



**EIGE-Civil Society annual consultation meeting
31 January – 1 February 2019, Vilnius**

Description of sessions and project laboratories

31 January (Day 1)

Venue: Hotel Artis, Totorių g. 23, Vilnius

Theme: BEIJING +25 (plenary 10:00-11:15) / session led by EIGE

EIGE's 2019 review of the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) represents an opportunity to assess the progress made by the EU in the area of gender equality since the last review five years ago. The review will make an important contribution to EU policy-making and Council conclusions. The report will assess the implementation of objectives listed in the 12 critical areas of the BPfA, within the context of EU policy priorities and targets. It will also provide an assessment of gender mainstreaming at the EU and Member State levels. Particular attention will be paid to reviewing the relationship between gender equality and the economy, in the context of building a more social Europe.

With a view to building momentum for change on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the BPfA participants are invited to outline the most topical and relevant issues addressed therein and to elaborate on possible ways to tackle them.

The session will start with a presentation by EIGE of the content of upcoming Beijing+25 report, followed by work in groups on most topical and relevant issues in several areas of concern of the BPfA.

PROJECT LABORATORIES A-D (4 breakout rooms 14:30-15:45)

-Participants are invited to choose in advance which project laboratory they wish to attend.

-Each laboratory is a space for open and informal discussions; co-leading and active participation is encouraged.

-Last 15-20 minutes of each session are dedicated to presenting in plenary feedback from discussions in the laboratories

Laboratory A: Gender pay gap and its links with work-life balance / EIGE starts the session, CSOs are invited to contribute to the topic

Women continue to bear a disproportionate amount of family care work, limiting the time they can devote to education, training, leisure and health care. When in paid work, career disruptions and gender-specific working patterns expose women to a greater risk of job insecurity and contribute to the gender pay gap. EIGE's 2019 research note for the Romanian Presidency provides an overview on the gender pay gap across the EU and explores the links between the gender pay gap and the factors influencing work-life balance.

With a view to enriching and complementing the work carried out by organisations in this area, following a brief presentation on the findings, recommendations and best practices included in EIGE's research note, participants are invited to share their work and their perspectives on work-life balance and the gender pay gap.

Laboratory B: Shrinking space for Civil Society - Building a stronger voice around policies supporting gender equality / session led by participating CSOs: EWL

Civil society is a vital component of any healthy democracy and it is indispensable for the full protection of human rights. The current historical period, marked by an increased pressure on fundamental rights and values, has seen a more significant clampdown on civil society across the EU. Increased obstacles include funding cuts, stringent regulatory frameworks, judicial harassment and sanctions, and smear campaigns. This process has worsened an environment that has always posed obstacles to women's rights activists, which on top of having to fight for their right to step out of societal norms, work on issues deemed as controversial in conservative settings.

During the session, members of the European Women's Lobby (EWL) will discuss the challenges faced by women's rights organisations across Europe, particularly highlighting the situation for women's rights activists in Central Eastern Europe, the Balkan and Baltic States. Members of EWL will present key findings from EWL's latest report on the state of women's rights in Central Eastern Europe, the Balkan and Baltic States, sharing stories and case studies and presenting some of the lessons learned and demands from women's organisations in the region. Participants in the project lab will be invited to share their own stories and challenges, and together we will explore solutions that can support civil society organisations to strengthen our voices in the struggle for equality between women and men, and ensure we have a meaningful place at the policy-making table.

Laboratory C: Community Policing and Femicide / session led by EIGE

An important part of EIGE's work in the area of gender-based violence is to develop a measurement framework of violence against women.

In accordance with EIGE's work programme 2019, EIGE will conduct a collection of good practices on Community Policing and handling of witness statements and bystanders of intimate partner violence. Community Policing is as an organisational strategy which promotes collaborative partnerships with various community actors (including civil society) and is concentrated on problem solving and improving public safety. The good practice examples will look at how Community Policing can be used as a tool to counter intimate partner violence. The study will collect information on effective approaches and mechanisms implemented in EU Member States that highlight the role of bystanders/witnesses of intimate partner violence to eradicate violence against women.

Another focus of EIGE present work is on gender-based killing of women, known as femicide. EIGE aims to develop a uniform methodology for gathering data on incidents of different forms of gender-based violence, including femicide. This will allow comparison of the scale of violence against women across EU countries. In 2019 EIGE plans to conduct a study that consists of data collection and institutional response to femicide.

Strong engagement of civil society is critical in the joint efforts to eradicate gender-based violence. In this project laboratory, EIGE will present concepts and early insights from the studies to be discussed with participating CSOs for guidance on community policing and femicide.

