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## 21<sup>st</sup> EXPERTS' FORUM MEETING

26-27 April 2018, Vilnius

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Adopted by written procedure on xx July.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Experts' Forum meeting took place on 26-27 April 2018, in Vilnius. The aim of the meeting was to discuss and to receive input from the Experts' Forum members to EIGEs on-going projects and directions.

The meeting was attended by 18 members (or alternate members). Invited guest speaker Cristina Gallach, representative of the Council of the European Union, participated in the first day of the meeting.

### Opening and the latest developments at EIGE

*Virginija Langbakk, director*

Virginija Langbakk, the Chair of the Experts' Forum, opened the meeting and reminded to submit the **Conflict of Interest** declarations to EIGE. No conflicts of interest were noted in relation to topics to be covered in this meeting.

Ms Langbakk gave feedback on the follow-up of the action points from the previous meeting. She noted that most of the action points agreed have been completed, with only a few in process:

- **Gender Equality Index country factsheets** are currently in production. Translations will be done by the end of 2018;
- **Gender Equality Index report on violence against women** was shared with the Experts' Forum. Should the members need presentations materials for their own use, they are encouraged to contact EIGE.
- **Country visits** are well under way. Three visits are planned for 2018 (Latvia, France, Italy) and there is still a possibility for 1-2 more countries in 2018. Poland and Croatia expressed their interest in having a country visit in 2018;

Other major developments and processes important for EIGE's work:



Lithuania will host **Women Political Leaders' Summit** this June, in cooperation with the Lithuanian Parliament and President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė. This event brings together heads of states, members of parliaments and other high-level participants. EIGE sees this as an excellent opportunity for establishing and nurturing high-level relationships. EIGE is supporting the event and will organise two policy focus sessions (on risks and opportunities of digitalisation and on gender-sensitive parliaments).

By the end of May the European Commission will publish the **vacancy notice** for the Director's position. Experts' Forum members are asked to disseminate the vacancy widely.

Preparations for the **next external evaluation** of EIGE will start soon. As soon as the Management Board approves the approach, EIGE will contact the Experts' Forum members for the nomination of one of the Experts' Forum member in the Steering Committee of the evaluation process. Experts' Forum participation is crucial, as they have worked closely with EIGE and therefore, have good understanding of EIGE's work. The appointed person will have to cooperate with the Institute in developing the terms of reference, participate in all the meetings (last time there were four meetings) and discuss the final findings and recommendations.

The October 2018 meeting will be the last for the current term of the Experts' Forum, EIGE will prepare an **internal assessment of the Experts' Forum** and ask Experts' Forum members/alternates for feedback. One of the elements of the internal assessment is the feedback survey that was sent to the Experts' Forum members prior to this meeting. Members are kindly asked to respond to the survey. For the final assessment of the future Experts' Forum, members proposed further analysis of aspects such as the importance of the independence of Experts Forum members (how it can be achieved when nominated by government), role focused on the content, best ways to tap on the expertise of different members and shaping the next nomination request by EIGE's (i.e. what are the expectations to the incoming members).

EIGE informed about the measures that the Institute has taken to ensure **harassment-free working environment**. The Forum proposed to establish a declaration accepting the zero tolerance policy to be signed by every employee of EIGE.



**Action:**

Experts' Forum members wishing to receive EIGE's country visit contact EIGE at [experts.forum@eige.europa.eu](mailto:experts.forum@eige.europa.eu)

EIGE will distribute to the Experts' Forum the Gender Equality Index country factsheets once they are ready (during summer 2018). The linguistic versions will be uploaded on EIGE's website and EIGE will notify members.

Once the Director's vacancy notice is published, EIGE will share it with the Experts' Forum. Members are encouraged to disseminate the vacancy widely.

When approved by the Management Board, EIGE will approach the Experts' Forum to ask them to nominate a member to participate in the Steering Committee of EIGE's external evaluation.

Experts' Forum members are encouraged to submit their responses to the feedback survey.

