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2019 Report on equality between women and men in the EU

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KEY HIGHLIGHTS

The Commission's Strategic engagement for gender equality will end in 2019, as will the mandate of the current Commission. This report is the last monitoring exercise of its type before the Commission takes stock of progress made over the whole 2016-2019 period and sets priorities for the future. Even though employment rates have reached historically high levels in the EU and more women than ever are in positions of power, a lot remains to be done for equality between women and men. The labour market participation of women in the EU remains at about 11.5 p.p. lower than that of men. Women's average pay is about 16 % lower than that of men. Women rarely reach the highest management positions, with only 6.3 % of CEO positions in major publicly listed companies in the EU being held by women. Attitudes and behaviours are changing very slowly, which shows a need for the continuous commitment of all actors.

In 2018, the Commission put significant efforts in pushing forward and concluding open files on equality between women in men in the EU and its Member States. It finalised negotiations on work-life balance¹, and it strived to overcome blockage on women on boards² and to conclude the ratification of the Istanbul Convention³. It launched an evaluation on equal pay⁴, put in place measures to strengthen the role of equality bodies, reinforced the gender dimension in its international policy⁵, as well as in a number of sectoral initiatives⁶. It also adopted a Reflection Paper "Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030"⁷ in the follow-up to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and as part of the future of Europe debate, emphasising the need to prioritise ambitious additional actions to deliver on the promise of gender equality in the EU.

Attention given to women's rights in the public sphere following the #MeToo movement has been instrumental in promoting gender equality. With gender equality issues becoming more prominent in the international debates and a clearly enhanced engagement for gender equality on the political scene, equality between women and men stands a chance of getting more vigour and consideration in the coming years. The informal meeting of gender equality ministers that took place under the Austrian Presidency, the first meeting of its kind since October 2011, is an important first step in this direction.

¹ See more in Chapter 1 on the Directive on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU.

² See more in Chapter 3 on the Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures.

³ See more in Chapter 4 on the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

⁴ See more in Chapter 2 on the evaluation of Directive 2006/54/EC on equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in employment and occupation.

⁵ See more in Chapter 5.

⁶ See more in Chapter 6.

⁷ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/rp_sustainable_europe_30-01_en_web.pdf

A 'joint trio' declaration of the Estonian, Bulgarian and Austrian Presidencies called for a high-level and stand-alone EU gender equality strategy under the future new Commission and highlighted the importance of regular meetings of EU ministers for gender equality and the guiding role of the EU strategy for national strategies. This should ensure stronger action on gender equality and get gender indicators finally moving.

INTRODUCTION

The European Commission's **Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019**⁸ sets the current framework for EU action to promote one of the Union's fundamental values of equality between women and men. This report takes stock of the main initiatives launched or completed in 2018 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's indicators;
- key 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 both on short-term developments over the last 12 months and the medium-term changes since 2010, which could evolve into longer-term developments. It also addresses potential factors that have an influence on real progress in equality between women and men in the EU, as supported by recent research.

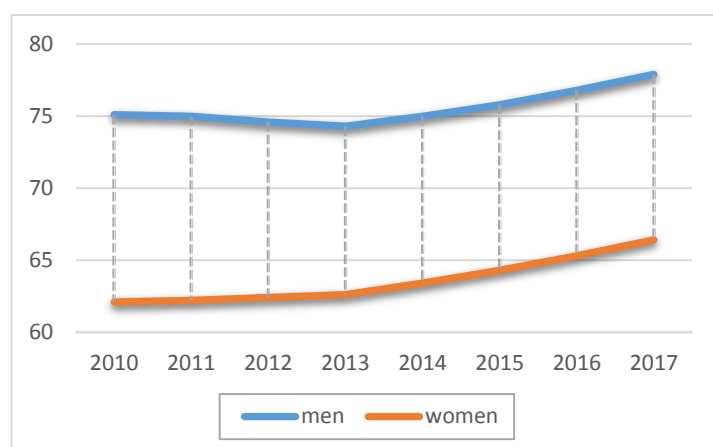
1. INCREASING FEMALE LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION AND THE EQUAL ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF WOMEN AND MEN

Employment rates in the EU continue to improve in line with continued growth and improved labour market conditions. The employment rate for people aged 20 to 64 reached the highest rate ever recorded — 72.2 % in 2017. Even if employment rate for women also reached its all time high, gender inequality persists on the labour market. With the employment rate for men at 77.9 % as compared to 66.4 % for women in 2017, the gender employment gap stood at 11.5 percentage points, the same figure for the last 3 years (Figure 1). At the same time, increasing the employment rate of women aged 30-54 and 55-64 is considered to be a solution for a number of Member States in reaching the overall 75 % employment rate target by 2020, as

⁸ 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.

it seems to have the highest potential impact on the overall national employment rate in those countries⁹.

Figure 1: EU-28 trends in employment rates, people aged 20-64, by gender [%]



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey [lfsa_ergan]

The European Pillar of Social Rights¹⁰ reinforced the importance given to gender equality in the 2018 European Semester. In 2018, eight Member States received a country-specific recommendation under the European Semester framework¹¹ linked to women's labour market participation (Austria, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Poland, and Slovakia). The recommendations covered issues such as improving the labour market participation of women, addressing the high gender pay gap, ensuring the availability, affordability and/or quality of (full-time) formal childcare services and reducing tax-benefit disincentives for second earners. The 2019 Annual Growth Survey¹² — published in November 2018 and launching the 2019 European Semester — also pointed out that, in some Member States, tax and policy incentives aimed at broadening women's participation in the labour market could lead to productivity gains. Furthermore, wider access to high-quality care services (e.g. childcare and long-term care) should ensure more opportunities for women to enter or stay in employment, and reduce the risk of poverty and social exclusion among children and vulnerable groups.

IT IS THE TIME TO MOVE ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Care intensity and type of care arrangements may vary over time, as care responsibilities are likely to be more intensive in specific phases of a person's life, for instance when they have small children or frail elderly parents. In order for both men and women to engage in the labour

⁹ Key messages to accompany the Annual Employment Performance Report and Employment Performance Monitor, Doc. 12690/18, available at:

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/register/en/content/int?lang=EN&typ=ADV>

¹⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights_en

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester_en

¹² https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2019-european-semester-annual-growth-survey_en

market in an equal way, the puzzle of care in the private life of working women and men must be resolved, using a wide set of tools, ranging from legislative and policy measures to legal action and funding. This was at the core of the **Commission's initiative on work-life balance for working parents and carers**¹³, adopted in April 2017.

As part of this initiative, the Commission proposed a Directive on work-life balance¹⁴ to modernise family leave and flexible working arrangements — so that they're better adapted to people's private time needs in different phases of life, and encourage in particular fathers to make use of family leave. A provisional agreement reached by the co-legislators on 24 January 2019 sets a European minimum standard of 10 days of paid paternity leave for fathers following the birth of their child (compensated at the sick pay level). It strengthens the existing right to 4 months of parental leave, by making at least 2 months non-transferable between parents and paid. Besides, it introduces a new European entitlement for carers by attributing at least 5 working days per worker per year, and for parents with children up to at least 8 days. Finally, the new rules strengthen the right for all carers to request flexible working arrangements. The provisional agreement on the Directive has to be formally adopted by both the European Parliament and the Council. The Directive is expected to be adopted in spring 2019. Once adopted, this Directive will repeal the current Parental Leave Directive (Directive 2010/18/EU).

At the same time, the Employment Committee and Social Protection Committee are working on developing indicators to monitor take-up of parental and paternity leave schemes in each Member State. These indicators will be a crucial tool for monitoring progress made after the Directive is adopted.

FROM A DUAL-BREADWINNER TO A DUAL-EARNER-CARER MODEL — A MATTER OF WORK HOURS

Work is the best way to empower women economically. It is therefore necessary to increase women's labour market participation. The question remains how we can reach parity in women's and men's employment through a dual-breadwinner model where both people in the couple work full-time and also have domestic and care responsibilities. Recent studies¹⁵ point to the fact that the length or volume of working hours is no longer decreasing, and in some countries this trend has been reversed. There is a substantial gender difference in excess paid hours worked: in developed countries, men are twice as likely as women to work excessive hours. Even if more women participate in the labour market, also because of part-time work possibilities, the burden of the work done in the private sphere, the unpaid work, still rests largely on women. Women's increase in labour market hours therefore is not generally accompanied by a more balanced sharing of domestic and caregiving work between women and men. Care responsibilities are still borne mostly by women. There is a gender gap in unpaid

¹³ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1311&langId=en>

¹⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52017PC0253>

¹⁵ ILO (2018), Working time and the future of work, Research Paper, available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_649907.pdf

working time in all EU Member States, even though it varies from 6 to 8 hours in the Nordic countries to over 15 hours in Italy, Croatia, Slovenia, Austria, Malta, Greece and Cyprus¹⁶.

These findings show that the traditional division of work and care responsibilities in the household is shifting but only very slowly. Not surprisingly, therefore, part-time work remains predominantly a women's way to engage in the labour market. Women's inactivity might be an induced choice for low-earning families who cannot afford to outsource some of their household or care work.

On the other hand, when it comes to working time *preferences*, men who are fathers are more likely to want to be able to reduce their working hours¹⁷: the gap between actual hours worked and preferred working hours peaks for men during the parenting phase, while it remains equal and small for women throughout their working life, including during the parenting period. These findings also suggest a potential for change: men's new aspirations could be met by offering better work-life balance arrangements to families.

Within the EU, little attention is currently paid to the policy debate on working time. However, employee organisations are raising working time as a concern more and more often. According to studies conducted by the Trade Union Congress (TUC), stress and long hours are currently workers' biggest concerns after pay. The TUC points out that evolving technology and communications should make it possible to cut the number of hours spent at work¹⁸. There has been a major breakthrough for flexible working in Europe recently: German workers (Industrial Union IG Metall) won the right to a 28-hour week in their fight for a better work-life balance.

France is a unique example when it comes to a change in working time. In France, the overall reduction of working hours and the shift towards a 35-hour working week coincides with a halt in the percentage increase of women part-time work (Figure 2).

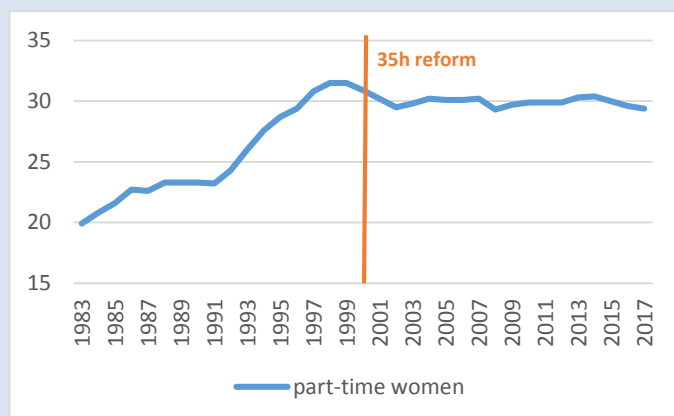
¹⁶ Eurofound (2018), Striking a balance: Reconciling work and life in the EU, available at:

<https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2018/striking-a-balance-reconciling-work-and-life-in-the-eu>

¹⁷ Eurofound (2018), Working time patterns for sustainable work.

¹⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/sep/10/four-day-working-week-for-all-is-a-realistic-goal-this-century-frances-o-grady>

Figure 2. Part-time employment as a percentage of total employment, women aged 20-64, France [%]



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey [lfsa_eppga]

The proposed Directive on work-life balance grants parents the right to temporarily reduce their working hours. However, gender stereotypes related to the division of care responsibilities influence people's choices, usually to the detriment of women and their career paths. Women opt for part-time work more often, with consequences for their life-long income, including pension. There is a high hourly wage penalty associated with working fewer hours per week. Few industries offer part-time work, which often comes with lower pay and poorer promotion prospects. The 2018 European Semester country reports recognised the gender gap in part-time work as a significant challenge for a number of countries, e.g. Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, and the United Kingdom¹⁹.

The **Netherlands** is looking into the question of women's part-time work and taking measures to encourage men to spend more time caring for their children. This is necessary, as the country scores highest in the EU as regards part-time work, with an overwhelming majority of people working part-time being women (75 %). The government will carry out an extensive interinstitutional policy analysis on part-time work, to look more deeply into the consequences of this figure, including for women's untapped potential and economic (in)dependence²⁰.

TOWARDS MORE FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES — A MATTER OF WORK ORGANISATION

EU labour markets are still far from offering employees the flexibility necessary to fit work into their lives. A recent Eurobarometer²¹ survey showed that more than a fifth of Europeans consider that it is not easy for them to make use of flexible work arrangements, and nearly three in ten say that employees are usually discouraged from doing so. 27 % agree with the statement that managers and supervisors discourage employees from making use of flexible

¹⁹ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-european-semester-country-reports_en

²⁰ For more information:

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/begrotingen/2017/09/19/miljoenennota-2018> (Dutch).

²¹ Flash Eurobarometer 470 (2018), Work-life balance, available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/flash/surveyky/2185>.

work arrangements and a similar proportion fears it is negatively perceived by colleagues (25 %). Interestingly, most respondents (74 %) who are not currently in work think they would have a better chance of entering paid work if the use of flexible working arrangements was very common in the job market, while almost half of those working part-time (45 %) think they would move from part-time to full-time work if more flexibility was available.

Flexible working arrangements can play an important role in promoting gender equality in employment. As shown by the Eurofound analysis of work-life balance²², the ability to take time off at short notice to deal with private issues, without being afraid of losing one's job, is seen as the most significant flexible arrangement. Other research, such as in Chung and van der Lippe²³, highlights that workers, especially women, can use flexible working as a tool to help them adapt their work to family demands, and therefore stay in employment and work longer than they would have otherwise (not move into part-time jobs). However, this positive effect can only be achieved if gender stereotypes with regard to men's and women's roles and responsibilities are overcome. If not, flexible working could reaffirm gender roles in the labour market and in the household (see box below).

A recurring finding is that men often use flexible working arrangements to improve their work performance and to increase their work intensity /working hours, leading to financial and other rewards. Such a use of flexible working arrangements does not support their work-life balance but rather increases the work-family conflict to the detriment of the family. Women, on the other hand, often use, or are expected to use, flexible working arrangements to take better care of their family obligations. This also increases their work-family conflict but mainly to the detriment of work.²⁴

It is therefore important to have a gender-sensitive approach to flexible workplace practices, including through better protection against dismissal and unfavourable treatment of workers who opt for family leave, and family-friendly working time arrangements. Funding for projects that tackle stereotypes with regard to care is available under the **rights equality and citizenship programme**. Providing flexible working arrangements has been recognised as a challenge in the 2018 European Semester country reports for Italy, Luxembourg, and Slovakia²⁵.

TOWARDS A DUAL-EARNER-CARER MODEL — A MATTER OF FAMILY LEAVE

Research²⁶ shows that even short periods of paternity and parental leave taken by fathers may have long-lasting effects on fathers' involvement in childcare and housework. This in turn has a positive effect on women labour supply. In general, the gender gap in paid and unpaid work is

²² Eurofound (forthcoming), Work-life balance and reconciliation challenges for men and women in the European Union.

²³ Chung H. and van de Lippe T. (2018), Flexible working, work-life balance and gender equality, Social Indicators, 1-17.

²⁴ Chung H. and van de Lippe T. (2018), op. cit.

²⁵ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-european-semester-country-reports_en.

²⁶ Tamm M. (2018), Fathers' Parental Leave-Taking, Childcare Involvement and Mothers' Labour Market Participation, IZA DP No 11873, available at: <https://www.iza.org/publications/dp/11873/fathers-parental-leave-taking-childcare-involvement-and-mothers-labor-market-participation>.

smaller in EU countries with more generous paternity and parental leave opportunities for fathers.

At the same time, one in three Europeans (31 %) considers²⁷ that it is not easy for employees in their workplace to take family leave. Over a quarter (27 %) feel that managers and supervisors discourage employees from taking family leave. When asked about the main factors that would encourage fathers to take parental leave, the most frequent answer is financial compensation (41 %), followed by having the choice of part-time work or taking such leave in a flexible way, e.g. in blocks (35 %).

The Commission organised a **mutual learning seminar**²⁸ to discuss Member States' approaches to fostering fathers' involvement in care, in particular by encouraging fathers to take up paternity and parental leave. The seminar was hosted by the German government in October 2018. The importance of non-transferability of leave and a sufficient level of financial compensation were discussed with participants from 17 countries (see box below).

In 2000, **Iceland** introduced non-transferable and paid parental leave of 3 months for the mother, 3 months for the father and 3 months to be shared. This led to a high uptake of the leave by men. Fathers' uptake jumped to 82.4 % in 2001, with 14.5 % of men using more than 3 months. There have been some small variations over the years, but, in general, fathers' uptake stays at around 80 %, with around 15-20 % of fathers using more than 3 months in recent years.

Germany provides a financial allowance for 12 months of leave after the birth of a child. This allowance can be extended by another 2 months if both parents participate in childcare, which works as an incentive for the second parent to also take some part of the leave. Parents can distribute the 14 months between them. The compensation runs from 65 % to 100 % of the last income. Following the reform of parental leave in Germany, from 2006 to 2015 the proportion of fathers on parental allowance increased from 3.5 % to 36 % and the employment rate of mothers with children aged 2 to 3 years increased from 42 % to 58 %.

The design of parental leave has been recognised as an important challenge in the 2018 European Semester country reports for Czechia, Estonia, Ireland, Cyprus, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Austria, Slovakia, Finland, and the UK²⁹.

²⁷ Flash Eurobarometer 470 (2018), Work-life balance, available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/flash/surveyky/2185>.

²⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/mlp-gender-equality-seminar-long-term-paternal-involvement-family-work_en.

²⁹ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-european-semester-country-reports_en.

DISMISSAL PROTECTION — A MATTER OF CONTINUITY OF EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Workers who opt for family leave should be protected against dismissal and unfavourable treatment in the workplace. Not having to fear losing one's job or to be treated negatively when adapting one's work to private life contributes to the success of work life balance policies.

In 2018, the Commission carried out work on mapping bottlenecks and problems as regards the protection of pregnant workers and workers who have taken family leave. The Legal Network carried out a study³⁰ on '**Family leave: enforcement of the protection against dismissal and unfavourable treatment**', mapping the legal situation in 31 countries (the 28 EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway). The study lists some interesting Member State initiatives that strengthen protection from dismissal and unfavourable treatment. (see box below)

In the **United Kingdom**, the **Equality and Human Rights Commission** offers an individual casework/peer-support service to women experiencing pregnancy and maternity discrimination at work. The preliminary findings are that this combination 'significantly increases the likelihood of women exercising their rights'³¹.

In **Finland**, the **Equality Ombudsman** decided that there is a presumption of discrimination if a fixed-term contract of a pregnant worker is not renewed. The Ombudsman thus shifted the burden of proof towards the employer, in line with EU rules on the matter³².

Despite a good legal framework, problems with discrimination and unfavourable treatment remain a reality for EU workers. On 17-18 November, EQUINET (the European Network of Equality Bodies) and the European Commission jointly organised **a capacity-building seminar for equality bodies and labour inspectorates** on discrimination and dismissal protection for workers with care responsibilities. This seminar aimed to raise awareness of the risks of dismissal and discrimination against pregnant women and workers who have taken family leave. It also aimed to facilitate an exchange of good practices across Member States, especially to strengthen cooperation between equality bodies and labour inspectorates. The Danish Institute of Human Rights presented the results of a study on discrimination against parents in the workplace, showing that 45 % of women and 23 % of men who took parental leave experienced

³⁰ Available at: <https://www.equalitylaw.eu/publications>.

³¹ European Commission (2018), Family leave: enforcement of the protection against dismissal and unfavourable treatment, p.127. See pilot study from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (2018) p.4, available at: <http://senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s74322/ELGC5-11-18%20Paper%202%20-%20Maternity%20Action.pdf>.

³² European Commission (2018), Family leave: enforcement of the protection against dismissal and unfavourable treatment p. 107. See Annual Report 2013 by the Finnish Ombudsman for Equality p. 23, available at: https://www.tasa-arvo.fi/documents/10789/75076/STM_Tasa-arvo_vuosik_2013_ENG_web.pdf/a95a1606-dc1a-4b0e-a76b-ad80fd1b1cba. This is in accordance with the jurisprudence of the ECJ, see C-438/99 Maria-Luisa Jimenez Melgar v Ayuntamiento de los Barrios, ECLI:EU:C:2001:509.

discrimination after taking the leave. This study also showed that 12 % of women and 21 % of men did not take as much parental leave as they would have liked. Some of the highlighted gaps include the difficulty for victims to prove the link between pregnancy and discrimination, fear of negative treatment and a general lack of awareness on all sides.

In 2018, the European Court of Justice has had the opportunity to further interpret and clarify the legal protection against unfavourable treatment of breastfeeding workers. In **Case C-41/17**, González Castro, the Court held that the protection ensured under Directive 92/85 on pregnant workers applies to a female security agent who does shift work, when some of the shifts are worked at night and thus involve a risk for the agent to breastfeed her baby. The Court also held that the rules on sharing the burden of proof set out in Directive 2006/54 on sex equality in employment also apply to this breastfeeding worker's situation. As a result, if the worker can provide factual evidence to suggest that the risk assessment of her work did not include a specific assessment of her individual situation, the respondent is responsible for proving that the risk assessment made by the employer did actually include such a specific assessment and that, accordingly, the principle of non-discrimination was not infringed.³³

Awareness and information play a role, and proactive campaigns and actions can ensure that the law has real effects in people's lives. Some good practice examples of collaboration between equality bodies and labour inspectorates show that the two can work together well to tackle dismissal protection more efficiently. (see box below)

The **Slovak Centre for Human Rights** developed a 'blacklist' of companies involved in cases related to unfair dismissals and discrimination. Blacklisted companies can lose commercial advantages.

In **Greece**, the **Ombudsman** has the power to examine witnesses and request testimonies from employers and employees, while the labour inspectorate has the power to sanction employers. The institutes are required to notify each other when a complaint arrives.

In **Belgium**, the **Institute for Equality of Women and Men** and the **labour inspectorate** have a cooperation agreement which is currently being further developed to include strategies and useful methods for dealing with cases and investigations related to discrimination in the work place.

In **Portugal**, the **Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment** has established cooperation with the labour inspectorate, including on the organisation of joint seminars and events.

