

Policy cycle in education



In this phase, it's recommended to gather information 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 education and training statistics

At the EU level, relevant databases and indexes have been developed to address the dimension of gender and education. Don't forget to check databases that may also exist at the level of the Member States.

The European Union labour force survey (EU-LFS)

It provides the main aggregated statistics on labour market outcomes in the European Union. [The EU-LFS](#) is the main data source for employment and unemployment. Tables on population, employment, working hours, permanency of the job, professional status etc. are included. It provides disaggregated statistics by sex, age groups, economic activity, education attainment and field of education, from which it is possible to measure the characteristics of labour force by level of education attained.

The Eurostat education and training database

It produces and publishes indicators and analysis on the operation, evolution and impact of education. This covers data from early childhood through formal education to learning and training throughout life. Data and indicators disseminated include:

- participation rates at different levels of education
- enrolments in public and private institutions
- tertiary education graduates
- pupil-teacher ratios
- foreign language learning
- expenditure on education per student and relative GDP.

Data are disaggregated by sex, age and educational level. The data collection on education statistics is based on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). For data on educational attainment based on the EU labour force survey (EU-LFS) the International Standard Classification of Education 2011 (ISCED 2011) is applied as from 2014.

The Adult education survey (AES)

It is a household survey which is part of the EU statistics on lifelong learning. The AES provides an overview of the participation of individuals in education and training (formal, non-formal and informal learning). The reference period for participation in education and training is the 12 months prior to the interview. The survey focuses on people aged 25 – 64 living in private households. The AES contains information on several aspects of formal and informal training and learning, language and computer skills, and contains variables regarding personal and job-related characteristics (e.g. country of residence, individual and household characteristics, work context), including the highest level of education attained (ISCED) and occupation (ISCO-08). As the target population of the survey is composed of people aged 25 to 64, it allows an analyse of the participation in lifelong learning of adults, disaggregated by sex. A set of calculated indicators is available in Eurostat's online dissemination database, under the education and training section.

OECD run PISA – programme for international student assessment.

This is a triennial international survey which aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students. Survey results are useful tools for monitoring gender and education.

Around 510,000 students in 65 countries (34 of which were OECD countries) took part in the PISA 2012 assessment of reading, mathematics and science representing about 28 million 15-year-olds globally.

PISA has developed tests which are designed to assess to what extent students at the end of compulsory education can apply their knowledge to real-life situations and be equipped for full participation in society. In addition, given PISA is an ongoing triennial survey, countries participating in successive surveys can compare their students' performance over time and assess the impact of education policy decisions. [Based on the PISA data, gender analyses were carried out](#). The dataset is available online for further analysis.

To reinforce the collection and monitoring of gender-specific indicators, the OECD updates its [gender data portal](#), also presenting data on education.

[EIGE issued their Gender equality index report in 2015](#), measuring gender equality in the European Union from 2005 to 2012. This compiled 2 main indicators for monitoring gender in education, referring to the proportion of graduates in tertiary education and segregation in education. You can find the results for the EU and the 28 Member States online.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Its website aims to bring together both gender statistics and policies. Focus is on the production, dissemination and use of gender-related data. In addition to statistics, the website outlines some of the main gender issues relevant to the UNECE region, and provides examples of policies and other initiatives. It also contains thematic pages on topics consisting of important methodologies and examples of survey instruments.

[The UNECE gender statistics database](#) helps to monitor the situation of women and men in all UNECE member countries. It contains data on education attainment disaggregated by sex.

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS)

It is a source for cross-national comparable [statistics](#) on education, science and technology, culture, and communication for more than 200 countries and territories.

Examples of studies, research and reports

Eurostat/Eurydice, Key data on education in Europe, 2012

[The general key data on education report](#), published jointly with Eurostat, is a unique publication and a flagship product for the Eurydice network as it combines statistical data and qualitative information to describe the organisation and functioning of education systems in Europe.

EIGE, Gender equality index report, measuring gender equality in the European Union 2005 – 2012, 2015.

The [report](#) includes scores for 2005, 2010 and 2012, for the first time allowing for an assessment of the progress made in the pursuit of gender equality in the European Union and Member States over time, also presenting data for the knowledge domain.

Eurydice, Gender differences in educational outcomes: study on the measures taken and the current situation in Europe. Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, EU, 2010, Brussels.

[The study](#) contains a review of the research literature on gender and education and summarises the main findings from international performance surveys on gender differences in education. It provides secondary analyses of PISA data mostly focusing on the variation of achievement by gender. The comparative overview of policies and measures in place in European countries with respect to gender equality in education forms the main part of the report.

