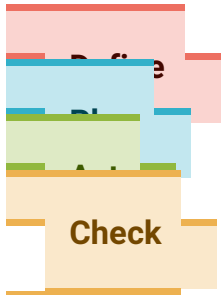


# Policy cycle in economic and financial affairs



In this phase, it is recommended that information is gathered on the situation of women and men in a particular area. This means looking for sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics, as well as checking for the existence of studies, programme or project reports, and/or evaluations from previous periods.

## Examples of gender and economic and financial affairs statistics

Did you know that EIGE has a [Gender Statistics Database](#)? Check whether there are relevant statistics to feed into your analysis.

### LABREF – LABour market REForm database

The [LABREF – LABour market REForm](#) database is a joint project managed by the European Commission and the Economic Policy Committee (EPC). The aim of the project, started in December 2005, is to support the work carried out in the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy and to improve the understanding of labour market institutions as part of the general economic policy surveillance of Member States.

The LABREF database provides information on the design, scope and durability of labour market reforms. It focuses on selected characteristics of measures introduced as part of labour market reforms and provides information on their expected implementation.

LABREF covers 9 broad policy areas:

- labour taxation
- unemployment and welfare-related benefits
- active labour market programmes

- employment protection legislation
- early retirement and disability schemes
- pension systems
- wage bargaining framework
- working time organisation
- immigration
- labour mobility policies

These areas correspond to 49 fields of policy intervention. A single measure may cover several areas of policy intervention and therefore be recorded several times. What matters is not the format of the measure itself, but rather the different policy actions it involves. For each recorded measure the database provides information on a number of key characteristics identifying specific related reform features of the reform design.

Several fields of interventions are gender-relevant, for example part-time, working hours management, family-related working time organisation, etc. Moreover, the database identifies whether policy initiatives are targeted, and women may be identified among targets, when relevant.

The database allows for tracking reforms by country, policy area, year of adoption and key characteristics of the reform design. This configuration allows for undertaking cross-country analysis on the pace and type of reforms enacted in a particular year, as well as for tracking reforms over time, thus providing a consistent and policy-relevant picture of different reform strategies being pursued by Member States. It also sheds light on the existing interactions between various labour market institutions.

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## **Labour market policy (LMP) statistics**

[Labour market policy \(LMP\) statistics](#) provide information on labour market interventions, defined as “public interventions in the labour market aimed at reaching its efficient functioning and correcting disequilibria and which can be distinguished from other general employment policy interventions in that they act selectively to favour particular groups in the labour market”. The scope of LMP statistics is limited to public interventions which are explicitly targeted at groups of people with difficulties in the labour market: the unemployed, those employed but at risk of involuntary job loss and economically inactive people who would like to enter the labour market.

The unit of observation in the LMP database is the labour market intervention and data on the expenditure and participants (disaggregated by sex) for each intervention are collected annually from administrative sources in each country. The database also collects extensive qualitative information that describes each intervention, how it works, the main target groups, etc. According to the LMP methodology, labour market interventions are classified by type of action: labour market services (category 1), training, job rotation and job sharing, employment incentives, supported employment and rehabilitation, direct job creation, start-up incentives, out-of-work income maintenance and support, and early retirement. These categories are further classified as active LMP (categories 2 – 7) and passive LMP (8 and 9).

The LMP database was developed and maintained by Eurostat until 2013. From 2014, the LMP database has been developed and maintained by the European Commission's DG EMPL and LMP data are disseminated by Eurostat.

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## Examples of studies, research, reports

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### **Walby, S., Gender and the financial crisis, 2009 - UNESCO/Lancaster University, Lancaster.**

The current global financial crisis is gendered in its causes as well as in its consequences for human rights. [This paper](#) seeks to identify these hidden gendered causes and consequences and subject them to analysis so as to improve the knowledge base for policy development. This includes gendered assumptions underlying financial and macroeconomic policies, the gender composition of decision-makers and of beneficiaries or losers in the financial and 'real' economy, as well as issues of regulation, transparency and democracy, which have implications for women's human rights and empowerment.

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### **Elborgh-Woytek et al., Women, work, and the economy: Macroeconomic gains from gender equit. Staff discussion note, SDN/13/10. International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC, 2013.**

[This report](#) examines the specific macro-critical features of women's participation in the labour market, the constraints preventing women from developing their full economic potential, and possible policies to overcome these obstacles. Implementing policies that remove labour market distortions and create a level playing field for all will give women the opportunity to develop their potential and to participate in economic life more visibly.

[The paper](#) analyses the financial crisis and financial reform from 2 alternative ethical perspectives as compared to the mainstream one in economics, utilitarianism. This hypothesis is tested with exploratory survey data from the Netherlands as well as 2 case studies of caring financial innovation from the Netherlands. Gender differences are considered when ethical alternatives are proposed.