CARE INFRASTRUCTURE — A MATTER OF AFFORDABLE AND HIGH-QUALITY SERVICES

Good care infrastructure considerably facilitates women's engagement in paid work. The 2017 Commission initiative on work-life balance underlines its importance for both children and other dependents.

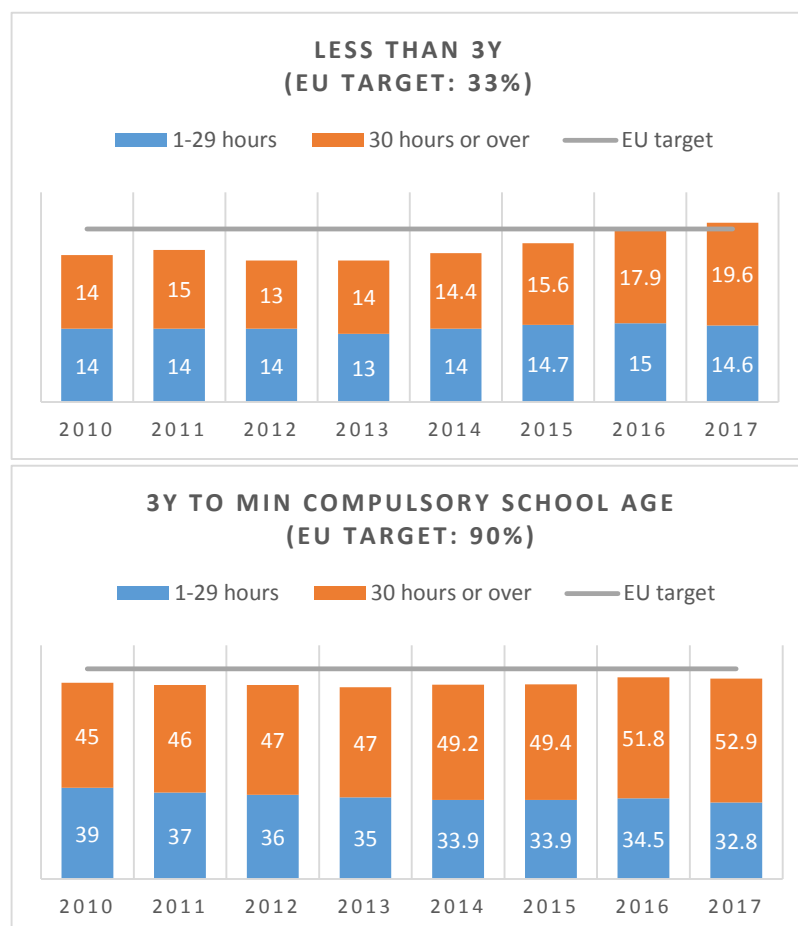
In May 2018, the Commission adopted a **report³⁴ on the Barcelona objectives³⁵**. The report shows that there has been further improvement since 2013 on the share of children under

³³ <http://curia.europa.eu/juris/liste.jsf?num=C-41/17>.

³⁴ European Commission (2018), Barcelona objectives, Justice and Consumers, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/bcn_objectives-report2018_web_en.pdf.

mandatory school age being in childcare, but that some countries continue to seriously lag behind. On average in the EU-28, the target of 33 % has been reached for children under the age of three and the target of 90 % has nearly been reached for children from 3 until mandatory-school-going age (Figure 3).

Figure 3: EU-28 trends in childcare provision — children in formal childcare or education by age group and duration, [%]



Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC survey [ilc_caindformal]

Notwithstanding overall progress, there are considerable differences across countries, in particular with regard to the youngest children: while 70 % of children under the age of 3 participate in childcare in Denmark, this figure is less than 15 % in Slovakia, Czechia, Poland, Greece and Bulgaria. While some countries, such as Malta, Romania, Estonia, Italy, Germany and Ireland, have made a considerable effort to increase the availability of childcare, some of the poor performing countries with participation rates lower than 10 %, such as Greece, Poland, Czechia and Slovakia, hardly improved at all. Consequently, the European Semester process focuses on encouraging particularly these latter countries to progress further in this area. The

³⁵ In 2002, the heads of state and government agreed on two targets for children under mandatory school age being in childcare (these are the Barcelona objectives): 33 % of children under age of 3, and 90 % of children between 3 years old and mandatory school age. See: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/71025.pdf.

2018 country reports state that childcare should be available, affordable and of high-quality (this is addressed to: Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, Finland, and the United Kingdom)³⁶. EU co-funding instruments are available to help Member States meet these objectives. The European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development can be used to address the lack of available places or affordability of services, to promote the participation of children from particular socioeconomic groups or in certain areas of the country, e.g. rural areas, and to tackle the lack of quality services and parents' trust in the services available.

On the occasion of the European Week of Regions and Cities in October 2018, the Commission organised a **workshop on 'Affordable and high-quality early childhood education and care throughout regions in the EU: adapting local needs'**. Three good practice examples were presented. The Agricultural Fund for Rural Development supports the development of basic services in rural areas, for instance in **Hungary**, and promotes social inclusion through childcare. In the region of **Lombardy** (Italy), the 'nidi gratis' project, co-financed by the European Social Fund, offers families from deprived backgrounds free access to childcare for children up to the age of 3. In the city of **Nantes** (France), a 'Quality Charter' on childcare for children up to the age of 3, developed with the involvement of parents and educational/nursing staff, aims to promote values such as transparency, tolerance, equality, and confidentiality as a basis for childcare in all institutions.

In December 2018, a workshop organised by umbrella NGO **COFACE Families Europe** showcased further examples of free or very affordable high-quality childcare for all children, such as in the city of **Madrid** and in **Slovenia**. COFACE published a paper on 'a new EU deal for childcare'³⁷ in which it calls for a 2030 Agenda for childcare based on a mix of policy, targets, funding and monitoring.

In **Latvia**, the project '**Vouchers for the provision of flexible child-minders service to workers with nonstandard work schedules**'³⁸, funded in the framework of **EaSI PROGRESS 2014-2020** and implemented as an experimental pilot intervention in 3 municipalities, in partnership with the Institute for Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility, introduced a new subsidized flexible form of child-care service – flexible "open hours" child-minders. The model of subsidization includes public vouchers for subsidized child-minders and private co-financing from enterprises with nonstandard work schedules. Major beneficiaries from this initiative are families where both parents are working nonstandard hours as well as single parents, mostly women, and parents rearing children with a chronic illness or disability.

Childcare can play a role not only in men's and women's participation on the labour market, but also in children's educational development from an early age³⁹. It also plays a role in social inclusion by helping to integrate children from disadvantaged backgrounds⁴⁰. In May 2018, the

³⁶ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-european-semester-country-reports_en

³⁷ Available at: http://www.coface-eu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/COFACE-paper_Childcare.pdf

³⁸ <http://www.darbsungimene.lv/en/for-employers>.

³⁹ Proposal for a Council recommendation on ECEC including a voluntary quality framework for education systems: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/GA/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A271%3AFIN> and <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52018SC0173>

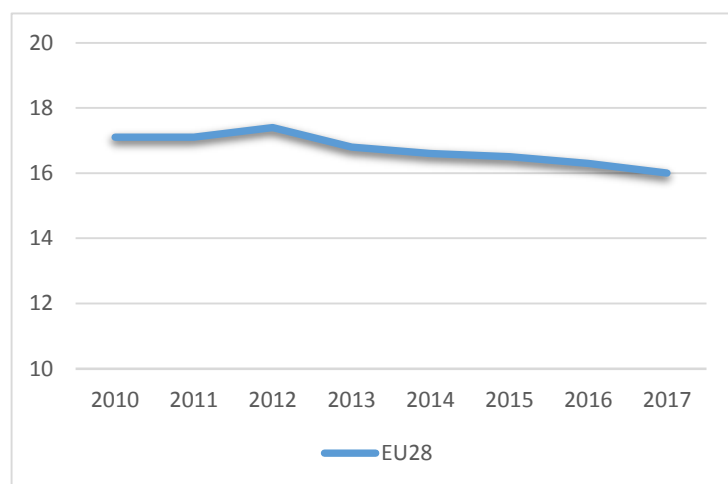
⁴⁰ Recommendation on breaking the cycle: social inclusion of children of disadvantaged background: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1060>.

Commission adopted a **proposal for a Council Recommendation⁴¹ on affordable and high-quality early childhood education and care systems** (ECEC), accompanied by a quality framework for ECEC systems. This quality framework is a voluntary tool to improve early childhood education and care systems in the Member States. An expert working group with representatives from all Member States is currently reflecting on how to advance on the professionalization of staff and social inclusion. ECEC staff can participate now in Erasmus+ projects in other Member States.

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

The gender pay gap in the EU perseveres. Since the launch of monitoring under the Strategic engagement, the gender pay gap has remained practically unchanged in the EU, decreasing from the baseline figure of 16.6 % in 2014 to 16 % in 2017. It means a progressive change of just 0.6 percentage points over the last 3 years (Figure 4).

Figure 4: EU-28 trends in the gender pay gap, in unadjusted form, [%]



Source: Eurostat, Structure of Earnings Survey [earn_gr_gpgr2]

To understand the reasons behind gender-related pay differences, it is necessary to look beyond the simple measure of average hourly earnings. Education levels of working men and women explain relatively little of the gender pay gap. The lack of women in high paying, male-dominated, professions is considered to be one of the major causes of the gender pay gap. Around 30 % of the total gender pay gap is explained by the overrepresentation of women in relatively low-paying sectors, such as care and education. This has been well illustrated by calculations made by Boll and Langemann⁴². Moreover, in some countries (Portugal, Spain,

⁴¹ Proposal for a Council recommendation on ECEC including a voluntary quality framework for education systems: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/GA/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A271%3AFIN> and <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52018SC0173>

⁴² Boll Ch., Langemann A., (2018), Gender pay gap in EU countries, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/aid_development_cooperation_fundamental_rights/report_gender-pay-gap-eu-countries_october2018_en_0.pdf.

Cyprus, Malta, Ireland, Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Denmark) employed women are statistically more frequently represented in lower-paid occupations, even if on average they have a higher level of education than employed men.⁴³

ARE CAREER CHOICES SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED?

Women are increasingly pursuing jobs that have traditionally been considered male jobs, for example in law, accountancy and pharmacy. However, there are still jobs where the proportion of male employees is very high (over 80 %), such as science, technology and engineering⁴⁴. Some indicate that a possible factor preventing women from entering some male dominated professions might be related to the content of these jobs: women may prefer ‘people’ and ‘brains’ content, like medicine and law, over ‘making things’ like engineering – but get a wage penalty for that choice⁴⁵.

Tastes and preferences certainly have a role to play in choosing one’s occupation, but they may be socially constructed⁴⁶. The efforts of the European Commission to fight stereotypes and engage more women in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and ICT (information and communication technologies) are described in Chapter 6 of this report.

In addition, some of women’s career choices may be the result not only of enduring gender-based stereotypes, but also of imbalances in unpaid care work and family responsibilities. They may also be affected by the lack of adequate public provision of childcare services or inadequate company policies on flexible working time arrangements⁴⁷. Some studies⁴⁸ indeed suggest giving support to sectors to develop strategies to decrease the wage penalty associated with more time flexibility, rather than only striving to even the distribution of men and women over sectors and occupations.

WOMEN’S WORK IS OFTEN UNDERVALUED

The undervaluing of women’s work can partly explain the persistence of the gender pay gap over time. Research has consistently found that occupations with higher proportions of women

⁴³ See also: Eurostat (2018), *A decomposition of the unadjusted gender pay gap using Structure of Earnings Survey data*, statistical working paper, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-statistical-working-papers/product/-/asset_publisher/DuuxBAj0uSCB/content/KS-TC-18-003.

⁴⁴ Lekfuangfu W.N., Lordan G. (2018), *Cross Cohort Evidence on Gendered Sorting Patterns in the UK: The Importance of Societal Movements versus Childhood Variables*, IZA DP No 11872, available at: <http://ftp.iza.org/dp11872.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Lordan G., Pischke J.-S. (2016), *Does Rosie Like Riveting? Male and Female Occupational Choices*, NBER Working Paper No 22495, available at: <https://www.nber.org/papers/w22495>.

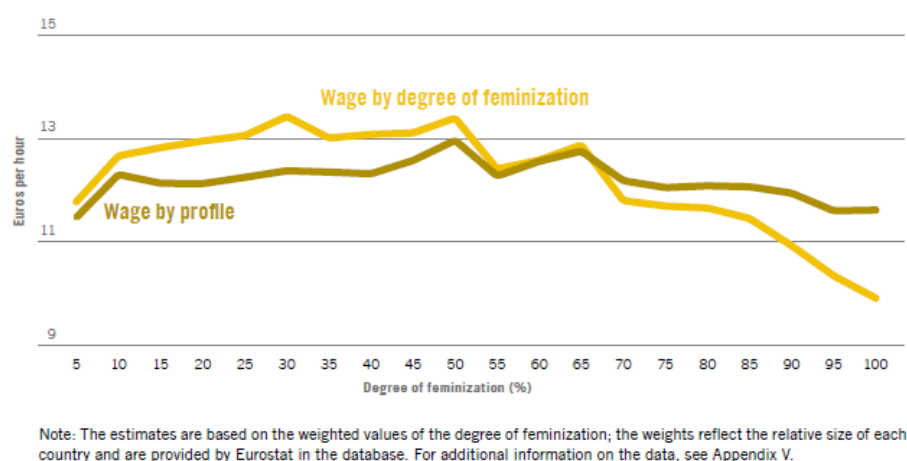
⁴⁶ IZA DP No 11872, available at: <http://ftp.iza.org/dp11872.pdf>.

⁴⁷ ILO (2018).

⁴⁸ Boll Ch., Langemann A., (2018), *Gender pay gap in EU countries*, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/aid_development_cooperation_fundamental_rights/report_gender-pay-gap-eu-countries_october2018_en_0.pdf.

pay lower wages⁴⁹. For instance, a recent International Labour Organisation (ILO) report⁵⁰ shows that wages in the EU tend to be lower in companies that employ more women than in companies that have a more equal mix of male and female employees and are otherwise similar in terms of number of employees, economic sector, ownership and type of collective pay agreement (Figure 5). Using data from the European Structure of Earnings Survey, the ILO estimates that female-dominated companies (where over 95 % of workers are women) in the EU pay around EUR 9.90 per hour, in contrast to the EUR 11.60 per hour paid by companies with a similar workplace profile but more equal mix of male and female workers. This means a gender pay gap of 14.7 %.

Figure 5: Hourly wage by degree of feminization and by wage profile in Europe, 2014



Source: ILO (2018), Global Wage Report 2018/2019, page 77.

Working in undervalued sectors is not the only explanation for the gender pay gap. The same report shows that in many countries women are more highly educated than men working within the same occupational categories, but nonetheless earn lower wages. This illustrates the fact that the closing of the gender gap in education has not done enough to reduce the gender pay gap, because men's and women's education are rewarded differently.

Women tend to earn less per hour than men do for the same profession, regardless of whether it is a highly skilled white-collar profession or a lower-skilled job. Eurostat data⁵¹ indicate that the largest gender gap in hourly earnings exists for managerial positions (23 %). Even for the professions with the lowest salaries, such as clerical support workers (office clerks, secretaries etc.) and service and sales workers, the pay difference between women and men is still 8 % in the EU.

⁴⁹ Murphy E., Oesch D. (2015), The Feminisation of Occupations and Change in Wages: A Panel Analysis of Britain, Germany, and Switzerland, available at: https://serval.unil.ch/resource/serval:BIB_394986C05943.P001/REF.

⁵⁰ ILO (2018), Global Wage Report 2018/2019, available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-dgreports/-dcomm/-publ/documents/publication/wcms_650553.pdf.

⁵¹ Eurostat (2017), The life of women and men in Europe — a statistical portrait, available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-digital-publications/-/KS-02-17-602>.

Some⁵² indicate a persistence of social devaluation of all employed women that goes beyond gender typing of the occupation the women are working in. In other words, gender pay gaps are likely to persist in Western societies because both men and women consider that somewhat lower earnings for female employees than for otherwise similar male employees are fair⁵³. Wage disparities between male and female occupations are, to some extent, rooted in unequal gender norms that accord higher value to male work effort, and thus imply labour market discrimination against women⁵⁴.

What emerges from the available research is that women are employed in jobs or occupations which are undervalued, but also that their work is generally undervalued simply because they are women. To address this, the Commission **funds projects combating stereotypes and segregation in the labour market**⁵⁵. These projects promote good practices related to gender roles and aim to overcome gender-based stereotypes in education, training and in the workplace. Furthermore, funding is granted to grass-root level projects led by education and training communities themselves and to Member States to help them reduce the gender pay gap through national measures.

WOMEN FACE OBSTACLES TO CAREER PROGRESSION AND REACHING MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

The higher the average hourly wages are, the lower the proportion of women becomes; in some cases it declines sharply. For instance, women make up 50 % of the bottom one per cent of wage earners in Belgium, but only about 26 % of the top one per cent. In France, these figures are 40 % versus 23 %, in Poland 46 % versus 26 %, in Finland 61 % versus 24 % and in the UK 51 % versus 17 %⁵⁶.

Women may be less likely to make it to the top positions. McKinsey research⁵⁷ established that women's absence at the top is likely to be determined by their general career progression. The chances of promotion and advancing on the company ladder differ between industries. Some industries, such as technology, are particularly poor at hiring women in the first place. In others,

⁵² Hausmann A.-Ch., Kleinert C., Leuze K. (2015), Devaluation of Female Occupations or Devaluation of Women within Occupations? A Longitudinal Analysis on the Relationship of Occupational Gender Segregation and Wage Trends in West Germany, available at:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11577-015-0304-y>.

⁵³ Auspurg K., Hinz T., Sauer C. (2017), Why Should Women Get Less? Evidence on the Gender Pay Gap from Multifactorial Survey Experiments, available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416683393>.

⁵⁴ Murphy E., Oesch D. (2015), The Feminisation of Occupations and Change in Wages: A Panel Analysis of Britain, Germany, and Switzerland, available at:

https://serval.unil.ch/resource/serval:BIB_394986C05943.P001/REF.

⁵⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/files/2015_action_grants/2015_rgen_ag_role/award_decision.pdf.
See also H2020 project HYPATIA on supporting gender inclusive education, with focus on STEM <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/198205/factsheet/en>.

⁵⁶ ILO (2018), Global Wage Report 2018/2019.

⁵⁷ McKinsey (2018), Still looking for room at the top: Ten years of research on women in the workplace, available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/still-looking-for-room-at-the-top-ten-years-of-research-on-women-in-the-workplace>.

women tend to get stuck at middle- or senior management level. Women are less likely to be hired into manager-level jobs and they are far less likely to be promoted into them — McKinsey data show that for every 100 men promoted into management, 79 women are promoted to such positions⁵⁸. In the EU-28, managers are on average twice more likely to be male.

SHOULD THE LEGISLATION ON EQUAL PAY BE REVIEWED?

Equal pay was among the first topics covered by the EU gender equality legislation. Considering the merely marginal evolution in the gender pay gap figures, the Commission marked again 3 November 2018 as the **European Equal Pay Day**⁵⁹, drawing media attention to the persistence of the gender pay gap in the EU.

The **Equal Pay Day** takes place in most European countries (e.g. Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Estonia, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom). This awareness-raising measure receives quite a lot of media attention in some countries, for example in Sweden and the United Kingdom. In other countries, such as Portugal, it is a trigger for various campaigns relating to equal pay.

A recent expert study⁶⁰ published by the Commission states that a mere focus on pay gaps would be short-sighted. Strategies that foster female employment produce a double dividend as they also boost women's wages, since any improvements in the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities help women to better use their talents. The implementation of the work life balance Directive will play a role in that respect.

Ineffective implementation of the equal pay principle remains one of the biggest challenges in tackling pay discrimination. Dealing with this issue could contribute to reducing the gender pay gap. A report⁶¹ by the Legal Network revealed shortcomings related to the enforcement of the equal pay principle in practice. The first of them — and the most striking — is the lack of legal actions that challenge pay discrimination. In some countries, no judicial or administrative complaints on equal pay have been lodged at all. In others, there are only a few cases. Landmark cases which would help clarify the legal situation on pay discrimination are scarce. This lack of cases reflects the possible limits of individual enforcement of equal pay rules, as complaint processes tend to be complicated, lengthy and costly. The recent **Commission**

⁵⁸ McKinsey (2018) Women in the workplace, available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/women-in-the-workplace-2018>.

⁵⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/equal-pay/gender-pay-gap-situation-eu_en#europeanequalpayday.

⁶⁰ Boll Ch., Lagemann A. (2018), Gender pay gap in EU countries, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/aid_development_cooperation_fundamental_rights/report_gender-pay-gap-eu-countries_october2018_en_0.pdf.

⁶¹ National Cases and Good Practices on Equal Pay, *Forthcoming*.

Recommendation⁶² on standards for equality bodies, adopted in June 2018, should pave the way for improving the way in which equality bodies assist victims of discrimination.

A lack of wage transparency does not help shedding light about the reasons for pay inequalities, while unconscious bias in pay still seems to persist on EU labour markets. As already discussed in the previous parts of this report, studies point to the lower financial returns for education of women within the same occupations in comparison to men, the effects on wages of the increasing proportion of women in certain occupations and workplaces, and the effect of the parenthood status of women and men on their respective wages⁶³.

The gender-centred commentary and the discourse on gender rights following the #MeToo movement have indirectly fuelled demands for pay transparency.

In the private sector in **France**, a new law adopted on 5 September 2018 (L.1142-8 of the Labour Code) obliges companies to annually publish their result regarding the Gender Equality Index⁶⁴, and the actions they have implemented to tackle the issues that have been identified. If the overall grade obtained by the company is below 75/100, corrective measures and, when appropriate, an annual or multiannual programming of financial catch-up measures, must be considered. In the absence of measures, a financial penalty may be applied. Results have to be published by 1 March 2019 for sectors and enterprises with more than 250 employees, and by 1 March 2020 for companies of 50-250 employees. Companies have until March 2022 (2023 for companies with less than 250 employees) to comply with the equal pay requirement: at the end of these three years, if the company still achieves results below the level set (75), it will be subject to a financial penalty.

