

# What does infrastructure have to do with gender equality?



**Have you ever thought about how public infrastructure affects your life? How nurseries enable people to participate in employment or education? How street lights, public transport and pedestrian paths enable people to move around safely and independently. How parks and public spaces are important so people can benefit from outdoor activities and enjoy leisure time?**

We use infrastructure every day, often without even realising. It underpins our lives and is essential for the functioning of a society. It is also an effective measure for judging a country's or region's development.

But what does all of this have to do with gender equality?

Infrastructure is meant to address people's needs and make life easier. Therefore, the different roles and needs of women and men who use public infrastructure have to be taken into consideration and addressed.

In Europe, women are more likely to be employed in part-time roles and perform the bulk of unpaid domestic work. They also spend less time on leisure and sporting activities than men. The unequal division of roles in the labour market and division of time spent on domestic tasks can have an impact on the way in which women and men use or need certain types of infrastructure.

For example, women are more likely than men to use public transport and take on caring responsibilities for young children. They would therefore benefit more from buses with a lowering platform and a dedicated space to leave their pram. Bus routes with bus stops placed close to schools, nurseries, workplaces and shops would also benefit women and men who use public transport to access these places on a regular basis. These small adjustments could make life easier for people who use buses and travel with children and lead to increased mobility and decrease social isolation.

EIGE's upcoming report on the benefits of gender mainstreaming in infrastructure is based on survey data from over 5000 women and men from all EU Member States. The report will investigate the experiences of European women and men in relation to infrastructure use and the effects on well-being. It will examine the importance of facilitating an approach to infrastructure that takes into account the different needs of women and men. The study is due to be published in mid-2016.

For more information on how gender can be considered in the various areas of our society, visit EIGE's new gender mainstreaming [Platform](#).