### Connecting the dots: EIGE in the EU

*[Presentation](#) by Cristina Gallach, Council of the European Union*

To increase synergies between and the knowledge of the work of the EU institutional framework, EIGE regularly invites representatives of the EU institutions to its Experts' Forum meeting. This time, EIGE invited the representative of the Council of the European Union, Ms Cristina Gallach, who gave an overview of how the principle of equal opportunities is implemented at the Council and presented an inclusive language manual that the Council has developed. This manual is in all the official EU languages and could be useful for the national contexts. Members received a copy in their national language. The PowerPoint slides of the full presentation are available at Experts' Forum workspace in EuroGender.



## Quality assurance: best ways to engage in EIGE's work

*Presentation by Christian Veske, EIGE*

To engage the Experts' Forum members in the Quality Assurance process, EIGE has developed a template, which gives a short overview of the project, deliverables, expected contributions and timeline. The Forum members supported the usage of one template, making a few proposals for improvement.

### Action:

EIGE will send the Experts Forum members a request to participate in the Quality Assurance process of the project on *Risk assessment by police of intimate partner violence against women*.

Experts' Forum members are expected to send final comments on the template format and indicate their availability in the quality assurance of the upcoming projects.

## Knowledge Management and Communication: new strategy

*Presentation by Mira Banerjee, EIGE*

EIGE outlined its broad priorities for the new Knowledge Management and Communication strategy, shared before the meeting (available on EuroGender).

The Experts' Forum members noted the high quality of EIGE's communication, especially around the Gender Equality Index. The idea of **packaging different pieces of research into thematic areas** and country-specific information was supported. Experts' Forum also proposed to connect EIGE's report to emerging issues or hot topics, where applicable.

### Action:

Experts' Forum members will send their additional feedback on the broad priorities of the new Knowledge Management and Communications strategy within two weeks after receiving the meeting minutes. The comments should be sent to [ExpertsForum@eige.europa.eu](mailto:ExpertsForum@eige.europa.eu)

## Gender Budgeting: how to ensure wide usage of tools in the Member States?

*Presentation by Barbara Limanowska, EIGE*

EIGE gave an overview of the upcoming **gender budgeting** project, focusing on the structural funds. EIGE's ambition in this project is that the national Managing Authorities will use EIGE's tools and methods in their work in the upcoming programming period. As EIGE does not have direct



contacts with the Managing Authorities, Experts' Forum expertise and contact networks are crucial for the success of the project. The presentation was followed by group discussions on:

- How are the stakeholder consultations at national level organised in the context of preparing for a new round of structural funds? How we can use these stakeholder consultations to contribute to this project of GM into structural funds?
- How can Experts' Forum help us with the dissemination of the results of the project?

The participants noted that it is important to keep the gender equality bodies involved in stakeholder consultations in the Member States, as this would give the opportunity to build alliances with the Managing Authorities. Several members expressed their willingness to disseminate the results of the project, once it gets to that stage. It was also proposed to search for ways to include gender equality targets in the country development strategies and identify good practices in the area.

Action:

Experts' Forum members will indicate their availability to contribute to the project once they have received the Quality Assurance form (planned for July).

### Gender-based violence: priorities for 2019-2022

*[Presentation](#) by Jurgita Peciuriene, EIGE*

Gender-based violence against women is one of EIGE's key areas of work, with strong interest from variety of EIGE's stakeholders. In order to prioritise its work and distribute the resources, EIGE has prepared a plan for upcoming years.

Following the presentation, participants discussed in groups:

- To what extent do the priority topics cover the needs of Experts' Forum and Member States?
- What are the challenges the Experts' Forum sees on these topics in their Member States?
- How can Experts' Forum support EIGE's work on the improvement of administrative data collection?

The Forum suggested to make a distinction between data collection on Central and Eastern Europe and the rest of the European Union.

It was proposed to collect good examples on persecution of femicide cases and to develop recommendations to train police.



Action:

Experts' Forum members will provide EIGE with contacts of relevant experts on administrative data collection and for the study on Risk assessment by the police by September 2018.

