

Cooperation with EU candidate countries and potential candidates

The EU supports candidate and potential candidates on their path to join the European Union. EIGE contributes to this process by supporting responsible authorities in their efforts to improve gender equality in the Western Balkans and Turkey in line with EU policies.

By providing assistance to EU pre-accession countries, EIGE's work is aiming to strengthen the capacity of Western Balkans and Turkey to develop gender equality policies aligned with EU priorities and better monitor gender equality progress. To achieve this, EIGE provides expertise and technical support on a diverse range of gender-related topics, including replicating monitoring methods and tools used in the EU, such as EIGE's Gender Equality Index and Gender Statistics Database.

Who do we work with?

Within this project, EIGE works with the following EU candidate and potential candidates: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of North Macedonia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey.

The main cooperation partners are the national bodies responsible for gender equality policies and national statistical offices.

EIGE can also join up with other ministries and institutions, civil society, academia, gender equality experts and others.

To make the most of EIGE's synergies with other EU institutions, cooperation is coordinated with:

- Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR);
- European External Action Service (EEAS);
- EU Delegations operating in the region.

EIGE also coordinates its projects with international organisations including:

- UN WOMEN regional office for Europe and Central Asia;
- Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Principles of co-operation

Transparency: EIGE's cooperation with EU candidate and potential candidates is transparent and inclusive. EIGE shares information through its regular communication channels.

Country driven cooperation: The initiative for cooperation must come from the EU candidate or potential candidates with strong political commitment. For example, EIGE can support those that have expressed interest in developing a national Gender Equality Index.

Expertise: EIGE provides expert support, such as knowledge on data collection on gender-based violence.

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

How do we work?

We have identified several ways to bring gender equality forward in the region of the Western Balkans and Turkey and to make use of the work done for the EU Member States. Here are a few examples of how we work:

- Support the development of national Gender Equality Indices;
- Include data from the region on Women and Men in Decision Making into EIGE's Gender Statistics Database;
- Share EIGE's collected methods and tools on gender mainstreaming;
- Inform on EIGE's work on combating gender-based violence;
- Promote good practices on gender equality in the region.

Good practices

The collection of Good Practices from the EU candidate countries and potential candidates provide examples of projects and initiatives that have been successfully implemented in the area of gender equality.

The Good Practices refer to a wide variety of projects ranging from the empowerment of rural women to e-modules of gender-sensitive programs for civil servants.

This collection of Good Practices aims to work as an incentive for further action in close cooperation with civil society, the private sector and governments; as well as an example of lessons learnt from the region.

Albania

- Women of the Mountains Empowerment Network (W.O.M.E.N.)
- Gender Equality Facility (G.E.F.)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- NAP on UNSCR
- Regional Network of Gender Institutional Mechanisms

Kosovo

- Tax-free registration of joint property on behalf of both spouses
- Local level coordination mechanisms against domestic violence

Montenegro

- Implementing principles of Gender Equality at a Local Level
- Women Political Network Montenegro

North Macedonia

- Gender Mainstreaming E-Module for Civil Servants
- Embedding a gender perspective in strategic planning policies

Serbia

- Gender Responsive Budgeting

- Gender Responsive Budgeting
- Support to Priority Actions for Gender Equality in Serbia

Turkey

- VAW Policy Making and Monitoring Mechanisms National and Local Levels
 - Integration of Administrative Records in Combating VAW
 - Women in Business (EU Delegation)
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Why this project?

The European Union has a special programme for supporting candidate and potential candidate countries seeking to be members of the EU and who are already in the process of EU accession or negotiation. The programme is called the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and is managed by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR). Funds from the IPA programme are used for supporting these countries to implement necessary political and economic reforms before they join the European Union.

As gender equality is one of the key principles of the European Union, EIGE works with EU candidate and potential candidates to build their capacity in the area of gender equality within this IPA programme.

Cycles of EIGE's cooperation with EU candidate and potential candidates

2013 - 2014

Preparatory measures for the participation of candidate countries and potential candidates in EIGE's work



2014 - 2015

Participation of candidate countries and potential candidate countries in EIGE's work



2015 - 2017

Involvement of EU candidate countries and potential candidate countries in EIGE's work and deepening of cooperation in common priority areas



2017 - 2019

EIGE's cooperation with the EU candidate countries and potential candidate countries: improving monitoring on gender equality progress

Government bodies working on gender equality

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees
- The National Statistics Body

Serbia

- Coordination Body for Gender Equality in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
- Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister
- The National Statistics Body

Turkey

- Directorate General on Status of Women in the Ministry of Family and Social Policies
- The National Statistics Body



Montenegro

- Ministry of Human and Minority Rights
- The National Statistics Body

Albania

- Ministry of Health and Social Protection
- The National Statistics Body

Kosovo

- Agency for Gender Equality in the Office of the Prime Minister
- The National Statistics Body

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
- The National Statistics Body