

SUBMISSION BY SLOVENIA AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES

Submission on dimensions and examples of the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change; the role of women as agents of change; and opportunities for women

9 November 2021

Introduction

The adoption of the Enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan is a major achievement of COP 25. The EU and its Member States welcome the adoption of the GAP and the opportunity to contribute to its implementation by submitting views related to activity A.4. of the GAP “*strengthen the evidence base and understanding of the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women and the role of women as agents of change and on opportunities for women*”.

The submission aims to bring evidence that climate action needs to be more gender-responsive, and that there has been progress made worldwide on gender mainstreaming to successfully combat climate change in the last few years. Having said that, the EU and its Member States wish to underline the challenges to strengthen the data-based evidence to develop gender-responsive climate action. In this submission, the EU and its Member States will present accordingly in regards to the activity A.4 mandate

- its understanding of the gender differentiated impacts of climate change,
- the role of women as agents of change
- opportunities for women.

The EU and its Member States make this submission ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, with the aim of contributing to the discussion on the implementation of the GAP, and raising awareness on the challenge of collecting relevant sex-disaggregated data. The submission is especially relevant in view of how the past two years have been marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has proven to be a major challenge for women and for gender equality. Generally, it should be pointed out that gender issues don't reflect on nor concern only women and girls, although some still refer to gender as a “women's issue”.

Lessons learned / Key messages:

Within this context, *strengthening the evidence base and understanding of the role of women as agents of change and on opportunities for women, and the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women*, is a challenge of collecting sex-disaggregated data and carrying out analysis.

Collecting more sex-disaggregated data on climate change impacts, mitigation policies, citizens' attitudes towards climate change and adaptation capabilities, is essential for sound policy-making. Adequate data and resources along with gender analysis are underlying requirements to integrate gender considerations at planning and implementation stages. Currently the EU and several Member States have initiated work to collect gender-differentiated data and to drive gender impact assessment of climate strategies and hope for more experiences to come. Linked to this matter accessing dedicated resources for gender-mainstreaming and gender actions proved to be challenging too.

Addressing these challenges would allow for an effective systematic integration of gender considerations in climate action, to ultimately unleash the potential of gender equality for enhanced climate action and more effective adaptation to the impact of climate change. However, these are just two of the many challenges. Promoting gender equality would also require capacity building and addressing gender inequalities in representation and decision-making.

Notwithstanding the challenges, gender equality in the EU and its Member States is advancing. One of the main reasons for this is that the principle of gender equality is among the core foundations of the European human rights system. This eminent importance of gender equality as a human rights issue is reflected in the various instruments protecting human rights. For instance, human rights provisions relating to gender equality are to be found inter alia in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR), in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the European Social Charter (ESC) and in various other international treaties that are being implemented by the EU and/or its Member states. The rights enshrined in these instruments are successfully implemented within the EU and its Member States by comprehensive measures comprising, among others, of directives, regulations, domestic constitutions, and policy frameworks. In this regard, the European Commission has adopted an EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025¹.

¹ COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: "A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025" of 5 March 2020, adopted in response to the Council's call to the Commission to set out a gender equality strategy in its Conclusions of 10 December 2019, where the Council recalled how gender-sensitive environmental and climate policies and the equal participation of women in decision-making promote both gender equality and the effectiveness of tackling the climate change.

Gender equality and the transformation towards resilient climate neutrality

Gender-mainstreaming has a very relevant role to play in the green transition, both to contribute to achieving gender equality and to leverage the full potential of the green transition. Promoting and advancing gender equality leads to more equitable societies, with higher levels of agency and participation of women in all aspects of society. This reduces vulnerability to risk and increases women's resilience to shocks and hazards, including climate change. More inclusive representation and participation in governance structures can lead to more inclusive and gender responsive planning, budgeting and policy-making that responds to the different needs of each gender. Promoting and advancing gender equality in the implementing policies as a cross-cutting priority can contribute to addressing climate change from a double perspective. On the one hand, climate change can affect each gender differently, reflecting differences in gender roles, as well as vulnerability and exposure to climate change. Each gender can also differ in its adaptive capacity, in its access to resources to mitigate and manage climate-related risks as well as to strengthen resilience. The gender-differentiated impact of climate change is presented in more details in point A below.

On the other hand, gender equality contributes to the empowerment of every person as agent of change. The role of women as agents of change is explored in point B below. With appropriate representation and participation in decision-making, gender equality could contribute to energy security and GHG emissions reductions. Women also play a crucial role when it comes to adaptation, as they may have unique (local) knowledge and skills concerning development and environmental management.

As outlined in the European Green Deal², the EU aims to become the first climate neutral continent by 2050. This ambitious goal requires transforming the EU's economy and society: it will change how EU citizens transport themselves and goods, how they heat their homes, how they work, the energy they use and what they eat. This transformation provides opportunities to strengthen gender equality as developed in point C below.

A. Dimensions and examples of the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change

Environment and climate policy are not gender-neutral. The negative consequences of climate change, but also the causes of climate change, interact closely with gender relations. Structural gender inequalities along with gender norms, roles and relations have a significant influence on access to and control over resources, information and knowledge, technologies, financing, and decision-making.

