



GENDER MAINSTREAMING ACTIVITIES AT THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Introduction

Historical and institutional background

Born from the need for a new approach to policy-making that takes into account both women's and men's interests and concerns, in order to design better policies, the concept of *gender mainstreaming* was first introduced at the 1985 United Nations World Conference on Women in Nairobi. It was consequently introduced as a strategy in international gender equality policy through the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the 1995 Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing.

The Council of Europe was instrumental in developing the concept of gender mainstreaming from the 1990's onwards, including through the establishment of a Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming in 1995, which prepared a conceptual framework and a methodology for mainstreaming the gender equality perspective in an effective and visible way (1998). This work led to the adoption of the definition of gender mainstreaming used within the Council of Europe and by many other organisations and countries:

“Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels at all stages, by the actors involved in policy making.”¹

In 1998, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe also adopted a Recommendation on Gender mainstreaming.² Since then, the gender mainstreaming strategy has been an integral part of the work and activities of the Council of Europe to promote the full realisation of gender equality. This is part of the “dual approach” generally used in both national gender equality policies and in international organisations, which combines a) specific policies and actions for the advancement of women, including positive action, and b) gender mainstreaming.

Giving institutional strength to gender mainstreaming in the Council of Europe

If properly understood and implemented, gender equality mainstreaming is a transformative approach with a great potential for social change. Today, there is a wide consensus about the effectiveness of the “dual approach” to make progress towards effective equality between women and men. Even if the understanding and implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy need to be improved amongst policy and decision makers, the last decade has witnessed significant developments.

The Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)17 on gender equality standards and mechanisms gives detailed instructions to member states, which are required to “give priority to the development, adoption and enforcement of effective national gender equality legislation, **and to the integration of a gender perspective into all areas of governance, both in laws and policies.**” This Recommendation calls on member states to **adopt specific measures and integrate a gender equality approach in a wide range of areas** such as private and family life; education, science and culture; economic life; political and private life; reconciliation of private/family life and professional/public life; social protection; health, including sexual and reproductive matters; media; trafficking in human beings; conflicts and post-conflict situations; and as regards the specific situation of vulnerable groups exposed to multiple discrimination.

¹ Council of Europe: Gender Mainstreaming, [Conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices. Final report of Activities of the Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming](#) (EG-S-MS), Strasbourg 1998.

² Recommendation No R (98) 14 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on gender mainstreaming.

The 7th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Equality between women and men “Gender Equality: bridging the gap between *de jure* and *de facto* gender equality” (Baku, 2010) reiterated the commitment of member states to the realisation of real equality between women and men through, among other measures, “**adopting and implementing gender mainstreaming strategies, including gender budgeting**”.

Relevant Council of Europe conventions give additional impetus to gender mainstreaming and provide guidance for its implementation in different fields. Article 6 of the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention, 2011) specifically requires parties “to include a gender perspective in the implementation and evaluation of the impact of the provisions of this convention and to promote and effectively implement policies of equality between women and men and the empowerment of women.” Similarly, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (2005) recognises that trafficking in human beings is a heavily gendered phenomenon and the convention therefore contains strong references to gender equality and gender mainstreaming including in Article 1 (Purpose), Articles 5 and 6, and Chapter III (Measures to protect and promote the rights of victims, guaranteeing gender equality).

Gender mainstreaming was reinforced at the Council of Europe with the launching of the Transversal Programme on Gender Equality (2012) and the adoption of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017, which includes the realisation of gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures as one of its five strategic objectives. Furthermore, the appointment of 50 Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs), in the Organisation’s intergovernmental and institutional bodies (including in nine monitoring mechanisms), has led to more sustained efforts to introduce a gender equality perspective in all policies and at all levels of the Council of Europe.

The Recommendations adopted by the Committee of Ministers regarding gender mainstreaming in different areas (Part 1 of this document) and specific initiatives undertaken by the intergovernmental structures and institutional bodies of the Council of Europe (Part 2), provide useful instruments and benchmarks to support member states in their efforts to implement a gender mainstreaming strategy and achieve gender equality in policy fields as diverse as media, youth or drug policies.

The integration of a gender equality perspective is also particularly relevant in relation to policies of the Council of Europe addressing the situation of different groups of people in society, notably with regards, to children’s rights, LGBTI persons, migrants, women and men from ethnic and other minorities including Roma³ people, or persons with disabilities (section g. of this document). Gender mainstreaming in these activities of the Council of Europe should allow for the needs of women and girls belonging to these groups to be taken into account and for issues of multiple discrimination to be better addressed.⁴

Information on the gender mainstreaming initiatives and activities carried out by different Council of Europe bodies is available under the gender mainstreaming section of the Council of Europe website on Gender Equality (www.coe.int/equality) and, in some cases, on the websites of the relevant bodies.

³ The terms “Roma” and “Travellers” are being used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term “Gens du voyage”, as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.

⁴ See in particular Part 2, point f of this document for specific policies in this regard.

1. GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN AREAS ADDRESSED BY COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS' RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee of Ministers has adopted Recommendations in four areas, namely **education** (Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2007\)13 on gender mainstreaming in education](#)), **health** (Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2008\)1 on the inclusion of gender differences in health policy](#)), **media** (Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2013\)1 on gender equality and media](#)) and most recently, **sport** (Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2015\)2 on gender mainstreaming in sport](#)) and the **audio-visual sector** ([Recommendation CM/Rec\(2017\)9 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender equality in the audio-visual sector](#)). This is a promising development as such recommendations should set the basis and provide the necessary tools and incentives to integrate a gender equality perspective in all activities of the Organisation and of member states in these fields.

a. Gender mainstreaming in the field of education

Gender-specific aspects of this sector:

Today, despite progress, there are still differences and inequalities between girls and boys with respect to school organisation and curricula, teaching methods and materials, career guidance, teacher training and most aspects of education. In particular, the social roles associated with often stereotypical representations of femininity and masculinity are still replicated at school through gender-stereotypical treatment of girls and boys. It means that gender inequalities are partly produced by gender stereotypes present in the educational system itself. These inequalities in turn impact on women and men's employment situation and on all aspects of their participation in society. In particular, girls' academic success does not automatically lead to gender equality later in life, as illustrated by employment inequalities, the gender pay gap, inequalities in relation to care work⁵ or inequalities regarding participation in political and economic decision making. The educational sector plays a crucial role in shaping gender representations, attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, eradicating formal discrimination in the education system is a first step, but it should be accompanied by the integration of a gender equality perspective into all aspects of education. Making sure that the education system actively promotes real equality between women and men is the building block of gender-equal societies.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of education

A report on [Promoting gender mainstreaming in schools](#)⁶ was prepared in 2004, giving guidelines for the development of a top-down strategy to promote gender mainstreaming in schools. The 2007 Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on gender mainstreaming in education⁷ looks at all aspects of education and suggests actions in all areas pertaining to the organisation and content of education. An expert [study on combating gender stereotypes in education](#) was published in 2011, focusing on the historical and analytical aspects of gender stereotypes in education. A first [Monitoring report of the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in education](#) was produced in 2012. The report concluded that "(...) *Although the goal of providing equal opportunities for women and men exists almost everywhere, fewer countries have identified explicitly the aim of reaching gender equality in terms of outcomes or have successfully implemented the gender mainstreaming strategy in the field of education. Although the list of potential policy measures aiming to challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes is long, only a limited number of countries have put many of these into action*⁸."

