

# ARENAS

ANALYSIS OF AND RESPONSES  
TO EXTREMIST NARRATIVES

## Gender Equality in European Countries

A Comprehensive Report

Béatrice  
Fracchiolla (ed.)

[www.arenasproject.eu](http://www.arenasproject.eu)

October 2024  
Deliverable 5.1

By  
WP5 team led by  
Béatrice Fracchiolla



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101094731

**The ARENAS project** looks at extremist narratives that affect political and social life in Europe. It examines the nature of these narratives and seeks to understand the discourses they impact, particularly about science, gender and the nation. By understanding how these narratives work, ARENAS will empower people to resist them. To foster a spirit of people living together in harmony across Europe, policy recommendations will be made as to how to prevent such narratives from taking hold in the future.

The **ARENAS Analysis of and Responses to Extremist Narratives project** is funded by the **EU Horizon Programme**, the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027), and is coordinated by **Julien Longhi** and his team in **CY Cergy Paris Université**, France. It brings together a multidisciplinary consortium of nine Universities, one NGO, two SMEs as well as three associated impact partners comprised of an International Association, a National Association and an NGO.

### **Project Topic**

HORIZON – CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY -01-05 -Evolution of political extremism and its influence on contemporary social and political dialogue

### **Funding Scheme**

HORIZON-RHA – HORIZON Research and Innovation Actions.  
Grant agreement ID: 101094731

### **Duration**

May 1 2023 – 30 April 2027



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101094731

# OUR PARTNERS

Our partnership consists of **12 organisations** from **9 countries**, each bringing unique experience, expertise and skills to the project.



CY Cergy Paris  
Université



Institute of  
Contemporary  
History



Universidad Autònoma  
de Barcelona



Institut de Ciències  
Polítiques i Socials



University of  
Helsinki



CNRS



Heinrich Heine  
University Düsseldorf



Università degli studi  
di Genova



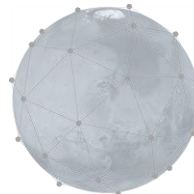
Cyprus University



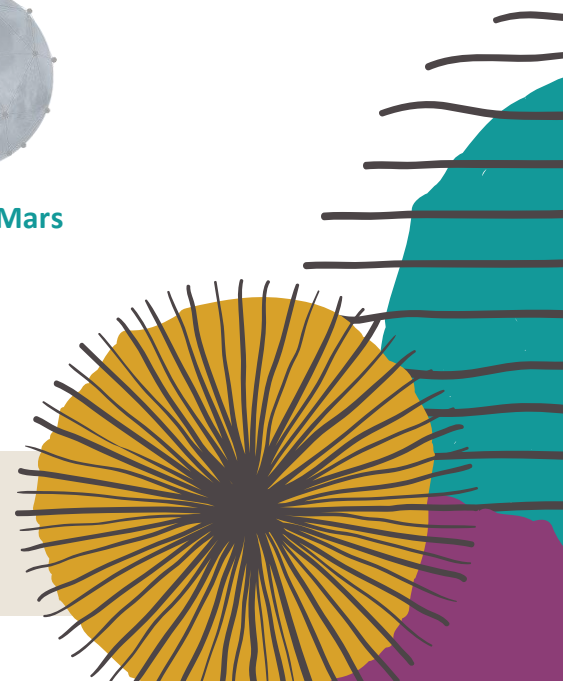
Creative Ideas



Momentum  
Marketing Services  
Ltd.



Water on Mars



## About the document:

**Name:** D5.1 Gender Equality in European Countries. A Comprehensive Report

**Authors:** Coordination of the report: **Béatrice Fracchiolla** (CNRS).  
**Authors :** **Béatrice Fracchiolla** and **Louise Burté** (CNRS), **Anthony Carty** (Momentum), **Nora Gattiglia** (UniGe), **Katalin Miklossy** (UH), **Alise Vitola** (Creative Ideas), **Fabienne Baider** (UCY), **Christina Romain** (CNRS)

**Collaborators:** Nathalie Paris (UniGe), Beatriz Collantes (CNRS), Lea Romain (AMUR), Alena Johnen (UD), Centrs MARTA

**Publication date:** October 2024



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101094731

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

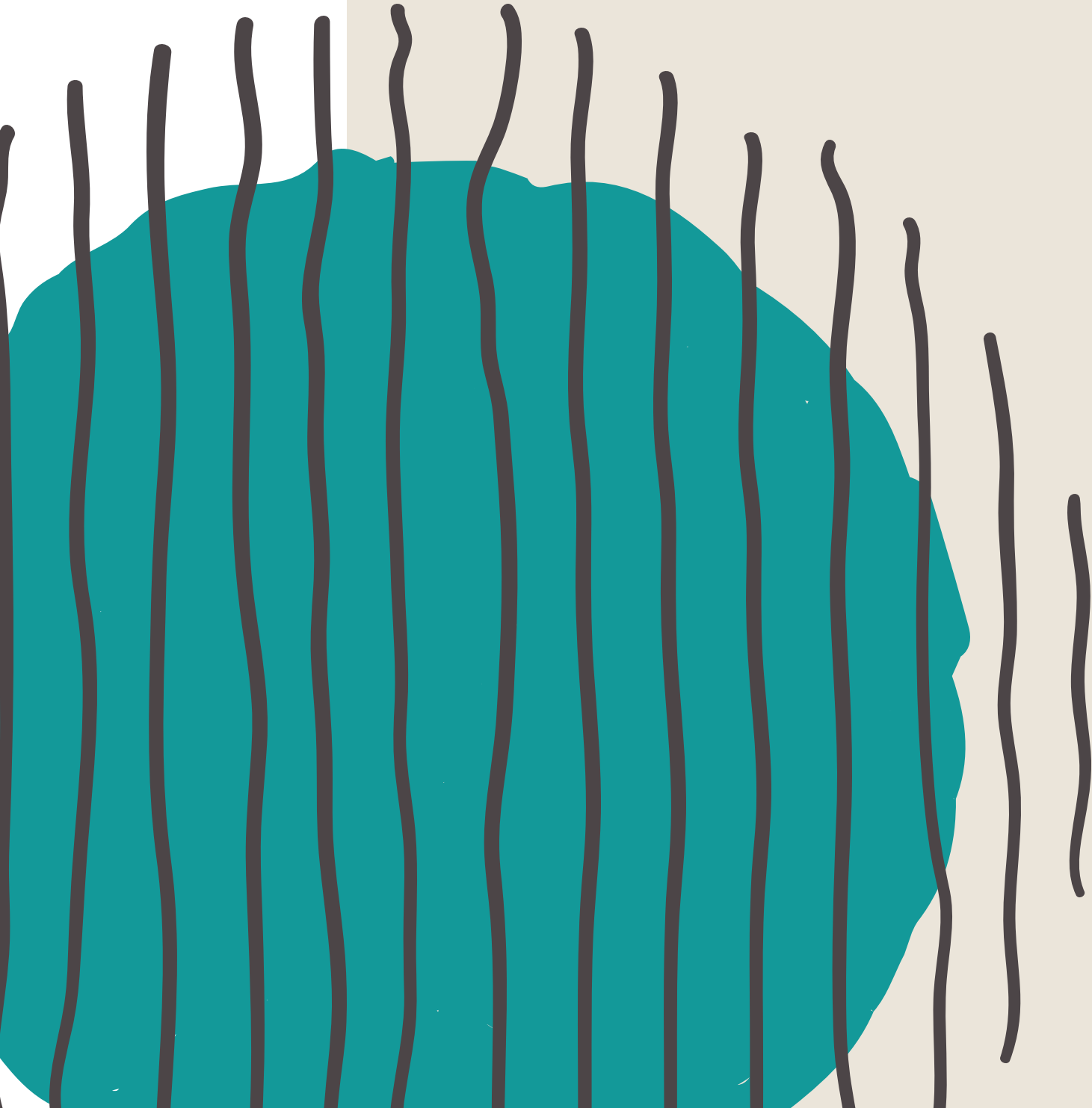
<b>01</b>	Gender Equality: European Perspective	6
<b>02</b>	Executive Summaries of the Country Gender Equality Reports	11
<b>03</b>	Table: Gender-Based Violence Statistics in Selected European Countries	15
<b>04</b>	<b>Country Reports</b>	18
	• Gender Equality in Cyprus	20
	• Gender Equality in Finland	23
	• Gender Equality in France	27
	• Gender Equality in Germany	32
	• Gender Equality in Greece	35
	• Gender Equality in Ireland	38
	• Gender Equality in Italy	41
	• Gender Equality in Latvia	47
	• Gender Equality in Poland	52
	• Gender Equality in Slovenia	57
	• Gender Equality in Spain	61



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101094731

# 01

## Gender Equality: European Perspective



# GENDER EQUALITY: EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE



## Introduction and Aims

The aim of this report is to provide a concise overview of gender equality activities in the partner countries over the past decade, in order to understand the current situation. It is our basis for a better understanding of people's actual representations of gender and the evolution of gender roles in society. We have paid particular attention to the three focus countries of WP5 (Italy, Spain and Latvia). The annexes provide further insight into gender issues and gender education, with authentic documents attached to the summary. A list of the documents included in the annexes is provided where relevant. It is indicated as "Additional resources (cf. Country's annexes)" after the list of references. In agreement with the project coordinator, we have decided to add some information on Poland and Greece (in relation to Cyprus).

### Summary of the report

What the report shows: Although many actions have been taken, are being taken and are planned for the coming years to reduce gender discrimination and promote gender equality in all European partner countries, it is clear that these two issues, which are strongly linked to cultural practices, beliefs and behaviours, remain problematic at many levels in many countries, despite all the actions taken at different institutional levels.

The hypothesis and ambition of WP5 is to make people understand that language, which creates the representations that underlie our practices, beliefs and behaviours, is at the origin of the very way we make society. But language is also the vehicle by which we share our beliefs and representations, and therefore the way in which we pass them on to our

children. Insofar as it creates reality, language is at the heart of what needs to be thwarted, understood and taught, and the laws themselves are shaped by language. This report will form the basis of our next WP5 educational sequences D5.2.

### Introduction to the report

The latest Gender Equality Index 2023 report by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) shows that despite improvements in the quality of life at work, in education and in economic decision-making, gender inequalities continue to widen in the European Union, for example in the economic sphere (personal economic situation) or in the health sphere (health status and access to health care) (EIGE, 2023 : 11).

In addition to violence against women (femicides, domestic violence, etc.), gender discrimination (LGBTphobia, sexism, intersectional discrimination (Crenshaw, 1991)) and persistent professional and socio-economic inequalities (difficulties in obtaining a job because of gender, pay gap, etc.), violations of the most fundamental rights (see articles 1 and 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) are also located in and through language. Hate speech is one of the most recognised forms of such manifestations of antagonism and hostility. It is defined by the Council of Europe as "any form of expression that incites, promotes, disseminates or justifies violence, hatred or discrimination against a person or a group of persons on the grounds of their personal characteristics or their real or perceived status such as 'race', colour, language, religion, nationality, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation".

# Gender Equality: European Perspective

In line with the overall objective of ARENAS, WP5 aims to highlight and educate young people about the fact that language works through categorisation and differentiation, which are the basis of stereotypes and discrimination and the operators of extreme narratives and discourses. The aim is to raise awareness that the way we express ourselves has an impact on others and on our relationships with others.

In particular, by addressing the issue of the construction of these extreme and extremist narratives (still based on discriminatory discourses capable of inciting hatred and violence against others) on the subject of gender, the aim is to highlight the existence of these discourses in our contemporary societies, to unveil their socio-historical ramifications and, above all, to find the levers through mediation actions in the form of evaluative and didactic activities with a young European school audience. In accordance with the grant agreement signed with the EU, the Protocol will be implemented in three target countries: Italy, Spain and Latvia.

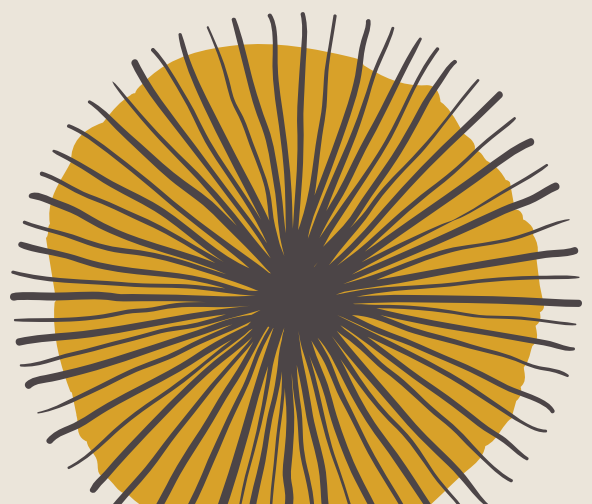
The main research hypothesis of WP5 is that the change of mentalities and representations mainly involves narratives, speeches and their (future) circulation: addressing the tools of this change to the youngest is the best way to give them the means to address persistent and targeted issues related to gender and its perception by gradually transforming the representations related to it. It is a question of questioning existing practices through the prism of persistent tensions, finding ways out of them and calming them down. This report therefore focusses on the actions already taken by public actors against gender discrimination in the European countries covered. The hypothesis is that, on the basis of these findings and the possible shortcomings of public policies, a mediation action focussed on language (and here on gender) would highlight the impact of language on the construction of gender perceptions and make them evolve towards an inclusive, conscious and more harmonious approach.

## European Union strategies and international cooperation

Member States' efforts to promote gender equality are closely linked to broader European Union strategies and international cooperation, such as the EU's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, which aims to achieve gender equality in all Member States. This strategy focusses on key areas such as combating gender-based violence, closing gender gaps in the labour market and tackling gender stereotypes. A country's accession to the EU is a means of strengthening overall action against discrimination and for gender equality.

EU Member States also cooperate internationally through initiatives such as Horizon Europe, which supports research and innovation in the field of gender equality. This cooperation enables countries to benefit from shared knowledge and resources and to contribute to the development of best practice in promoting gender equality across Europe.

Finally, through their participation in international frameworks such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), EU Member States uphold global standards for gender equality and implement best practices to prevent gender-based violence. This international cooperation reinforces the commitment to create an inclusive and just society for all genders.





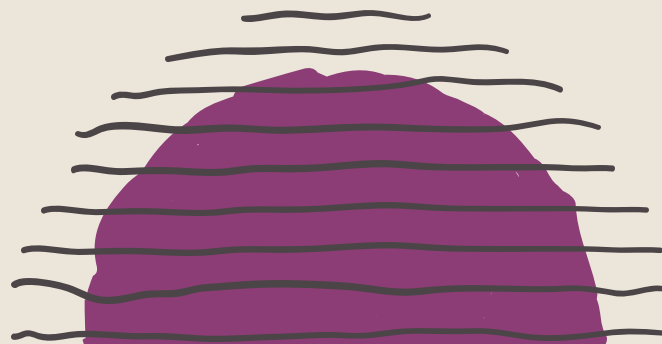
# References

1. Pierre-Brossolette, S., Alberti, X., Bernard, M-A., Chaudouët-Delmas, M., Bernard, M. (2024, 22 janvier). *Rapport annuel 2024 sur l'état des lieux du sexisme en France* (Rapport n°2024-01-22-STER-61). Haut Conseil à l'Egalité entre les femmes et les hommes (HCE). [https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hce\\_-\\_rapport\\_annuel\\_2024\\_sur\\_l\\_etat\\_du\\_sexisme\\_en\\_france.pdf](https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hce_-_rapport_annuel_2024_sur_l_etat_du_sexisme_en_france.pdf)
2. EIGE, (2023). *Gender Equality Index 2023. Towards a green transition in transport and energy*, Publications Office of the European Union.
3. Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299.
4. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. (1948, 10 December). UN. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
5. Council of Europe (n.d.). *Hate speech*. CoE. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/hate-speech>
6. European Commission. (2020). *Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025*. Brussels: European Commission. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en)
7. United Nations. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>



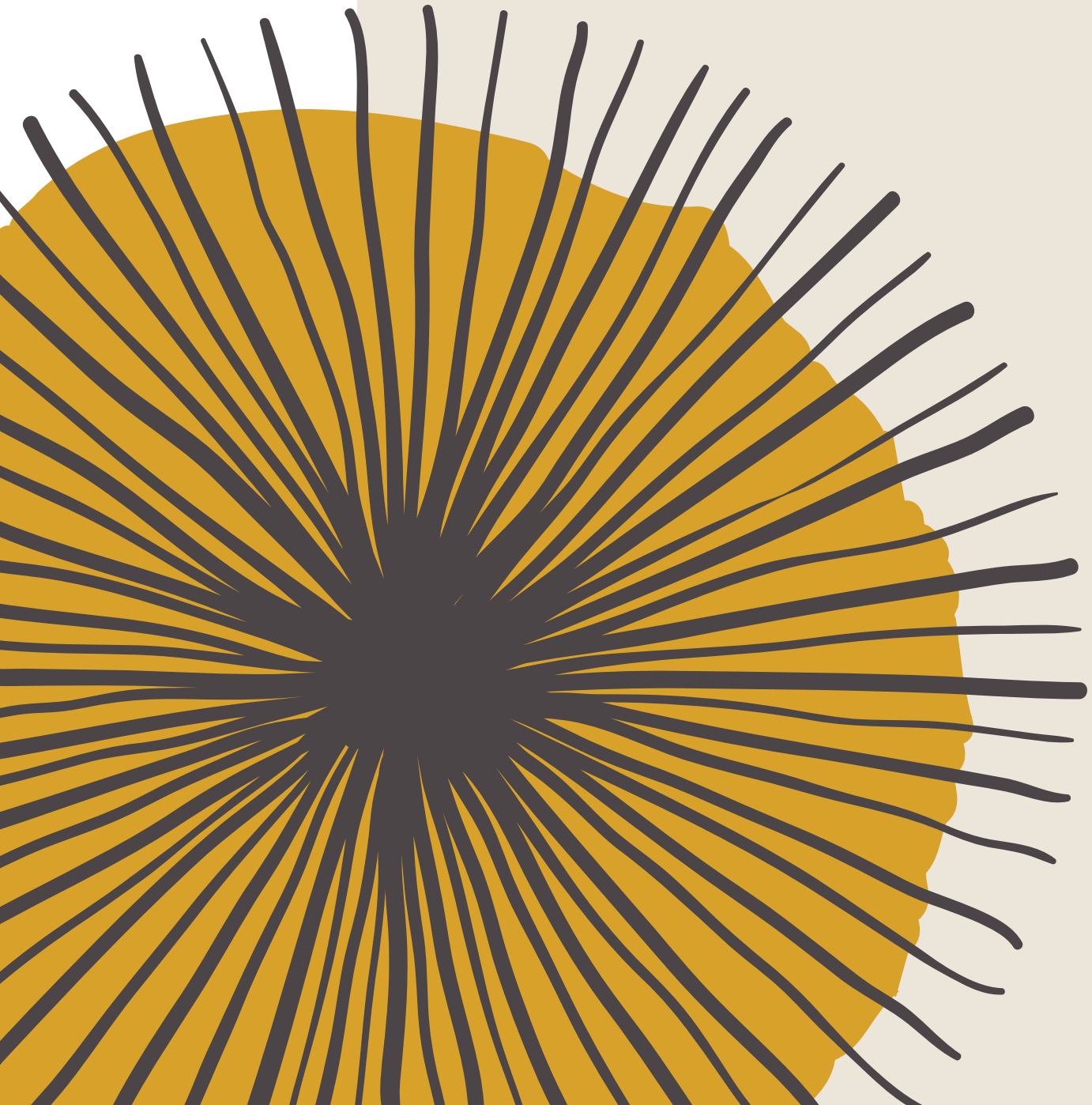
# Additional resources from EU institutions or previous European projects (cf. EU's Annexes)

1. EIGE. (2013). *A study of collected narratives on gender perceptions in the 27 EU Member States*. <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/publications/study-collected-narratives-gender-perceptions-27-eu-member-states>
2. Council of Europe (CoE). (2015). *Combating Gender Stereotypes in and through Education*. Report of the 2nd Conference of the Council of Europe National Focal Points on Gender Equality. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/-combating-gender-stereotypes-in-and-through-education->
3. Hypatia project. (2017). *Hypatia toolkit*. <https://www.ecsite.eu/activities-and-services/resources/hypatia-toolkit>
4. European Parliament. (2018). *Gender Neutral Language in the European Parliament*. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL\\_Guidelines\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL_Guidelines_EN.pdf)
5. Boys In Care project (BIC). (2019). *Boys in Care – Strengthening boys to pursue care occupations. A handbook for teachers and vocational counsellors working with boys and multipliers for gender sensitive vocational orientation*. <https://www.boys-in-care.eu/tools>
6. Gender ABC project. (2019). *Educational modules for gender equality*. <https://www.endfgm.eu/what-we-do/projects/gender-abc-project/gender-abc-educational-modules/18-educational-modules-for-gender-equality-english/>
7. (de) Bivar Black, M-L; Santos Tambo, M P; Janečková, H. (2021). *Educational toolkit to help fight gender stereotypes in primary/secondary school*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union  
[https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/social-issues-equality-and-attractiveness-transport-sector/attractiveness-transport-sector/educational-toolkits-help-fight-gender-stereotypes\\_en](https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/social-issues-equality-and-attractiveness-transport-sector/attractiveness-transport-sector/educational-toolkits-help-fight-gender-stereotypes_en)
8. Mind the Gap project. (2021). *A guide to build a gender-inclusive educational environment*. [https://www.endfgm.eu/editor/0/EN\\_guide\\_WE\\_B\\_2.pdf](https://www.endfgm.eu/editor/0/EN_guide_WE_B_2.pdf)



# 02

## Executive Summaries of the Country Gender Equality Reports



# Executive Summaries of the Country Gender Equality Reports

## Cyprus

The Cypriot society has historically been patriarchal, with gender roles defined by a strong emphasis on family and domestic responsibilities for women. However, Cyprus' integration into the EU in 2004 was a defining moment for the country's approach to gender equality. The need to align with the EU has led to the adoption of numerous legislative measures aimed at promoting gender equality, as in 2004. This period also saw the emergence of civil society organisations promoting women's rights and gender equality, which further contributed to changing social attitudes. Despite this progress, Cyprus still has a long way to go to achieve full gender equality, in particular in tackling entrenched cultural norms and stereotypes.