The consequence is, on the one hand, a different contribution to the causes of climate change and biodiversity loss as well as to climate and nature protection, and, on the other hand, a

² COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: The European Green Deal (COM/2019/640 final).

differentiated vulnerability and resilience to their impacts. Looking at gender inequalities is key to effectively addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and their impacts.

This first part examines some examples of dimensions of gender-differentiated impacts of climate change within the EU.

i. Economic dimension of gender-differentiated impacts of climate change: the COVID-19 pandemic

The pandemic has exacerbated existing gender inequalities in almost all areas of life, in Europe and beyond. At the EU level, initial results of analysis of the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic suggest that there is a risk that the fragile gains achieved with regards to women's independence in the past decade will be rolled back³. In general, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying economic lockdown has had greater impact on the employment of women than the employment of men⁴. By 2021, the total number of women and girls living on less than \$1.90 is forecast to increase to 435 million, with projections showing that this number will not revert to pre-pandemic levels until 2030⁵. This has once again shown that women's rights and gender equality are threatened to a larger extent by the impacts of global crises. This also underlines the need for human rights action, and action on gender equality and the empowerment of women in the context of international climate action.

Acknowledging this, the EU and its Member States have integrated safeguards for gender equality in the [COVID-19 Recovery Funds](#). The Recovery and Resilience Facility (the Facility) makes €672.5 billion (in 2018 prices) in loans and grants available to support reforms and investments undertaken by EU Member States. The aim is put in place to mitigate the economic and social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and make European economies and societies more sustainable, resilient and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transition. The Regulation establishing the Facility⁶ requires Member States to provide an explanation on how the measures in their recovery plans are expected to contribute to gender equality. As 37% of the funding of each recovery plan needs to be dedicated to climate action, we could expect to see some funding addressing interconnected issues of climate change and gender equality, or at least explanations on how specific climate action also contributes to gender equality.

In addition, a recent Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council establishes a Social Climate Fund⁷ to support Member States' policies to address the social

³ <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-index-2020-report/highlights>

⁴ EPRS Briefing; [Recent trends in female employment](#) (October 2020)

⁵ <https://data.unwomen.org/features/covid-19-driving-women-and-girls-deeper-poverty>

⁶ Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility, published in the Official Journal of the European Union (*OJ L 57, 18.2.2021.*)

⁷ As part of the revision of the EU emissions trading system (EU ETS), the European Commission is proposing to establish a new, separate emissions trading system for the buildings and road transport sectors. To address any social impacts that arise from this new system, the Commission proposes to introduce the Social Climate Fund, (i) financing temporary direct income support for vulnerable households; and (ii) supporting measures and investments that reduce emissions in road transport and buildings sectors and as a result reduce costs for vulnerable households, micro-enterprises and transport users. The proposal for a Social Climate Fund can be accessed here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/social-climate-fund_with-annex_en.pdf

impacts of the emissions trading system (EU ETS) for buildings and road transport on vulnerable households. Such policies are especially relevant in the context of the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposal recognises that carbon pricing particularly affects women and encourages Member States to mainstream gender equality in the preparation and implementation of their Plans for the use of the funds.

ii. Gender-differentiated impacts of climate change in the response to natural disasters

The EU and its Member States would like to recall its submission on how to mainstream gender considerations into national adaptation planning and implementation from 2019⁸. Many good practices in this submission inform on the gender-differentiated impact of climate change in the context of climate change and natural hazards.

For example, a case study in Austria⁹ showed that hitherto emergency response teams are not fully aware of group- and gender-specific aspects but that raising awareness for gender- and group-specific aspects, needs and demands would improve the emergency response. The analysis also revealed that people without a local social network are affected the most by the impact of a natural disaster. The outcome of the research supports the thesis that the integration of gender-specific aspects in the management and prevention of natural disasters needs to be part of a comprehensive and effective approach.

However, whereas the United Nations Development Programme reports that women and children are 14 times more likely than men to die during natural disasters¹⁰, comprehensive and pan-European data on the gender-differentiated impacts of natural disasters is not available in the European Union. Obtaining this data is necessary to achieve full awareness of any potential differentiated impacts, and to address them.

iii. Impacts of climate change in building resilient societies

As recognised in the EU Adaptation Strategy, unequal exposure and vulnerability to climate impacts in different regions and socio-economic groups worsens pre-existing inequalities and vulnerabilities. Persons of different gender, older people, persons with disabilities, displaced persons, or socially marginalised people have different adaptive capabilities.

In many EU contexts, gender inequalities persist, although the knowledge of to which extent these inequalities lead to a differentiated climate vulnerability is limited. That said, in all various contexts, the experience of climate vulnerability is very likely to be different for persons of different gender, and so gender-responsive approaches are always justified.

Against this background the Czech Republic issued a Gender Equality Strategy for 2021 – 2030 that stresses the importance of incorporating a gender equality perspective into the

⁸<https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/Documents/201907161515---FI-07-16%20EU%20Submission%20Gender%20Adaptation.pdf>

⁹<https://boku.ac.at/rall/ilap/projekte/giaklim>

¹⁰<https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/gender/Gender%20and%20Environment/PB3-AP-Gender-and-disaster-risk-reduction.pdf>

agenda of environmental protection and transport policy. The strategy supports research projects that investigate the specific effects of climate change on gender inequality. Furthermore, the strategy proposes guidelines for the integration of gender equality in the design and implementation of substantive policies associated with environmental protection. For example by applying gender equality as a cross-cutting principle in subsidy programmes associated with environmental protection, and by drawing up an analysis of the differing health and social effects that an unfavourable environment has on women and men¹¹.