⁵ Women still carry the majority of household tasks and care for dependant persons and the evolution towards a better sharing between women and men has been very slow in Europe over the years.

⁶ Council of Europe, Final report of the Group of Specialists on Promoting Gender Mainstreaming in Schools, EG-S-GS (2004) RAP FIN.

⁷ Council of Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender mainstreaming in education.

⁸ Council of Europe, Report on the implementation of Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2007\)13](#) by member States, CM(2012)38.

Combating gender stereotypes in education is one of the priorities of the [Council of Europe Strategy on Gender Equality 2014-2017](#). A [conference on Combating Gender Stereotypes in and through Education](#) was organised in Helsinki in 2014, followed by the publication of a comprehensive [conference report](#). A [Compilation of good practices from member states to promote an education free from gender stereotypes](#) and a [Factsheet](#) on the topic were also published in 2015.

Member states are at various stages of introducing measures in order to integrate a gender equality perspective in their educational system. The challenge is now to actively use the tools produced to integrate a gender equality perspective in *all* Council of Europe activities in the field of education: from higher education to teachers' training, education for democratic citizenship and human rights, history teaching or language policy.

b. Gender mainstreaming in the field of media

Gender-specific aspects of this sector:

In European societies, media plays a major role both as a source of information and as a shaper of attitudes, opinions and behaviours. There is a gender equality dimension in questions related to media as a profession and in relation to media content. Media can either hinder or hasten structural change towards gender equality. This is true with regards to women's under-representation in media ownership, information production and journalism, in newsrooms and in management posts. It is even more blatant as regards women's presence in media content, from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective: women are under-represented in the media and when they are, it is rarely in an expert capacity and some fields are still very male dominated (e.g. front-page stories, politics and government, economy).⁹ In addition, the persistence of sexist stereotypes in media content, the prevalence of sexist hate speech in social media, the scarcity of counter-stereotypes and the often sensationalist media coverage of issues such as violence against women are particularly telling. The integration of a gender equality perspective in all aspects of media policy can contribute to better quality media and to a more accurate reflection of different social phenomena. This also leads to the promotion of equality between women and men through challenging gender stereotypes and content of violent nature in media output.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of media

The Council of Europe started its work on equality between women and men in the media, with a Council of Ministers Recommendation in 1984 and the subsequent adoption of different texts by the Parliamentary Assembly. The 2011 [Recommendation on a new notion of media](#)¹⁰ integrates several gender equality-related measures. In 2013, the [Committee of Ministers adopted a Recommendation on gender equality and media](#),¹¹ spelling out 16 measures to be implemented in six areas: gender equality policy and legislation, indicators, provision of information and promotion of good practices, accountability channels, research and publication and media literacy and active citizenship. A comprehensive [Handbook to support the implementation of this Recommendation](#) by member states was published in 2015, including relevant examples of measures taken at the national level.

In 2012, the [Equality in the Media - Guide for Journalists](#) was conceived as a practical tool for journalists to better take into account diversity and equality between women and men in their work.¹² The handbook "[Women and Journalists First, A challenge to media professionals to realise democracy in practice, quality](#)

⁹ In 2015, women represented only 25% of news subjects and 17% of experts present in the media in Europe, [Global Media Monitoring Project, Report for Europe](#), 2015.

¹⁰ Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on a new notion of media.

¹¹ Recommendation CM/Rec(2013)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on gender equality and media.

¹² Produced in the framework of the [Media against Racism in Sport Programme](#).

in journalism and an end to gender stereotyping" (2013) was prepared for journalists and media professionals to re-think their professional practice on the representation of women. The Conference "Media and the Image of Women", held in Amsterdam in 2013 and followed by the publication of a conference report, aimed at drawing attention to existing standards, facilitating debate and making recommendations for further action. Combating gender stereotypes and sexism is one of the objectives of the Council of Europe Strategy on Gender Equality 2014-2017 and a Compilation of good practices from member states on Gender Equality and the Media at National Level as well as a Factsheet on the topic were made available in 2014.

[Recommendation \(2016\)4 on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors](#) stresses the need for a gender-sensitive approach for all issues related to the protection of journalists and for "urgent, resolute and systemic responses" to the (sexual) violence and gender-related dangers female journalists and other female media actors are confronted with. In 2016, the **Steering Committee on Media and Information Society Meetings (CDMSI)** set up a the Committee of Experts on Media Pluralism and Transparency of Media Ownership (MSI-MED), which is preparing a feasibility study on a standard-setting instrument on media coverage of elections with a specific focus on gender equality. The study is scheduled for adoption at the CDMSI meeting in December 2017, which will also discuss the possibility of preparing a CM recommendation on this topic. The website of the media and Internet division has a [section on gender equality](#).

c. Gender mainstreaming in the field of sport

Sport and gender equality are inter-related in different manners. Sport is a social and cultural process, in which social constructions of masculinity and femininity play a key role, whereby for example sport is traditionally associated with 'masculinity' and sport practiced by women is often less valued. In addition, because sport is extremely popular, the images associated with it have a great impact on public attitudes and opinions. Sport also contributes to fostering good health and well-being, it gives access to public spaces, and it facilitates the development of new skills, and allows the exercise of freedom of expression and movement. However, gender inequalities persist in all areas pertaining to sports namely, in access to and participation in sports and recreational activities, in an unequal access to resources, salaries, financial incentives, and appropriate sports facilities, as well as in the organisational cultures of sporting bodies, where women are seriously under-represented. Other issues concern the lack of gender awareness of sport-related policies, coaching and training, gender-based violence in sport, and the fact that media coverage of sport can contribute to perpetuate gender stereotypes. More research into the topic, integrating a gender mainstreaming approach into all sport-related policies, including in federations, as well as positive measures to address the many gender gaps in the field of sport are necessary in order to achieve *de facto* equality between women and men in and through sport.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of sport

The issue of gender equality and sport had been addressed in several Council of Europe declarations and documents,¹³ before the report "Gender equality and (elite) Sport" and a Handbook on good practices regarding gender equality in sports were published in 2011. In 2015, the Committee of Ministers adopted a comprehensive Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in sport¹⁴ addressed to governments, sports' organisations, media and other international organisations. The Recommendation provides suggestions regarding legislation; policies and programmes; formal and non-formal physical education; combating gender-based violence; awareness raising and training; data collection and research, monitoring and reporting; non-sexist language, as well as grants, pays, prize money and bonuses. This

¹³ Athens Declaration on Women and Sport of 2001, Berlin Declaration adopted during the 5th International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport in May 2013.