## Finland

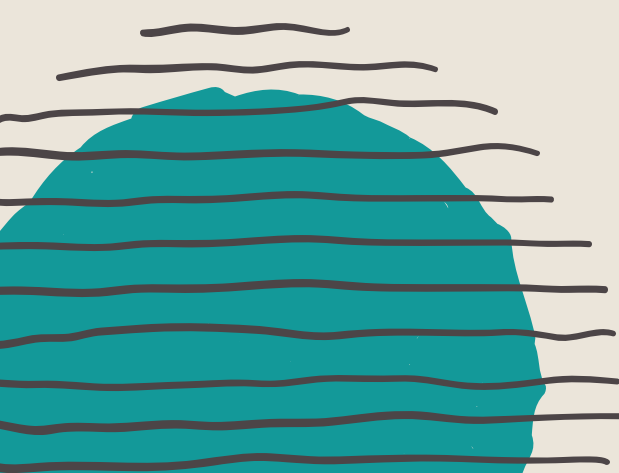
Finland is recognised as a world leader in gender equality, with a strong legal and policy framework to promote equal opportunities and prevent discrimination. The Finnish Constitution and the Gender Equality Act serve as the basis for these efforts, mandating equal treatment in education, employment and public life. The Finnish government, through the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, is implementing a National Action Plan to reduce gender-based violence and ensure the well-being of women and men alike. Finland's education system is characterised by a gender-sensitive curriculum that integrates gender equality principles from primary school through to higher education.

## France

France has made significant progress in promoting gender equality - or more precisely 'equality between the sexes' - in particular through its comprehensive legislative framework and national education policy. The French government has integrated gender equality into the national curriculum and implemented training programmes for educators to address gender issues in the classroom. Laws such as the 2013 Charter for Equality between Girls and Boys in Schools and the 2018 Law against Sexual and Gender Violence underline France's commitment to combating gender stereotypes and promoting inclusivity in education. The government also actively supports initiatives, programmes and partnerships with local organisations to promote a culture of respect and equality at all levels of education. France's approach is further strengthened by its alignment with the European Union's gender equality strategies and international conventions, although it remains somewhat reluctant to talk about "gender", preferring "equality between boys and girls".

## Germany

Germany has developed a robust framework for promoting gender equality, with a focus on both the state and federal levels. The country's legal foundation is underpinned by the Basic Law, which enshrines equality between men and women. Each of Germany's federal states has appointed equality commissioners to oversee gender equality in public administration and education. At the federal level, laws such as the Federal Equality Act and the Self-Determination Act of 2023 are key components of Germany's efforts to promote gender equality and protect the rights of transgender, intersex and non-binary people. Germany also places a strong emphasis on gender-sensitive education, with initiatives to integrate gender equality into school curricula and teacher training programmes.



# Executive Summaries of the Country Gender Equality Reports

## Greece

Greece (in parallel with Cyprus) has made considerable progress in promoting gender equality, with a strong legal framework supported by the Greek Constitution and laws such as the Law on Substantive Gender Equality and the Law on Combating Gender-Based Violence. The General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality oversees the implementation of gender equality policies, including the National Action Plan for Gender Equality and the National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women. Greece has also integrated gender equality into its education system, with initiatives aimed at challenging traditional gender roles and promoting inclusivity. Despite these efforts, challenges remain, particularly in changing societal attitudes towards gender roles and ensuring effective enforcement of gender equality legislation.

## Ireland

Ireland has implemented a number of measures to promote gender equality, with a focus on tackling gender-based violence and ensuring equal opportunities in education and employment. The annual report of Women's Aid highlights the prevalence of domestic violence and the annual report of the Courts Service records a significant number of protection orders. The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre and the Central Statistics Office provide further data on sexual violence, highlighting the need for continued efforts to combat gender-based violence. Ireland's legal framework includes key legislation such as the Employment Equality Acts and the Domestic Violence Act, which provide protection for women and promote gender equality in the workplace. The Irish Government also supports gender-sensitive education and youth engagement programmes to promote a culture of respect and equality from an early age.

## Italy

Italy has made significant progress in promoting gender equality, particularly through its legal framework and institutional policies. The Italian Constitution guarantees equality before the law, and laws such as the Code of Equal Opportunities for Men and Women and the Law on Violence against Women provide comprehensive protection for women's rights. Italian governments have implemented various strategies to address gender-based violence, including the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women and the establishment of specialised courts and support services for victims. The country's commitment to gender equality is further strengthened by its alignment with European Union policies and international conventions.

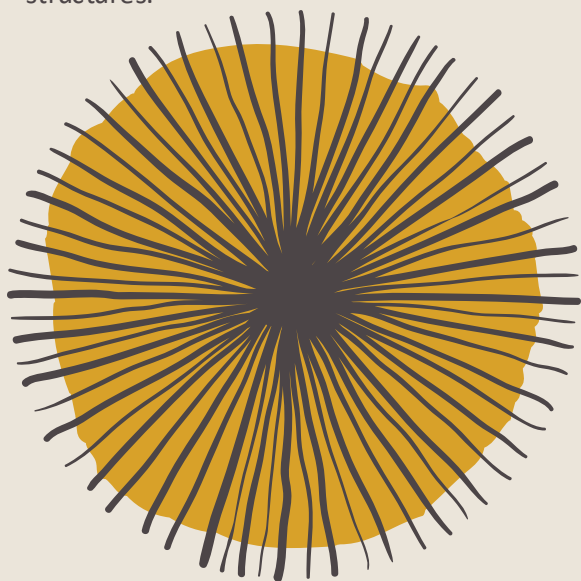
## Latvia

Latvia has developed a comprehensive approach to promoting gender equality, supported by a strong legal framework and institutional policies. The Latvian Constitution and laws such as the Law on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Labour Law provide the legal basis for gender equality in employment, education and public life. The Latvian government, through the Ministry of Welfare, is implementing the National Programme for the Promotion of Gender Equality, which includes measures to reduce the gender pay gap and increase women's participation in decision-making. The Office of the Ombudsperson of Latvia, the independent body for the promotion of gender equality, is also a key actor in strengthening the legislative and public apparatus. Latvia is also addressing gender-based violence through the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, although the latter was ratified only recently (2023). The country's education system integrates gender equality principles into the curriculum, supported by programmes that engage young people in promoting social justice and equality.

# Executive Summaries of the Country Gender Equality Reports

## Poland

Poland's approach to gender equality is shaped by its historical context and a strong legislative framework, with key laws such as the Act on the Implementation of Certain EU Regulations in the Field of Equal Treatment and the Act on Combating Domestic Violence. The Polish Constitution guarantees equality before the law and the Labour Code provides protection against gender discrimination in the workplace. Government strategies include the National Action Plan for Equal Treatment and initiatives to promote gender equality in employment and education. Poland is also addressing gender-based violence through the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and the establishment of support services for victims. Despite these efforts, challenges remain, particularly in areas such as reproductive rights and the influence of conservative social attitudes. In this respect, the election of the nationalist conservative PiS party to government in 2015 marks a new era that continued and accelerated a process, started already in 2000s, that can be characterized as significant setback regarding gender equality. This evolution, sometimes seen as a 'conservative backlash' has led to a number of policies aimed at reinforcing traditional gender roles and family structures.



## Slovenia

Slovenia has established a strong framework for promoting gender equality, supported by its Constitution and laws such as the Act on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and the Employment Relations Act. The Slovenian government is implementing the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, which includes measures to reduce the gender pay gap, increase women's representation in decision-making and combat gender-based violence. Slovenia is also addressing gender-based violence through the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and the ratification of the Istanbul Convention. The country's education system integrates gender equality principles into the curriculum, supported by initiatives to promote youth engagement and social justice. Slovenia's commitment to gender equality is reinforced by its participation in European Union initiatives and international cooperation.

## Spain

Spain has made significant progress in promoting gender equality, in particular through its comprehensive legal framework and institutional policies. The Spanish Constitution guarantees equality before the law, and laws such as the Organic Law on Effective Equality between Women and Men and the Organic Law on Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence provide robust protection for women's rights. The Ministry of Equality oversees the implementation of gender equality policies, including the Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities and initiatives to combat gender-based violence. Spain's education system promotes gender-sensitive curricula and youth engagement programmes aimed at fostering a culture of respect and equality, making Spain a leader in gender equality in Europe.

# 03

## Table: Gender-Based Violence Statistics in Selected European Countries





# Table

## Gender-Based Violence Statistics in Selected European Countries

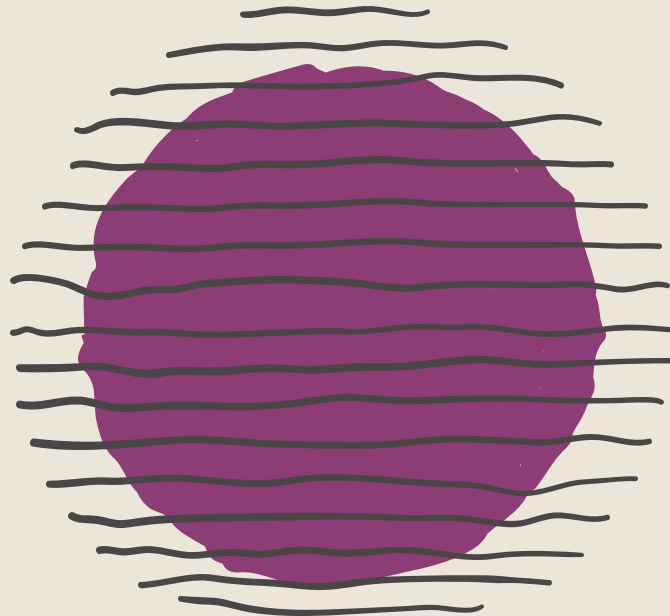


	Domestic Violence	Sexual Violence	Harassment	Legal Measures
<b>Cyprus</b>	At least 28% of women have experienced some form of domestic violence <sup>1</sup> .	A study conducted by the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies indicated that women and girls are the overwhelming majority of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence among asylum-seekers in Cyprus.	No specific statistics available.	Various legislative measures influenced by EU directives, including Law 115 (1)/2021 which criminalizes many forms of violence against women, and a 2021 anti-harassment and stalking law.
<b>Finland</b>	17,400 cases reported in 2020; 80% of victims are women.	10% of women and 2% of men had experienced sexual intimate partner violence in their lifetime <sup>2</sup> .	47% of women reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment since the age of 15.	Act on Equality between Women and Men; Anti-Discrimination Act; National Action Plan to Combat Violence against Women.
<b>France</b>	220,000 women aged 18-75 are victims annually; 149 women killed by their partner or ex-partner in 2019.	580,000 women aged 18-69 experienced sexual violence or attempted sexual violence in the past five years.	12% of women experienced workplace harassment; 87% experienced harassment in public spaces.	Laws against psychological violence and street harassment; fines for street harassment.
<b>Germany</b>	Approximately 148,031 cases of gender-based violence were reported in 2021, with 81% of victims being female <sup>1</sup> .	13.4% of women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15 <sup>1</sup> .	50% of women reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment in their lifetime <sup>1</sup> .	Federal Equal Opportunities Act; Self-Determination Law of 2023.
<b>Greece</b>	21.3% of Greek women and 13.2% of Greek men report that domestic violence against women is common in Greece <sup>1</sup> .	5.1% of women aged 15-49 years reported that they had been subject to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months	No specific statistics available.	Law on Substantive Gender Equality and Combating Gender-Based Violence.
<b>Ireland</b>	43,472 contacts with survivors in 2020; 2,520 applications for safety or protection orders.	2,837 sexual offences recorded in 2020.	Not specified.	Employment Equality Acts; Domestic Violence Act.
<b>Italy</b>	6.7 million women aged 16-70 have experienced physical or sexual violence by a partner during their lifetime; 116 women killed by partners in 2020.	31% of women aged 16-70 have experienced physical or sexual violence	33% of women experienced physical or sexual harassment in the past 12 months.	Laws against domestic violence and stalking; specialized anti-violence centres; extension of time limit for reporting gender-based violence crimes.
<b>Latvia</b>	8,022 cases reported in 2020; 85% of victims are women.	15.4% of women have experienced physical violence; 4.4% have experienced sexual violence	15% of women reported experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace.	Law on Protection Against Domestic Violence; National Programme for the Prevention of Domestic Violence.
<b>Poland</b>	68,000 cases reported in 2020; majority of victims are women.	19% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence	22% of women reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment since age 15.	Act on Counteracting Domestic Violence; ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2015.
<b>Slovenia</b>	22% of women and 16% of men experienced physical (including threats) or sexual violence since the age of 15.	3.4% of women aged 15-49 years reported that they had been subject to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months.	No specific statistics available.	Family Violence Prevention Act; ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2015.
<b>Spain</b>	45,457 cases reported in 2020; 1,101 women killed by their partners or ex-partners between 2003-2020.	2.5% of women aged 16 or older reported experiencing sexual violence.	9.6% of women reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment in the previous year.	Organic Law 1/2004 on Gender Violence; specialized courts for gender violence.



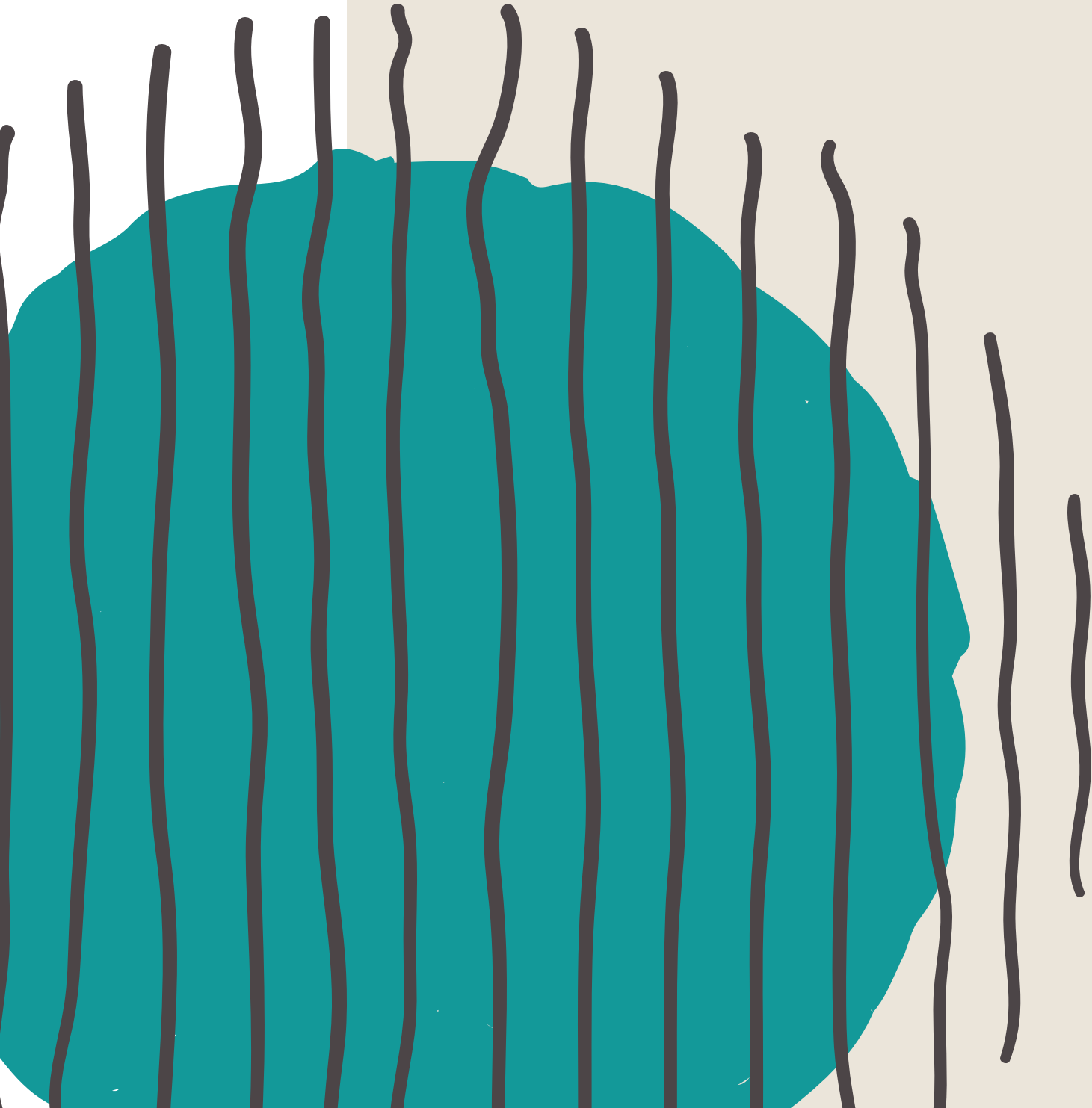
# References

1. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/>
2. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Available at: <https://unece.org/statistics/documents/2023/05/presentations/implementation-eu-survey-gender-based-violence-against>
3. Eurostat and National Statistical Agencies.
4. Ministry of Justice, Finland.
5. Ministry of Interior, Spain.
6. Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Policy, Poland.
7. Ministry of Equality, France.
8. Ministry of the Interior, Italy.
9. Gender violence - statistics & facts | Statista <https://www.statista.com/topics/7672/gender-abuse-in-spain/>



# 04

## Country Reports



# Country Reports

*In-depth Insights into Gender Equality, Legal Frameworks and Progress across Europe*



*The following section provides a comprehensive analysis of gender equality for each country, exploring the historical context, legal framework, institutional strategies and the integration of gender equality initiatives in educational settings. It also highlights each country's alignment with European Union directives and international conventions and provides a detailed examination of the country's efforts to promote gender equality and combat gender-based violence. At the end of each country synthesis there is a brief bibliography of resources, sometimes with a list of additional resources provided by partner countries to support the synthesis. These additional resources are also available in the country annexes.*

# Gender Equality in Cyprus

## Historical Background and Context

The history of gender equality in Cyprus has been shaped by a combination of traditional social norms and the influence of external factors, in particular the island's alignment with European Union standards. Historically, Cypriot society has been deeply rooted in patriarchal values, with gender roles traditionally defined by a strong emphasis on family and domestic responsibilities for women. However, the modernisation of Cypriot society, coupled with its accession to the European Union in 2004, has had a significant impact on the development of gender equality.

Cyprus' integration into the EU marked a pivotal moment in the country's approach to gender equality. The need for harmonisation with the EU led to the adoption of numerous legislative measures aimed at promoting gender equality. This period also saw the emergence of civil society organisations advocating for women's rights and gender equality, which further contributed to changing social attitudes. Despite this progress, Cyprus continues to face challenges in achieving full gender equality, particularly in tackling entrenched cultural norms and stereotypes.

