

# Ireland

## About



Gender mainstreaming was introduced into the policy framework in Ireland through the European Structural Funds (ESF). The European Commission (EC) requirement meant that projects supported by Structural Funds were to be implemented in accordance with the principle of promoting equal opportunities. Gender mainstreaming was introduced into the policymaking process in Ireland through the National Development Plan 2000–2006 (NDP), the country's multi-annual investment strategy. While ESF regulations applied only to those projects supported by the

Structural Funds, the Irish government decided to apply the requirements to all measures, with a few limited exceptions. This decision was underpinned by the establishment of the NDP Gender Equality Unit within the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. However, this unit ceased operation at the end of 2007 and its re-establishment as the Central Gender Mainstreaming Unit was foreseen by the National Women’s Strategy covering the period between 2007 and 2016. This strategy represents the current framework for the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

---

## Structures



The Gender Equality Division under the Department of Justice (currently led by the Minister for Justice and Equality) has a broad remit including policy, coordination, analysis and monitoring, and has overall responsibility for the Equality for Women Measure 2008–2013 (a source of funding from the European Social Fund to support women’s participation in the labour market, and in the economy more broadly).

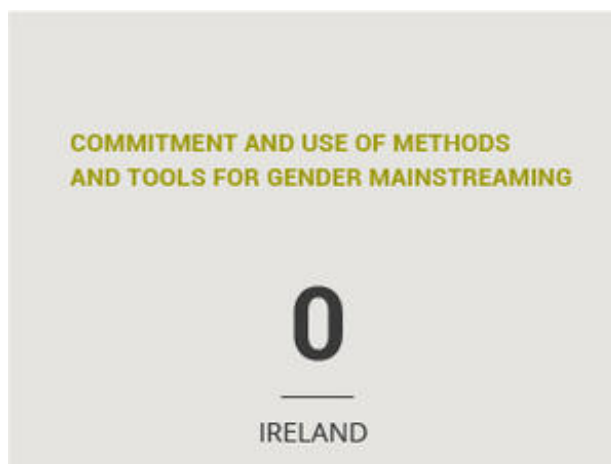
After gender mainstreaming was adopted at national policy level in Ireland under the National Development Plan 2000–2006, an NDP Gender Equality Unit was established in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to provide support and advice to all those working on the NDP and to monitor progress on gender mainstreaming in the NDP. A second such unit was established in the Department of Education and Science to provide support and advice on gender equality to those working on education policies. The National Women’s Strategy calls for the re-establishing of the NDP Gender Equality Unit as the Central Gender Mainstreaming Unit.

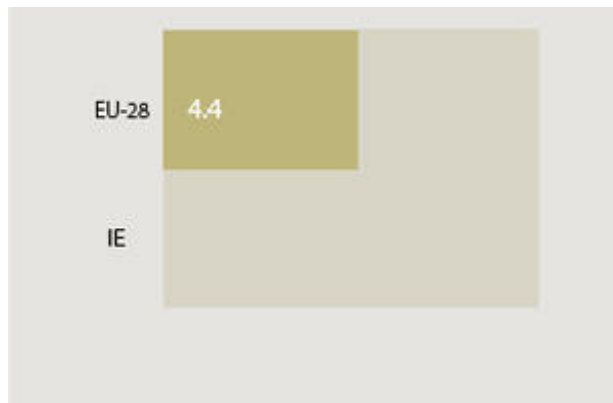
## Laws and policies

Gender mainstreaming was driven in Ireland by the National Development Plan 2000–2006 (NDP), which incorporated ESF grants. It included a mandate to mainstream gender equality as a horizontal principle. In 1999 and 2000 the Employment Equality Acts and the Equal Status Acts were enacted to prohibit discrimination on gender and eight other grounds in employment and in the provision of goods and services. The Equality Authority was established to promote equality of opportunity and combat discrimination in the areas covered by this legislation. The legislation was further developed with the enactment of the Equality Act in 2004.

The National Women's Strategy 2007–2016 is the current framework for Ireland's gender-equality policy. There are three objectives focused on the implementation of the strategy. The first of these is 'To implement gender mainstreaming as the principal instrument for the achievement of gender equality in Ireland'. Seven actions are listed for this objective: two refer to the re-establishing of the NDP Gender Equality Unit as the Central Gender Mainstreaming Unit by the end of 2007; two refer to training; one speaks of considering the use of gender budgeting; and the others refer to support and guidance for government departments.

## Methods and tools





The period preceding the current gender-equality policy foresaw the deployment of several gender-mainstreaming methods, including gender impact assessments. However, presently, only a few are being used – and those that are in use, such as gender planning, monitoring, sex-disaggregated statistics and stakeholder consultations – are being deployed in a limited way.

[Browse all Ireland methods and tools](#)



---

## Good practices

[Browse all Ireland good practices](#)

