women and men on the boards of the largest listed companies in the EU, October 2017

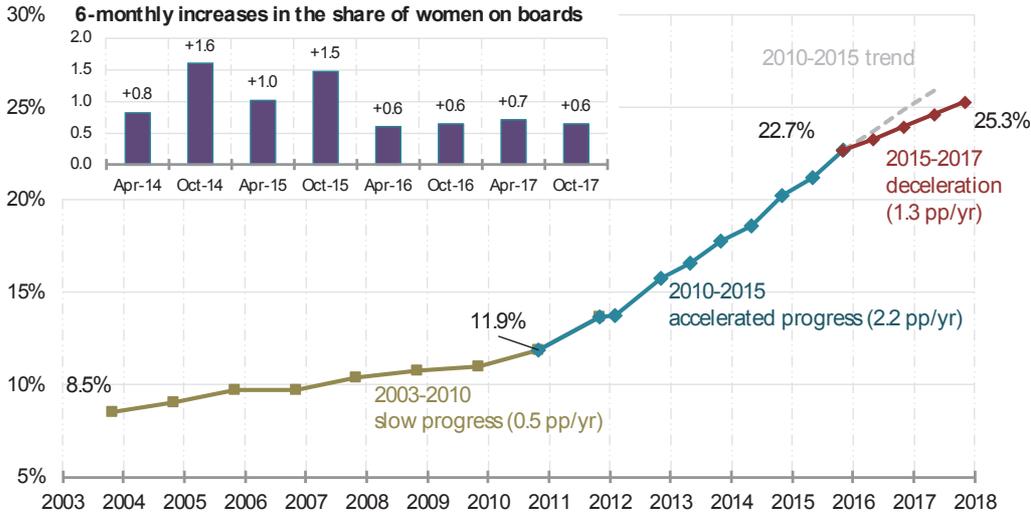


Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database

Legislative quotas applicable to corporate boardrooms are already implemented in BE (target of at least one third of each gender, 33%), DE (30%), FR (40%) and IT (33%). The latest data (based on the companies covered by the sample) show that FR, DE and IT have already met their legislative targets. However, in BE — where the deadline for achieving the 33% target is the 2017-18 financial year for publicly listed companies — it is still to be seen (30.7%). In 2017, AT and PT also adopted quota legislation (see below).

In October 2017, the percentage of women in corporate boardrooms across the EU-28 was 25.3%. This represents an increase of 0.6 percentage points since April 2017 (24.6%), a result that confirms the slowdown in progress since 2015. Between October 2010 and October 2015, the share of women on company boards increased at an average rate of 2.2 percentage points per year, but since then the annual rate of change has slipped to just 1.3 percentage points (Figure 14). Such a deceleration should be a signal to policy-makers that the issue needs renewed attention.

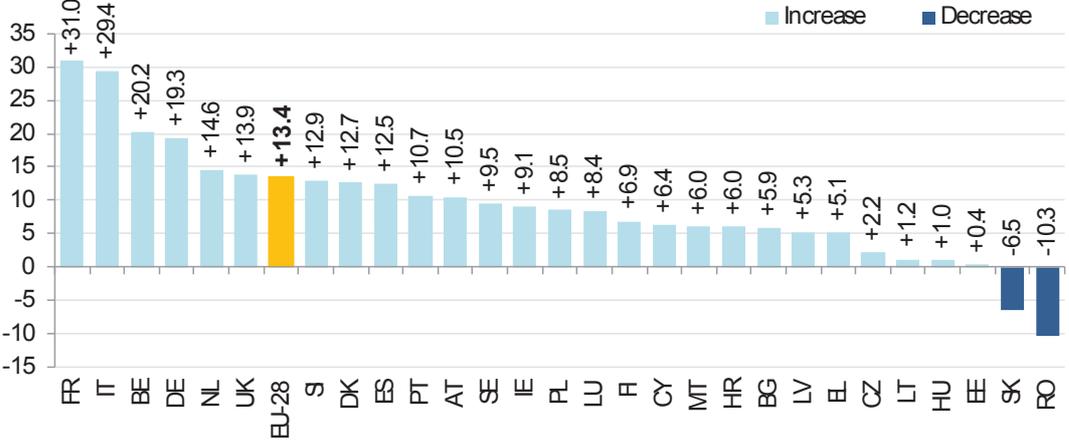
**Figure 14:** Share of women on the boards of the largest listed companies in the EU, 2003-October 2017 (%)



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database

While the representation of women in corporate boards improved in most EU Member States, the changes have been far from uniform<sup>77</sup>. France and Italy<sup>78</sup> stand out with increases of around 30 percentage points, while at the other end of the spectrum there has been no significant progress (less than 2 percentage points) in Lithuania, Hungary and Estonia and even a decline in Romania and Slovakia (Figure 15).

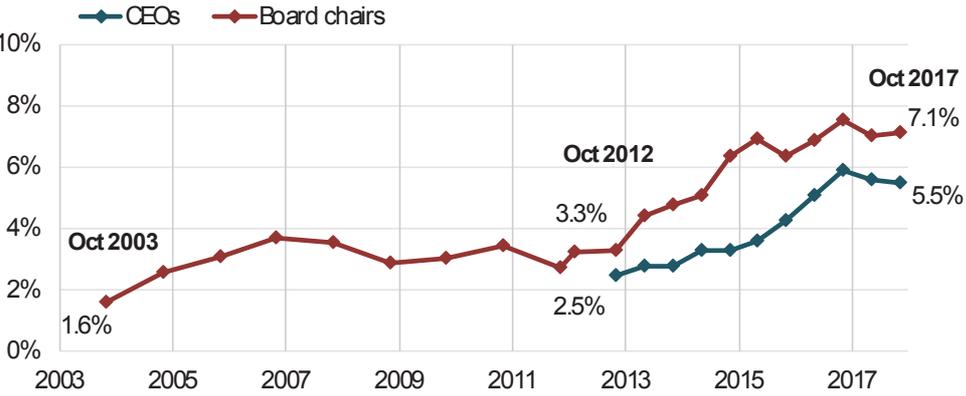
**Figure 15:** Change in the share of women on the boards of the largest listed companies in the EU, October 2010 — October 2017 (percentage points)



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database

Despite some progress at board level, very few women reach the highest positions in large companies: less than 1 in 10 companies have a female chair or Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Nonetheless, some gradual progress can be observed, for example the proportion of women board chairs or CEOs more than doubled compared to October 2012. In October 2017, women accounted for 7.1 % of board chairs (up from 3.3 %) and 5.5 % of CEOs (up from 2.5 %).

**Figure 16:** Share of women among board chairs and CEOs in largest publicly listed companies in the EU, 2011 - 2017



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database

<sup>77</sup> The companies included in the samples for each country may vary over time as they are based on the constituents of the main blue-chip indices, which are reviewed regularly to reflect changes in the market capitalisation of companies and/or volume of shares traded. In Member States where the blue-chip index (and therefore the sample) has relatively few constituents, a change of one company for another can sometimes affect results as much as changes in the board composition of constant member companies.

<sup>78</sup> FR, IT, BE and DE have all introduced legislated quotas; in NL the government has set a target with a comply or explain mechanism; and in the UK the government has backed voluntary targets and self-regulation measures.

Gender balance in leadership positions, including on corporate boards, is hampered by factors such as the lack of transparency in recruitment and promotion practices and the persistence of gender stereotypes in corporate culture, which shape the way leadership and those holding positions of power are perceived. These perceptions are reflected in the institutional culture where formal and informal practices work to the advantage of men. A comprehensive approach involving all stakeholders is needed to fight the root causes of gender imbalances. The engagement of male senior leaders is one of the driving forces for change.

**In Austria**, the ‘Law on equality for women and men as non-executive directors on company boards’ was adopted on 26 July 2017 and entered into force on 1 January 2018. It stipulates that the boards of publicly listed companies and of companies with more than 1 000 employees must include at least 30 % of both women and men. The 30 % objective will apply to new mandates assigned after 31 December 2017 and the penalty for failure to meet it will be the ‘empty chair’-rule, following the example of the German legislation (2015). Companies with less than 20 % employees of either gender or with boards consisting of fewer than six members are exempt from the Law<sup>79</sup>.

In **Portugal**, the new Law No 62/2017 of 1 August 2017 lays down rules for balanced representation between women and men in the administrative and supervisory bodies of public sector entities and listed companies. The Law provides that from 2018 onwards state-owned companies and listed companies must have a minimum share of the less-represented gender on the boards of directors and supervisory bodies. Thus, in state-owned companies, at least 33.3 % of the positions on the boards of directors and supervisory bodies have to be filled by women. For listed companies, the minimum is 20 % in 2018 and rises to 33.3 % in January 2020.

### *Initiatives at EU level*

The EU’s Action Plan on tackling the gender pay gap reiterates the Commission’s commitment to breaking the glass ceiling. The Commission is determined to work towards the adoption of the 2012 proposal for a Directive under which the under-represented gender must represent at least 40 % of non-executive directors. It will also continue efforts to ensure transparent selection of board members and to encourage governments to adopt strategies with targeted measures to improve the gender balance in decision-making.

Moreover, **Directive 2014/95/EU on disclosure of non-financial and diversity information** requires certain large companies (above 500 employees) to disclose information about sustainability matters, including environmental, social, human rights and corruption issues. The Directive also requires large listed companies to disclose a description of the diversity policy applied to the company’s administrative, management and supervisory bodies on aspects such as age, gender, educational and professional backgrounds, the objectives of that diversity policy, and how it has been implemented and the results in the reporting period. If no such policy is applied, the statement must explain why this is the case. In 2017, the Commission adopted **Guidelines**<sup>80</sup> setting out how companies should report on these issues.

<sup>79</sup> Gleichstellungsgesetz von Frauen und Männern im Aufsichtsrat (2017), available at: [https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblAuth/BGBLA\\_2017\\_I\\_104/BGBLA\\_2017\\_I\\_104.html](https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblAuth/BGBLA_2017_I_104/BGBLA_2017_I_104.html).

<sup>80</sup> Communication from the Commission (2017/C215/01), Guidelines on non-financial reporting (methodology for reporting non-financial information), available at: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52017XC0705\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52017XC0705(01)).

### *The European Commission is leading by example*

The European Commission is steadily moving towards meeting the **target set by President Jean-Claude Juncker** of ensuring that at least 40 % of the Commission's middle and senior managers are women by the end of the current mandate (2019). Women accounted for 37 % of managers at all levels on 1 January 2018, up from 30 % at the beginning of the mandate of this Commission (2014). At senior management level<sup>81</sup>, the share of women has increased from 27 % on 1 November 2014 to 35 %. At middle management level<sup>82</sup>, 38 % of managers are women, compared to 31 % when the Juncker Commission took office. The progress comes after efforts to identify, develop and support female talent, targeted training sessions and mentoring, specific management programmes, support for existing and new female networks<sup>83</sup>, and setting individual targets for all Commission departments when it comes to appointing someone to a middle-management position for the first time.

#### **4. COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND PROTECTING AND SUPPORTING VICTIMS**

The Commission marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 27 November by bathing the Berlaymont in orange light. Similar initiatives were taken by the EEAS and the European Parliament for their buildings. Orange is the colour of the global campaign to end violence against women.

Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread and devastating human rights violations across the globe. It takes place every day regardless of social background, whether at home, at work, at school, in the street, playing sports or online. Eliminating violence against women and girls is a first step towards global peace and security and is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

According to the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights study from 2014 on violence against women<sup>84</sup>:

- One in three women in Europe has experienced either physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15
- 75 % of women in qualified professions or top management jobs have been sexually harassed, as have 61 % of women employed in the services sector
- 55 % of women in the EU have experienced sexual harassment
- 20 % of young women (aged 18-29) in the EU-28 have experienced cyber harassment
- One in ten women has experienced sexual harassment or stalking through new technologies
- 80 % of trafficking victims inside the EU are female<sup>85</sup>.

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<sup>81</sup> Directors, Deputy Directors-General and Directors-General.

<sup>82</sup> Heads of unit.

<sup>83</sup> Communication of the Commission 'A better workplace for all: from equal opportunities towards diversity and inclusion', available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/communication-equal-opportunities-diversity-inclusion-2017.pdf>.

<sup>84</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014), Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results report, available at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>.

In 2017, Eurostat released crime statistics for 2015 based on joint data collection by Eurostat and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. According to the statistics most victims of sexual violence (85.8 %) in the EU are female, whereas most suspects (96.5 %) and offenders (98.3 % of those convicted) are male. The figures for rape show an increase by 47.0 % between 2008 and 2015<sup>86</sup>. The observed rise in EU figures for rape is particularly influenced by the figures for England and Wales (+173 % between 2008 and 2015<sup>87</sup>).