## Legislative and Policy Frameworks

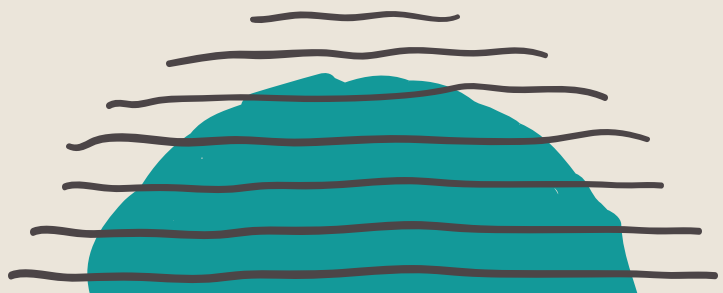
In Cyprus, the promotion of gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence have been significantly influenced by the country's alignment with the *acquis communautaire* of the European Union. This alignment has led to the adoption of numerous legislative measures aimed at promoting gender equality. One of the cornerstones of these efforts is the National Action Plan (NAP) for Gender Equality 2019-2022. This plan focusses on the integration of gender considerations in different sectors of society, with an emphasis on gender mainstreaming. In this context, an ad hoc committee – comprising representatives of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, the Committee on Gender Equality in Employment and Vocational Training, the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration, the Ombudsman and the Office of the Gender Equality Commissioner (GEC) (established in 2014) – was set

up to prepare a guide on gender mainstreaming in public policies.

In addition to the NAP, Cyprus has developed several sectoral action plans addressing specific aspects of gender equality. The National Youth Strategy of Cyprus, adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2017, and the Country Sheet on Youth Policy in Cyprus, prepared by the European Commission and the Council of Europe in 2020, are such initiatives. These strategies recognise the diversity of young people (see "Principles of National Youth Policy" in the Country Sheet on Youth Policy in Cyprus), including their gender and sexual orientation, and aim to empower them through targeted policies and programmes. The Ministry of Health has also played a key role in these efforts by launching the National Strategy for the Sexual and Reproductive Health of Young People 2018-2025. This strategy represents a significant initiative by the government to address the non-discrimination and sexual and reproductive health needs of young people, in line with Cyprus' international commitments.

## Institutional and Governmental Strategies

The Government of Cyprus has prioritised the promotion of non-discrimination across different dimensions, including disability, gender, sexual orientation and cultural background. A key initiative in this regard is the horizontal integration of the gender dimension in the state apparatus. This process was initiated by a series of meetings between the Gender Equality Commissioner and representatives of various ministries, universities and institutions on 20-23 July. The Council of Ministers also mandated the Gender Equality Commissioner to prepare and monitor the implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2024-2027. This strategy is expected to build on previous efforts and provide a more structured and measurable approach to promoting gender equality in Cyprus.



# Gender Equality in Cyprus

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

The promotion of gender equality in Cyprus extends to the education sector, where the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth has implemented a series of three-year action plans within the framework of the European Union's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and Horizon Europe. These plans aim to integrate gender equality at all levels of education and are coordinated by a special inter-ministerial committee (President of the Committee on Gender Equality in the Workplace and Vocational Training and Commissioner for Legislation during the term of Prodromos Prodromou and Louisa Christodoulidou Zannetou). Educational initiatives include voluntary student competitions, teacher seminars and the inclusion of gender issues in the curriculum, particularly in the health education curriculum under the chapter on sexual and reproductive health. These efforts aim to challenge gender stereotypes and promote a learning environment that supports gender equality from an early age.

## Gender-Based Violence

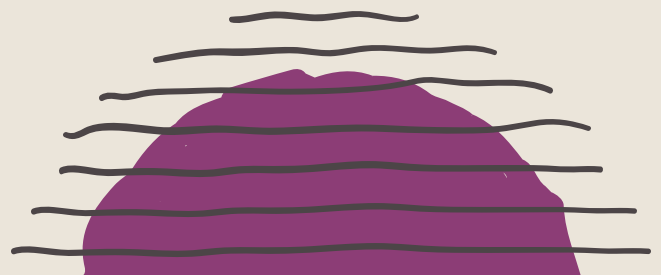
Gender-based violence remains a significant problem in Cyprus, despite legislative and institutional efforts to combat it. A report by the Advocates for Human Rights (AHR) and the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) on the situation in Cyprus regarding gender-based violence (2023) reveals persistent problems in implementing and harmonising laws to effectively protect victims, in providing resource centres and shelters for victims of gender-based violence, and in addressing intersectional discrimination as well as the needs of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Similarly, a 2022 report by the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) states that despite positive changes such as the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2017 or the adoption of Law 115(1)/2021 on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and Related Matters, the Law on Protection against Harassment and Stalking of 2021 and the Law on Combating Sexism and Sexist Behaviour of 2020,

Cyprus is still struggling to fully comply with this legal framework and to prevent gender-based violence and protect victims. Both reports recommend, among other things, training for civil and judicial officials, harmonisation of the legal framework on gender-based violence and improved coordination in the implementation of laws, improvement of support and assistance to victims, collection of data on all forms of gender-based violence, inclusion of an intersectional perspective in the care of victims of gender-based violence, and further enforcement of legislation on gender-based violence.

The horizontal integration of the gender dimension into government mechanisms, initiated by the Gender Equality Commissioner, is therefore a promising approach. However, its success will depend on the consistent application of gender equality principles at all levels of government and the ability to measure and evaluate the results of these initiatives. In addition, addressing gender-based violence requires a comprehensive approach that includes robust legal protection, effective enforcement and widespread public awareness campaigns.

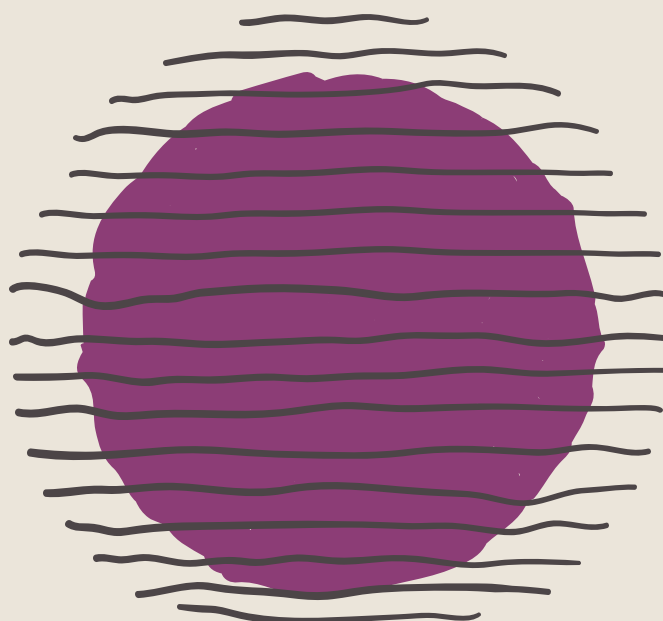
## Highlights

Cyprus is a republic, but religion (Orthodox Christian) is central and has a strong influence on politics and society in general. As a result, many issues (such as feminisation) have been taken up first by Greece and then by Cyprus in response to European policies. For example, only recently has the University of Cyprus included provisions on feminisation in its official texts and developed a strategic equality plan in cooperation with the EU. Greece also recognises same-sex civil unions, while same-sex marriage has been recognised in Cyprus since 2015. Cyprus' accession to the EU has made it possible to implement efforts in the field of human rights and gender equality.



# References

1. European Commission. (2020). Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025. Brussels: European Commission. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en)
2. Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth of the Republic of Cyprus. (2017). National Youth Strategy of Cyprus 2017-2022. Nicosia: Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth. Available at: [https://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=910&Itemid=383&lang=el](https://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=910&Itemid=383&lang=el)
3. Ministry of Health of the Republic of Cyprus. (2018). National Strategy on Sexual and Reproductive Health of Youth 2018-2025. Nicosia: Ministry of Health. Available at: [https://www.moh.gov.cy/moh/moh.nsf/All/2C0AF2AB5E5F5D18C22583FA004657F2/\\$file/STRATEGY%20FOR%20YOUTH%20SEXUAL%20AND%20REPRODUCTIVE%20HEALTH%20IN%20CYPRUS.pdf](https://www.moh.gov.cy/moh/moh.nsf/All/2C0AF2AB5E5F5D18C22583FA004657F2/$file/STRATEGY%20FOR%20YOUTH%20SEXUAL%20AND%20REPRODUCTIVE%20HEALTH%20IN%20CYPRUS.pdf)
4. Gender Equality Commissioner. (2023). Gender Equality in Cyprus: Horizontal Integration and Strategic Planning. Nicosia: Office of the Gender Equality Commissioner.
5. Council of Ministers of Cyprus. (2023). Decision on the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2024-2027. Nicosia: Council of Ministers.
6. AHR & MIGS. (2023, 11 October). *Stakeholder Report for the United Nations Universal Periodic Review*. <https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Res/AHR%20MIGS%20Cyprus%20UPR%20Final.pdf>
7. Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). (2022). *Baseline Evaluation Report Cyprus*. Council of Europe. <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-inf-2022-29-cyprus-report-for-publication-eng-for-publication/1680a91c5b>





# Gender Equality in Finland

## Historical Background and Context

Finland has a long history of promoting gender equality, often seen as a pioneer in advancing women's rights. In 1906, Finland became the first country in Europe to grant women full political rights, including the right to vote and stand for election. By 1907, 19 women were members of the Finnish Parliament. The foundations for a progressive society that continues to prioritise equality were laid by this early commitment to gender equality.

Throughout the 20th century, Finland's efforts to promote gender equality expanded, particularly in the areas of education, employment and social welfare. The country's welfare state model, characterised by universal health care, childcare and education, has been instrumental in promoting gender equality by enabling both men and women to combine work and family life. Finland's approach to gender equality is also deeply rooted in its cultural and social values, which emphasise inclusiveness, fairness and respect for diversity.

In recent decades, Finland has continued to build on this heritage by aligning its national policies with European Union standards and international conventions. Reflecting its commitment to promoting equality in all areas of society, Finland is consistently ranked among the most gender-equal countries in the world.

## Legislative and Policy Frameworks

Finland has developed an effective legal framework to promote gender equality and prevent discrimination. The main piece of legislation in this area is the Act on Equality between Women and Men (Equality Act), originally adopted in 1986 and subsequently amended to strengthen its provisions. The Equality Act mandates equal treatment in all areas of life, including education, employment and political participation. It also requires the active promotion of gender equality in schools, workplaces and public institutions.

Another landmark piece of legislation is the Non-Discrimination Act, which complements the Equality Act by prohibiting discrimination on a number of grounds, including gender, gender identity and sexual orientation. The Act requires public and private bodies to take proactive measures to prevent discrimination and promote equality.

Finland has also taken specific measures to combat gender-based violence. The National Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women sets out guidelines for preventing violence, protecting victims and prosecuting perpetrators, with measures to improve the legal framework, strengthen support services and raise public awareness of gender-based violence.

## Institutional and Governmental Strategies

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is the main government body responsible for coordinating gender equality policy and overseeing the implementation of the Equality Act. The Ministry works closely with other government departments, civil society organisations and international bodies to promote gender equality in Finland.

One of the Finnish government's central strategic instruments is the Gender Equality Action Plan, which sets out specific measures to promote gender equality in various areas. The Action Plan is regularly updated to reflect new challenges and priorities and includes targets for reducing the gender pay gap, increasing the number of women in decision-making positions and improving the reconciliation of work and family life.

At the local level, municipalities play a crucial role in the implementation of gender equality policies. For example, many municipalities have established gender equality committees or appointed gender equality officers to oversee the implementation of local initiatives, all with the support of the Finnish Association of Local and Regional Authorities, which provides guidance and resources to help municipalities promote gender equality.



# Gender Equality in Finland

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

The Finnish education system is widely regarded as one of the most equitable in the world, and gender equality is a fundamental principle embedded in the national curriculum, as evidenced by Finnish Gender Sensitive Education.

Schools are indeed required to promote gender equality and address issues related to gender stereotypes and discrimination. The curriculum includes topics such as human rights, gender equality and sex education, with an emphasis on promoting respect for diversity and inclusiveness. In addition, subjects included in the Finnish national core curriculum are not gender-specific and are taught to all students, such as home economics, which is part of the curriculum for seventh graders. Teachers are trained to recognise and challenge gender bias in the classroom and to create a supportive learning environment for all students.

Finland also attaches great importance to involving young people in promoting gender equality. Various programmes and initiatives aim to empower young people to become advocates for equality and social justice. For example, student unions and youth councils in Finland actively promote gender equality and provide platforms for young people to voice their concerns and propose solutions to gender-related issues.

In addition to formal education, Finland supports lifelong learning initiatives that promote gender equality. Adult education centres, vocational schools, and universities offer courses on gender studies, equality, and diversity, enabling individuals of all ages to deepen their understanding of these critical issues.

## Gender-Based Violence

Finland has made significant progress in addressing gender-based violence, but challenges remain. For example, a study conducted by Tilastokeskus (Statistics Finland) in 2021 showed that gender-based violence is still an issue in Finland, as women (57%) and men (46%) have experienced some form of gender-based violence in their lifetime, be it

physical, sexual or threats of violence. The National Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women is the main framework guiding the country in this area. The plan includes a wide range of measures to prevent violence, protect victims and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable.

Coordination of support services for victims of gender-based violence is also a central feature of the plan. Finland has established a network of shelters, crisis centres and helplines that provide essential support to women and children affected by violence. These services are complemented by legal aid, counselling and rehabilitation programmes to help victims rebuild their lives.

Finland also recognises the importance of prevention and education in tackling gender-based violence. Schools and universities play a vital role in raising awareness and teaching young people about healthy relationships, consent and respect. Public awareness campaigns, often supported by governments, also aim to change societal attitudes towards violence and promote a culture of zero tolerance.

## Highlights

Finland is a country where gender equality has long been a matter of principle and culturally deeply rooted. Finland is a pioneer: it gave women the right to vote and stand for election in 1906, which led to 19 women being elected to the Finnish Parliament as early as 1907. The Finnish model, which includes universal health care, childcare and education, has promoted gender equality by enabling men and women to reconcile work and family life. Youth education in Finland is central to promoting gender equality at all levels. A strong legal framework also supports the promotion of gender equality (the Gender Equality Act (1986); the Non-Discrimination Act, which prohibits discrimination and promotes equality in various areas). However, in recent years it has become a social issue again due to the influx of immigrants from countries where gender issues are not equally acculturated, especially from Muslim countries.





# References

1. Eduskunta. (n.d.). Women as Members of Parliament - The Parliament's number of women has ballooned in a little over a century. Available at: <https://www.eduskunta.fi/EN/naineduskunta/toimii/kirjasto/aineistot/yhteiskunta/womens-suffrage-110-years/Pages/women-as-members-of-parliament.aspx>
2. Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland. Act on Equality between Women and Men. Available at: <https://stm.fi/en/gender-equality>
3. Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland. Gender Equality in Education. Available at: <https://minedu.fi/en/gender-equality-in-education>
4. Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI). National Curriculum for Basic Education. Helsinki: EDUFI.
5. Finnish Association of Local and Regional Authorities. Gender Equality in Municipalities. Available at: <https://www.localfinland.fi/>
6. Finnish Government. (2020). National Action Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women. Helsinki: Government of Finland.
7. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Gender Equality in Education and Training: Finland. Vilnius: EIGE. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/countries/finland>
8. Attila, H., Keski-Petäjä, M., Pietiläinen, M., Lipasti, L., Saari, J., & Haapakangas, K. (2023). *Sukupuolistunut väkivalta ja lähisuhdeväkivalta Suomessa 2021: Loppuraportti*. Tilastokeskus. <https://otos.stat.fi/server/api/content/bitstreams/93f18e83-3308-4acd-b370-b71fbb70f9bd/content>



# Additional resources (cf. Finland's Annexes)

1. SETA. (2018). Normipyyrintys.  
<https://seta.fi/tue/normipyyrintys/>
2. Pelastakaa Lapset. (2019). Kehoni On Minun : Opas Aikuisille.  
<https://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/kehoni-on-minun-toinen-painos-fi-2020-web.pdf>
3. Lapsiasiavaltuutettu. (2020, October). Do you know about the human rights of children?  
<https://lapsiasia.fi/documents/25250457/41743419/Tunnetko+lapsen+oikeudet+englanti+2020.pdf/7cb5a3a7-f7cd-43b8-10c7-e5b757a1ad1c/Tunnetko+lapsen+oikeudet+englantia+2020.pdf?t=1603187409506> (English & Finnish)
4. Lapsiasiavaltuutettu.(2021). Lapsella on oikeus.  
[https://lapsiasia.fi/documents/25250457/47071064/ALLA+BARN+HAR+RA%CC%88TT+bildtavlorna+30032021+\(1\).pdf/a6c6d95d-07d0-84b1-0f51-55fe10a81bb6/ALLA+BARN+HAR+RA%CC%88TT+bildtavlorna+30032021+\(1\).pdf?t=1669185714194](https://lapsiasia.fi/documents/25250457/47071064/ALLA+BARN+HAR+RA%CC%88TT+bildtavlorna+30032021+(1).pdf/a6c6d95d-07d0-84b1-0f51-55fe10a81bb6/ALLA+BARN+HAR+RA%CC%88TT+bildtavlorna+30032021+(1).pdf?t=1669185714194)
5. Pelastakaa Lapset. (2021). Mun keho mun rajat – Opas nuorille.  
<https://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/mun-keho-mun-rajat-2021.pdf>
6. Ihmisoikeusliitto. (n.d.). Tunnista & puutu - oppituntimateriaali.  
<https://ihmisoikeudet.net/ihmisoikeuskasvatus/ihmisoikeudet-opetuksessa/tunnista-puutu-oppituntimateriaali/>



# Gender Equality in France

## Historical Background and Context

In France, the recent report on the state of sexism by the High Council for Equality (HCE) shows that sexist stereotypes are persisting or even strengthening in France, particularly with the rise of masculinism; that gender-based and sexual violence is on the increase; and that inequalities persist in many areas (work, sport, transport, etc.) (Pierre-Brossolette et al., 2024: 9-15). An interplay of cultural, social and political factors has shaped the pursuit of gender equality in France. Historically, France has been a society with deeply entrenched gender roles, influenced by its long-standing patriarchal traditions. However, significant social movements, particularly since the mid-20th century, have challenged these norms, leading to substantial advances in gender equality (1920: Law banning contraception and abortion; 1942: Abortion is considered a crime against the state, punishable by death; 1944: Women gain the right to vote (21 April)).

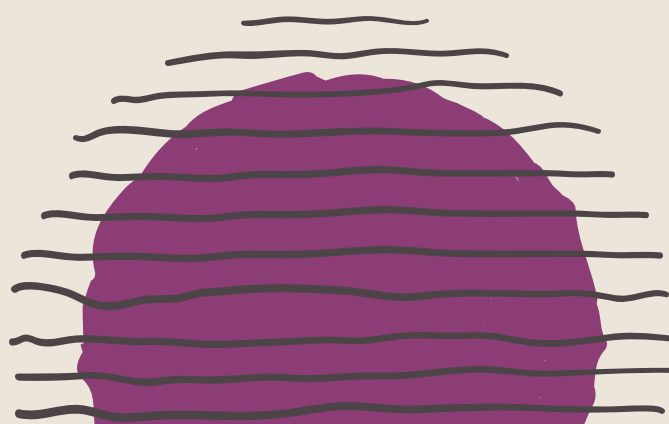
The feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s played a decisive role in pushing through reforms in areas such as reproductive rights, equality in the workplace and education (1965: reform of the 1804 matrimonial regime (women can manage their own property, open a bank account and work without their husband's permission); 1967: Neuwirth Law (18 December) legalising contraception; 1970: the mother became equal to the father in parental authority; late 1974: law on voluntary abortion. These feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s laid the foundations for the development of a more inclusive society in which gender equality became central to public policy. The integration of gender equality into the French education system was one of the strategic areas of progress, reflecting wider societal shifts towards recognising and addressing gender inequalities. In recent decades, France has continued to build on this foundation by aligning its national policies with European Union standards and international conventions on gender equality. The country's commitment to promoting gender equality in education is evident in the various laws, policies and initiatives that have been implemented to create more inclusive learning environments and challenge gender stereotypes.

## Legislative and Policy Frameworks

France has implemented several legislative and policy measures to promote gender equality in education and to address issues related to sexual identity. These efforts are part of a broader strategy to integrate gender equality into all aspects of the education system, from curriculum design to teacher training and school policies.

One example is the 2013 Law on the Fight Against Gender Stereotypes, which sought to combat gender stereotypes and promote gender equality in education and media. The law prohibits the use of gender stereotypes in textbooks, educational materials and advertisements, and requires the inclusion of gender equality education in teacher training. In addition, the 2013 Charter for Equality Between Girls and Boys in School, signed by the Ministry of National Education, specifies actions for schools to integrate gender equality into the curriculum, promote gender-neutral language, and prevent gender-based violence.

Another important initiative is the Education for Gender Equality Program (PEG), launched in 2014 by the Ministry of National Education. This programme provides resources, training and support for teachers to integrate gender equality into their teaching practices and curricula. The 2018 Law Against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence further strengthens these initiatives by mandating the implementation of prevention and awareness-raising measures in educational institutions to address sexual harassment, assault, and other forms of violence.