In **Ireland**, the General Scheme of the Gender Pay Gap Information Bill was approved on 26 June 2018. The Minister will be required to issue regulations requiring employers to publish information on the pay of their employees to demonstrate whether there are differences in the pay of male and female employees and, if so, the scale of such differences. The Minister must have regard to the cost of complying with such regulations. These regulations will not apply to employers with fewer than 50 employees. For the first two years, the legislation applies to employers with over 250 employees and the upper limit will be lowered to 150 employees within 3 years. The new law requires that the mean and median rates of pay be published annually for each group of employees. The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission may lodge an application to the court in case of alleged breaches of the equal pay legislation. In addition, the enforcement powers of the Workplace Relations Commission will be broadened in cases of alleged breaches of the legislation.

The Parliament of **Portugal** approved a new law to promote pay transparency. Law n. 60/2018 of 21 August 2018 comprises four types of mechanisms that affect the principle of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value: (i) the state will annually release statistical information on wage differences by

⁶² Commission Recommendation (EU) 2018/951 of 22 June 2018 on standards for equality bodies, C/2018/3850, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1550246119622&uri=CELEX%3A32018H0951>.

⁶³ ILO (2018), Global Wage Report 2018/2019.

⁶⁴ Including a score for each of 5 Index' indicators: 1. No wage gap; 2. Same chance for salary increase; 3. Same chance for promotion; 4. Same chance when returning from maternity leave; 5. At least 4 women within the 10 highest earners.

company and economic sector; (ii) companies (with more than 250 employees) are obliged to ensure a transparent remuneration policy based on objective and non-discriminatory criteria (pay audit); (iii) in cases where differences are identified, companies shall submit to the Authority for Labour Conditions an evaluation plan of these differences, to be implemented over the course of one year (pay report); (iv) any worker is entitled to apply to the Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment (CITE) to issue an opinion on the existence of pay discrimination on grounds of sex (right to wage information). Companies that fail to comply are subject to serious administrative offences and may be deprived of the right to take part in public tenders for two years.

Following the adoption of the 2017 gender pay gap action plan, the Commission launched an **evaluation⁶⁵ of the Directive on equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in employment and occupation (Directive 2006/54/EC)**. The evaluation will be based on discussions with stakeholders, in particular social partners, and Member States, as well as on other input. The Commission launched an online open public consultation in January 2019⁶⁶. It will support the Commission's assessment of the need for potential targeted amendments to Directive 2006/54/EC, building on the 2014 Commission Recommendation on pay transparency.

In **Iceland**, since January 2018, companies and government agencies with more than 25 employees are required to obtain government certification from an independent entity that certifies that their pay policies are gender-equal. Those failing to demonstrate pay equality face fines. This policy measure aims to close Iceland's gender pay gap by 2022.

LIFE-LONG CUMULATION OF PAY INEQUALITIES CONVERTS INTO A PENSION GAP AND WOMEN'S POVERTY IN OLD AGE

The gender pay gap in the EU persists at around 16 %. What is more, women are still overwhelmingly the second earners in the family, far less economically independent than men. In total, 78 % of second earners in the EU are women. It is therefore not surprising that, if on top of the gender pay gap, working hours and total working life are taken into account, a real difference in the economic independence between men and women can be observed. The gender gap in overall earnings reaches almost 40 % in the EU. This translates further into the pension gap 35.7 % in 2017 (Figure 6) and leads to a higher risk of poverty at old age for women. More than 20 % of older women are at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU, compared to 15 % of older men (Figure 7). In some countries, more than 10 % of older women cannot afford the necessary health care. Current pension systems only mildly compensate for women's non-linear careers. Older women remain the main beneficiaries of minimum income schemes⁶⁷. The gender pension gap has been recognised as an important challenge in the 2018 European

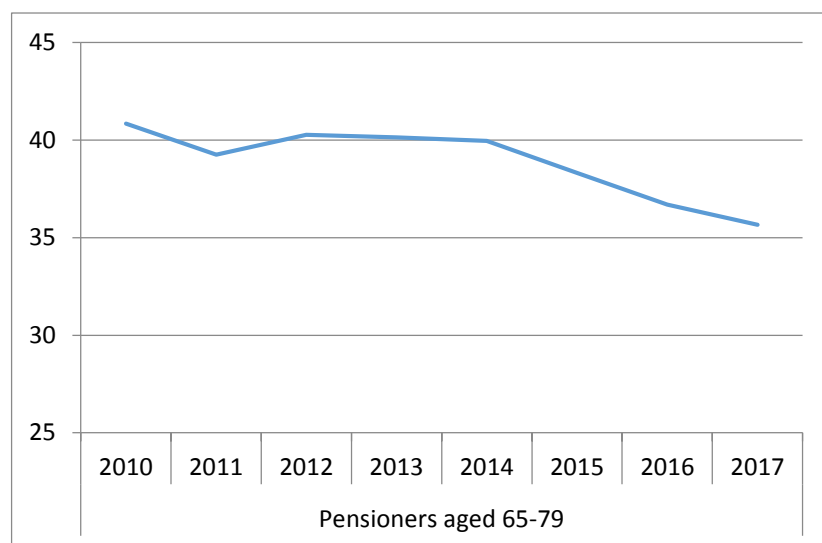
⁶⁵ The roadmap is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2018-3415794_en.

⁶⁶ The consultation on EU legislation on equal pay is available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2018-3415794/public-consultation_en and is open until 5 April.

⁶⁷ European Commission (2018), The 2018 Pension Adequacy Report: Current and future income adequacy in old age in the EU, available at: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/f0e89c3f-7821-11e8-ac6a-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-83413151>.

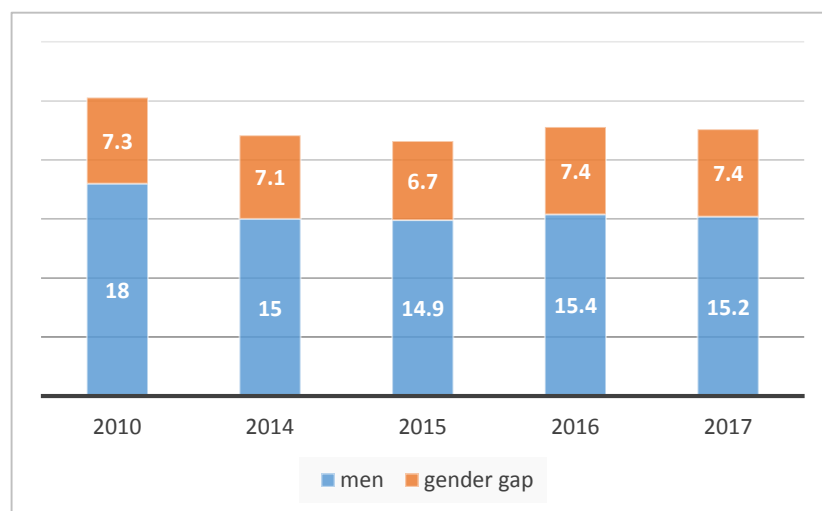
Semester country reports for Germany, Estonia, Croatia, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, and Romania⁶⁸.

Figure 6: Gender pension gap, EU-28 (%)



Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC

Figure 7: At risk of poverty and social exclusion, people aged 75+, EU28 (%)



Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC [ilc_peps01]

3. PROMOTING EQUALITY IN DECISION MAKING

WOMEN IN ECONOMIC DECISION MAKING

Despite some encouraging progress in recent years, the under-representation of women on corporate boards and in management positions remains an important challenge for EU Member States. This under-representation means that the potential of highly skilled and needed human

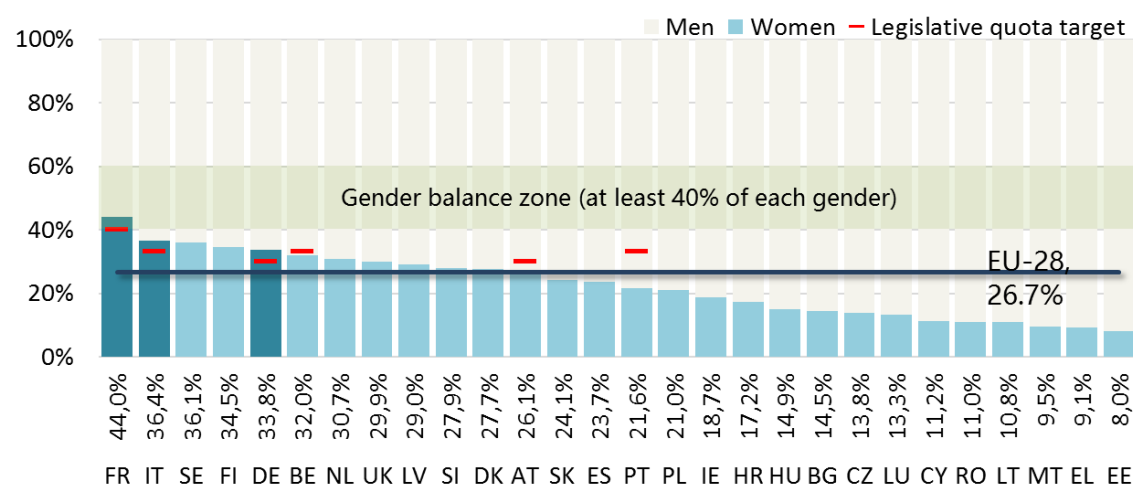
⁶⁸ Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2018-european-semester-country-reports_en

resources remains untapped, as evidenced by the discrepancy between the high number of female graduates and their number in top-level positions. Women still face numerous obstacles on their way to reaching senior positions.

EUROPEAN BOARDROOMS CONTINUE TO BE MALE-DOMINATED AND PROGRESS IN WOMEN'S ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP HAS STALLED SINCE 2015

The proportion of women on the boards of the largest publicly listed companies⁶⁹ registered in the EU Member States reached 26.7 % in October 2018. With 44 % of its board members being women, France is the only EU Member State with at least 40 % of each gender at board level. In Italy, Sweden, Finland, and Germany, women account for at least one third of board members. Despite positive and encouraging improvements in cases where governments have introduced quotas for the under-represented sex (women) or taken other targeted measures to make further progress on the matter, European boardrooms continue to be predominantly filled by men. In just under half of Member States (12), men still outnumber women by at least 4 to 1 (i.e. < 20 % women). In Malta, Greece and Estonia, women account for less than 10 % of board members (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Proportion of women and men on the boards of the largest publicly listed companies in the EU, October 2018



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database.

Legislative gender quota targets: FR (40 %), BE, IT, PT (33 %), DE, AT (30 %).

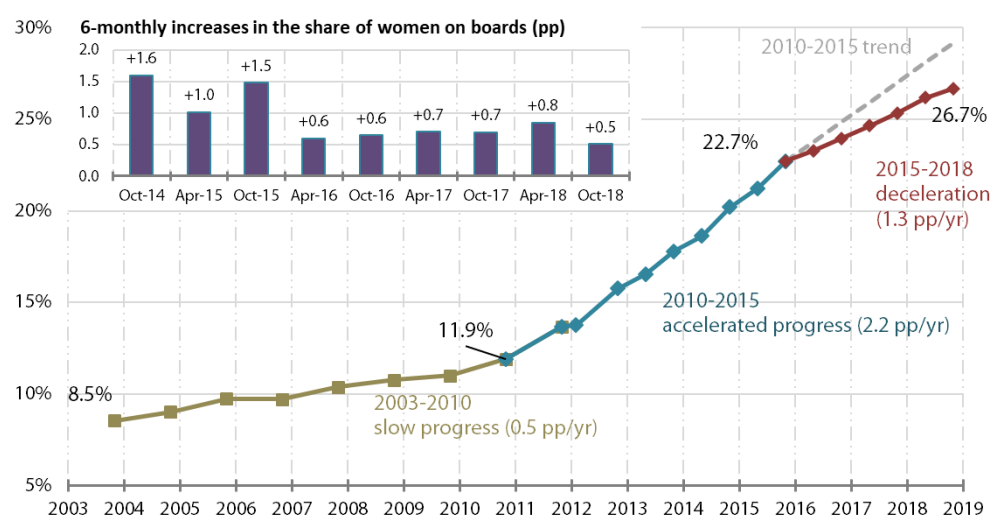
The latest EU-28 data for women on boards (26.7 % in October 2018) show an increase of just 0.5 pp. from data collected in April 2018 (26.2 %), a result that reiterates the slowdown in progress since 2015. Between October 2010⁷⁰ and October 2015, the proportion of women on

⁶⁹ **Publicly listed** means that the company's shares are traded on the stock exchange. The largest companies in each country are taken to be the members (max 50) of the primary blue-chip index maintained by the national stock exchange, which covers the largest companies by market capitalisation and/or volume of market trades. Only companies registered in the country concerned (according to the ISIN code) are taken into account.

⁷⁰ In 2010, the European Commission announced that it was considering using 'targeted initiatives to get more women into top jobs in decision making'.

company boards increased at an average rate of 2.2 pp. per year, but since then the annual rate of change has slipped to just 1.3 pp. (Figure 9). The slowdown reflects the fact that the key drivers of progress over the earlier period have run out or are close to target and highlights the limited progress being made elsewhere. The 2012 Commission proposal⁷¹ triggered broader debates about the benefits of gender diversity on corporate boards, including about the adoption of regulatory measures in some Member States. Since the proposal was tabled, the presence of women in company boardrooms improved in some countries — and the debate on the proposal at the EU level may have contributed to this development.

Figure 9: Proportion of women on the boards of the largest publicly listed companies in the EU, 2003-October 2018 (%)



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database.

BINDING QUOTAS DRIVE MORE RAPID PROGRESS THAN SOFT MEASURES

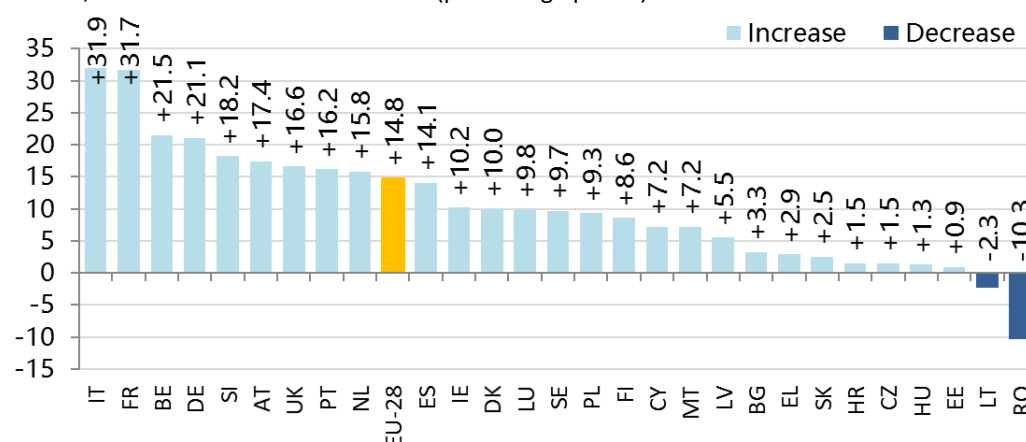
Since 2010, the representation of women on corporate boards has improved in many EU Member States but the extent of progress varies considerably⁷². Italy and France continue to stand out, with increases of more than 30 pp. Belgium and Germany are the only other EU countries to have seen the level of female representation increase by more than 20 pp. There

⁷¹ Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures; available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52012PC0614>.

⁷² The companies included in the samples for each country may vary over time as the samples 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. In October 2018, there were four Member States in which the sample covered fewer than 15 companies: Czechia (11), Luxembourg (10), Romania (13) and Slovakia (10).

has been no significant progress (less than 2 pp.) in Croatia, Czechia, Hungary⁷³ and Estonia and even some decline in Romania and Lithuania (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Change in the proportion of women on the boards of the largest publicly listed companies in the EU, October 2010 — October 2018 (percentage points)



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database.

The results achieved in the EU countries that impose female quotas on corporate boards are instructive. Improvements in the representation of women on the boards of listed companies have been most significant in countries that have imposed binding quotas and/or had other types of concrete measures in place. France, Italy, Belgium, and Germany have been applying binding quotas. A different approach is preferred in 13 other Member States (Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom)⁷⁴ including legislative measures that are restricted to state-owned companies or applied without sanctions in Greece, Slovenia, and Spain. Still others have preferred to encourage companies to self-regulate in order to redress the gender balance in boardrooms. In the remaining 11 Member States (Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Romania, and Slovakia), governments have not taken substantial action to make progress in this area.

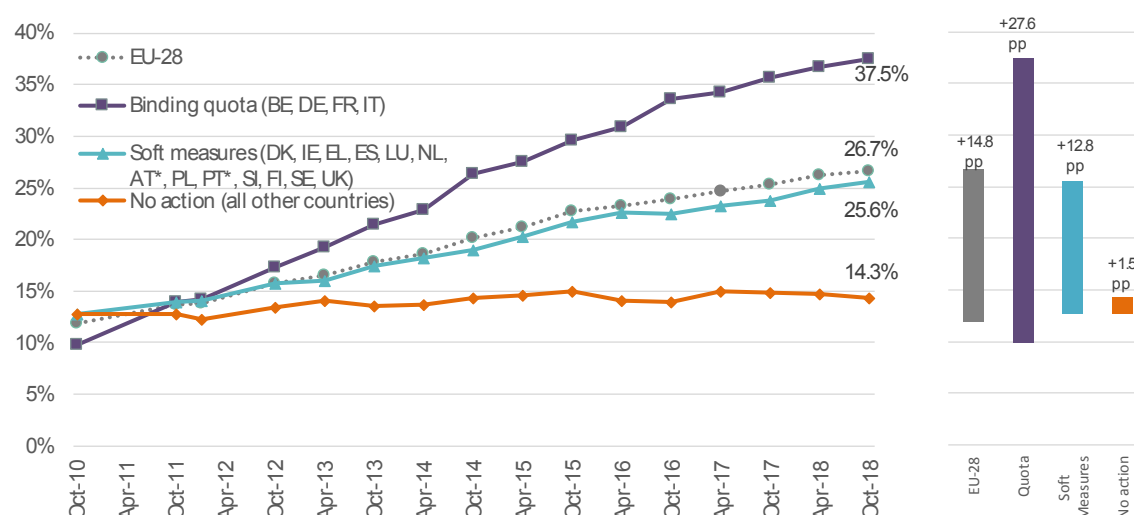
The difference between binding and soft measures is striking (Figure11). The four countries with binding quotas currently have 37.5 % of women on boards (aggregate of all companies covered by sample in those countries) and have seen this proportion rise by 27.6 pp. since 2010 at an average rate of 3.5 pp. per year. The countries in which governments have taken soft measures have a representation of 25.6 % women, an increase of 12.8 pp. at 1.6 pp. per year. In stark contrast, Member States without significant measures have just 14.3 % women on boards and the level of female representation has risen just 1.5 pp. over the period at an average of just 0.2

⁷³ The small change in Hungary is partly linked to a methodological review which resulted in a change in the bodies covered by the data collection.

⁷⁴ Austria and Portugal have not been included in the binding quotas group despite the fact that both countries have been enforcing legislative quotas since January 2018. The quotas are fairly recent and will take some time to show any impact. These countries are instead included in the soft measures group.

pp. per year. The differences show a clear stagnation in the number of women on boards correlating with low levels of action. The current situation and the slowdown in progress are strong messages to policy makers on the need for further action in countries where little has been done to promote a balanced gender representation on company boards.

Figure 11: Changes in the proportion of women on boards 2010-2018, by type of action taken



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database.

* The legislative quotas applied to listed companies in Austria and Portugal were adopted in 2017 and only enforced in January 2018. These countries are included in the soft measures group (see Footnote 61).

In **Spain**, under the *More Women, Better Companies* initiative, the Institute of Women and for Equal Opportunities (IWEO) continues to promote focused development programmes and projects for women, such as the *Promociona Project*, carried out in collaboration with the main Spanish employer organisation (CEOE), and *Talentia 360. Female Directives*, a programme for pre-executive and executive women that includes high-level leadership training, coaching and networking opportunities with a multidisciplinary gender perspective. The LinkedIn site '*Mujeres, Talento y Liderazgo*', (*Women, Talent and Leadership*) created a network to raise awareness of the equal participation of women and men in decision making and publishes a list of highly qualified board-ready women who have participated in professional development and leadership programmes carried out by the IWEO.

In **Poland**, the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy focuses on the dissemination (including through the www.rownoscwbiznesie.mpips.gov.pl website) of publications prepared as part of the 'Equal in business' project funded by the EU (2013-2015), including a report on the situation of women in business decision-making bodies and a practical guide for companies, containing a package of tips and tools to facilitate the implementation of equality activities. The project follow-up is addressed to medium-sized enterprises. It includes training, business consulting, free tools for internal company audits, document templates (e.g. regulations or procedures), educational infographics, educational videos, and an equality training programme for business with a set of materials. One of the projects' activities is the 'Equality in business' competition, which aims to promote companies that put measures in place to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the workplace.

In **Malta**, the *online Directory of Professional Women* gives women visibility for appointment to boards and committees as well as to higher positions⁷⁵. Women register their profiles, including their credentials, experience and achievements. In September 2018, 260 women were registered in the Directory.

In **Croatia**, the Croatian Employers' Association is managing the electronic **database of women in business** listing, since 2016, women who are qualified to assume management positions in companies. The database is being updated every year through an open call to new candidates. It is open to the public through the association website, listing over 100 members so far.

In the **United Kingdom**, the fund manager Legal & General Investment Management (LGIM) has recently launched a gender-diversity-oriented investment fund (the 'GIRL' fund), which focuses on UK-listed firms. The LGIM scores and ranks companies according to four gender diversity measures: women on the board of directors, women executives, women in management, and women in the workforce. The gender pay gap may be added as an additional measure in the future⁷⁶. The fund will invest more in companies with higher levels of gender diversity. Companies are expected to score at least 30 % in all four areas in order to be eligible for inclusion in the fund.

