

Policy cycle in regional policy



In this phase, it's 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.

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

Examples of gender and regional development statistics

Eurostat (cohesion indicators section)

This [section](#) publishes a portfolio of indicators, grouped according to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, which are used to measure cohesion at the sub-national level. Some of the proposed indicators are disaggregated by sex.

Eurostat (regional statistics section)

The European Union places considerable emphasis on the cohesion policy, with the objective of bringing Europe's regions and cities closer together in economic, social and environmental spheres. In allocating cohesion policy funds (ERDF, ESF; Cohesion Fund), regional statistics are used. Among the regional statistics collected by [Eurostat](#), the following are disaggregated by sex at regional level: demography; education; science and technology; labour market; health; poverty and social exclusion.

Examples of studies, research and reports

Pollack M. and Hafner-Burton E., Mainstreaming gender in the European Union, 2000

Journal of European Public Policy 7 (3), Special Issue, pp. 432 – 456.

This [article](#) examines the adoption of gender mainstreaming by the European Union (EU), and traces its implementation in 5 issue-areas of EU policy: Structural Funds, employment, development, competition, and science, research and development.

Hudson C. and Ronnblom M., Regional development policies and the constructions of gender equality: The Swedish case, 2006.

European Journal of Political Research, 10/2006, 46 (1), 47 – 68.

This [article](#) uses a discursive approach to analyse how gender equality has and is being constructed and given meaning in the context of Swedish regional policy. Drawing on Carole Bacchi's What's the problem? approach, it explores how arguments concerning the new forms of regional policy are assigning different categories of people different subject positions and, in particular, it focuses on the kind of subject positions that are being given to women as a group in this context.

European Parliament (2007)

Gender mainstreaming in the use of structural funding.

The [study](#) outlines to what extent gender mainstreaming has been taken into account in the 2000 – 2006 structural funds programming and implementation.

European Commission (2009)

Study on the translation of Article 16 of Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006, on the promotion of gender equality, non-discrimination and accessibility for disabled persons, into cohesion policy programmes 2007 – 2013, co-financed by the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund.

The [study](#) analyses the integration of the gender perspective, non-discrimination and accessibility for disabled persons in Cohesion policy programmes co-financed by ERDF and the Cohesion Fund. A total of 15 examples of good practice across Member States and policy areas are identified and analysed. Conclusions and useful lessons to strengthen the gender, non-discrimination and disability dimensions in the current and next policy programming period are derived.

Campbell J., McKay A., McSorley L., and Ross S. (2009)

The legacy of gender mainstreaming within the Scottish Structural Funds Programme 2007 – 2013.

The [report](#) analyses gender mainstreaming in the 2007 – 2013 Scottish Structural Funds Programme and highlights lessons in terms of what worked and what did not work which could inform the 2014 – 2020 Scottish Structural Funds Programme.

Lombardia region (2009). Evaluation of equal opportunities

(Part of the DOCUP_Objective 2, 2000 – 2006 final evaluation report for region Lombardia).

The evaluation assesses the effects of the programme in terms of equal opportunities for the dimensions of female entrepreneurship, accessibility to the job market and improvement of life conditions for women.

IRS and CSIL (2009) Work package 7

Effectiveness of the Cohesion policy: Gender equality and demographic change.

The present [evaluation](#) provides an assessment of the extent to which the ERDF-supported regions are adapting to demographic change and fostering gender equality, as well as a better understanding of what ERDF interventions can deliver in this respect during the future planning periods.

Sidlauskiene V. (2010)

Evaluation of the influence of structural funds allocated to Lithuania for the period 2004 – 2006 on the promotion of equality between women and men in Social Research 2010, NR 1 (18).

The article examines the application of gender mainstreaming in Lithuanian structural funds policies between 2004 and 2006 and analyses to what extent there has been any progress in gender equality by using structural funds.

World Bank (2010). Making infrastructure work for women and men

A review of World Bank infrastructure projects (1995 – 2009).

This [report](#) reviews 15 years of infrastructure lending at the World Bank. Unlike most stocktakes of projects supporting water, roads, energy and other infrastructure development, this one applies a gender lens. In doing so, it reveals important progress on the integration of gender concerns into infrastructure lending operations.

Projects and Quality Management and ACCIPE (2011)

Evaluation of the EU funds impact on implementation of the horizontal priority equal opportunities, defined in planning documents in Lithuania.