In November 2017, EIGE published the ‘Gender Equality Index 2017: Measurement framework of violence against women<sup>88</sup>’, which incorporates violence against women as a satellite domain into its Gender Equality Index. A set of indicators can assist Member States in assessing the extent and nature of violence against women and enable the monitoring and evaluation of the institutional response to violence against women.

The new measurement framework sheds light on the spectrum of violence against women, which ranges from harassment to death (femicide). It also helps to measure forms of violence such as intimate partner violence, sexual assault, rape and human trafficking. Three aspects of violence are measured: prevalence, severity and disclosure of violence against women. On a scale of 1 to 100, 1 represents a situation where violence is non-existent and 100 represents a situation where violence against women is extremely common, highly severe and not disclosed.

The EU’s score is 27.5 out of 100 (the higher the score, the worse the situation), showing that the phenomenon is prevalent, severe and underreported. The national scores range from 22.1 in Poland to 44.2 in Bulgaria. The high score in Bulgaria is mainly due to the rate of non-disclosure of violence, which is more than three times the EU average (48.6 and 14.3 respectively<sup>89</sup>).

### ***2017: A year of focused actions to end violence against women***

The recent global #MeToo movement in the second part of 2017 has drawn major attention to widespread cases of sexual assault and harassment in our societies and encouraged victims to speak up, and claim and defend their rights. This was possible due to a high level of solidarity among women and the trust that their voice will be taken seriously. Trust in law enforcement and support structures is crucial when it comes to reporting harassment or sexual violence.

This global movement emphasises the importance of the Commission’s intensified efforts to: (i) give voice and visibility to women experiencing violence; (ii) increase societal awareness; and (iii) build new alliances on violence against women through the ‘Year of Focused Actions’. Throughout 2017, the Commission engaged with different stakeholders, facilitated

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<sup>85</sup> On 4 December 2017, the European Commission adopted a new communication addressing human trafficking and committed itself to a new set of priorities to be implemented in the coming period. Building on the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 and in light of recent migratory, economic and security challenges, the priorities set out by the Commission identify key areas that require immediate action from the EU and Member States to disrupt the modus operandi of traffickers, strengthen victims’ rights and intensify EU internal and external efforts to provide a coordinated and consistent response. The action taken in this context will include the gender dimension. For more details see COM(2017) 728 final.

<sup>86</sup> Data for Italy and Scotland were not available.

<sup>87</sup> Eurostat 2017, Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Crime\\_and\\_criminal\\_justice\\_statistics](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Crime_and_criminal_justice_statistics).

<sup>88</sup> For more details, see:

<http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/gender-equality-index-2017-measurement-framework-of-violence-against-women>.

<sup>89</sup> For more details, see: <http://eige.europa.eu/news-and-events/news/gender-equality-index-2017-we-cannot-be-silent-about-violence>.

networking and partnerships and enabled actors in this field to share best practices and improve support structures for victims of gender-based violence.

- The social media campaign **NON.NO.NEIN campaign — Say NO! Stop violence against women** launched in 2017 raised awareness and funded concrete projects that address violence against women. EUR 15 million in funding were made available for Member States, local governments, relevant professionals and civil society organisations across Europe to help them intensify their actions and campaigns to combat violence against women. This resulted in training for lawyers, doctors, teachers and police, among others, to offer better support to victims and prevent gender-based violence<sup>90</sup>. This campaign will continue throughout 2018.
- In February the Maltese Presidency Council hosted a conference focusing on gender-based violence in the context of intersectional discrimination (i.e. discrimination on more than one ground) and women’s access to justice and services<sup>91</sup>.
- Under the **Mutual Learning Programme in gender equality** the Commission organised an exchange of good practices among Member States’ governmental representatives. Good practices included Denmark’s policy and legislation on digital sexual abuse and France’s campaign addressing sexual harassment on public transport.
- The **Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights** held on 20-21 November in Brussels focused on ‘Women’s Rights in Turbulent Times<sup>92</sup>’. Violence against women was one of the core topics at the Colloquium, which brought together more than 400 participants including ministers from about half of the Member States, international organisations, leading academics, social partners, business representatives, civil society actors, journalists and media professionals.
- **The first step to build a global alliance to fight violence against women and girls at global level** was taken in December by the Commission, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Council of Europe and UN Women. A joint communiqué was issued confirming the institutions’ commitment to intensify their collaboration to work together towards establishing by the end of 2018 a global alliance to end violence against women and girls.

In addition to action under the gender equality and justice policies, the European Commission focuses on violence against women in a range of other policy areas such as **trade, transport and external cooperation** (see chapters 5 and 6). Furthermore, the European Social Fund supports targeted action to combat violence against women, particularly against women with disabilities and against the most vulnerable or deprived.

**Internally**, the European Commission has at its disposal a robust and comprehensive anti-harassment policy, based on a preventive approach as well as reactive measures. The recently adopted diversity and inclusion strategy emphasises again that a culture of equal opportunities for all, respect and safeguarding dignity is essential for a thriving and inclusive workplace. In

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<sup>90</sup> Under the hashtag #SayNoStopVAW, the Commission has launched a social media campaign to raise awareness and take a clear stand against violence against women. For more details, see: <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/saynostopvaw/>

<sup>91</sup> Conference on European Union Responses to Gender-Based Violence: An intersectional perspective. The programme is available at: <https://www.unibs.it/sites/default/files/ricerca/allegati/European%20Responses%20Agenda%202-3%20Feb.pdf>.

<sup>92</sup> The web-streaming of the conference is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item\\_id=115277](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=115277).

this respect, the Commission will continue to develop the existing conflict and harassment prevention framework. Building on the experience acquired over the last years, a review of the Decision on the anti-harassment policy adopted in 2006 was launched. The aim is to have a new, updated anti-harassment policy in place in 2018.

### ***Cyber violence on the rise***

A phenomenon of recent concern is the increase of **cyber violence** against women and girls, ranging from cyber stalking, bullying and harassment to growing hate speech. In general, the space for debate can be hostile to women, often shaped by sexist attitudes in social and traditional media. Journalists, bloggers and activists are frequently victims of violence and hate speech online and offline. Female politicians experience a double burden created by their public status as well as their gender, while human rights defenders are more often attacked when they are women<sup>93</sup>.

**EIGE's 2017 publication on Cyber violence against women and girls**<sup>94</sup> found that online violence is not necessarily distinct from violence experienced in the 'real world' but is rather a continuum. For example, cyber stalking by a partner or ex-partner follows the same patterns as offline stalking and can therefore be seen as intimate partner violence that is simply facilitated by technology. The European Commission undertook action to address the current lack of research and data quantifying the prevalence of cyber violence against women and girls at EU level<sup>95</sup>. In 2017, the results of a **Code of Conduct with social media** on countering illegal online hate speech were assessed. While this initiative adopted in 2016 delivered some progress, challenges persist<sup>96</sup>. In 70 % of cases, the IT companies concerned responded to notifications of illegal hate speech made by NGOs and public bodies by removing the content. This is more than twice the level of 28 % that was recorded in 2016.

In **Denmark**, the government launched a set of initiatives to combat digital sexual harassment, including tougher penalties for offenders, extended support for victims, and awareness-raising campaigns aimed at young people, educators and parents. The Minister of Justice, the Minister of Education and the Minister of Equal Opportunities are behind this package of cross-cutting and comprehensive activities. As part of the EU best practice sharing seminars, Denmark hosted the Mutual Learning Programme seminar in Copenhagen in September and presented Danish experiences in dealing with online abuses. Furthermore, a new national unit against violence in intimate relationships was established in 2017.

The majority of victims of cyberbullying in **Italy** are girls. Social networks have become the main tool through which people engage in bullying. In May 2017, a law to prevent and counteract cyberbullying was approved. The law: (i) makes it illegal to offend, slander, threaten or steal the identity of a minor; (ii) provides a specific legal definition of cyberbullying; and (iii) requires all schools to educate pupils to use the internet responsibly.

<sup>93</sup> Council of Europe factsheet on Sexist Hate Speech (2016), available at: <https://edoc.coe.int/en/index.php?controller=get-file&freeid=6995>.

<sup>94</sup> 'Cyber violence against women and girls (2017)', available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/cyber-violence-against-women-and-girls>.

<sup>95</sup> For more details, see: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-violence/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-violence/index_en.htm).

<sup>96</sup> For more details, see: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-17-1471\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-1471_en.htm).

## *The legal framework is progressing slowly — EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention*

There has been major progress on the **legal framework** to combat violence against women. As of November, all EU Member States have signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), and 17 countries (BE, DK, DE, EE, ES, FR, IT, CY, MT, NL, AT, PL, PT, RO, SI, FI, SE) have ratified it<sup>97</sup>. The Convention is the first instrument in Europe to set legally binding standards to prevent violence against women and domestic violence, protect its victims and punish perpetrators. After the Commission's proposal in March 2016, the EU signed the Istanbul Convention on 13 June 2017. Work is ongoing on the Council Decision that will enable it to be concluded in 2018. The Convention will enable Member States to develop a common framework to combat violence against women<sup>98</sup>.

### *Improvement of data on gender-based violence is necessary*

Effective policy-making on gender-based violence requires **data and reliable statistics**. The improvement of data on gender-based violence is one of the key actions outlined in the 2016-2019 Strategic engagement for gender equality. Violence remains regrettably underreported: only about one third of women who are physically or sexually abused by their partners contact the authorities. In addition, complaints are not systematically recorded, and the collection of administrative data is not comparable between EU countries.

The Commission aims to implement an EU-wide prevalence survey on violence against women, coordinated by Eurostat. Data are sorely needed to raise awareness of gender-based violence, develop better legislation and policies, enable mutual learning, target funding priorities and measure progress towards goals, and ensure proper accountability. Moreover, Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention requires state parties to collect the data necessary to understand the prevalence, trends and causes of violence against women, including by conducting surveys at regular intervals. As the EU and Member States are in the process of ratifying the Istanbul Convention and the national surveys are in many cases still in the early stages of development, a cooperative approach would allow for comparability of results.

In May 2017, **Eurostat** launched a call for proposals to test the survey, restricted to national statistical institutes. Some 11 Member States were granted funding from the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme to test the Eurostat questionnaire and to perform a pilot survey<sup>99</sup>. In January 2018, Eurostat relaunched the call to get more Member States on board. This will be done through a small-scale gender-based violence pilot survey at national level to prepare the final common questionnaire and methodology for collecting the data on gender-based violence in the EU. Following that, the aim is to cover all Member States by a full-scale survey that can be carried out in the subsequent years (2019-2020-2021).

In 2017, various **Member States** launched legal measures, campaigns and actions to address violence against women:

<sup>97</sup> European Parliament (2017), 'The Istanbul Convention: A tool to tackle violence against women and girls', available at:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2017/608\\_814/EPRS\\_ATA\(2017\)608\\_814\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2017/608_814/EPRS_ATA(2017)608_814_EN.pdf).

<sup>98</sup> The Istanbul Convention is a legally-binding treaty to combat violence against women and girls, prevent violence, protect victims and end the impunity of perpetrators. The Commission has taken a first important step by committing the EU as a full-fledged party to the Convention under international law.

<sup>99</sup> The Rights, Equality and Citizenship Committee approved a sub-delegation of credits to Eurostat, in the form of grants (EUR 1.375 million in the 2016 work programme and EUR 2.25 million in the 2017 work programme) and procurements (EUR 125 000 each year). The European Parliament will also support this initiative by funding a pilot project of EUR 1 million from the 2017 budget.

The **Latvian** Parliament passed amendments to its Criminal Code in 2017 to combat gender-based violence. The amendments make stalking a criminal offence. Another important change introduced is that a criminal case against an offender who is a close relative will become possible without a statement from the victim. The amendments also make the statute of limitation for offences against children's sexual integrity long enough to allow for court action after the person reaches adulthood.

In compliance with the Istanbul Convention, in **Ireland** the 2017 Domestic Violence Bill creates a new offence of forced marriage. It prohibits any form of duress or coercion in the matter of marriage. In 2017 Ireland also introduced two additional pieces of new legislation to combat violence against women. The first is a series of amendments to the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Bill 2015 which deals with prostitution, making it illegal to purchase sex, while decriminalising those who have been prostituted. It also provides for measures to combat sexual exploitation of children and child abuse material, including the use of the internet for sexual exploitation and the sending of sexually explicit material to children.

