

# Institutional Transformation

## Who is the guide for?

This Guide focuses on **public institutions within the EU** as bodies that are **accountable for gender equality**

Institutions at EU and member state level play a crucial role in achieving gender equality, since they are key communicators of policies. Institutions of any kind do not act in a gender neutral way. On one hand, institutions are gendered social settings in themselves. On the other hand, their outcomes will not meet an abstract “citizen” or “society” – but they have an influence on women and men in different social settings as well as a gendered structure in society.



Institutions serve as a platform for actors within an organisation who want to start to work with integrating a gender equality perspective into its core processes. Therefore it focuses not on thematic issues or policy fields which organisations operate within but on **internal preconditions to mainstream gender equality**.

You can find more information on the sectoral areas section of this website.

However, the focus of this Guide is on the **public sector**, tackling **institutions with governing executive power** such as a **ministry or similar administrative body**. There is also a strong focus on the question of how an institution should be organised to contribute to gender equality within the scope of its working results.

The Guide to Institutional transformation addresses issues of the organisational culture as a cross-cutting issue within its 13 steps for implementing gender mainstreaming. It is important to adapt an implementation process to suit the respective culture. An administration within a legalistic tradition has a different culture than an administration within a public interest tradition. For example, in a legalistic institution, referring to gender equality law will have a strong effect on creating accountability.

It seems likely that a legalistic tradition is accompanied by what Beveridge et al. have called an “expert bureaucratic model” of gender mainstreaming and a minimal state tradition by a “participatory democratic model” (Beveridge/Nottet al. 2000).

This also applies to step 6 of the Guide (setting objectives): an institution with ongoing reform processes (e.g. focus on management by objectives), will have a different culture from an institution without this style of governance. Introducing new objectives on gender equality will be a greater challenge for organisations without these types of reforms and more efforts to communicate may be necessary.