

Gender Impact Assessment

European Commission

Model

Actors involved

Guidelines

Strengths and weaknesses

Model

The European Commission deploys a variety of methods in its approach to gender mainstreaming. These methods span the whole policy cycle, from policy definition, through implementation to monitoring and evaluation.

In the policy-definition phase, gender impact assessment **is integrated within the European Commission's impact assessment system**. Indeed, the Commission does not perform gender impact assessments as a separate, standalone exercise. Rather, it has integrated the consideration of gender issues within its general impact assessment system.

Since 2002, the Commission has introduced a centralised system of impact assessment for major legislative proposals, non-legislative initiatives that define future policies, and implementation measures to replace previously used single-sector types of assessment (such as gender impact assessment). **The Commission's impact assessment system aims to enhance the coherence of initiatives across policy areas, and the quality of new policy proposals.**

To do this, the Commission has set up an integrated approach to impact assessments, incorporating three different dimensions. The aim is to assess the potential economic, social and environmental consequences that proposed initiatives may have. The gender-related impacts are to be addressed under social issues.

Impact assessment gathers and presents evidence that helps determine possible policy options and their comparative advantages and disadvantages. The impact assessment runs parallel with and feeds into the development of the Commission's proposal and is carried out before a proposed activity is adopted. Impact assessments in the Commission accompany legislative, regulatory or other policy proposals which have an economic, social and/or environmental impact and which are presented in the Commission's Work Programme or Annual Policy Strategy.

A robust quality assurance system is in place, with detailed guidelines, support and helpdesk functions, training, and a review system. Furthermore, the Commission strives for transparency and accountability within the system and publishes [all impact assessments](#) online. All opinions of the Impact Assessment Board (see [Actors involved](#) section) are also published once the Commission has adopted the relevant proposal.