In 2017, **Croatia** adopted a new National strategy for protection from domestic violence (2017-2022), which applies the provisions of the Istanbul Convention. Under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme, the EU supported a programme in Croatia to train judges and public prosecutors to address barriers to the legal protection of women who have experienced violence.

The Act on Protection against Domestic Violence adopted by the Croatian Parliament in 2017 has entered into force on 1 January 2018. The Act includes parts of the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (i.e. the Istanbul Convention) and Directive 2012/29 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime and replacing of Council Framework Decision 2001/202 / PUP (i.e. Victims' Rights Directive).

Also the changes to the Croatian Criminal Code which entered into force on October 2017, mark the return of domestic violence as a criminal offense. Article 179.a prescribes that domestic violence is a criminal offense; it involves the most severe forms of violence in a family environment where no element of any other criminal offense has been present, and it represents intensity or persistence that goes beyond the scope of misdemeanour liability such as severe insults, intimidation, physical, sexual abuse, and the like.

In February 2017, the Ministry of Justice in **Estonia** launched a social campaign called '1ELU (1LIFE)' which aims to raise public awareness of human trafficking. The campaign currently includes video clips explaining different aspects of the issue and encouraging people to use the telephone helpline services, including a Facebook page. The campaign ran until summer and had three topics — human trafficking for labour exploitation, sexual exploitation and the exploitation of children.

In **Italy**, the government issued on 3 July 2017 a new call for proposals under its National Action Plan against Trafficking in and Serious Exploitation of Human Beings. The call has a total envisaged budget of about EUR 23 million. The call, which will fund projects starting from 1 December 2017, will run for 15 months and is specifically dedicated to the protection and assistance of human trafficking victims, including child victims.

In July 2017, the **Spanish** Congress approved the first National Pact against Gender-based Violence, with a budget of EUR 1 billion, comprising 214 targeted measures to be

implemented in five years. In December, the Pact was approved by the Government, the State Observatory on Violence against Women, the Autonomous Communities and the Local Authorities. Furthermore, three new awareness-raising campaigns have been launched in Spain in 2017: ‘Stop it on time. Abuse doesn’t come suddenly’ (to prevent gender-based violence during adolescence); ‘Don’t invest in suffering’ (against trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation); and ‘Help stop gender-based violence’ (addressed to the general population).

## 5. PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S RIGHTS ACROSS THE WORLD

The EU promotes gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment in all its actions across the world<sup>100</sup>. For this reason, the EU is actively engaged with partner countries in multilateral fora to consistently promote gender equality, notably at annual sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and quarterly sessions of the UN Human Rights Council as the key policy-making UN fora. Furthermore, the EU places gender equality at the centre of its priority agenda with the UN and other multilateral partners, such as OSCE, COE, G7, G20, NATO, AU, OAS, ASEAN and OIC.

The EU supports the full and effective implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICDP) and the outcomes of their review conferences.

The EU fully recognises the multiple roles that civil society organisations, in particular women’s organisations and those advocating for gender equality, play as promoters of women’s and girls’ rights and consistently ensures their free, active and meaningful participation in all partnerships at all levels.

During 2017 important initiatives were launched.

The Commission, in close cooperation with the European External Action Service, played a key role in preparing the **G7 Roadmap for a Gender Responsive Economic Environment**<sup>101</sup> officially adopted by the G7 leaders at the May 2017 Taormina Summit. This was the first G7 ministerial meeting dedicated to the topic of gender equality. The Roadmap focuses on structural policies falling within central governments’ jurisdiction and that are likely to have the greatest impact on delivering gender equality. Of particular importance are policies that enable women to participate in the labour force, engage in entrepreneurship, become economically empowered and thus achieve full and equal participation in society. Addressing the gender inequality dimension of poverty and eliminating gender-based violence are other main objectives outlined in the Roadmap. At the ministerial meeting, the participants adopted a Final Declaration calling on all G7 members to adopt national action plans on combating gender-based violence.

The EU plays an active role in maximising progress towards the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), which form part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To that

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<sup>100</sup> The European Commission and EEAS Joint Staff Working Document on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020 (Gender Action Plan II, GAP II) outlines in detail the areas of current and future actions. It promotes policy consistency with internal EU policies, in full alignment with the EU Human Rights Action Plan.

<sup>101</sup> G7 Roadmap for a Gender-Responsive Economic Environment (2017), available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/23560/g7-gender-roadmap.pdf>.

end, Eurostat published a document entitled ‘Sustainable development in the European Union — 2017 monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context’<sup>102</sup>. The report marks the beginning of Eurostat’s regular monitoring of progress towards the SDGs in the EU. The set of indicators, developed in cooperation with a large number of stakeholders, comprises 100 indicators and is structured around the 17 SDGs. For each SDG, it focuses on aspects which are relevant from an EU perspective. Indicators measuring progress in SDG5, ‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’, focus on the areas of gender-based violence, education, employment and leadership positions.

Contributing to the in-depth review of SDG5, last year’s report on equality between women and men in the EU reported on the work on SDG5, its targets and indicators. In response to the reporting request regarding the EU’s contribution to the SDGs, the 2017 report on equality between women and men in the EU was presented at the 2017 United Nations High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development by Commissioner Mimica on 17 July.

The EU continues to take action to implement **UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security** (WPS) and all its follow-up resolutions. The WPS agenda aims to ensure that the rights, agency and protection of women and girls are observed and upheld before, during and after conflict, and that a meaningful and equitable role in decision-making is secured for women at all stages of the conflict continuum. Therefore, the WPS agenda is applicable to the full spectrum of aspects of foreign and security policy, including conflict prevention, mediation, conflict resolution and reconciliation, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, peacekeeping, peace-making and peacebuilding, humanitarian and development assistance and political engagement in relation to situations of conflict and fragility. In addition, addressing gendered root causes of violence remains critical to conflict prevention.

In addition, the EU closely interacts with the UN and all other relevant stakeholders worldwide. For example, the new sets of proposals between the EU and NATO from December 2017 include WPS considerations regarding early warning, situational awareness and capacity building for third countries. Also the ‘Enhancing women’s role in peace and security in **Yemen**’ project seeks to empower women activists and civil society organisations to engage in local peacebuilding processes and initiatives and raise awareness of women’s peace and security concerns. The project budget is EUR 500 000.

The empowerment of women is one of the five priority areas in the EU’s strategy on **Afghanistan**. The strategy makes explicit reference to incorporating legislation and additional measures to prevent, combat and criminalise violence against women and sexual harassment<sup>103</sup>. The ‘Strengthening women’s role in peace in Afghanistan’ project supports the implementation and monitoring of the Afghan national action plan on women, peace and security at local and provincial level. The project budget is EUR 607 776.

In the EU, 18 Member States have already adopted a national action plan on women, peace and security<sup>104</sup>.

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<sup>102</sup> Eurostat 2017: Sustainable Development in the European Union — Overview of progress towards the SDGs in an EU context, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4\\_031\\_688/8\\_461\\_538/KS-01-17-796-EN-N.pdf/f9c4e3f9-57eb-4f02-ab7a-42a7ebcf0748](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4_031_688/8_461_538/KS-01-17-796-EN-N.pdf/f9c4e3f9-57eb-4f02-ab7a-42a7ebcf0748).

<sup>103</sup> For more details, see: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-17-2122\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-2122_en.htm).

<sup>104</sup> For more details, see: [https://eas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/36861/eu-statement-%E2%80%93-united-nations-security-council-open-debate-women-peace-and-security\\_en](https://eas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/36861/eu-statement-%E2%80%93-united-nations-security-council-open-debate-women-peace-and-security_en).

Furthermore, in the framework of EU Common Security and Defence Policy, Gender Advisors were appointed to provide their gender expertise and support the systematic integration of a gender perspective in the analysis, planning, conduct and evaluation of all missions and operations.

The Commission is also committed to preventing gender-based violence in humanitarian crises. On 21 June 2017, the EU took over from Sweden the lead for the coming 18 months for the global initiative ‘**Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies**’. In humanitarian crises, gender-based violence is often widespread. The call to action brings together more than 60 humanitarian organisations with one mission: to recognise gender-based violence as life-threatening and address it from the earliest onset of a crisis. In 2017, the EU allocated almost EUR 22 million in humanitarian aid for the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence worldwide. The EU's leadership of the Call to Action will be guided by four main priorities:

- Increase advocacy on the prevention and response to gender-based violence and amplify the voices of survivors of such violence through awareness-raising events, and continuous outreach to existing and potential new partners to strengthen the Call to Action partnership.
- Increase focus on prevention of gender-based violence in emergencies, including through the promotion of the revised Inter-Agency Standing Committee Handbook on Gender.
- Raise awareness of the Call to Action at the field level where awareness is the lowest yet the potential impact is the biggest. At the end of 2017, the EU allocated EUR 975 000 through the Enhanced Response Capacity programme to the United Nations Population Fund to implement the Call to Action at field level.
- Lead the implementation and monitoring of the Call to Action Roadmap through further development of the existing monitoring and evaluation framework. A progress report on the Call to Action Roadmap will be published in the second half of 2018.

The first **Annual Implementation Report monitoring the EU commitment to implement the EU Gender Action Plan II (GAP II)**<sup>105</sup> and advance gender equality in external actions was published in August 2017<sup>106</sup>. During the first year of implementation of the GAP II, progress has been made towards the aim of transforming the lives of girls and women through ensuring their physical and psychological integrity, promoting the economic and social rights and strengthening girls' and women's voice and participation in cooperation with third countries. Transforming gender power relations in every sphere requires long-term and high-level engagement.

Progress has been made across the six institutional culture shift objectives: (i) increased coherence and coordination amongst EU institutions and with EU Member States; (ii) dedicated leadership on gender equality and girls and women's empowerment established in

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<sup>105</sup> GAP II is 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 through the following pivotal areas: a. Ensuring girls' and women's physical and psychological integrity; b. Promoting the economic and social rights/empowerment of girls and women; c. Strengthening girls' and women's voice and participation; d. Shifting the institutional culture of the Commission and the EEAS to more effectively deliver on EU commitments. For further details see: SWD(2015) 182 final.

<sup>106</sup> SWD(2017) 288 final, 29.8.2017.

EU institutions and Member States; (iii) sufficient resources allocated by EU institutions and Member States to deliver on EU gender policy commitments; (iv) robust gender evidence used to inform all EU external spending, programming and policy making; (v) results for women and girls measured and resources allocated to systematically track progress, and (vi) partnerships fostered between EU and stakeholders to build national capacity for gender equality, allowing for the time taken for GAP II start-up and implementation.

The commitment to mainstreaming or integrating gender analysis and perspectives across all instruments and modalities of external cooperation is gaining prominence in the Commission, even if the practice is not yet as robust as intended. Gender analysis is beginning to take a more central place in the planning and formulation of programmes and projects, but is still a long way from being fully integrated into the programme and project management cycle.

The results demonstrate significant progress in terms of incorporating gender equality in external cooperation: 58.8% of new initiatives adopted in the International cooperation and development area and 56.6% in the Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations area have been marked as mainly or significantly aiming at promoting gender equality and/or women empowerment (Gender marker 2 or 1) while 92% of new initiatives adopted in area of EU foreign policy have been marked as mainly or significantly aiming at promoting gender equality and/or women empowerment, against an average of 47.3% in 2015. The target set in the GAP II is to incorporate gender perspective into 85% of new actions by 2020.

### ***Eliminating violence against women and girls around the world***

Eliminating violence against women and girls is a key area of concern and activities for EU delegations. In 2017, the Commission was running more than 60 projects to end sexual and gender-based violence. Most EU delegations reported that they chose to target violence against women and girls as an objective for action under GAP II.

The **Spotlight Initiative** is one of the largest initiatives that the EU has launched so far to address gender-based violence. Under this joint initiative, the EU and the UN are working together to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in partner countries from five regions of the world: Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The initiative will provide a substantial opportunity to build visibility around the issue of violence against women and girls and to demonstrate impact at regional and country level.

With an intended investment of EUR 500 million, the EU has put considerable financial and political resources behind a global movement together with the UN, in a joint effort to finally put an end to the scourge of violence affecting such a large proportion of women and girls worldwide.

Based on existing evidence, some specific types of violence can be identified as prevalent or prominently emerging in certain regions. The EU-UN initiative will therefore focus on the following areas:

- human trafficking and sexual and economic (forced labour) exploitation, including domestic workers in Asia;
- domestic violence in the Pacific region;

- sexual and gender-based violence, including harmful practices, in sub-Saharan Africa;
- femicide in Latin America;
- domestic and family violence in the Caribbean region.

