



February 2022

*Gender equality is one of the EU's core values and the Union has committed to 'gender mainstreaming', meaning that, in principle, all EU policies must take both women's and men's perspectives into consideration. In the face of the negative impact of the pandemic on gender equality, a key challenge facing the EU and its Member States is the need to ensure a gender-sensitive approach to the recovery that does not exacerbate inequalities. To mark International Women's Day in March 2022, the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) is hosting a meeting with national parliaments to explore the potential for gender-sensitive recovery policies, spotlighting inter-related issues around unpaid care work, teleworking and wellbeing.*

## Gender equality: State of play

### Beyond the pandemic: The potential of ambitious gender equality policy

'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, February 2022

Before the pandemic, gender equality was advancing in most of the areas measured by the EU's gender equality index and the less gender-equal Member States were catching up with the most gender-equal ones. The pandemic has put these advances at risk. Issues brought into sharp focus include the gender dimensions of the increase in unpaid care work, the accelerated shift to remote working and the impacts of both developments on wellbeing and mental health.

### Enhancing EU gender equality policy

Chapter by Rosamund Shreeves in **the study Towards a more resilient Europe post-coronavirus: Options to enhance the EU's resilience to structural risks coordinated by Étienne Bassot, Franck Debié, Stanislas de Finance and Astrid Worum, April 2021**

The coronavirus 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, 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 have, or could further develop, their capacities and where consistent application of gender mainstreaming tools could make a real difference to outcomes.

### 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) adopted at the conference is considered the 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 twelve critical areas. See also the longer briefing **Beijing Platform for Action: 25-year review and future priorities** and the related **infographic**.

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# Gender equality and Covid-19

## Gender equality in the Recovery and Resilience Facility

*Briefing by Magdalena Sapala, October 2021*

The creation of the EU's biggest financial instrument supporting recovery in the Member States is an opportunity to put into practice the long-standing commitment to mainstream gender across different policies and EU spending, and to channel the extraordinary resources towards measures that promote gender equality. This briefing gives an overview of how the gender equality aspect is built into the RRF Regulation and concrete examples of how Member States have taken it into account in their national recovery and resilience plans.

## 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 these differences in order to understand the impacts on individuals and communities and to respond effectively and equitably.

## The coronavirus crisis: An emerging gender divide?

*Infographic by Marie Lecerf and Giulio Sabbati, February 2021*

The EU remains severely hit by the coronavirus crisis, whose impact extends far beyond public health. This infographic sheds 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.

## 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 issued in March 2020, the coronavirus pandemic has exposed and exacerbated gender inequalities, creating further challenges. This note was prepared for Parliament's January 2021 plenary session, where committee reports on the EU gender equality strategy, women's participation in the digital economy and the gender impacts of the pandemic had been tabled.

# Gender mainstreaming

## Exploring gender equality across policy area

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

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

## 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, formally launched in 2003, has evolved considerably over time. This study, supporting a forthcoming report by the FEMM committee, 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, in order to place Parliament's efforts in the wider context.

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# 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 is committed to achieving gender balance in political representation. Since EU policies can influence the lives of women and men in various ways, it is important that both sexes 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.

## 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 whether in the EU, the US or at UN level. Women's role in peacekeeping receives 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 on the part of several Member States in the Council.

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# Gender pay gap and female employment

## Equal pay for equal work between men and women: Pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms

*Legislative briefing by Marie Lecerf, February 2022*

Equal pay for equal work is one of the EU's founding principles, enshrined in Article 157 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. However, implementation and enforcement of this principle remain a challenge. One concern is that, owing to a lack of pay transparency, pay discrimination often goes undetected and victims are prevented from bringing claims.

## International Equal Pay Day

*'At a glance' note by Marie Lecerf, September 2021*

As things stand, the gender pay gap persists globally and in the EU, and progress in reducing it is slow. The pandemic has been a further brake on gender equality. To accelerate the realisation of the principle of 'equal pay for work of equal value', the United Nations marked the first International Day for Equal Pay on 18 September 2020. In 2021, the debate centred on ensuring that equal pay remained central to the response to the pandemic and on recognition of women's major contribution to economic recovery.

