

**October 2021**

With gender equality one of its core values, the EU has committed to 'gender mainstreaming'. This means that all EU policies must take both women's and men's perspectives into consideration. The priorities set out in the EU's current five-year gender equality strategy include taking account of the gender dimension in major climate change and digitalisation initiatives, and in specific sectors such as transport, energy and agriculture. The aim is to introduce an intersectional approach across EU policies and earmark dedicated funding for a gender equal future. In the face of the negative impact of the pandemic on gender equality, a key challenge for the EU and its Member States will be to ensure a gender-sensitive approach to the recovery that does not exacerbate inequalities.

Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament: State of play

Study by Rosamund Shreeves and Nora Hahnkamper-Vandenbulcke, October 2021

The European Parliament's own gender mainstreaming policy, launched in 2003, has evolved considerably over time. This study, supporting a forthcoming report by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, gives an insight into the concept of gender mainstreaming and tools to implement it, provides an overview of Parliament's current gender mainstreaming policy and analyses gender mainstreaming practices in other EU institutions, national parliaments and international institutions, putting Parliament's efforts into a wider context.

Exploring gender equality across policy areas

'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, October 2021

Parliament's Gender Equality Week is a relatively new initiative, first held in 2020, that gives all committees and delegations an opportunity to explore issues relevant to gender equality in their particular areas of competence.

Gender equality – State of play

Women's rights: 25-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action

'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, February 2021

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) is considered an international 'bill of rights' for women, defining women's rights as human rights and setting goals across a range of issues affecting women and girls. Under the BPfA, the EU and its Member States committed to achieving concrete targets in 12 critical areas. See also the longer briefing, [Beijing Platform for Action: 25-year review and future priorities](#) and related [infographic](#).

Gender equality and Covid-19

Gender equality in the Recovery and Resilience Facility

Briefing by Madgalena Sapala, October 2021

The EU's major financial instrument supporting recovery in the Member States is an opportunity to deliver a long-standing commitment to gender mainstreaming across different policies and EU spending and to channel resources towards measures that promote gender equality. This briefing gives an overview of how the gender equality aspect has been built into the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation and concrete examples of how Member States have taken the issue into account in their national recovery and resilience plans.

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Towards a more resilient Europe post-coronavirus: Options to enhance the EU's resilience to structural risks – Chapter on Enhancing EU gender equality policy

Study coordinated by Étienne Bassot, Franck Debié, Stanislas de Finance and Astrid Worum, April 2021

The pandemic hit at a pivotal moment when the EU had committed to refocus on combating gender inequalities. Evidence shows that the lockdowns led to an increase in violence against women, a widening of the gender divide in unpaid care work and potentially long-term impacts on women's paid work and incomes. These are all areas where the EU and the Member States could further develop their capacities and where consistent application of gender mainstreaming tools could make a real difference to outcomes.

Achieving gender equality in the face of the pandemic and existing challenges

'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, January 2021

Since the EU's 2020-2025 gender equality strategy was launched in March 2020, the pandemic has exposed and exacerbated gender inequalities, creating further challenges. This note was prepared ahead of Parliament's plenary session in January 2021, whose agenda included parliamentary committee reports on the EU gender equality strategy, women's participation in the digital economy and the gender impacts of the pandemic.

Covid-19: The need for a gendered response

Briefing by Rosamund Shreeves, EPRS, February 2021

In the midst of the current Covid-19 pandemic, adopting a gender perspective may seem a secondary concern. However, evidence shows that pandemics affect women and men differently and that it is essential to recognise this to understand the impacts on individuals and communities and respond effectively and equitably.

The coronavirus crisis: An emerging gender divide?

Infographic by Marie Lecerf and Giulio Sabbati, February 2021

The EU has been severely affected by the coronavirus crisis, whose impact extends far beyond public health. This infographic aims to shed light on the socioeconomic and psychological impacts of the pandemic on women, through the lens of the transformation of the labour market, work-life balance and well-being.

Women in politics and leadership

Women in politics in the EU: State of play

'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, February 2021

The EU has committed to achieving gender balance in political representation. Since EU policies can influence the lives of women and men in different ways, both sexes must have equal representation in posts that can make a difference. The pandemic has shone a spotlight on the need for gender balance in decision-making.