The Spotlight Initiative was made official in December 2017 through the launch of its very first project 'Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region". With a financial support of over EUR 25 million, the project will contribute to improving labour migration conditions for women in the ASEAN region. Together with UN Women and the International Labour Organization, the EU will work with governments, community-based organisations, civil society and service providers to improve labour laws, access to information and services, and prevent and put an end to violence and trafficking of women and girls. The programme targets countries of origin (Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Vietnam) and countries of destination (Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand) in the ASEAN region.

### ***Promoting gender equality through enlargement requirements***

The EU requires countries wishing to join the EU to carry out specific reporting on gender equality issues. In the 2017 Enlargement package, gender equality was reported on under the subjects of the rule of law and fundamental rights, and social policy and employment.

Since 2017, the EU has also been cooperating with the UN Women under the Regional Programme — Ending violence against women in the Western Balkan Countries and Turkey — Implementing Norms, Changing minds (budget: EUR 5 million). The programme focuses on a wide range of capacity-building measures to promote the development and implementation of laws and policies in line with CEDAW (UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), the Istanbul Convention and the EU's body of legislation. Governments receive technical assistance to review and reform laws, policies and legislation in line with CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention. Countries wishing to join the EU have to carry out awareness-raising campaigns challenging gender stereotypes. In addition, training on how to address gender stereotypes and discrimination must be offered to women's organisations (including those representing and/or working with disadvantaged groups), the media, the judiciary and the security sector. The aim is to increase the capacity of governmental and non-governmental service providers to ensure their services comply with CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention.

Another facility that supports governments in EU accession countries like Albania and Serbia in implementing the EU body of rules on gender equality is the UN Women Gender Equality Facility. It promotes the implementation of gender and socially responsive government strategies, plans, policies, funds and priorities at central and municipal level and through the establishment of strong national gender monitoring, implementation, coordination and advocacy bodies.

Women's access to the labour market and women's economic empowerment are also a central focus in development cooperation projects realised in line with the GAP II objectives. In June 2017, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) presented its Women in Business programme during the joint Western Balkans Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility and the Western Balkans Investment Framework Steering Committee

meeting in Stockholm. The EBRD also has a gender strategy<sup>107</sup> and includes gender and equal opportunity components in its selected infrastructure projects.

### ***Promoting gender equality through neighbourhood policy***

The EU also promotes gender equality in its cooperation with the European Neighbourhood Policy countries:

- The ‘***Strengthening Resilience and Empowerment of Women and Girls affected by the Syrian Crisis***’ programme was adopted in June 2017 as part of the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (the Madad Trust Fund). The programme, which has EUR 25 million at its disposal, will increase access to basic services and improve the prevention and protection of refugee women and girls and vulnerable women and girls in host communities from all forms of violence. It will also increase access to decent work and economic opportunities for refugee women and vulnerable women in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey and will boost the role and participation of women in political processes and decision-making processes in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon.
- The ‘***Egalité/Moussawat***’ programme, which has EUR 35 million at its disposal, was adopted by the Commission in December 2017. The programme will support gender equality in Morocco in areas such as combating violence against women, promoting a culture of equal opportunities and women’s political participation. The programme will also support the implementation of the national gender action plan in Morocco to meet the SDGs and support the government’s efforts on gender budgeting.
- In June 2017, the Commission adopted a revised document on the *20 Deliverables for 2020*<sup>108</sup> to ensure that all actions under the Eastern Partnership: (i) use tailor-made approaches to pursue the outreach and inclusion of civil society; and (ii) foster gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women by following the provisions of the GAP II<sup>109</sup>. In addition, a number of specific objectives have been outlined for the Eastern partner countries, such as adopting anti-discrimination legislation, ratifying the Istanbul Convention and the meeting the goal to reach 75 % of young women through the EU4Youth grant scheme. The EU, its Member States and the EBRD have also made commitments to contribute at least USD 55 million in sub-loans from local banks to companies run by women.
- The EU supports the work steered by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) on strengthening the role of women in the Euro-Med societies and on preparing the ***Fourth UfM Ministerial on Strengthening the Role of Women***<sup>110</sup>. The ministerial meeting was held in Cairo on 27 November with the participation of the Jordan and EU co-presidencies and more than 100 representatives from UfM countries, international organisations and civil society. The Commission confirmed its commitment to launch a regional campaign in the Southern Neighbourhood countries to raise public awareness on violence against women and girls. The regional-level campaign is meant to spread a clear message of zero tolerance to violence against women and girls and challenge gender stereotypes and norms

<sup>107</sup> For more details, see: <http://www.ebrd.com/gender-strategy.html>.

<sup>108</sup> For more details, see: SWD(2017) 300 final.

<sup>109</sup> Under GAP II, the gender dimension has to be incorporated into all EU programming documents and government policies where it is of relevance.

<sup>110</sup> For more details, see: <http://ufmsecretariat.org/fr/ufm-ministerial-conference-strengthening-role-women-society/>.

that contribute to the problem. A civil society back-to-back conference was organised on 22 and 23 November in Cairo with EU support to provide space for women's organisations and networks from the Euro-Med region to come together, strengthen their common discourse and issue concrete requests and recommendations to the fourth UfM ministerial mentioned above. This event was part of the 'Gender Regional Platform' process funded by the EU between 2015 and 2017 to promote progressive social policies on gender equality and women's empowerment through the 'UfM Ministerial' process on strengthening the role of women in society.

### ***Promoting gender equality through trade policies***

The EU promotes gender equality in its trade policy.

- All recently negotiated trade agreements include a trade and sustainable development chapter<sup>111</sup>. This chapter contains commitments on the ratification and implementation of fundamental International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions relevant for gender equality in employment, such as ILO convention 100 on equal remuneration and ILO Convention 111 on non-discrimination.
- Under an EU unilateral trade preferences system (GPS+) a country may apply for additional benefits if it commits itself to 27 international treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The EU monitors how the GSP+ beneficiaries respect their obligation of effective implementation<sup>112</sup>.
- The European Commission seeks to include a gender perspective when assessing impacts of policy initiatives in the area of trade<sup>113</sup>.

On 20 June 2017, the European Commission, together with the International Trade Centre, organised an International Forum on Women and Trade to further discuss possibilities for an inclusive trade policy<sup>114</sup>. In the same month, the Commission's Directorate-General for Trade and the Joint Research Centre published an analysis of the link between women's jobs and EU exports. The analysis reveals that while exports provide substantial employment opportunities for women across the EU (amounting to almost 12 million jobs in 2011) a gender gap to the disadvantage of women persists<sup>115</sup>.

The EU actively supported the adoption of a joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment, which was endorsed in December 2017 by 118 World Trade Organisation (WTO) members and observers. The Declaration is a collective initiative to increase the participation of women in trade<sup>116</sup>. Participating members will exchange information about making their trade policies more gender-responsive.

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<sup>111</sup> Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, as well as Free Trade Agreements with Canada, South Korea, Colombia-Peru and Central America and recently concluded agreements with Singapore, Vietnam and Japan.

<sup>112</sup> [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/january/tradoc\\_156536.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/january/tradoc_156536.pdf).

<sup>113</sup> For more details see Sustainability Impact Assessment Handbook, available at: [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2016/april/tradoc\\_154464.PDF](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2016/april/tradoc_154464.PDF) and guidelines on the analysis of human rights impacts in impact assessments for trade-related policy initiatives.

<sup>114</sup> For more details, see: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1632>.

<sup>115</sup> Jose Manuel Rueda-Cantuche (DG JRC) and Nuno Sousa (DG TRADE) 2017: Are EU Exports Gender-Blind?, available at: [http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2017/june/tradoc\\_155632.pdf](http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2017/june/tradoc_155632.pdf).

<sup>116</sup> For more details, see: [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news17\\_e/mc11\\_12dec17\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news17_e/mc11_12dec17_e.htm).

## 6. GENDER MAINSTREAMING, FUNDING FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND COOPERATION WITH ALL ACTORS

### *Gender mainstreaming: a gender-Better Regulation*

The European Commission continued to stress the importance of incorporating gender equality considerations into its decision-making process. In line with the Better Regulation Guidelines adopted by the Commission in July 2017 and the associated ‘Toolbox’<sup>117</sup>, gender equality (one of the EU’s fundamental rights), is one of the key impacts to be screened within the EU’s policy cycle — i.e. gender equality should be part of every impact assessment of Commission’s policy proposals before they are implemented, and of every evaluation of the existing EU actions.

### *Gender mainstreaming: fighting sectoral segregation*

As outlined in chapter 2, horizontal segregation (i.e. the tendency for women to be overrepresented in sectors with low pay levels) leads to inequality in terms of pay, lifelong earnings, pensions, working conditions and the working environment. There are economic arguments for addressing segregation. Studies show that closing the gender gap in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) would contribute to an increase in EU GDP per capita of 2.2 to 3.0 % and would increase employment in the EU by 850 000 to 1 200 000 jobs by 2050. For example, equal participation of women in the rapidly growing yet highly segregated ICT sector would lead to a gain of around EUR 9 billion in EU GDP each year<sup>118</sup>.

In 2017, Commission action tackling stereotypes that drive differences in the employment of women and men in different fields focused on transport and ICT, where around 20 % of all workers are women.

- Automation and digitalisation bring about new opportunities for women in transport. A **study** published in July 2017<sup>119</sup> on *‘Making the EU transport sector attractive to future generations’* gave recommendations on how to attract young people, including women to this sector. Since 2016, a wide range of stakeholders were invited to discuss possible actions that could be taken at EU and national level, as well as within companies and training institutions, and this reflection continued in 2017. Campaigns and exchange of best practices may be most efficient at changing mentalities. Such practices include the discussion of gender equality issues at all corporate levels, the review of recruitment policies and the reconciliation of work and personal life.
- In November 2017, the **Women in Transport-EU Platform for Change** was launched by the Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee, with the support of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Infrastructure of Estonia, and the Transport Committee of the European Parliament. The Platform was developed in cooperation with different stakeholders, including social partners. Committed organisations come together with solutions to increase female employment in transport. The actions which they can propose under the Platform vary widely, from very practical measures (e.g. installation of sanitary

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<sup>117</sup> Better regulation ‘Toolbox’, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/better-regulation-toolbox\\_1.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/better-regulation-toolbox_1.pdf).

<sup>118</sup> EIGE (2017), *Economic Benefits of Gender Equality in the EU*: available at: [http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/ti\\_pubpdf\\_mh0116183enn\\_pdfweb\\_20170518162039.pdf](http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/ti_pubpdf_mh0116183enn_pdfweb_20170518162039.pdf).

<sup>119</sup> For more details on the study, see: [https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/social/studies/social\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/social/studies/social_en).

facilities) to the development of fully-fledged strategies or action plans. The actions have to be focused on achieving concrete results and will be monitored.

- **A declaration to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the transport sector** was publicly signed on 27 November 2017 during the conference launching the Platform and is now available online to gather further signatures<sup>120</sup>. A related webpage includes an online module that can be used for the exchange of good practices.
- For the first time in its 2017 edition, the Commission introduced a new category for "rising innovators" (under 30 years old) in the EU **Prize for Women Innovators**.
- The forthcoming *‘Women in the digital age’* study sheds light on factors influencing women’s participation in the digital sector. Once women are in the digital sector, they tend to leave it at a greater rate than men. This is particularly clear in the 30 to 44 age range, which is the prime working age and the key stage in a person’s professional development. This age range is also the period when most Europeans have their first child and/or have to take care of small children. While around 1.2 % of male digital workers with tertiary education left their profession in 2015 for one of these reasons, that number almost quadruples for women to 8.7 % in the same year, which is 1.5 percentage points more than in 2011. This ‘drop-out phenomenon’ of women from digital jobs has an economic cost. The annual productivity loss for the European economy due to women leaving their digital jobs is estimated at EUR 16.1 billion. The study highlights some innovative approaches to address the digital gender gap, which persist despite many structured efforts.
- At the request of the **Bulgarian Presidency** of the Council, EIGE is preparing a **document on ‘Women in the Digital World’** to further steer the policy debate under the Bulgarian Presidency.
- After 1 year, the **Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition** has over 300 members, with nearly 90 organisations having pledged to tackle the digital skills gap. The pledging organisations have provided millions of Europeans with online and face-to-face training, digital skills certifications, awareness raising, job placements and internships. The main target audience of the pledges are primary and secondary school students. 63 % of the pledges were submitted by companies and organisations from the ICT sector, while 27 % were submitted by the education and training sector. The rest of the commitments were made by the public sector, the financial and banking sector, the agriculture sector and the social care sector.
- The first **Digital Opportunity traineeships** were announced in December 2017. They will offer students traineeships in digital areas in another EU country. The aim is to give students of all disciplines the opportunity to get hands-on digital experience in fields demanded by the market. The traineeships are offered in a wide range of fields such as cybersecurity audits and development, web and app development, design, implementation and operation of public networks through Wi-Fi, technical design and planning of systems and multimedia product projects, and development of e-learning platforms. The initiative will provide cross-border traineeships for up to 6 000 students and recent graduates between 2018 and 2020. The first traineeships will start in spring 2018. Interns will receive an allowance of around EUR 500 per month, for an average of 5 months. The pilot project will be financed by the EU’s Horizon 2020 research funding programme and implemented

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<sup>120</sup> For more details on the Platform, see: [https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/social/women-transport\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/social/women-transport_en).

through Erasmus+. Members of the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition have been mobilised to offer the internships.