Nesse Network of Experts, Gender and Education (and employment). Gendered imperatives and their implications for women and men, lessons from research for policy makers. European Commission, 2009, Brussels.

[This report](#) is a review of international research evidence on the relationship between gender and education, focusing especially on the Lisbon objectives and EU benchmarks. It provides a critical, empirically and theoretically-informed analysis of how gendered identities relate to educational processes and outcomes.

Naves, M.C., and Wisnia-Weill, V., Lutter contre les stéréotypes filles-garçons. Commissariat Général à la Stratégie et à la Prospective, 2014, Paris.

[Report](#) commissioned on gender stereotype by the French Ministry of Women's Rights.

[Introduction to the PISA tests to compare countries' achievements in education](#), provides a 'gender brief' on boys and girls in mathematics.

UNICEF, A statistical snapshot of violence against adolescent girls, 2014.

[Data and analysis of violence against adolescent girls in the world also covering gender-based violence at school.](#)

UNISA, Mncube and Harber, The dynamics of violence in South African schools, 2013.

[Data and analysis of gender-based violence at school in a comparative perspective.](#)

The PISA report – The ABC of gender equality in education: Aptitude, behaviour, confidence

[This report](#) examines in detail possible reasons for gender differences in PISA reading performance, and many of them are connected with differences in behaviour between boys and girls. For example, boys spend one hour less per week on homework than girls – and each hour of homework per week translates into a 4-point higher score in the PISA reading, mathematics and science tests. Outside school, girls spend more time reading for enjoyment, particularly complex texts like fiction, while boys are much more into playing video games, either on their own or collaboratively. While excessive gaming can lead to lower academic performance, moderate one-player video gaming is associated with better overall performance, and in particular, with better performance in digital areas.

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

One of the first steps to take when defining your policy/project/programme is to gather information and analyse the situation of women and men in the respective policy area. The information and data you collected will allow an understanding of the reality and assisting you in designing your policy, programme or project. Specific methods that can be used in this phase are gender analysis and gender impact assessment.

Example of a gender analysis

Fiona Leach, Practising gender analysis in education, Oxfam UK, 2003.

[This guide](#) makes a contribution to ongoing efforts at gender mainstreaming in education by providing accessible tools for carrying out gender-sensitive analyses of current situations. Appropriate tools of gender analysis are presented and discussed through several examples. The guide is intended for use by those working to achieve these targets in all types of educational settings: policy makers and planners, teachers and teacher trainers, academics, researchers and students, development agency staff and other practitioners.

Example of a gender impact assessment

Gender mainstreaming in practice: Step-by-step guide for gender impact assessment, Malta National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE).

[This guide](#) is designed to assist public administrators or other actors who are involved in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of any policy, activity or programme. More specifically, this guide serves as a reference point to empower policymakers to carry out a gender impact assessment of all policies, programmes and activities. This ensures that prior to their implementation, a thorough analysis is conducted on the potential effects on both women and men, and girls and boys. Although the guide refers to several policy areas, specific examples related to education are reported.

Examples of stakeholders that can be consulted

Consider consulting stakeholders (e.g. gender experts, civil society organisations) on the topic at hand, to share and validate your findings and to improve your policy or programme proposal. This will enhance the learning process on the subject for all those involved and will improve the quality of the work done at the EU level. Stakeholders consultation process will start in this phase, but could also be considered as an important method to be applied along all the policy cycle's phases.

The Girls' Education in International Development (GEID) working group

Access the Girls' Education in International Development (GEID) working group webpage [here](#).

For a more detailed description of how gender can be mainstreamed in this phase of the policy cycle, [click here](#).

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.

Examples of gender budgeting in education and training

2015 Budget of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia

The report on the 2015 Budget of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia of 2015 contains findings of a gender assessment of the budget with a dedicated section on education.

The executive summary of the gender impact report of the Budget 2015 is also available in [English](#).

Examples of indicators for monitoring gender and education

When planning, don't forget to establish monitoring and evaluation systems and indicators that will allow measurement and compare the impact of the policy or programme on women and men over the timeframe of its implementation. Remember to define the appropriate moments to monitor and evaluate your policy.

