March 2023

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. To mark International Women’s Day in March 2023, the European Parliament’s Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) is hosting a meeting with national parliaments to address gender aspects of energy poverty, an issue of growing concern which affects women at a higher rate due to their lower average income.

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 these 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 Bassat, 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.
Gender mainstreaming

Exploring gender equality across policy areas
‘At a glance’ note by Rosamund Shreeves, October 2021
The European Union has adopted gender mainstreaming as its official approach to gender equality, alongside targeted action to eliminate discrimination and advance women's empowerment. In October 2021, Parliament held its second Gender Equality Week, with a series of events aimed at highlighting the importance of gender equality and gender mainstreaming across different policy domains.

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 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.

COVID-19 and the recovery

Gender equality in the Recovery and Resilience Facility
Briefing by Magdalena Sapala, October 2022
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
During the pandemic, a gender perspective could have been seen as 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 has been 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 were tabled.
War on Ukraine

Russia’s war on Ukraine: The risk of trafficking of human beings
‘At a glance’ note by Maria-Margarita Mentzelopoulou, May 2022

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has forced millions of people to flee the country or move to safety within Ukraine’s borders, resulting in one of the largest European humanitarian crises in recent times. The chaos generated by the conflict has exponentially increased the risk of human trafficking and exploitation, especially for the most vulnerable.

Russia’s war on Ukraine: The situation of LGBTI people
‘At a glance’ note by David de Groot and Micaela del Monte, May 2022

With each passing day, the chaos engendered by the war increases the risk of violence and exploitation exponentially, in particular for the most vulnerable, including women, children, Roma people, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersexual (LGBTI) community.

Russia’s war on Ukraine: A gender-sensitive humanitarian response
‘At a glance’ note by Rosamund Shreeves, March 2022

Even – or especially – in complex, emergency situations, a gender perspective is vital in order to take into account the specific needs of women and men and the different risks to which they are exposed. Humanitarian actors are calling for a gender-sensitive response to the Ukraine crisis, to help tackle barriers to accessing vital services, address increased risks of gender-based violence and facilitate the reception and integration of refugees.

Human rights

Protests in Iran over the death of Mahsa Amini
‘At a glance’ note by Beatrix Immenkamp, September 2022

Iran has seen massive protests over the death in police custody of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, a Kurdish woman arrested for allegedly violating Iran’s compulsory veiling laws. Protests have spread to more than 150 cities across Iran, including universities. The government has reacted violently to the protests, leading to at least 75 deaths and over a thousand arrests. Iranians are protesting not just against Amini’s death, but also against an increasingly repressive regime that targets women, journalists and minorities. During its current mandate, the European Parliament has adopted eight resolutions condemning human rights violations in Iran.

Foreign affairs, security and defence

Growing transatlantic divide on abortion rights
Briefing by Gisela Grieger, October 2022

Once at the forefront of liberalising abortion rights, the United States has rolled back women’s reproductive rights. On 24 June 2022, the US Supreme Court overturned its landmark 1973 ruling in Roe v Wade, establishing a constitutional abortion right under certain circumstances. For almost half a century, Roe v Wade made it unconstitutional to enact and enforce abortion ‘bans’ at state level. The 2022 ruling defers the highly polarised US abortion rights debate to the state level, where a patchwork of abortion laws has since emerged. Republican lawmakers seeking to codify a federal abortion ban, inter alia, claim alignment with Europe. The Supreme Court ruling galvanised voters, and abortion rights were unexpectedly on the ballot at the 2022 mid-term elections.
**SHecurity Index and 2021 report**  
*October 2021*

Data from EPRS were used as a basis for this resource, authored by Hannah Neumann MEP and Leonie Hopgood. 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 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.

**Climate change, energy and environment**

**Gender aspects of energy poverty**  
*'At a glance' note by Ionel Zamfir, February 2023*

This year, International Women’s Day is being celebrated in the context of Russia’s war in Ukraine. By threatening energy shortages, the conflict has exacerbated the inflationary effects of the post-pandemic recovery, leading to a cost-of-living crisis in Europe. Parliament’s Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) is marking the day with a meeting with national parliaments on 1 March 2023. On the agenda: the impact of rising energy prices on women and potential measures to mitigate it.