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## Examples of gender analysis

One of the first steps to take when defining your policy/project/programme is to gather information and analyse the situation of women and men in the respective policy domain. The information and data you collect will allow an understanding of the reality and assist you in designing your policy, programme or project. Specific methods that can be used in this phase are gender analysis and gender impact assessment.

Did you know that EIGE has a [Resource and Documentation Centre](#)? Check whether there is relevant information to feed into your analysis.

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## European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), 2013. Strategic gender initiative EBRD, London.

[The strategic gender initiative \(2013\)](#) of the EBRD builds on lessons learned during the implementation of its three-year gender action plan (2009 – 2012). One of these lessons learned is that gender mainstreaming should start at the first stage of designing the project. The specific objectives of the strategic gender initiative are as follows.

- Identify the priority countries with gender gaps in the Bank's current countries of operations and the potential countries of operations in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEMED) region, to establish where EBRD resources should be focused to have systemic gender impact.
- On the basis of these priorities, identify and develop projects with either a gender component or a gender focus aimed at promoting access to employment and skills, finance and services. Projects with a specific gender focus will generally be considered only in priority countries, although exceptions might be made where there is a compelling rationale to do so.
- Roll out specific products which have proved to be successful in addressing gender

gaps, such as equal opportunities audits, and focus on the development of new products in specific sectors aimed at addressing gender gaps.

- Continue to ensure mitigation measures are applied through the implementation of the EBRD's environmental and social policy in all of the Bank's investments so as to ensure compliance with relevant International Labour Organisation (ILO) principles and conventions.
- Mainstream gender considerations into all of the Bank's country strategies, sector policies and political assessments and strengthen institutional awareness of gender objectives.
- Assess and monitor the broader impact of EBRD projects, with a gender component or gender focus, in promoting economic opportunity for women – that is, their systemic impact at the sector, regional or even country level.

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## Example of gender impact assessment

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### **United Kingdom: Department for Work and Pensions. Gender impact assessment of pension reform, 2006.**

The United Kingdom introduced 2 new Pension Acts in 2007 and 2008, which make important changes to the State pension from 2010 and introduce a new, low-cost private pension scheme that people will be able to contribute to from 2012. The gender impact assessment analyses the likely impact of these reforms on women and men saving for retirement. The 2007 Act addresses a number of measures that are crucial from an equality perspective in order to ensure justice for both genders. These factors concern labour market factors (women sometimes work for smaller firms with lower capacity to provide social security services), in-work factors (women are more involved into part-time work) and work duration (women often work fewer hours due to caring responsibilities). A key aspect in this reform is that a life of unpaid caring responsibilities will be rewarded in retirement (in the State pension system) in the same way as a life of work.

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### **European Parliament, Directorate-General for Internal Policies Policy Department C: Citizens' rights and constitutional affairs gender equality**

[Gender aspects of the effects of the economic downturn and financial crisis on welfare systems, 2013](#). This study explores the impact on women of the economic and financial crisis of 2007/8 and 2009/10, in terms of social welfare systems across the EU. It reviews EU level statistics and provides 6 in-depth case studies of EU Member States, which explore the gender impacts of reforms introduced as a result of the crisis.

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## Examples of stakeholders that can be consulted

Consider consulting stakeholders (e.g. gender experts, civil society organisations) on the topic at hand, to share and validate your findings and to improve your policy or programme proposal. This will enhance the learning process on the subject for all those involved and will improve the quality of the work done at EU level. The stakeholders consultation process will start in this phase, but could also be considered as an important method to be applied along all the policy cycle's phases.

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### The IAFFE

[The International Association for Feminist Economics](#) is an open, diverse community of academics, activists, policy theorists, and practitioners from around the world.

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### The World Bank

[The gender and development policy framework](#) comprises 9 Operational Policies (OPs) and/or Bank procedures (BP): 5 are relevant for investment lending generally, one for development policy lending, and 3 for safeguard policies.

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### The International Monetary Fund

For more than a decade the promotion of gender equality has been an issue of debate at the [IMF](#) considering that women's economic participation is also a part of the growth and stability equation.

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### The Women Budget Group (WBG), UK

The [WBG](#) brings together feminist economists, researchers, policy experts and activists to work towards our vision of a gender-equal society in which women's financial independence gives them greater autonomy at work, home, and in civil society.

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For a more detailed description of how gender can be mainstreamed in this phase of the policy cycle, click [here](#).

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In this phase, it's appropriate to analyse budgets from a gender perspective. Gender budgeting is used to identify how budget allocations contribute to promoting gender equality. Gender budgeting brings visibility to how much public money is spent for women and men respectively. Thus, gender budgeting ensures that public funds are fairly distributed between women and men. It also contributes to accountability and transparency about how public funds are being spent.