## 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*

This briefing forms 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. It summarises the state of affairs in the relevant policy field, examines how existing policy works on the ground, and, where possible, identifies best practice and ideas for the future on the part of governmental organisations at all levels of European system of multi-level 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 are more likely to work in sectors considered as essential economic activities (with the exception of healthcare), 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 aged under 30, while around 36 % are 50 or older. 72 % of the nearly 6 million people working as school teachers are women, thus confirming the perception that teaching is a 'woman's world'.

## Gender and work-life balance

### Maternity and paternity leave in the EU

'At a glance' infographic by Marie Lecerf, Ulla Jurviste and Samy Chahri, February 2022

This infographic aims to present the current maternity and paternity leave situation in EU Member States. Maternity rights are set out in the 1992 **Pregnant Workers Directive**. This EU legislation sets the minimum period for maternity leave at 14 weeks, with 2 weeks' compulsory leave before and/or after confinement and an adequate allowance subject to national legislation. A right to two weeks paternity leave was introduced in a new **Directive on Work-life Balance for Parents and Carers**, which entered into force on 1 August 2019. **Member States** have until 2 August 2022 to adopt the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with the directive. The right to paternity leave may not be made subject to a period of work qualification or to a length of service qualification.

## Gender-based violence

### Violence against women in the EU: State of play

Briefing by Rosamund Shreeves, November 2021

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

### Zero tolerance for female genital mutilation

'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, February 2022

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 – the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation. This publication is a further update of an 'at a glance' note originally published in January 2015.

### 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. An own-initiative legislative report setting out proposals for strengthening the EU's response by identifying gender-based violence at EU level as an area of serious crime was adopted during the plenary session in September 2021.

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## 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 supports the European 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 supporting the classification of 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 cyber-violence

*'At a glance' note by Rosamund Shreeves, December 2021*

As the world moves online, forms of violence that already affect women and girls disproportionately are following suit, and digital technologies are enabling them to take on new guises. The EU does not have a legislative framework to address this gender-based violence, despite its harmful impacts on individuals, society and democracy. A legislative-initiative report calling for EU legislation to fight gender-based cyber-violence, and provide its victims across the Union with equal protection was to be put to the vote during Parliament's December 2021 plenary session.

## 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 as generally. 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 (EAVA), which complements the European Parliament's own initiative legislative report on combating gender-based violence: Cyber violence (2020/2035(INL)) finds that the cost to individuals and society is substantial and that a combination of legal and non-legal policy options would generate the greatest European added value.

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

*'At a glance' note by Ulla Jurviste and Rosamund Shreeves, November 2021*

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 new EU 2020-2025 gender equality strategy.

## Understanding EU action against human trafficking

*Briefing by Sofija Voronova, 25 May 2021*

Gender plays an important part in human trafficking, as women and men are not trafficked in the same way or for the same purpose. Women and girls represent a disproportionately high number of victims, both globally and at EU level, especially in terms of sexual exploitation. This form of exploitation is still dominant in the EU, even though other forms are on the rise, such as exploitation for forced labour and for criminal activities. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought new challenges for victims, as well as amplifying the vulnerabilities of those most at risk.

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## European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

*'At a glance' note by Sofija Voronova, November 2021*

Child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are among the worst forms of violence against children, and constitute serious crimes that know no borders. The continuous increase in child sexual exploitation and abuse, not least owing to the pandemic, underscores the importance of harmonised national legislation and international cooperation to prevent these offences, protect the victims and prosecute the perpetrators. The European day helps to raise awareness of the need for prevention and action to protect children.

## Migration and gender

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

*Study by Alina Ileana Dinu, September 2020*

Directive 2011/36/EU (Anti-trafficking Directive) is benchmark legislation on the fight against human trafficking at European level. The aim of this European implementation assessment is to gather evidence on progress made and challenges in implementing 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 out the need to continue efforts to ensure application of its provisions in all its main areas. The persisting grey areas and obstacles are significant enough to put the full achievement of the directive's objectives at risk.