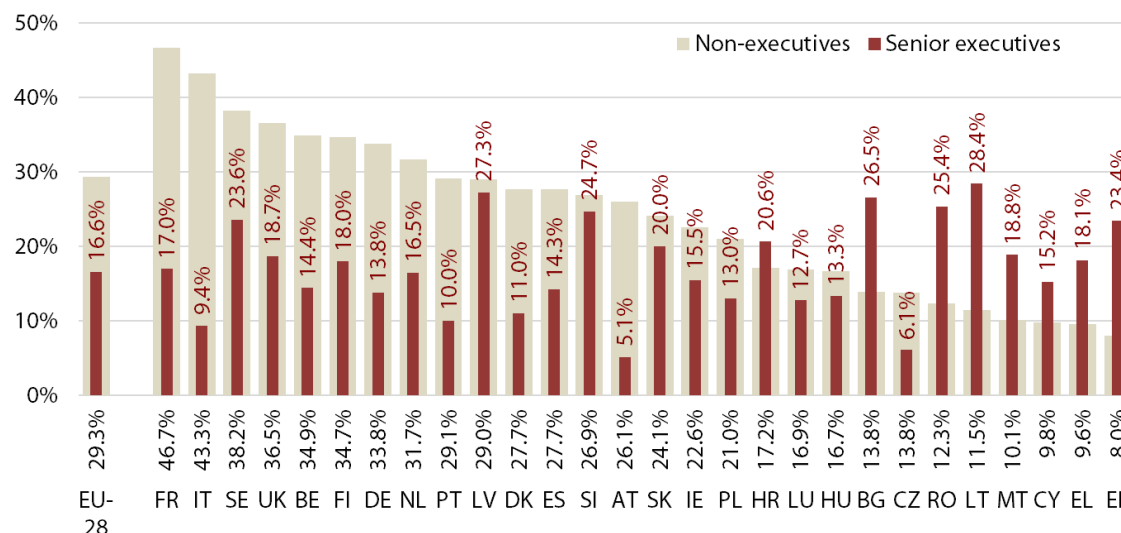
CRITICAL POSITIONS WITHIN BOARDS ARE STILL RARELY FILLED BY WOMEN

While legislation can have a significant impact on women's representation *on* company boards, it seems so far to have no impact on the positions that women hold *within* the boards. In October 2018, women held 29.3 % of non-executive positions in the top two decision-making bodies of large companies, but just 16.6 % of executive positions. This disparity (fewer women executives than non-executives) exists in the majority of Member States (20 of 28), and the exceptions mostly relate to countries with particularly low levels of female representation among non-executives (Figure 12).

⁷⁵ <https://ncpe.gov.mt/en/Pages/Directory/Register.aspx>.

⁷⁶ The gender pay gap is another potential measure that may be added to the list.
<http://www.lgim.com/uk/en/press/2018/legal---general-investment-management-launches-first-gender-diversity-fund-focused-on-uk-companies.html>

Figure 12: Proportion of women among executive and non-executive members of the two highest decision-making bodies of large companies in the EU-28, October 2018



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database

Very few women reach the highest positions in large companies: fewer than 1 in 10 companies has a female chair or CEO. Even if there has been some progress — the proportions of women occupying board chair and CEO positions have both more than doubled since October 2012 — the numbers are still rather marginal⁷⁷. In October 2018, women accounted for 6.7 % of board chairs (up from 3.3 % in October 2012, but down by 0.9 pp. compared to 7.5 % in April 2018) and 6.5 % of CEOs (up from 2.5 %) (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Proportion of women among board chairs and CEOs in largest publicly listed companies in the EU, 2003-2018



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Statistics Database

⁷⁷ Data on CEOs were not collected before October 2012.

WOMEN IN POLITICAL DECISION MAKING

The composition of political assemblies and executives at all territorial levels still too often fails to reflect the gender diversity of the population they represent, with women significantly under-represented in many Member States. In democracy, gender equality in political office matters. Women's participation in parliaments is crucial to improve the representative nature, accountability and quality of democracies, and has a profound impact on the way politics is practiced in terms of policy-making agendas and political content⁷⁸. More women in power also leads to a higher quality of regional government⁷⁹. States and political parties in the EU have introduced a wide array of instruments, including legislative and voluntary quotas and other measures, to promote equal opportunities for women and men in politics. However, the general lack of long-term strategies and the lack of push for change from political parties and governments in many countries undoubtedly explain the slow progress on women's representation.

QUOTAS BRING MORE WOMEN INTO NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS BUT PROGRESS REMAINS SLOW AND CANNOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED

In November 2018, only 6 of the 28 national parliaments across the EU⁸⁰ were led by a woman (21.4 %). On average, parliament members in the EU comprised 69.8 % men and 30.2 % women. Although the proportion of women is at an all-time high, still seven out of ten members of national parliaments in the EU are men.

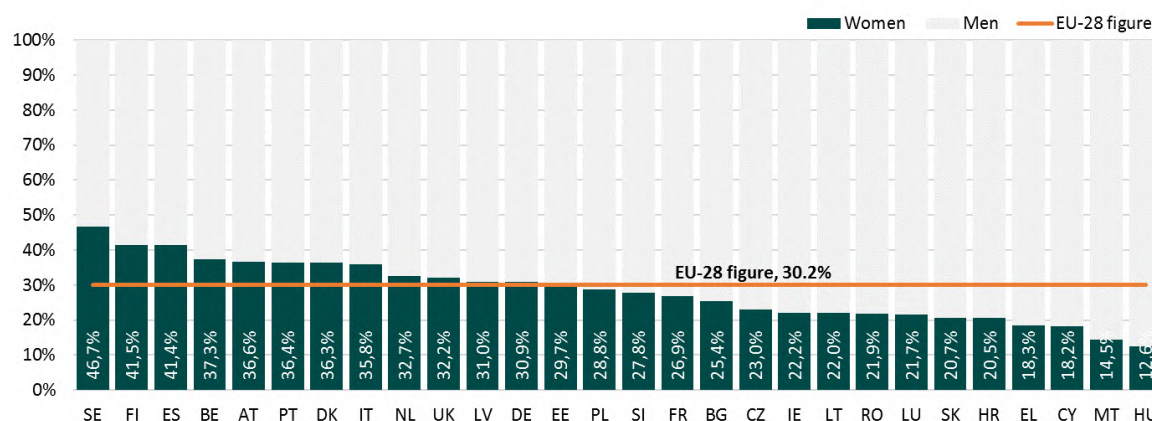
At the same time, there is considerable variation between countries. Parliaments in Sweden, Finland and Spain have at least 40 % of each gender, while women account for less than 1 in 5 members (<20 %) in the parliaments of Greece, Cyprus, Malta and Hungary (Figure 14: 4).

⁷⁸ <https://www.osce.org/odihr/224206?download=true>.

⁷⁹ Results from the Commission's Joint Research Centre Technical Report "A Monitoring Tool for Regional Gender Equality: Measuring female disadvantage and achievement in EU regions", JRC115814, *forthcoming*.

⁸⁰ Bulgaria, Denmark, Spain, Latvia, the Netherlands, and Finland.

Figure 14: Proportion of women and men in single/lower houses of parliament, November 2018



Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database

The proportion of female members of the single/lower houses of EU national parliaments increased by 8.1 percentage points between 2004 and 2018 at an average rate of just 0.58 percentage point per year.

A number of countries have launched initiatives to improve the gender balance in their parliaments. Legislative candidate quotas are currently in place in nine Member States: Belgium, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Poland, Portugal, and Slovenia. With the exception of Croatia, the representation of women has improved when comparing the situation before and after application of the quota⁸¹. However, only Portugal and Spain have seen the quota target translated into an equivalent (or almost) proportion of elected members. In all other cases, the quota are still to be reached: the proportion of women among elected members is still 8 pp. below the candidate quota level in Poland and Ireland, 11 pp. in Belgium and Slovenia, 13 pp. in Greece, and over 20 pp. in Croatia and France.

The application of quota to political candidates is insufficient to achieve gender parity. Further actions are necessary to translate candidate quota into election outcomes⁸², for example ensuring that sanctions⁸³ for non-compliance with quota are strong enough and enforceable, that women are placed fairly in lists (e.g. using the zipper system⁸⁴), and that they are represented equally in winnable seats⁸⁵. Moreover, short-term success is not always sustained and sustainability cannot be taken for granted. In Slovenia, where there is a requirement to have at least 35 % of each gender among candidates, the proportion of female Members of

⁸¹ Refers to women and men in decision making data from the first quarterly update following the election date.

⁸² <https://www.cesifo-group.de/DocDL/dice-report-2015-4-linder-december.pdf>.

⁸³ Sanctions can include financial penalty or lists not accepted when they do not comply.

⁸⁴ That is where female and male candidates would appear alternately on party lists.

⁸⁵ <https://rm.coe.int/analytical-report-data-2016-/1680751a3e>.

Parliament jumped from 16.7 % to 35.6 % following the elections in 2011. This level fell dramatically to 27.8 % in 2018, however⁸⁶.

In **Czechia**, the Office of the Government published a ‘Manual for Political Parties’, which includes 15 recommendations on how to support women within political parties, and an ‘Analysis of Gender Stereotypes in Political Campaigns’, which puts a spotlight on the stereotypical presentation of women and men in political campaigns. It also organised an international conference focusing on breaking the glass ceiling to discuss the equal representation of men and women in decision making. The **Czech** Social Democratic Party (CSSD) has recently approved a 40 % quota for the representation of the under-represented sex on candidate lists for regional elections and elections to parliament. The Green Party applies a zipper rule for women and men on the ballot list.

THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EUROPEAN POLITICAL PARTIES’ TO SHOWCASE THEIR COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY

In November 2018, women accounted for 36.4 % of the 749 members of the European Parliament (MEPs), slightly down from the peak of 37.3 % that was reached at the end of 2016. Finland stands out clearly with 76.9 % of its MEPs being women. The representatives of seven Member States include at least 40 % of each gender (Ireland, Spain, France, Croatia, Latvia, Malta, and Sweden). In all other countries, the majority of members (more than 60 %) are men. Most notably, men outnumber women by more than 4 to 1 (i.e. >80 % men) among MEPs from Bulgaria, Estonia, Cyprus, Lithuania, and Hungary (Figure 15). The European Parliament has had only two female presidents⁸⁷.

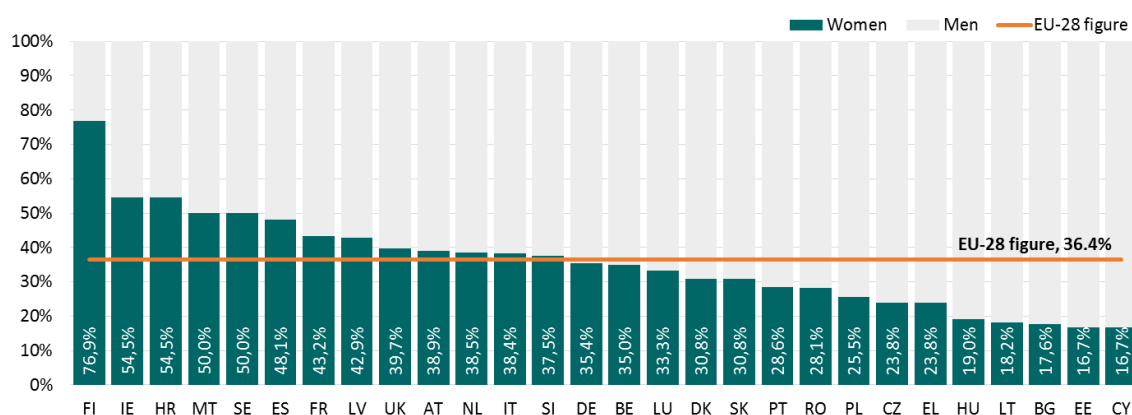
This situation means that the gender balance in the European Parliament has hardly changed since 2009 (when 35 % of MEPs were women)⁸⁸. The upcoming 2019 elections hence represent a key opportunity to increase the proportion of female members and take the institution a step closer to parity. The chances of this happening depend to a large extent on whether Member States, in particular political parties, take effective steps to ensure a good gender balance among the candidates for election.

⁸⁶ Latest figure from November 2018.

⁸⁷ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/the-president/en/former-ep-presidents>

⁸⁸ Women in the European Parliament: International Women’s Day, 8 March 2018, European Parliament (2018)
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/publications/2018/0001/P8_PUB%282018%290001_EN.pdf

Figure 15: Proportion of female members of the European Parliament, November 2018



Source: European Parliament

A Eurobarometer survey published in November 2018 on ‘Democracy and elections’ shows that the factors most likely to increase a respondent’s desire to vote in the next European Parliament elections are: being better informed about the EU and its impact on his/her daily life (43 %), having more young people stand as candidates (31 %), and having more female candidates (20 %) ⁸⁹.

To improve transparency and democratic accountability, **Regulation 2018/673**⁹⁰ amending the Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations encourages (recital 6 of the preamble) the inclusion of information on gender balance in relation to each of the member parties of each European political party.

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES ARE MOSTLY LED BY MEN

Political parties are seen as the gatekeepers of the equal representation of women and men on the political scene since they set party policy and select the candidates for election. In 2018, fewer than one in five (18.4 %) leaders of major political parties⁹¹ across the EU were women and only one in three deputy leaders (33.8 %)⁹² was female. At the EU level, the proportion of women in leadership positions within major political parties has fluctuated since 2011, with little sign of substantial progress. In Czechia, Hungary, Malta and Slovakia none of the major parties has had a woman leader since data were first collected in 2011.

⁸⁹

<http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/special/surveyky/2198>

⁹⁰ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/673 of the EP and of the Council of 3 May 2018 amending Regulation No 1141/2014 on the statute and funding of European political parties and European political foundations.

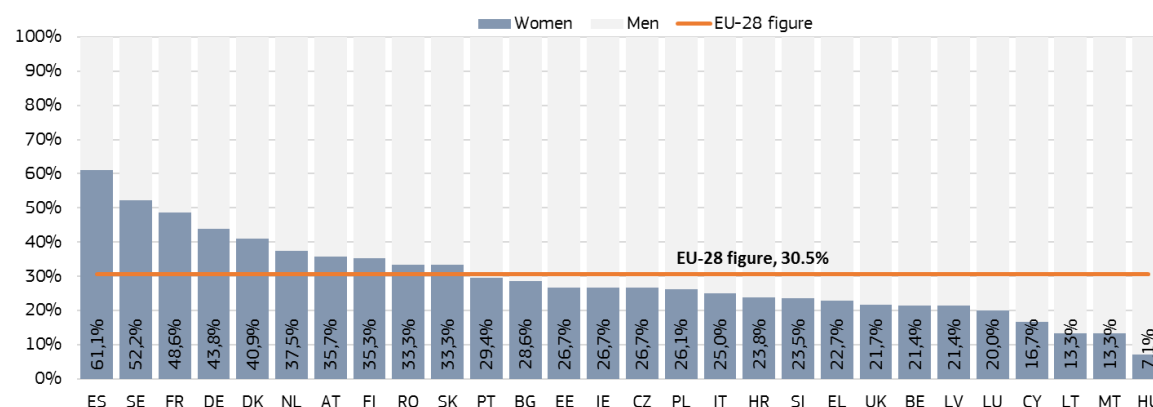
⁹¹ Those with at least 5 % of seats in parliament.

⁹² Data collection in May-June 2018 identified 152 parties across the 28 EU Member States.

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS CONTINUES TO INCREASE BUT WOMEN STILL FACE GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN TERMS OF CERTAIN PORTFOLIOS

In November 2018, 25 out of 28 EU Member States had a male prime minister, the exceptions being Germany, Romania and the UK. Moreover, men accounted for the large majority (69.5 %) of senior ministers⁹³ with women holding only 30.5 % of these positions. Governments were gender-balanced (at least 40 % of each gender) in Sweden, France, Germany, and Denmark. In Spain, there was a clear majority of women in government (61.1 %). However, in all other countries, most senior ministers (more than 60 %) are men. Most strikingly, women accounted for just 7.1 % of cabinet members in Hungary (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Proportion of women and men in governments (senior minister positions), November 2018



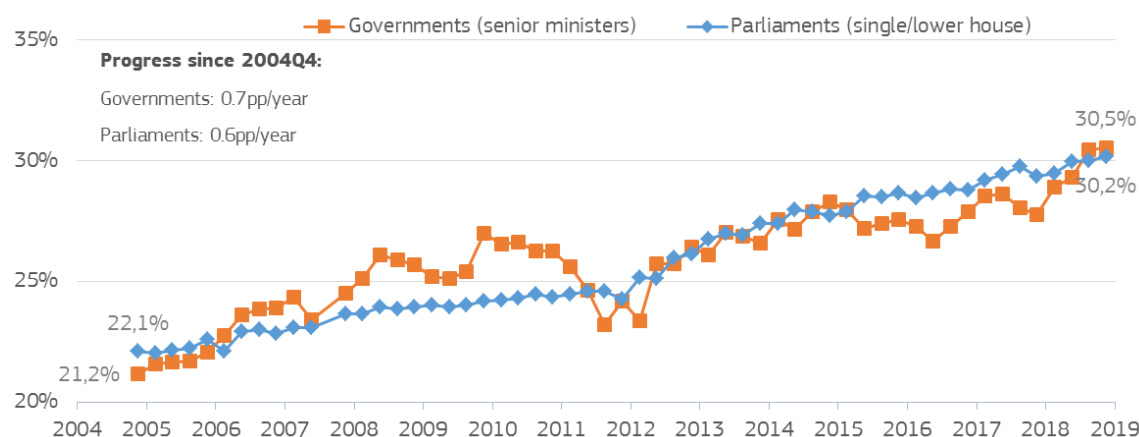
Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database

Data for Latvia refers to 2018Q3, the new cabinet was not yet appointed during the 2018Q4 update.

In the EU, the gender balance in national governments (senior minister positions) has been improving progressively since 2004 but with considerable variation along the way (which is to be expected given the more frequent changes and smaller numbers concerned compared to national parliaments) (Figure 17). The proportion of women among senior ministers increased from 21.2 % at the end of 2004 to 30.5 % at an average rate of 0.7 pp. per year.

⁹³ Ministers with a seat in the cabinet.

Figure 17: Proportion of women in governments (senior minister positions), EU-28, December 2004–November 2018

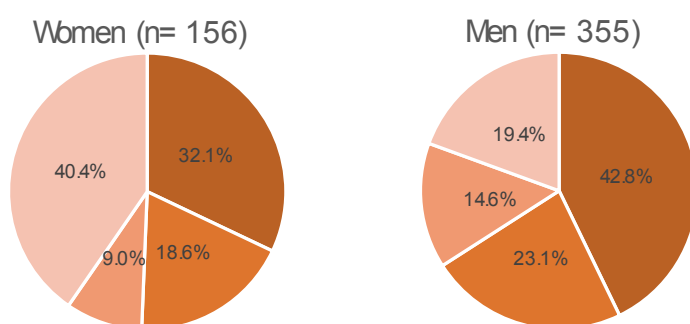


Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database

The current level of 30.5 % female senior ministers is the highest since 2004. Over the last year, there have been significant increases in the proportion of women among senior ministers following the formation of new governments or cabinet reshuffles in some Member States. At the same time, the proportion of women in government declined substantially in other countries.

Although the continued under-representation of women in government is a fundamental concern, there is also evidence suggesting some gender segregation in allocation of portfolios at cabinet level. In November 2018, two thirds (65.9 %) of all male senior ministers held a portfolio with basic or economic functions compared to half (50.6 %) of female ministers (Figure 18). Moreover, 40.4 % of all female ministers had a socio-cultural portfolio compared to just 19.4 % of their male colleagues.

Figure 18: Senior ministers by gender and type of portfolio, EU-28, November 2018



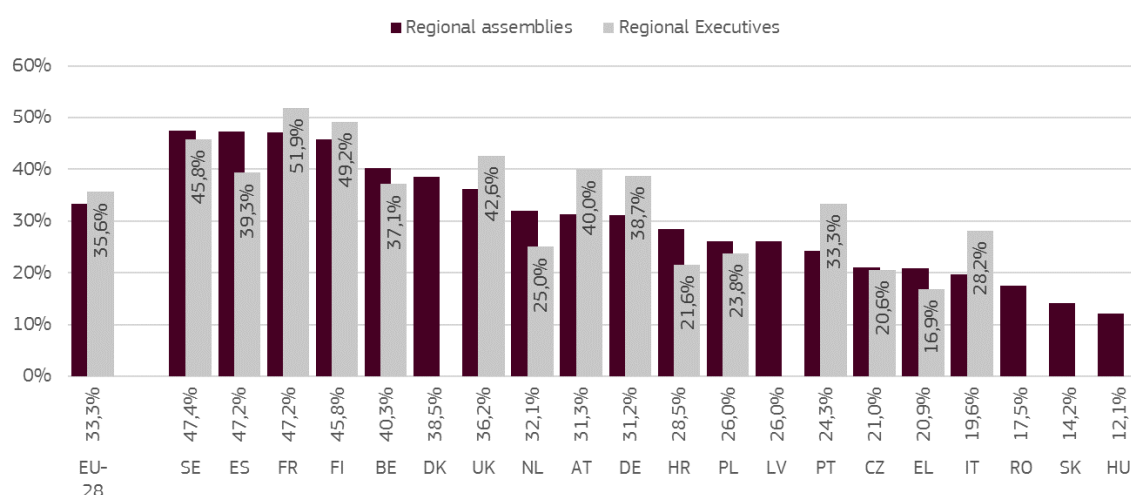
Basic functions	Foreign and internal affairs, defence, justice
Economy	Finance, trade, industry, agriculture
Infrastructure	Transport, communications, environment
Socio-cultural functions	Health, education, social affairs, employment, family, culture, sports

Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database

NO REAL CHANGE IN REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES AND EXECUTIVES, OR IN LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

The representation of women in regional assemblies across the EU has remained unchanged since 2017 (33.3 %). There has, however, been a small increase in the proportion of women leading these assemblies, which has reached a new high of 22.2 % (from 21.5 % in 2017). Regional assemblies include at least 40 % of each gender in 5 (Belgium, Spain, France, Finland, and Sweden) of the 20 Member States in which there is a regional level endowed with powers of self-government. On the other hand, in Italy, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary, men occupy more than 4 out of every 5 seats (Figure 19). The representation of women in regional executives has dropped from an all-time high proportion of 36.0 %, reached in November 2017, to the current level of 35.6 %. The proportion of female leaders of regional executives has increased from 14.4 % to 14.8 % over the last year.

Figure 19: Proportion of women and men in regional executives and assemblies, 2018

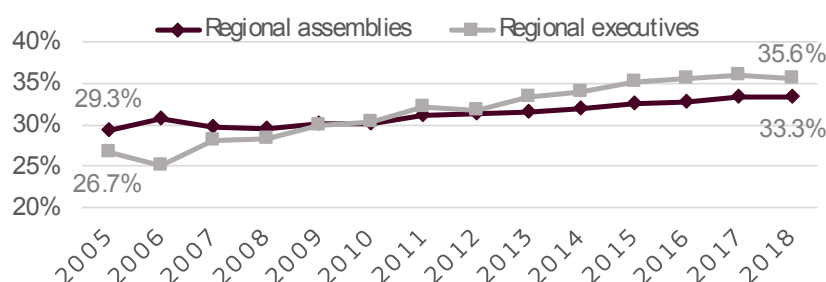


Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database

Note: members of regional executives not applicable in Denmark, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary.

