

POLICY CONTEXT

The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) was officially adopted at the fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. All EU Member States are committed to implementing its strategic objectives at the national level. A series of indicators have been developed by each of the rotating Presidencies of the Council of the European Union since 1999 to monitor its implementation in the EU.

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women (area H) is one of the 12 areas of concern of the BPfA. It covers three strategic objectives:

- **H1: create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies;**
- **H2: integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects; and**
- **H3: generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.**

In 2009, the Council emphasised the need to enhance the status of the national bodies for the promotion of gender equality in order to bring gender equality to the forefront. The Council also stressed that the conditions necessary for an effective national institutional structure for gender equality are that it is located at the highest possible level in the government, involves civil society organisations, can draw from sufficient resources and has the possibility to influence the development of all government policies. The European Commission's Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 also highlights the need to take gender equality into account in all EU and national policies, and implement gender mainstreaming as an integral part of policy-making, including through impact assessment and evaluation processes.

FINDINGS

By 2012, all 28 EU Member States had established governmental gender equality bodies and designated bodies for the promotion of equal treatment. However, compared to 2005, no substantial progress has been observed within the existing institutions in relation to their mandate, human resources and capacity to promote gender equality and ensure a more systematic implementation of gender mainstreaming. In fact, there has been a tendency for gender equality, as a policy area, to decrease in importance.

The report by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) on the effectiveness of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of gender equality (2013), building on the conceptual and methodological framework laid down by the Finnish Presidency (Council of the European Union, 2006), reviewed the progress of Member States since 2005 regarding institutional mechanisms for gender equality, including gender mainstreaming. On 9 and 10 December 2013, the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council of Ministers (EPSCO) adopted **conclusions on the effectiveness of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women and gender equality** on the basis of EIGE's report and took note on four indicators in this area, including a new indicator on production and dissemination of statistics disaggregated by sex.

EU-LEVEL INDICATORS

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|---------------------|--|
| Indicator 1 | Status of the governmental body responsible for promoting gender equality |
| Indicator 2a | Personnel resources of the governmental gender equality body |
| Indicator 2b | Personnel resources of the designated body or bodies for the promotion of equal treatment of women and men |
| Indicator 3 | Gender mainstreaming |
| Indicator 4 | Production and dissemination of statistics disaggregated by sex |

Indicator 1: Status of the governmental body responsible for promoting gender equality

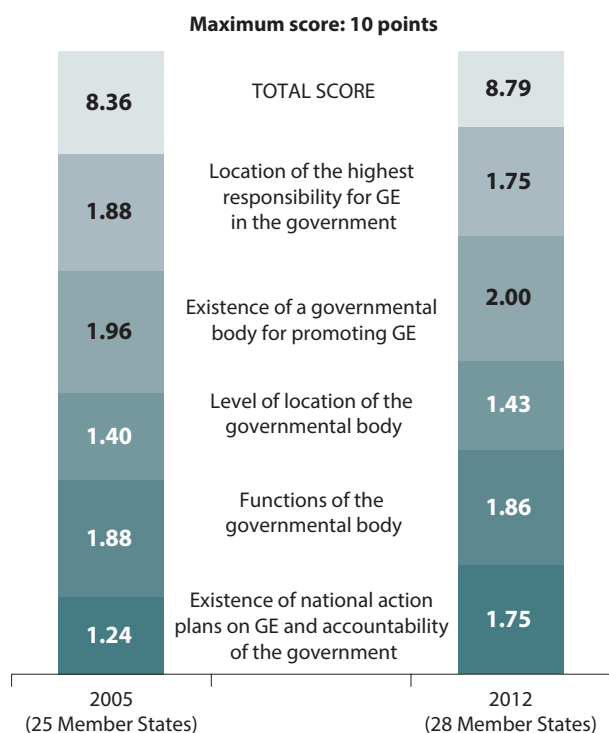
Compared to 2005, there was an improvement in 16 Member States in terms of governmental responsibility for gender equality by 2012, in particular in the area of accountability for gender equality policies. The percentage of Member States which adopted national action plans for gender equality increased from 60 % in 2005 to 82 % in 2012. In addition, the percentage of Member



States which established regular reporting on gender equality to the legislative bodies grew from 64 % in 2005 to 93 % in 2012.

During the same time period, gender equality experienced a decline in its status: fewer governments had cabinet ministers responsible for gender equality in 2012 compared with 2005 (a decrease from 88 % to 79 %) and more governments placed the highest responsibility for gender equality with deputy ministers and assistant ministers. One third of Member States do not have their governmental gender equality body located at the highest level of governmental structures despite the recommendation of the Council (2009) to do so.

Developments in the status of governmental responsibility for promoting gender equality (GE) in the EU



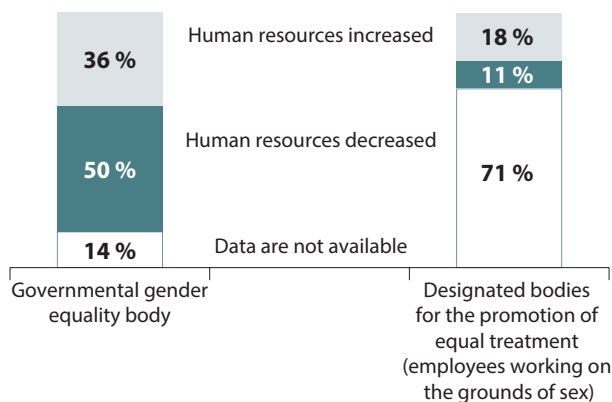
Note: max. 2 points for each category, max. 10 points in total.