To ensure gender-responsiveness of climate actions, participatory approaches from the beginning of the design of climate policies are essential. In Spain a gender perspective and balanced participation were considered through participatory workshops that were carried out for the design of a new National Adaptation Plan (PNACC) 2021-2030¹². The PNACC has mainstreamed a gender perspective by including a gender approach as one of the cross-cutting aspects to be considered in the development of all adaptation policies and measures. Firstly, the vulnerability analysis is based on socio-demographic variables, including gender. Secondly the PNACC also identifies specific lines of action for the integration of a gender perspective in adaptation, which will be carried out through specific measures aimed at, among others, the collection of sex-disaggregated data and the development of specific indicators; the consideration of gender differences in accessing information and training, risk perception, environmental behaviours and lifestyles when developing adaptation measures; and the consideration of women as agents of change, favouring their participation in decision-making forums.

Climate change will lead to a higher frequency of extreme temperatures in the EU such as heat waves, leading to an increase in energy use for heating and cooling purposes. Therefore, persons in energy poverty will be more affected by these extreme weather events. A 2017 study for the European Parliament's FEMM Committee entitled "Gender perspective on access to energy in the EU"¹³ concluded that the causes of energy poverty are a combination of high energy prices, low income and energy inefficient homes (in particular influenced by the age, condition and materials of the building envelope and energy efficiency of appliances). Residential status (owner/tenant) and the heating/cooling system are also factors which influence capacity to invest in improvements. Due to the income gap between men and women, and the demographic fact that women live longer, the study estimated that women are disproportionately affected by energy poverty, although it also indicated that the understanding of the way women and men experience energy poverty is still limited. The Gender Equality Index of 2020¹⁴ shows that the income gap has barely improved in the EU in recent years, advocating for further analysis of the potential gender-differentiated impact of energy poverty.

¹¹ See pages 76 – 77 <https://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/gcfge/Gender-Equality-Strategy-2021-2030.pdf>

¹² https://www.miteco.gob.es/es/cambio-climatico/temas/impactos-vulnerabilidad-y-adaptacion/pnacc-2021-2030-en_tcm30-530300.pdf, especially page 223

¹³ IPOL_STU(2017)596816, available here: [Gender perspective on access to energy in the EU \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹⁴ [Gender Equality Index 2020 Report | European Institute for Gender Equality \(europa.eu\)](#). According to the Index, since 2010, the gender gap in earnings has increased in 17 Member States, while the gender gap in income has gone up in 19 Member States, leading to an overall increase in gender inequality in earnings and income in the EU. Gender inequalities grow substantially with age and level of education, peaking for women living in couples with children, and lone mothers. The poverty gender gap has increased in 14 Member States since 2010 and in 21 Member State since 2017. Poverty or social exclusion are concentrated

B. Role of women as agents of change

Women and girls play a crucial role as agents of change when it comes to combating climate change. Due to the gender-specific distribution of tasks in everyday life, including as providers, educators, energy and land users, women have specific potential in GHG emissions reduction. Women are often traditionally responsible for mitigation-relevant sectors. Among others, household activities are often performed by women, which is important for the energy and transport sectors¹⁵. Empowering women has thus a great potential because women play a substantive role as consumers to actively respond to climate change and develop alternative strategies, for example in their energy consumption and choice of using transportation.

With participation in decision-making, this could contribute to energy security and GHG emissions reduction. Women also play a crucial role when it comes to adaptation, as they have unique and local knowledge and skills concerning development and environmental management. Women are often knowledge carriers of traditional and local knowledge in local communities, which is vital to cope with and adapt to the severe impacts of climate change. Therefore women need to be included when implementing adaptation measures. Finding appropriate adaptation solutions will always be more effective if women have equal roles in leadership, and if their voices can be heard in adaptation planning and action. To take women's needs and interests into account, they must be able to articulate their circumstances at national and international level, but also –crucially– at local level. The EU and its Member States refer to the EU submission on adaptation and gender from 2019 for further understanding on the role of women and girls in adaptation to climate change. Ways to achieve it, like national leadership and consultative approach, are also presented.

Greater equality in decision-making at a political level can also contribute to the green transition. Studies show that women are generally more likely than men to support more drastic environmental policies¹⁶, both at EU national¹⁷ and European level¹⁸. This is in line with women's general perception of and behaviour toward environmental issues¹⁹. However,

among certain particularly vulnerable groups of women and men: lone mothers, women above 65 years of age, women and men with disabilities, women and men with a low level of education, and migrant populations.

¹⁵ pp. 38; Gendergerechtigkeit als Beitrag zu einer erfolgreichen Klimapolitik: Forschungsreview, Analyse internationaler Vereinbarungen, Portfolioanalyse: https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/1410/publikationen/2018-03-15_texte_23-2018_gender-klima.pdf

¹⁶ The OECD report 'Promoting Sustainable Consumption - Good Practices in OECD Countries' (2008) states that "gender has a huge influence on sustainable consumption [...]. In some OECD countries, women make more than 80% of consumption decisions, although men may spend more than 80% of household funds' (OECD, 2008b:47). [...] Women seem to show a greater willingness to change their consumption behaviour for the benefit of the environment. [...] women are more likely to have a greater recognition of health problems and more developed risk perceptions, often acting on their internalised orientation towards health and the environment; [...] women tend to travel in a more sustainable way than men [...]"