The rate of change at regional level is extremely slow. The proportion of women in regional assemblies has improved by just 4 pp. since 2005 at an average rate of 0.3 pp./year (Figure 20). The rate of change in regional executives is slightly faster (+8.9 pp. at an average rate of 0.7 pp./year), but still too slow.

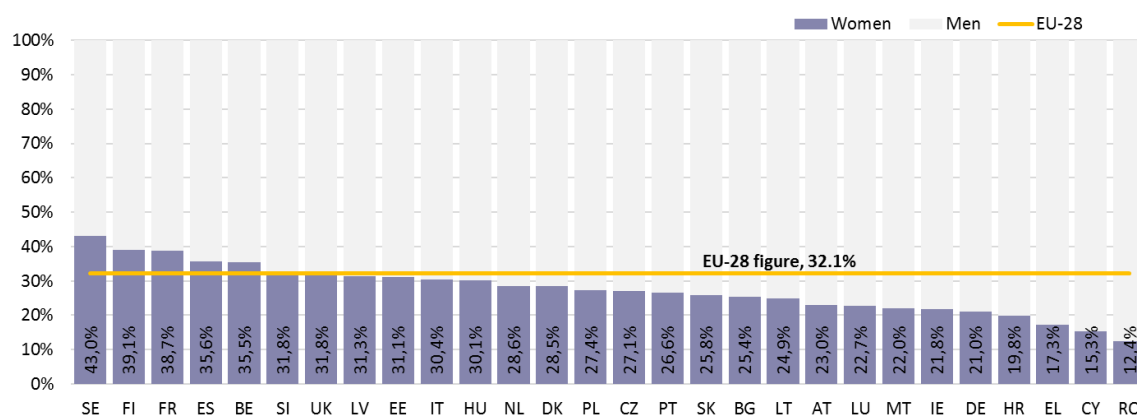
Figure 20: Proportion of women in regional assemblies and executives, 2005-2018



Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database

The latest data available (from June 2017) show that 32.1 % of members of local assemblies across the EU are women (Figure 21). Only Sweden's assemblies included at least 40 % of each gender (43.0 % women, 57.0 % men). Those in Greece, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania comprised more than 80 % men and less than 20 % women. Across the EU, women hold only 14.9 % of local leadership positions (mayor or other leader of the municipal council).

Figure 21: Proportion of women and men in local assemblies, June 2017



Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database

In **Portugal**, Organic Law No 1/2017 of 2 May (revoking paragraph 4 of Article 2 of Organic Law No 3/2006⁹⁴ of 21 August) abolished the exemption of municipal bodies with 7 500 or fewer voters from fulfilling the minimum representation requirement of 33.3 % of each gender in candidate lists submitted to the local authorities.

THE COMMISSION'S ACTION TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY IN DECISION MAKING

To address the problem of the low level of female participation in corporate management, in 2012 the European Commission put forward a **legislative proposal to improve transparency of the selection of board directors in the largest publicly listed companies**. The proposed legislation does not impose binding quota. At the heart of this proposal lies a transparent selection process for board members; it aims to reach a quantitative target of 40 % of the under-represented sex, based on clear criteria and a comparison of the candidates' qualifications. The Commission's legislative proposal has the support of the European Parliament and most Member States. The Commission remains fully committed to the proposed directive with a view to its future adoption by the EU co-legislators. In any event, one can observe, since the adoption of the proposal, a significant increase in the proportion of women on the boards of the largest publicly listed companies in the EU (Figure 9).

The European Commission continues to encourage Member States and stakeholders such as political parties to take effective action to achieve gender balance in politics. Actions include:

⁹⁴ Which sets a target of a minimum of 33 % people of each sex in the candidate lists for the national Parliament, the European Parliament, and local authorities.

supporting mutual learning and exchange of good practices between Member States⁹⁵; raising awareness (organisation and participation in events⁹⁶), and; funding projects⁹⁷ to be run by stakeholders (see also Chapter 6). For instance, to help Member States reach targets and fill quotas and increase the number of **women in decision-making positions in research and innovation and professorships**, in February 2018 the Commission published ‘Guidance to facilitate the implementation of targets to promote gender equality in research & innovation’⁹⁸. In addition, the online ‘gender equality in academic and research organisations (GEAR)’ toolkit, developed by EIGE and the Commission, was made available in all EU languages⁹⁹.

The Commission monitors the situation with the support of the European Institute for Gender Equality. It does so with the help of the many indicators presented in this chapter. In addition, the Commission’s Joint Research Centre has developed a monitoring tool of gender equality to capture regional differences across Europe, including in the domain of women in power¹⁰⁰.

Ireland took steps to tackle gender discrimination in academia. Under new so-called performance compacts, higher education institutions face the risk of a cut of up to 10 % of annual state funding if they do not meet certain performance objectives, and gender equality has been included as one of those. To address the persistent lack of promotion of women to senior posts in universities new measures have been included in the Gender Action Plan 2018-2020¹⁰¹: by 2021, 45 posts of women-only professorships will be created, at an annual cost of EUR 4.7 million. The first 15 of 45 women-only professorships will be created in Irish higher education by September 2019. The government has set aside EUR 800 000 in funding for 2019 to support the appointments.

The Commission’s sustained efforts to meet the **40 % target of women in middle and senior management** in-house, set by President Jean-Claude Juncker for the end of the current mandate (2019), are showing results. The number of female managers continued to increase and reached 39 % at all levels by 1 November 2018, up by 2 percentage points as compared to 2017. Women accounted for 37 % of senior management (up from 35 % last year). At middle management level, the target of 40 % was reached (up from 38 % in 2017). This progress comes after efforts to identify, develop and support female talent through targeted initiatives run either by directorates-general or at the Commission level. For instance, the ‘corporate female talent development’ programme, open to female colleagues holding pre-managerial positions,

⁹⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/who-we-work-gender-equality/mutual-learning-programme-gender-equality_en

⁹⁶ In June 2018, a panel on ‘Raising women’s participation in decision-making: engaging men as change agents’ was organised in the framework of the European Development Days event: <https://eudevdays.eu/community/sessions/603/raising-womens-participation-in-decision-making-engaging-men-as-change-agents>

⁹⁷ Example: six projects to support gender equality in politics and in public debate will receive EU funding from the rights and citizenship programme. They will be implemented in 2019-2021.

⁹⁸ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub_gender_equality/KI-07-17-199-EN-N.pdf

⁹⁹ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear>

¹⁰⁰ “A Monitoring Tool for Regional Gender Equality: Measuring female disadvantage and achievement in EU regions”, JRC115814, *forthcoming*.

¹⁰¹ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/gender-action-plan-2018-2020.pdf>

offers a personalised skills assessment, one-on-one coaching sessions, cross-directorate-general senior mentoring, a dedicated training path and Commission-wide networking events with peers and managers.

Furthermore, the European External Action Service (EEAS) has started to implement its Gender and Equal Opportunity Strategy 2018-2023 (endorsed in November 2017). This strategy aims to accelerate progress towards sustainable gender balance at all levels in all functions and all job categories in the EEAS, both in the Brussels headquarters and in EU Delegations. Currently, the overall gender balance in the EEAS is close to equal.

Gender balance in the EU institutions can improve the functioning of our democracies and citizen trust in the EU. In 2019, political parties and the Member States are expected to demonstrate their real commitment to gender equality and ensure a balanced representation of women and men in the European Parliament and in the top positions of the European institutions¹⁰².

In the **United Kingdom**, in 2018 the government allocated a £5 million fund to celebrate the centenary of women's suffrage. The fund supports projects that will increase young people's understanding of and engagement with democracy, and encourage women to participate in public life.

The **European Women's Lobby (EWL)**¹⁰³ launched the 50/50 campaign 'Women for Europe — Europe for Women'. It includes a call for Member States and the EU to ensure equal representation of women and men in political decision making as a 50/50 representation of each sex in any EU decision-making body, including the EU's 'top jobs'¹⁰⁴.

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

Violence against women takes many different forms ranging from intimate partner violence, sexual harassment and cyber harassment, to femicide, honour-related violence and female genital mutilation. One in three women aged 15 or over in the EU has experienced physical and/or sexual violence, around half of all women in the EU have experienced sexual harassment, and 1 in 10 women have faced cyber harassment¹⁰⁵. Combating violence against women is one of the Commission's priorities, and it makes substantial efforts to eradicate such violence, through legislative and policy measures, financial support and awareness-raising.

¹⁰² Currently, 32.1 % of Commissioners are women (9 of 28).

¹⁰³ <https://www.womenlobby.org/?lang=en>

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.womenlobby.org/-WomenForEurope-?lang=en>

¹⁰⁵ 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>. The study is the first of its kind in the EU and was based on interviews with 42 000 women on their experiences of physical, sexual and psychological violence, including domestic violence across the 28 Member States of the EU.

EU CONTINUES TO BE AN ACTIVE CAMPAIGNER FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The European Commission's **Non.No Nein. communication campaign — #SayNoStopVAW** — was launched as part of a **Year of Focused Actions to end violence against women**. Throughout 2018, multiple actions and communication outputs were produced, including a social media campaign, awareness-raising videos, GIFs, animations and a specific website for the campaign¹⁰⁶. On the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women** on the 25 November, the Commission's communication activities focused on stopping sexual harassment, with a message of supporting a culture of non-violence and free from harassment. The Commission's headquarters, the European Parliament, and the European External Action Service's buildings in Brussels were lit in orange, showing the EU's support for the United Nations' **16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence** campaign. The Commission organised a one-day **high-level conference** entitled '**Ending violence against women — taking stock and next steps**'¹⁰⁷ on 4 December. The conference emphasised the need to develop cross-European legal standards, change attitudes, and combat stereotypes. It highlighted best practices from projects to combat gender-based violence, which have been funded under the 'Daphne' strand of the EU Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme, and it supported discussions on next steps at policy level with high-level speakers.

In addition, the Commission, the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Council of Europe, UN Women and the World Bank agreed to improve the way they work together, take stock and agree on further steps, and **call on other world leaders** from both the public and private sectors to join the intensified global effort to end violence against women and girls.

The Commission stayed committed to address the gender angle in its **anti-trafficking strategy**¹⁰⁸, with trafficking for sexual exploitation as a particular form of gender based violence. An EIGE report¹⁰⁹, published on the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day on 18 October 2018, presented gender-specific measures in anti-trafficking actions. The Institute, in cooperation with the European Commission, has developed gender and child specific recommendations to help Member States implement the relevant directives¹¹⁰ and monitor their progress.

On 13 June 2018, the Heads of ten EU agencies¹¹¹ signed the **Joint Statement of commitment to working together to address trafficking in human beings**¹¹². The signatory agencies stressed the

¹⁰⁶ The website is available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/justice/saynostopvaw/>

¹⁰⁷ The agenda available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/events/ending-violence-against-women-taking-stock-and-next-steps-2018-dec-04_en.

¹⁰⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/eu-policy/commission-sets-out-priorities-step-eu-action_en.

¹⁰⁹ <https://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/gender-specific-measures-anti-trafficking-actions-report>

¹¹⁰ EU Anti-Trafficking Directive and the Victims' Rights Directive.

¹¹¹ These were: European Asylum Support Office (EASO), European Police Office (Europol), European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (eu-LISA), European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), EU Judicial Cooperation Unit (Eurojust), European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), European Border

importance of an enhanced multiagency approach, and they commit to countering the culture of impunity and enhance the focus on prevention. The Joint Statement adopts a gender specific and child sensitive approach to addressing this grave violation of human rights and serious form of organised crime.

#METOO BRINGS FURTHER ACTION ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The wide-ranging response to the #MeToo movement brought about a particular momentum in 2018 to developing new instruments against workplace harassment. Alongside the EU Member States, the Commission took part in the negotiations on a draft **labour convention** launched in June 2018 by the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**. That was supplemented by a draft **recommendation on combating violence and harassment in the world of work**¹¹³.

A new study¹¹⁴ by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) shows that acts of sexism, abuse and violence against women are widespread in parliaments across Europe. 85 % of female Members of Parliament (MPs) have suffered from psychological violence in parliament; female MPs under 40 are more likely to be harassed; female parliamentary staff endure more sexual violence than female MPs; and the majority of parliaments don't have mechanisms to enable women to speak out. On 9 October 2018, the **@MeTooEP** was launched, a blog publishing anonymous testimonies of sexual harassment in the European Parliament, where neither the victims' nor the perpetrators' names are mentioned. The blog was created to allow victims of sexual harassment to speak freely about the violence they have encountered. It had already collected 30 stories before its launch.

There have been significant legal developments in the area of sexual violence in **Sweden** in 2018. In April 2018, a Swedish appeal court (Hovrätten) upheld a ruling sentencing a 41-year-old Swedish man to 10 years imprisonment for coercing girls in Canada, Britain and the United States to perform sexual acts in front of webcams and recording them. It was the first time in Sweden that a person was convicted of 'online rape', i.e. rape for offences that took place exclusively over the internet. Under Swedish law, rape does not have to include physical sexual acts, but can include non-physical acts which are considered equally violating. The court considered that sexual abuse of children performed online is as serious for the child as sexual abuse performed in real life.

In June 2018, a new sexual offence law came into force in Sweden clarifying the concept of 'consent'. The new law clarifies that sexual activities where one party does not participate voluntarily — expressed by

and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL), and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound).

¹¹² https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eu_agencies_joint_statement_of_commitment_to_working_together_to_address_thb.pdf.

¹¹³ See more information in chapter 4.

¹¹⁴ Council of Europe (2018), *Sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Europe*, Issues Brief, available at: <http://website-pace.net/documents/19879/5288428/20181016-WomenParliamentIssues-EN.pdf/7d59e7c5-4a88-4d23-a6cd-7404449fd45f>

words, acts or in another way — is considered rape. The law also acknowledges that a person may change his/her mind at any time, even if he/she initially took part voluntarily. If this happens, the sexual act ceases to be voluntary and becomes rape. Situations where a person suffers from a so-called freezing reaction and cannot speak up after they were initially willing are also covered by the law.

WORK TOWARDS MORE AND BETTER DATA CONTINUES

The Commission continued its work on developing an EU-wide survey to determine the prevalence of violence against women. The pilot project, launched by Eurostat, is running in 2018/2019 in cooperation with Austria, Portugal, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Malta, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Croatia, the Netherlands and Iceland. Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia also expressed interest in implementing the gender-based violence survey at national level. The survey methodology builds on the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights' 2014 survey¹¹⁵. Results from the pilot project are expected at the beginning of 2019, and the final questionnaire and methodology will be drawn up in 2019.

On trafficking of women and girls, the Commission incorporated a gender analysis in its 'Second Progress Report in the fight against trafficking in human beings in the EU'¹¹⁶, adopted in December 2018. For 2015-2016, over two-thirds of the registered victims in the EU were female (68 %) and sexual exploitation was the most reported form (56 % victims reporting it). Of those trafficked for sexual exploitation the vast majority were women and girls (95 %).

SLOW PROGRESS TOWARDS THE EU'S ACCESSION TO THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

13 June 2018 marked the first anniversary of the EU's signature of the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence ('the Istanbul Convention'). Following this signature, the Commission has been working with the Council to agree on the practical arrangements — set out in a Code of Conduct — for the EU and Member States jointly to carry out their legal obligations under the Convention. The Council and the Commission have also been working on Council decisions on the Convention's conclusion, with the aim of completing the EU's accession to the Convention before the European elections in May 2019.

The Istanbul Convention is the most comprehensive and far-reaching international treaty ever adopted regarding the elimination of violence against women. It establishes legally binding rules and standards to prevent violence against women and domestic violence, protect victims and punish perpetrators and aims to take a holistic and integrated approach to combating violence against women, comprising of a set of measures aimed at prevention, coordination, information, criminalisation, support, protection, investigation and prosecution. This approach

¹¹⁵ <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>

¹¹⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/20181204_com-2018-777-report_en.pdf

is based on the fundamental understanding that violence against women is a human rights violation and an obstacle to equality between women and men.

The Convention has been signed by all EU Member States. During the past year, three more Member States (Greece, Croatia and Luxembourg) have concluded the ratification process — bringing the total number of Member States having ratified to 20. However, the Convention has caused heated discussions in some Member States, centred on the Convention's use of the term 'gender' and its approach of considering violence against women to be gender-based violence. Gender-based violence is violence which is committed against women because they are women or because women are overrepresented as victims of such violence. Some see these concepts as threatening 'traditional' family values. The public and political debate shows that there are various views on the concepts of gender and sex and that terminology is often misunderstood and used out of context.

With the ambition to serve as a counterbalance to negative and misleading messages from those Member States where ratification continues to be difficult, the Commission and the Council of Europe worked together with the civil society organisation the European coalition to end violence against women and girls¹¹⁷ to clarify messages on the Istanbul Convention. To that end, an information leaflet has been published and social media material was developed, explaining the provisions of the Istanbul Convention which have been misinterpreted. The message is from the Commission and the Council of Europe is that, even if the understanding of what constitutes a family may differ, there is no place for violence in any family¹¹⁸.

PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE CONTEXT OF ASYLUM AND MIGRATION

The last three years have been turbulent for the EU, not only with regard to the large migration flow, but also in terms of tackling violence against women on the move. Studies show that nearly 60 % of those who had recently arrived in Europe in 2016 were women and children¹¹⁹. These studies also demonstrate that women on the move are at grave risk of being subject to

¹¹⁷ The Coalition is an initiative of a number of civil society organisations, led by the European Women's Lobby, to campaign on ending violence, and ratification of the Istanbul Convention:

<https://www.womenlobby.org/European-Coalition-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls>

¹¹⁸ See the European Commission GIF available at:

<https://www.facebook.com/278117815576023/posts/1977108339010287/>

¹¹⁹ European Parliament, *Reception of female refugees and asylum 6 seekers in the EU: Case study Germany*, p. 6-7, available at:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/571364/IPOL_STU\(2016\)571364_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/571364/IPOL_STU(2016)571364_EN.pdf)

gender-based and sexual violence¹²⁰ and that they encounter violence in all stages of their journey, including while in Europe¹²¹.

As part of the **Mutual Learning Programme in gender equality**¹²², the Commission organised two seminars to exchange good practice on tackling gender-based violence through asylum and migration procedures in the EU. In February 2018, **Greece** hosted a seminar on **support services for victims of violence in asylum and migration** in Athens, discussing the Greek 'Protocol of Cooperation' as an example of good practice. In October 2018, **Spain** hosted a mutual learning seminar on **combating trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation** in Madrid, where Spain presented its activities to reduce demand and promote multi-agency coordination and communication in the fight against trafficking for sexual exploitation.

In addition, the 'Daphne' strand of the **EU Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme** funds projects aimed at improving the coordination and/or adaptation of support services for sexual and gender-based violence to include refugees and migrants. For instance, the EMPOWER_REF project will seek to empower professional and refugee communities to detect, identify, address and prevent sexual and gender-based violence in Greece¹²³.

The **Italian** Council of Ministers adopted a decree in December 2017, which included measures to provide training on preventing and detecting violence against migrant women¹²⁴ for operators in the public and private sector (NGOs, cooperatives, associations etc.). The measures also aim to give women information on their rights and available services; provide training for translators and members of territorial commissions regarding violence; take a gender-sensitive approach to work in this area; and promote awareness among and provide information for asylum seekers.

Belgium's project focusing on professionals working for support services and migrant women aims to sensitise them about gender-based violence, including 'honour crimes'. This is done through providing an information booklet for professionals about gender, gender-based violence, migration etc. and a puppet

¹²⁰ UNHCR, UNPF and WRC, *Initial Assessment Report: Protection Risks for Women and Girls in the European Refugee and Migrant Crisis*, January 2016, p. 3, 4 and 7, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/569f8f419.pdf>

¹²¹ Amnesty International, *Female refugees face physical assault, exploitation and sexual harassment on their journey through Europe*, 18 January 2016, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/01/female-refugeesface-physical-assault-exploitation-and-sexual-harassment-on-their-journey-through-europe/>

¹²² https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/who-we-work-gender-equality/mutual-learning-programme-gender-equality_en

¹²³ <https://mdmgreece.gr/missions/stin-ellada/programmata/empowering-professional-refugee-communities-detect-identify-address-prevent-sexual-gender-based-violence-greece/>.

¹²⁴ European Commission, Maura Misiti IRPPS-CNR, Comments Paper — Italy, The EU Mutual Learning Programme in Gender Equality, Support services for victims of violence in asylum and migration Greece, 20-21 February 2018, p. 1.

theatre for both migrant women and professionals in the field. This is designed to facilitate discussion on subjects concerning gender, power, violence and the needs of women in asylum¹²⁵.

A national Women's Aid 24-hour free phone helpline in **Ireland** is available to all women who have encountered gender-based violence. The helpline offers support in 170 languages through a telephone interpretation service. It helps detect the prevalence of violence against women. In Ireland, 20 000 cases of domestic violence against women and children were disclosed in 2016¹²⁶.

In **Finland**, a project has been launched by the reception centre in Joutseno, to train staff in identifying at an early stage the special needs of female migrants and survivors of violence. The project also includes practical ways and working models that can be used in considering these needs.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION — 5 YEARS ON

November 2018 marked the 5-year anniversary of the 2013 Communication¹²⁷ on eliminating female genital mutilation (FGM). FGM is carried out for cultural, religious and/or social reasons, and eliminating it requires a range of actions including data collection, prevention, protection of girls at risk, prosecution of perpetrators and provision of services for victims. FGM is an internationally recognised human rights violation and is a harmful practice that results in long-lasting consequences, including physical and psychological damage for thousands of girls and women. It is estimated that 180 000 girls and women in the EU are at risk of FGM each year¹²⁸. In addition, it is estimated that 500 000 women in Europe and 200 million women across the world have undergone FGM¹²⁹.

Over the last two years, the EU has provided support for care and protection services related to FGM for more than 1.5 million girls and women. In addition, 8.5 million people from 3 000 different communities have been encouraged to publicly declare that they reject this practice¹³⁰. The EU has established a strong partnership with the African Union and the Pan African Parliament to advocate the elimination of FGM. The EU's work to end FGM also includes a

¹²⁵ European Commission, Fatma Arikoglu Independent expert, Comments Paper — Belgium, The EU Mutual Learning Programme in Gender Equality, Support services for victims of violence in asylum and migration Greece, 20-21 February 2018, p. 3.