# Gender Equality in France

In 2021, the French government launched the National Strategy for Gender Equality, which outlines a comprehensive approach to promoting gender equality in various sectors, including education. The strategy includes measures to strengthen gender education in schools, combat gender-based violence and promote equal opportunities for girls and boys in education and beyond. However, "inclusive writing" has been officially banned from educational institutions following an outcry from the right (Blanquer circular of 7 May 2021), followed by a proposed ban (Gruny - Retailleau bill of October 2023).

## Institutional and Governmental Strategies

Over the past decade, France has implemented various institutional and governmental strategies to promote gender equality and address issues related to sexual identity in educational settings. These policies aim to create inclusive and supportive learning environments where all students, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation, can thrive.

A key aspect of these strategies is the integration of gender equality and diversity into national education policies. This includes the inclusion of gender equality, sexual orientation and diversity issues in the curriculum across different subjects and grade levels. The French government has also provided training programmes for educators to raise awareness of gender issues and equip them with the tools to tackle discrimination and promote inclusivity in the classroom.

Anti-discrimination measures are in place to protect students from harassment, bullying and discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation. Schools are required to have policies in place to address instances of discrimination and to provide support to affected students. In addition, educational institutions provide support services, such as counselling and peer support groups, for students who may face challenges related to their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Awareness-raising campaigns have been launched to promote acceptance and tolerance of diverse gender

identities and sexual orientations. These campaigns aim to raise awareness among students, educators and parents about the importance of respecting differences and creating an inclusive school environment.

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

Through various strategies and initiatives aimed at promoting inclusive learning environments and challenging gender stereotypes, France has taken substantive steps towards gender equality in education.

French schools try to design an inclusive curriculum, free from gender bias, after being identified as exhibiting gender stereotypes (Sinigaglia-Amadio, 2011). Gender education is also integrated into the curriculum at different levels of education, from primary school to university. Students learn about gender roles, gender stereotypes and the importance of gender equality through dedicated lessons, discussions and projects. Teachers are trained to be sensitive to gender issues and to facilitate meaningful conversations about gender equality in the classroom. Indeed, teacher training programmes include modules on gender equality and diversity to ensure that future educators are equipped to create inclusive and equitable learning environments. These programmes focus on identifying and challenging gender stereotypes and discrimination in teaching practices.

Schools are also encouraged to develop policies and initiatives to promote gender equality and prevent gender discrimination and harassment. Awareness-raising campaigns (e.g. "Ici on peut être soi" campaigns) and partnerships with local organisations are essential components of the French approach to promoting gender equality in education. However, gender equality has not been achieved in French schools, where gender roles and inequalities tend to persist (Magni, 2022). This has led public actors and scientific researchers to study the issues at stake and to imagine new forms of education that are sensitive and inclusive (Szerdahelyi, 2022).

# Gender Equality in France

## Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence remains a critical issue in France, particularly in educational settings. As mentioned above, sexism is still widespread in French society, according to the latest report of the High Council for Equality (HCE) (Pierre-Brossolette *et al.*, 2024). The legislative and policy measures discussed above, such as the 2018 Law Against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and the National Strategy for Gender Equality, include specific provisions to combat gender-based violence in schools.

However, despite these efforts, challenges remain in fully addressing gender-based violence within the education system. The need for comprehensive prevention strategies, effective enforcement of anti-discrimination policies and widespread awareness-raising campaigns is evident. The controversy surrounding initiatives such as the "ABCD de l'égalité" programme to foster gender equality in schools, which was promoted in 2013 under French Socialist President François Hollande but cancelled due to opposition from conservative groups, highlights the ongoing challenges in achieving gender equality in education. Following this controversy, which was waged by various religious and conservative right-wing movements against an alleged "gender theory", the term "gender" has since been banned from educational materials and replaced with the promotion of "equality of sexes".

Nevertheless, France continues to work towards creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students. Including gender equality in educational curricula, focussing on youth engagement and implementing supportive policies and services are crucial steps to address the root causes of gender-based violence and promote a culture of respect and equality. More recently, in the wake of the #metoo

movement, there has been increased awareness-raising in universities. The inclusion of "inclusive writing" has also come under attack and criticism in the last decade, while its advocates continue to promote it on the basis that social equality between men and women can only be rooted in a balanced treatment and representation of both through language.

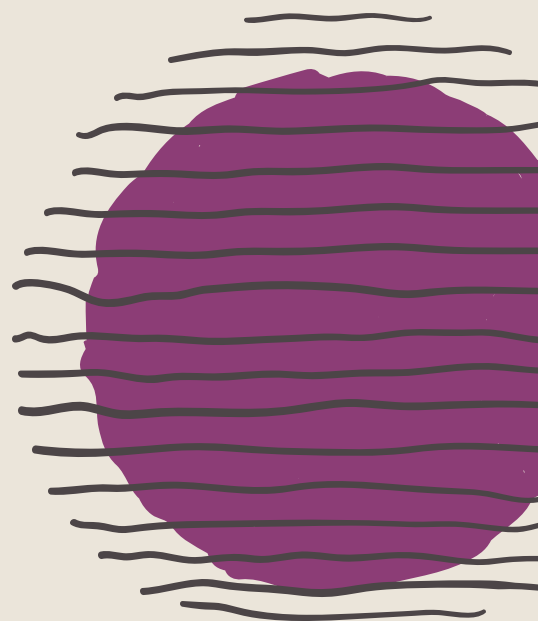
## Highlights

France has a history of traditional gender roles and an entrenched patriarchy. However, significant progress was made in the 20th century, especially after the Second World War. Various laws and institutional (educational) policies aim to promote gender equality (e.g. the 2013 Law on Combating Gender Stereotypes, which aims to prohibit the use of stereotypes in school textbooks and to integrate gender equality education into teacher training; the 2018 Law on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence). In addition, the 2013 Marriage for All Act allows same-sex marriage, and awareness-raising campaigns aim to promote acceptance of gender diversity and combat harassment and discrimination. Nevertheless, gender-based violence remains a major problem in the French education system. Moreover, a supposed "gender theory" originating in the United States, criticised and attacked by the most conservative parties and religious associations (especially Catholics and Muslims), has made the word "gender" taboo in France, which is paradoxical given that gender studies was born thanks to French researchers (notably Jacques Derrida and Hélène Cixous). As a result, the word "gender" has been erased from institutional texts in favour of "gender equality" / "girls-boys equality".



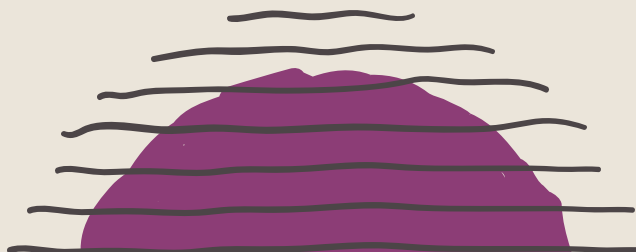
# References

1. Pierre-Brossolette, S., Alberti, X., Bernard, M-A., Chaudouët-Delmas, M., Bernard, M. (2024, 22 janvier). *Rapport annuel 2024 sur l'état des lieux du sexisme en France* (Rapport n°2024-01-22-STER-61). Haut Conseil à l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes (HCE). [https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hce\\_-\\_rapport\\_annuel\\_2024\\_sur\\_l\\_etat\\_du\\_sexisme\\_en\\_france.pdf](https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hce_-_rapport_annuel_2024_sur_l_etat_du_sexisme_en_france.pdf)
2. Ministry of National Education, Youth, and Sports (Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports). National Education Policies on Gender Equality and Diversity. Available at: <https://www.education.gouv.fr/>
3. Ministry of National Education, Youth, and Sports (2013). Charter for Equality Between Girls and Boys in School. Paris: Ministry of National Education.
4. Ministry of National Education, Youth, and Sports (2014). Education for Gender Equality Program (PEG). Paris: Ministry of National Education.
5. French Government. (2018). Law Against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. Paris: Government of France.
6. National Observatory of Gender Equality in Schools (Observatoire National de la Mixité et de l'Égalité Fille-Garçon dans l'Éducation). Reports on Gender Equality in French Schools. Available at: <http://www.mixite-ecole.education.fr/>
7. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). (2021). Gender Equality in Education and Training: France. Vilnius: EIGE. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/countries/france>
8. Sinigalia-Amadio, S. (2011). Le genre dans les manuels scolaires français. Des représentations stéréotypées et discriminatoires. *Tréma*, (35-36), 98-115.
9. Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale. (2024). "*Ici on peut être soi*": la campagne nationale de prévention et de sensibilisation contre les LGBT+ phobies. <https://www.education.gouv.fr/contre-l-homophobie-et-la-transphobie-l-ecole-40706>
10. MAGNI, G (2023). Loïc Szerdahelyi (dir.) – Quelle égalité pour l'école ? 2022, Paris, L'Harmattan, 210 p. *Cahiers du Genre*, 2023/2 n° 75, pp. 309-313. <https://doi.org/10.3917/cdge.075.0309>.
11. SZERDAHELYI, L. (2022). *Quelle égalité pour l'école ?*. L'Harmattan. P.210.



# Additional resources (cf. France's Annexes)

1. Académie de Limoges. (2012). L'égalité en bulles. <https://videos.reseau-canope.fr/pefg/pdf/limoges-egalite-en-bulles.pdf>
2. Convention interministérielle pour l'égalité entre les filles et les garçons, les femmes et les hommes dans le système éducatif, 2013 – 2018. (2013). [https://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/02\\_Fevrier/17/0/2013\\_convention\\_egalite\\_FG\\_241170.pdf](https://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/02_Fevrier/17/0/2013_convention_egalite_FG_241170.pdf)
3. Houadec, V., Babillot, M., De La Motte, A. & Pontais, C. (2015). 50 activités pour l'égalité Filles-garçons. Canopé Editions. 50 activités pour l'égalité Filles-garçons. Canopé Editions. [https://www.reseau-canope.fr/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Projets/Plan\\_egalite\\_filles-garcons/50\\_activites.pdf](https://www.reseau-canope.fr/fileadmin/user_upload/Projets/Plan_egalite_filles-garcons/50_activites.pdf)
4. Crips Île-de-France. (2021). Cahier engagé. <https://www.lecrips-idf.net/cahiers-de-vacances-engages>
5. DRDFE. (2021). Je m'engage pour l'égalité entre les filles et les garçons, et vous ? Préfecture de Normandie. <https://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/normandie/irecontenu/telechargement/77893/503629/file/DRDFE-Kit%20animation-PLANCHES.pdf>
6. HCE. (2022). POUR UNE COMMUNICATION PUBLIQUE SANS STÉRÉOTYPES DE SEXE : Guide pratique. [https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/guide\\_egacom\\_sans\\_stereotypes-2022-versionpublique-min-2.pdf](https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/guide_egacom_sans_stereotypes-2022-versionpublique-min-2.pdf)
7. Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Jeunesse. (2023). Campagne de prévention et de sensibilisation contre les LGBT+phobies dans les collèges et les lycées. <https://www.education.gouv.fr/contre-l-homophobie-et-la-transphobie-l-ecole-40706>
8. Réseau Canopé. (2023). Les valeurs de la République : rencontres 2023. [https://www.reseau-canope.fr/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Academies-ateliers/DT\\_Languedoc-Roussillon\\_Midi-Pyrenees\\_LRMP/Academie\\_Toulouse/VDLR\\_Programme2023.pdf](https://www.reseau-canope.fr/fileadmin/user_upload/Academies-ateliers/DT_Languedoc-Roussillon_Midi-Pyrenees_LRMP/Academie_Toulouse/VDLR_Programme2023.pdf)
9. HCE. (2023). Rapport annuel 2023 sur l'état des lieux du sexisme en France. [https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hce\\_-\\_rapport\\_annuel\\_2023\\_etat\\_du\\_sexisme\\_en\\_france.pdf](https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hce_-_rapport_annuel_2023_etat_du_sexisme_en_france.pdf)





# Gender Equality in Germany

## Historical Background and Context

In post-war Germany, Article 3 of the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) of 1949 enshrined the principle of equality between men and women. For decades, however, social norms and the legal framework continued to reflect traditional gender roles. The feminist movements of the 1970s were instrumental in challenging these norms by advocating legal reforms in areas such as family law, employment and reproductive rights. The reunification of Germany in 1990 brought new challenges and opportunities for advancing gender equality, as the integration of East and West Germany required the harmonisation of policies and laws across the newly unified country. In the decades that followed, Germany made strong progress in promoting gender equality, particularly in the areas of employment, education and political representation. In recent years, both the federal and state governments have continued to implement a range of measures to combat discrimination and promote equality, reflecting Germany's commitment to ensuring that all citizens, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from all areas of society.

## Legislation, policies and government strategies

Germany has a legal and policy framework in place at both state and federal level. At state level, each of Germany's 16 federal states has appointed equal opportunities officers in various ministries. In North Rhine-Westphalia, for example, the Ministry of Culture and Science employs a team of equal opportunities officers who are involved in all personnel, social and organisational measures. Their role includes participating in decision-making processes, providing support and advice on equality issues and ensuring compliance with legal requirements. Similarly, the Ministry of Education in North Rhine-Westphalia focusses on ensuring gender equality among teachers and promoting gender-sensitive education in schools. This includes developing gender-sensitive curricula, promoting

gender equality among teachers and providing resources such as brochures and training materials. These initiatives are being replicated in all federal states.

At federal level, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBWF) plays a central role in promoting gender equality, with its Equal Opportunities Commissioner actively involved in the implementation of the Federal Equal Opportunities Act (*Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz*). This law ensures equal treatment within the federal administration, especially in leadership positions, where a 30% quota for women on supervisory boards will apply from 2016. This also includes ensuring equal treatment in personnel decisions, promoting the compatibility of family and work, and supporting the development of gender-sensitive policies within the ministry.

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth also supports these efforts by developing resources and initiatives to promote gender equality in all federal institutions.

A landmark development in Germany's legislative landscape is the enactment of the Self-Determination Law (SBGG) in August 2023. This law allows transgender, intersex and non-binary people to change their gender marker or first name by self-disclosure to the registry office, without the need for medical or psychological certification. This legislation represents a significant extension of gender reassignment rights.

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

Germany's approach to promoting gender equality in education involves a combination of legal mandates, policy initiatives and practical strategies aimed at fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment.





# Gender Equality in Germany

Gender-responsive education is a key focus of German education strategies. In all federal states, curricula have been revised to incorporate the principles of gender equality, with an emphasis on challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes. In North Rhine-Westphalia, for example, the educational mandate includes the task of observing the constitutional principle of gender equality and working towards the elimination of gender-based disadvantages. Teachers and education professionals are provided with training and resources to develop the necessary gender competence to support young people's development in the classroom. In Germany, teacher training programmes include modules on gender equality to equip teachers with the skills to address gender issues effectively. These programmes are designed to help teachers identify and challenge gender stereotypes, promote inclusivity and create a supportive learning environment for all students. In addition, government ministries often provide booklets and other resources to support gender-sensitive education. These materials are designed to help educators implement gender equality policies in schools and to raise students' awareness of the importance of respecting diversity.

## Gender-Based Violence

Germany has also taken significant steps to address gender-based violence, with legislative and policy measures aimed at preventing violence and supporting victims. A key part of these efforts is the Self-Determination Act (SBGG), which provides legal recognition and protection for people who are transgender, intersex or non-binary. A report by GREVIO (2022) also praised "the consent-based definition of rape and sexual violence and the successful operation of a national telephone

helpline". Despite this progress, challenges remain in fully addressing gender-based violence. In 2020, the German authorities even recorded a 4.9% increase in intimate partner violence compared to the previous year. The GREVIO report also highlights a poor level of risk assessment, a lack of protection and support services for victims, and the absence of a national action plan or coordination at the national level as required by the Istanbul Convention. Continued efforts are needed to ensure that policies are effectively implemented and that victims receive the support they need, for example by promoting gender equality through education and legislation, which are crucial to addressing these challenges and creating safer, more inclusive societies.

## Highlights

In Germany, gender equality is enshrined in the Basic Law of 1949 (Article 3). The reunification of Germany in 1990 led to the harmonisation of gender equality policies. Legislatively, there is a dual federal and state system, with each state developing its own equality strategies, often overseen by equality officers. School curricula now include gender equality, with the aim of deconstructing traditional roles and stereotypes. Teachers are trained in gender equality to promote inclusiveness in schools. Germany also passed the Self-Determination Act (2023), which allows transgender, intersex and non-binary people to change their legal gender and first name without a medical certificate.



# References

1. Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF). Federal Ministry of Education and Research: Equal Opportunities in Education. Available at: <https://www.bmbf.de/>
2. Ministry of Culture and Science of North Rhine-Westphalia. Equal Rights in Education and Research. Available at: <https://www.mkw.nrw/>
3. Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (BMFSFJ). Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth: Gender Equality Initiatives. Available at: <https://www.bmfsfj.de/>
4. German Federal Government. (2023). Self-Determination Law (SBGG). Berlin: Government of Germany.
5. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Gender Equality in Education and Training: Germany. Vilnius: EIGE. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/countries/germany>
6. GREVIO. (2022, 7 October). *Germany: Council of Europe experts find serious gaps in protecting women and girls from gender-based violence*. CoE. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/germany-council-of-europe-experts-find-serious-gaps-in-protecting-women-and-girls-from-gender-based-violence>
7. Brady, K. (2022, 24 July). Berlin cracks down on gender-based violence. *DW*. <https://www.dw.com/en/germany-cracks-down-on-gender-based-violence/a-62567153#:~:text=German%20authorities%20report%20a%20high%20number%20of%20violent,viole%2C%20accounting%20for%20four%20out%20of%20five%20cases>.



# Gender Equality in Greece (In parallel with Cyprus)

## Historical Background and Context

Greece has a deeply rooted patriarchal tradition, with gender roles historically defined by strong family and societal norms. However, significant changes began to emerge in the second half of the 20th century, particularly with the adoption of the Greek Constitution in 1975, which formally recognised the principle of gender equality. Various reforms aimed to improve gender equality, particularly in areas such as employment, family law and education. These changes were often driven by the country's efforts to harmonise its laws with European Union standards following Greece's accession to the EU in 1981. Despite this progress, cultural and societal attitudes to gender roles in Greece remain a challenge.

## Legislation, policies and government strategies

Gender equality is enshrined in the Greek Constitution (Article 4(2)), which guarantees equality before the law and equal treatment of men and women, thus providing a constitutional guarantee for subsequent legislation and policies. The General Secretariat for Family Policies and Gender Equality (GSFPG) is the main governmental body responsible for the implementation of gender policies in Greece. The GSFPG oversees the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAPGE), which outlines specific measures to promote gender equality, prevent gender-based violence and increase women's representation in decision-making. The NAPGE includes provisions for gender mainstreaming in all areas of public policy, with a particular focus on employment, education and health. At the local level, the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE) provides guidance and resources to help municipalities promote gender equality.

In 2019, Greece introduced the Law on Substantive Gender Equality and Combating Gender-Based Violence (Law 4604/2019). The law strengthens the legal framework for the protection of women and the promotion of gender equality by addressing issues such as domestic violence, discrimination in the workplace and sexual harassment. The law also requires the establishment of gender equality committees in public and private sector organisations to monitor and promote gender equality practices.

More recently, the Law on Parental Leave and Work-Life Balance (Law 4808/2021) was ratified to improve gender equality in the workplace by providing more equitable parental leave arrangements. This law is part of Greece's efforts to comply with the European Union's work-life balance directive.

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

The Greek education system has made significant progress in integrating gender equality principles into the national curriculum, with a focus on challenging traditional gender roles and promoting inclusivity. Gender-sensitive education is promoted through various initiatives. The curriculum now includes discussions on human rights, gender equality and sex education, with the aim of raising students' awareness of the importance of respecting diversity and promoting equality. Greece also participates in European Union programmes, such as Erasmus+, which support educational exchanges and promote gender equality among students and educators across Europe. These programmes provide valuable opportunities for Greek students and teachers to interact with their peers from other countries and to learn from best practices in gender equality education.