¹⁴ Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender mainstreaming in sport.

Recommendation now needs to be implemented by member states. A survey to monitor the implementation of the Recommendation was commissioned and a conference entitled “Implementing Gender Mainstreaming in Sport”, was organised by the Council of Europe’s **Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)** and European Women in Sports in November 2015. Through a series of presentations and discussions, the conference looked at the implementation of the Committee of Ministers.

In 2016, EPAS implemented the project “Balance in Sport (BIS) – Tools to implement Gender Equality”, which aimed to identify and test gender equality indicators in sports. The aim was to introduce a uniform approach to data collection on gender equality and the impact of policy design on redressing persisting gender inequalities in the sector. The project looked at gender inequalities in different aspects of sports, including leadership, coaching, media, participation and violence. A follow-up BIS2 project is being prepared and will be launched in 2018, focusing on a broad data collection campaign on gender equality in sport and supporting member states and relevant stakeholder in their policies-making in this area.

d. Gender mainstreaming in the audio-visual sector

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

A 2014 study on female characters in popular films¹⁵ showed that across the films assessed, only 31% of all speaking characters were female and that sexualisation was the standard for female characters. In Europe, approximately one in every ten films is directed by a woman. Film school participation is relatively equal between the sexes, but women face barriers in being employed as directors and inequality in employment spans across all professions in the audio-visual sector - from video game programming, to lead roles in films, to ageism against female TV presenters.¹⁶

Gender inequalities and gender mainstreaming in the audio-visual sector implies addressing women’s limited access and visibility in the professions (e.g. unequal access to decision making, to funding, lack of support for women-created content, pay inequalities) and looking at on-screen content from a gender equality perspective in order to tackle gender stereotypes and sexism in the area.

Eurimages (the European Cinema Support Fund) has addressed gender equality in the European film industry since 2012. A Gender Study Group was set up to address the presence of women in the cinema sector at national and European levels and to analyse the under-representation of women among eligible projects for Eurimages funding. Eurimages is collecting information on the “gender of the project” and on the content of the scripts submitted to Eurimages (the “Bechdel test”¹⁷). The latest Eurimages study on the projects submitted showed a small improvement: women were still under-represented but on average, in 2015, 27% of submitted projects were directed by a woman (17% in 2012).¹⁸ Women were also less represented on screen than men (62% men in the first three roles of castings)¹⁹.

In October 2015, the Eurimages Board of Management adopted a Strategy for gender equality 2016-2017, with three strategic objectives: 1) Mainstream a gender equality approach in all policies and measures, 2) Combat gender stereotypes and sexism, and 3) Prevent and combat violence against women. In March 2016, an annual prize for Best Female Director, the Audentia Award was launched at the Istanbul Film

¹⁵ Gender Bias without Borders, an investigation of female characters in popular films across 11 countries, by the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, with support from UN Women and The Rockefeller Foundation, 2014.

¹⁶ Information from the European Women’s Audiovisual Network (EWA).

¹⁷ The Bechdel test is a test of female characterisation in movies. Passing the Bechdel test requires that the movie [media]: 1) has at least two women characters; 2) who talk to each other; 3) about something other than a man. The Bechdel test is named after the American cartoonist Alison Bechdel, in whose comic strip Dykes to Watch Out For it first appeared in 1985.

¹⁸ Eurimages Strategy 2016-2017 on Equality between Women and Men in the European Film Industry.

¹⁹ Reflection on "Gender"- Data study for 2014 and evolution for 2012-2014, Eurimages.

Festival. The prize will be awarded at a different festival each year. Eurimages holds quarterly gender outreach meetings to focus on the state of play in gender equality issues in the host country and include discussions with local directors and producers. On 8 March 2017, Eurimages co-hosted a conference on gender inequality in the French film industry in Strasbourg. Eurimages is also developing indicators to look into the content of Eurimages eligible films (character's age, gender according to leading role, stereotypes and clichés) and plans to continue sharing best practices with European networks of national and regional film funds. In October 2017, Eurimages adopted a [new strategy to promote gender equality in the European film industry for the period 2018-2020 entitled "Aiming for 50/50 by 2020"](#). The Strategy's overall goal is to provide equal support for projects by women and by men film directors and to work to help increase gender equality in the film industry, both on and off-screen. Building on this comprehensive set of activities, a working group was set up in 2016 (under the supervision of the Steering Committee for Culture, Culture Heritage and Landscape) to prepare a [Committee of Ministers recommendation on gender equality in the audio-visual sector](#), which was adopted in September 2017. Eurimages has a [dedicated internet page on gender equality](#).

e. Gender mainstreaming in the field of health, including drug abuse policies

Gender-specific aspects of this sector:

Gender and sex both impact on women and men's health and access to health care. Gender roles and inequalities, including an unequal access to resources, as well as other social factors, produce different health risks and unequal access to health information, care, and services for women and men. Biological differences imply that women have particular health concerns and needs, especially related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Increasing evidence from all fields of health research (concerning both biomedical and psycho-social mechanisms) also shows that risk factors, clinical manifestation, causes, consequences and treatment of disease may differ between men and women. Prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, care-delivery and health promotion therefore need to be adapted to women's and men's differing needs, moving beyond a situation whereby men have traditionally been the only model. The effects of sex and gender differences must be taken into account in health policy planning, research, delivery of health services, and in the monitoring of these, in order to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of health policies and health care services for both women and men and in order to achieve gender equality in the health sector.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of health

The Committee of Ministers adopted a [Recommendation on the inclusion of gender differences in health policy](#) in 2008,²⁰ asking member states to *"make gender one of the priority areas of action in health through policies and strategies which address specific health needs of men and women and incorporate gender mainstreaming"*. The Recommendation also suggests the establishment of monitoring and evaluation frameworks on progress on gender mainstreaming in health policies.

Relevant committees (the [European Committee on Organ Transplantation](#), CD-P-TO, the [European Committee on Blood Transfusions](#) -CD-P-TS- and the [European Committee on Pharmaceuticals and Pharmaceutical Care](#) -CD-P-PH-) within the [European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines and Healthcare \(EDQM\)](#), at the Council of Europe, are starting to consider gender equality aspects in their work with the support of the Gender Equality Unit and the Senior Gender Equality Adviser. The [European Committee on Organ Transplantation](#) (CD-P-TO) is preparing brochure entitled 'Women's guide to informed choices regarding oocyte preservation, donation and treatment' aiming at increasing women's

²⁰ Committee of Ministers Recommendations on the inclusion of gender differences in health policies (CM/Rec(2008).

health literacy with regard to their reproductive capacities and to support informed decisions for donors and recipients of oocytes as well as for their partners and families. CD-P-TO also agreed on other gender equality-related activities, including sex-disaggregated data collection. The [European Committee on Pharmaceuticals and Pharmaceutical Care](#) (CD-P-PH) dedicated a session to gender mainstreaming in September 2017 and committed to include gender equality-related considerations in the draft resolution on Pharmaceutical Care that will be finalised in 2018-2019.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of drug abuse policies

