



**INFORMAL MEETING OF EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY MINISTERS
BUCHAREST, 10-11 APRIL, 2019**

Background note

Gender mainstreaming in the social dimension of the EU post 2020

Equality between men and women is an essential part of EU law, a founding value and one of the objectives of the European Union. The commitments made by the Commission in this area include *the Women's Charter (2010)*, *the Strategy for equality between men and women (2010-2015)* and *the Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019*.

According to the 2017 Gender Equality Index developed by EIGE, progress towards gender equality in the EU-28 remains slow – the Gender Equality Index score increased from 62 points in 2005 to 65 points in 2012 and 66.2 points in 2015. Each Member State has room for improvement and faces particular obstacles to achieving gender equality.

The Commission monitors the progress towards gender equality in its annual report on equality between women and men, which also reviews good practices implemented by Member States¹. In addition, the Commission recently launched a public consultation² to collect views concerning gender equality in the EU at present as well as future priorities. Finally, 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of the fourth World Conference on Women.

Therefore, it is the right time to review the progress made across the EU in the quest to achieve gender equality and women's rights. This is also an opportune moment to make recommendations to ensure that all women and men can enjoy equality as envisaged in the EU Treaties, the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

¹https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/aid_development_cooperation_fundamental_rights/annual_report_ge_2019_en_1.pdf

²https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/genderequalitybrp/public-consultation_en

The European Union's gender equality policy after 2019 should further strengthen the implementation and enforcement of the European *acquis* and contribute to the implementation of the EU's international commitments, such as the United Nations 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the sustainable development goals (SDGs), and to the implementation (and where needed ratification) of, inter alia, the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action and the Istanbul Convention.

Ongoing discussions on a new perspective for gender equality take place in parallel with preparations for the EU's next Multiannual Financial Framework, including the European Structural and Investment Funds. It is vitally important that a gender perspective is included in all relevant strategic and horizontal frameworks and policies. This covers the successor of the current Europe 2020 Strategy.

Questions for discussion:

How can we ensure an effective implementation of gender mainstreaming in the EU and elsewhere?

How can we ensure adequate financing for gender equality in the MFF and national budgets?

How can we ensure that the post 2020 European Strategy takes account of the EU's gender equality obligations?