¹²⁶ European Commission, Maeve Foreman Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland Social Work & Migration Special Interest Group, ASW, 311 Comments Paper — Ireland, The EU Mutual Learning Programme in Gender Equality, Support services for victims of violence in asylum and migration Greece, 20-21 February 2018, p. 6.

¹²⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2013:0833:FIN>

¹²⁸ <https://eige.europa.eu/news-and-events/news/female-genital-mutilation-problem-eu>. In 2017 and 2018, EIGE carried out a study estimating the number of girls at risk of FGM in Belgium, Greece, France, Italy, Cyprus and Malta.

¹²⁹ European Parliament: Resolution on ending female genital mutilation from 16/06/2012 (2012/2684(RSP)), available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2012-0261+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> Note that not all countries have estimates, and such estimates are not necessarily comparable.

¹³⁰ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/54350/orange-world-and-stop-violence-against-women_en

contribution of EUR 3.8 million to support the Egyptian government's efforts to eliminate FGM in a programme from December 2011 to June 2017, jointly implemented with the United Nations. Eliminating harmful practices, such as FGM, is also the specific theme of the regional part of the Spotlight Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa.

In **Malta**, awareness-raising group sessions for asylum seekers in detention were organised by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). They focused on cultural practices and drew attention to the seriousness of the issues surrounding FGM¹³¹.

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

Gender equality remains uneven across regions and countries, although it is crucial for sustainable development. In 2018, the EU continued to promote and financially support gender equality and women's empowerment across the globe. Gender equality remained an important subject of debate and cooperation with relevant international and regional organisations, in particular the UN, but also the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the G20, the G7, NATO, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organisation of American States (OAS), the African Union (AU), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

GENDER ACTION STANDS PROMINENT IN THE EU'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The Commission's monitoring of the implementation of the **Gender Action Plan II (GAP II)**¹³² focused on ensuring that programmes are gender mainstreamed and that the minimum standards set in the GAP II are followed. The second year of implementation of GAP II brought a greater alignment of the EU's activities in external relations with the 2030 Agenda¹³³, working towards reaching its sustainable development goals. Gender equality has been **prominently included in EU political positions and dialogues with partner countries**. A shift in institutional culture can be observed, as the EU is making greater use of gender expertise to strengthen its actions and to contribute more comprehensively to gender equality outcomes. As a result, progress is being made on the EU's objectives of stopping violence against women and girls, improving their socioeconomic rights, and increasing their participation in decision-making processes at all levels.

In particular, the use of **gender analysis** in the formulation of EU external actions is increasing. Almost all EU Delegations have carried out a detailed gender analysis. In 2018, new gender

¹³¹Jesuit Refugee Service Malta, *Try to Understand*, p. 37-38, available at:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9dE4MlylERgX01JOTE5NnU2bWs/view>

¹³²SWD(2015) 182 final, 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020', available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sectors/human-rights-and-democratic-governance/gender-equality/gender-mainstreaming_en

¹³³

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>

analyses were carried out in Ukraine, Kosovo and Turkey. Another key factor contributing to progress is the growing network of **Gender Focal Persons**, with management support and access to training. A regional meeting for gender focal points based in the Western Balkans and Turkey was organised in August with the aim of strengthening the work on gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The 2018 Western Balkans Strategy underlines that ‘equality between women and men must also be ensured and domestic violence tackled’. Cooperation with Western Balkans was further strengthened in the framework of the G7 Partnership Initiative, where the EU agreed to partner with Bosnia and Herzegovina for the enhancement of the women, peace and security agenda.

In December 2018, the EU adopted its **new strategic approach to women, peace and security**¹³⁴. This emphasises women’s leadership and the need for meaningful, equitable participation, as well as integration of gender perspectives into all EU policies related to security, conflict prevention and resolution, and long-term peace building. It aims to ensure that women and girls from all backgrounds are entitled and enabled to participate substantially and equitably in preventing and resolving conflicts and in preventing and protecting women from conflict-related violence including sexual and gender-based violence. Furthermore, the strategic approach engages men and boys as positive agents for change, looking at the need to address and transform gender stereotypes and eliminate existing societal exclusion mechanisms. It brings an important commitment to systematically integrate a gender perspective, based on gender analysis, into all fields and activities related to peace and security, including political and strategic dialogues, human rights dialogues, policy and policy-making processes, research, analysis and assessment, planning and conduct, and monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes. The strategic approach is expected to be a timely and much needed incentive for the EU as well as global community to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 faster and more effectively, and its follow-up resolutions.

In 2018, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) supported **monitoring** process in external dimension. The project entitled ‘EIGE’s cooperation with the EU candidate and potential candidate countries 2017-2019: improved monitoring of gender equality progress’ aims to support better monitoring of several policy areas in the EU candidate and potential candidate countries in order to improve policy, legislation and practice, and gender equality progress in general. Serbia was the first non-EU beneficiary in the Western Balkans to develop a gender equality index.

Policy dialogue and technical assistance continued to bring gender equality into the **enlargement** and **neighbourhood policy** process in 2018. The Commission continued its policy dialogue on women’s empowerment with the **Union for the Mediterranean** (UfM). The UfM Regional Dialogue on Women’s Empowerment took place on 9 October in Lisbon, back to back with the fourth edition of the UfM High-Level Conference on Women (**Women4Mediterranean**) on 10-11 October. It provided for the creation of a mechanism to monitor progress towards gender equality made by the UfM countries.

¹³⁴ Women, Peace and Security — Council conclusions (10 December 2018), Doc. 15086/18.

The European External Action Service issued new **guidelines on gender mainstreaming for the EU civilian missions**¹³⁵. These guidelines represent a concrete tool for implementation, directed towards all mission staff, including management, and will help to systematically mainstream a gender perspective and adopt gender equality policies in all activities and phases of a civilian CSDP missions.

On the international scene, the **62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women** took place at the UN Headquarters in New York between 12 and 23 March 2018. Representatives of the UN Member States, UN bodies, and NGOs from across the world, discussed the state of play on gender equality. The conclusions¹³⁶ agreed by the parties at this meeting paid special attention to **rural women's** equal economic rights, economic empowerment and independence, essential for achieving the goals in the 2030 Agenda.

International policy has paid increased attention to women's rights in the public sphere, following the #MeToo movement. Initiatives to promote gender equality and the economic empowerment of women received substantial attention and support at the **G7 and G20** meetings. In particular, at the June 2018 G7 meeting in Charlevoix, Canada, an **action plan**¹³⁷ **to eliminate online sexual and gender-based violence** was adopted. To prevent and counter online gender-based violence, the G7 leaders committed to a wide range of measures, such as: inclusive approaches at all stages of technological development; effective protection mechanisms such as national anti-violence strategies, and having existing mechanisms reflect contemporary technology realities; data collection on online gender-based violence; and promoting work to educate law enforcement staff, judges and other legal actors about online gender-based violence. Furthermore, they committed to sharing approaches and support global efforts to prevent and counter technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

Women Foreign Ministers meeting — the first summit of its kind — took place in Montréal, 21/22 September. Co-chaired by High Representative – Vice-President Mogherini and Minister Freeland of Canada, it pledged to bring a 'women's perspective' to foreign policy. Female foreign ministers highlighted the benefits that come from integrating a gender perspective into approaches to foreign and security policies, and their shared desire to promote the meaningful participation of women at all levels of decision making and leadership. They pledged to continue to leverage their formal positions as foreign

¹³⁵ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12851-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

¹³⁶ The Conclusions point to access economic and productive resources, including land and natural resources, property and inheritance rights, new and existing technologies, financial products and services, such as microfinance, and women's full and productive employment and decent work, and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value in rural areas. It also points to the need to address unequal power relations between men and women in access to and ownership and control over resources as well as tackling other gender stereotypes and unequal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work. Furthermore, the conclusions stressed the importance for rural women and girls to have access to social protection and social services, in particular health care and educational services. See: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw62-2018>.

¹³⁷ <https://g7.gc.ca/en/official-documents/charlevoix-commitment-end-sexual-gender-based-violence-abuse-harassment-digital-contexts/>

ministers, and their visibility, to expand the global commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Finally, in September 2018, the EU and UN agreed on a new set of forward-looking priorities for cooperation on peace operations and crisis management for 2019-2021. Out of these priorities, number one consists of the establishment of an EU-UN **collaborative platform on Women, Peace and Security**.

EU FUNDS TO COMBAT VIOLENCE ACROSS THE WORLD

The Commission continues to fund multiple projects to eliminate violence across the world.

The EU-UN Trust Fund provided EUR 500 million to the **Spotlight Initiative**, to stop violence against women and girls. It was launched in September 2017 at the 73rd session of UN General Assembly and is a global initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls. It is planned to last for 6 years, 2018-2024, and is composed of regional programmes and focused investment in targeted countries. The Spotlight Initiative finishes 2018 with concrete commitments to ending violence against women and girls, having signed EUR 260 million for programmes in **Africa** and **Latin America** countries in December.

In 2018, it is estimated that the EU allocated nearly EUR 30 million in **humanitarian aid to help fight sexual- and gender-based violence**, under its protection and health programming. In line with its policy on gender in humanitarian aid¹³⁸, support includes prevention of sexual violence, and support for victims through a comprehensive multi-sectorial approach including medical care, psychological support, referral to legal services and, if possible, livelihood support or socio-economic assistance¹³⁹. Furthermore, from June 2017 to December 2018, the EU led the global humanitarian initiative 'Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies'¹⁴⁰. It brings together 82 partners comprising governments and donors, international organisations and non-governmental organisations. Its aim is to drive change and foster accountability from the humanitarian system to address gender based violence from the earliest phases of a crisis. During its leadership of the Call to Action, the EU welcomed 18 new members to the initiative, initiated the piloting of the Call to Action in Nigeria and Democratic Republic of the Congo (implementing partner: UNFPA), organised 10 awareness-raising workshops through its field offices, and facilitated the drafting of the 2017 Call to Action Progress Report. Since 1 January 2019, Canada is the new global lead of the initiative.

A fundamental element of the EUR 3 million **South Programme III** 'Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the Southern Mediterranean' is **combating violence against women** in the Southern Mediterranean region. This programme was officially

¹³⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender_thematic_policy_document_en.pdf

¹³⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/gender-sensitive-aid_en

¹⁴⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/thematic/call_to_action_on_protection_from_gender_based_violence_in_emergencies_en.pdf

launched on 18 September 2018 and pays special attention to promoting the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention and Council of Europe standards in this area.

The **IPA II** funded (EUR 5 million) '**Ending Violence against Women in the Western Balkans and Turkey: Implementing Norms, Changing Minds**' programme is particularly focused on the most disadvantaged groups of women in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey. A regional forum in Skopje in November took stock of the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in those countries.

Under the **EU MADAD Trust Fund**, in response to the Syrian Crisis, two key initiatives were launched by the Commission in 2018: a EUR 12.5 million project, working with UN WOMEN, to strengthen the resilience of Syrian women and girls and host communities in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey; and a EUR 12.5 million project, working with the EuroMed Feminist Initiative, to improve access to protection, participation and services for **women refugees**, internally displaced persons and host communities.

In addition, on 23 November, a EUR 3.24 million grant contract was signed with the EuroMed Feminist Initiative to launch a regional campaign to combat and prevent violence against women and girls in the Southern Neighbourhood countries. The campaign aims to raise public awareness of violence against women and girls through information and educational activities and capacity development activities for civil society organisations working in the field. In order to monitor national governments' progress and accomplishments in combating gender-based violence, the campaign also supports the establishment of a **civil-society led Regional Observatory**.

TRADE POLICIES CAN STIMULATE WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

A recent study¹⁴¹ by the European Commission shows that the EU's exports to the world support 36 million jobs across Europe, of which 14 million are held by women. Trade therefore provides substantial potential for empowering women across the EU.

The Commission continues to actively promote gender equality in relation to trade. Following the **2017 Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment**, the Commission worked to raise awareness and increase policy makers' capacity to incorporate gender considerations in trade policy development and negotiations. It took an active part in several workshops organised in 2018 in the WTO to unpack the complex relationship between trade and gender, such as gender-based analysis of trade policies or women in global value chains¹⁴².

¹⁴¹ Arto, I., Rueda-Cantuche, J.M., Cazcarro, I., Amores, A.F., Dietzenbacher, E. Kutlina-Dimitrova, Z. and Román, M. V. (2018), EU exports to the World: Effects on Employment, Publications Office of the European Union, available at:

http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/november/tradoc_157516.pdf

¹⁴² https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/womenandtrade_e/womenandtrade_e.htm

A Sustainable Impact Assessment¹⁴³ was launched in June 2018, in support of the negotiations to modernise the **EU-Chile Association Agreement**. This includes an assessment, based on the latest methodology available — the UNCTAD Trade and Gender Toolbox¹⁴⁴ — of the impact on women in their roles as workers, entrepreneurs, traders, and consumers. In June 2018, the EU provided a textual proposal¹⁴⁵ on including provisions on trade and gender equality in the EU-Chile Association Agreement.

Furthermore, a **Recommendation**¹⁴⁶ on trade and gender was agreed in September 2018 by the Joint Committee of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between EU and Canada. This recommendation launches cooperation between the EU and Canada on improving the capacity and conditions for women (including workers, businesswomen and entrepreneurs) to access and fully benefit from the CETA.

Finally, **Trade and Sustainable Chapters** continue to be negotiated in all trade agreements containing commitments to respect core ILO conventions, including on equal remuneration and non-discrimination in the workplace¹⁴⁷.

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

Multiple studies point to the important economic benefits that result from greater gender equality¹⁴⁸. On 12 October, the Austrian Presidency of the Council organised an **informal meeting of gender equality ministers**. This was the first meeting of its kind since October 2011. The meeting led to the signing of a joint declaration on *gender equality as a priority of the European Union today and in the future*¹⁴⁹ proposed by the trio of the Estonian, Bulgarian and Austrian Presidencies. The declaration stresses the importance of a strong network and continuous dialogue between all relevant actors in the area of gender equality and, in that context, raises the importance of **regular meetings of EU ministers for gender equality**. It calls for a dual approach to be fully put in place, combining gender mainstreaming and specific actions. The joint declaration also calls for a **high-level and stand-alone EU gender equality strategy** in order to increase visibility, strengthen commitment and accountability, and allow for progress to be monitored. This call is echoed in the Presidency Conclusions¹⁵⁰ adopted on 6 December. These asked the Commission to adopt a Communication setting out an **EU gender equality strategy for the period post-2019**.

¹⁴³ Available at: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/november/tradoc_157550.pdf

¹⁴⁴ https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditc2017d1_en.pdf

¹⁴⁵ Available at: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/june/tradoc_156962.pdf

¹⁴⁶ Available at: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/september/tradoc_157419_....pdf

¹⁴⁷ See, for example, EU proposal for a Trade and Sustainable Chapter:

http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2018/june/tradoc_156961.pdf

¹⁴⁸ C.Lagarde and J.D. Ostry (2018), The macroeconomic benefits of gender diversity, available at:

<https://voxeu.org/article/macroeconomic-benefits-gender-diversity>

¹⁴⁹ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14309-2018-INIT/en/pdf>.

¹⁵⁰ https://www.consilium.europa.eu/register/en/content/out/?amp=ENTRY&i=ADV&DOC_ID=ST-15308-2018-INIT.

REDUCING SEGREGATION REQUIRES CHANGING PERCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES

Strong sectoral and occupational segregation (the lack of women in high paying, male-dominated jobs) has important consequences for the individual (gender pay differentials) but also for the EU economy. EIGE estimates that attracting more women to the STEM sectors would lead to economic growth, with more jobs (up to 1.2 million by 2050) and increased gross domestic product over the long term (up to EUR 820 billion by 2050)¹⁵¹.

Against this backdrop, the EU continues to focus its mainstreaming activities on bringing about a behavioural change and fighting stereotypes. For instance, in 2018, the Commission's **Joint Research Centre** published a 'science for policy' report on the science career plans of adolescents, analysing patterns, trends and gender divides¹⁵². The report provides an insight into why men and women end up studying certain subjects and entering corresponding jobs. The report highlights some of the challenges and points to potential interventions and initiatives that might lead to more gender balance in students' career choices.

EIGE prepared a research note on 'Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work-life balance'¹⁵³ to steer the policy debate under the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council. The note found that only 17 % of the almost 8 million people working in ICT in the EU are women. A strong gender divide in digital skills and gender-insensitive working conditions are just two factors that impede women from pursuing a career in this area.

Looking at the future of work, in June 2018 the Council called on the EU Member States and the Commission to prevent and combat gender stereotypes, to reduce gender segregation in the labour market, to promote the participation of women in the ICT sector and to promote the development of basic digital skills for both women and men¹⁵⁴. The **advisory committee** on equal opportunities between women and men also looked at new challenges for gender equality in the changing world of work and on 25 January 2019 adopted an opinion on the topic¹⁵⁵.

EIGE prepared a report on 'Gender equality and youth: opportunities and risks of digitalisation'¹⁵⁶. The report recommends that the EU institutions and Member States incorporate a gender perspective into all digital initiatives focused on young people and

¹⁵¹ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/policy-areas/economic-and-financial-affairs/economic-benefits-gender-equality>

¹⁵² <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/science-career-plans-adolescents-patterns-trends-and-gender-divides>.

¹⁵³ <https://eurogender.eige.europa.eu/events/women-and-men-ict-chance-better-work-life-balance>

¹⁵⁴ Future of Work: a Lifecycle Approach — Council Conclusions, available at: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10134-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

¹⁵⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/who-we-work-gender-equality/high-level-group-gender-mainstreaming-and-advisory-committee-equal-opportunities-women-and-men_en#advisorycommitteeonequalopportunitiesforwomenandmen.

¹⁵⁶ <https://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/gender-equality-and-youth-opportunities-and-risks-digitalisation>

recognises that digital media offers a powerful tool for mobilisation in support of gender equality. If there is targeted support and funding for women's empowerment, digitalisation can significantly support the pursuit of an inclusive, equal and participatory society. Based on this report and as part of the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action, **Presidency Conclusions on gender equality, youth and digitalisation** were adopted in December 2018¹⁵⁷. These call on the EU Member States and the Commission to mainstream a gender perspective when designing and implementing future gender equality policies and legislation in all areas relevant to digitalisation.

A study on Women in the Digital Age¹⁵⁸ published in March 2018 highlights that more women in digital jobs could create an annual EUR 16 billion GDP boost in the EU. Following that study, the Commission's strategy on **Women in Digital**¹⁵⁹ aims at facilitating an increase in the participation of women in the digital sector. The actions to be implemented in the course of 2018 and 2019 focus on three main areas: combating stereotypes, promoting IT training for girls and women and promoting female entrepreneurs in the digital sector. In April 2018, the Commission sent a letter to relevant ministers in all 28 EU Member States urging them to play a more active role in promoting opportunities for women to participate in the digital sector, and urging them to endorse the Women in Digital Scoreboard. This Scoreboard has been published on 10 December 2018, monitoring the performance of EU Member States across 13 relevant indicators on internet use, digital skills and employment. The Scoreboard will be part of the annual Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI). A need to set national action plans and national and EU targets will be discussed with Member States at ministerial level.

In a similar vein, the **MEDIA** programme will start monitoring data on gender balance among beneficiaries, applicants and participants, the results of which will be published in the annual report for 2019. The next step is to collect data about the **on-screen and off-screen gender gap** – examples of the gender gap in terms of representation, access to key positions, and average budgets. A recent report¹⁶⁰ on the subject affirms that women are under-represented on- and off-screen, and in the audio-visual media industry. Women are less likely to appear as experts or in scientific or technical roles on-screen. On-screen, women are subject to more stereotypical and degrading portrayal than men are. In off-screen creative roles, women are also under-represented, most significantly in senior and technical positions.

¹⁵⁷ https://www.consilium.europa.eu/register/en/content/out?&typ=ENTRY&i=ADV&DOC_ID=ST-15308-2018-INIT

¹⁵⁸ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/increase-gender-gap-digital-sector-study-women-digital-age>

¹⁵⁹ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/more-women-digital-sector-key-europes-successful-digital-future-international-womens-day-2018>

¹⁶⁰ European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (2018), Achieving Greater Diversity in Broadcasting - special focus on Gender; benefits and best practice approaches; available at: https://www.epra.org/news/announcements/news_items/achieving-greater-diversity-in-broadcasting-publication-of-the-final-comparative-background/.

Within its funding programme for research and innovation, Horizon 2020, the European Commission also finalised a EUR 1.5 million project, **HYPATIA** aimed at fostering partnerships among schools, science museums and centres and industries to offer **gender inclusive STEM education** to young people. The project developed a modular toolkit of activities for engaging teenagers in STEM and actively exposed young people and especially girls to the variety of STEM related careers.

The Commission also improved visibility for the finalists and winners of the **EU Prize for Women Innovators**. An award ceremony took place on 21 June. The winners were involved in different events and activities, such as the launch of the 2019 Prize at the Web Summit in Lisbon. They also took part in mentoring.

The work of the EU Platform '**Women in transport — EU Platform for change**', launched in November 2017, has continued and new members have joined in 2018. The platform consists now of members from the main employers' and workers' organisations in the transport sector, Member States' representatives, the EU Agency for Railways and the Shift2Rail joint undertaking. Platform members share good practices on how to increase women's employment and equal opportunities in the transport sector. They are also encouraged to take concrete actions to meet this objective. The launch of a permanent Diversity and Inclusion Council by a railway company was the first action officially presented under the Platform in October 2018. The Commission has also published the outcome of a study entitled "a business case to increase female employment in transport". Based on case studies, it presents a list of measures that transport companies can take to increase their gender balance¹⁶¹.

The **No Women No Panel Campaign**¹⁶², is a campaign to raise awareness of the need for gender balance in panels and public events. Several Commissioners committed to ensure that, for every panel or public event they are invited to, there should be at least one other female panellist. This campaign is inspired by the BrusselsBinder initiative, which provides a database of female experts and a platform for female experts to connect. The Commission's department for interpretation, as the lead department for conference organisation, also promotes female panellists' participation in conference panels.