The [evaluation](#) assesses the impact and contribution of EU funds on horizontal priority of equal opportunities as set in planning documents. In addition, the evaluation characterises potential risks that could hinder the implementation of equal opportunities priority and proposes recommendations for the improvement of the implementation of the policy. The main report is available in Lithuanian, while the executive summary in English.

Spanish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Ministry of Work and Immigration (2011)

Strategic thematic evaluation on gender equality.

The study's objective is to analyse the contribution of the funds (ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Fund) to the implementation of the equality principle between women and men. The study covers both specific actions, namely specifically designed for women (priority theme 69), and horizontal actions, in order to ensure the integration of equality in all phases of implementation of the funds. The study is available in Spanish.

GHK and FGB (2011)

Evaluation of the European Social Fund's support to gender equality.

The [report](#) provides an overall assessment of the ESF's (2007 – 2013) support to gender equality policy by drawing an overall picture of the gender sensitivity of ESF programmes addressing the 3 evaluation questions defined in the original request for services.

Centro de Estudos Sociais (CES) (2013)

Evaluation study of the integration of the gender perspective within structural funds during the programming period 2007 – 2013.

The main objective of the [study](#) is to analyse the ways in which the gender perspective has been integrated into the concept, programming, implementation and monitoring of operational programmes supported by the European Social Fund and the ERDF. The study included types of measures directly or indirectly associated with the subject of gender equality.

Perrons D. (2013). Regional development, equality and gender

Moving towards more inclusive and socially sustainable measures. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, August 34, 483 – 499.

The [article](#) examines what kind of development model would be inclusive, and economically and socially sustainable. Current indicators of regional performance are based on growth alone; they overlook distribution and so misrepresent the performance of regions in terms of social well-being. An alternative, more inclusive measure of regional development and a gender-sensitive variant is calculated for UK regions. On these measures London falls from the top ranked region to a middle rank on the regional development indicator and on the gender-sensitive variant falls to the lowest position, arguably better reflecting the experience of life in this region. Optimistically, the use of these measures would lead to more inclusive models of development that would render the more contentious social, redistributive policies less necessary.

Callerstig A., and Wielpütz R., Thematic report, 2014

New skills and jobs and gender in the ESF.

The main aim of the report is to discuss the 'anchoring' of a gender perspective in relation to the agenda for new skills and jobs, and specifically concerning the role of the ESF in fulfilling the EU 2020 strategy and the gender equality strategy as well as the pact for gender equality.

Examples of gender analysis

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

The European standard of gender mainstreaming in ESF (2014), Gender-CoP

The purpose of this [standard](#), produced by the European Community of Practice on Gender Mainstreaming (Gender-CoP), is to provide clear requirements and good practices on how to achieve gender equality in all cycles of the European Social Fund (ESF). It can be used both as a guide to implement the dual gender equality approach within the ESF and as a tool to assess and monitor existing practices – from policy to project level in all steps such as planning, programming, implementing to monitoring and evaluation. All examples and good practices have been selected by the Member States and derive from ESF experiences with gender equality across the EU. The standard is currently under piloting in 4 Member States' ESF programmes: Belgium (Flanders), Czech Republic, Finland and Sweden.

Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee (JämStöd) (2007)

Gender mainstreaming manual.

The [manual](#) includes a set of various methodologies and tools for gender mainstreaming in policies and organisations. Among the different methodologies proposed, it's worth emphasising the 4R method is also particularly useful for analysing gender mainstreaming in regional development, and especially in structural funds and organisations in charge. The 4R method may be used as a basis for analysing and surveying activities, and for providing an overview of how activities are run and financed, and how they should be changed to reduce gender inequality.

European Commission (2000)

Mainstreaming equal opportunities for women and men in structural fund programmes and projects.

The [paper](#) provides a checklist that summarises the principal requirements concerning the integration of equal opportunities between women and men in the European Structural Funds. It can be used to verify that the plans and programmes respect the relevant provisions in the General Regulation, and that the most important elements are in place to support the mainstreaming of equal opportunities in the management of assistance.

Equal Managing Authorities of Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Finland and Spain (2006)

Integrating the gender equality principle in the new ESF programmes.

The [guide](#) includes a checklist for assessing the inclusion of a gender equality perspective in the National Strategic Reference Frameworks. Furthermore, the guide also provides a series of examples of good practices.

