

**ACTION PLAN ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING
OF THE BUDGETARY CONTROL COMMITTEE
9TH PARLIAMENTARY TERM**

Gender equality forms an integral part of the European Union's fundamental values, enshrined in Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty on European Union, while also being firmly established in Article 8 of the TFUE, stipulating that: *"In all its activities, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women."* Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union further stipulates that *"Equality between women and men must be ensured in all areas, including employment, work and pay"*.

Gender mainstreaming requires the assessment of the different implications of our public policies on both men and women at every stage of policy making and processes - from the design to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation - with a view to achieving equality between women and men.

The European Parliament decided, in its resolution of 13 March 2003, that the gender perspective should be integrated in the work of its committees and delegations, and it set out the basis on which the Gender Mainstreaming Network should be established.

One of the most recent developments in this area was the addition of Rule 228a to Parliament's Rules of Procedure on 31 January 2019 (currently Rule 239 in the last version of Rules of Procedures of July 2019), which reads as follows: *"The Bureau shall adopt a gender action plan aimed at incorporating a gender perspective in all Parliament's activities, at all levels and all stages. The gender action plan shall be monitored bi-annually and reviewed at least every five years."*

In line with European Parliament resolutions from 13 March 2003, 17 November 2011, 8 March 2016 and 15 January 2019 and in order to ensure that continuous attention is paid to the issue of gender mainstreaming, the Budgetary Control Committee intends to integrate in its regular functioning and work, the following objectives and actions:

1. With regard to the budgetary control perspective and monitoring of EU policies:

- The overarching CONT objective shall be adequately to take into account gender issues in its oversight function through the annual discharge procedure and related resolutions, in order to assess that the other institutions and bodies integrate gender mainstreaming requirements in their internal organizational and management systems and/or in the designing and implementation of the development policies in their remit;
- Furthermore, gender issues should be taken up in CONT opinions, working documents related to specific Court of Auditors' special reports if any findings or recommendations on the matter are issued. Likewise, the gender perspective shall be considered in

amendments by CONT rapporteurs, shadow rapporteurs and other Members, as well as in opinions issued by specialised committees where they tackle the issue according to their own specific concerns and their policy environments. The CONT may echo/endorse the concerns of specialised committees;

- Overall, in preparing reports, opinions, amendments and questionnaires, CONT shall ensure that gender focus is a recurrent theme of CONT scrutiny of EU policies or spending programmes.

The CONT committee scrutiny may be implemented as follows:

- ✓ **By providing paragraph(s)** to be included in the CONT draft texts identifying/analysing trends and gaps on gender related issues and/or focused questions on as specific issues impacting Gender equality;
- ✓ **By ensuring regular screening** of ECA reports or EU institutions' management reports focusing on the issue; if the reports are deemed lacking or insufficient in assessing the impact of a specific policy on gender equality, the committee shall clearly address the issue to improve the report and seek a better overview by collecting statistics disaggregated by gender;
- ✓ **By encouraging the identification and use of key indicators** for EU executives and management as another means of getting better informed policy making and implementation;
- ✓ **By developing a set of statistics** on CONT amendments tabled and adopted related to Gender Mainstreaming or on any other CONT activities, such as hearings with gender balanced list of experts/speakers, the composition of missions and delegations and/or informing Members of best practices identified in the area of gender mainstreaming;
- ✓ **By attending any dedicated meetings/working groups** on Gender Mainstreaming and seeking to be consulted on any initiatives or assessment related to this field in any existing EU policy and related spending program under consideration;
- ✓ **By following up the staffing monitoring** of the EU institutions/bodies in order to ensure that the targets as regards equality between women and men in staffing are achieved.

In the absence of analysis or data on gender, the committee may request assistance from the Policy Department or EPRS, as appropriate.

2. With regard to the practices of the work of Members and staff:

- Gender neutral language (EP Guidelines "Gender neutral language in the European Parliament") shall be used in all documents related to the work of the committee (budgetary control, legislative and non-legislative files); attention should be paid in the daily work of the Committee as well as in the committee's reports, opinions and commissioned studies;
- On every occasion when the opportunity arises, the Committee should seek to ensure that its Bureau achieves gender balance;

- In the allocation of CONT files, the Committee should ensure a balanced approach on appointments and distribution of reports and opinions, appointment of standing and shadow rapporteurs, and when composing CONT missions/delegations, organigrams, representation/negotiating teams or in representation at external events/conferences;
- In discussions, the President or presiding Member shall ensure that speaking time reflects the gender balance of the Members present;
- Gender balance of paid experts and invited speakers should be sought when organising hearings and commissioning studies, as well as regarding interlocutors on Committee delegation visits. The secretariat, with the Policy Department of the Directorate, will propose gender balanced lists of experts;
- Where CONT missions include meetings with civil society organisations these should, where the organisations themselves are not gender balanced, include womens' business organisations, women in NGOs, and organisations defending human and womens' rights;
- Reports from missions shall contain gender budget assessments;
- The CONT Secretariat should coordinate with the FEMM committee and the gender mainstreaming network in order to ensure that information on gender issues and best practices in gender mainstreaming are circulated to the committee;
- The selection procedure in the CONT secretariat should be carried out with the aim of gender balance and equity;
- CONT shall progressively increase awareness of gender budgeting as an important milestone in promoting gender mainstreaming¹. Attendance at training, distribution of key documents, introduction of this matter in the terms of reference of CONT studies assessing good governance in the EU institutions / bodies and any policy areas for helping awareness raising while exploring how and what Parliament could initiate on the topic.

3. Monitoring and follow-up of the Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming

- This plan will be closely monitored by the Members responsible for gender mainstreaming in the committee. Whilst all staff are responsible for gender mainstreaming, a person within the CONT secretariat staff shall be tasked with monitoring the implementation of this Action Plan, in cooperation with members responsible;

¹ Gender budgeting is a strategy to achieve equality between women and men by focusing on how public resources are collected and spent. The Council of Europe defines gender budgeting as a gender-based assessment of budgets incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality.

- The Members responsible shall report back annually by appropriate means to the committee on the work of Gender Mainstreaming network.

The action plan was adopted by CONT coordinators on 4 December 2019.

CONT representatives in the Gender Mainstreaming Network are:

- Ms Katalin CSEH - Member,
- Ms Sheila RITCHIE - Substitute.