¹⁷ Gender and climate change: Do female parliamentarians make difference?: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0176268017304500>

¹⁸ Do women make a difference? Analysing environmental attitudes and actions of Members of the European Parliament: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09644016.2019.1609156>

¹⁹ The Eurobarometer on climate change (July 2021) notes that in the EU women (80%) are slightly more likely than men (76%) to say climate change is a very serious problem and women (66%) are slightly more likely than men (62%) to have taken action to fight climate change.

currently the proportion of men in the chambers of national parliaments is 68% compared to 32% for women; the same proportion as in national governments²⁰. Representation in national parliaments and at EU level is also lower than men's in environmental committees or ministries²¹. Similarly, the gender impact assessment²² carried out in preparation for Finland's updated Climate and Energy strategy showed that the combination of gender, climate emissions and climate attitudes form a significant cluster of factors. Men's activities lead to higher emissions, as they tend to work in sectors and make consumption decisions that cause more emissions. Women would more readily take climate-friendly measures in private life as well as at work and in society at large, but are often not involved in emissions-related decision-making.

A sectoral approach that looks at Transport, Energy, Finance, Land use and land use change and Forestry (LULUCF) was envisaged in the following to highlight some activities of the EU and its Member States.

i. Transport

Some sectors are better informed with sex-disaggregated data than others. Within the EU it seems that the transport sector has benefited from studies on the gender-differentiated patterns of mobility. Conclusions cast light on different needs regarding local mobility in cities and surroundings.

Despite this, greater efforts have to be made in order to better understand the rationale and the effects of gender differences in mobility patterns: adequate, gender-sensitive statistical data and research are needed at the local, national and EU level²³. These aspects are particularly relevant when planning public transport and infrastructure, for example making public spaces secure (through well-lit bus stops, safe cycling routes) and frequencies of public buses, or designing the renting options and stations of bike sharing schemes²⁴.

The transport sector accounts for around 25% of global energy-related CO₂ emissions, tendency increasing, and is hence an important sector to keep the 1.5 °C global warming objective within reach, in line with the Paris Agreement. Women and men behave differently when it comes to transport purposes. Gender is often a more robust determinant of modal choice than age or income²⁵, and women represent the largest share of public transport users

²⁰ National parliaments: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_pol_parl_wmid_natparl
National governments: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_pol_gov_wmid_natgov_minis

²¹ Only 27 % national ministers dealing with environment and climate change were women, and 41 % of the members of environment related committees in the European Parliament: https://eige.europa.eu/lv/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/wmidm_env_nat_wmid_env_nat_environ/datatable

²² published 16 Sept 2021, https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163440/TEM_2021_52.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

²³ [Paper on Sustainable and Inclusive Transport Systems from the Institute for European Environmental Policies](#)

²⁴ A study exploring the bike-sharing scheme of Oslo (Norway) "The gendered dimension of multimodality" by *Tanu Priya Uteng, Hans Martin Espegren, Torstein S. Throndsen, Lars Böcker*, showed more bike stations were needed in the areas where women travel. Similar studies could be useful for bike sharing schemes in the EU.

²⁵ *Understanding Urban Travel Behaviour by Gender for Efficient and Equitable Transport Policies*, Discussion Paper No. 2018-01, International Transport Forum (OECD).

around the world. For example, latest research shows that on average, women cover significantly shorter distances than men completing a similar number of trips in Germany.

One factor in this is the issue of safety. Inadequate street lighting at bus-stops, lack of surveillance on services, inconsistency in the provision of safe cycling routes, and the prevalence of attacks on women when traveling alone can create an association of harm with the use of public transport²⁶. Additionally, in rural areas the lack of frequency in public transport timetables negatively impacts the buy-in necessary for a successful transition to greener living. These elements can push passengers to opt-out for personal and private transport.

Therefore, as the transport sector combines opportunities for both decarbonization and sustainable development, it is of great concern that a significant section of society face such obstacles in accessing it. Considering differences in travel behaviour can greatly boost the use of public transport, or of sustainable transport alternatives like bike-sharing schemes. In addition, a gender-conscious and safe transport infrastructure improves mobility not only for women, but especially for older people and children, as explained through the study²⁷ of the German environment agency (UBA) on the just transformation in mobility.

The 2020 Civitas policy analysis²⁸ provides insightful evidences and deepens the understanding of the role of women in sustainable mobility: “[Women and girls] appear to be more sensitive to environmental risks and more prepared to make the behavioural changes to sustain significant climate change mitigation and adaptation policies.” Gender mobility data is mentioned as key in the EU for developing gender-tailored mobility services.

As an example, the recent strategic document Transport Policy of the Czech Republic for 2021 - 2027 considers specific needs of different groups, including gender identities and integrating the lens of gender equality. The importance of using different kinds of transportation and its connectivity in the Czech Republic is rising. This is especially beneficial for women who often use public transportation and might combine different kinds of transportation on their shorter and multiple journeys during the day.