EU PROVIDES FUNDING TO SUPPORT BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE AND PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY

Overall, in 2015-2019, about EUR 6.17 billion has been allocated to achieving the targets and objectives of the current strategic engagement for gender equality. This includes the financial support given to grassroot organisations (NGOs, civil society organisations,...), thus addressing the lack of funding at national level and ensuring that gender equality remains a core value of the EU and previous achievements in this field are safeguarded. This is even more important in

¹⁶¹ https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/social/women-transport-eu-platform-change_en

¹⁶² <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/commissioners-support-no-women-no-panel-campaign>

the presence of current trends pointing to a **growing backlash¹⁶³ against gender equality** in some EU countries, resisting gains made in women and girls' rights in past decades linked to equal economic independence, equal pay, equality in decision-making, ending gender-based violence, gender mainstreaming, sex education, and tackling gender stereotyping. EU funds to women's organisations help promoting and safeguarding women's rights at the local level (see also Chapter 4 section on the Istanbul Convention).

Under the **EU's Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme**, a total of EUR 3.3 million of funding has been granted in 2018 to projects promoting good practice on **combating stereotypes and segregation** in the labour market. EUR 3.7 million has been awarded to projects to incentivise the **equal participation of women and men in public forums, in leadership positions** in politics and in the corporate sector, and to support public authorities and civil society in relation to the 'New Start to **Support Work-Life Balance** for Parents and Carers' initiative. An additional EUR 4.48 million was secured for projects through a restricted call for proposals to **address gender gaps over the life-cycle**. Those projects should help Member States analyse existing gender gaps and develop effective measures to tackle them, in particular the gender gap in pensions.

Under the 'Daphne' strand of the EU Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme, the European Commission granted EUR 15 million to projects to **prevent and combat gender-based violence**. Some of these projects focus on 'primary prevention', i.e. changing social attitudes and behaviour to end tolerance of all forms of violence, while others focus on providing protection and support for victims, better coordinating and/or adapting support services for sexual and gender-based violence to include refugees and migrants, or working with perpetrators.

In March 2018, the Commission called on EU Member States to support the implementation of the work-life balance initiative through mobilising the European Structural and Investment funds, in line with the country-specific recommendations. Approximately EUR 1.3 billion from the **European Regional and Development Fund** has been programmed for **early childhood education and care infrastructure** in the 2014-2020 period. These investments directly contribute to the work-life balance initiative. As an example, Czechia introduced measures to increase the availability of childcare services in its operational programmes.

In a similar vein, the Commission has allocated EUR 4.24 million for **social innovation projects related to work-life balance strategies** under the **employment and social innovation programme EaSI¹⁶⁴**. The selected projects will develop, test and implement innovative work-life balance strategies in the workplace. The objective is to facilitate the reconciliation of work and private life by supporting a more equal division of care responsibilities between working men and women, and thereby encouraging more women to participate in the labour market. The projects selected had to include a social partner in their consortium.

¹⁶³ See the Plenary A discussion note of the 2017 Fundamental Rights Colloquium on Women's Rights in Turbulent Times: http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=115277

¹⁶⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en&callId=525&furtherCalls=yes>

The Commission's work in support of **gender equality in research and innovation** has led to a growing community of research performing organisations, including universities, and research funding organisations that have adopted gender equality plans (up to 56 % in 2016, from 36 % in 2014). Several Horizon 2020 projects launched in 2018 contributed to that goal, as for instance **'European Community of Practice to support institutional change – ACT'** with a budget of almost EUR 3 million. A knowledge-sharing and policy-building cluster event¹⁶⁵ on gender equality plans was co-organised by DG RTD and the Research Executive Agency in February 2018, for all gender equality plan projects funded to date under Horizon 2020 and 7th Framework Programme.

In addition, Horizon 2020 **GENDERACTION project** contributed to mainstream gender equality in the implementation of the European Research Area at national level. The ERA Progress report 2018 mapped and analysed the gender equality dimension in the national action plans. The project has also developed policy briefs to stakeholders and decision makers on how best to address gender equality in the next Framework Programme for research and innovation – Horizon Europe. The Commission continues publishing calls for projects in support of gender equality under its Science with and for Society programme. For instance, one of the projects to be financed in 2019 will explore how best to consider gender equality in its international science and technology dialogues with third countries.

During the current **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund** programming period, EUR 19.5 million has been committed by EU Member States to supporting projects that specifically have women as beneficiaries. An estimated 1 851 projects, 14 % of all Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) projects, in the 2014-2020 period are focused specifically on supporting women in fisheries and aquaculture under the EMFF. This is an increase of 5 % compared to the 2007-2013 funding period. In addition, FLAGs are placing greater emphasis on women when outlining their objectives. For the 2014-2020 period, 27 % of FLAGs indicated that supporting women is a high priority, an 11 % increase from the 2007-2013 programming period. Support for increasing the role of women in decision making went up from over 10 % in the 2007-2013 period to almost 30 % in the current period. Support for capacity building and training increased from around 25 % to almost 50 %.

For the future, the Commission proposes that political support for gender equality goes alongside financial support, and gender equality should be mainstreamed in different policy areas. **The Commission proposal for the next multiannual financial framework** stipulates that gender equality should be embedded as a cross-cutting priority, which could be reflected in the individual programmes' designs. This covers, for example, using funding from the European Social Fund Plus¹⁶⁶ to support women's labour market participation and better work/life balance, or funding from the European Regional Development Fund¹⁶⁷ to support investment in childcare infrastructure. In addition, Horizon Europe — the EU Framework Programme for

¹⁶⁵ <http://www.plotina.eu/2018/05/07/gender-cluster-event-main-highlights/>

¹⁶⁶ COM(2018) 382.

¹⁶⁷ COM(2018) 372 final.

Research and Innovation in 2021-2027¹⁶⁸ — should ensure the effective promotion of gender equality and a gender perspective in its research and innovation content.

EU CONTINUES TO COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The European Commission continued to stimulate debate and the exchange of experiences on gender equality between governmental representatives, independent experts and relevant stakeholders from across Europe.

In 2018, the Commission organised four seminars on gender equality to exchange views among the Member States' governmental representatives within the **Mutual Learning Programme**:

- The mutual learning seminar, held in Athens on 20-21 February 2018, focused on support services for victims of violence in asylum and migration and discussed the Greek 'Protocol of Cooperation' as a good practice example.
- In October 2018, Germany hosted a seminar on promoting fathers' involvement in family work and presented its good practice approach on parental allowances.
- A seminar held in October 2018, hosted by Spain, presented activities to reduce demand and promote multi-agency coordination and communication in the fight against trafficking for sexual exploitation.
- A seminar, held in Paris in November 2018, addressed initiatives to overcome the under-representation of and discrimination against women in all media professions, as well as the broader issue of gender stereotypes and sexism in media content.

Comprehensive summary reports of each seminar are available on the Mutual Learning Programme's website¹⁶⁹.

The Commission has also started a project on **peer-learning for women entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education**, financed under the EU programme for small and medium-sized enterprises – COSME. This project provides for three interactive workshops to be held in 2019-2020, where women entrepreneurship organisations, experts and practitioners can exchange good practices and work together to create a real community of practice.

The Commission took a proactive approach to engage technology companies' senior managers to sign-up to a **declaration to achieve gender balance in companies**¹⁷⁰. Twenty IT companies co-signed this declaration committing to provide an inclusive and gender-balanced work culture and environment. Ten prizes were also awarded to the ten women-led start-ups that were invited to pitch their projects at the Digital4Her event. A few months later, the Commission reconvened the core group of CEOs to assess their companies' progress and extract good

¹⁶⁸ COM(2018) 435 final.

¹⁶⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/who-we-work-gender-equality/mutual-learning-programme-gender-equality_en.

¹⁷⁰ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/ceos-tech-companies-sign-declaration-committing-gender-balanced-work-culture>

practice on gender diversity that has proven to work in their companies. Those examples will be compiled in a **good practice paper for high-tech and audio-visual companies** that would serve as an example for others to follow and be inspired by.

The **European Network on Women in Digital** connects organisations and individuals interested and active in closing the digital gender divide. It helps them find partners for their projects, events and activities. As of March 2019, the Network will be hosted on EIGE's collaborative platform EuroGender using its advanced collaborative functionalities, hence providing better service to the Network registrants.

The Commission continued its efforts to engage the media stakeholders to act on gender equality. A leaflet with exclusive MEDIA gender data was prepared for the 2019 Berlinale and priority actions have been drawn during a round table on gender balance chaired by the Commission, putting together private and public organizations. All participants agreed to **explore the creation of a European Ethic Committee for gender equality in the film industry**. For the Cannes Film Festival, private and public organisations will prepare a **joint paper on good practices** in the industry. Data gathered by the association 50/50 2020 will also be presented in the MEDIA stand.

The 2018 **colloquium on fundamental rights**, organised by the European Commission, discussed the topic of democracy in the EU. The colloquium addressed, among other matters, the democratic participation and political representation of all European citizens and, in particular, the under-representation and participation of women in decision making in politics and in public debates. Concrete proposals for improvement were discussed and are included in the conclusions¹⁷¹.

On 12-13 November 2018, the Commission organised a **meeting of the European Integration Network** devoted to the integration of migrant women. Best practices in relation to labour market integration, social integration and outreach and empowerment of migrant women were shared and discussed. A short analysis of policies and good practice relating to the integration of migrant women across the EU is available online¹⁷².

Another conference was organised on 27 November 2018 to discuss how to **attract women to the transport sector**¹⁷³. Participants looked at economically viable solutions to improve work-life balance and transport workers' choice of shifts. A collection of good practices on how to develop family friendly schedules will start in 2019 to complete this outcome. Positive insights were also gathered on the attractiveness of the transport sector for women. This input will be used to prepare a toolkit for primary and secondary school teachers to fight gender stereotypes.

¹⁷¹ Available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/conclusions_colloquium_2018_post_cab_clearance_clean.pdf

¹⁷² <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/feature/integration-of-migrant-women>.

¹⁷³ https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/social/events/conference-how-attract-women-transport-sector_en.

In 2018, intensive discussions took place in the **advisory committee** on equal opportunities between women and men about the next steps towards more gender equality in the EU and beyond, and on 19 December the committee adopted an opinion on *the future gender equality policy after 2019, old and new challenges and priorities*¹⁷⁴, giving recommendations to the EU institutions and the Member States.

CONCLUSION

Compared to many other parts of the world, the EU is a good address for women. According to the 2018 Sustainable Development Goals Index and Dashboards Report¹⁷⁵, 11 EU Member States have a score of more than 80 out of 100 for Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality. Sweden, Finland and France are in the lead, scoring above 87 and ranking respectively 2nd, 3rd and 5th worldwide. 11 EU Member States are in the worldwide top 20.

However, the reality is that even in the EU, where unequivocal gender equality is secured by law, equality between women and men is still not a tangible reality for too many. While the gender gap in education is being closed and even reversed, this does not yet yield true gender equality at work in the EU countries. Most indicators on gender equality are stagnating. Gender gaps in employment, hours worked and pay persist. The labour market participation of women in the EU remains about 11.5 p.p. lower than that of men, and women's pay is on average 16 % less. Progress on gender equality has also stalled when it comes to the proportion of women in decision-making positions. Currently, only 6.3 % of CEO positions in major publicly listed companies in the EU are held by women. Changes in attitudes and behaviours only come very slowly, showing the need for continuous commitment by all actors.

The Commission's strategic engagement ends in 2019, together with the Commission's term of office. In 2019, the Commission will be taking stock of the progress made under the current framework, identifying gaps and contributing to setting priorities for the future. As part of this work, the Commission will listen to the views of the EU Member States, stakeholders and civic society. With gender equality becoming more prominent in international debates and a clearly increased commitment to gender equality on the political scene, equality between women and men stands a chance of getting even more momentum in the coming years.

¹⁷⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/who-we-work-gender-equality/high-level-group-gender-mainstreaming-and-advisory-committee-equal-opportunities-women-and-men_en#advisorycommitteeeonequalopportunitiesforwomenandmen.

¹⁷⁵ Available at: <http://sdgindex.org/>

STATISTICAL ANNEX

ANNEX 1: MEMBER STATES' PERFORMANCE IN KEY AREAS

EQUAL ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Women's and men's employment rate (20-64 years old), 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and Q3-2018 (%)

	Men						Women					
	2010	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 Q3	2010	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 Q3
EU28	75.1	75.0	75.8	76.8	77.9	79.5	62.1	63.4	64.3	65.3	66.4	67.6
BE	73.5	71.6	71.3	72.3	73.4	73.8	61.6	62.9	63.0	63.0	63.6	66.3
BG	68.6	68.1	70.4	71.3	75.3	77.6	60.8	62.0	63.8	64.0	67.3	69.3
CZ	79.6	82.2	83.0	84.6	86.3	87.5	60.9	64.7	66.4	68.6	70.5	72.4
DK	78.6	79.5	80.2	80.7	80.2	82.0	73.0	72.2	72.6	74.0	73.7	75.1
DE	80.4	82.2	82.3	82.7	83.1	84.4	69.7	73.1	73.6	74.5	75.2	75.9
EE	67.8	78.3	80.5	80.8	82.4	83.2	65.9	70.6	72.6	72.6	75.1	75.7
IE	69.9	74.0	76.1	77.5	79.1	80.8	61.1	62.3	63.8	65.4	67.0	68.1
EL	76.0	62.6	64.0	65.8	67.7	71.3	51.8	44.3	46.0	46.8	48.0	50.1
ES	69.2	65.0	67.6	69.6	71.5	73.8	56.3	54.8	56.4	58.1	59.6	61.3
FR	74.0	73.1	73.2	73.8	74.6	75.5	64.9	65.6	66.0	66.3	66.7	67.8
HR	67.9	64.2	65.4	66.2	68.9	70.8	56.4	54.2	55.9	56.6	58.3	61.7
IT	72.7	69.7	70.6	71.7	72.3	73.8	49.5	50.3	50.6	51.6	52.5	53
CY	81.7	71.6	72.3	73.8	75.7	80.8	68.8	63.9	64.0	64.1	66.2	69
LV	64.0	73.1	74.6	74.7	77.0	80.6	64.5	68.5	70.5	71.8	72.7	74.9
LT	63.5	73.1	74.6	76.2	76.5	79.6	65.0	70.6	72.2	74.3	75.5	76.7
LU	79.2	78.4	76.7	76.1	75.4	75.0	62.0	65.5	65.0	65.1	67.5	68
HU	65.5	73.5	75.8	78.6	81.0	82.5	54.6	60.2	62.1	64.6	65.7	67
MT	78.2	81.1	82.1	83.5	84.7	86.5	41.6	54.3	55.3	58.0	60.6	65.3
NL	82.8	81.1	81.9	82.6	83.3	84.6	70.8	69.7	70.8	71.6	72.8	74.6
AT	79.0	78.3	78.4	78.7	79.4	81.7	68.8	70.1	70.2	70.9	71.4	71.8
PL	71.3	73.6	74.7	76.4	78.2	80.0	57.3	59.4	60.9	62.2	63.6	65.6
PT	75.4	71.3	72.6	74.2	77.3	79.3	65.6	64.2	65.9	67.4	69.8	72.5
RO	73.1	74.0	74.7	75.0	77.3	80.7	56.5	57.3	57.2	57.4	60.2	61.7
SI	74.0	71.6	73.3	73.3	76.9	79.8	66.5	63.6	64.7	66.7	69.7	71.6
SK	71.9	73.2	75.0	76.9	77.5	79.7	57.4	58.6	60.3	62.7	64.7	65.7
FI	74.5	74.0	73.9	75.0	75.9	79.6	71.5	72.1	71.8	71.7	72.4	74.8
SE	81.1	82.2	82.5	83.0	83.8	85.7	75.0	77.6	78.3	79.2	79.8	80.8
UK	79.3	81.9	82.5	83.1	83.4	83.8	67.9	70.6	71.3	72.1	73.1	73.7

Source: Eurostat, LFS [lfsa_ergan]

Employment gender gap in full-time equivalents (20-64 years old) (%)

	2010	2014	2015	2016	2017
EU28	19.6	18.1	18	18.1	18.1
BE	20.8	17.2	16.7	17.3	16.7
BG	7.9	6.3	6.7	7.4	8.1
CZ	20.6	19.3	18.5	18.2	18.3
DK	11.1	12	12.3	11.5	10.9

DE	24	22.2	21.8	21.2	20.9
EE	3.4	8.8	10.1	10	9.1
IE	16.2	18.3	18.7	18.5	18.6
EL	26.2	19.3	19.1	20.1	21.1
ES	17.6	14.8	15.7	15.8	16.4
FR	14.7	12.8	12.4	12.6	13
HR	13	10.8	10.2	10.3	11
IT	27.7	24	24.5	24.8	24.5
CY	15.2	9.5	9.6	10.4	10.7
LV	0.1	5.8	5.7	4.4	5.8
LT	-0.1	4.8	4.5	3.6	2.8
LU	25.8	21	19.8	18.5	16.3
HU	12.2	14.4	14.8	15.5	16.7
MT	40.8	33.6	32.9	32.6	31
NL	29.1	27.2	27.3	27.2	26.2
AT	22.2	20.7	20.8	20.2	20.4
PL	16.2	16.5	15.9	16.4	17
PT	12.4	8.6	8.6	8.7	9.5
RO	17.3	17.2	17.8	17.9	17.4
SI	10	10.7	11	9	10
SK	15.3	15.9	16.1	15.7	14.6
FI	5.8	4.6	4.7	6	6.4
SE	12.3	10.2	9.5	9.3	9.3
UK	21.3	21	20.7	20.7	20

Source: Eurostat, LFS

Female and male part-time employment as percentage of total employment (%)

	Men					Women				
	2010	2014	2015	2016	2017	2010	2014	2015	2016	2017
EU28	7.1	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.2	30.8	31.7	31.5	31.4	31.1
BE	8.1	8.2	9.0	9.3	9.8	41.9	41.0	41.3	41.9	40.9
BG	2.0	2.2	1.9	1.7	2.0	2.4	2.7	2.4	2.2	2.3
CZ	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	9.0	9.4	9.2	9.8	10.8
DK	10.1	11.7	12.0	12.7	12.4	34.2	31.2	30.9	32.9	31.4
DE	8.3	8.9	9.0	9.0	9.3	45.9	46.7	47.0	46.9	46.8
EE	5.9	5.6	5.7	6.4	5.8	13.1	10.9	12.9	12.8	12.9
IE	10.7	12.6	11.7	11.5	9.6	33.6	33.6	32.9	32.0	29.7
EL	3.3	6.5	6.6	6.9	6.5	10.1	12.9	13.0	13.6	14.0
ES	4.9	7.5	7.6	7.4	6.9	22.4	25.3	24.9	23.9	23.9
FR	6.2	7.3	7.3	7.4	7.5	29.9	30.4	30.0	29.6	29.4
HR	5.0	4.0	4.7	4.3	3.8	9.3	6.7	7.3	7.0	6.0
IT	4.9	7.7	7.9	8.1	8.2	28.8	32.1	32.4	32.7	32.5
CY	4.9	10.2	10.2	11.2	8.9	11.5	16.5	15.6	15.5	15.5
LV	7.5	4.5	4.3	5.9	4.6	10.8	8.8	9.9	10.6	10.4
LT	6.4	6.3	5.4	5.3	5.5	8.9	10.6	9.7	8.7	9.2

LU	3.2	4.3	5.1	5.9	5.7	35.8	35.4	33.5	34.8	35.3
HU	3.6	4.1	4.0	3.1	2.6	7.6	8.3	7.7	6.8	6.2
MT	4.2	6.2	5.7	5.3	5.6	23.3	27.3	25.7	25.0	23.6
NL	20.1	22.2	22.4	22.1	22.6	74.7	75.2	75.3	74.8	74.1
AT	7.9	9.4	9.7	10.5	10.5	44.2	47.2	47.8	47.9	47.9
PL	4.6	4.1	3.9	3.5	3.5	10.6	10.2	9.8	9.5	9.8
PT	4.9	7.5	6.9	6.6	5.8	12.3	12.4	12.3	11.9	11.4
RO	9.5	8.0	8.2	7.0	6.4	9.8	9.2	8.8	7.4	6.6
SI	6.4	6.1	6.3	5.5	6.0	12.4	13.0	12.9	12.7	13.7
SK	2.5	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.9	5.1	6.7	8.0	7.8	8.0
FI	8.0	8.1	8.6	8.9	8.7	17.4	17.5	17.0	18.4	18.6
SE	11.5	11.8	12.1	11.9	11.9	38.9	35.9	34.9	34.2	32.9
UK	9.3	9.9	9.7	9.8	9.6	40.9	40.1	39.7	39.6	39.1

Source: Eurostat, LFS [lfsa_eppga]

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK AND WORK OF EQUAL VALUE

The gender pay gap, 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 (%)

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	2014	2015		2016		2017	
EU28	17.1	16.6	16.5	p	16.3	p	16	p
BE	10.2	6.6	6.5		6.1		6	
BG	13	14.2	15.4		14.4		13.6	
CZ	21.6	22.5	22.5		21.5		21.1	
DK	17.1	16	15.1		15		14.7	
DE	22.3	22.3	22	p	21.5	p	21	p
EE	27.7	28.1	26.9		25.3		25.6	
IE	13.9	13.9	:		:		:	
EL	15	12.5	:		:		:	
ES	16.2	14.9	14.2		15.1		15.1	p
FR	15.6	15.5	15.3		15.3	p	15.4	p
HR	5.7	8.7	:		11.1		11.6	
IT	5.3	6.1	5.5		5.3		:	
CY	16.8	14.2	14		13.9		13.7	
LV	15.5	17.3	17		17		15.7	
LT	11.9	13.3	14.2		14.4		15.2	
LU	8.7	5.4	5.5		5.5		5	
HU	17.6	15.1	14		14		14.2	p
MT	7.2	10.6	10.4		11		12.2	
NL	17.8	16.2	16.1		15.6		15.2	
AT	24	22.2	21.7		20.1		19.9	
PL	4.5	7.7	7.4		7.2		7.2	p
PT	12.8	14.9	17.8		17.5		16.3	

RO	8.8	4.5	5.8	e	5.2	e	3.5	e
SI	0.9	7	8.1		7.8		8	
SK	19.6	19.7	19.6		19		19.8	
FI	20.3	18.4	17.6		17.4		16.7	p
SE	15.4	13.8	14		13.3		12.6	
UK	23.3	20.9	21		20.7		20.8	p

:=not available p=provisional e=estimated

Source: Eurostat, Structure of Earnings Survey [sdg_05_20]

Gender segregation in occupations and economic sectors, 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017

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 % for occupational segregation and 18.8 % for sectoral segregation.