Women in parliaments

Infographic by Martina Prpic, Giulio Sabbati and Samy Chahri, February 2020

This infographic shows the proportion of women in parliaments around the world, compares representation of women in national parliaments and the European Parliament and shows the proportion of women in the European Parliament by political group. It also gives an overview of female Members of the European Parliament by Member State and the gender quotas applicable to the 2019 elections.

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Women in foreign affairs and international security: Still far from gender equality

Briefing by Ionel Zamfir, March 2021

While gaps persist, women's representation at management and ministerial levels in the areas of foreign affairs and security has increased, at EU, US and UN level. Women's role in peacekeeping has drawn particular attention, as research has consistently shown that gender equality contributes to peace, and that peace negotiations involving women have a better chance of being sustainable and effective.

Women in local and regional government: Still a long way from achieving parity

Briefing by Vasileios Margaras, March 2020

Local and regional government ought to constitute an advantageous sphere for women: a space where they can easily participate in decision-making without having to sacrifice their multiple family, social and career roles. Nevertheless, the data show that it is not always easy for women to participate in these structures.

Gender balance on company boards

'At a glance' note by Martina Prpic, September 2020

In 2012, the European Commission proposed a directive to improve gender balance on company boards. It required that the under-represented sex make up 40 % of board members of companies listed on stock exchanges. Although the European Parliament supported the proposal in 2013, the directive has still not been adopted owing to reservations from several Member States in the Council.

Gender pay gap and female employment

European gender equality strategy and binding pay transparency measures – Pre-legislative synthesis of national, regional and local positions on the European Commission's initiatives

Briefing by Claudio Collovà and Laura Zandersone with Elise Habib, November 2020

Part of a series offering syntheses of the pre-legislative state of play and consultation on key European Commission priorities during the current five-year term, this briefing summarises the state of play in gender equality strategy, examines how existing policy works on the ground and identifies best practice and ideas for the future from governmental organisations at all levels of the EU's multi-level system of governance.

Recent trends in female employment

Briefing by Monika Kiss, October 2020

The coronavirus crisis has had a harsher impact on women than on men when it comes to the labour market. One of the main reasons is that men tend more to work in sectors considered as essential economic activities (with the exception of health care), whereas women's work often involves contact with customers and clients, making teleworking impossible. Women have also been faced with increased childcare needs, reducing their ability to work, while enjoying a lower level of social protection owing to their working arrangements.

Teaching: A woman's world

Infographic by Ivana Katsarova, February 2020

A report on gender segregation by the European Institute for Gender Equality shows that in all EU countries men dominate certain professional fields, such as engineering and technology. By contrast, a number of jobs are still commonly considered to be for 'women only'. These include pre-school education, nursing, midwifery, secretarial work, and domestic and personal care related services.

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Teaching careers in the EU: Why boys do not want to be teachers

Briefing by Ivana Katsarova, February 2020

In the EU, only 7 % of all teachers are under 30 years old, while around 36 % are aged 50 or over. Of the nearly 6 million people working as school teachers, 72 % are women, thus confirming the perception that teaching is a 'woman's world'.

Gender-based violence

Adding gender-based violence to the list of serious crimes in Article 83(1) TFEU

'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, September 2021

Despite the extent of gender-based violence and the harm it causes, the EU does not currently have a specific legal instrument to address it. A resolution setting out proposals for strengthening the EU's response by identifying gender-based violence as an area of serious crime at EU level was adopted during Parliament's plenary session in September.

Gender-based violence as a new area of crime listed in Article 83(1) TFEU – European added value assessment

Study by Cecilia Navarra, Meenakshi Fernandes and Niombo Lomba, with María García Muñoz, June, 2021

This European added value assessment (EAVA) supported Parliament's legislative-initiative report on a 'Proposal for a Council decision to identify gender-based violence as a new area of crime listed in Article 83(1) TFEU', 2021/2035(INL). The assessment presents evidence pointing to the need to classify gender-based violence as a particularly serious crime with a cross-border dimension, estimates the significant benefits that could be generated through EU action and identifies complementary EU action that could enhance the European added value of this policy option.

Combating gender-based violence: Cyber violence – European added value assessment

Study by Niombo Lomba, Cecilia Navarra and Meenakshi Fernandes, March 2021

With the rise of new technology and social media, gender-based cyber violence is a constantly growing threat with impacts at individual, social and economic levels, on women and girls and on society in general. Action taken so far has been inadequate, and the cross-border nature of gender-based cyber violence has yet to be properly addressed. This European added value assessment, which complemented Parliament's own initiative legislative report on combating gender-based violence: cyber violence (2020/2035(INL)) found that the costs to individuals and society are substantial and that a combination of legal and non-legal policy options would generate the greatest European added value.