In 2014, the **Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs (Pompidou Group)** produced a study on [“The gender dimension of non-medical use of prescription drugs in Europe and the Mediterranean region”](#). The study identifies women as a “high risk category for non-medical use of prescription drugs” and shows a link between women victims of violence and the abuse of prescription drugs. The study includes recommendations on the need to address the existing gaps in data and it shows that understanding gender differences in this area is a critical requirement for developing effective policy responses. This study was followed by a literature review and identification of lines of research on [“Violence \(experienced or perpetrated\) and psychoactive substance use among women in Europe and in the Mediterranean region”](#). The Pompidou Group organised a Conference on "Drugs, Women and Violence" (Rome, December 2015), a side-event on women and drugs at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) in April 2016, and published a report on [“Improving the management of violence experienced by women who use psychoactive substances”](#) (2016). The professionals interviewed for this report requested policy makers, first and foremost, to recognise the link between violence and psychoactive substance use, by including the question of violence in national drug strategies and programmes and by including the question of addiction to psychoactive substances in national strategies and programmes for combating violence against women. In January 2017, a [report was published on the development of specialised services for treating pregnant drug users in Egypt](#), as a part of a project carried out by the Pompidou Group in partnership with the Egyptian General Secretariat of Mental Health and Addiction Treatment. On 8 March 2017, [a seminar on women and drugs](#), was organised in Algeria at the initiative and in co-operation with the Office National de Lutte contre la Drogue et la Toxicomanie of Algeria. New activities are foreseen in 2017 on violence against women and rape drugs, in which 14 countries are participating. National data will be collected and an-online questionnaire will be launched. A seminar on [“Women and Drugs: from policy to good practice”](#) took place in Rome on 26-27 June, which addressed women in prison for drug-related offences, and the problems this creates for families. The Pompidou Group will also have a seminar in its newest member state, Mexico, towards the end of the year about women, drugs and violence. The work on gender in drugs policy in Egypt continues, including services for women in Cairo and elsewhere, and addressing the needs of pregnant women as drug users. The website of the Pompidou Group also has a [section on gender equality](#).

2. OTHER GENDER MAINSTREAMING INITIATIVES BY COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES

a. Gender mainstreaming in relation to arts and culture

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

Arts and culture plays a major role in popular culture and in shaping perception and attitudes related to gender roles. In the UK in 2010, 83% of the artists in Tate Modern were men,²¹ in France, in the 2015-2016 season, no national theatre was headed by a woman and 26% of performances were directed by women.²² In most countries, women are still hidden or trapped in stereotypical roles in history books and

²¹ Statistics gathered by the campaigning group [UK Feminista](#).

²² Study *"Où sont les femmes"*, saison 2015-2016, more information: <http://www.ousontlesfemmes.org/chiffres-cles-de-la-saison-2015-2016/>

they are largely absent from policies related to heritage (e.g. lack of visibility of female historical characters and of streets named after women).

Gender inequalities and gender mainstreaming in the cultural field relate to women's limited access and visibility in the professions and to women's access as members of the audience (in light of women's lesser financial resources and amount of leisure time). In addition, arts and culture are also shapers of attitudes, it is therefore crucial that policies in this areas actively promote a gender equality perspective, so as to give equal visibility to the contribution of both women and men to European history, culture and arts. From this point of view, it would be highly interesting to address gender stereotypes and sexism in the (visual) representation of women in arts, as well as in cultural symbols and cultural symbolism.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in relation to arts and culture

In the area of culture, a first discussion on gender equality took place in the [Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape](#) (CDCPP) in June 2016; The Committee confirmed that it wished to see more emphasis given to the gender equality dimension of its various activities, in particular in the European Heritage Strategy for the 21st century. A report will be prepared to address the issue of women involvement in cultural institutions.

b. Gender mainstreaming in the field of countering corruption, money laundering and other criminal activities

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

Preventing and combating corruption require a multidisciplinary approach, yet this issue has been generally addressed as gender-neutral.²³ While there is still insufficient research on how corruption and gender interact, the topic is gaining more attention with a focus on two areas. The first relates to the gendered impact of corruption, whereby unequal power relations and access to resources between women and men make women more vulnerable to the impact of corruption. There are also forms of corruption that affect women more specifically, such as sexual extortion, using sex as an informal currency in which bribes are paid, and human trafficking (where the majority of people trafficked are female). Corruption in public services can also reduce the overall quality and quantity of the services provided, which specifically impacts on women who are still the main carers within families and important users of basis public services. Women's more difficult access to justice is an additional barrier for the application of the rule of law and the fight against the corruption they are confronted with.

The second issue is the relationship between levels of corruption and increased women's participation in the public sphere. On the one hand, corruption, clientelism and government ineffectiveness substantially hamper women's participation in public life, as shown by a study of 18 European countries.²⁴ On the other hand, research has shown that in countries where there is greater female participation in public life, there is less corruption. The issue is still discussed and merely increasing female participation where democratic structures and accountabilities are weak is not enough to reduce corruption. However, decisive factors in the reduction of corruption are the participation of newcomers in decision-making (which disturbs existing habits) and democratisation, as well as better governance, which are both associated with the promotion of gender equality in decision-making.²⁵

²³ Gender neutral can be defined as "Having no differential positive or negative impact for gender relations or equality between women and men" but often, often, what is perceived to be 'gender neutral' is in fact 'gender blind', [Council of Europe Gender Equality Glossary](#), March 2016.

²⁴ Aksel Sundstrom and Lena Wängnerud, 'Women's political representation in the European regions: the impact of corruption and bad governance', Working Paper Series 2013:9 (Gothenburg, Sweden: Quality of Government Institute, 2013)

²⁵ Council of Europe, Report "[Gender Dimensions of Corruption](#)", 2012, Helena Lišuchová, GRECO Gender Equality Rapporteur, 2012.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of the prevention and fight against corruption, money laundering and other criminal activities

Since 2012, the [Group of States against Corruption \(GRECO\)](#) has been looking into the gender dimensions of corruption. A 2012 GRECO report on [Gender Dimensions of Corruption](#) shows that most national anti-corruption policies (except Austria) do not yet include any gender equality dimension and therefore proposes collecting data to allow member States to better evaluate the gender dimension of corruption. GRECO concluded that it would be useful to monitor the gender dimensions of corruption over time and that including a gender perspective is likely to increase the understanding on how corruption works. GRECO also organised a conference on “Gender dimensions of corruption” in 2013. In the context of the 4th GRECO Evaluation Round, the typology of gender imbalances within parliaments and the judiciary and their impact on transparency, accountability and openness and the propensity for corrupt practices was examined. An analysis of that data, as well as selected European research was presented at a [round table](#) organised in 2015. GRECO agreed that in the 5th Evaluation Round, efforts will be extended to identify gender imbalances which might potentially lead to or result from non-transparent informal networks and decision-making processes. A number of gender-related questions were included in the 5th Round Questionnaire, in particular requests for statistics on gender representation in the branches of power under review (i.e. central governments and law enforcement) and for criminal/disciplinary statistics disaggregated by sex. The newly elected GRECO Bureau meets the minimum 40% target enshrined in CM Recommendation Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making. The GRECO Report of activities for 2016 and Work programme for 2017 both refer to gender mainstreaming. -GRECO envisages carrying out an empirical study on gender equality aspects of corruption, possibly together with MONEYVAL, in 2018.