Laboratory D: Informal care and Gender Equality: the hidden group of young carers /
session led by participating CSOs: Eurocarers

Across the EU, 80% of care is provided by informal carers (mainly women). While there is a greater understanding of informal care and its gendered dimension, far less is known about young carers: children and young people caring for a family member or a friend who has a disability, suffer from chronic illness, mental health problem or other condition connected with a need for care.

Young carers are largely invisible to public authorities and service providers. The lack of awareness on the challenges faced by young carers entails a lack of support, with a negative impact at individual level and at societal level. Indeed, taking on a caring role can have a negative impact on young carers' education, with the result of low employability and social exclusion in the long term. Moreover, the pressure associated with caring can be considered as a risk factor for mental ill-health.

As recognised by EIGE in its Report Gender Equality Index 2017, Measuring gender equality in the European Union 2005-2015, "young people with care responsibilities may face barriers in accessing educational and training opportunities or, once in education, they may encounter further challenges in the reconciliation of education with care responsibilities, which can in turn influence their educational attainment. Given that five times as many young women aged 15-24 are engaged in care work as young men in this age group, the lack of policy focus on this group has particularly gendered consequences, which are likely to affect the opportunities of these young women in the next stage of their lives."

The session aims to raise awareness about the challenges faced by young carers and to shed light on the promising practices that exist to support and empower them.

PROJECT LABORATORIES E-H (4 breakout rooms 16:00-17:15)

-Participants are invited to choose in advance which project laboratory they wish to attend.

-Each laboratory is a space for open and informal discussions; co-leading and active participation is encouraged.

-Last 15-20 minutes of each session are dedicated to presenting feedback from discussions in the laboratories to the plenary.

Laboratory E: Gender budgeting / *EIGE starts the session, CSOs are invited to contribute actively to the topic*

Gender budgeting is a strategy to achieve equality between women and men by focusing on public resources. It is a gender mainstreaming tool that can help plan and implement budgets that take into account the different needs of women and men, girls and boys. It plans measures and resources to meet these needs by focusing on how both revenues and expenditures of an administration can have different impacts on women and men, and affect the socioeconomic status and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys.

In 2019, EIGE continues its work in the area of gender budgeting in the European Structural and Investment funds, including the development of a tailored online tool for gender budgeting.

In this project laboratory, EIGE aims to exchange views with participants on the main findings of EIGE's research and on how to best communicate the results. Participating CSOs are also invited to share their work and views on this issue.

The laboratory will start with a presentation of EIGE's work on gender budgeting, followed by presentations of interested CSOs and discussion.

Laboratory F: EP elections / session led by participating CSOs: EWL

Even though women account for more than half of the European population, they are still systematically under-represented in the political decision-making apparatus of the EU. At the supra-national level, currently only 36% of MEPs are women. While the rise of populist movements and growing popular doubt in the legitimacy of the European project pose challenges to the upcoming European elections, the vote in May is also an important political momentum to be seized for the advancement of gender equality and equal representation in the EU.

During the project laboratory the EWL's Campaign for the European Elections 50/50 Women For Europe will be presented. Members of the EWL Women in Politics Working group will share stories from their campaigns and strategies at national level.

During the open debate that will follow, participants are invited to share their work and their views on the upcoming elections to ensure that more women are elected and that the next European Parliament is committed to women's rights and gender equality. The session will also elaborate possible strategies of cooperation with the European Parliament in the post-election period. EIGE will contribute to the discussion by providing a brief update on the gender sensitive parliament tool.

Laboratory G: Incorporating an intersectional approach in the cooperation with stakeholders / EIGE starts the session; CSOs are invited to contribute actively to the topic. TGEU will present their anti-activity report.

An intersectional approach recognises that inequalities and discrimination cut across different identity categories, and that social identities have multiple intersecting dimensions. The incorporation of an intersectional approach in an organisation's activities results in the inclusion of a richer array of experiences and perspectives in its work as well as in the strengthening of marginalized groups' voices.

Drawing on the perspectives of participants, this project laboratory will serve as an occasion to reflect upon the approach of participant organisations in the cooperation with stakeholders, in order to make it more inclusive and more responsive to intersectional concerns.

Laboratory H: #Metoo: What comes next? Challenges and best practices / session led by participating CSOs: MenEngage

Over the last year, the #MeToo movement encouraged survivors of sexual violence to seek accountability for their abusers. Since October 2017 the hashtag has been tweeted 18m times and has generated a growing concern about the persistence of gender-based violence in our society. #MeToo also provided an opportunity for men to reflect critically upon patriarchal masculinity and to be actively engaged in fighting sexist and misogynistic culture.

At the same time, while being accused by its critics of reversing sexism, the movement is also attacked for not providing enough coverage to the experiences of LGBTIQ+ people and women of colour, especially those in low-wage industries.

It could be also interesting to discuss gender-based violence in the world of work.