

Gender Budgeting

Gender budgeting as a way of increasing women's and men's participation in budget processes

What does this mean?

Promoting equal participation in budget processes can take many forms. As gender budgeting builds on good governance, it aims to increase stakeholder participation in the budgeting process through consultations and the use of sex-disaggregated data. It is worth noting that gender budgeting in itself does not guarantee a participatory process. Targeted measures need to be applied to make budget processes inclusive.

However, by taking steps to actively involve both women and men in an equal manner during the preparation of public budgets, we can ensure that they are part of the decisions that affect them. Improving the diversity of participation also means considering women's and men's diverse characteristics, such as their age, race, ethnicity, religion, education, disabilities, socioeconomic background and sexual orientation^[1]. For the EU Funds, this means organising consultations that involve diverse stakeholders and representatives – authorities, experts, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social partners, etc. Ensuring that these key stakeholders are informed of potential opportunities possible through the funds, and enabling them to express their priorities and interests in possible projects, are essential.

Austria: participation in EU Funds' budgeting

In Austria, several organisations that work for gender equality participate in EU Funds' budgeting. For the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) budget, participating organisations included the Kinderfreunde (child care organisation), Landesfrauenbeauftragte (women's affairs officers of Austrian provinces), Initiative Frau&Arbeit (initiative woman&work), and FEMAIL-Fraueninformationszentrum Vorarlberg (information center for women).

Several actions facilitated the inclusion of gender experts and partners, such as:

focus groups involving gender experts;

day-long open conferences about the interim results of public comments on the draft budget;

involving an official national representative expert on gender equality (for the Federal Chancellery, or Bundeskanzleramt), engaging gender experts more broadly and ensuring the balanced participation of women and men in programming groups.

As a result of this participation, expert knowledge fed into the processes of project design and corresponding budgeting. By ensuring the participation of organisations dedicated to equality, non-discrimination and the rights of people's responsibilities, Austria was able to ensure compliance with EU treaties, Article 7 of the Constitution and national policies.^[2]

Footnotes

[1] EIGE (2017), Gender Budgeting, EIGE, Vilnius. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/methods-tools/gender-budgeting>

[2] Operational Programme IGJ/EFRE 2014-2020.