The Gender Equality Rapporteur of [the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism](#) (MONEYVAL) reported to the Plenary on gender equality issues in September 2017; a proposal for further activities will be proposed at the MONEYVAL plenary in April 2018.

The [European Committee on Crime Problems \(CDPC\)](#) is preparing a concept paper on the gender dimension in counterfeiting of medical products.

c. Gender mainstreaming in the field of action against terrorism

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

Although the issue of women, peace and security has been high on the political agenda at all levels for more than two decades,²⁶ counter-terrorism policies are traditionally seen as gender-neutral and research on the topic is still scarce. At the same time, attacks on the rights of women and girls are a common feature of many recent terrorist movements. Looking at the gendered impact of terrorist activities implies recognising the fact that people are not equally at risk and not equally able to recover from attacks, especially the most vulnerable, among which women are often over-represented.²⁷ In the same way, responses to terrorism can impact differently on women and men, for example it is crucial to ensure that negotiations with terrorist groups are not lead at the expenses of the rights of women.²⁸ Understanding the gender equality dimension can also improve prevention policies, by deconstructing stereotypical perceptions of women’s and men’s roles in terrorism and counter-terrorism, whereby men are often seen

²⁶ In particular since the adoption of the [United Nations Security Council Resolution \(UNSC\) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security](#) in 2000 and subsequent UNSCR 1889, 1820 and 1888.

²⁷ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Guidance Note on Gender Mainstreaming in the Work of UNODC, 2013.

²⁸ Ibid.

as perpetrators and women as passive victims. In fact, women's patterns of involvement in terrorism (recruitment, motives, rewards and roles), may differ from those of men. In addition, women and men often highlight different concerns and bring different perspectives, experiences and solutions to policy-making. Understanding these differences, can help ensuring a more comprehensive approach to counter-terrorism.²⁹

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of action against terrorism

The [Council of Europe Committee of Experts on terrorism \(CODEXTER\)](#) started to investigate the gender equality dimension of its work through a "Discussion Paper on possible gender-related priorities" in 2014. In the discussion paper, the CODEXTER Gender Equality Rapporteur gives an analysis of gender-related issues in the field of counter-terrorism, including the role of women as terrorists and the added value of integrating a gender perspective in this field in terms of policy efficiency. The paper for example proposes to assess the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No. 196) for possible gender-bias. CODEXTER has not included gender equality among its priorities for 2016-2017, but it took note that the Group of Parties to the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism will consider gender mainstreaming as a future subject for thematic assessments. At its November 2016 plenary meeting, the CODEXTER examined a paper on "[The roles of women in Daesh](#)" and discussed the idea of organising a conference on "The role of women in preventing terrorism" in 2018-2019.

d. Gender mainstreaming in relation to justice and legal cooperation issues

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

The ability to access justice is a human right and the existence of fair and impartial justice systems is also key to the realisation of all other human rights, including the rights to non-discrimination and gender equality. While the justice system is usually considered neutral and impartial, it is, as all other institutions, influenced by predominant cultural norms, including gender roles. Women have specific needs based on their sex/gender and face specific barriers in their interactions with all relevant bodies and actors in the justice system. These barriers include socio-economic issues (e.g. lack of resources, of legal literacy or issues related to language for migrant women), fear of stigma and reprisal and cultural perceptions of men as primary rights-bearers. Some of the obstacles which limit women's opportunities to claim their rights also include gender stereotyping among law enforcement professionals or emphasis placed on using out-of court settlement procedures, often leaving women at a disadvantage. This leads to a situation where, for example, only a minority of incidents of sexual violence is reported, and the majority of reported rapes do not end in a conviction (in several countries conviction rates are as low as 5%).³⁰ In the same way, women were found to represent only 16% of applications to the European Court of Human Rights.³¹ The different actors (from victims to law enforcement officials and legal professionals) also often lack knowledge about gender-specific standards in particular as regards gender-based discrimination, gender-based violence or asylum. Another issue is to ensure the gender-sensitiveness of services and procedures for victim protection, legal aid or detention conditions (e.g. specialised care for victims of gender-based violence; health, hygiene, privacy and security conditions adapted to the needs of women).

²⁹ CODEXTER [Discussion paper on possible gender-related priorities](#), November 2014.

³⁰ Lovett, Jo, and Liz Kelly. 2009, 'Different systems, similar outcomes? Tracking attrition in reported rape cases across Europe' and Hester, M 2013, 'From Report to Court: Rape and the Criminal Justice System in the North East'. Bristol: University of Bristol.

³¹ Human rights, rights of women - Female applicants to the European Court of Human Rights - [Article by F. Tulken, former Judge and Vice-President at the European Court of Human Rights](#) (2007).

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in relation to justice and legal cooperation questions

[Guaranteeing equal access of women to justice](#) is one of the five objectives of the Council of Europe Strategy for Gender Equality 2014-2017. The work and activities in this area aim to support member states achieve equal access to justice for women through research and studies, conferences and hearings, as well as the exchange of good practices. A [co-operation project](#) implemented in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine aims at identifying and supporting the removal of obstacles for women's equal access to justice; and strengthening the capacity of these countries to design measures to ensure that the justice chain is gender-responsive. This includes the training of legal professionals and the preparation of a training manual for judges and prosecutors".

The Council of Europe [Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality](#), adopted in April 2016, contains a number of references to gender-sensitive measures, notably the needs to mainstream a "gender perspective into all reforms", achieve "gender balance in the composition of the judiciary", and undertake efforts "to fight gender stereotyping within the judiciary itself".

The **European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ)** considered how to better integrate gender mainstreaming into its working methods. A first step was to undertake a gender impact analysis regarding the administrative detention of migrants in 2016. This will inform the future work of the CDCJ on this issue, including the codification of European rules relating to the administrative detention of migrants. In November 2016, the CDCJ adopted a document entitled "Gender Equality in the CDCJ: Methods and implementation" and agreed to modify its working methods in order to strengthen the mainstreaming of equality perspectives in its work. CDCJ also agreed to increase the number of Gender Equality Rapporteurs to two. The CDCJ commissioned an expert tasked with conducting a gender impact assessment of the rules to be included in the codifying instrument on the administrative detention of migrants.

The [Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment \(CPT\)](#) will conduct an analysis of their working methods and tools to better integrate gender equality considerations in the planning and conduct of their evaluation visits and subsequent reports. The CPT is also preparing a factsheet on "women in prison".