**Women and the environment**  
*In the briefing Beijing Platform for Action: 25-year review and future priorities by Rosamund Shreeves and Martina Prpic, February 2020, pp. 8-9*

The signatories to the Beijing Platform for Action committed to involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels, integrate gender perspectives in sustainable development policies, and strengthen or establish mechanisms to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women. Twenty-five years on, women and girls in developing countries have been particularly affected by environmental stress and crises triggered by increasing temperatures, rising sea levels and loss of biodiversity. In the EU, analysis shows gender gaps in data, access to energy, employment and decision-making. The European Parliament has stressed the need for equal participation of women in decision-making and called for the adoption of a more gender-sensitive approach in climate change policy.

**Trade**

**Gender equality and trade**  
*'At a glance’ note by Ionel Zamfir, January 2019*

Trade liberalisation has a gender-differentiated impact inside and outside Europe. The EU, which is committed to promoting gender equality in all policies, has established specific mechanisms in its trade policy to enforce women’s labour and human rights, and monitor the gender impact of its trade preferences. The European Parliament supports this policy and has asked for it to be reinforced.
Transport

Women working in transport
‘At a glance’ note by Karin Smit-Jacobs, March 2022
Women only represent on average around 16% (2020) of total employees in the different transport sectors and modes (land, water and air). In view of growing labour shortages in this important economic sector, worsened by the coronavirus pandemic, this share needs to increase, according to experts.

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.

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).

Employment and social affairs

Maternity and paternity leave in the EU
‘At a glance’ infographic by Marie Lecerf, Verena Kern and Samy Chahri, March 2023
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 had 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.

Equal pay for equal work between men and women – Pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms
‘EU Legislation in progress’ briefing by Marie Lecerf, February 2023
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 2022*

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 2022, for the third edition, the debate focused on pay transparency measures.

**What if care work were recognised as a driver of sustainable growth?**

*Briefing by Meenakshi Fernandes and Cecilia Navarra, September 2022*

Care work provided in homes and institutions is a public good that is under-valued by society. Care workers are more likely to have low earnings and precarious working conditions. About 9 in 10 care workers are women. Most unpaid care work within households is carried out by women. The ‘unpaid care penalty’ for women in the EU, which is equivalent to the earnings they lost because of this unbalanced distribution of care responsibilities, is estimated to reach €242 billion per year. EU action in the care sector has the potential for high returns for society. Fostering the ‘equal earner – equal carer model’ could generate benefits of between €24 billion and €48 billion a year. EU action to promote affordable, high-quality care could produce an additional €90 billion to €160 billion in benefits each year.

**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 provides an analysis of the positions of organisations at European, national, regional and local levels on the Commission’s gender equality strategy and the proposal on binding pay transparency measures.

**Recent trends in female employment**

*Briefing by Monika Kiss, October 2020*

The coronavirus crisis 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 were also faced with increased childcare needs, reducing their ability to work, while enjoying a lower level of social protection owing to their working arrangements.

**Migration**

**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.
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 ten 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.

Education, culture and sports

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. 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.

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. Of the nearly 6 million people working as school teachers 72% are women, thus confirming the perception that teaching is a 'woman's world'.
Teaching: A woman’s world
Infographic by Ivana Katsarova, February 2020
A report on gender segregation by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) 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.

Women and education in the EU
Infographic by Martina Prpic, Ulla Jurviste and Eulalia Claros, March 2015
Gender equality in education is guaranteed by law in EU Member States, so the issues are far more complex than simply that of gaining access to education for girls, as remains the problem in many developing countries. Yet despite the legal equality in the EU, inequalities persist because of the educational choices that girls make, which may prevent them from achieving the potential they show earlier in education. Moreover, care needs to be taken not to ignore the problem of low-performing boys, a phenomenon sometimes overshadowed by the successes of men generally.

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.