# Gender Equality in Greece (In parallel with Cyprus)

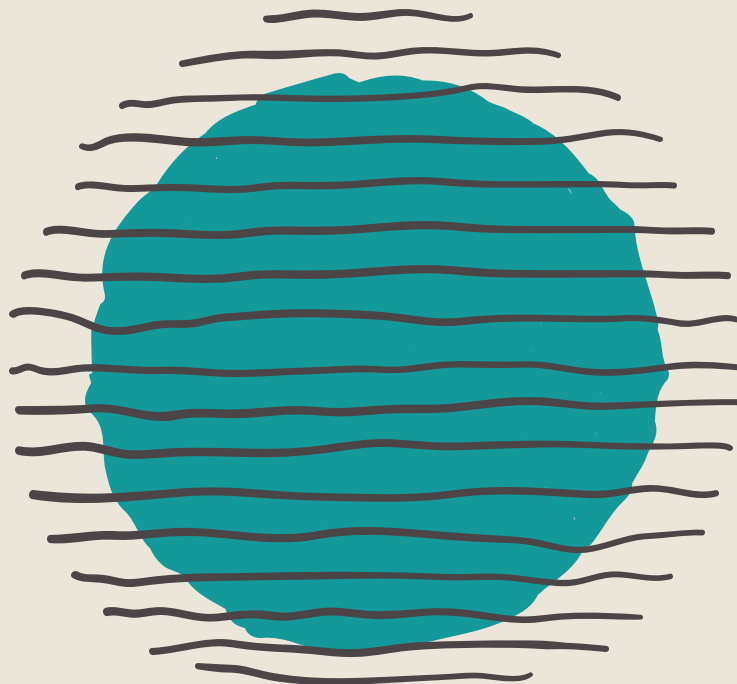
## Gender-Based Violence

The Law on Substantive Gender Equality and Combating Gender-Based Violence (Law 4604/2019) provides a strong legal framework for protecting victims of gender-based violence and prosecuting perpetrators. Greece has also implemented the National Action Plan on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women, which outlines specific measures to address domestic violence, sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence. This plan includes coordinating support services for victims, training law enforcement and judicial personnel, and promoting public awareness campaigns to change societal attitudes towards violence. However, gender-based violence remains a critical issue in Greece and the prevalence of all forms of violence against women is still high and increasing, according to a report by the GSFPGE in 2020. Cultural attitudes, economic disparities and

gaps in the implementation of legal frameworks remain barriers.

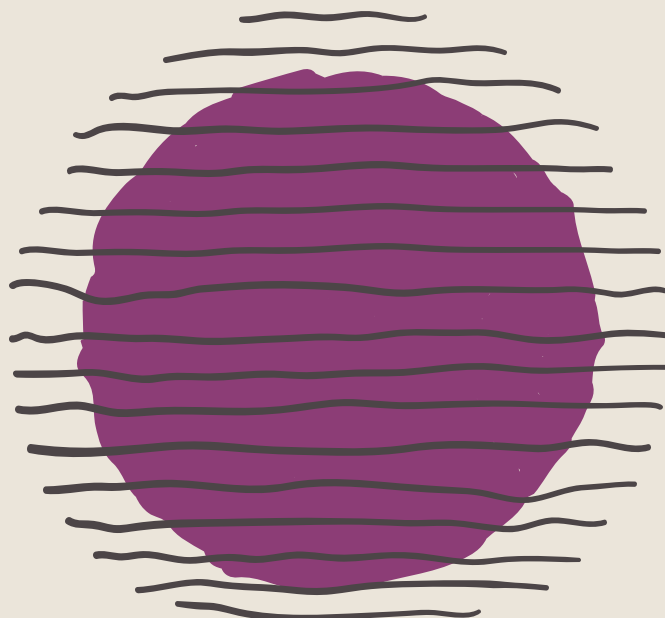
## Highlights

In Greece, the Constitution guarantees equality before the law (Article 4(2)). Greece has a deep-rooted patriarchal tradition, but progress towards gender equality has been made since the 1975 Constitution, and accession to the EU in 1981 accelerated reforms – but gender equality remains an important social issue. The fight against gender-based violence is central, and the Law on Substantive Equality and the Fight against Gender Violence (Law 4604/2019) strengthens the protection of women against domestic violence, discrimination in the workplace and sexual harassment.



# References

1. General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (GSFPGGE). National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025. Available at: <https://www.isotita.gr/en/>
2. Greek Parliament. (2019). Law on Substantive Gender Equality and Combating Gender-Based Violence (Law 4604/2019). Athens: Government of Greece.
3. Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, Greece. Gender Equality in Education: Policies and Initiatives. Available at: <https://www.minedu.gov.gr/>
4. Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE). Gender Equality in Local Governance. Available at: <https://www.kedke.gr/>
5. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Gender Equality in Education and Training: Greece. Vilnius: EIGE. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/countries/greece>
6. GSFPGGE. (2020, November). *1st ANNUAL REPORT ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN*. [https://isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/First-Report-on-Violence-Against-Women\\_GSFPGGE.pdf](https://isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/First-Report-on-Violence-Against-Women_GSFPGGE.pdf)



# Gender Equality in Ireland

## Historical Background and Context

The journey towards gender equality in Ireland has been shaped by significant historical events, cultural shifts and social reforms. The impact of the Great Famine, for instance, had a profound effect on traditional gender roles, altering the fabric of Irish society. As the influence of the Catholic Church evolved, it continued to play a substantial role in shaping societal attitudes towards gender, particularly in areas such as reproductive rights and family life.

Throughout the 20th century, Ireland saw a series of pivotal changes that laid the groundwork for gender equality. Key milestones include the introduction of voting rights for women, the Employment Equality Acts and the Maternity Protection Acts. These legislative advancements were crucial in promoting women's rights and ensuring their participation in public and economic life. However, despite these achievements, challenges such as gender pay disparities and the underrepresentation of women in decision-making structures have persisted, necessitating ongoing efforts to address these issues.

## Legislative and Policy Frameworks

Ireland's legislative framework has been instrumental in advancing gender equality and protecting women's rights. Over the years, the country has implemented several important legislative measures designed to promote gender equality and address gender-based violence. The Employment Equality Acts, for example, have played a crucial role in ensuring that women receive equal treatment in the workplace, while the Maternity Protection Acts provide essential support for working mothers.

One of the most significant developments in Ireland's legislative landscape is the passage of reproductive rights legislation. This includes the legalisation of contraception and, more recently, the repeal of the Eighth Amendment, which paved the way for the legalisation of abortion in 2018. These changes have been landmark victories for gender equality, reflecting the evolving views of Irish society

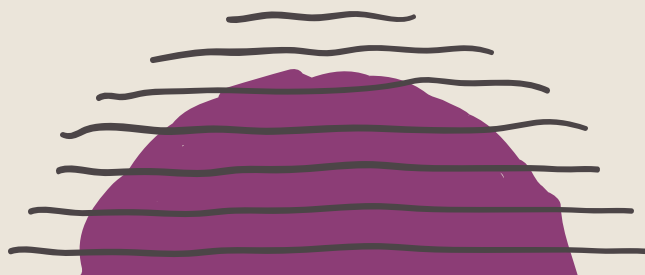
and the increasing recognition of women's autonomy over their bodies.

The legal framework also encompasses measures aimed at addressing domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Act 2018 is a comprehensive piece of legislation that provides victims with various forms of protection, including barring orders, safety orders and protection orders. The Act's recognition of coercive control as a form of domestic abuse marks a significant shift in understanding the dynamics of domestic violence and highlights Ireland's commitment to protecting victims from all forms of abuse.

Despite these legislative advancements, the implementation of these laws remains a challenge. Issues such as limited resources, societal stigma and the complexity of legal proceedings can deter victims from seeking justice. Moreover, there is a growing recognition of the need for further legislative reforms to address gaps in the current legal framework, particularly concerning the protection of vulnerable groups such as migrant women, women with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

## Institutional and Governmental Strategies

The Irish Government has developed and implemented various strategies to promote gender equality and combat gender-based violence. Central to these efforts is the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, which outlines specific actions aimed at preventing violence, protecting victims and prosecuting offenders. This strategy emphasises the importance of multi-agency collaboration, bringing together law enforcement, social services, healthcare providers and non-governmental organisations to deliver a coordinated response to gender-based violence.



# Gender Equality in Ireland

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

Education plays a crucial role in promoting gender equality and preventing gender-based violence in Ireland. The integration of gender sensitivity into school curricula has been a key focus of educational reforms, with the aim of challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes from an early age. Comprehensive sex and relationships education (SRE) has been introduced in schools, covering topics such as consent, respectful relationships and the importance of equality and non-discrimination. This curriculum is designed to equip young people with the knowledge and skills necessary to build healthy relationships and recognise and challenge gender-based violence.

Beyond the classroom, youth engagement initiatives have been implemented to further promote gender equality. The National Youth Council of Ireland, for example, runs programmes that encourage young people to take an active role in advocating for gender equality and challenging gender-based violence in their communities. These programmes provide young people with a platform to voice their concerns, share their experiences and advocate for social change.

In addition to student-focussed initiatives, professional development opportunities for educators are also a major component of Ireland's educational strategies. Teachers are provided with resources and training to help them address gender equality and gender-based violence topics effectively in the classroom. This ongoing professional development is essential for creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students.

## Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence remains a significant challenge in Ireland, with various forms of violence affecting women and vulnerable groups. The Women's Aid Annual Report 2020 highlighted the extent of domestic violence in Ireland, with the

organisation responding to 43,472 contacts with survivors. This figure underscores the widespread nature of domestic violence and the critical role that support services play in assisting survivors.

Sexual violence is another major concern. The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC) reported receiving 13,867 helpline calls in 2020, reflecting the ongoing prevalence of sexual violence across the country. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) recorded 2,837 sexual offences in the same year, illustrating the scope of the problem and the need for continued efforts to prevent sexual violence and support victims.

Human trafficking and violence against vulnerable groups, such as women with disabilities, are also pressing issues. The Immigrant Council of Ireland reported a 96% increase in cases of trafficking or exploitation of women and girls in 2020, highlighting the growing threat of trafficking in Ireland. Additionally, the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWC) has identified that women with disabilities are disproportionately affected by physical abuse, with 23% reporting experiences of abuse compared to 13% of women without disabilities. These statistics underscore the unique vulnerabilities faced by certain groups and the necessity of targeted interventions to protect them.

## Highlights

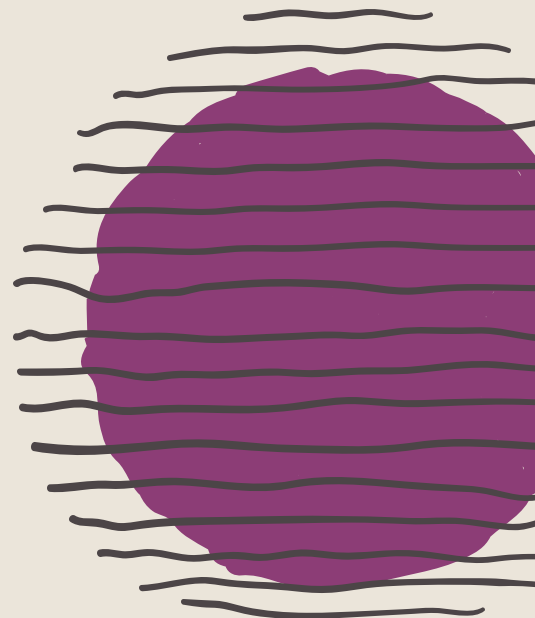
The history of gender equality in Ireland has been shaped, in particular by the Great Famine and the influence of the Catholic Church. Legislation on occupational equality and the protection of reproductive rights, particularly the legalisation of abortion in 2018 following the repeal of the Eighth Amendment, represent significant progress. The Domestic Violence Act 2018, which recognises coercive control as a form of violence, is an important step towards protecting victims. However, domestic and sexual violence remains a significant problem, with a high number of calls to helplines.





# References

1. Women's Aid. (2020). Women's Aid Annual Report 2020. Dublin: Women's Aid. Available at: [https://www.womensaid.ie/download/pdf/womens\\_aid\\_annual\\_report\\_2020.pdf](https://www.womensaid.ie/download/pdf/womens_aid_annual_report_2020.pdf)
2. Courts Service of Ireland. (2020). Courts Service Annual Report 2020. Dublin: Courts Service of Ireland. Available at: <https://www.courts.ie/annual-report-2020>
3. Dublin Rape Crisis Centre. (2020). Annual Report 2020. Dublin: DRCC. Available at: <https://www.drcc.ie/about/annual-reports/>
4. Central Statistics Office. (2020). Recorded Crime Statistics 2020. Dublin: CSO. Available at: <https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/crimeandjustice/>
5. Immigrant Council of Ireland. (2020). Annual Report 2020. Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland. Available at: <https://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/news/annual-reports>
6. National Women's Council of Ireland. (2020). Women with Disabilities: Intersectional Challenges. Dublin: NWCI. Available at: <https://www.nwci.ie/>
7. Connolly, L. (2021). Gender Equality in Ireland: Historical and Legal Perspectives. Dublin: University College Dublin Press.
8. Smyth, A. (2020). The Impact of Cultural Shifts on Gender Roles in Ireland. Cork: Cork University Press.
9. Murphy, Y. & Walsh, F. (2021). Educational Reforms and Gender Sensitivity in Irish Schools. Galway: National University of Ireland, Galway Press.
10. Ryan, L. (2019). The Magdalen Laundries: An Institutional Analysis. Dublin: Irish Academic Press.
11. Keogh, D. (2020). The Role of Media in Shaping Gender Norms in Ireland. Dublin: Trinity College Dublin Press.





# Gender Equality in Italy

## Historical Background and Context

This report provides an analysis of the evolution of gender dynamics and developments in Italy, highlighting key milestones and current challenges. It examines the impact of historical events, cultural changes and educational reforms on gender equality, focussing on legislative progress. Whenever possible, the report highlights not only the social conditions of cisgender women, but also those of other gender minorities. Traditionally, Italian society was deeply rooted in patriarchal norms, with distinct gender roles that limited women's participation in public life. However, significant changes began to emerge in the mid-20th century, particularly after the Second World War, when Italy's new republican constitution of 1948 formally recognised the principle of equality between men and women.

The feminist movements of the 1970s played a crucial role in challenging traditional gender roles and advocating for women's rights in Italy. These movements led to significant legal reforms in areas such as family law, divorce and reproductive rights. Since then, Italy has made concerted efforts to address these challenges by implementing new laws and policies to promote gender equality and combat gender-based violence. These efforts are part of Italy's broader strategy to harmonise its national policies with European Union standards and to fulfil its international obligations under various human rights conventions.

However, gender inequality persists in various aspects of Italian society, including the labour market, political representation and social attitudes. In this respect, Istat (National Statistics Institute) has recently (2024) provided some statistics on the general conditions of girls and women by age group in comparison with their male counterparts. The data show that the role of girls and women is characterised by violence (higher scores for bullying) and inadequate working conditions (lower employment rate, higher percentage of over-educated and involuntary part-time workers).

## Legislative and Policy Frameworks

In Italy, the women's rights movement has deep roots, with significant legislative milestones over time to promote gender equality and prevent discrimination. In 1945, at the end of the Second World War, women gained the right to vote through the institutional referendum, enabling them to participate actively in the political life of the country. The Italian Constitution (1947), in particular Article 3, further enshrines the principle of equality before the law and prohibits discrimination on grounds of sex. This constitutional guarantee is the basis for a wide range of laws and policies aimed at promoting gender equality in all areas of society.

Subsequent legislation continued to promote gender equality, such as the Divorce Act (1970) and the Family Law Reform of 1975, which abolished the husband's power as head of the household and recognised the legal independence of wives. Further reforms addressed issues such as discrimination in the workplace (1977), access to state-provided abortion (1978), the abolition of honour crimes and reparative marriages (1981), marking significant progress towards a fairer and more inclusive society.

Another important legislative measure is the Code of Equal Opportunities for Men and Women (Legislative Decree No. 198/2006). This decree consolidates several laws aimed at promoting gender equality in employment, education and political representation. It also mandates the establishment of Equal Opportunities Councils at the national and regional levels to monitor and promote gender equality practices.

Law No. 120 of 2011, known as the Golfo-Mosca Law, aims to ensure an adequate number of women on the boards of directors and boards of auditors of listed companies and companies controlled by the public administration. The law requires that the by-laws of these companies be amended to reserve at least one-third of the positions for the underrepresented gender.



# Gender Equality in Italy

With regard to the rights of sexual minorities, the "Cirinnà Law" (L. 20/05/2016 n. 76) marked an important milestone in Italy's journey towards equality by legalising civil unions for same-sex couples. The main difference between the regulation of civil unions and the institution of marriage remains that of the legal relationship between the partners and their child. In fact, in Italy only married heterosexual couples can adopt a child, except in some special cases (adoption of a disabled child), and only heterosexual couples can adopt the child's partner (adoption of stepchildren) or have access to assisted reproductive technologies. Surrogacy is illegal (2004), even if it takes place outside the national territory.

As for discrimination on the basis of gender, the Italian Penal Code contains article 604 bis, which criminalises propaganda and incitement to commit crimes on the grounds of racial, ethnic and religious discrimination, but does not refer to gender, sex or sexual orientation as grounds for discrimination. Similarly, Law 654/1975 on the ratification and implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, later amended by the Mancino Law in 1993, only covers racial discrimination. To date, Italian national law does not provide protection against discrimination on the grounds of sex or sexual orientation.

Finally, the Equal Pay Law (Law No. 162/2021) aims to reduce the gender pay gap that persists in various sectors by requiring companies to report on gender pay gaps and take corrective action where necessary. The law also promotes transparency in recruitment and promotion processes to ensure equal opportunities for men and women. At the same time, much remains to be done to ensure gender equality in the workplace: the latest data from Istat (National Statistics Institute, 2024) show that the rate of involuntary part-time work is higher for women (15.6%) than for men (5.3%), that women are more likely to be overqualified workers

(32.6%) than men (28.3%) and that the employment rate for women is still high (57% compared to 74.9% for men).

## Institutional and Governmental Strategies

Strategies to promote gender equality and combat gender-based violence are coordinated by the Department for Equal Opportunities, which operates under the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The Department is responsible for developing and implementing national policies on gender equality and monitoring compliance with national and international obligations. Italy has also established the National Equality Councillor, a government-appointed official responsible for monitoring the implementation of gender equality policies, who works closely with the Regional Equality Councillors and other stakeholders to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed in all areas of public policy.

One of the key strategies is the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women (2021-2023). The plan includes measures to improve the legal framework, strengthen support services for victims and raise public awareness of gender-based violence. It also emphasises the importance of inter-institutional cooperation, involving different government ministries, local authorities and civil society organisations in the implementation of these measures. In addition, Italy has focussed on promoting gender equality through the National Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2026, which is inspired by the European Union's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, with a long-term perspective.

Policies to reconcile work and family life are another area of interest, with the need for more childcare services and paid parental leave to support working women. According to Istat (2023), in 2022 there will be 350,000 places for children in crèches and infant services, with some differences between the North and the South of Italy: in the South, only 66.4% of them are public.

# Gender Equality in Italy

The representation of women in political and decision-making institutions remains an area of concern. In April 2002, a special study group was set up within the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The group, composed of nine university professors of Constitutional Law, Principles of Public Law and Comparative Public Law, developed proposals for the full participation of women in institutions, in leading positions at all levels of decision-making and in all aspects of social, economic and political life.

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

In Italy, gender sensitive education is still under discussion. While Civic Education programmes may include topics such as gender equality, teachers are free to choose their topic from a wide range of subjects and develop it as they wish. Teachers are rarely provided with the necessary materials or training, except in some schools.

At the same time, there are some programmes in Italy that focus on youth engagement, especially in relation to EU initiatives that aim to empower young people to become advocates for gender equality and social justice.

For example, the EU initiative Youth Guarantee Programme includes measures to support young women entering the labour market and to promote gender equality in vocational education and training.

## Gender-based violence

As part of its efforts to achieve gender equality, Italy has implemented a number of measures to combat gender-based violence in recent decades.

The "Stalking Law" (Law No. 38/2009), in order to provide a more concrete response to the fight against violence against women, introduced the crime of persecutory acts, also known as stalking, into the legal system by inserting Article 612-bis into the Criminal Code. The Stalking Law criminalised stalking behaviour and imposed penalties on

perpetrators, thus providing greater protection for victims, many of whom are women.

The Istanbul Convention is the most comprehensive international human rights treaty on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Italy signed the Convention in September 2012 and ratified it in September 2013. Since the ratification of the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Law No. 77 of 2013), Italy has adopted a series of interventions aimed at establishing an integrated strategy to combat gender-based violence in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Convention. The first intervention in this regard was Decree-Law No. 93 of 2013, which was adopted a few months after the ratification of the Convention and subsequently became the so-called "Femicide Law" (Law No. 119/2013). This law introduced the crime of voluntary manslaughter, aggravated by the relationship of kinship or cohabitation with the female victim. It also increased the penalties for the crimes of family abuse, stalking and sexual violence.

A provision that also had an impact on the fight against gender-based violence was Law No. 69 of 2019 (the so-called "Red Code"), which strengthened procedural guarantees for victims of violent crimes, especially sexual and domestic violence, introduced some new offences in the Criminal Code and increased penalties for the offences most frequently committed against female victims.

As part of the reform of the criminal procedure, Law No. 134 of 2021 extended protection to victims of domestic and gender-based violence, while Law No. 53 of 2022 strengthened the collection of statistical data on gender-based violence through greater coordination among all stakeholders.