The **European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ)** carries out regular [evaluations of the judicial systems](#) of Council of Europe's member states. These biannual reports contain detailed data about the number of women and men within justice systems for 2010, 2012 and 2014, and some information about legislation regarding crimes of violence against women. The latest [Report "European judicial systems – Edition 2016 \(2014 data\): efficiency and quality of justice"](#) of October 2016 shows that although there is parity, on average, between male and female judges in all jurisdictions, there is a decrease in the percentage of female judges as we move up in the judicial hierarchy, especially regarding presidents of courts. In October 2017, CEPEJ published [a specific dashboard on gender equality in courts and prosecution services](#). The published data concern professional judges, prosecutors, non-judge staff and non-prosecutor staff for all instances (1st instance, 2nd instance and supreme courts).

The [Consultative Council of European Judges \(CCJE\)](#) is preparing a study on gender equality on the basis of a questionnaire distributed to its members in the autumn 2017.

The [Committee of Legal Advisers on Public International Law \(CAHDI\)](#) revised its questionnaire on the "Organisation and functions of the Office of the Legal Adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs" in order to include additional questions on gender equality. Answers to this revised questionnaire can be consulted in the [CAHDI databases](#).

The [Cybercrime Convention Committee](#) is preparing a report to map out the issue and tools against cyber bullying and violence against women and children.

e. Gender mainstreaming in the fields of governance and constitutional matters

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

The work of the Council of Europe on constitutional matters focuses on three areas: 1) democratic institutions and fundamental rights; 2) constitutional justice and ordinary justice; 3) elections, referendums and political parties. In relation to governance, the work relates to issues concerning territorial reforms, citizens' democratic participation in public life, the modernisation of public administration, the dialogue and relations between tiers of government, public finances and trans-frontier cooperation. All these areas are important for the promotion of gender equality and their gender-related aspects are numerous. Examples of these include promoting parity democracy through constitutional reform and/or through electoral law reform; promoting and researching gender equality aspects in political parties; issues related to women's access to justice, administration and public services.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the fields of governance and constitutional matters

Achieving a [balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making](#) is one of the five objectives of the **Council of Europe Strategy on Gender Equality 2014-2017**.

The **Venice Commission** (VC) - the European Commission for Democracy through Law - has adopted a number of reports and opinions related to gender equality since 1992. The Venice Commission Report on the Impact of Electoral Systems on Women's Representation in Politics (2009),³² favours legal quotas "as compensation for existing obstacles to women's access to parliament" and states that these should be accompanied by placement rules and effective monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. While a gender equality perspective is not systematically integrated in all the work of the VC, the 2015 Report on the Methods of nomination of candidates within political parties has a section of women's representation and reaffirms the legitimacy of quotas. A regional conference was organised by the VC in 2015 on gender equality and electoral processes. A compilation of gender equality opinions and reports adopted by the VC has been published in 2016 to serve as a source for future drafting purposes. The VC has also collected information on how the constitutions of its 61 member states cover gender equality and non-discrimination issues. A study will be carried out to analyse the information collected and include recommendations on how to include the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination in legal systems that do not have them in their constitutions, including good practices. The preliminary results of the study show that 35 out of 61 constitutions have a gender equality/non-discrimination provisions. The VC has set up a specialised sub-committee on gender equality issues and their website has a section on gender equality.

In May 2016, the **European Committee on Democracy and Governance** (CDDG) held a discussion regarding gender mainstreaming and its practical consequences and implications for national policies and decision-making in member states. The Committee will further examine policies and action plans in relation to gender mainstreaming in public administration at all levels to identify topics for future action within its terms of reference. CDDG members were invited to respond to the questionnaire on the monitoring of [CM/Rec\(2003\)3](#) on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making. CDDG will hold a about discussion about the [findings of the analytical report on the implementation of CM/Rec\(2003\)3](#).

³² Council of Europe, Venice Commission Report on the Impact of Electoral Systems on Women's Representation in Politics, (CDL(2009)080).

The **Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform** of the Council of Europe supports central, regional and local authorities in improving their institutions, regulations, capacity and action. In 2008 the Centre of Expertise developed a “Leadership Academy” programme aiming at improving the abilities of local leaders, which includes a gender mainstreaming session. Since then, a Leadership Academy session has been revised to focus on women in leadership. A gender aspect was added to a revised Public Ethics Benchmarking tool. When providing legal advice on decentralisation reforms, human resource management, and local elections legislation, the Centre’s experts incorporate a gender perspective into the appraisals.

f. Gender mainstreaming in the field of electoral assistance and census

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

Elections are at the core of democratic institutions and the integration of a gender equality perspective as a central aspect of a functioning democracy is crucial. Gender-specific aspects can be considered on the one hand regarding the under-representation of women in political and public decision-making, as candidates, as elected decision-makers and in higher levels of the electoral administration and on the other hand regarding mechanisms to improve the situation. This includes a range of issues such as the role of electoral law, political parties, media, or gender-sensitive citizenship education and election monitoring. Other issues relate to different voting patterns between women and men or to the involvement of women’s NGOs in activities related to elections. Regarding census, it is one of the most important tools for policymakers, as it takes stock of the most important asset of a country - its human capital and allows, *inter alia*, for the collection of the sex-disaggregated data that is vital for gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming. Census is therefore a rich source of information about the differences between women and men, girls and boys as well as their specific needs and integrating a gender equality perspective in census methods and analysis is vital for policy planning.³³

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of electoral assistance and census

Since the early 1990’s, the Council of Europe has been working to support participation in elections and in political life of citizens, with a special emphasis on women. Women voters and candidates are one of the five topics dealt with by the Division of Electoral Assistance and Census. Activities have been undertaken under the Eastern Partnership Programme in [Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine on women’s participation](#) in decision making. A [documentary](#) was produced in 2014 on women politicians in a Georgian municipality. In 2016, a [workshop was organised in Kyiv](#) to address the range of barriers to the realisation of gender equality in political decision making in Ukraine. A [regional study](#) on women political representation in the Eastern Partnership countries was presented at the workshop. The study (which is also available in Armenian, Georgian, Romanian and Ukrainian) demonstrates that in all the countries surveyed women are less likely to run for political office and to be elected both to the national parliaments and to local government bodies. The study shows that women hold less than 20% of seats in parliament in all the countries with the exception of Belarus.

The Electoral Assistance Division is preparing its activities in relation to the 2018 elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the need to address women’s participation as one of the priorities.

The website of the Council of Europe Division on Electoral Assistance and Census has a [section on women voters and candidates](#).