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.
Decision-making and politics

Gender balance on corporate boards
‘At a glance’ note by Marie Lecerf, November 2022
In 2012, the European Commission tabled a directive to improve gender balance on company boards. It set a target whereby women should make up 40% of non-executive director positions and 33% of all directors’ positions for listed companies. After being blocked in the Council for a decade, the Parliament and Council reached agreement in June 2022. The proposal was put to the vote and adopted during the Parliament’s November II 2022 plenary session.

Women in politics in the EU – State of play
Briefing 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 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-based violence

EU accession to the Istanbul Convention
‘At a glance’ note by Ionel Zamfir, February 2023
On 25 January 2023, the Committees on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) and Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) jointly adopted, by a substantial majority, their interim report on EU accession to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). The report calls for swift European Union (EU) ratification, noting that the 2021 opinion of the European Court of Justice enables EU accession even in the absence of a common accord among Member States. A lack of consensus in the Council has proved an obstacle to ratification to date, however the Swedish Council Presidency has made it one of its priorities.
Violence against women in the EU – State of play

Briefing by Rosamund Shreeves, November 2022
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. However, in March 2022, the European Commission put forward a proposal for a directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence. This briefing explains the scale of the problem, also in view of the 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.

Violence against women and domestic violence – The new Commission proposal in light of European Parliament requests

Study by Izabela Cristina Bacian and Nora Hahnkamper-Vandenbulck, June 2022
On 8 March 2022, the European Commission presented a long-awaited proposal for a directive combating violence against women and domestic violence. Ahead of its deliberations, the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) asked the Ex-Post Evaluation Unit (EVAL) within DG EPRS to prepare an analysis of the Commission proposal in light of the European Parliament’s requests for a legislative framework on preventing and combating gender-based violence, submitted over time. Accordingly, this study examines the Parliament’s main requests in this regard adopted since 2009 – when Parliament first called for a directive on preventing and combating all forms of violence against women – compared with the provisions of the Commission proposal.

Combating violence against women and domestic violence
Briefing by Laura Zandersone, June 2022
This briefing provides an initial analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the European Commission’s impact assessment (IA) accompanying the above-mentioned proposal, submitted on 8 March 2022. According to the Commission, the proposal sets out targeted rules for the protection of victims of VaW and domestic violence in order to strengthen the actions taken by the Member States. The proposal aims to ensure minimum rules on the level of protection across the EU against such violence, regardless of whether it takes place online or offline.

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. See also the related infographic.

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.

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 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 legislative-initiative 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 Piotr Bąkowski and Sofija Voronova, 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 brought new challenges for victims, as well as amplifying the vulnerabilities of those most at risk.
European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

'At a glance' note by Sofija Voronova, November 2022

Child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are among the worst forms of violence against children, and constitute serious crimes that know no borders. The constant rise in child sexual exploitation and abuse, exacerbated by the COVID-19 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 to this end.

Sexual orientation and gender identity

Bans on conversion 'therapies' – The situation in selected EU Member States

Briefing by David de Groot, June 2022

LGBTI conversion 'therapies' are practices that can be defined as 'any treatment aimed at changing a person's sexual orientation or gender identity'. The European Parliament has strongly condemned all forms of discrimination against LGBTI people, including LGBTI conversion 'therapies'. Moreover, it has also made repeated calls on the Member States to ban such practices. This briefing looks at the laws on conversion 'therapies' that are already in place or are proposed for adoption in some Member States. It then compares them, among other things, based on the definition of the practice, the scope of protection offered and the sanctions envisaged.

The rights of LGBTI people in the European Union

Briefing by David de Groot, May 2022

The prohibition of discrimination and the protection of human rights are important elements of the EU legal order. Nevertheless, discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people persists throughout the EU and takes various forms. This briefing looks, amongst other things, at the scope of EU non-discrimination law, the recognition of marital or family status in the EU Member States and implications for free movement. Combating discrimination has become part of EU internal and external policies, and is the subject of numerous resolutions of the European Parliament. However, action in this area remains problematic when it touches on issues pertaining to areas that are traditionally the preserve of Member States, such as marital status and family law.

Intersectionality

Fundamental rights and non-discrimination

Topical digest, May 2022

Further EPRS publications covering intersections with discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, race and ethnicity, religion and belief.