Challenges to fully addressing gender-based violence in Italy remain, despite these efforts. Cultural attitudes, economic disparities and gaps in the implementation of legal frameworks continue to be obstacles.



# Gender Equality in Italy

In 2023, a press report by the Italian CNR (National Centre for Research) indicated that 12,500,000 women (18-84) had been victims of gender-based violence (psychological/physical harm) at least once in their lives, that is, one in two Italian women. Only 5% of them reported it. The report also shows that in 2022, 22,500,000 women had experienced psychological violence and 800,000 women had experienced physical violence at least once. The average biographical data of women who have experienced violence is that they are younger than 60, have a medium or high level of education, work in the middle class, are married or live with their partner. More than 50% have children. A study (2022) by Vox - Osservatorio Italiano sui Diritti (Italian Rights Observatory) shows that women are the most frequent target of on-line hate speech, with peaks of hate occurring immediately after femicides.

As highlighted in the EU-funded network ILGA-Europe's 2023 Annual Report, Italy ranks 34th out of 49 European and Central Asian countries on a general index of LGBTQ+ rights. Reproductive and parental rights are particularly poor: while same-sex registered partnerships are legal in Italy, with rights similar to marriage, same-sex adoption is not possible. According to Istat and Unar (National Office against Racial Discrimination) (2022), LGBTQ+ people also face discrimination in the workplace: a report for 2020/2021 highlights that 26% of respondents say they have been discriminated against at work.

However, Italy's commitment to international standards and its ongoing efforts to strengthen its legal and institutional framework reflect a determination to address these issues.

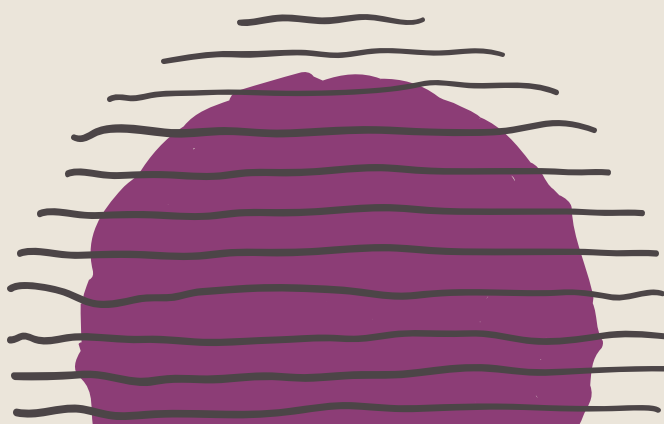
## Highlights

Italian society is traditionally patriarchal, with clearly defined gender roles. Article 3 of the Italian Constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. The feminist movements of the 1970s brought about significant reforms, but inequalities remain in the labour market, political representation and social attitudes. The "Femicide Law" (2013) increased penalties for domestic abuse, harassment and sexual violence, and the Code Red Law (2019) improved protection for victims of sexual and domestic violence. Italian women face high rates of violence, overqualification in the workplace and involuntary part-time work. For example, 12.5 million women have been victims of gender-based violence, but only 5 per cent report it (2023). Italy ranks 34th out of 49 European countries in terms of LGBTQ+ rights. The law on civil unions (2016) has led to the recognition of same-sex couples, but these couples do not enjoy the same parental rights as heterosexual couples and adoption remains prohibited.



# References

1. Istat. (2024, 8 March). *Infografica 8Marzo Sito*. <https://www.istat.it/it/files/2024/03/Infografica-8Marzo2024.pdf>
2. Calloni, A. (n.d.). Timeline on the evolution of Italian women's rights. *Timetoast*. <https://www.timetoast.com/timelines/timeline-on-the-evolution-of-italian-women-s-rights>
3. Italian Parliament. (2006). Code of Equal Opportunities between Men and Women (Legislative Decree No. 198/2006). Rome: Government of Italy.
4. Italian Parliament (2011). Golfo-Mosca Law (120/2011) Rome: Government of Italy.
5. Italian Parliament. (2013). Law on Violence Against Women (Law No. 119/2013). Rome: Government of Italy.
6. Italian Parliament (2019), Red Code (Law No. 120/2011)
7. Department for Equal Opportunities. National Strategic Plan on Male Violence Against Women (2021-2023). Available at: <https://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/>
8. Ministry of Education, University, and Research (MIUR), Italy. Gender Equality in Education: Policies and Initiatives. Available at: <https://www.miur.gov.it/>
9. National Equality Councillor. Reports on Gender Equality in Italy. Available at: <https://www.consigliereparita.it/>
10. National plan for gender equality. Available at: <https://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/it/politiche-e-attivita/parita-di-genere-ed-empowerment-femminile/strategia-nazionale-per-la-parita-di-genere-2021-2026/>
11. Istat. (2023, 23 November). *Statistiche report*. <https://www.istat.it/it/files/2023/11/REPORT-ASILI2021-2022.pdf>
12. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Gender Equality in Education and Training: Italy. Vilnius: EIGE. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/countries/italy>
13. Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche CNR). (2023, 24 November). *Comunicato stampa : I dati sulla violenza di genere in Italia*. <https://www.cnr.it/it/comunicato-stampa/12373/i-dati-sulla-violenza-di-genere-in-italia>
14. Vox - Osservatorio Italiano sui Diritti (Italian Rights Observatory). (2022). *Mappa dell'Intolleranza*. <https://www.retecontrolodio.org/cmswp/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Mappa-dellIntolleranza-7.pdf>
15. ILGA Europe. (2023). *2023 ANNUAL REVIEW*. [https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/2023/full\\_annual\\_review.pdf](https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/2023/full_annual_review.pdf)
16. Istat and Unar (National Office against Racial Discrimination) (2022, 24 March). *L'INDAGINE ISTAT-UNAR SULLE DISCRIMINAZIONI LAVORATIVE NEI CONFRONTI DELLE PERSONE LGBT+ (IN UNIONE CIVILE O GIÀ IN UNIONE)*. [https://www.istat.it/it/files/2022/03/REPORTDISCRIMINAZIONILGBT\\_2022\\_rev.pdf](https://www.istat.it/it/files/2022/03/REPORTDISCRIMINAZIONILGBT_2022_rev.pdf)





# Additional resources (Cf. Italy's annexes)

1. CITTÀ DI TORINO - Divisione Servizi Educativi. (2005). NESSUNO UGUALE : ADOLESCENTI E OMOSESSUALITÀ. <http://www.comune.torino.it/politichedigenere/bm~doc/nessuno-uguale--agedo.pdf>
2. REGIONE PIEMONTE. (2009). Quando...un imprevisto in famiglia. <http://www.comune.torino.it/politichedigenere/bm~doc/quando-un-imprevisto-in-famiglia.pdf>
3. Montano, A., Cali, S. & Zagaroli, A. (2013). EDUCARE ALLA DIVERSITÀ A SCUOLA: Scuola primaria. Istituto A. T. Beck. <https://www.settenove.it/HandlerObject.ashx?id=78.pdf%7C>
4. Montano, A., Cali, S. & Zagaroli, A. (2013). EDUCARE ALLA DIVERSITÀ A SCUOLA: Scuola secondaria di secondo grado. Istituto A. T. Beck. <https://banner.orizzontescuola.it/File%20complet%20UNAR%20Liceo.pdf>
5. Montano, A., Cali, S. & Zagaroli, A. (2013). EDUCARE ALLA DIVERSITÀ A SCUOLA: Scuola secondaria di primo grado. Istituto A. T. Beck. <https://www.delosvicenza.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/UNAR-File-Completo-Media1.pdf>
6. Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri & UNAR. (2013). STRATEGIA NAZIONALE PER LA PREVENZIONE E IL CONTRASTO DELLE DISCRIMINAZIONI BASATE SULL' ORIENTAMENTO SESSUALE E SULL' IDENTITÀ DI GENERE 2013 – 2015. <https://www.unar.it/portale/documents/20125/51437/LGBT-strategia-unar-pocket.pdf/7e0e5824-fe6c-1dda-94c0-381e105e3c08?t=1619796877393>
7. Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell' Università e della Ricerca. (2015). Linee Guida Nazionali (art. 1 comma 16 L. 107/2015) - Educare al rispetto: per la parità tra i sessi, la prevenzione della violenza di genere e di tutte le forme di discriminazione. <https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/Linee+guida+Comma16+finale.pdf/>
8. Consiglio dei Ministri. (2015). PIANO D'AZIONE STRAORDINARIO CONTRO LA VIOLENZA SESSUALE E DI GENERE 2015-2017. <https://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/media/1954/piano-nazionale-violenza-2015-2017.pdf>
9. Ministero dell'Istruzione. (2020, 8 March). Letter to students. [https://www.noisiamopari.it/\\_file/documenti/circolari/2020/Lettera%20Ministra%20Istruzione%20Oper%208%20marzo\(1\).pdf](https://www.noisiamopari.it/_file/documenti/circolari/2020/Lettera%20Ministra%20Istruzione%20Oper%208%20marzo(1).pdf)
10. MIUR & AOODGSIP. (2016, 16 May). 17 maggio - Giornata internazionale contro l'omofobia. [https://www.istruzione.it/allegati/2015/17maggio-Giornata\\_internazionale\\_contro\\_omofobia.pdf](https://www.istruzione.it/allegati/2015/17maggio-Giornata_internazionale_contro_omofobia.pdf) + [https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/190406/MIUR.AOODGSIP.REGISTRO\\_UFFICIALE%28U%29.0002592.16-05-2017.pdf/94ba9a6c-3c49-470c-8fd9-902a534726d3?version=1.0&t=149545003791](https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/190406/MIUR.AOODGSIP.REGISTRO_UFFICIALE%28U%29.0002592.16-05-2017.pdf/94ba9a6c-3c49-470c-8fd9-902a534726d3?version=1.0&t=149545003791) + [https://miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/MIUR.AOODGSIP.REGISTRO\\_UFFICIALE%28U%29.0002303.15-05-2018.pdf/784e1b61-066f-4c1a-9b7b-f3ef5a0afefa?version=1.0&t=1526558630910](https://miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/MIUR.AOODGSIP.REGISTRO_UFFICIALE%28U%29.0002303.15-05-2018.pdf/784e1b61-066f-4c1a-9b7b-f3ef5a0afefa?version=1.0&t=1526558630910)
11. Valerio, P., Amodeo, A-L., Scandurra, C. (2015). Lesbiche Gay Bisessuali Transgender : Una guida dei termini politicamente corretti. [https://www.unisa.it/uploads/868/20150316\\_lgbt\\_una\\_guida\\_dei\\_termini\\_politicamente\\_corretti.pdf](https://www.unisa.it/uploads/868/20150316_lgbt_una_guida_dei_termini_politicamente_corretti.pdf)
12. MIUR. (2017). Rispetta le differenze. Piano nazionale per l'educazione al rispetto. <https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/Piano+Nazionale+ER+4.pdf/7179ab45-5a5c-4d1a-b048-5d0b6cda4f5c?version=1.0>
13. Città di Torino. (2019). LGBT - Piccola guida - Conoscere per orientarsi. <http://www.comune.torino.it/torinogiovani/sites/default/files/documenti/guidalgbt.pdf>
14. GLSEN. (2022). Classe Arcobaleno: Una guida per agire insieme a studenti LGBTQI+. [https://risorselgbti.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/cr-classe\\_arcobaleno-manuale-A5-web.pdf](https://risorselgbti.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/cr-classe_arcobaleno-manuale-A5-web.pdf)
15. Educare alle Differenze. (2022). Che fare? Tutto quello che avreste voluto sapere per contrastare le violenze di/del genere a scuola. <http://www.educarealldifferenze.it/contrastare-le-violenze-di-del-genere-a-scuola/>
16. ACRA. (2023). GENER-AZIONE 5 Strumenti, risorse e attività per una prospettiva di genere nella didattica. [https://www.scosse.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Guida-Multisicilinare\\_Generazione-5.pdf](https://www.scosse.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Guida-Multisicilinare_Generazione-5.pdf)
17. Università du Genova. (2023). Giornata Terza Missione 2023 : Hate Speech.
18. Municipality of Turin. (n.d.). Educational materials\_homophobia and transphobia.

# Gender Equality in Latvia

## Historical Background and Context

Traditionally, Latvian society was characterised by conservative gender roles, influenced by its rural economy and patriarchal norms. However, the social and political changes that accompanied Latvia's independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 and its subsequent accession to the European Union in 2004 have played a significant role in advancing gender equality.

The post-independence period saw Latvia adopting a range of legal and policy measures aimed at promoting equality between men and women. The influence of European Union norms and standards has been particularly important in shaping Latvia's approach to gender equality, leading to the implementation of progressive laws and policies designed to address discrimination, promote equal opportunities, and combat gender-based violence. Despite these advancements, Latvia continues to face challenges related to gender inequality, particularly in areas such as employment, political representation, and social attitudes. For example, in 2022, women's average gross hourly earnings were 17.1% lower than men's, according to calculations based on preliminary data from the Central Statistical Bureau (CSB), the gap between women's and men's average hourly earnings increased by 2.5 percentage points compared to the previous year. According to the 2021 statistics, Latvia has a higher gender pay gap than the European Union average (12.7%), despite a better employment rate. The reasons for the gender pay gap include gender segregation in education, training and employment, gender segregation in occupations, gender imbalances in management and decision-making, higher rates of part-time work for women, higher rates of interruptions in employment and longer interruptions in employment due to unequal sharing of domestic, family and care responsibilities between women and men, and the undervaluing of work by women. However, the country's commitment to aligning with EU standards and its participation in international initiatives reflect a strong dedication to furthering gender equality.

## Legislative and Policy Frameworks

The Latvian Constitution guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination based on gender, providing a foundational principle that underpins the country's legal and policy efforts in this area. One of the key legislative measures is the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination of Natural Persons - Participants to a Legal Transaction (2012), which prohibits differential treatment of the participant to a legal transaction due to his or her gender, age, religious, political, or other conviction, sexual orientation, disability, race, or ethnic origin in relation to his or her access to economic activity, access to goods and services, supply of goods and provision of services.

The Labour Law of Latvia (2001) is another important piece of legislation addressing gender equality, particularly in the workplace. The law requires equal pay for equal work, prohibits gender discrimination in recruitment and employment practices, and provides protection for pregnant women and new mothers. Additionally, the law includes provisions for parental leave, which can be taken by either parent, thereby promoting a more balanced sharing of family responsibilities. In 2016 and 2018 there were amendments to the Labour Law, strengthening the equal treatment of women and men in employment, including amendments in the Labour Law regarding non-discrimination, which includes sexual harassment in the workplace. Since 2023, at least two months of the parental leave should be used by both parents to promote gender equality and work-life balance for parents.





# Gender Equality in Latvia

In recent years, Latvia has introduced specific policies to address gender-based violence and support victims. The Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child (1998) includes provisions to protect children from domestic violence, and amendments to this law have strengthened protections for victims of gender-based violence. Latvia's signing of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence) by the Government in 2018 further demonstrates the country's commitment to combating gender-based violence. However, the National Parliament ratified Istanbul Convention only in 2023. This was a major setback for Latvia as a democratic EU state, and the political polarisation on this issue is worrying, especially considering that the arguments on the other side are largely based on prejudice rather than factual legal implications.

## Institutional and Governmental Strategies

The Latvian government has implemented a range of institutional and governmental strategies to promote gender equality and address gender-based violence. These strategies are coordinated by the Ministry of Welfare, which is responsible for overseeing the implementation of gender equality policies and ensuring compliance with national and international obligations.

The Plan for the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men (2024-2027) aims to provide an integrated and targeted policy that promotes the implementation of equal rights and opportunities for women and men. The plan focusses on three directions: equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the labour market and education, reducing negative gender stereotypes and integration of the principle of gender equality in policy planning processes. This plan continues the directions set in the previous policy documents: a plan to promote equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period 2021-2023 (2021) and a Plan for the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period 2018–2020 (2017).

The Gender Equality Committee (previously - Gender

Equality Council) has been set up to promote cooperation and participation of ministries, NGOs, social partners, municipalities and other relevant stakeholders, as well as to promote the implementation, monitoring and development of gender equality policies. The Committee plays a key role in defining the priorities of gender equality policy and in monitoring the implementation of the principle of gender equality in other sectoral areas. The Gender Equality Committee meets on average three times a year.

In addition, there are at least two institutional bodies dedicated to gender equality in Latvia: at the Latvian Parliament with the Parliamentary Group for the Promotion of Gender Equality, Reproductive Health and Healthy Sexuality (2019) (13th Saeima) – now the Subcommittee on Reducing Inequalities of the Commission for Social and Labour Affairs and the Parliamentary Women's interest group (2023) (14th Saeima) – and the Ombudsperson's Office of Latvia. The Ombudsperson's Office of Latvia is the independent body for the promotion of gender equality. Its mandate includes gender equality as well as human rights and non-discrimination in a broader sense.

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

Education is a central component of Latvia's efforts to promote gender equality. The Latvian education system has made significant strides in integrating gender equality principles into the national curriculum, with a focus on challenging traditional gender roles and promoting inclusivity.

Gender-sensitive education is promoted through various initiatives, including the revision of school curricula to incorporate gender equality topics across subjects. The curriculum includes discussions on human rights, gender equality, and sexual education, aiming to raise awareness among students about the importance of respecting diversity and promoting equality. Teachers are provided with training and resources to address gender issues in the classroom and to create a supportive learning environment for all students.



# Gender Equality in Latvia

Youth engagement is another important aspect of Latvia's educational strategies. Various programmes and initiatives are designed to empower young people to become advocates for gender equality and social justice. For example, the Youth Guarantee Programme includes measures to support young women entering the labour market and to promote gender equality in vocational education and training.

Latvia also participates in European Union programmes, such as Erasmus+, which support educational exchanges and promote gender equality among students and educators across Europe. These programmes provide valuable opportunities for Latvian students and teachers to engage with their peers from other countries and to learn from best practices in gender equality education.

## Gender-Based Violence

The Law on Prevention of Discrimination (2004) and the Istanbul Convention provide a strong legal framework for the protection of victims of gender-based violence and the prosecution of perpetrators. These laws include provisions for the establishment of shelters, crisis centres, and helplines for victims, as well as the development of prevention and awareness-raising campaigns. In addition to these two legal frameworks, Latvia has implemented several laws to combat gender-based violence and support victims. According to a report by the MARTA Centre, a prominent Latvian non-profit organisation that has been working for gender equality and against gender-based violence since 2000, Latvia's legal framework on the prohibition of violence has been significantly strengthened between 2012 and 2022.

In particular, a National Strategic Plan on human trafficking was adopted in 2013 for the period 2014-2020. In addition, a number of legal measures have been implemented in Latvia since 2013 to prohibit gender-based violence (not only against women, but also against children), to define sanctions and rehabilitation procedures for perpetrators, and to support victims (forced marriage (2013), intimate partner violence (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022), sexual violence (2015, 2017, 2018), emotional and psychological violence (2017,

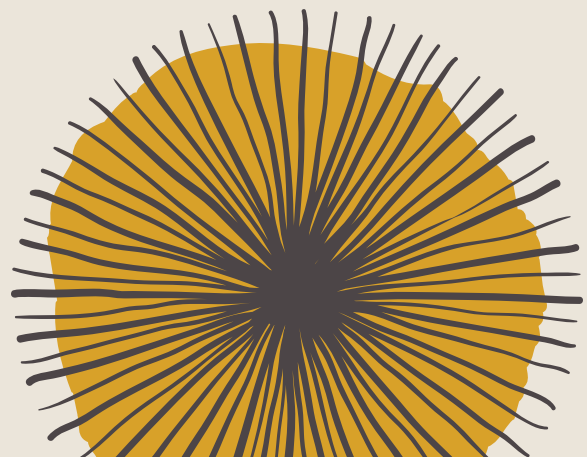
2018), and human trafficking (2020)).

Latvia has also implemented the National Program for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (2008-2011), which outlines specific measures to address domestic violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence. This programme includes coordinating support services for victims, training law enforcement and judicial personnel, and promoting public awareness campaigns to change social attitudes towards violence.

Despite these endeavours, challenges remain in tackling gender violence comprehensively in Latvia. Cultural attitudes, economic disparities and gaps in the implementation of legal frameworks continue to pose obstacles. However, Latvia's commitment to international standards and ongoing efforts to strengthen its legal and institutional frameworks reflect a determination to address these challenges and protect the rights of all individuals.

## Highlights

Latvia became independent from the Soviet regime in 1991 after being occupied since 1940. Its constitution was adopted on 15 February 1922. It is one of the oldest constitutions still in force in Europe and guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination based on gender. The Ministry of Welfare is responsible for gender equality policies, and the Labour Act (2001) guarantees equal pay and protects against discrimination in the workplace; it includes amendments on sexual harassment. It joined the European Union in 2004.