³³ UNFPA [Guide on the Gender Analysis of Census Data](#), 2014.

g. Gender mainstreaming in relation to multiple discrimination and the needs of specific groups

Gender-specific aspects in this field:

Women are part of all groups in society and sometimes form the majority of these groups, including disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. Women have multiple identities as well as specific needs and situations, but they also often face multiple forms of discrimination and violence, firstly as women, and secondly as part of a specific group. For example, women with disability face higher risks of discrimination and violence; Roma women face specific types of human rights violations such as forced sterilisation, but also other forms of violence and injustices both within and outside their community. In the same way, women asylum seekers may not necessarily fit into the conventional image of a political refugee fleeing persecution from the state and certain types of gender-specific or predominantly gender-specific harm need to be taken into consideration. The integration of a gender equality perspective in all policies and activities related to specific groups is essential to capture the needs of women and girls who are part of these groups and for the measures taken to be effective and adapted to the needs of all.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe on the needs of specific groups

In 2016, a training session on gender mainstreaming was organised for the staff and the Chair and Gender Equality Rapporteur of the [European Commission against Racism and Intolerance \(ECRI\)](#). ECRI plans to include more questions in their monitoring in order to produce more sex-disaggregated data. The 2017 ECRI monitoring report on Montenegro includes some gender equality -related considerations.

The [Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015](#)³⁴ integrated gender equality as a cross-cutting issue and has a specific section on “Women and girls with disabilities”. The Committee of Ministers also adopted [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2012\)6b on the protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls with disabilities](#). The Recommendation encourages member states to adopt legislative measures to encourage the participation of women and girls with disabilities and proposes measures in eleven fields. The Council of Europe [Disability Strategy 2017-2023](#) was adopted in November 2016 and it includes several references to the rights of women and girls with disability and to gender equality.

[Roma issues and gender mainstreaming](#) are transversal themes within the work of the Council of Europe. Roma women’s issues have grown in visibility especially in the context of the International Roma Women’s Conferences organised since 2003. The 5th International Conference of Roma Women took place in October 2015, and the following topics were discussed: national Roma integration strategies, empowerment and participation as well as violence against Roma women, with a focus on trafficking and child marriage. The [Strategy for the Advancement of Romani Women and Girls in 2014-2020](#) contains six strategic objectives aligned with the objectives of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 (adding “Guaranteeing Equal Access of Romani Women and girls to public services”). A new [Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers](#)³⁵ was adopted in March 2016, including innovative programmes to empower Roma and Traveller women and girls.

The Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers Issues (CAHROM) prepared a draft Committee of Ministers Recommendation on access to justice for Roma and Travellers. The [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2017\)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on improving access to justice for Roma](#)

³⁴Recommendation Rec(2006)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015.

³⁵ Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers (2016-2019), SG/Inf(2015)38 final.

[and Travellers in Europe](#), adopted in October 2017, includes a gender equality dimension and addresses the challenges faced by Roma women in accessing justice. The Sixth International Conference of Roma Women will focus on women's political participation in local, regional national and European elections (Strasbourg, 6-7 November 2017).

A new [Joint Programme on Access of Roma and Traveller Women to Justice \(JUSTROM\)](#), in five pilot countries: Bulgaria, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Romania was launched in October 2016. An event about "Forms of violence against Roma and Traveller women" was organised in December 2016.

The [Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#) (FCNM) has drafted a questionnaire on gender-related issues to be used in country monitoring.

In relation to **migration**, which is a heavily gendered phenomenon, migrant and refugee women are in different situations compared to men, both in relation to the migration process itself, in particular regarding their safety and the high risk of violence against women and in relation to their needs after arriving in a new country (in terms of education, health, housing, employment, access to justice etc.). The Council of Europe Istanbul Convention addresses in a comprehensive manner the issue of violence against migrant and refugee girls, including in relation to asylum, and all other provisions of the Convention should apply to migrant women and girls. The Secretary General information document "[Protecting children affected by the refugee crisis: a shared responsibility](#)" (2016),³⁶ points to the worrying situation of migrant and asylum-seeking girls due to the risk of abuse, exploitation and other harmful practices, as well as to the inadequacy and shortage of gender-sensitive reception centres and accommodation. An [Action Plan on refugee children](#) was adopted on 19th May 2017, whose implementation must be gender-sensitive, including in relation to ensuring that girls "benefit in practice from the protection provided by relevant human rights standards."

The work of the Council of Europe on protecting and promoting the **human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people** is based on the Committee of Ministers' [Recommendation 2010\(5\) on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity](#). The Secretariat's [Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity \(SOGI\) Unit](#) is in charge of this issue and is carrying out co-operation activities with different member states to highlight the heightened risk of discrimination and violence that lesbian, bisexual and transgender women face due to the fact that they do not conform to stereotypical gender norms.

The Council of Europe [Strategy for the Rights of the Child for 2016-2021](#) includes references to equality between girls and boys and to fighting violence against girls, gender stereotypes, sexism and the over-sexualisation of girls and boys. A factsheet on gender equality and children's rights is planned for 2018.

In relation to the **sexual exploitation of children**, the Lanzarote Committee, brings together the countries that have ratified the Council of Europe [Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#) (Lanzarote Convention). The Committee published in 2015 its [first evaluation report on how European states are protecting children against sexual abuse in the circle of trust](#). The report covers 26 European countries and contains some recommendations on gender equality. The Committee invited parties to disaggregate data on the basis of the gender of the child victim and of the perpetrator, and considered that information and advice should be provided to girls and boys victims in a gender- and cultural-sensitive language.

³⁶ "Protecting children affected by the refugee crisis: A shared responsibility" - Secretary General's proposals for priority actions, SG/Inf(2016)9 final (March 2016).

The **Youth Department** and, in particular, the European Youth Centres, have worked on integrating a gender and gender equality dimension in their policy, educational approaches and practices for a long time, mostly thanks to the role of youth organisations in the co-management system and in the running of the [Youth Department's](#) programmes. Youth organisations have introduced themes ranging from fighting discrimination against LGBT people, to measures to combat sexism and violence against women, domestic violence and gender-based violence, the recognition of gender identities and challenging heteronormativity. Beyond gender-related programme, in all its programmes and educational activities, the Youth Department makes *practical considerations* to ensure gender equality (e.g. gender balance in educational teams and participants). The Youth Department also supports the inclusion of a gender equality perspective in its policy work. The [Agenda 2020, adopted in 2008](#), indicated that the aim of the Council of Europe's youth policy is "to provide young people – girls and boys, young women and young men – with equal opportunities and experience which enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society".

The [No Hate Speech Movement](#) campaign, set up in 2012 to mobilise young people to act against hate speech and human rights violations online, is also focusing on sexist hate speech to address the fact that women and girls are confronted with this phenomenon on a daily basis. A [seminar on Combating Sexist Hate Speech](#), organised jointly with the Gender Equality Unit, took place in February 2016, to deepen the understanding of this increasing phenomenon. European Action days dedicated to this topic took place on 8 March 2016 and on [8 March 2017](#), International Women's Day. A seminar entitled 'Gender Equality Matters!' was organised in June 2016 with a view to develop guidelines on gender mainstreaming for the youth sector. In October 2016, the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) [set up a working group on gender equality](#) to support the GER's mandate and the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ) [invited the Secretariat to prepare proposals for the implementation of the guidelines of the Gender Equality Matters seminar](#).