Violence against women in the EU: State of play

Briefing by Rosamund Shreeves and Martina Prpic, November 2020

The EU is tackling the problem of violence against women in various ways, but has no binding instrument specifically designed to protect women from violence. Explaining the scale of the problem, against the backdrop of the current Covid-19 crisis, this briefing gives an overview of the international context, political commitments at EU level, the activities of the European Parliament, the various approaches taken by the Member States, and stakeholders' views.

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The Istanbul Convention: A tool to tackle violence against women and girls

'At a glance' note by Ulla Jurviste and Rosamund Shreeves, November 2020

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) is the first instrument in Europe to set legally binding standards specifically to prevent gender-based violence, protect victims of violence and punish perpetrators. EU accession to the Istanbul Convention is one of the priorities in the EU's new 2020-2025 gender equality strategy.

Zero tolerance for female genital mutilation

'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, February 2021

The EU is committed to working collectively to eradicate female genital mutilation (FGM), as part of broader efforts to combat all forms of violence against women and girls, and to supporting the efforts of its Member States in this field. The European Commission has undertaken to assess EU efforts to combat FGM every year, on or around 6 February – International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation.

Women, peace and security

Shsecurity Index and 2020 report

October 2021

EPRS data were used as a basis for this resource, which records gender balance in the EU, its Member States and the G20 in six categories: politics, diplomacy, the military, the police, civil and military missions and business.

Women and culture

Women in arts and culture – Artists, not muses

'At a glance' note by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, March 2021

As in all other domains, women's place in the arts and culture has not matched their ambition and skills. Traditionally women were the muses of male artists or amateur performing artists, and arts education for them was very limited. Despite good progress, there is still a lot to do to ensure women can contribute their artistic vision fully and freely and hold positions of responsibility, and to recover the works of courageous women artists from the dusty archives of museums.

The Bauhaus movement: Where are the women?

Briefing by Ivana Katsarova, March 2021

Bauhaus, arguably the most influential art and design movement in history, celebrated its centenary in 2019. While many of the avant-garde genres that helped shape modern art focused on painting, the Bauhaus movement encompassed a wide array of media, materials, and disciplines, ranging from the fine arts to architecture and design. Bauhaus is renowned for its smart use of resources, simplicity, effectiveness and polished, smooth lines. The early years, the movement restricted women to areas deemed proper for their gender, such as textiles and weaving, discouraging them from indulging in architecture, sculpture or painting.

European Heritage Days – Women's contribution

'At a glance' note by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, September, 2020

The European Heritage Days certainly help raise awareness of Europe's rich and diverse heritage, but have they promoted women's contribution to that heritage sufficiently or done enough to highlight the female dimension of the aim to promote diversity?

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Women in front of and behind the camera: Still struggling with inequality

'At a glance' note by Ivana Katsarova, March 2021

Although almost as many female (44 %) as male (56 %) directors graduate from film schools, the average proportion of female directors in the industry is around 20 % only, with the figures varying from 5 % in Latvia to 30 % in Sweden. Gender equality in the film industry is still a long way off.

Gender equality in sports: (Slowly) changing the game

'At a glance' note by Ivana Katsarova, February 2020

Women's involvement in the Olympic Movement has evolved over the years, but girls and women around the world still enjoy fewer opportunities and less investment, training and corporate attention when they play sport. There is also room for improvement when it comes to women's participation in sports governance structures.

Women in agriculture

Women and their roles in rural areas

'At a glance' note by Rachele Rossi, April 2017

The many roles played by women in rural communities help to maintain vibrant rural areas and viable farm businesses. Yet despite their crucial contribution, rural women still face numerous challenges, such as difficulties accessing the labour market, a lack of adequate public services and a weak presence in decision-making forums.

Women in fisheries

Women in fisheries

Topical Digest, September 2021

Women play a key role in the fisheries sector, although their work is often unrecognised and underpaid in low-valued positions in the processing and aquaculture sectors. Many women also have a significant role in supporting fishing activities in small-scale, family-run businesses. This work – often unpaid and less visible – can include a variety of vital tasks, such as maintaining equipment, and processing and marketing the fish. The publications included in the topical digest offer background information and analysis in relation to women's important role in fishing communities and include a recent Parliament resolution with recommendations, 'Fishers for the future' (16 September 2021).

