

CONCEPT NOTE

MEETING OF OFFICIALS FROM ENLARGEMENT COUNTRIES'

12 June 2013

Brussels

Background

Aligning national legislation with the European Union (hereinafter EU) acquis and ensuring an effective administrative structure to implement properly EU rules belong to the main criteria for the EU membership. It is in the Community's interest to involve candidate and potential candidate countries (hereinafter Enlargement countries) in the work of the European Institute for Gender Equality (hereinafter EIGE) and to provide them with technical assistance in the field of gender equality in order to help meeting EU standards.

Providing information to the Community Institutions on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the accession and candidate countries is one of the main tasks of EIGE. EIGE is a European agency which supports EU and its Member States in their efforts to promote gender equality, including gender mainstreaming in all Community policies and resulting national policies, to fight discrimination based on sex and to raise awareness about gender equality issues.

This year EIGE has launched an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) project *"Preparatory Measures for the participation of candidate countries and potential candidates in EIGE's work"* whose main objective is to strengthen the capacity of Enlargement countries to comply with the EU policies in the field of gender equality. This is a pilot project that is used to establish contacts, assess the needs and expectation of the Enlargement countries, and explore ways/forms of cooperation with EIGE after 2013.

The actions envisaged in this project are mainly targeting officials from Enlargement countries' in competent administrations or other relevant gender equality bodies, working at central level on the implementation of gender equality policies and on gender. These officers have been appointed by their administrations following an invitation from EIGE.

Objectives of the Meeting

The aim of the meeting of officials from enlargement countries is to present EIGE's mission, structure and mandate; to create space for sharing good practices and experiences from enlargement countries in the implementation of gender equality and gender mainstreaming by the governments of enlargement countries; and to build further cooperation with EIGE and enlargement countries in the area of gender equality.

The meeting will serve as a platform for discussion and consultation on a number of selected issues:

- identifying needs and expectations of the officials from the administration of enlargement countries and exploring ways/forms of further cooperation with EIGE in the area of gender equality;
- discussing challenges of integrating gender equality policies in each candidate and potential candidate country's accession process;
- discussing ways of including collection of information from enlargement countries into EIGE's research projects in order to enhance communication and information sharing between enlargement countries, EIGE and EU Member States;
- identifying and developing synergies between already developed projects and existing research in the area of gender equality in enlargement countries with EIGE's work;
- identifying and discussing ways to involve EIGE in the current or future gender equality projects or activities in enlargement countries (e.g. to organize joint in-country seminars or info-days on specific subject);
- discussing ways of involving other relevant stakeholders at the national or local level working in the area of gender equality in enlargement countries in EIGE's work (e.g. to integrate and associate national experts in relevant working groups and technical meetings so as to facilitate the 'learning by doing' process).

As different countries have developed different strategies for addressing gender equality please prepare a short presentation (10 minutes per country) of your country experiences, progress and challenges that you have been facing while aligning national legislation with EU gender equality acquis. We would appreciate if you could also include information on relevant national gender equality projects or activities funded by IPA or other European funds, their objectives and results.

One of EIGE's focal areas is compiling existing data at European level and developing methods to improve the objectivity, comparability and reliability of data and indicators. In order to achieve these objectives we work closely with Eurostat and other relevant institutions. To identify ways to develop synergies between collection of data in enlargement countries with EIGE's research we would kindly ask you if you could also share information on collection and availability of comparable and reliable gender statistics in your country and

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information on cooperation with Eurostat and other relevant institutions.

In order to have a constructive dialogue we would like to invite you to visit our webpage prior to the meeting (<http://eige.europa.eu/>), where you can find information on EIGE's work, projects and activities.

Format and Structure

The meeting will be held on 12 June 2013 in the premises of the Council of the EU in Brussels. It will involve short presentations of EIGE's work and countries presentations followed by a discussion on future collaboration and information exchange between EIGE and enlargement countries. The final part will focus on identifying the main conclusions and recommendations that were raised during the meeting regarding the next steps and particular measures to be taken to build and strengthen future cooperation between EIGE and Enlargement countries.

Output

A summary report of the meeting with the relevant insights.

Venue of the meeting

Room: Salle agencies (1st floor)

Council of the European Union

Rue de la Loi 175

B-1048 Brussels

Belgium

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