**National Coalitions** for Digital Skills and Jobs seeking to facilitate local action with a high-impact have been launched in 17 Member States and more are under development. Concrete measures to boost digital skills planned/adopted by Member States include: (i) the introduction of basic digital training from primary level and reinforcing digital training throughout school curricula (AT, DE); (ii) stepping up training on coding (PL, BE, RO, SE), digital skills training for teachers (AT, BG, DE); (iii) the increase of STEM places in higher education (AT, PL); (iv) the certification of the European computer driving licence on a voluntary basis for secondary students (CY); and (v) one-off initiatives such as the IT Academy in SK<sup>121</sup>.

### ***Gender mainstreaming: ensuring effective and efficient funding***

The European Commission continued to support innovative projects promoting and strengthening gender equality and reward inspiring initiatives that could be replicated across Europe.

- The Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition shared digital skills initiatives, which can be replicated and scaled up across Europe. In December 2017, 20 finalists were selected and five outstanding projects were awarded the **European Digital Skills Awards 2017**. This included a special award for organisations that promote digital skills for women and girls.
- The European Commission's annual EU-wide **RegioStars Awards** competition puts the spotlight on the most innovative and inspiring EU-funded projects. Through concrete real-life examples, it illustrates how cohesion policy supports people's lives by creating economic growth and jobs at regional level. This year, **'Women's empowerment and active participation'** was one of the 5 categories for competing projects. The award ceremony took place in Brussels in October as part of the European Week of Regions and Cities. The winning project focused on integrating victims of gender-based violence into the labour market. In addition, this year 11 937 votes were cast for the Public Choice Award. The **'Coordination to improve gender-based violence victims' labour market integration and social inclusion** project won, based on the votes received via social media and from those attending the event<sup>122</sup>.
- Several **Horizon 2020** funded projects launched in 2017 support gender mainstreaming in research and innovation. Under the call **'Swafs-03-2016-2017: Support to research organisations to implement gender equality plans'**, two projects were funded with a total grant of EUR 4 020 446.39. The projects are expected to increase the number of research performing organisations and research funding organisations starting to implement gender equality plans. In the long term, the projects aim to: (i) increase the number of female researchers; (ii) improve their careers and mobility; and (iii) integrate the gender dimension into research programmes. Funded under call **"Swafs-02-2016: ERA-NET Cofund – Promoting Gender equality in H2020 and the ERA"** (total budget EUR 11.8 million, including EUR 3.77 million EC contribution), the GENDER-NET Plus project gathers 16 national research funding organisations from 13 countries, which will

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<sup>121</sup> For more details, see: COM(2017) 674 final.

<sup>122</sup> For more details, see: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/regio-stars-awards/](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/regio-stars-awards/).

develop joint activities and co-fund selected transnational research projects integrating a gender dimension in topics relating to specific sustainable development goals, e.g. Good health and well-being (including gender-based violence, and gender and ageing), Infrastructure, industrialization and innovation (including gender and ICT, gender in entrepreneurship and innovation). Likewise, project GENDERACTION, funded under call "SwafS-19-2016: **Networking of National representatives and resources centres on Gender in R&I**" is supporting EU Member States and Associated Countries in the implementation of the gender equality priority of the European Research Area Roadmap

In 2016 and 2017, through the **EU Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme**, the European Commission helped to finance projects to incentivise the **equal economic independence of women and men**. Several of the projects considered a more equal sharing of care responsibilities between men and women and aimed to promote active fatherhood.

- The National Institute for Health and Welfare in **Finland** presented a project called '*Visible Fathers*' which aims to: (i) encourage more fathers to take parental leave; (ii) increase awareness about paternity leave; and (iii) promote positive attitudes and practices in this regard. In Finland, about half of fathers currently take paternity leave (they take on average 3-6 weeks until the child turns two<sup>123</sup>) while the mother is also at home; but only 5 % of fathers take the share of parental leave that can be taken by either parent. Approximately 20 % of fathers do not take any leave. Often fathers think they are not needed. They are also worried about financial and work implications if they take leave. The Finnish project includes a 3-week media campaign called 'It's Daddy Time!'. The campaign emphasises benefits for families, workplaces and society through ads on radio, website, testimonials, outdoor materials, internet and social media.
- The '*Gender Equality in Cyprus*' project also focuses on sharing care responsibilities, and tries to promote flexible work arrangements for men in **Cyprus**. It includes a media campaign (radio and TV spots, a social media campaign, published material, such as leaflets and guides) which shows positive examples.
- In **Malta**, the '*Equality beyond gender roles*' project focused on the role of men, with the aim of raising awareness on gender equality and work-life balance. The target groups are students in particular (14-16 years old, 16+ years old), employers and employees, and the public at large, while activities include interactive theatre in education, roving van campaign, social media campaigns, conferences, consultation sessions, and events with debates, stands and music exhibitions. Moreover, video clips were developed through which role models were portrayed discussing their uptake of family friendly measures as well as an educational animated video on the benefits of family friendly measures.

Equality between men and women is also one of the investment priorities of the **European Social Fund (ESF)**. It includes policy areas such as access to employment, career progression, reconciliation of work and private life and promotion of equal pay for equal work. EUR 1.6 billion has been programmed by Member States under the ESF for 2014-2020. The European Structural and Investment Funds Strategic Report, published in December 2017, highlights the ESF's contribution to supporting **actions in line with the Work-life balance initiative**. Under the dedicated investment priority 165 000 participants had been supported by end-2016. 25 % of projects under the relevant investment priority were

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<sup>123</sup> The leave entitlement in Finland is 54 working days (i.e. 9 weeks) with a pay replacement at 70 % of the salary.

selected, amounting to EUR 385 million. Measures under this priority include the provision of quality childcare, individual guidance for women, vocational training, arrangements at the work place to reconcile work and private life, development of tools and instruments, awareness-raising programmes for employers, change management in organisations, and financial incentives. Actions for work-life balance were also incorporated into other investment priorities<sup>124</sup>.

Of particular note are the **fisheries** and **maritime sectors**, where funds were made available to achieve greater gender mainstreaming:

- Actions to support ‘greater integration, participation and access to funds by women’ are eligible under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. In particular, under Article 29(1) and 29(2) of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Regulation<sup>125</sup>, which deal with the ‘Promotion of human capital, job creation and social dialogue’, support may be provided for projects aiming, for example, at ‘networking and exchange of best-practices between stakeholders including among organisations promoting equal opportunities between men and women and promoting the role of women in fishing communities’. Article 63 of the same Regulation provides for support to projects focused on training women or the provision of social care facilities as part of fisheries local development strategies.
- Good practice examples are included in the FARNET magazine<sup>126</sup>; furthermore, the social inclusion guide gives some indication on how gender equality can be integrated into fisheries communities<sup>127</sup>.
- The call for proposal on blue careers in Europe (EMFF, 2016) called for projects that ‘address the gender imbalance in the blue economy and encourage women to step into traditionally male-dominated work areas and vice-versa’.
- The Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills (2017) in the maritime technology sector should include actions "to promote the attractiveness of the sector as a career choice, in particular among the young, while also aiming for a gender balance in the sector".

**Gender budgeting can be an important tool in gender mainstreaming** but is at an early stage in many EU countries.

In **Finland**, a one-year project on gender budgeting started on 1 September 2017. The aim of the project is to deepen the research-based approach to gender budgeting and develop a concrete model according to which gender budgeting could be implemented in ministries. The project analyses certain sections of the State budget in 2017 from a gender perspective and provides workshops for civil servants participating in the preparation of the State budget in various ministries. Experiences of gender budgeting in other EU countries will be utilised. The project is carried out by Ekvalita — Equality Experts, with the participation of the

<sup>124</sup> SWD(2017) 452 final, Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the document Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Strategic report 2017 on the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds, available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/strat\\_rep\\_2017/strat\\_rep\\_2017\\_swd\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/strat_rep_2017/strat_rep_2017_swd_en.pdf).

<sup>125</sup> REGULATION (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

<sup>126</sup> The FARNET magazine is specifically targeting implementers of Community-Led Local Development under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, available at: [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/library/farnet-magazine/farnet-magazine-ndeg15\\_en](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/library/farnet-magazine/farnet-magazine-ndeg15_en).

<sup>127</sup> For more details, see: [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/library/guide/farnet-guide-13-social-inclusion-vibrant-fishing-communities\\_en](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/library/guide/farnet-guide-13-social-inclusion-vibrant-fishing-communities_en).

Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Prime Minister's Office in the steering group.

In June 2017, the **Italian** Minister of Economy and the Undersecretary of State in charge of Equal Opportunities signed a specific Decree on Gender Budgeting in the State budget. Following the entry into force of the Decree, the impact of public policies on women and men will be assessed to monitor gender inequalities in pay, services, time and unpaid work. Under the Decree, public administration will have to report on action taken to close the existing gaps between women and men.

### ***Gender mainstreaming: cooperation with stakeholders and exchanges of good practices***

A series of important events took place this year to strengthen policy dialogue and feed the policy debate on women's equality. These included high-level political events discussing general policy needs, as well as expert exchanges to share experiences on concrete measures.

- In cooperation with the Estonian Presidency, EIGE launched the third edition of the **Gender Equality Index**. The EU-level conference held in Brussels on 11 October 2017 gathered together representatives of European institutions, Member States and other relevant stakeholders. It provided a forum for around 300 decision-makers and practitioners to discuss the findings of the Gender Equality Index, looked at recent trends and sought solutions to gender inequalities in the current political and economic context. The current score for gender equality in the EU is 66.2 out of 100, but in the past 10 years the score has increased only 4 points. The top scoring country in the EU is Sweden (82.6), while Greece has the lowest score (50). The most improved country is Italy — up 12.9 points in the past 10 years to reach 14th position. All countries have room to improve<sup>128</sup>.
- On 20-21 November 2017, the **European Commission hosted the 2017 Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights**, which focused on **Women's Rights in Turbulent Times**. The Colloquium brought together over 400 national and EU policy-makers, international and civil society organisations, academics and legal practitioners, activists, businesses and trade unions, media representatives and journalists. Participants explored together the relationship between the fulfilment of fundamental rights for women, and pluralism, solidarity, tolerance, justice and equality. They agreed to join forces and step up efforts to protect and promote women's rights in the EU. The topics for discussion included: (i) the presence and normalisation of misogyny in society and its links to the violation of women's fundamental rights in all spheres of life; (ii) the key obstacles to gender equality in economic empowerment and political participation; (iii) the international women's movement and the shifting space for civil society; (iv) violence against women and links to other forms of violence in society, including in the context of populist and extremist movements; (v) the gendered nature of hate speech, racism and other forms of discrimination.
- The **Mutual Learning Programme seminar** held in Stockholm on 13-14 June 2017 focused on the **impact of tax systems on gender equality**. The Swedish policy on individual taxation since 1971 was examined in detail, including the policy considerations and social and economic context that had prompted the reform and its impact on women's

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<sup>128</sup> For more details on the EIGE Index Score, see: <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index>.

employment rates. The seminar was particularly relevant in the light of the recent publication of a new initiative by the European Commission, the **Work-life balance initiative**, which combines legal and policy measures to support work-life balance. The initiative includes a component on removing fiscal disincentives for second earners which prevent women from accessing the labour market or working full-time. The seminar was well attended with government representatives and independent experts from AT, BE, BG, HR, EE, FI, FR, EL, IE, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, SI, ES and SE. Representatives of the European Commission and EIGE also attended.