Moreover, sustainable and secure transportation is crucial in enabling women and girls access to economic and social opportunities, leading to more inclusive societies and equitable growth. As an example, the Gender impact assessment of the Finnish Climate Energy strategy identified an increase in the share of cycling and to promote remote working as the most neutral means of reducing emissions in private transport from a gender equality perspective. Men with high income benefit more from various purchase and conversion subsidies than other groups, while the benefits of supporting public transportation are more pronounced for working-age women living in urban areas²⁹.

²⁶ *Unsafe in the City*, Plan International report 2018. Their survey of young women in Lima, Madrid ,Sydney, Kampala and Delhi found public transport to be ‘a problem spot’ in tackling the harassment and assault of women.

²⁷ https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/1410/publikationen/pp_verkehrswende_fuer_alle_englisch_bf.pdf

²⁸ https://civitas.eu/sites/default/files/civ_pol-an2_m_web.pdf

²⁹ https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163440/TEM_2021_52.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Although solutions to the technical and planning issues mentioned above are necessary for developing gender-responsive mobility services, a wider societal change and the empowerment of women is required to counteract fears and develop the necessary public trust.

ii. LULUCF

The potential of gender-responsive decisions in the food sector is also a substantial lever to reduce GHG emissions. For example a study³⁰ states that if men in Germany were to adapt their eating habits to those of women (less meat, more fruit and vegetables instead), an area of about 15,000 km² could be freed up at home and abroad and about 15 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions and 60,000 tonnes of ammonia could be avoided. This situation has been observed also in the Czech Republic, where a vast majority of women (49% – 60%) consumed fruit and vegetables on a daily basis compared to 32% – 40% of men³¹.

Not only on the fork end, but also on farms, choices are linked to gender identities. The latest Gender impact assessment³² of the Finnish climate and energy strategy identified that women farmers are more concerned about climate change and are more in favour of climate action than men. However, the potential for women to act as agents of change in this field may be lost out on due to the degree to which they own land. For example, Sweden has undergone a mapping of land ownership that shows that men in Sweden own 2.5 times more land than women³³. This may also affect the ability to adapt to climate change.

iii. Energy

Sex-disaggregated data is to be found in the energy sector in the works of IRENA and IEA. Notable are the employment ratios in the renewable energy branch compared to the whole sector. Renewable energy employs about 32% women, compared to 22% in the energy sector overall. Still, within renewables, women's participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics jobs is far lower than in administrative jobs (IRENA, 2019³⁴). Interestingly, perceived inequality in salaries is lower in the wind sector than in the economy overall.

The energy sector remains one of the least gender diverse sectors and closing this gender gap will be vital as women are key drivers of innovative and inclusive solutions (IEA³⁵).

Italy and Sweden co-founded with Canada the Clean Energy, Education and Empowerment (C3E³⁶) initiative in 2010, and lead the Workstream with IEA (Workstream coordinator) on knowledge and data collection with support from the International Energy Agency Tracking

³⁰ https://www.dbu.de/708ibook68426_33154_705.html, Ernährung: Frauen schützen die Umwelt mehr. Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 2012.

³¹ See page 9 <https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/151439704/30000420k02.pdf/f7d7e90a-7e69-4680-8f4f-08aeb3245553?version=1.3>

³² https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163440/TEM_2021_52.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

³³ <https://www.ownershift.se/report>

³⁴ <https://www.irena.org/publications/2019/Jan/Renewable-Energy-A-Gender-Perspective>

³⁵ <https://www.iea.org/topics/energy-and-gender>

³⁶ https://nachhaltigwirtschaften.at/resources/iea_pdf/reports/C3E-Brochure_Gender-Equality-in-the-Energy-Sector_MAY-2019.pdf

efforts to support gender diverse and inclusive clean energy transitions. Other EU MS later joined the Initiative: Austria, Czech Republic and Finland. The IEA will in the future focus on data related to indicators for energy sector decision-making (corporate boards), employment (wage gaps) and entrepreneurship (start-ups, access to venture capital) within the G7.

C. Opportunities for women

Oftentimes the benefit of mainstreaming gender equality runs both ways: it leverages the full potential of climate change policies and strengthens gender equality. For example, by designing a bike infrastructure that is gender-responsive and fits all users' transportation needs, we simultaneously advance equal and accessible participation in society while maximising the impact of our transport policies. This example is also valid for other groups such as disabled people³⁷ or older people.

i. Job creation

The climate transition is an opportunity to expand sustainable and job-intensive economic activity. There is significant potential in global markets for low-emission technologies, sustainable products and services³⁸. Likewise, the circular economy offers great potential for new activities and jobs. A gender-responsive approach in this area can increase the level of employment and access to quality jobs for women.

The Gender Impact Assessment of the 101 policy measures in the six sectors - energy production, construction and buildings, transport, industry, the service sector and agriculture - proposed for Finland's updated Climate and Energy Strategy states that the proposed policy measures are mainly targeted at male-dominated sectors and involve technical solutions that are of interest to men. In male-dominated sectors, the overall impact of the measures on economic activity and employment is positive. The most significant negative impacts focus on female-dominated service sectors and these should be taken into consideration more widely in the climate policy. The impact of the proposed policy measures on the services sector highlights two aspects: climate policy budgeting must be gender-sensitive and, more importantly, it is essential to break down gender segregation in sectors that benefit from climate action.