Gender segregation in occupations						Gender segregation in sectors				
	2010	2014	2015	2016	2017	2010	2014	2015	2016	2017
EU28	24.8	24.4	24.3	24.1	24.0	19.1	18.8	18.8	18.9	18.8
BE	25.4	26.3	26.4	26.3	25.9	19.5	20.3	20.2	20.3	19.7
BG	28.9	28.2	28.6	28.4	28.2	21.1	21.6	21.9	21.8	21.9
CZ	28.3	28.2	28.2	28.4	28.0	20.9	21.3	21.5	21.3	20.5
DK	25.7	25.0	24.9	23.8	23.8	19.5	19.0	19.2	18.3	18.2
DE	26.1	25.4	25.3	24.9	24.7	19.4	19.4	19.5	19.3	19.3
EE	30.6	30.7	30.9	30.0	29.1	25.7	24.9	25.0	24.5	24.5
IE	25.4	25.5	25.4	24.9	24.7	20.3	19.6	20.0	20.3	20.2
EL	21.9	19.3	19.0	19.1	19.2	16.1	13.6	13.5	13.8	13.7
ES	26.5	25.3	25.2	25.5	25.7	20.4	19.4	19.4	19.8	19.6
FR	26.1	26.1	25.9	25.7	25.3	19.1	18.8	18.7	19.0	18.7
HR	28.0	27.8	28.1	29.0	29.1	20.6	20.4	21.0	22.0	22.4
IT	24.7	25.0	24.8	24.4	24.4	19.7	19.7	19.5	19.5	19.4
CY	28.9	28.6	28.9	28.6	28.3	20.0	18.9	19.4	19.0	18.9
LV	28.0	29.2	28.9	29.2	29.0	24.2	24.9	24.8	23.3	23.7
LT	28.8	29.3	28.2	27.7	28.0	22.0	23.0	22.4	21.8	22.3
LU	23.4	23.1	23.0	22.3	23.3	16.0	15.9	15.8	14.6	14.9
HU	27.7	27.5	28.0	27.3	27.5	20.7	19.8	20.5	20.1	20.5
MT	24.0	24.8	24.9	24.8	24.3	16.3	16.0	17.2	17.4	15.6
NL	25.0	24.9	24.9	24.9	24.6	19.4	18.2	18.1	18.4	17.6
AT	25.9	26.9	27.4	27.1	26.9	19.3	18.9	19.4	19.9	19.3
PL	26.0	27.3	26.9	26.9	26.8	20.5	21.4	21.5	21.7	21.9
PT	26.4	25.5	25.7	25.7	26.1	21.2	20.9	21.1	21.5	21.5
RO	22.0	22.6	23.0	23.8	23.8	16.7	17.8	18.1	18.6	18.4
SI	25.8	25.0	26.2	27.0	25.9	19.0	18.7	19.5	20.4	20.7
SK	31.1	30.8	29.5	29.4	29.4	25.2	23.9	23.6	23.2	23.5
FI	28.6	28.2	27.5	27.7	27.8	23.7	23.8	23.8	23.9	24.1
SE	26.1	25.3	25.0	24.6	24.1	21.5	20.6	20.6	20.4	19.9
UK	24.4	23.7	23.3	23.2	23.0	19.4	18.7	18.4	18.4	18.2

Source: Eurostat, LFS

Gender gap in pensions, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 (%)

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	2017	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
EU28	40.1	40.0	38.3	36.7	35.7	38.2	38.5	37.3	35.7	34.8
AT	41.4	41.9	41.1	40.6	41.4	38.1	39.0	39.0	39.1	40.1
BE	33.6	30.2	35.3	26.6	23.8	32.8	29.7	34.1	26.0	25.6
BG	30.0	23.7	28.3	25.8	25.8	30.7	23.9	29.3	27.2	27.5
CY	47.7	48.8	46.8	48.7	41.1	44.8	45.6	44.8	46.7	39.2
CZ	13.2	13.4	13.6	13.4	13.5	12.5	12.8	12.7	12.5	12.4
DE	45.6	45.1	41.8	40.2	38.1	45.6	45.8	42.5	40.3	37.7
DK	13.0	16.3	13.5	7.8	7.5	12.7	14.2	11.7	8.0	6.9
EE	3.3	3.4	3.9	1.8	2.6	5.4	4.4	3.1	2.3	3.1
EL	25.1	24.5	26.5	26.4	25.1	26.4	24.4	26.7	26.4	24.6
ES	36.7	36.0	35.5	33.8	32.8	35.2	34.0	33.7	32.5	31.2
FI	24.0	24.2	24.0	23.7	25.2	23.1	24.0	22.5	22.4	23.2
FR	35.9	35.4	32.9	32.4	29.5	35.9	35.8	34.1	33.4	30.4
HR	23.3	20.4	22.3	22.7	23.1	23.2	22.2	22.7	24.1	25.3
HU	14.0	13.0	14.6	15.2	15.4	14.5	13.2	14.9	14.3	14.3
IE	35.4	33.9	30.3	26.1	30.1	33.3	32.0	30.0	27.6	29.4
IT	37.9	38.0	36.3	36.8	35.8	33.1	33.4	32.2	32.5	32.1
LT	16.4	15.4	14.4	17.5	18.5	16.8	14.5	13.3	16.0	17.3
LU	45.1	40.0	35.9	43.1	42.6	41.7	39.5	34.2	43.3	44.0
LV	17.1	18.0	17.9	15.4	16.6	17.1	17.6	16.8	14.6	16.2
MT	25.3	25.6	30.2	44.8	46.1	27.0	27.2	31.3	42.5	44.1
NL	46.4	46.0	44.5	45.4	43.4	41.7	39.9	39.8	42.1	41.1
PL	22.5	23.4	21.0	21.8	21.4	22.3	21.9	19.5	20.5	20.8
PT	32.2	32.8	31.9	32.6	32.1	31.6	32.1	31.5	31.2	31.6
RO	28.0	35.4	58.1	25.2	25.2	25.2	34.3	55.1	27.1	27.8
SE	26.7	29.7	28.8	28.3	26.0	26.7	29.8	28.5	28.7	26.0
SI	20.5	17.4	19.0	15.8	14.2	23.9	20.1	21.2	18.9	17.5
SK	7.0	8.3	7.7	8.1	8.8	5.1	7.3	7.3	7.8	7.9
UK	38.7	40.5	39.5	34.8	36.2	36.1	39.1	38.0	34.4	35.7

Source: Eurostat. EU-SILC

Gender gap in pension 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	2017	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017

EU28	6.3	6.1	5.9	5.7	6.2	5.4	5.3	5.1	5	5.5
AT	9.7	11.1	11.3	10.2	12.6	8.6	9.7	10.2	9.1	10.9
BE	18.2	18.8	18.5	15	14.3	15.8	17	17.3	13.2	12.8
BG	0.1	0.2	-1.1	-1.8	-2.4	0	0.1	-0.9	-1.5	-1.7
CY	-0.3	1.1	0.9	0.7	0.1	-0.3	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.2
CZ	0	0.2	0.4	-0.2	-0.1	0	0.2	0.3	-0.2	-0.1
DE	3.7	2.6	1.2	1.3	1.2	3.6	2.7	1.4	1.3	1.2
DK	0	0.1	-0.5	-0.5	-0.4	0	0.1	-0.2	-0.5	-0.3
EE	-0.3	-0.9	-0.5	-1.9	-1.1	-0.2	-0.9	-0.6	-1.8	-1.1
EL	15	17	18.8	16.8	16	12.2	14	15.6	13.7	13.1
ES	25.3	26.3	27.2	27.2	27.7	21.1	21.9	21.8	22.1	22.9
FI	-0.8	-0.1	-0.1	-0.4	-0.1	-0.7	-0.1	-0.1	-0.4	-0.3
FR	1.1	1.9	1.7	1.9	0.8	1.2	2	1.6	2	0.8
HR	-0.9	-2.9	-1.2	6.6	7.6	-0.5	-2.9	-0.8	7.2	7.1
HU	0.4	0.3	-0.3	0.1	-1.3	0.4	0.2	-0.4	0.1	-1.1
IE	18.9	18.8	14.5	9.3		15.5	16.2	13	9.6	
IT	14.4	13.7	15.2	15.2	16.4	10.6	9.8	10.8	11.1	12.4
LT	-1	-0.7	-0.7	0	-0.1	-1.1	-0.8	-0.7	0	-0.2
LU	8.5	8	6.5	6.9	6.1	8	7.4	6.6	7.1	5.8
LV	-0.6	0	-0.1	-0.6	-0.6	-0.5	-0.2	0	-0.7	-0.4
MT	39.8	36.3	32.3	13.4	12.2	31.7	29.1	25.7	10.7	9.7
NL	0.1	0.5	0.5	0	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.1	0.4
PL	1.2	0.1	-0.9	-2.4	-4.6	1	0	-0.8	-1.9	-3.9
PT	6.9	6.4	5.3	6.9	5.7	5.7	5.8	4.9	5.9	5.2
RO	3.9	3.8	3.4	3.6	5.2	4	3.5	3.1	3.3	4.4
SE	0.1	0	-0.7	-0.8	-0.2	0.2	0	-0.5	-0.5	-0.3
SI	-6.7	-6.6	-6	-3.4	-2.2	-5.4	-6.8	-5.9	-3.7	-3.1
SK	-0.2	-0.8	-0.4	-0.2	-0.4	-0.2	-0.7	-0.3	-0.2	-0.5
UK	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	

Source: Eurostat. EU-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	2015	2016	2017	2018	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018
EU-28	11.9	22.7	23.9	25.3	26.2	24.4	28.5	28.8	29.8	30.0	26.3	27.4	27.3	28.1	30.4
BE	10.5	26.0	28.6	30.7	30.9	39.6	38.7	38.7	38.3	37.3	33.3	21.4	21.4	21.4	21.4
BG	11.2	19.0	15.3	17.1	16.4	22.1	20.0	19.2	26.7	26.7	16.7	35.0	47.4	23.8	23.8
CZ	12.2	10.4	10.1	14.5	15.7	22.0	20.0	20.5	20.5	22.5		17.6	17.6	11.8	28.6
DK	17.7	25.8	27.1	30.3	30.7	37.4	37.4	36.9	37.4	37.1	47.4	29.4	29.4	40.9	40.9
DE	12.6	26.1	29.5	31.9	33.1	32.8	36.1	36.8	37.1	30.9	37.5	37.5	37.5	43.8	43.8
EE	7.0	8.1	8.8	7.4	7.4	22.8	23.8	27.0	26.7	29.7	7.7	13.3	13.3	26.7	26.7
IE	8.4	15.3	16.5	17.6	18.1	13.9	15.9	22.2	22.2	22.2	20.0	26.7	26.7	26.7	26.7
EL	6.2	9.8	9.1	11.3	9.8	17.3	23.3	18.7	18.3	18.3	31.3	6.7		17.4	18.2
ES	9.5	18.7	20.3	22.0	23.2	36.6	42.4	39.1	40.0	41.7	50.0	28.6	25.0	35.7	61.1
FR	12.3	35.6	41.2	43.4	44.1	19.4	26.2	26.1	26.9	26.9	34.2	47.1	48.7	50.0	50.0

HR	15.6	22.2	19.9	21.6	19.3	24.8	24.5	19.9	17.9	20.5	15.8	14.3	13.6	28.6	23.8
IT	4.5	28.6	32.3	34.0	35.5	21.1	31.1	31.1	31.0	35.8	20.8	37.5	29.4	27.8	23.8
CY	4.0	9.0	10.8	10.4	10.5	12.5	12.5	18.6	17.9	17.9	16.7	8.3	8.3	8.3	16.7
LV	23.5	30.4	28.5	28.8	30.1	21.0	16.0	16.0	18.0	18.0	21.4	28.6	21.4	21.4	21.4
LT	13.1	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.1	19.1	24.1	24.3	20.6	21.4	13.3	26.7	26.7	20.0	13.3
LU	3.5	12.1	12.9	12.0	14.3	20.0	28.3	28.3	28.3	31.7	26.7	26.7	20.0	20.0	20.0
HU	13.6	17.8	12.3	14.5	15.3	8.8	10.1	10.1	10.1	12.6					7.1
MT	2.4	4.5	4.5	8.4	8.4	8.7	13.0	13.0	12.7	14.5	22.2	6.7	5.9	13.3	13.3
NL	14.9	25.5	27.5	29.5	29.8	41.3	38.3	38.7	36.0	33.3	25.0	38.5	38.5	41.7	37.5
AT	8.7	20.0	18.1	19.2	23.8	27.9	30.6	30.6	31.1	35.5	42.9	28.6	21.4	21.4	35.7
PL	11.6	19.4	18.8	20.1	20.2	19.6	25.2	28.0	28.3	28.5	25.0	31.6	25.0	27.3	26.1
PT	5.4	13.5	14.3	16.2	16.7	30.0	30.9	34.3	35.2	36.1	29.4	26.7	22.2	22.2	16.7
RO	21.3	11.8	10.1	11.0	8.2	11.4	13.7	14.3	20.9	21.9	5.9	18.2	31.8	25.0	32.1
SI	9.8	21.5	24.8	22.6	26.2	15.6	34.4	34.4	35.6	24.4	21.1	47.1	43.8	47.1	47.1
SK	21.6	12.7	12.5	15.1	20.8	16.0	20.0	20.5	20.8	20.8	14.3		13.3	13.3	33.3
FI	25.9	29.2	30.1	32.8	33.8	40.0	41.5	41.5	42.0	41.5	55.0	35.7	35.7	35.3	35.3
SE	26.4	32.6	36.9	36.3	35.8	47.0	43.6	45.3	46.1	46.1	47.6	50.0	50.0	52.2	52.2
UK	13.3	27.8	27.0	27.2	28.9	22.0	29.4	29.6	32.0	32.2	16.0	31.8	36.4	26.1	21.7

Source: EIGE. gender statistics database

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Istanbul Convention			
	signature	ratification	entry into force
EU	13-06-2017		
AT	11-05-2011	14-11-2013	01-08-2014
BE	11-09-2012	14-03-2016	01-07-2016
BG	21-04-2016		
HR	22-01-2013	12-06-2018	01-10-2018
CY	16-06-2015	10-11-2017	01-03-2018
CZ	02-05-2016		
DK	11-10-2013	23-04-2014	01-08-2014
EE	02-12-2014	26-10-2017	01-02-2018
FI	11-05-2011	17-04-2015	01-08-2015
FR	11-05-2011	04-07-2014	01-11-2014
DE	11-05-2011	12-10-2017	01-02-2018
EL	11-05-2011	18-06-2018	01-10-2018
HU	14-03-2014		
IE	05-11-2015		
IT	27-09-2012	10-09-2013	01-08-2014
LV	18-05-2016		
LT	07-06-2013		
LU	11-05-2011	07-08-2018	01-12-2018
MT	21-05-2012	29-07-2014	01-11-2014
NL	14-11-2012	18-11-2015	01-03-2016

PL	18-12-2012	27-04-2015	01-08-2015
PT	11-05-2011	05-02-2013	01-08-2014
RO	27-06-2014	23-05-2016	01-09-2016
SK	11-05-2011		
SI	08-09-2011	05-02-2015	01-06-2015
ES	11-05-2011	10-04-2014	01-08-2014
SE	11-05-2011	01-07-2014	01-11-2014
UK	08-06-2012		

ANNEX 2: BASELINE FOR THE 2016-2019 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)

N o	Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	EU-level target
1	Gender employment gap (20-64) [<i>Eurostat. LFS. lfsa_ergan</i>]	11.5 pps (2014)	11.6 pps (2015)	11.6 pps (2016)	11.5 pps (2017)		0 pps
2	Gender employment gap (20-64) in full-time equivalents [<i>Eurostat. LFS</i>]	18.1 pps (2014)	18 pps (2015)	18.1 pps (2016)	18.1 pps (2017)		
3	Gender gap in part-time employment (15-64) among parents [<i>Eurostat. LFS. lfst_hhptety</i>]	32.7 pps (2014)	32.7 pps (2015)	32.4 pps (2016)	32.4 pps (2017)		
4	Time spent in unpaid care work and housework per week disaggregated by sex [<i>Eurofound. EWCS</i>]	M: 9 hrs W: 24 hrs (2010)	M: 9 hrs W: 22 hrs (2015)	:	:		
5	Part-time work (15-64) due to looking after children of incapacitated adults disaggregated by sex [<i>Eurostat. LFS. lfsa_epgar</i>]	M: 4.2 % W: 27.1 % (2014)	M: 4.4 % W: 27.2 % (2015)	M: 4.6 % W: 27.4 % (2016)	M: 5 % W: 27.5 % (2017)		
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) [<i>Eurostat. SILC. ilc_caindformal</i>]	0-3 years: 28.4 % 3-school age: 83.1 % (2014)	0-3 years: 30.3 % 3-school age: 83.3 % (2015)	0-3 years: 32.9 % 3-school age: 86.3 % (2016)	0-3 years: 34.2 % 3-school age: 85.7 % (2017)		0-3 years: 33 % 3-school age: 90 %
7	Proportion of active population (50-64 years) caring for elderly or disabled relatives at least several days a week disaggregated by sex [<i>Eurofound. EQLS</i>]	M: 10 % W: 17 % (2011)	:	M: 11 % W: 21 % (2016)	:		
8	Gaps in employment rates between non-EU	19.7 pps	20.9 pps	21.5 pps	21.1 pps		

	national men and women	(2014)	(2015)	(2016)	(2017)		
9	Gaps in employment rates between recent non-EU national men and women	22.6 pps (2014)	25.6 pps (2015)	20.7 pps (2016)	20.9 pps (2017)		
10	Female entrepreneurs (as % of all entrepreneurs) [<i>Eurostat. LFS. lfsa_esgais</i>]	32 % (2014)	32 % (2015)	32 % (2016)	33 % (2017)		
11	Proportion of research performing organisations that adopted gender equality plans [<i>DG RTD. She Figures</i>]	36 % (2014)	:	:	56 % (2016)		

REDUCING THE GENDER PAY. EARNINGS AND PENSION GAPS AND THUS FIGHTING POVERTY AMONG WOMEN (INDICATORS. AVAILABLE DATA AND TARGETS)

N o	Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	EU-level target
1	Gender pay gap [<i>Eurostat. SES. earn_gr_gpgr2</i>]	16.6 % (2014)	16.5p % (2015)	16.3p % (2016)	16p % (2017)		
2	Gender overall earnings gap [<i>Eurostat. SES. teqges01</i>]	41.2 % (2010)	39.6 % (2014)	:	:		
3	Gender segregation in economic sectors (S) and occupations (O) [<i>Eurostat. LFS</i>]	S: 18.8 % O: 24.4 % (2014)	S: 18.8 % O: 24.3 % (2015)	S: 18.9 % O: 24.1 % (2016)	S: 18.8 % O: 24 % (2017)		
4	Gender pension gap (65-79) [<i>Eurostat. SILC</i>]	40.0 % (2014)	38.3 % (2015)	36.7 % (2016)	35.7 % (2017)		
5	Gender coverage gap in pensions (65-79) [<i>Eurostat. SILC</i>]	6.1 % (2014)	5.9 % (2015)	5.7 % (2016)	6.2 % (2017)		
6	In-work poverty of women and men [<i>Eurostat. SILC. ilc_iw01</i>]	M: 9.9 % W: 9.1 % (2014)	M: 10.1 % W: 8.7 % (2015)	M: 10 % W: 9.1 % (2016)	M: 10 % W: 9.1 % (2017)		
7	At risk of poverty or social exclusion in old age (65+) [<i>Eurostat. SILC. ilc_peps01</i>]	M: 14.6 % W: 20.2 % (2014)	M: 14.6 % W: 19.6 % (2015)	M: 15 % W: 20.6 % (2016)	M: 15 % W: 20.5 % (2017)		
8	Single parent households at risk of poverty or social exclusion [<i>Eurostat. SILC. ilc_peps03</i>]	48.4 % (2014)	48.2 % (2015)	48 % (2016)	44.1 % (2017)		

PROMOTING EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN IN DECISION MAKING (INDICATORS. LATEST AVAILABLE DATA AND TARGETS)

N o	Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	EU- level target
1	Proportion of women among members of the highest decision-making body of the largest nationally registered companies listed on the national stock exchange [<i>EIGE gender statistics database</i>]	21.2 % (Apr 2015)	23.3 % (Apr 2016)	24.6 % (Apr 2017)	26.2 % (Apr 2018)		
2	Proportion of women among presidents and CEOs of the largest nationally registered companies listed on the national stock exchange [<i>EIGE gender statistics database</i>]	Presidents: 6.9 % CEOs: 3.6 % (Apr 2015)	Presidents: 6.9 % CEOs: 5.1 % (Apr 2016)	Presidents: 7 % CEOs: 5.6 % (Apr 2017)	Presidents: 7.5 % CEOs: 6.3 % (Apr 2018)		
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 [<i>EIGE gender statistics database</i>]	Non-executive directors: 23 % Senior executives: 13.6 % (Apr 2015)	Non-executive directors: 25.5 % Senior executives: 14.9 % (Apr 2016)	Non-executive directors: 26.9 % Senior executives: 15.5 % (Apr 2017)	Non-executive directors: 28.8 % Senior executives: 15.9 % (Apr 2018)		
4	Proportion of women heads of institutions in the higher education sector [<i>DG RTD. She Figures</i>]	20 % (2014)	:	:	21.7 % (2017)		
5	Proportion of women in the single /lower houses of the national /federal parliaments of the Member States and in the European Parliament [<i>EIGE gender statistics database</i>]	28.5 % EP: 37 %	28.8 % EP:37.3 %	29.8 % EP: 36.1 %	30.0 % EP: 36.4 %		
6	Proportion of women among the members of the national /federal governments (senior ministers) of the Member States and in the European Commission [<i>EIGE gender statistics database</i>]	27.4 % EC: 32 %	27.3 % EC: 32 %	28.1 % EC: 32 %	30.4 % EC: 32 %		
7	Proportion of women in senior and middle management in the European Commission's administration [<i>DG HR</i>]	28 % and 32 % (Feb 2015)	31 % and 34 % (Nov 2016)	35 % and 38 % (Nov 2017)	37 % and 40 % (Nov 2018)		

COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND PROTECTING AND SUPPORTING VICTIMS
(INDICATORS. LATEST AVAILABLE DATA AND TARGETS)

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