Disinformation

What if deepfakes made us doubt everything we see and hear?

'At a glance' note by Philip Boucher, September 2021

Deepfakes are hyper-realistic media products created by means of artificial intelligence techniques that manipulate how people look and the things that they appear to say or do. The accessibility and outputs of deepfake generation tools are improving rapidly, and their use is increasing exponentially. A wide range of malicious uses have been identified, including fraud, extortion and political disinformation. However, the most widespread use so far has been the production of non-consensual pornographic videos, with negative impacts that overwhelmingly affect women. While the technology itself is legal, some malicious uses are not, and a combination of legal and technical measures could be mobilised to limit their production and dissemination.

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Migration and gender

Implementation of Directive 2011/36/EU: Migration and gender issues

Study by Alina Ileana Dinu, September 2020

The Anti-Trafficking Directive (Directive 2011/36/EU) is the benchmark legislation in the fight against human trafficking at EU level. The aim of this European implementation assessment was to gather evidence on progress made and challenges that occur in the implementation of the directive in the Member States, with a double focus: the migratory context and gender issues. Almost 10 years after its adoption, the Anti-Trafficking Directive remains a valuable tool in combating trafficking in human beings in the EU. Nevertheless, the evaluation points to the need to continue efforts to ensure that all the directive's main provisions are applied. The persisting grey areas and obstacles are significant enough to put full achievement of the directive's objectives in jeopardy.

Comparative Law Library publications: Equality and non-discrimination

These external studies, commissioned by the EPRS Comparative Law Library, are part of a larger comparative law project that is studying the way the principles of equality and non-discrimination have developed and are demonstrated in a broad range of legal systems around the world.

Austria

J. Vašek, *Die Grundsätze der Gleichheit und der Nichtdiskriminierung, eine rechtsvergleichende Perspektive – Österreich*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, October 2020, PE 659.277 (original version in German, also available in French).

Belgium

Ch. Behrendt, *Les principes d'égalité et non-discrimination, une perspective de droit comparé – Belgique*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, February 2021, PE 679.087 (in French only).

Canada

C. Sheppard, *The principles of equality and non-discrimination, a comparative law perspective – Canada*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, November 2020, PE 659.362.

Chili

G. García Pino, *Los principios de igualdad y no discriminación, una perspectiva de Derecho Comparado – Chile*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, March 2021, PE 690.533 (in Spanish only).

Council of Europe

J. Ziller, *Les principes d'égalité et de non-discrimination, une perspective de droit comparé – Conseil de l'Europe*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, October 2020, PE 659.276 (in French only).

European Union

V. Salvatore, *I principi di uguaglianza e non discriminazione, una prospettiva di diritto comparato – Unione europea*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, January 2021, PE 679.060 (in Italian only).

France

M.-C. Ponthoreau, *Les principes d'égalité et non-discrimination, une perspective de droit comparé – France*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, January 2021, PE 679.061 (in French only)

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Germany

F. Reimer, *Die Grundsätze der Gleichheit und der Nichtdiskriminierung, eine rechtsvergleichende Perspektive – Deutschland*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, October 2020, PE 659.305, (in German only).

Italy

M. Luciani, *I principi di eguaglianza e di non discriminazione, una prospettiva di diritto comparato – Italia*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, October 2020, PE 659.298 (in Italian only).

Peru

E. Espinosa-Saldaña Barrera, *Los principios de igualdad y no discriminación, una perspectiva de Derecho Comparado – Perú*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, December 2020, PE 659.380 (in Spanish only).

Spain

P. González-Trevijano Sánchez, *Los principios de igualdad y no discriminación, una perspectiva de Derecho Comparado – España*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, October 2020, PE 659.297 (in Spanish only).

Switzerland

N. Frei, *Die Grundsätze der Gleichheit und der Nichtdiskriminierung, eine rechtsvergleichende Perspektive – Schweiz*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, October 2020, PE 659.292 (in German only).

United States of America

E.L. Osborne, *The principles of equality and non-discrimination, a comparative law perspective – United States of America*, Comparative Law Library, EPRS, European Parliament, March 2021, PE 689.375.

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