The EU will need more workers in the science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) fields for the green transition, while there is already a shortage and women are under-represented. Overall, employment in the green energy sector is growing. Thus, currently changes and benefits have a greater impact on men than women. Changes in the sector and the increase in small-scale production can help reduce gender segregation in the energy sector and increase the participation of women in energy-related consumption decisions.

³⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/jan/02/cambridge-disabled-people-cycling-rolling-walking-stick>

³⁸ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608867/IPOL_STU\(2019\)608867_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608867/IPOL_STU(2019)608867_EN.pdf)

It should be noted that The European Institute for Gender Equality³⁹ estimates that if we were to reduce the gender gap in education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, we would create economic growth with more than 1 million jobs by 2050 and an increase in GDP in the long term (up to 820 billion Euro by 2050).

ii. Bilateral cooperation with the EU and its Member States

In their funding instruments to the implementation of the UNFCCC, the EU and its Member States contribute to the Gender Action Plan (GAP) through bilateral cooperation programmes. The priority areas of the Lima Work Programme on Gender and its Gender Action Plan (GAP), established in 2017 and enhanced in 2019, provide guidance for the action areas of the guidelines for bilateral funding programmes, including gender strategies. In addition, such bilateral programmes are guided by the Paris Agreement, which calls on contributing countries to promote gender equality and empowerment of women in all climate change activities.

Gender equality is both a priority and a cross-cutting theme across development cooperation programmes of many EU Member States. Just to cite two examples, in 2021 the Belgian Development Cooperation set out a thematic climate strategy for the Sahel region. This 5-year strategy stipulated that each intervention implementing the strategy should concretely contribute to gender equality. Similarly, gender equality and the human rights of girls and women is a long-standing core priority in both Danish development efforts and Danish humanitarian work. This is reflected in Denmark's new development strategy "The World we share" the importance of climate and gender equality is also highlighted.

iii. Networking

Working together with peers and exchanging on how to be empowered is another opportunity for women and girls. For example, Women Mobilize Women is a network of female change makers from all over the world, seeking to actively transform the mobility sector to become more diverse and sustainable. Women Mobilize Women aims to raise awareness to the topic of gender and transport amongst planners and decision-makers in the transport sector. Launched by the Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative ([TUMI](#)) and supported by Germany, TUMI publishes the "Remarkable Women in Transport" among various activities. The publication provides concrete examples of the role of women as actors of change in the transport sector: highly qualified women transport experts and the daily work of women who transform urban mobility presented their work as agents of change.

D. Governance structure and policy framework established at EU level for gender mainstreaming, gender equality and empowerment of women

Acknowledging the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change, the need for more gender equality and efforts towards SDG5 as well as awareness about the untapped potential of gender equality for climate mitigation, resilience and protection, the EU and its Member States

³⁹ Study and work in the EU: set apart by gender Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States (EIGE).

have developed a policy framework to deliver on gender mainstreaming. This framework reflects the importance of gender equality as a human rights issue, as recognised in the various instruments protecting human rights. For instance, human rights provisions relating to gender equality are to be found inter alia in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR), in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the European Social Charter (ESC) and in various other international treaties that are being implemented by the EU and/or its Member states. The rights enshrined in these instruments are successfully implemented within the legal system of the EU and its Member States.

Building on the EU's domestic efforts and international support for mainstreaming gender considerations into national adaptation planning and action⁴⁰, the EU and its Member States underline the importance of getting the right legislative and policy framework in place and the collection of sex-disaggregated data to ensure gender responsive implementation. This section provides an overview of the governance structure and policy framework established at EU-level relating to gender mainstreaming, gender equality and empowerment of women, and the steps taken on sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis.

i. Leadership in the EU Governance for gender mainstreaming

The European Commission currently led by the first-ever female Commission President, Ms. Ursula von der Leyen, has put the focus on equality with the first stand-alone portfolio of a Commissioner dedicated exclusively to equality. This portfolio was taken on by Ms. Helena Dalli at the end of 2019, bringing forward several policies to strengthen equality at large in the EU, including gender equality.

With the support of the Task Force on Equality⁴¹ created at the beginning of the mandate, the Commissioner's task is to integrate an equality perspective in all EU policies and major initiatives. In addition to supporting Commissioner Dalli in her daily work and contributing to the delivery of concrete initiatives promoting equality, the Task Force on Equality plays a key role in mainstreaming equality in all policies, from their design to their implementation. This includes providing strategic guidance, designing a toolbox for policy makers, organising trainings and facilitating the work on equality undertaken by different services. The Task Force pursues an intersectional approach to equality mainstreaming to ensure that the different aspects of people's personal characteristics and identities are duly considered. The Task Force on Equality is composed of representatives of all Commission services and the European External Action Service and is supported by a Secretariat based in the Secretariat General of the European Commission.