Community of Practice on Gender Mainstreaming

Assessment grid for ESF operational programmes

The grid provides a checklist for assessing how gender equality is taken into consideration in the ESF programmes.

Examples of gender impact assessment

Department for Equal Opportunities, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (1999)

VISPO – Strategic Impact Assessment on Equal Opportunity (updated in 2006).

The [guidelines](#) include a methodological framework for gender impact assessment, gender analysis and gender evaluation of policies, and in particular of structural funds, to provide operational support to Regional Managing Authorities and stakeholders in the planning of actions from a gender perspective. VISPO aims to:

- 1 | create context analysis and an assessment of scenarios aimed at an effective reading of one's own territory from a gender perspective;
- 2 | identify and define equal opportunities criteria for the selection of projects, which are valid for different types of actions to be financed, that make it possible to assign a preference and to identify those most representative;
- 3 | identify indicators for output and results that allow for ongoing evaluation focusing

| on equal opportunities.

International Finance Corporation (2012)

Gender impact of public-private partnerships

The [study](#) assesses the actual and potential gender impacts of public-private partnership (PPP) infrastructure projects across a number of sectors, among which the following are addressed by ERDF funding: healthcare, energy, industrial, transport and water/waste infrastructure. The study proposes a set of input, output and outcome indicators to assess the gender impact of PPP in these areas. Some of the proposed indicators can also be used for other areas targeted by ERDF.

Examples of stakeholders that can be consulted

European Community of Practice on Gender Mainstreaming

(for integrating a gender perspective in ESF)

During 2010 – 2014, the [European Community of Practice on Gender Mainstreaming \(Gender-CoP\)](#) was a community dedicated to integrating the gender dimension into the European Social Fund (ESF) programmes (2014 – 2020) in relation to the EU-2020 targets. The aim of the Gender-CoP was to integrate gender mainstreaming into ESF management in order to improve ESF management and the possibilities to reach gender equality objectives set by the EU, national governments and the managing authorities.

WINNET Europe (the European Association of Women Resource Centres)

Enhancing women's active participation in regional development and growth.

[WINNET Europe, the European Association of Women Resource Centres](#), was formed in 2006 by national, regional and local women resource centres. In 2014, WINNET Europe had member organisations in 11 of the 28 EU Member States, with one outside the EU. The Association's mission is, in a collaborative effort among national, federal/regional and local organisations in EU Member States, to support and reinforce the activities of resource centres for women and other similar women's organisations.

[Women in Europe for a Common Future](#) is an international network of over 150 women and civil society organisations implementing projects in 50 countries and advocating globally to shape a just and sustainable world in the main fields tackled by ESI funds.

Thematic Group on Equality

Sharing knowledge about equal rights and opportunities, gained from European Social Fund projects.

The Thematic Group on Equality used to be one of the European Social Fund's 5 national thematic groups. Now Arbetsmiljöforum i Norden AB – Working Life Forum is the owner. Its focus is on equality in the work–life balance ensuring that the knowledge gained from hundreds of projects run under the European Social Fund are at the disposal of the labour market's actors. Their principal issues are: (i) methods for equal treatment in working life; (ii) skills enhancement relating to all grounds of discrimination; (iii) gender mainstreaming; (iv) accessibility for people with disabilities.

Semester Alliance

The European Anti-poverty Network coordinates the work of the [Alliance](#), which currently includes 15 EU major networks/organisations and 3 national pilot alliances (Bulgaria, Denmark, Ireland). All European organisations involved are committed to engaging their national members in the alliance's work and in the European Semester. The overall aim of the EU Alliance is to achieve progress on a more democratic, social and sustainable EU Strategy, by improving civil society and social actors' engagement in the European Semester. Its main objectives are therefore to: (i) ensure that all policies, including macroeconomic, contribute to the social, environmental/climate targets and equality commitments of the European Union's Strategy (EU 2020 Strategy); (ii) improve the legitimacy of the EU Strategy through strengthening the engagement of environmental, social, equality organisations and trade unions in the EU decision-making process, (the European Semester) starting at the national level.

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.

Frey R., in collaboration with Savioli B. and Flörcken T. (2012)

Gender budgeting in the federal ESF – a qualitative analysis

The [report](#) presents a methodological framework for gender budgeting within the German Federal ESF programmes and concrete examples of its application. From a methodological point of view, the proposed approach suggests a qualitative application of gender budgeting that is not concerned with the quantitative funding allocation among men and women, but rather with what is expected with regards to content, namely the contribution to equality. This approach includes a classification of all funded activities according to their potential for affecting equality outcomes and the linkage of the (qualitative) classification with the implemented budget.