- The **Peer Review on the ‘Competence Check for the Labour Market Integration of Female Refugees’**, hosted on 26-27 June 2017 by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection as part of the Commission’s Mutual Learning Programme, discussed measures that help refugees, particularly female refugees, to validate their skills and qualifications in order to find suitable employment. The employment of female refugees enables them to contribute their skills to the economy, while also serving as a role model for their children and families. However, compared to their male counterparts, female refugees face additional gender-specific barriers to entering the labour market. The event looked in particular at tailored support measures for female refugees, such as offering peer support or cooperation between services to address individual barriers such as child care needs or mobility issues. Labour market integration is a crucial factor for the overall integration process of refugees. The Peer Review was attended by participants from FI, FR, DE, NL, RO, SI and SE.
- Since its launch in September 2016, the **e-platform for European women entrepreneurs (WEgate.eu)** has been regularly updated and enriched with information on: (i) events taking place in the EU to promote women’s entrepreneurship; (ii) support available to women entrepreneurs throughout Europe; and (iii) success stories of women entrepreneurs from across the continent.
- Four projects were launched in January 2017 to set up a **European Network of Women Business Angels**. The selected consortiums cover 14 EU Member States. The objectives are to encourage more women entrepreneurs to become business angels and to help women entrepreneurs present their business ideas to potential investors. In a first phase, the network conducted desk research and launched surveys to identify the obstacles and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs seeking or offering business angel funding, as well as potential success factors. In addition, the network started raising awareness of women entrepreneurs and organising training sessions and pitching events. A second interim report is due at the beginning of 2018 and will provide an update on the implementation of these projects.

In **Belgium**, the intermediate report on the implementation of the federal law<sup>129</sup> and plan on gender mainstreaming was adopted in June by the government and sent to the Parliament. The conclusions show that there is progress in some departments and that several trainings and tools helped increase awareness, but some difficulties remain, including on implication at the highest levels, gender statistics and the understanding of the strategy.

<sup>129</sup> For more details on the law, see: [http://reflex.raadvst-consetat.be/reflex/pdf/Mbbs/2007/02/13/103\\_046.pdf](http://reflex.raadvst-consetat.be/reflex/pdf/Mbbs/2007/02/13/103_046.pdf) and [http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/sites/default/files/rapport\\_intermediaire\\_2017.pdf](http://igvm-iefh.belgium.be/sites/default/files/rapport_intermediaire_2017.pdf).

The **Cyprus** Academy of Public Administration, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice and Public Order/Equality Unit, the Office of the Commissioner for Gender Equality, the Office of the Commissioner for Administration and Human Rights and the Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training, established a steering group to: (i) prepare an action plan for the training of public officers on gender mainstreaming; and (ii) design educational programmes for all levels of government officials and especially of officers who prepare and implement the State budget and the strategic development plans on gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting questions.

In **Croatia**, the ‘Support to the Gender Equality’ project led to a number of activities to establish a basis for the gender mainstreaming of national and local policies. Seminars about gender mainstreaming were organised for gender equality coordinators in 35 state administration bodies, members of 21 county commissions for gender equality and politicians, gathering more than 200 participants. Four tailored-made manuals were drawn up and are to be widely distributed to coordinators, county commissions and politicians. The Office for Gender Equality ensures the sustainability of the project. As a result of the project’s activities, several ministries decided to form gender equality working groups led by senior officials, whose task will be to draft a plan for the gender mainstreaming of their respective policies. The Office for Gender Equality is planning to establish inter-ministerial coordination for gender mainstreaming to provide continuous support to coordinators in state bodies in their work on gender mainstreaming. In addition, several county commissions for gender equality started to work on an action plan to implement the European Charter for Equality of women and men in local life<sup>130</sup>. This work was done in the EU Twinning project CRO Gender together with **Finland**.

In **Germany**, the Second Gender Equality Report was adopted in June 2017 by the government and sent to the Parliament. The Report focusses on new ways of restructuring paid work and (unpaid) care work. The Second Gender Equality Report presented the Gender Care Gap, which is determined by relating the time spent on unpaid daily care work by women to that spent by men. The Gender Care Gap in Germany is 52.4 % (based on the most recent Time Usage Survey 2012/2013 by the German Federal Statistical Office), which means women perform 52.4 % more unpaid care work than men. This is equivalent to one hour and 27 minutes more care work daily. The Expert Commission for the Second Gender Equality Report has taken it as given that a gender-equal organization of paid work and (unpaid) care work should provide the ability to combine employment and care work in equal measures during the life course, irrespectively of gender. This guiding principle gives rise to policy recommendations that are presented in the Second Gender Equality Report.

In **Slovenia**, the government adopted Guidelines for gender mainstreaming in the work of ministries by 2020. They were prepared by the Equal Opportunities Department of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The Guidelines support the work of ministries in gender mainstreaming in their specific fields of work and specify the role of Coordinators for Equal Opportunities of Men and Women<sup>131</sup>.

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<sup>130</sup> For more details on the European Charter for Equality of women and men in local life, see: [http://www.ccre.org/docs/charte\\_egalite\\_en.pdf](http://www.ccre.org/docs/charte_egalite_en.pdf).

<sup>131</sup> Slovenia, Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming in the Work of Ministries 2016-2020, available at: [http://www.mddsz.gov.si/fileadmin/mddsz.gov.si/pageuploads/dokumenti\\_\\_pdf/enake\\_moznosti/SmerniceGM\\_ANG.pdf](http://www.mddsz.gov.si/fileadmin/mddsz.gov.si/pageuploads/dokumenti__pdf/enake_moznosti/SmerniceGM_ANG.pdf).

## CONCLUSION

This year's report on gender equality between women and men enables us to take stock of various EU and Member State initiatives to improve gender equality in Europe. It gives an overview of the major achievements and reminds us of all the tasks still lying ahead for the upcoming years. The promotion and protection of equality between women and men requires a change of mind-sets, solidarity and the political will to create institutional and legal frameworks that specifically address gender inequalities.

More than 9 in 10 Europeans think that promoting gender equality is important to ensure a fair and democratic society<sup>132</sup>. Gender parity in participation and pay not only has its economic case<sup>133</sup>, it is also a necessity: promoting the model of dual-earning households seems impossible without further progress on gender equality.

The EU is aware that in order to close the gender gaps there is a need to intensify the efforts in all five priority areas identified in the Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019:

- (1) equal economic independence of women and men
- (2) equal pay for work of equal value
- (3) equality in decision-making
- (4) ending gender-based violence
- (5) promoting gender equality beyond the EU.

The *Joint trio declaration on gender equality* signed in July 2017 by the Estonian, Bulgarian and Austrian Presidencies gave a commitment to bring gender equality back onto the EU's list of priorities<sup>134</sup>.

To further strengthen our societies, the EU has decided to join forces with various international stakeholders and build alliances on gender equality with international organisations such as the OECD, UN Women, the Council of Europe and the WTO. In particular, violence against women will remain a common priority area for 2018. Even before women started to voice their experiences of sexual assault and harassment on social media (*#MeToo*), the EU supported this outcry of women (*#SayNoStopVaw*) through its own campaigns and actions. Empowering equality bodies and support services at Member State level is essential to secure women's rights and increases women's trust in law enforcement bodies. This is an important conclusion of this year's campaign on violence against women.

The Annual Fundamental Rights Colloquium on Women's Rights in Turbulent Times discussed the recent developments. The Colloquium was a major event in 2017, bringing

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<sup>132</sup> EBS 465.

<sup>133</sup> It could add, for instance, an additional US\$250 billion to the GDP of the United Kingdom, US\$320 billion to France's and US\$310 billion to the GDP of Germany. See: World Economic Forum (2017), *The Global Gender Gap Report 2017*, available at: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-report-2017>. It has been also estimated that the under-utilisation of women's skills costs the UK economy 1.3-2 % of GDP annually, and that eradicating the full-time gender pay gap would contribute additional spending into the economy of £41 billion each year, available at: <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Women%20and%20Equalities/Gender%20Pay%20Gap/written/25593.html>.

<sup>134</sup> Trio Presidency Declaration on Equality Between Women and Men, available at: <https://www.eu2017.ee/sites/default/files/inline-files/EU2017EE%20Trio%20Presidency%20Declaration%20on%20Equality%20Between%20Women%20and%20Men.pdf>.

together different stakeholders sharing the notion that policy-making and actions addressing multiple discriminations and stereotypes in European societies should be guided by ‘intersectional’ approaches. The Colloquium’s key overall message was that if we want to close the persisting gender gaps ‘we cannot afford to leave anyone behind’.

As this year’s report demonstrates, legal measures adopted by several Member States introducing quotas in political and/or economic decision-making significantly improved the ratio of women at top positions. Nevertheless, a huge discrepancy remains between the EU Member States. In addition, half-way through the 2016-2019 Strategic engagement, we have seen some slowdown in progress towards gender equality in various EU Member States. This concerns all areas of decision-making, employment and pay.

This report illustrates how important it is to collect data on equality between women and men in the EU. Data enable Member States and the EU to design appropriate and specific policies. The EU continues to further advance the methodology of data gathering and the harmonisation of indicators used in Member States.

There is no linear development towards gender equality. Advancing and ensuring the effective implementation of EU policies to promote and protect women’s fundamental rights is not only needed to ensure a fair and equal society; it is also the best collective response that the EU can have against the discriminatory and misogynous populist movements that currently challenge democratic societies. Only by joining efforts can the EU improve the lives of women and men and promote our European way of life.

STATISTICAL ANNEX

Annex 1: Member States' performances in key areas

Equal economic independence

Women and men's employment rate (20-64 years old), 2010, 2015, 2016 and Q3-2017, (%)

	Men				Women			
	2010	2015	2016	2017q3	2010	2015	2016	2017q3
<b>EU28</b>	75.1	75.9	76.9	78.1	62.1	64.3	65.3	66.6
<b>BE</b>	73.5	71.3	72.3	73.2	61.6	63	63	63.8
<b>BG</b>	68.6	70.4	71.3	75.9	60.8	63.8	64	67.8
<b>CZ</b>	79.6	83	84.6	86.6	60.9	66.4	68.6	71
<b>DK</b>	78.6	80.2	80.7	80.5	73	72.6	74	74.1
<b>DE</b>	80.4	82.3	82.7	83.1	69.7	73.6	74.5	75.1
<b>EE</b>	67.8	80.5	80.8	82.2	65.9	72.6	72.6	75
<b>IE</b>	69.9	76.1	77.5	79.3	61.1	63.8	65.4	67.2
<b>EL</b>	76	64	65.8	68.3	51.8	46	46.8	48.1
<b>ES</b>	69.2	67.6	69.6	71.8	56.3	56.4	58.1	59.9
<b>FR</b>	74	73.2	73.8	75	64.9	66	66.3	67.1
<b>HR</b>	67.9	65.4	66.2	68.8	56.4	55.9	56.6	59
<b>IT</b>	72.7	70.6	71.7	72.6	49.5	50.6	51.6	52.7
<b>CY</b>	81.7	72.3	73.8	76.4	68.8	64	64.1	67
<b>LV</b>	64	74.6	74.7	77.6	64.5	70.5	71.8	72.8
<b>LT</b>	63.5	74.6	76.2	76.4	65	72.2	74.3	74.9
<b>LU</b>	79.2	76.7	76.1	75.7	62	65	65.1	69.2
<b>HU</b>	65.5	75.8	78.6	81.2	54.6	62.1	64.6	65.8
<b>MT</b>	78.2	81.4	83.2	84.4	41.6	53.6	55.5	58.7
<b>NL</b>	82.8	81.9	82.6	83.3	70.8	70.8	71.6	72.9
<b>AT</b>	79	78.4	78.7	79.1	68.8	70.2	70.9	71.5
<b>PL</b>	71.3	74.7	76.4	78.2	57.3	60.9	62.2	63.8
<b>PT</b>	75.4	72.6	74.2	77.6	65.6	65.9	67.4	70.2
<b>RO</b>	73.1	74.7	75	77.4	56.5	57.2	57.4	60.4

<b>SI</b>	74	73.3	73.3	77.1	66.5	64.7	66.7	69.9
<b>SK</b>	71.9	75	76.9	77.5	57.4	60.3	62.7	64.9
<b>FI</b>	74.5	73.9	75	76.1	71.5	71.8	71.7	71.6
<b>SE</b>	81.1	82.5	83	83.8	75	78.3	79.2	79.7
<b>UK</b>	79.3	82.5	83.1	83.3	67.9	71.3	72.1	73.3

Source: Eurostat, LFS

## Women and men's employment rate in full-time equivalents (20-64 years old), 2016, (%)

	Women	Men	Gender gap
<b>EU28</b>	56.3	74.4	18.2
<b>AT</b>	55.8	75.6	19.8
<b>BE</b>	53.3	70.1	16.8
<b>BG</b>	63.0	71.1	8.1
<b>CY</b>	59.0	69.6	10.6
<b>CZ</b>	66.4	84.7	18.3
<b>DE</b>	58.1	79.1	21.0
<b>DK</b>	65.1	76.4	11.2
<b>EE</b>	69.6	79.7	10.0
<b>ES</b>	51.6	68.1	16.5
<b>FI</b>	67.4	72.6	5.2
<b>FR</b>	58.9	71.5	12.6
<b>EL</b>	43.8	63.9	20.1
<b>HR</b>	54.9	65.1	10.2
<b>HU</b>	62.9	78.0	15.1
<b>IE</b>	54.9	73.2	18.2
<b>IT</b>	44.4	69.3	24.8
<b>LT</b>	72.7	75.5	2.7
<b>LU</b>	57.1	74.8	17.7
<b>LV</b>	70.1	74.2	4.1
<b>MT</b>	50.0	82.5	32.5
<b>NL</b>	48.9	76.1	27.2
<b>PL</b>	60.5	76.8	16.4
<b>PT</b>	63.9	72.6	8.7
<b>RO</b>	55.9	73.7	17.8
<b>SE</b>	71.8	80.7	8.9
<b>SI</b>	63.2	72.2	9.0
<b>SK</b>	60.5	75.5	15.0
<b>UK</b>	58.9	79.3	20.4

Source: Eurostat, LFS

## Equal pay for equal work and work of equal value

The gender pay gap, 2010, 2015, 2016 (%)

The gender pay gap is the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male and female paid employees, expressed as a percentage of the former.