⁴⁰ Please refer to EU and its Member States submission on this topic:
<https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/Documents/201907161515---FI-07-16%20EU%20Submission%20Gender%20Adaptation.pdf>

⁴¹https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/2019-2024/dalli/announcements/union-equality-first-year-actions-and-achievements_en

ii. Gender equality in EU framework

The following policies brought forward to support gender equality in relation to climate change complement the above governance structure:

- **[Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025:](#)**

On 5 March 2020, the European Commission published "A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025". The Gender Equality Strategy aims at "achieving a gender equal Europe where gender-based violence, discrimination and structural inequality between women and men are a thing of the past".

The Strategy pursues a dual approach of gender mainstreaming combined with targeted actions, and intersectionality is a horizontal principle for its implementation. The Commission therefore commits to integrating a gender perspective in all major Commission initiatives during the current mandate. This includes the policies under the 'European Green Deal', which represents the new growth strategy for Europe as a response to climate change, and the plan to make the EU's economy green. It aims at achieving climate neutrality by 2050, as well as protecting the European Union's natural capital, and the health and well-being of citizens from environment-related risks and impacts.

The Gender Equality Strategy mentions the Building Renovation Wave⁴² and the EU Strategy on Climate Adaptation as examples of policies under the European Green Deal that need a gender perspective because they can impact women differently to men. Addressing the gender dimension can have a key role in leveraging the full potential of green policies. The Strategy requires the preparation of an *Annual report on equality between women and men in the EU* to take stock of progress made in implementing the strategy.

- **[EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change:](#)**

Adopted on 24 February 2021, the Strategy recognises the knowledge gaps in adaptation, calls to draw on science to improve our understanding of the nexus between climate hazards and socio-economic vulnerabilities and inequalities. The Strategy recognises that unequal exposure and vulnerability to climate impacts of different regions and socio-economic groups worsens pre-existing inequalities and vulnerabilities. The impacts of climate change are not neutral. The Strategy pays particular attention to ensuring that adaptation measures need to consider different adaptive capabilities of men and women, older people, persons with disabilities, displaced persons, and socially marginalised.

- **[Action plan on gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action 2021-2025 \(GAP III\)⁴³:](#)**

On 25 November 2020, the European Commission adopted the GAP III, welcomed through Presidency Conclusions by 24 Member States. The action plan makes the promotion of gender

⁴² https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficient-buildings/renovation-wave_en

⁴³ JOINT STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Objectives and Indicators to frame the implementation of the Gender Action Plan III (2021-25) Accompanying the document Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council GENDER ACTION

equality a priority of all external policies and actions; offers a roadmap for working together with stakeholders at national, regional and multilateral level; calls for the institutions to lead by example, and; ensures the transparency of the results. It also aims to accelerate progress by focusing on six key areas of engagement, one of which is the green and digital transformation.

Regarding climate change, the action plan dedicates a section to *Addressing the challenges and harnessing the opportunities offered by the green transition and the digital transformation*, and establishes concrete objectives and indicators to monitor the progress of the implementation of the actions related to climate change and environment. The GAP III outlines specific priorities and actions and sends a clear message on the importance of mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment into all areas of EU external action and is based on a gender-responsive, human rights-based and intersectional approach.

- [European Climate Pact⁴⁴](#).

Launched in December 2020, the European Climate Pact is an EU-wide initiative inviting people, communities and organisations to participate in climate action and build a greener Europe. The Pact invites persons, communities and organisations to (i) connect and share knowledge; (ii) learn about climate change and (iii) develop, implement and scale up solutions. As a result, the Climate Pact is an especially suitable instrument to strengthen the evidence base and understanding of the differentiated impacts of climate change and the role of women as agents of climate action.

The Climate Pact will mainstream equality at large by:

- Committing to diversity and inclusiveness, as one of the six values of the Pact. This commitment includes bringing down barriers resulting from personal characteristics, such as gender, age and disabilities.
- Encouraging actions that consider social sustainability, social well-being, inclusion, equality, diversity, accessibility and affordability for all and that aim to reach the most vulnerable individuals and areas.
- Striving for gender balance amongst Ambassadors.
- Making green skills development programmes and initiatives equally available to everyone and made accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Promoting green mobility that leaves no one behind, by addressing specific transport needs of women, the accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities and older persons.
- Ensuring the accessibility of communication materials and IT tools developed.

PLAN III: AN AMBITIOUS VISION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT FOR EU EXTERNAL ACTION (SWD/2020/284 final).

⁴⁴ COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS, European Climate Pact, Brussels, 9.12.2020 (COM(2020) 788 final).

Additionally, as established in the European Climate Law⁴⁵ (Article 9), the Commission will foster the diffusion of science-based information about the social and gender equality aspects of climate change, including through the Climate Pact.

iii. EU Member States' policy framework

EU Member States also take action in mainstreaming gender equality in all their policy fields, from designing policies to decision-making.

The authorities in Finland must ascertain ex-ante what the gender impact is of activities and decisions, prevent direct and indirect discrimination, actively promote gender equality. The Equality Act and the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality⁴⁶ entrusts the authorities with planning their own initiatives for gender mainstreaming. All ministries have set up equality working groups gender mainstreaming plans. Finnish guidelines for drafting legislation stipulate that gender impacts are assessed in law drafting. The guidelines of the Ministry of Finance for drawing up budget proposals include a request to present a summary of activities with significant gender impact⁴⁷.