# References

1. Centrālā statistikas pārvalde. (2023, 19 June). 2022. gadā sievietes nopelnīja par 17,1 % mazāk nekā vīrieši. LV. <https://lvportals.lv/dienaskartiba/352752-2022-gada-sievietes-nopelnija-par-171-mazak-neka-viriesi-2023>
2. Eurostat. (2021, November). *Gender pay gap statistics*. [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender\\_pay\\_gap\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender_pay_gap_statistics)
3. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). (2022). *Gender Equality Index : Latvia*. <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2022/domain/work/LV>
4. Latvian Parliament. (2012). Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination of Natural Persons - Participants to a Legal Transaction. Riga: Government of Latvia.
5. Ministry of Welfare, Latvia. Policy planning documents. Available at: <https://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/politikas-planosanas-dokumenti-un-tiesibu-akti-0>
6. Latvian Parliament. (1998). Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child. Riga: Government of Latvia.
7. Latvian Parliament. (2001). Labour Law of Latvia. Riga: Government of Latvia.
8. Latvian Parliament. (2018). Ratification of the Istanbul Convention. Riga: Government of Latvia.
9. Latvijas Republikas 13.Saeimas deputāti. [https://titania.saeima.lv/Personal/Deputati/Saeima13\\_DepWeb\\_Public.nsf/structureview?readform&type=DG2&lang=LV&count=1000](https://titania.saeima.lv/Personal/Deputati/Saeima13_DepWeb_Public.nsf/structureview?readform&type=DG2&lang=LV&count=1000)
10. Latvijas Republikas 14.Saeimas deputāti. [https://titania.saeima.lv/personal/deputati/saeima14\\_depweb\\_public.nsf/structureview?readform&type=5&lang=LV&count=1000](https://titania.saeima.lv/personal/deputati/saeima14_depweb_public.nsf/structureview?readform&type=5&lang=LV&count=1000)
11. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). *Gender Equality in Education and Training: Latvia*. Vilnius: EIGE. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/countries/latvia>
12. To know more about MARTA Centr : <https://marta.lv/en/about-marta/>



# Additional resources (cf. Latvia's annexes)

1. Centrs MARTA. (2023, September). What measures have European countries taken, at a National and/or International level, to tackle gender discrimination in the last ten years (2012-2022)? REVIEW OF LATVIA.
2. Labklājības ministrija & Norden. (2012). Pirmsskolas, kurās ir Vieta PepijPrinčiem un Pirātu Princesēm. <https://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/media/6406/download>
3. Windfeldt, L. & Clante, K. (2012). Diena, Kad Ruta Bija Rihards. Ilze Jansone. Labklājības ministrija. [https://www.lm.gov.lv/sites/lm/files/data\\_content/4024\\_Ir\\_Im\\_gramata1.pdf](https://www.lm.gov.lv/sites/lm/files/data_content/4024_Ir_Im_gramata1.pdf)
4. Windfeldt, L. & Clante, K. (2012). Diena, Kad Karlis Bija Karlina. Ilze Jansone. Labklājības ministrija. [https://www.lm.gov.lv/sites/lm/files/data\\_content/4024\\_Ir\\_Im\\_gramata1.pdf](https://www.lm.gov.lv/sites/lm/files/data_content/4024_Ir_Im_gramata1.pdf)
5. Cilvēktiesību gids. (2019). Dzimums. <https://www.cilvektiesibugids.lv/temas/diskriminacija/kas-ir-diskriminacija/diskriminacijas-pamati/dzimums>
6. Labklājības ministrija. (2019). ĪSS CEĻVEDIS, KĀ IZPRAST DISKRIMINĀCIJAS SITUĀCIJAS DZIMUMA DĒĻ. <https://www.lm.gov.lv/en/media/2068/download>
7. Labklājības ministrija. (2022, 22 March). Horizontālais princips "Vienlīdzība, iekļaušana, nediskriminācija un pamattiesību ievērošana" vadlīnijas īstenošanai un uzraudzībai (2021-2027). [https://juristavards.lv/wwwraksti/JV/BIBLIOTEKA/PRAKSES\\_MATERIALI/VADLINIJAS\\_2021-2027.PDF](https://juristavards.lv/wwwraksti/JV/BIBLIOTEKA/PRAKSES_MATERIALI/VADLINIJAS_2021-2027.PDF)
8. Labklājības ministrija. (2022, 22 November). Ieteikumi diskrimināciju un stereotipus mazināšanai komunikācijai ar sabiedrību. <https://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/media/18838/download>
9. Tiesībsargs. (2022). Vai šī ir diskriminācija? Informatīvais materiāls. <https://www.tiesibsargs.lv/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/vai-si-ir-diskriminacija.pdf>
10. Warriors Against Gender-based violence. (2023). ROKASGRĀMATA DZIMUMĀ BALSTĪTAS VARDARBĪBAS IZSKAUŠANAI: LABO PRAKŠU APKOPOJUMS. [https://marta.lv/files/jauniesi/Warriors%20against%20GBV/Guide%20of%20Best%20Practices%20\(Latvian\).pdf](https://marta.lv/files/jauniesi/Warriors%20against%20GBV/Guide%20of%20Best%20Practices%20(Latvian).pdf)

## Universities Gender Equality Strategies:

1. Latvijas Universitātes Dzimumu līdztiesības plāns (LUDzLP). (2022). <https://lulfmi.lv/files/dokumenti/LU-dzimumu-lidztiesibas-plans-2022.pdf>
2. Dzimumu līdztiesības pamatprincipi un plāns Rīgas Stradiņa universitātē (2022). [https://www.rsu.lv/sites/default/files/imce/Dokumenti/general/dzimumu\\_lidztiesibas\\_pamatprincipi\\_plans.pdf](https://www.rsu.lv/sites/default/files/imce/Dokumenti/general/dzimumu_lidztiesibas_pamatprincipi_plans.pdf)
3. Dzimumu līdztiesības nodrošināšanas pamatprincipi un to īstenošanas plāns 2022.-2027. Latvijas Lauksaimniecības universitātē. (2022). [https://www.lbtu.lv/sites/default/files/2022-03/Dzimumulidztiesiba\\_apstiprinats.pdf](https://www.lbtu.lv/sites/default/files/2022-03/Dzimumulidztiesiba_apstiprinats.pdf)



# Gender Equality in Poland

## Historical Background and Context

Poland has a long history of strong gender roles, deeply rooted in its Catholic traditions and patriarchal norms. However, significant changes began to emerge in the 20th century, particularly after World War II, when Poland became a socialist state under Soviet influence. During this period, women were encouraged to participate in the workforce, and legal reforms were introduced to promote gender equality in areas such as employment and education.

However, the fall of communism in 1989 marked a significant setback in Poland's history, with a 'conservative backlash' from both the political sphere and the Catholic Church encouraging the removal of women from the labour market, where they had entered during the communist era to strengthen economic life, in order to concentrate on family life and domestic duties (Zok, 2022).

Despite these advancements, gender equality in Poland remains a contentious issue, particularly in the areas of reproductive rights, political representation, and gender-based violence. The influence of conservative social attitudes and the strong presence of the Catholic Church continue to shape public discourse and policy decisions related to gender equality.

## Legislative and Policy Frameworks

Poland has established a legal framework aimed at promoting gender equality and preventing discrimination. The Polish Constitution, adopted in 1997, guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination on various grounds, including gender. Article 33 of the Constitution specifically addresses gender equality, stating that women and men shall have equal rights in family life, education, employment, and public life.

One of the most important legislative measures is the Act on the Implementation of Certain EU Regulations in the Field of Equal Treatment (2010), which was enacted to comply with European Union anti-discrimination directives. This law prohibits discrimination based on gender in various areas,

including employment, education, and access to goods and services. It also established the position of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, responsible for overseeing the implementation of gender equality policies.

Another important piece of legislation is the Polish Labour Code, which includes provisions to ensure equal pay for equal work, prohibit gender discrimination in recruitment and employment practices, and provide protection for pregnant women and new mothers. The Labour Code also includes provisions on parental leave, which can be taken by either parent, thus promoting a more balanced sharing of family responsibilities.

In recent years, Poland has introduced specific legislation to combat gender-based violence. The Act on Counteracting Domestic Violence (2005) provides legal protections for victims of domestic violence, including the establishment of crisis centres and shelters. Poland's ratification of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence) in 2015 further demonstrates the country's commitment to combating gender-based violence, although its implementation has been met with significant political and social challenges.

It should be noted that although Poland joined the EU and complied with EU regulations, gender equality and anti-discrimination values have not really been integrated into Polish politics (Gaweda, 2021: 632-633). In fact, since 2015, Poland has even experienced an "ultra-conservative and nationalist backlash" with the election of the Nationalist-Catholic Party (PiS) to the government, which has openly adopted anti-equality rhetoric and policies, resulting in a kind of "democratic regression" on issues of equality and women's rights (Gaweda, 2021).



# Gender Equality in Poland

## Institutional and Governmental Strategies

The Polish government has implemented various institutional and governmental strategies to promote gender equality and address gender-based violence. These efforts are coordinated by the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment (2008), which is responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of gender equality policies and ensuring compliance with national and international obligations. This office later became part of the renamed Government Plenipotentiary for Civil Society and Equal Treatment (2016), shifting its focus from solely gender issues to broader civil issues, reflecting the government's position on gender equality (Gaweda 2021: 642-50).

One of the key strategies is the National Action Plan for Equal Treatment (2021-2030), which outlines specific measures to promote gender equality in areas such as employment, education, health, and political participation. The plan includes initiatives to reduce the gender pay gap, increase women's representation in leadership positions, and combat gender-based violence. It also stresses the importance of gender mainstreaming, which ensures that gender equality is taken into account in all areas of public policy.

The Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment works closely with other government ministries, local authorities, and civil society organisations to promote gender equality and address issues related to discrimination and violence. At the local level, municipalities play a crucial role in implementing gender equality policies, with some establishing gender equality committees or appointing gender equality officers to oversee the implementation of local initiatives.

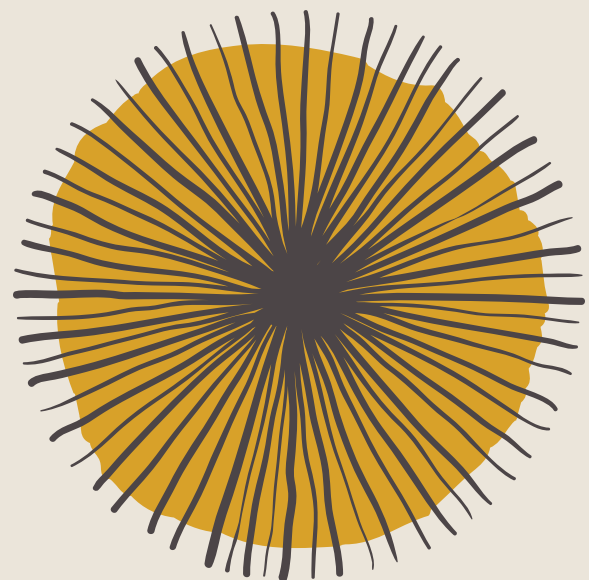
The Polish government has also focussed on promoting gender equality in the workplace through initiatives such as the National Programme for Gender Equality in Employment. This programme includes measures to support women's career advancement, promote work-life balance and reduce gender gaps in management positions. The programme encourages companies to adopt gender equality policies and practices, with financial

incentives for those that meet certain targets.

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

Education is a central component of Poland's efforts to promote gender equality. The Polish education system has made progress in integrating gender equality principles into the national curriculum, with a focus on challenging traditional gender roles and promoting inclusivity.

Gender-sensitive education is promoted through a number of initiatives, including the revision of school curricula to integrate gender issues across subjects, with the aim of raising students' awareness of the importance of promoting equality. However, gender equality education in Poland faces challenges due to the influence of conservative social attitudes and political pressures. Some initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality in education have been met with resistance, particularly from conservative groups and the Catholic Church.





# Gender Equality in Poland

As a country where religious education and the Catholic Church are both core constituents of education, Poland has indeed faced opposition to the implementation of a gender-sensitive approach in school systems, especially since the beginning and intensification of anti-gender campaigns in 2013 (Odrowąż-Coates, 2015), either because it is interpreted as going against traditional gender roles and family values, or as a threat to both the system and students (i.e. "gender theory" sometimes presented as a kind of conspiracy theory) (Kuhar & Zobec, 2017, 34-39). The appointment of Przemysław Czarnek as Minister of Education in 2020, known for his mysoginistic, homophobic and Eurosceptic views, reinforces the national tendency to return to nationalist and conservative values (Giobanu, 2021). In terms of educational impact, Polish core curricula have been reviewed and revealed an exclusion of European recommendations on key educational issues in school materials (Kopińska, 2021). This includes gender equality and anti-discrimination education, which has been largely excluded from Polish curricula to be replaced by learning aimed at strengthening national identity (Kopińska, 2021: 532-533) and spreading traditional and conservative views on gender roles, family and women (Klatt, 2024). It thus reflects the Polish government's current vision of education, which must include national and moral values, implemented through compulsory textbooks with nationalist and Catholic themes and by limiting local autonomy in teaching and school activities (Klatt, 2024). Despite these challenges, efforts to promote gender equality in education continue, supported by European Union programmes.

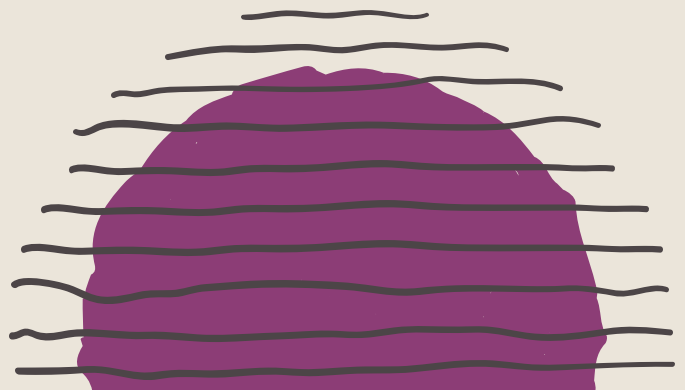
Youth engagement is another important aspect of Poland's education strategies. Various programmes and initiatives aim to empower young people to become advocates for gender equality and social justice. For example, Poland participates in European Union programmes such as Erasmus+, which support educational exchanges and promote gender equality among students and educators across Europe. These programmes provide valuable opportunities for Polish students and teachers to engage with their peers from other countries and learn from best practices in gender equality education.

## Gender-Based Violence

Addressing gender-based violence is a central focus of Poland's gender equality efforts. The Act on Counteracting Domestic Violence (2005) provides a legal framework for protecting victims of domestic violence and prosecuting offenders. The law includes provisions for the establishment of crisis centres, shelters and helplines for victims, as well as for the development of prevention and awareness-raising campaigns.

Poland's ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2015 marked an important step in the country's commitment to combating gender-based violence. However, implementation of the Convention has faced political and social challenges, particularly from conservative groups and the Catholic Church, which have raised concerns about its potential impact on traditional family values.

Nevertheless, Poland continues to address gender-based violence through various initiatives and programmes. The National Action Plan for Equal Treatment includes specific measures to combat gender-based violence, such as training law enforcement and judicial personnel, coordinating support services for victims, and promoting public awareness campaigns to change societal attitudes towards violence.





# Gender Equality in Poland

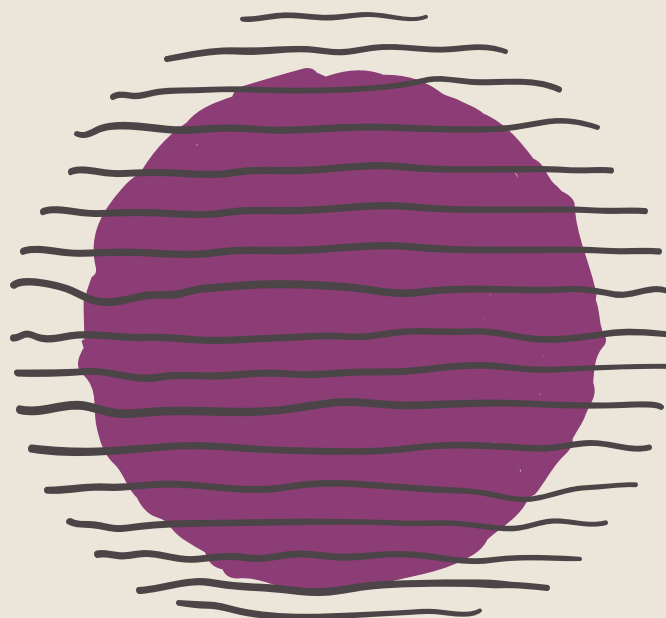
## Highlights

Poland is strongly influenced by Catholic and patriarchal traditions. The Polish constitution (1997) guarantees equality between men and women. Nevertheless, Poland experienced a setback in gender equality after the fall of communism in 1989, with a return to traditional roles encouraged by the political sphere and the Catholic Church. Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004 gave a new impetus to gender equality efforts. However, the shift towards conservative and nationalist policies since 2015 under the PiS party has slowed progress on equality. In October 2020, Poland's Constitutional Tribunal ruled that abortion is unconstitutional in cases of foetal malformation. This decision effectively made access to abortion almost impossible, complicating women's access to safe care (clandestine abortions, travelling abroad) and sparking significant protests across the country.



# References

1. Zok, M. (2022). Gendered Social Policies in (Post-) Communist Countries: The Case of Poland. *Ревіја за социјална политика*, (18), 37-53.
2. Polish Parliament. (1997). Constitution of the Republic of Poland. Warsaw: Government of Poland.
3. Polish Parliament. (2010). Act on the Implementation of Certain EU Regulations in the Field of Equal Treatment. Warsaw: Government of Poland.
4. Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Policy, Poland. National Action Plan for Equal Treatment (2021-2030). Available at: <https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina>
5. Polish Parliament. (2005). Act on Counteracting Domestic Violence. Warsaw: Government of Poland.
6. Polish Parliament. (2015). Ratification of the Istanbul Convention. Warsaw: Government of Poland.
7. Gaweda, B. (2021). Europeanization, democratization, and backsliding: Trajectories and framings of gender equality institutions in Poland. *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society*, 28(3), 629-655.
8. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Gender Equality in Education and Training: Poland. Vilnius: EIGE. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/countries/poland>
9. Odrowąż-Coates, A. (2015) Gender Crisis in Poland, Catholic Ideology and the Media. *Sociology Mind*, 5, 27-34. doi: 10.4236/sm.2015.51004.
10. Kuhar, R., & Zobec, A. (2017). The anti-gender movement in Europe and the educational process in public schools. *CEPS journal*, 7(2), 29-46.
11. Ciobanu, C. (2021, 10 June). Polish Ruling Party's Education Reforms: God and Country. *BalkanInsight*. <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/06/10/polish-ruling-partys-education-reforms-god-country/>
12. Kopińska, V. (2021). Towards an exclusive community? Political shift and changes to the school core curricula in Poland: a discourse analysis. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 54(4), 520–535. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2021.1995051>
13. Klatt, G. (2024). Resisting Europeanisation: Poland's education policy and its impact on the European Education Area. *European Educational Research Journal*, 23(4), 561-577. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14749041231155219>



# Gender Equality in Slovenia

## Historical Background and Context

Slovenia's path toward gender equality has been shaped by its historical and socio-political context, particularly its transition from a socialist republic within the former Yugoslavia to an independent state in 1991. Under the socialist regime, gender equality was promoted as part of broader social policies, with women encouraged to participate in the workforce and public life. However, traditional gender roles persisted, and women continued to face discrimination in various areas.

Following its independence, Slovenia embarked on a process of aligning its laws and policies with European Union standards, particularly after joining the EU in 2004. This period saw significant advancements in gender equality, supported by the adoption of progressive legislation and the establishment of institutions dedicated to promoting equality and combating discrimination. However, problems persist, particularly in areas like gender-based violence, the pay gap and political representation.

## Legislative and Policy Frameworks

The Slovenian Constitution lays down the principle of equality before the law and prohibits discrimination on various grounds, including gender. Article 14 specifically guarantees equality before the law for all persons regardless of gender, and Article 43 guarantees equal voting rights for men and women.

The Act on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2002), which provides the legal basis for the promotion of gender equality in Slovenia, is one of the most noteworthy legislative measures. This Act mandates equal treatment in employment, education, and public life, and requires public authorities to take proactive measures to promote gender equality. It also established the Office for Equal Opportunities, responsible for monitoring the implementation of gender equality policies and providing support to victims of discrimination.

Another notable piece of legislation dealing with gender equality in the workplace is the Employment Relationships Act (2002). The Act prohibits gender

discrimination in recruitment, employment practices and pay. It also includes provisions on maternity and paternity leave and protection for pregnant women and new mothers. The Act aims to promote work-life balance and ensure equal opportunities for men and women in the labour market.