	2010	2015	2016
<b>EU28</b>	16.4	16.2	16.2
<b>BE</b>	10.2	6.5	6.1
<b>BG</b>	13	15.4	14.4
<b>CZ</b>	21.6	22.5	21.8
<b>DK</b>	15.9	15.1	15
<b>DE</b>	22.3	22	21.5
<b>EE</b>	27.7	26.9	25.3
<b>IE</b>	13.9		
<b>EL</b>	15		
<b>ES</b>	16.2	14.2	14.2
<b>FR</b>	15.6	15.3	15.2
<b>HR</b>	5.7		
<b>IT</b>	5.3	5.5	5.3
<b>CY</b>	16.8	14	13.9
<b>LV</b>	15.5	17	17
<b>LT</b>	14.6	14.2	14.4
<b>LU</b>	8.7	5.5	5.5
<b>HU</b>	17.6	14	14
<b>MT</b>	7.2		11
<b>NL</b>	17.8	16.1	15.6
<b>AT</b>	24	21.7	20.1
<b>PL</b>	4.5	7.4	7.2
<b>PT</b>	12.8	17.8	17.5
<b>RO</b>	8.8	5.8	5.2
<b>SI</b>	0.9	8.1	7.8
<b>SK</b>	19.6	19.6	19
<b>FI</b>	20.3	17.6	17.4
<b>SE</b>	15.4	14	13.3
<b>UK</b>	19.5	21	21

Source: Eurostat, Structure of Earnings Survey

## Gender segregation in occupations and in economic sectors, 2010, 2015, 2016

This index reflects the proportion of the employed population that would need to change occupation/sector in order to bring about an even distribution of men and women across occupations or sectors. The index varies between 0 (no segregation) and 50 (complete segregation). For the EU as a whole, the figures are still high: 24.1 % for occupational segregation and 19 % for sectoral segregation.

	Gender segregation in occupations			Gender segregation in sectors		
	2010	2015	2016	2010	2015	2016
<b>EU28</b>	24.9	24.3	24.1	19.1	18.9	19
<b>BE</b>	25.4	26.4	26.3	19.5	20.2	20.3

BG	28.9	28.6	28.4	21.1	21.9	21.8
CZ	28.3	28.2	28.4	20.9	21.5	21.3
DK	25.7	24.9	23.8	19.5	19.2	18.3
DE	26.1	25.3	24.9	19.4	19.5	19.3
EE	30.6	30.9	30	25.7	25	24.5
IE	26.2	26.2	25.7	21.2	21.3	21.5
EL	21.9	19	19.1	16.1	13.5	13.8
ES	26.5	25.2	25.5	20.4	19.4	19.8
FR	26.1	25.9	25.7	19.1	18.7	19
HR	28	28.1	29	20.6	21	22
IT	24.7	24.8	24.4	19.7	19.5	19.5
CY	28.9	28.9	28.7	20	19.4	19
LV	28	28.9	29.2	24.2	24.8	23.3
LT	28.8	28.2	27.7	22	22.4	21.8
LU	23.4	23	22.3	16	15.8	14.6
HU	27.7	28	27.3	20.7	20.5	20.1
MT	24	24.9	24.8	16.3	17.2	17.4
NL	25	24.9	24.9	19.4	18.1	18.4
AT	25.9	27.4	27.1	19.3	19.4	19.9
PL	26	26.9	26.9	20.5	21.5	21.7
PT	26.4	25.7	25.7	21.2	21.1	21.5
RO	22	23	23.8	16.7	18.1	18.6
SI	25.8	26.2	27	19	19.5	20.4
SK	31.1	29.5	29.4	25.2	23.6	23.2
FI	28.6	27.5	27.7	23.7	23.8	23.9
SE	26.1	25	24.6	21.5	20.6	20.4
UK	24.4	23.3	23.2	19.4	18.4	18.4

Source: Eurostat

## Gender gap in pensions

The gender gap in pensions measures the difference in pensions between women and men, excluding non-pensioners.

	Pensioners aged 65-79				Pensioners aged 65+			
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>EU28</b>	40.12	39.95	38.34	37.22	38.21	38.49	37.28	36.56
<b>AT</b>	41.39	41.88	41.08	40.57	38.12	39.00	38.99	39.05
<b>BE</b>	33.59	30.20	35.29	26.56	32.77	29.66	34.13	25.98
<b>BG</b>	29.98	23.73	28.32	27.43	30.74	23.85	29.34	28.75
<b>CY</b>	47.72	48.83	46.81	48.66	44.85	45.58	44.82	46.66
<b>CZ</b>	13.23	13.40	13.64	13.35	12.53	12.77	12.68	12.47
<b>DE</b>	45.58	45.14	41.76	42.12	45.60	45.84	42.45	43.01
<b>DK</b>	13.04	16.31	13.54	7.75	12.69	14.17	11.72	8.10
<b>EE</b>	3.29	3.44	3.88	1.81	5.42	4.35	3.14	2.28
<b>EL</b>	25.14	26.61	28.65	28.39	26.42	26.52	28.88	28.40
<b>ES</b>	36.75	36.03	35.53	33.78	35.19	34.01	33.71	32.47
<b>FI</b>	24.01	24.25	24.02	23.74	23.11	24.04	22.50	22.37
<b>FR</b>	35.89	35.41	32.89	32.69	35.85	35.84	34.07	33.69
<b>HR</b>	23.32	20.41	22.31	22.71	23.19	22.22	22.69	24.08
<b>HU</b>	14.01	13.04	14.65	15.25	14.52	13.16	14.87	14.35
<b>IE</b>	35.40	33.86	30.28	26.08	33.27	32.03	29.98	27.61
<b>IT</b>	37.94	37.99	36.35	36.80	33.12	33.35	32.17	32.48
<b>LT</b>	16.38	15.41	14.39	17.49	16.82	14.54	13.26	16.04
<b>LU</b>	45.12	40.00	35.85	43.06	41.68	39.51	34.24	43.31
<b>LV</b>	17.05	17.99	17.90	15.43	17.13	17.60	16.77	14.64
<b>MT</b>	25.29	25.62	30.17	44.78	26.98	27.21	31.32	42.50
<b>NL</b>	46.41	46.04	44.48	45.42	41.68	39.91	39.79	42.10
<b>PL</b>	22.55	23.44	21.02	21.83	22.34	21.88	19.54	20.53
<b>PT</b>	32.20	32.85	31.89	32.59	31.56	32.13	31.46	31.21
<b>RO</b>	27.96	35.41	58.05	25.16	25.19	34.28	55.13	27.12
<b>SE</b>	27.47	29.96	28.82	28.26	27.67	30.30	28.51	28.67
<b>SI</b>	20.50	17.44	18.99	15.76	23.94	20.09	21.24	18.92
<b>SK</b>	6.99	8.28	7.66	8.12	5.11	7.28	7.34	7.82
<b>UK</b>	38.66	40.53	39.46	34.77	36.07	39.06	37.96	34.38

Source: Eurostat, SILC

## Gender gap in pensions coverage

The gender gap in pension coverage is the gap between the proportions of men and women *who are entitled to a pension*. It measures the extent to which more men than women have access to the pension system.

	Pensioners aged 65-79				Pensioners aged 65+			
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>EU28</b>	6.2	6.1	5.9	5.7	5.4	5.3	5.1	5
<b>AT</b>	9.7	11.1	11.3	10.2	8.6	9.7	10.2	9.1
<b>BE</b>	18.2	18.8	18.5	15	15.8	17	17.3	13.2

<b>BG</b>	0.1	0.2	-1.1	-1.8	0	0.1	-0.9	-1.5
<b>CY</b>	-0.3	1.1	0.9	0.7	-0.3	0.9	0.7	0.6
<b>CZ</b>	0	0.2	0.4	-0.2	0	0.2	0.3	-0.2
<b>DE</b>	3.7	2.6	1.2	1.3	3.6	2.7	1.4	1.3
<b>DK</b>	0	0.1	-0.5	-0.5	0	0.1	-0.2	-0.5
<b>EE</b>	-0.3	-0.9	-0.5	-1.9	-0.2	-0.9	-0.6	-1.8
<b>EL</b>	15	17	18.8	16.8	12.2	14	15.6	13.7
<b>ES</b>	25.3	26.3	27.2	27.2	21.1	21.9	21.8	22.1
<b>FI</b>	-0.8	-0.1	-0.1	-0.4	-0.7	-0.1	-0.1	-0.4
<b>FR</b>	1.1	1.9	1.7	1.9	1.2	2	1.6	2
<b>HR</b>	-0.9	-2.9	-1.2	-1.5	-0.5	-2.9	-0.8	-0.3
<b>HU</b>	0.4	0.3	-0.3	0.1	0.4	0.2	-0.4	0.1
<b>IE</b>	18.9	18.8	14.5	9.3	15.5	16.2	13	9.6
<b>IT</b>	14.4	13.7	15.2	15.2	10.6	9.8	10.8	11.1
<b>LT</b>	-1	-0.7	-0.7	0	-1.1	-0.8	-0.7	0
<b>LU</b>	8.5	8	6.5	6.9	8	7.4	6.6	7.1
<b>LV</b>	-0.6	0	-0.1	-0.6	-0.5	-0.2	0	-0.7
<b>MT</b>	39.8	36.3	32.3	13.4	31.7	29.1	25.7	10.7
<b>NL</b>	0.1	0.5	0.5	0	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.1
<b>NO</b>	2.2	0.7	1.5	-0.9	1.1	0.1	0.9	-1
<b>PL</b>	1.2	0.1	-0.9	-2.4	1	0	-0.8	-1.9
<b>PT</b>	6.9	6.4	5.3	6.9	5.7	5.8	4.9	5.9
<b>RO</b>	3.9	3.8	3.4	3.6	4	3.5	3.1	3.3
<b>SE</b>	0.1	0.1	-0.7	-0.8	0.2	0	-0.5	-0.5
<b>SI</b>	-6.7	-6.6	-6	-3.4	-5.4	-6.8	-5.9	-3.7
<b>SK</b>	-0.2	-0.8	-0.4	-0.2	-0.2	-0.7	-0.3	-0.2
<b>UK</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Eurostat, SILC