The European Parliament 2012 study “The multi-annual financial framework 2014 – 2020 from a gender equality perspective” proposes a gender budgeting methodology for analysing in a gender perspective the MFF proposal for 2014 – 2020. Furthermore, the study tests this methodology in 5 gender equality areas (economic independence; education and training; health and well-being; environment; fundamental rights and external relations) showing that the attention to gender is not given evenly by issue and that evaluation/monitoring in a gender perspective is still not as widespread as it should be to ensure an actual implementation of gender mainstreaming.

Examples of indicators for monitoring gender and regional development

Regional policy is embedded within the Cohesion policy, and in particular within the European Structural and Investment funds (ESI). ESI funds (ERDF/ESF/CF) finance several policy sectors that are associated with gender inequalities. For example, employment/unemployment, education and training, childcare or elderly care, social inclusion, poverty in the ESF framework and energy, transport, ICT, environment, tourism, culture in the ERDF framework. Each policy sector has its own specific indicators for monitoring and evaluation. In some cases, gender-sensitive indicators are also included. For gender-sensitive indicators referred to in regional policy, please see the indicators included in each sector of the website: education, entrepreneurship, youth, poverty, employment, health, migration, digital agenda, energy, research, culture, tourism, environment, transport.

Examples of procurement

European Commission (2010)

Buying social: A guide to taking account of social considerations in public procurement

The purpose of this [guide](#) is (a) to raise contracting authorities' awareness of the potential benefits of socially responsible public procurement (SRPP) and (b) to explain in a practical way the opportunities offered by the existing EU legal framework for public authorities to take social considerations into account in their public procurement, thus paying attention not only to price but also to the best value for money.

Even though not specifically designed for regional development, SRPP can have a relevant impact on some intervention areas targeted by ERDF and ESF where public purchasers command a large share of the market such as construction, business services and IT.

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.

Examples of capacity-building initiatives about gender in regional development

Haataja M., Leinonen E., and Mustakallio S. (2011)

Training and consulting project of the gender mainstreaming development programme Valtava.

The guide Gender Mainstreaming in Development Programmes and Projects is drawn up on the basis of the EU's structural fund programmes and it provides indications on how to mainstream gender in the Cohesion policy and funds.

Department for Work and Pensions, European Social Fund in England, 2012

Gender equality good practice guide.

This [guide](#) aims to: promote a gender dimension to supporting disadvantaged people within the European Social Fund (ESF) programme; remind partners of the need to consider gender alongside other protected characteristics such as disability, race and age when designing and delivering programme support; and provide clarity on the issue of promoting female participation in the ESF programme. The guide includes a checklist for assessing the gender dimension of training within ESF.

Example of gender language in regional development

It is not yet a common practice to include gender aspects in hard investments. A short movie produced by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions illustrates situations where gender should ideally be applied, and concrete examples of gender mainstreaming in infrastructure and city maintenance. It's worth mentioning that these are 2 areas specifically targeted by ERDF.

The film is available in English, German, French, Spanish and Finnish.

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 monitoring and evaluation on gender in regional development

European Commission (2013)

EVALSED: The resource for the evaluation of socio-economic development.

The [guide](#) is designed primarily for decision makers – specifically those who design and manage evaluations to enhance decision-making on socio-economic development policies. It defines the role of evaluation in socio-economic development, discusses various ways to develop evaluation capacity and elaborates on evaluation approaches as well as providing guidance on how to design and implement evaluations and how to ensure their quality. The guide also includes a section on monitoring and evaluation from a gender equality perspective.

Agency for Gender Equality within the ESF (2012)

Guideline on evaluating the cross-sectoral gender equality goal in programmes.

The [guide](#) provides pointers for evaluating the cross-sectoral goal of gender equality in ESF programmes both at the level of implementation procedures and results and impacts.

European Commission (1999)

MEANS Collection: Evaluation of socio-economic programmes – transversal evaluation of impacts on the environment, employment and other intervention priorities.

Among the questions addressed by this [book](#) are the impact of structural measures in terms of employment, equality of opportunity between men and women and the competitiveness of SMEs. The book equips the reader with the tools necessary for analysing effects such as those not necessarily listed within the explicit objectives of the schemes evaluated. The book is not available free of charge.