Employment rate for women and men by level of education

Measuring gender-disaggregated employment rates by educational attainment offers an insight into the level of knowledge and skills available in the labour market. The employment rate of the total population is calculated by dividing the number of people in employment by the total population. The employment rate could be calculated by sex, age group and educational attainment (less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0 – 2), upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3 – 4) and tertiary education (levels 5 – 8)). The employment rate for women and men by level of education attainment is a measure of gender difference in the employment performance and gender employment gap. [The indicator is included in the set of indicators for monitoring the area B – Education and Training of Women of the Bpfa](#). Latest figures show that in 2014 women’s employment rates were lower than men’s employment rates for all levels of education attainment (level 0 – 2, women 36%, men 50.5%, level 3 – 4 women 62.6%, men 73.9%, level 5 – 8, women 62.6%, men 73.9%). The higher level of education attainment, the lower the gender gap registered. The indicator is available from Eurostat LFS survey and is also included in the [Eurostat](#) education and training data (online data code: lfsa_ergaed).

Proportion of women and men having attained first and second stage of tertiary education (levels 5 and 6 ISCED)

This indicator measures educational attainment, defined as the percentage of people aged 15 – 74 that have attained a given educational level, as measured by International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) (Eurostat, 2013). This indicator focuses on educational attainment for ISCED levels 5 and 6, which represents those who have achieved the first or second stage of tertiary education. The indicator is a measure of gender gap in tertiary education. [It is considered in the calculation of the EIGE gender equality index under the knowledge domain](#). The indicator shows that women now outnumber men in education attainment among university graduates. The percentage of women and men at EU level who have attained tertiary level education has increased markedly in the last years. In 2014 the attainment rate for women was 25.6% compared to 24.1% of men. The indicator is available from Eurostat LFS survey, included in the [Eurostat](#) education and training data (online data code: edat_lfs_9903).

Proportion of female graduates and male graduates of all graduates in mathematics, the sciences and technical disciplines (tertiary education)

The indicator describes the proportion of female and male tertiary graduates in mathematics, sciences (science and computing) and technical disciplines (engineering, manufacturing and construction), from both public and private institutions, completing graduate/postgraduate (ISCED 5) as well as advanced research studies (ISCED 6) compared to the total number of tertiary graduates in the respective fields of study. The indicator distinguishes between female and male graduates with ISCED 5 and ISCED 6 qualifications, and thus illustrates the tendency of females engaging in mathematics, sciences and technical disciplines with regard to the level of qualifications acquired as well as vocational destinations. The indicator is a measure of gender segregation in education. The indicator is included in the set of indicators for monitoring the area B – education and training of women of the BPfA. It is also considered in the calculation of the EIGE gender equality index under the knowledge domain. Last available data relating to 2012 show data proportion of graduate women in science, mathematics and computing (ISCED 5) is 40.2% compared to 59.8% of men and 42.1% for women versus 57.9% for men in level ISCED 6. The gender gap increases when considering engineering, manufacturing and construction (26.9% for women, 73.1% for men in ISCED 5 level, 28.4% for women, 71.6% for men in ISCED 6 level). Calculation of the indicator could be made using [Eurostat data](#), education and training statistics (online data code: educ_grad5: Graduates in ISCED 3–6 by field of education and sex).

Early leavers from education and training, 18 – 24

Early leavers from education and training refers to people aged 18 – 24 fulfilling the following 2 conditions: first, the highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short, second, respondents declared they had not received any education or training in the 4 weeks preceding the survey (numerator). The denominator consists of the total population of the same age group, excluding no answers to the questions “highest level of education or training attained” and “participation in education and training”. It is a indicator measuring the proportion of boys and girls affected by the problem of early school leaving for education and training system. In 2014, the girl early leavers represented 9.5% of the total, compared to 12.7% of boys. The indicator is particularly used at the EU level as it is included into the employment performance indicator under the table on EU policy section of the [Eurostat database](#), as well as in the education and training statistics (online data code: edat_lfse_14).

Example of procurement

When preparing calls for proposals in the framework of funding programmes, or terms of reference in the context of public procurement procedures (notably for contractors to be hired for policy support services), do not forget to formalise gender-related requirements. This will ensure the projects and services which the European Commission will fund are not gender-blind or gender-biased.

The Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education (Nuffic), 2012. Complexities of gender mainstreaming in higher education capacity development programmes.

The document analyses Nuffic's efforts to ensure the inclusion of women and their interests in its programmes. Examples are provided from practice, indicating the successes achieved and factors that hamper or facilitate gender mainstreaming. A specific chapter is dedicated to "matching demand and supply: tender evaluation."

For a more detailed description of how gender can be mainstreamed in this phase of the policy cycle, [click here](#).

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 and education

Scottish Executive, Gender equality toolkit for education, 2007.

In 2007, the Scottish Executive published a toolkit to help education staff to reflect on and develop that process throughout all aspects of their work in schools: Gender equality: a toolkit for education staff.