Indicators 2a and 2b: Personnel resources

Notwithstanding the positive trends in institutional settings over the last decade, governmental gender equality bodies are seriously hampered by complex and expanding mandates and insufficient personnel resources to address them. Since 2005, the personnel resources of governmental gender equality bodies have decreased in 14 Member States.

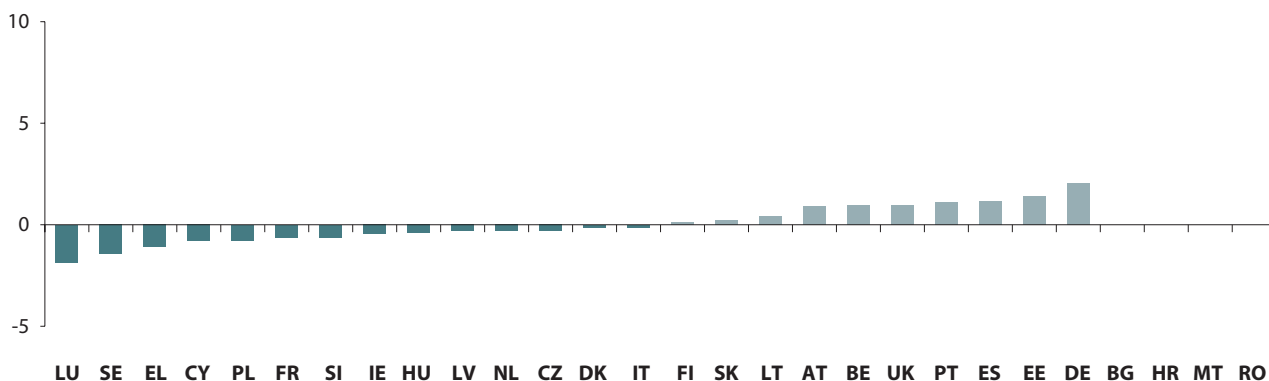
In 2012, following Directive 2002/73/EC, all Member States had set up independent bodies for the promotion of equal treatment, although this was not yet the case in 2005. Only five Member States have a separate designated body for the promotion of equal treatment of women and men. Other Member States demonstrate a trend to merge equality bodies for the promotion of equal treatment of women and men with bodies for equal treatment on several grounds, one of which is sex. Since it is difficult to properly identify resources dedicated to gender equality as opposed to other grounds, the information on the number of personnel working on anti-discrimination solely on the grounds of sex was not available in many Member States in 2005 and 2012.

Resources for gender equality and anti-discrimination on the grounds of sex are less visible in designated bodies for the promotion of equal treatment



Note: Difference in human resources of governmental gender equality bodies in 2005 and 2012, employees per population (1 000 000).

Human resources for governmental gender equality bodies decreased in more than half of the Member States



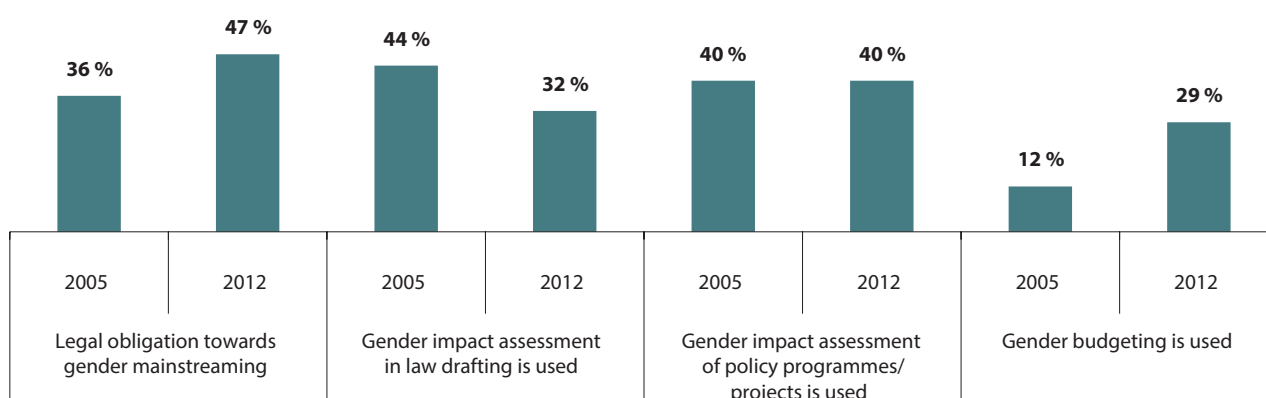
Note: Difference in human resources of governmental gender equality bodies in 2005 and 2012 by Member State, employees per population (1 000 000).