In Sweden the proceedings are similar, with a Gender Equality section at the Ministry of Employment and gender equality coordinators in all ministry departments, gender responsive budgeting⁴⁸, a Gender Equality Agency tasked with analysing and monitoring progress on the gender policy goals, and a government programme for gender mainstreaming in government agencies and universities⁴⁹, and last but not least – the first ever feminist government⁵⁰ and feminist foreign and trade policy frameworks⁵¹. Sweden is also in the process of adapting a strategy for how to gender mainstream the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

The German Federal Government's cabinet decision from 1999 introduced the political requirement of gender equality as a universal guiding principle for government action. Accordingly, all ministries of the federal government must take the guiding principle of gender equality into account in all political, standard-setting and administrative measures of the government. The German Ministry for the Environment, Natural Conservation and Nuclear Safety developed a gender strategy concerning "gender justice and environmental policy". The aim is to integrate a gender perspective into the ministries' work so that environmental protection, nature conservation and climate action become more effective. This includes, for example, a gender-differentiated regulatory impact assessment as well as guides for gender mainstreaming within the ministries' environmental research activities. In addition, a division of the ministry responsible for anchoring gender issues in international environmental policies, was created.

⁴⁵ Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 ('European Climate Law') (OJ L 243 9.7.2021 p. 1).

⁴⁶ https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162844/STM_2021_10_J.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

⁴⁷ <https://stm.fi/en/gender-equality/legislation>

⁴⁸ <https://www.government.se/articles/2019/10/gender-responsive-budgeting/>

⁴⁹ <https://www.government.se/articles/2020/04/gender-mainstreaming-in-government-agencies/>

⁵⁰ <https://www.government.se/government-policy/a-feminist-government/>

⁵¹ <https://www.government.se/government-policy/feminist-foreign-policy/>

The Danish Gender Equality Act from 2013 states that each minister is responsible for gender equality within its own area, including gender mainstreaming and impact assessment of policies and activities. Accordingly, the Danish Minister for Gender Equality has the coordinating responsibility, but all Ministries must work towards gender equality. This means that during the preparation and approval of the annual legislation program of Parliament, every bill will be subject to a test of relevancy (Danish: “relevanstest”) by the Ministry with the purview to assess whether a legislative proposal could have any implications on gender equality or not. If needed, the bill will also be gender mainstreamed. The test of relevancy and gender mainstreaming consists of elaborating the data concerning gender disparity, as well as illuminating and assessing whether possible gender disparities between the men and women, and the extent hereof, have actual gender implications. When a bill has been through the test of relevancy and gender mainstreaming, the consequences of the bill on gender equality is summarized and written into the bill itself under the bill’s “comments-section”, so that politicians are aware of gendered implications. Gender mainstreaming, therefore, ensures that policy-makers are aware of potential gendered-differences before the bill becomes legislation.

iv. Gender data in the context of climate policies to ensure sustainable trajectories

Solid research on the potential interlinkages between gender and climate change is a pre-requisite to address the gender dimension of the policies relevant for climate change. As examined throughout this document on the different aspects of gender mainstreaming, particularly regarding differentiated impacts of climate change and the role of women as agents of change, gender analysis - or adequate data on which to base it - is currently not always available at EU-level. As a result, the European Commission has sought the collaboration of the European Institute on Gender Equality (EIGE)⁵² to gather data and carry out studies on this topic. As first step EIGE analysed the possibility of further disaggregating the database on women and men in decision-making and the existing databases from Eurostat, and implemented the options available. Under its work programme for 2021-2024, prepared with the Commission’s input, the European Institute on Gender Equality (EIGE) proposed to research key topics under the Gender Equality Strategy, including the Green Deal. Among others, EIGE proposed to:

- prepare a research report on the topic to support the Presidencies of the Council of the EU;
- focus on climate change and the environment in the Gender Equality Index 2023;
- and develop a communications package on the gender perspective of the European Green deal, based on EIGE’s research findings and statistical data.

Member States can complement this framing with national gender strategies and action plans. The aim is for ministries in charge of climate change issues to provide adequate arrangements for a meaningful consideration of gender aspects in climate policies, as well as gender equality in the transformation towards climate neutrality. Research often helps identifying levers for more gender responsiveness, for example through the development of gender impact

⁵² <https://eige.europa.eu/>

assessment tools. These tools have been tailored sometimes to specific sectors. Germany developed and tested guidance for a gender impact assessment (GIA) to assess gender equality impacts of climate policy, including in the area of adaptation to climate change. With this Guidance, the effects of climate policy projects on gender equality can be examined with the aim of improving gender justice in climate policy. The related publication is available in German, an extended summary in English has been included⁵³. These gender impact assessments have the potential to provide further evidence and updated data on the gender differentiated impacts of climate change.

With the aim to deepen identification and analysis of gender-differentiated data, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland launched a Nordic project with the following objectives:

- i) to analyse how climate policies affect gender equality, and vice versa in the Nordic countries and thereby how to improve the development of climate policies and integration of a gender perspective into policies and programmes on climate change;
- ii) to identify what sector inclusion and data are relevant to enable an efficient implementation of gender into climate change policies;
- iii) to get an overview of participation of women in decision-making processes on climate change.

⁵³ (pages 29-43) https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/sites/default/files/medien/1410/publikationen/2020-02-06_texte_30-2020_genderaspekte-klimapolitik.pdf