## Example of gender budgeting

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### **Federal Minister for Education and Women's Affairs, 2014. Gender budgeting, making effective equality between women and men a reality ... step-by-step to a gender-equal budget.**

Gender budgeting is enshrined in the Austrian Constitution, which establishes in art. 13 that the federal, regional and local governments "have to strive for gender equality in their budget management". Additionally art. 51 establishes that "targets of gender equality are to be considered" in the budget management of the Austrian federation. On this basis, the Austrian Federal Budget Law (2013) establishes that for each ministry at least one of the outcomes of each budget chapter must be a gender equality outcome. This means that each ministry has to analyse its budget with regard to its impact on the lives of women and men, and to adapt this according to gender equality objectives. For the budget year 2014/2015 Austria has defined a gender budgeting roadmap, which shows for 45 budget categories the gender-related outcome objectives, the measures to be taken to achieve these measures, and the gender indicators with their timelines.

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## **fund tax breaks for men – new analysis from the Women’s Budget Group. Women’s Budget Group, London, 14 April 2014.**

In the UK the Women’s Budget Group applies a gender budget assessment each year. This group is an independent, voluntary organisation made up of individuals from academia, non-government organisations and trade unions. Since the early 1990s it has been scrutinising the gender implications of the budgets and spending plans of the UK government. Each year it publishes a gender budget assessment, which consists of a full analysis of governmental revenues and expenditures and their impact on the lives of men and women in the UK.

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## **Examples of indicators for monitoring gender and economic and financial affairs**

When planning, don’t forget to establish monitoring and evaluation systems, and indicators that will allow measurement and compare the impact of the policy or programme on women and men over the timeframe of its implementation. Remember to define the appropriate times to monitor and evaluate your policy.

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### **Percentage of labour market reform by gender-sensitive policy field**

Data and information on the [LABREF database](#) could be used for analysing and calculating measures and indicators on the proportion of labour market reform in the EU-28 and Member States in specific policy domains and fields. In particular, the number of gender-sensitive policy reforms in the field of family-related benefits, family-related working time organisation and income tax could be calculated. Data are available on the LABREF database, and can be downloaded by country and years.

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### **LMP participants to employment incentives by sex**

The indicator provides the percentage of women and men involved in the employment incentives as part of Labour Market Policy in the EU-28 Member States. The last figures available (2013) for the majority of Member States (excluding CZ, EL, ES, LT, NL, UK) show that women are 48% of the total participants in employment incentives. Calculation of the indicator could be made using [Eurostat data, LMP database](#) (online data code: Imp\_partsumm: ‘LMP participants by type of action – summary table’).

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## Examples of procurement

When preparing calls for proposals in the framework of funding programmes, or terms of reference in the context of public procurement procedures (notably for contractors to be hired for policy support services), don't forget to formalise gender-related requirements. This will ensure the projects and services which the European Commission will fund are not gender-blind or gender-biased.

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### **Interpretative Communication of the Commission on the Community law applicable to public procurement and the possibilities for integrating social considerations into public procurement (2001/C 333/08)**

Within DG EcFin – as for all the other European Commission DGs – reference to gender in public procurement is made to an [interpretative communication on the Community law](#) applicable to public procurement and the possibilities for integrating social considerations into public procurement which was adopted by the Commission in autumn 2001. This communication aims to identify the possibilities for taking social considerations, such as equality of treatment between men and women, into account in the best way in public procurement.

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For a more detailed description of how gender can be mainstreamed in this phase of the policy cycle, click [here](#).

In the implementation phase of a policy or programme, ensure that all who are involved are sufficiently aware about the relevant gender objectives and plans. If not, set up briefings and capacity-building initiatives according to staff needs. Think about researchers, proposal evaluators, monitoring and evaluation experts, scientific officers, programme committee members, etc.

## Example of capacity-building initiatives about gender and economic and financial affairs

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### **The World Bank. Gender-differentiated impacts of pension reform, PremNotes 85, 2004.**

Pension reform can have a positive or negative impact on the gender gap in pension benefits. This note uses examples from Latin America and Eastern Europe to illustrate how gender outcomes depend on the combined effect of changes in pension design features.

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A policy cycle or programme should be checked both during (monitoring) – and at the end – (evaluation) of its implementation.

Monitoring the ongoing work allows for the follow-up of progress and remedying unforeseen difficulties. This exercise should take into account the indicators delineated in the planning phase and data collection based on those indicators.

At the end of a policy cycle or programme, a gender-sensitive evaluation should take place. Make your evaluation publicly accessible and strategically disseminate its results to promote its learning potential.

## **Example of a gender monitoring and evaluation on gender and economic and financial affairs**

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**European Women's Lobby (EWL), 2012. The price of austerity – the impact on women's rights and gender equality in Europe.**

[This European Women's Lobby \(EWL\) report](#) assesses the evidence on the impact of austerity measures on women's rights and gender equality in Europe. Based on data from EWL member organisations in 13 countries and recent research from a range of sources, it reveals that austerity policies in Europe undermine women's rights, perpetuate existing gender inequalities and create new ones, and hamper the prospects of sustainable and equal economic progress in Europe.

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For a more detailed description of how gender can be mainstreamed in this phase of the policy cycle, click [here](#).