

Gender Budgeting

Tool 4: Coordination and complementarities between the EU Funds to advance work-life balance

This tool allows Member States to consider how different funds can be used in a complementary manner to advance work-life balance. It aims to promote work-life balance measures within the ESF+ and within the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund (as multifunded initiatives combining both funds' potential). The promotion of work-life balance measures within these two funds goes hand in hand with the new directive on work-life balance^[1] and the Commission's communication 'an initiative to support work-life balance for working parents and carers'^[2], in which the European Commission explicitly encourages funding from the EU Funds and the EFSI to advance work-life balance^[3].

The tool can be used at the Member State level, by national and subnational managing authorities involved in EU Funds' programming and investments. It is especially relevant when developing PAs and OPs, as it defines the combined usage of funds at the PA level and specifies this combination at the OP level.

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The tool is based on Article 8 (b)(ii) of the CPR on 'coordination, demarcation and complementarities between the Funds', in order to combine the use of the ERDF (and the Cohesion Fund) and the ESF+. Article 20 of the CPR points out that these three funds can "jointly provide support for programmes under the Investment for jobs and growth goal'. It is also based on recital 5 of the CPR, which stipulates that 'Member States and the Commission should aim at eliminating inequalities and at promoting equality between men and women and integrating the gender perspective' in the EU Funds.

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The gender equality pact 2011-2020 describes how gender inequalities can be tackled by the EU Funds, including by promoting better work-life balance for women and men. Using the EU Funds to enhance gender equality is championed by the European Parliament, the [European Pillar for Social Rights](#), the resolution of the European Parliament on the EU [Strategy for equality between women and men post-2015](#) and the framework for [Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019](#). The last two specifically call on the EC to support Member States' use of the E Funds for gender-sensitive investments.

The tool also focuses on the new directive on work-life balance and the Commission's communication 'an initiative to support work-life balance for working parents and carers', with its call for legislative and non-legislative measures to tackle women's underrepresentation in the labour market and their over-representation in unpaid care work.

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To this end, the Commission will 'Ensure, together with Member States, that the European Social Fund and other Structural and Investment Funds are supporting adequately work-life balance measures^[4].

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Footnotes

[1] Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2019.188.01.0079.01.ENG

[2] European Commission (2017), Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: An initiative to support work-life balance for working parents and carers, COM/2017/0252 final, European Commission, Brussels. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2017:252:FIN>

[3] Milotay, N. (2019), Briefing – EU legislation in progress: A new directive on work-life balance, European Parliamentary Research Service, Brussels. Available at: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/614708/EPRS_BRI\(2018\)614708_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/614708/EPRS_BRI(2018)614708_EN.pdf)

[4] European Commission (2017), Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: An initiative to support work-life balance for working parents and carers, COM/2017/0252 final, European Commission, Brussels. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2017:252:FIN>