Denmark, the children's book on gender roles and educators guide, 2009.

In Denmark, The children's book on gender roles and educators guide was published in 2009. Its primary target group was five- or six-year-old girls and boys and the secondary target group was kindergarten educators. The book was part of a project aimed to give children equal opportunities to choose what and with whom they want to play.

Belgium, training tool for gender-conscious teaching, 2010.

In 2010, the Flemish regional government in Belgium edited a [training tool](#) for gender-conscious teaching for teachers at all educational levels: Gender in de klas (Gender in the classroom).

Belgium, capacity-building initiative, 2010

In 2010 in Belgium, a capacity-building initiative was launched to stimulate girls' interest in science and technology, including training material and workshops for girls in primary education.

French Ministry of Education, plan aimed at raising awareness and building capacity on gender equality in primary and secondary education, 2012-2014

In 2013 – 2014, the French Ministry of Education launched a plan aimed at raising awareness and building capacity on gender equality in primary and secondary education. This also targets teachers, for whom a specific training module has been designed.

Portugal, the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG)

In Portugal the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) which is the public institution with responsibility for the area of citizenship, published the education guides on gender and citizenship. The guides – embedded in the third and fourth national plans for equality, citizenship and gender (2007 – 2010 and 2011 – 2013 respectively) – are addressed to [teachers of preschool \(from 3 to 6 years\)](#) and [basic education \(9 years of schooling\)](#). They were developed by experts on gender and education and validated by the Ministry of Education.

Spain, Women's Institute and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports through the National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teachers Training (INTEF)

The Women's Institute and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports through the National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teachers Training (INTEF) of Spain developed the online training course Co-education: [Two sexes in one world](#), which consists of 7 units for teachers and educators from nursery to secondary education. The main aim of the course is to make teachers aware of differences between the 2 sexes; to make them conscious of how those differences can become inequalities in most cases; to break down discriminatory gender stereotypes and to offer educators a vast amount of reflective exercises, reading, videos and links to introduce gender pedagogy in their everyday practices.

Belgium, De onderwijskaravaan . 2012

In Belgium, a project that aims at banishing gender mechanisms and negative choices in study orientation for youngsters in ethnic-cultural minorities was implemented in 2012 (De onderwijskaravaan (the caravan of education)).

Example of gender language in education

Blumerg, R. L., Gender bias in textbooks: A hidden obstacle on the road to gender equality in education, Paris, 2007, UNESCO.

This was a [background paper](#) for the 2008 education for all global monitoring report, Education for all by 2012 – will we make it? Gender and language education studies have multiplied in the past decade. However, it does not appear that any state-of-the-art article has reviewed the various undertakings. This paper attempts to fill this gap by focusing on gender representation in learning materials and classroom interaction studies globally within gender and education literature.

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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 process should take into account the indicators delineated in the planning phase and realign 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.

Examples of monitoring and evaluation on gender and education

Sex discrimination in access to education

In 2011 this report, subtitled Evaluation of the need for and effectiveness of current measures in the Member States was produced. The objective of the report is to enable the European Commission to better understand whether there are concerns/concrete discrimination problems in the Member States in relation to access to compulsory education.

Observatory for Gender Equality in Education

In 2008, [Greece started the implementation of the project Monitoring and assessment observatory for actions by the educational policy on gender equality](#). The main objective of the project was to successfully address the lack of centrally-planned educational policies on gender equality, as well as to evaluate in a systematic and organised way the implementation of equality policies in education, in order to contribute decisively to the improvement of women's position in shaping and developing relevant policies. Within the framework of the project, 5 reports and studies were designed:

- study on the existing conditions at global level
- report on cooperation perspectives with respective agencies from other EU countries
- assessment report on the possibility and perspectives of networking
- technical networking reports with suggested structures, designed by the observatory
- observatory networking list with national and foreign agencies and brief recording of their goals and actions.

Gender Mainstreaming Evaluation Indicators for Primary and Secondary Schools

Also in 2008, the Irish Department of Education and Science put in place the initiative [Gender mainstreaming evaluation indicators for primary and secondary schools](#). The aim of this evaluation was to incorporate gender mainstreaming indicators into the criteria for school inspections. In 2009, the Department of Education and Science circulated guidelines and indicators on gender mainstreaming for primary and secondary schools to all post-primary schools, and a system of indicators to evaluate gender mainstreaming was included in the criteria for school inspections at primary and secondary schools.

For a more detailed description of how gender can be mainstreamed in this phase of the policy cycle, [click here](#).