

Beijing +25 policy brief: Area H - Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women: reduced efforts from Member States



Gender equality is one of the fundamental values of the EU. Since 1996, the EU Commission has committed itself to a dual approach, which involves 'mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies, while also implementing specific measures to eliminate, prevent or remedy gender inequalities' (1). More recently, the 2013 Council conclusions on institutional mechanisms highlighted the mainstreaming principle within all of its activities as a specific goal. Gender mainstreaming (i.e. the 'systematic consideration of the differences between the conditions, situations and needs of women and men in all policies and actions' (2)) is also a focus area within the strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019.

Despite these commitments, EU's approach towards realising gender equality across different policy areas remains fragmented and suggests insufficient continuity and progress. The publishing of the Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019 as a staff working document shows the declining importance of gender equality within EU policy in comparison with the previous strategy, which was published as a communication, having the status of soft law. In addition, gender mainstreaming is absent from some flagship EU strategies (the Europe 2020 strategy) and gender perspective is weak in a number of policy areas of high importance (such as climate change or migration). The use of gender-mainstreaming tools, such as gender impact assessment and gender budgeting, also remains fragmented. Notably, the EU budget is still largely gender blind.

Downloads



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