## Gender equality in decision-making

	Proportion of women on boards of the largest publicly listed companies (%)				Proportion of women in the single/lower houses of the national/federal parliaments (%)				Proportion of women among senior ministers in national/federal governments (%)			
	2010	2013	2016	2017	2010	2013	2016	2017	2010	2013	2016	2017
<b>EU-28</b>	11.9 %	17.8 %	23.9 %	25.3 %	24.4 %	27.4 %	28.7 %	29.3 %	26.2 %	26.6 %	27.9 %	27.7 %
<b>BE</b>	10.5 %	16.7 %	28.6 %	30.7 %	40.0 %	40.0 %	38.7 %	38.7 %	33.3 %	38.5 %	21.4 %	21.4 %
<b>BG</b>	11.2 %	16.7 %	15.3 %	17.1 %	22.1 %	24.6 %	19.2 %	25.9 %	16.7 %	38.9 %	47.4 %	23.8 %
<b>CZ</b>	12.2 %	11.3 %	10.1 %	14.5 %	22.0 %	19.5 %	20.5 %	22.0 %	0.0 %	6.7 %	17.6 %	11.8 %
<b>DK</b>	17.7 %	22.9 %	27.1 %	30.3 %	37.6 %	38.0 %	37.4 %	37.4 %	47.4 %	45.5 %	29.4 %	40.9 %
<b>DE</b>	12.6 %	21.5 %	29.5 %	31.9 %	32.6 %	36.5 %	37.0 %	30.9 %	37.5 %	33.3 %	37.5 %	46.2 %
<b>EE</b>	7.0 %	7.3 %	8.8 %	7.4 %	22.8 %	17.8 %	25.7 %	27.7 %	7.7 %	7.7 %	13.3 %	26.7 %
<b>IE</b>	8.4 %	11.1 %	16.5 %	17.6 %	13.9 %	15.7 %	22.2 %	22.2 %	20.0 %	13.3 %	26.7 %	26.7 %
<b>EL</b>	6.2 %	8.4 %	9.1 %	11.3 %	17.0 %	21.0 %	18.3 %	18.3 %	16.7 %	5.0 %	0.0 %	17.4 %
<b>ES</b>	9.5 %	14.8 %	20.3 %	22.0 %	36.9 %	39.7 %	38.9 %	40.6 %	50.0 %	28.6 %	27.3 %	35.7 %
<b>FR</b>	12.3 %	29.7 %	41.2 %	43.4 %	19.2 %	26.2 %	26.2 %	26.9 %	34.2 %	47.4 %	47.4 %	50.0 %
<b>HR</b>	15.6 %	15.1 %	19.9 %	21.6 %	24.8 %	23.8 %	18.5 %	18.0 %	15.8 %	19.0 %	19.0 %	28.6 %
<b>IT</b>	4.5 %	15.0 %	32.3 %	34.0 %	21.1 %	31.3 %	31.0 %	31.0 %	21.7 %	28.6 %	29.4 %	27.8 %
<b>CY</b>	4.0 %	7.3 %	10.8 %	10.4 %	12.5 %	14.3 %	17.9 %	17.9 %	16.7 %	8.3 %	8.3 %	8.3 %
<b>LV</b>	23.5 %	28.6 %	28.5 %	28.8 %	19.0 %	25.0 %	16.0 %	17.0 %	21.4 %	23.1 %	21.4 %	21.4 %
<b>LT</b>	13.1 %	16.1 %	14.3 %	14.3 %	19.1 %	24.1 %	21.3 %	20.6 %	13.3 %	6.7 %	28.6 %	20.0 %
<b>LU</b>	3.5 %	11.3 %	12.9 %	12.0 %	20.0 %	23.3 %	28.3 %	28.3 %	26.7 %	26.7 %	20.0 %	20.0 %
<b>HU</b>	13.6 %	11.3 %	12.3 %	14.5 %	8.8 %	9.4 %	9.5 %	10.1 %	0.0 %	10.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
<b>MT</b>	2.4 %	2.1 %	4.5 %	8.4 %	8.7 %	14.3 %	13.0 %	14.5 %	22.2 %	13.3 %	5.9 %	13.3 %
<b>NL</b>	14.9 %	25.1 %	27.5 %	29.5 %	41.3 %	38.0 %	38.0 %	35.3 %	25.0 %	38.5 %	38.5 %	37.5 %
<b>AT</b>	8.7 %	12.6 %	18.1 %	19.2 %	27.9 %	33.3 %	30.6 %	31.1 %	42.9 %	42.9 %	21.4 %	21.4 %
<b>PL</b>	11.6 %	12.3 %	18.8 %	20.1 %	19.8 %	24.4 %	28.0 %	28.5 %	25.0 %	20.0 %	27.3 %	27.3 %
<b>PT</b>	5.4 %	8.8 %	14.3 %	16.2 %	30.4 %	31.3 %	34.3 %	35.2 %	29.4 %	20.0 %	22.2 %	16.7 %
<b>RO</b>	21.3 %	7.8 %	10.1 %	11.0 %	11.4 %	13.5 %	14.2 %	21.3 %	11.8 %	21.4 %	36.4 %	21.4 %
<b>SI</b>	9.8 %	21.6 %	24.8 %	22.6 %	15.9 %	33.3 %	35.6 %	35.6 %	26.3 %	21.4 %	47.1 %	47.1 %

SK	21.6 %	24.0 %	11.3 %	15.1 %	16.0 %	18.7 %	20.5 %	21.3 %	14.3 %	6.7 %	13.3 %	20.0 %
FI	25.9 %	29.8 %	30.1 %	32.8 %	39.5 %	42.5 %	42.0 %	42.0 %	55.0 %	47.4 %	35.7 %	35.3 %
SE	26.4 %	26.5 %	36.9 %	35.9 %	45.6 %	44.4 %	45.8 %	46.1 %	45.8 %	54.2 %	50.0 %	52.2 %
UK	13.3 %	21.0 %	27.0 %	27.2 %	22.0 %	22.6 %	29.7 %	32.0 %	16.0 %	18.2 %	34.8 %	26.1 %

Source: EIGE, gender statistics database

## Gender-based violence

Prevalence of violence against women, % of women experiencing violence, 2012

	Physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or a non-partner since the age of 15	Physical and/or sexual violence by a partner since the age of 15	Any form of psychological violence by a partner since the age of 15	Sexual harassment, all forms, since the age of 15
<b>EU28</b>	33	22	43	55
AT	20	13	38	35
BE	36	24	44	60
BG	28	23	39	24
HR	21	13	42	41
CY	22	15	39	36
CZ	32	21	47	51
DK	52	32	60	80
EE	33	20	50	53
FI	47	30	53	71
FR	44	26	47	75
DE	35	22	50	60
EL	25	19	33	43
HU	28	21	49	42
IE	26	15	31	48
IT	27	19	38	51
LV	39	32	60	47
LT	31	24	51	35
LU	38	22	49	67
MT	22	15	37	50
NL	45	25	50	73

<b>PL</b>	19	13	37	32
<b>PT</b>	24	19	36	32
<b>RO</b>	30	24	39	32
<b>SK</b>	34	23	47	49
<b>SI</b>	22	13	34	44
<b>ES</b>	22	13	33	50
<b>SE</b>	46	28	51	81
<b>UK</b>	44	29	46	68

Source: FRA gender-based violence against women survey dataset, 2012

## Annex 2:

### Baseline for the 2016-19 Strategic engagement and monitoring of indicators with latest available data

Increasing female labour market participation and the equal economic independence of women and men (indicators, latest available data and targets)

No	Indicator	Data					EU-level target
		2015 <sup>135</sup>	2016	2017	2018	2019	
1	Gender employment gap (20-64 years)	11.5 pps (2014)	11.6 pps (2015)	11.6 pps (2016)			0 pps
2	Gender employment gap (20-64) in full-time equivalents	18.1 pps (2014)	18.1 pps (2015)	18.2 pps (2016)			
3	Gender gap in part-time employment among parents	34.8 pps (2013)	33.1 pps (2015)				
4	Time spent in unpaid care work and housework per week disaggregated by sex <sup>136</sup>	Men: 9 hours Women: 24 hours (2010)	M: 9 hours W: 22 hours (2015)	:			

<sup>135</sup> Baseline as of September 2015.

<sup>136</sup> Eurofound.

5	Part-time work due to looking after children or incapacitated adults disaggregated by sex <sup>137</sup>	Men: 4.2 % Women: 27.1 % (2014)	m: 4.4 % W: 27.2 % (2015)	m: 4.6 % W: 27.4 % (2016)			
6	Number of children cared for by formal arrangements as a proportion of all children of the same age group (0-3 years and 3 years to mandatory school age)	0-3 years: 27 % 3-school age: 82 % (2013)	28 % 83 % (2014)	30.3 % 83.3 % (2015)			0-3 years: 33 % 3-school age: 90 %
7	Share of active population (50-64 years) caring for elderly or disabled relatives at least several days a week disaggregated by sex <sup>138</sup>	Men: 10 % Women: 17 % (2011)	:	m: 11 % W: 21 % (2016)			
8	Gaps in employment rates between non-EU national men and women	19.6 pps (2014)	20.8 pps (2015)	21.5 pps (2016)			
9	Gaps in employment rates between recent non-EU national men and women	22.5 pps (2014)	25.4 pps (2015)	20.9 pps (2016)			
10	Female entrepreneurs (as percentage of all entrepreneurs)	29 %	32 % (2015) <sup>139</sup>	27 %			

<sup>137</sup> Eurostat ('main reason for part-time employment' — distributions by sex and age (%) [Ifsa\_epgar]); 15-64 years old.

<sup>138</sup> Eurofound.

<sup>139</sup> Eurostat data on self-employed.

		(2014)		(2016)			
11	Share of research performing organisations that adopted gender equality plans <sup>140</sup>	36 % (2014)	:	:			

Reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting the poverty among women (indicators, latest available data and targets)

No	Indicator	Data					EU-level target
		2015 <sup>141</sup>	2016	2017	2018	2019	
1	Gender pay gap	16.6 % (2014)	16.2 % (2015)	16.2 % (2016)			
2	Gender overall earnings gap	41.2 % (2010)	39.6 % (2014)	:			
3	Gender segregation in economic sectors and occupations <sup>142</sup>	Sectors: 18.9 % Occupations: 24.4 % (2014)	18.9 % 24.3 % (2015)	19 % 24.1 % (2016)			
4	Gender pension gap <sup>143</sup>	40 %	38.3 %	37.2 %			

<sup>140</sup> 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).

<sup>141</sup> Baseline as of September 2015.

<sup>142</sup> Gender segregation in occupations/sectors is calculated as the average national share of employment for women and men applied to each occupation/sector; differences are added up to produce the total amount of gender imbalance expressed as a proportion of total employment (ISCO classification/NACE classification).

<sup>143</sup> For pensioners aged 65-79.

		(2014)	(2015)	(2016)			
5	Gender coverage gap in pensions <sup>144</sup>	6.1 % (2014)	5.9 % (2015)	5.7 % (2016)			
6	In-work poverty of women and men	Men: 9.9 % Women: 9.1 % (2014)	m: 10.1 % W: 8.7 % (2015)	m: 10 % W: 9.1 % (2016)			
7	At-risk of poverty and social exclusion in old age (65+)	Men: 14.7 % Women: 20.3 % (2014)	m: 14.6 % W: 19.6 % (2015)	m: 15 % W: 20.6 % (2016)			
8	Single parent households at risk of poverty or social exclusion	48.4 % (2014)	48.1 % (2015)	48 % (2016)			

**Promoting equality between women and men in decision-making (Indicators, latest available data and targets)**

No	Indicator	Data					EU-level target
		2015 <sup>145</sup>	2016	2017	2018	2019	

<sup>144</sup> For pensioners aged 65-79.

1	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 % (Apr 2015)	23.3 % (Apr 2016)	25.3 % (Oct 2017)			
2	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 % (Apr 2015)	Presidents: 7.1 % CEOs: 5.1 % (Apr 2016)	Presidents: 7.1 % CEOs: 5.5 % (Oct 2017)			
3	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 % (Apr 2015)	Non-executive directors: 25.4 % Senior executives: 14.9 % (Apr 2016)	Non-executive directors: 27.9 % Senior executives: 15.8 % (Oct 2017)			
4	Proportion of women heads of institutions in the higher education sector <sup>146</sup>	20 % (2014)	:	:			
5	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 %	29 % (Jul 2016) EP: 37.3 %	29.3 % (Nov 2017) EP: 36.1 %			
6	Proportion of women among the members of the national/federal governments (senior ministers) of the	27 % (May 2015)	27 % (Jul 2016)	27.7 % (Nov			

<sup>145</sup> Baseline as of September 2015.

<sup>146</sup> SHE Figures 2015.

	Member States and in the European Commission	EC: 32 %	EC: 32 %	2017)			
7	Proportion of women in senior and middle management in the European Commission's administration <sup>147</sup>	28 % and 32 % respectively  (Feb 2015)	31 % and 34 % respectively  (Nov 2016)	35 % and 38 % respectively  (Jan 2018)	EC:32 %		

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<sup>147</sup> DG HR.

### Combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims (indicators, latest available data and targets)

No.	Indicator	Data					EU-level target
		2015 <sup>148</sup>	2016	2017	2018	2019	
1	Proportion of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence	33 % (Mar 2014)	:	:			
2	Proportion of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner	22 % (Mar 2014)	:	:			
3	Proportion of women who have experienced psychological partner violence	43 % (Mar 2014)	:	:			
4	Proportion of women who have been sexually harassed	55 % (Mar 2014)	:	:			

<sup>148</sup> Baseline as of September 2015.