In recent years, Slovenia has introduced additional policies to address gender-based violence. The Family Violence Prevention Act (2008) provides a comprehensive framework for the prevention of domestic violence and the protection of victims. It also provides for measures to increase public awareness about gender-based violence. Slovenia's ratification of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence) in 2015 further demonstrates the country's commitment to combating gender-based violence.

## Institutional and Governmental Strategies

In order to promote gender equality and combat gender-based violence, the Slovenian government has implemented various institutional and governmental strategies. These efforts are coordinated by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, which is responsible for developing and monitoring the implementation of gender equality policies and ensuring compliance with national and international requirements.

One of the main strategies is the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2015-2020), which has set out measures to promote gender equality in various sectors, including employment, education, health and political participation. The programme focusses on reducing the gender pay gap, increasing women's representation in decision-making and combating gender-based violence. It also stresses the importance of gender mainstreaming, which ensures that gender equality is taken into account in all areas of public policy.

# Gender Equality in Slovenia

The Government Office for Gender Equality also has a central role in the monitoring of the implementation of gender equality policies and the provision of support to other government ministries and agencies. To promote gender equality and address issues of discrimination and violence, the office works closely with civil society organisations, local authorities and international partners.

At the local level, municipalities play a crucial role in the implementation of gender equality policies. Many municipalities have established gender equality councils or appointed gender equality officers to oversee the implementation of local initiatives. These efforts are supported by the Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia (SOS), which provides guidance and resources to help municipalities promote gender equality.

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

Education is a key component of Slovenia's efforts to promote gender equality. The Slovenian education system has made significant strides in integrating gender equality principles into the national curriculum, with a focus on challenging traditional gender roles and promoting inclusivity.

Gender sensitive education is promoted through various initiatives. For example, to raise students' awareness of the importance of respecting diversity and promoting equality, the curriculum includes discussions on human rights, gender equality and sex education. Teachers receive training and resources to address gender in the classroom and create favourable learning environments for all students.

Slovenia also takes part in European Union programmes, such as Erasmus+, which support educational exchanges and the promotion of gender equality among students and educators from all over Europe. These programmes offer Slovenian students and teachers valuable opportunities to interact with peers from other countries and learn from best practices in gender education.

## Gender-Based Violence

Tackling gender-based violence is a key focus of Slovenia's gender equality efforts. The Family Violence Prevention Act (2008) provides a legal framework for the protection of victims of domestic violence and the prosecution of perpetrators. The Act includes provisions for the establishment of shelters, crisis centres and helplines for victims, as well as for the development of prevention and awareness-raising campaigns.

Slovenia's ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2015 marked a significant step in the country's commitment to combating gender-based violence. The implementation of the Convention has led to the strengthening of legal protection for victims and the establishment of additional support services. However, challenges remain to fully address gender-based violence, particularly in terms of changing societal attitudes and ensuring effective enforcement of laws.

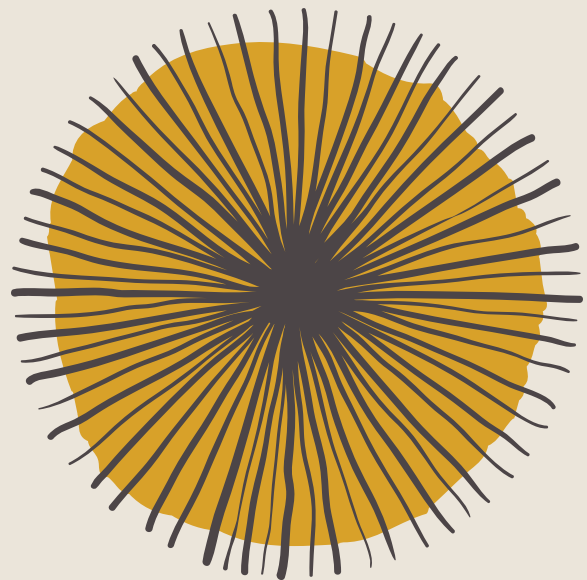
The National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men includes targeted initiatives to combat gender-based violence, such as training law enforcement and judicial personnel, coordinating support services for victims, and promoting public awareness campaigns to change societal attitudes towards violence.



# Gender Equality in Slovenia

## Highlights

The Slovenian constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Under the socialist regime of the former Yugoslavia, of which it was one of the federal republics, gender equality was promoted, but traditional roles persisted. Slovenia became independent in 1991 and joined the EU in 2004. Since then, the country has sought to align its legislation and policies with EU standards. The Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (2002) provides a legal basis for gender equality in employment, education and public life. The Prevention of Domestic Violence Act (2008) provides a framework for the prevention of domestic violence and the protection of victims, supported by the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2015. The role of municipalities is central to the implementation of gender equality policies (establishment of gender equality councils; appointment of specialised staff). Special efforts will be made to educate young people to challenge traditional roles.



# References

1. Slovenian Parliament. (2002). Act on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Ljubljana: Government of Slovenia.
2. Slovenian Parliament. (2002). Employment Relationships Act. Ljubljana: Government of Slovenia.
3. Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Slovenia. National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2015-2020). Available at: <https://www.mddsz.gov.si/>
4. Slovenian Parliament. (2008). Family Violence Prevention Act. Ljubljana: Government of Slovenia.
5. Slovenian Parliament. (2015). Ratification of the Istanbul Convention. Ljubljana: Government of Slovenia.
6. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Gender Equality in Education and Training: Slovenia. Vilnius: EIGE. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/countries/slovenia>  
[https://www.lbtu.lv/sites/default/files/2022-03/Dzimumulidztiesiba\\_apstiprinats.pdf](https://www.lbtu.lv/sites/default/files/2022-03/Dzimumulidztiesiba_apstiprinats.pdf)



# Gender Equality in Spain

## Historical Background and Context

Spain's transition from dictatorship under General Francisco Franco (1939-1975) to a democratic state marked a significant turning point for women's rights and gender equality. During the Francoist regime, strict gender roles were enforced, with women largely relegated to the domestic sphere. However, the Spanish Constitution of 1978, adopted after Franco's death, enshrined the principle of equality before the law and laid the foundation for progressive reforms in gender equality.

The feminist movement in Spain gained momentum in the 1980s and 1990s, advocating for legal and social changes to improve women's rights. These efforts led to significant advancements in areas such as reproductive rights, employment equality, and political representation. Spain's accession to the European Union in 1986 further accelerated these developments, as the country aligned its laws and policies with EU standards.

In recent decades, Spain has emerged as a leader in gender equality within Europe, implementing comprehensive legislation and policies aimed at promoting equality and combating gender-based violence. While progress has been made, there are still challenges to be overcome, including the gender paygradient, leadership and cultural perceptions of gender roles.

## Legislative and Policy Frameworks

Spain has developed a strong legal framework to promote gender equality and prevent discrimination. The Spanish Constitution of 1978 guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination on various grounds, including gender. Article 14 explicitly states the principle of gender equality, providing a constitutional basis for subsequent laws and policies to promote equality, such as the 1981 Divorce Law, which was the first significant reform in terms of women's rights.

One of the most significant legislative measures is Organic Law 3/2007 on the Effective Equality of Women and Men, which provides a comprehensive framework for the promotion of gender equality in

all areas of society, mandating equal treatment in employment, education and public life and requiring public authorities to take proactive measures to eliminate gender discrimination. The law also established the State Observatory on Violence against Women, which monitors the implementation of policies related to gender-based violence.

The Organic Law 1/2004 on Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence is another cornerstone of Spain's gender equality framework. This law provides a comprehensive approach to combating gender-based violence, including legal protection for victims, the establishment of specialised courts and the development of prevention and awareness-raising campaigns. This law is based on a definition of gender violence that includes structural dimensions and views it through the prism of power and domination, as stated in the report "Les politiques publiques de lutte contre les violence conjugales en Espagne: regards croisés avec la France" (2020) prepared by the Centre Hubertine Auclert. The law is considered one of the most advanced in Europe and reflects Spain's strong commitment to combating gender-based violence.





# Gender Equality in Spain

In recent years, Spain has introduced additional legislative measures to address specific aspects of gender inequality. Royal Decree-Law 6/2019 on Urgent Measures to Guarantee Equal Treatment and Opportunities for Women and Men in Employment and Occupation includes provisions to reduce the gender pay gap, promote work-life balance and increase the representation of women in leadership positions. This decree also introduced mandatory gender equality plans for companies with more than 50 employees. This law paved the way for further legislation aimed at ensuring equal status, treatment and pay for women, such as the Gender Equality Law (2021), which introduced quotas to ensure women's representation in company boards and political positions and strengthened measures against gender-based violence, or the Equal Parental Leave Law (2022), which introduced equal parental leave of 16 weeks for both parents and promoted a balanced sharing of parental responsibilities. The latter enshrines the principles previously addressed by the Parental Responsibility Act (1989) and the extension of paternity leave (2017), both of which promoted shared parental responsibilities.

With regard to the rights of sexual minorities, several laws have been implemented, such as the 2005 same-sex marriage law, which made Spain one of the first countries (after the Netherlands) to grant LGBTQ+ couples the same legal rights as heterosexual couples, including adoption rights; the 2010 Gender Identity Law, which allows transgender people to change their gender on official documents without surgery or hormone therapy; the 2020 Non-Binary Identities Recognition Law, which extends legal recognition to non-binary people and allows them to identify as a third gender on official documents; and the 2021 Transgender Rights Law, which facilitates legal gender reassignment and provides greater protection against discrimination for transgender people.

## Institutional and Governmental Strategies

The Spanish government has implemented various institutional and governmental strategies to promote gender equality and address gender-based violence. The first is the Institute of Women, created by Law 16/1983 of 24 October, published in the Spanish Official Journal on 26 October. It is an independent

body, attached to the Ministry of Culture, whose main objective is to ensure compliance with, and development of the constitutional principles set out in articles 9.2 and 14, which detail the promotion of conditions that facilitate social equality between the sexes and the participation of women in political, cultural, economic and social life. These efforts are coordinated by the Ministry of Equality, which was established in 2008 to oversee the development and implementation of gender equality policies. The Ministry works closely with other government departments, local authorities and civil society organisations to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed into all areas of public policy.

The Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities (2010), which outlines specific measures to advance gender equality in areas such as employment, education, health, and political participation is central. The plan includes initiatives to reduce the gender pay gap, increase women's representation in decision-making processes, and combat gender-based violence. It also stresses the importance of gender mainstreaming, ensuring that gender equality is a cross-cutting priority in all government policies.

The Government Delegation for Gender Violence plays a central role in the implementation of Spain's strategies to combat gender-based violence. It is responsible for coordinating the implementation of Organic Law 1/2004 and other related policies, providing support to victims and raising public awareness of gender-based violence. It also works to ensure the effective functioning of specialised gender violence courts and collaborates with law enforcement agencies to improve the protection of victims.

At the local level, municipalities and regional governments play a crucial role in implementing gender equality policies. Many have established gender equality councils or appointed gender equality officers to oversee the implementation of local initiatives. These efforts are supported by the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP), which provides guidance and resources to help local governments promote gender equality.

# Gender Equality in Spain

## Educational Strategies and Youth Engagement

Education is an essential part of Spain's efforts to promote gender equality. One of the first steps towards gender equality in schools was the Education Law (1985), which aimed to provide equal educational opportunities for boys and girls. A few years later, the Organic Law on the General Organisation of the Education System (LOGSE) (1990) introduced a coeducational system and aimed to eliminate gender bias in school curricula and teaching practices. This was later reinforced by the Organic Law on Education (LOE) (2006), which emphasises the importance of coeducation and gender equality in schools, promotes inclusive educational practices and aims to eliminate gender stereotypes. It should be noted that with the LOMCE (Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality) of 2018, provisions for the protection of LGBTQ+ students and the promotion of diversity in school environments have been included. This legal framework underlines Spain's commitment to implementing gender-sensitive education in its territory.

Gender-sensitive education is promoted through various initiatives. For example, schools are expected to implement comprehensive programmes to prevent and address bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity. These programmes include training for education professionals, support services for students and awareness campaigns to promote inclusivity. Schools are also expected to promote inclusive policies on gender equality and anti-discrimination, with the introduction of safe spaces in schools or the installation of gender-neutral toilets. Mental health services should also be accessible and sensitive to gender issues.

Youth engagement is another important aspect of Spain's education strategies. Various programmes and initiatives aim to empower young people to become advocates for gender equality and social justice. For example, the Youth Guarantee Programme includes measures to help young women enter the labour market and to promote gender equality in vocational training. Other awareness-raising campaigns involve a wider audience (parents, teachers, students, etc.) to challenge gender

stereotypes and change traditional perceptions and gender roles in order to promote equality.

## Gender-Based Violence

Addressing gender-based violence is a central focus of Spain's gender equality efforts. The Organic Law 1/2004 on Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence provides a comprehensive legal framework for protecting victims of gender-based violence and prosecuting offenders. This law includes provisions for the establishment of shelters, crisis centres, and helplines for victims, as well as the development of prevention and awareness-raising campaigns. It also provides legal and social assistance to victim of gender-based violence, as well as economics aids and adjustments of working time and contract (Centre Hubertine Auclert, 2020).

Spain's approach to gender-based violence is considered one of the most comprehensive in Europe, with specialised gender violence courts, mandatory restraining orders and a network of services for victims. For example, the VioGén platform of the Secretary of State for Security of the Ministry of the Interior records all incidents of domestic violence reported to the police, provides forms for assessing the danger of a given situation and applying appropriate measures (updated every 7 to 60 days, depending on the seriousness of the situation), and enables the judicial authorities to monitor domestic violence by referencing and accessing the platform (Centre Hubertine Auclert, 2020).

In addition, the Government Delegation for Gender Violence (part of the Ministry of Equality) coordinates efforts to tackle gender-based violence, ensuring that victims receive the support they need and that perpetrators are held to account.



# Gender Equality in Spain

Regarding the rights of sexual minorities, two pieces of legislation have been introduced to protect LGBTQ+ people from gender-based violence: the 2014 Comprehensive Protection Law, which protects LGBTQ+ people from discrimination and violence and guarantees their rights in various areas, including employment, health care and education, and the 2019 Anti-Discrimination Law, which aims to strengthen protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and improve legal recourse for victims.

In spite of this progress, there are still challenges to the full elimination of gender violence in Spain. Cultural attitudes, economic disparities and gaps in the implementation of legal frameworks continue to be obstacles. However, Spain's commitment to international standards and its ongoing efforts to strengthen its legal and institutional frameworks (see, for example, the Action Plan For a Feminist Foreign Policy 2023-2024) reflect a determination to address these challenges and protect the rights of all individuals.

## Highlights

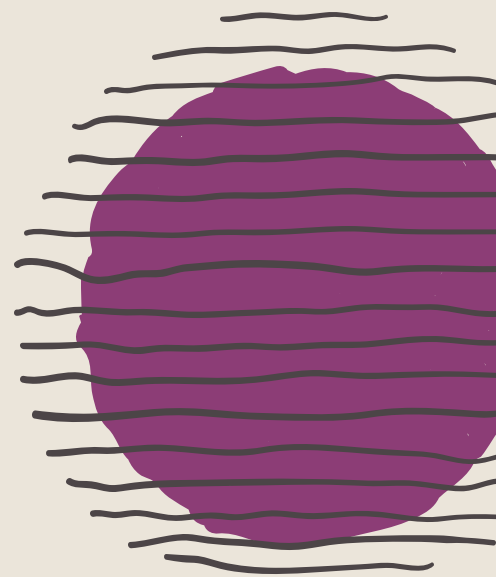
Spain's transition from Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975) to democracy marked a turning point for women's rights. The 1978 Constitution established equality before the law and outlawed discrimination. In 1986, Spain joined the European Union. In the years 1980-1990: Feminist movements campaigned for legislative and social change, leading to advances in reproductive rights, equal employment and political representation. Recent legislation has strengthened the promotion of gender equality (Law 1/2004 on gender-based violence; Law of 30 June 2005 legalising same-sex marriage, which allows same-sex couples to enjoy the same rights as heterosexual couples, including the right to adopt children; Organic Law 3/2007, which establishes a comprehensive framework for the promotion of gender equality in all sectors). Nevertheless, the pay gap between women and men persists, as does the lack of representation in key positions and behaviours that reproduce gender roles.



# References

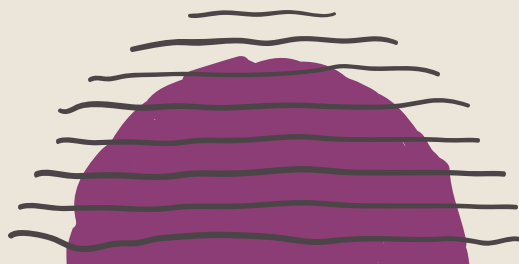
1. Spanish Parliament. (1978). Constitution of Spain. Madrid: Government of Spain.
2. Spanish Parliament. (2007). Organic Law 3/2007 on Effective Equality between Women and Men. Madrid: Government of Spain.
3. Spanish Parliament. (2004). Organic Law 1/2004 on Integrated Protection Measures against Gender Violence. Madrid: Government of Spain.
4. Centre Hubertine Auclert. (2020). *Les politiques publiques de lutte contre les violences conjugales en Espagne : regards croisés avec la France*. <https://www.centre-hubertine-auclert.fr/sites/default/files/medias/egalitheque/documents/cha-rapport-espagne-def-web2011.pdf>
5. Ministry of Equality, Spain. Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunities. Available at: <https://www.igualdad.gob.es/>
6. Spanish Parliament. (2019). Royal Decree-Law 6/2019 on Urgent Measures to Guarantee Equal Treatment and Opportunities between Women and Men in Employment and Occupation. Madrid: Government of Spain.
7. Government Delegation for Gender Violence, Spain. Reports on Gender Violence in Spain. Available at: <https://violenciagenero.igualdad.gob.es/>
8. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). Gender Equality in Education and Training: Spain. Vilnius: EIGE. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/countries/spain>
9. Ministerio del Interior | Sistema VioGén. <https://www.interior.gob.es/opencms/es/servicios-al-ciudadano/violencia-contra-la-mujer/sistema-viogen/>
10. Government Delegation against Gender Violence (igualdad.gob.es). <https://violenciagenero.igualdad.gob.es/>
11. Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Unión Europea y Cooperación. (2021). *Action Plan For a Feminist Foreign Policy 2023-2024*. <https://www.exteriores.gob.es/es/PoliticaExteri>

[or/Documents/PoliticaExteriorFeminista/2023\\_10\\_PLAN%20ACCION%20POLITICA%20EXTERIOR%20FEMINISTA%20v2\\_EN.pdf](https://www.exteriores.gob.es/es/PoliticaExteri/or/Documents/PoliticaExteriorFeminista/2023_10_PLAN%20ACCION%20POLITICA%20EXTERIOR%20FEMINISTA%20v2_EN.pdf)



# Additional resources (cf. Spain's annexes)

1. List of Spanish experts on Gender and organizations (Manuel Fernández Navas and J. Eduardo Sierra Nieto)
2. OXFAM Intermón. (2020, November). A different perspective: a Compendium of perceptions of migration in Spain and recommendations for a narrative change.  
<https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/426027/Oxfam-Website/oi-informes/nota-metodologica-la-otra-mirada-oxfam-intermon-en.pdf> + *Methodology for the Barometer of Misinformation and Hate Speech against Migrants*. <https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/426027/Oxfam-Website/oi-informes/barometro-desinformacion-odio-metodologia-en.pdf>
3. Centre Hubertine Auclert. (2020). Les politiques publiques de lutte contre les violences conjugales en Espagne : regards croisés avec la France. <https://www.centre-hubertine-auclert.fr/sites/default/files/medias/egalitheque/documents/cha-rapport-espagne-def-web2011.pdf>
4. Consejo de Ministros. (2022, 8 March). Referencia.  
<https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/consejodeministros/referencias/Paginas/2022/refc20220308.aspx>
5. Instituto Nacional de Estadística. (2022). Mujeres y hombres en España 2022.  
[https://www.ine.es/ss/Satellite?L=es\\_ES&c=INE\\_Publicacion\\_C&cid=1259924822888&p=1254735110672&pagename=ProductosYServicios/PYSLayout&param1=PYSDetalleGratis&param4=Ocultar](https://www.ine.es/ss/Satellite?L=es_ES&c=INE_Publicacion_C&cid=1259924822888&p=1254735110672&pagename=ProductosYServicios/PYSLayout&param1=PYSDetalleGratis&param4=Ocultar)



# ARENAS

ANALYSIS OF AND RESPONSES  
TO EXTREMIST NARRATIVES



Follow our journey



[www.arenasproject.eu](http://www.arenasproject.eu)



This project  
research



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union