### Gender aspects of migration and asylum in the EU: An overview

*Briefing by Rosamund Shreeves, March 2016*

Men and women are exposed to different types of risk and vulnerability during the different stages of migration. A body of gender-sensitive standards and guidance on displacement and asylum has been built up at international and EU levels. However, reservations have been expressed regarding some aspects of the EU legal framework, particularly its implementation at national level. It has been concluded that variable responsiveness to gender across the EU means that women are not guaranteed consistent gender-sensitive treatment when they seek protection in Europe. Stakeholders including the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), women's and refugee organisations and the European Parliament have expressed strong concerns about protection gaps, and called for further action to protect women and girls.

## Migration and children

### Child migrants: Irregular entry and asylum

*Infographic by Maria Diaz Crego and Györgyi Mácsai, February 2022*

The number of migrant children has been rising globally since the turn of the century. According to estimates by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in 2020, 35.5 million children were living outside their country of birth, 11.5 million more than in 2000. Child migration takes many forms, from regular family reunification to forced and traumatic migration. This infographic focuses exclusively on forced and irregular movements of migrant children to the EU.

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# Women, peace and security

## Security Index and 2020 report

October 2021

Data from EPRS was used as a basis for this resource. It 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 arts and culture has not matched their ambitions and skills. Traditionally they were 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 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 of the Bauhaus restricted women to areas deemed proper for their gender, such as textiles and weaving, while 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

European Heritage Days have helped raise awareness of Europe's rich and diverse heritage, but have they promoted women's contribution to our common heritage sufficiently or highlighted enough the female dimension of the aim to promote diversity?

### 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 film industry is just around 20 %, with results varying from 5 % in Latvia to 30 % in Sweden, thus leaving gender equality still a long way off.

### Gender equality in sports: (slowly) changing the game

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

Even though women's presence and involvement in the Olympic Movement have evolved steadily, girls and women across the world still get fewer opportunities and less investment, training and corporate attention when they play sport. Today, there is still ample room for improvement when it comes to women's participation in sports governance structures.

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## 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 this topical digest offer background information and analysis in relation to women's important role in fishing communities and 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 through 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 can be mobilised to limit their production and dissemination.

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## Comparative Law Library publications – Equality and non-discrimination

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

### Austria

*Die Grundsätze der Gleichheit und der Nichtdiskriminierung, eine rechtsvergleichende Perspektive – Österreich,*  
by J. Vašek, EPRS Comparative Law Library, October 2020, PE 659.277.

### Belgium

*Les principes d'égalité et non-discrimination, une perspective de droit comparé – Belgique,*  
by Ch. Behrendt, EPRS Comparative Law Library, February 2021, PE 679.087.

### Canada

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

### Chili

*Los principios de igualdad y no discriminación, una perspectiva de Derecho Comparado – Chile,*  
by G. García Pino, EPRS Comparative Law Library, March 2021, PE 690.533.

### Council of Europe

*Les principes d'égalité et de non-discrimination, une perspective de droit comparé – Conseil de l'Europe,*  
by J. Ziller, EPRS Comparative Law Library, October 2020 PE 659.276.

### European Union

*I principi di uguaglianza e non discriminazione, una prospettiva di diritto comparato – Unione europea,*  
by V. Salvatore, EPRS Comparative Law Library, January 2021, PE 679.060.

### France

*Les principes d'égalité et non-discrimination, une perspective de droit comparé – France,*  
by M.-C. Ponthoreau, EPRS Comparative Law Library, January 2021, PE 679.061.

### Germany

*Die Grundsätze der Gleichheit und der Nichtdiskriminierung, eine rechtsvergleichende Perspektive – Deutschland,*  
F. Reimer, EPRS Comparative Law Library, October 2020, PE 659.305.

### Italy

*I principi di eguaglianza e di non discriminazione, una prospettiva di diritto comparato – Italia,*  
M. Luciani, EPRS Comparative Law Library, October 2020, PE 659.298.

### Peru

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

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## Spain

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

## Switzerland

*Die Grundsätze der Gleichheit und der Nichtdiskriminierung, eine rechtsvergleichende Perspektive – Schweiz,*  
N. Frei, *EPRS Comparative Law Library*, October 2020, PE 659.292.

## United States of America

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

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