Indicator 3: Gender mainstreaming

The percentage of Member States which introduced a legal obligation or other type of formal commitment to gender mainstreaming increased from 36 % in 2005 to 47 % in 2012. Moreover, nearly all Member States have formal interministerial structures for implementing gender mainstreaming. However, only two Member States used gender mainstreaming widely for drafting laws, policy programmes, action plans and projects in 2012. The existence of a legal obligation to gender mainstreaming does not guarantee its systematic and effective implementation in practice.

The use of gender mainstreaming methods and tools is still rare and not properly institutionalised. Gender impact assessment is at the initial stage of application in the majority of Member States. In 2012, only eight Member States had established a legal commitment to gender budgeting and only three Member States used gender budgeting widely. Comparatively few Member States carried out regular training and capacity building on gender equality which was mostly targeting the employees of governmental gender equality bodies.

Use of gender mainstreaming methods and tools, percentage of Member States, 2005 and 2012



Indicator 4: Production and dissemination of statistics disaggregated by sex

A major precondition for effective gender equality policies and legislation is the availability of high-quality statistics disaggregated by sex.

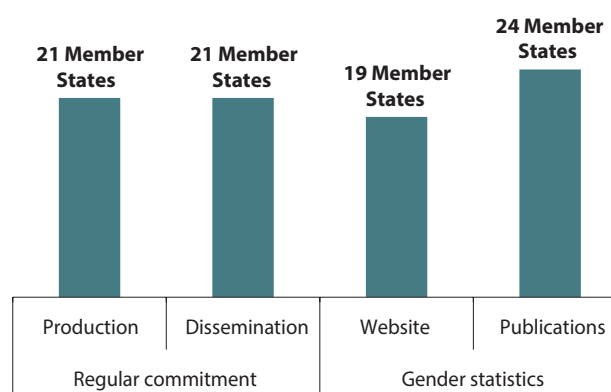
The new indicator includes the following:

- **government commitment to the production of statistics disaggregated by sex;**
- **government commitment to the dissemination of statistics disaggregated by sex;**
- **methods in use for the dissemination of gender statistics.**

Two thirds of Member States have a national legal obligation to regularly collect and disseminate statistics disaggregated by sex. National statistics bodies or other national authorities of the majority of Member States produce publications on gender statistics, usually on a regular basis. Two thirds of Member States have a dedicated website for gender statistics. However, in some policy fields, such as gender-based violence, sex-disaggregated data are not always available at the national level. At EU level, differences in definitions and data collection methods mean these data cannot be used in a comparable way. Moreover, there is a need to ensure that sex-disaggregated data are collected in line with key

strategies at EU level. For example, the assessment of the implementation of Europe 2020 is seriously challenged by a lack of data in policy areas such as research and development, innovation and technologies, climate change and energy. Finally, although collecting sex-disaggregated statistics is a prerequisite to gender mainstreaming, there is still a need to move from collection to utilisation. Indeed, available gender statistics are not always being used as much as they might be to monitor and evaluate the implementation of gender mainstreaming, including gender impact assessment and gender budgeting, in various policy areas.

Commitment to the production and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data, 2012



RECOMMENDATIONS

Institutional structures

Strengthen the institutional structures by:

- ensuring that there is a governmental body responsible for gender equality, located at the highest possible level in the government, falling under the responsibility of a cabinet minister, with adequate responsibility and means for action;
- ensuring that gender equality remains a policy priority, is mainstreamed in other policy areas and complements the work of addressing cases of discrimination based on sex;
- setting clear and measurable strategic objectives for gender equality with specific targets and timeframes, ensuring that the governmental body's mandate and capacity allow it to influence the development of all government policies, to formulate and review legislation and to coordinate and monitor the implementation of government decisions;
- establishing or strengthening an advisory board on gender equality or another permanent entity involving relevant branches of government, women's NGOs and other civil society organisations, researchers and social partners on a regular basis.

Gender mainstreaming

Promote the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming via:

- an interministerial structure and focal points in every ministry;
- legal obligations for the use of gender mainstreaming tools and methods, including training for gender mainstreaming, gender impact assessment, gender budgeting, monitoring and evaluation;
- appropriate budgets to have these carried out;
- raising awareness on the benefits of gender mainstreaming;
- strengthening the legal and institutional commitment to improving the gender competences of civil servants across the different sectors.

Sex-disaggregated data

Promote the collection and dissemination of gender statistics by:

- having legal obligations or binding structural agreements with statistics institutions and/or other organisations on the collection and publishing of statistics disaggregated by sex;
- producing statistics and establishing new indicators where they are lacking in areas such as gender-based violence, attitudes on gender roles and intersecting inequalities (data disaggregated by sex and also by other grounds for discrimination, such as ethnicity, age, etc.);
- ensuring that gender statistics represent relevant gender issues, by consulting different stakeholder groups when developing indicators;
- ensuring that gender statistics are freely available to policymakers, researchers, NGOs, social partners and all citizens;
- considering the establishment of targets and indicators in the action plans for gender equality to measure progress and evaluate developments.

European Institute for Gender Equality

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policymakers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable data on gender equality in Europe.

More information: <http://eige.europa.eu>



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