## Work-life balance: focus of the next Gender Equality Index

*Presentation* by Marre Karu, EIGE

With each Gender Equality Index release, EIGE will have a specific focus on one of the areas reflected in the index. In 2019, the focus will be on the work-life balance. EIGE consulted the Experts' Forum members on the different aspects that it could include. The groups discussed:

- What are the most crucial aspects of work-life balance that the Gender Equality Index analysis should tackle?
- Where are the largest gaps in information and knowledge? What is feasible to cover?
- What issues need more attention than they have received so far?

Forum members noted that the situation differs greatly in the Member States. Members reflected that areas such as health and well-being are connected to the work-life balance. They also raised the question of looking beyond the traditional families and considering the opportunities of using big data to gather information.

Members considered the following information most relevant for assessing the work-life balance:

- Legislative measures of the work-life balance;
- Amount of maternity allowance (and parental/paternal leave);
- Existence of provisions, child-care, care for the elderly;
- Consideration beyond traditional family concept;
- Care gap – instances where there is a gap between legal requirements and public services (e.g. gap between parental leave and general provision of the childcare services)
- Incentives for men to be more involved in care;
- How family finances determine work-life balance.

Biggest information and knowledge gaps on the work-life balance:

- What are the real working hours in comparison to registered hours;
- Safety (when working on irregular hours). How does the feeling of safety affect choices of employment;
- Fertility and postponing having children. This information is not gathered in the official data.
- Accessibility and infrastructure that support the work-life balance (i.e. public transport)



Work-life balance aspects that need more attention in research:

- New forms of family life;
- Work-life is not the same if you are 25 or 50. Family focus vs focus on work.
- Life-long learning
- Rural and urban differences.
- Cost effectiveness of public spending on work-life balance policies

Action:

EIGE will analyse all the suggestions to include what is the most relevant and possible.

## Glossary and Thesaurus

*[Presentation](#) by Alexandrina Satnoianu, Dimitrios Tsoutsias (EIGE) and Margarita Jankauskaite (external expert)*

EIGE has worked to consolidate the definitions and concepts on gender equality. These are presented in its Glossary and Thesaurus. Currently, EIGE is engaging national experts on the linguistic versions of the glossary and thesaurus. For the Lithuanian version, an external expert, Margarita Jankauskaite is contracted by EIGE. She pointed out that the terms are not easy to translate and it has raised lots of questions and even resistance. The expert also suggested that once the linguistic version is online it would be easier to organise broader discussions in the Member States.

Introductory presentations were followed by group discussions on:

- How could the glossary be further promoted in the Member States?
- How could the Glossary trigger national discussions around gender equality?

EF highlighted the importance of promotion of the tool through NGOs, gender equality networks and focal points, parliaments and legislative bodies: the bodies that need harmonised terminology.

Action:

EIGE will internally analyse suggested actions and will send out the form to register experts in EIGE's database, so that the Experts' Forum members could recommend experts to EIGE experts' database



## Digital communication

*Presentation by Noora Mäntyranta, EIGE*

EIGE is in the process of reviewing the structure and layout of its website and sought feedback from the Experts' Forum members from the users' perspective.

Experts' Forum felt that the new way to present the content by topics and countries is user-friendly and modern. Forum suggested to do more content marketing (i.e. prioritise content topics, followed by organisational branding).

Additionally, the Experts' Forum proposed to link specific EU institutions to the website, and raised the possibility of having multi-lingual content to have wider reach across the European Union. With existing resources, however, EIGE is only able to manage the website in English and Lithuanian (the translation of which is paid for by the Government of Lithuania). In addition, EIGE has selected content (i.e. specific publications) in all the EU languages.

### Action:

EIGE will incorporate the idea of topics and countries to its website. The revised website is scheduled to be released by the end of 2018.

## Conclusions

*Virginija Langbakk*

The Chair of the Experts' Forum closed the 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, summarising the action points. The next meeting will take place on 24-25 October 2018 in Vilnius.