In February 2016, the European **Youth Foundation** (EYF) launched a [new website on gender mainstreaming](#) with resources developed by the Council of Europe and youth NGOs, as well as links to relevant tools and actors. During the EYF March 2016 [Re\)mix seminar](#), two sessions were devoted to discussing gender mainstreaming. The EYF is actively promoting the integration of a gender perspective in the youth projects it supports and preparing a new toolbox on gender equality.

h. Gender mainstreaming in relation to socio-economic rights and social policies

Gender-specific aspects in this field:

Social policies (for example policies related to social protection, health and care, education, housing, poverty or unemployment) are important tools for the promotion of gender equality, as they affect the living conditions of persons and should strive towards social justice and human welfare. However, there are still important inequalities and differences between women and men in all areas covered by social policies. This concerns notably employment as women feature predominantly in part-time work and lower-paid occupations, and they continue to face different types of inequalities (e.g. in relation to remuneration, pensions, promotions and access to decision-making). Women are also still the main carers within families, which impacts on their use of public services, on their ability to engage in paid employment and in other activities such as decision making, volunteer work or sports. In addition, and as a result of combined inequalities, women have lesser income than men. All these aspects should be taken into consideration so that social policies contribute to real equality between women and men.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe on socio-economic rights/social policies

The [European Social Charter](#) enshrines a body of rights in the field of housing, health, education, employment, social protection, movement of persons and non-discrimination. The application of all these rights must ensure equality between women and men. In 2005, an information document on equality between women and men in the European Social Charter was prepared. In 2014, the [European](#)

[Committee of Social Rights upheld a claim](#) regarding women’s access to abortions in Italy.³⁷ Some of the issues looked at by the Social Charter Committee are closely related to gender equality, such as maternal mortality, access to social services or protection of maternity.

15 complaints were lodged by University Women of Europe in 2016 for alleged violation of the rights to work, to fair remuneration, and to equal opportunities and equal treatment in employment and occupation without discrimination on the grounds of sex. The [European Committee of Social Rights](#) declared the complaints admissible. The Committee will then decide on the merits of each of the complaint.

The [Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation \(2015\)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights](#) is an example of integration of a gender equality perspective. The Recommendation specifically requires member states to “develop gender-sensitive approaches to the elaboration of youth policies in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and provide support for the capacity building and equal participation of young women and young men”.³⁸ The Appendix to Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 contains a specific section on “Improving gender equality of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods” and a section on violence, including gender-based violence. References are also made to the needs of young women, to gender budgeting and to sexual and reproductive health, and the text regarding the conciliation of private and working life is presented in a gender-sensitive manner (e.g. childcare is presented as an issue for “parents” and not for young women only).

i. Gender mainstreaming in relation to natural resources and the environment

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

Women and men affect and are affected in different ways by issues related to the environment. Environmental policies impact directly on the health and living standards of individuals. While many women are present in ecological and environmental movements, they are largely absent from decision-making in this sector, including at the governmental level. Gender-differentiated roles and responsibilities in families and households, as well as gender-segregated labour market and income gap, cause differentiated vulnerabilities of women to the effects of climate change. They include more casualties among women during extreme weather events and stressful experiences of recovering from disasters. Economic disparities lead to differences in adaptive capacity. Care work may increase due to health impacts of climate change or due to natural disasters, putting additional burdens on women who are mainly responsible for caring.

Women’s capabilities to adapt to climate change are shaped by education, gender roles, division of labour in the household and income. In terms of mobility, women depend on access to public transport to a larger degree. Owing to their lower incomes, they have greater risk of energy poverty than men. Women from discriminated groups or living in isolated areas (like homeless women or rural women) have lower access to safe water and sanitation. Taking into account the needs and situations of both women and men is therefore necessary for policies related to the environment, including natural disasters to be effective.

The **Major Hazards Agreement** (EUR-OPA), a platform for co-operation in the field of major natural and technological disasters, appointed a Gender Equality Rapporteur to look at the integration on a gender equality perspective in its work.

³⁷ International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network v. Italy, No. 87/2012.

³⁸ Paragraph 15f of Recommendation (2015)3.

The [Standing Committee to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats](#) (Bern Convention) has prepared a draft Recommendation on mainstreaming a gender equality perspective in the implementation of the Convention as well as in the work of the Convention Secretariat, which will be discussed by the Convention's Standing Committee in December 2017.

j. Gender mainstreaming in the field of budgeting (*gender budgeting*)

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

Public budgets are not merely economic tools; they also translate policies in monetary terms and express political priorities. Because of the unequal distribution of power and resources between women and men within society as well as different living conditions and ascribed social roles, budgets are not gender-neutral; they affect women and men differently. Gender budgeting seeks to make the gender impact of budgets visible and to review budgets to ensure that they promote gender equality. Gender budgeting can be done both in relation to public expenditure (i.e. making sure that public spending contributes to both women and men and to greater equality) and in relation to income (looking at the impact of fiscal policies on both sexes). It can involve all levels of government, national, regional and local and all stages of the budgetary process.³⁹

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of budgeting

A Group of specialists on gender budgeting was created within the Council of Europe in 2002, which produced a [Final Report](#) (2005), including a widely used definition of gender budgeting. The Council of Europe also published a comprehensive [Handbook on gender budgeting](#) in 2009. In 2006, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe called for the use of a gender budgeting approach to the budgets of the Council of Europe and its member States. A [Pilot project on Gender Budgeting](#) was jointly conducted by the Council of Europe and the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* in 2011-2012 in Armenia and in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". A [report on gender budgeting](#) was adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, which notably recommends that local and regional authorities "introduce gender budgeting methods in their annual budgets" and "encourage national governments to ensure that their statistics offices compile sex".

k. Gender mainstreaming in the field of Council of Europe co-operation activities

Gender-specific aspects in this area:

Gender mainstreaming in co-operation interventions aims to ensure that women and men benefit equally from the results of the activities and that the intervention contributes to the advancement of gender equality. A gender mainstreaming perspective entails looking at the implications of a potential project on women and men, using data highlighting their situation and needs and designing the project so that its impact on gender equality is positive. This should be done throughout the whole project cycle, i.e. from the preparation and planning stage, to implementation and evaluation and is relevant in most areas of co-operation intervention.

Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe in the area of co-operation activities

Initiatives have been taken in terms of gender mainstreaming in a number of co-operation interventions of the Council of Europe. Work has also started to support the institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming in this sector, through tools for the integration of a gender equality perspective in the organisation's methodological framework for co-operation activities. The **Office of the Directorate General of Programmes (ODGP)** prepared [Guidelines on gender mainstreaming in Council of Europe's co-operation activities](#). A working on gender mainstreaming was set up within ODGP, whose tasks is to prepare gender mainstreaming guidelines for country advisers for projects currently under development,

³⁹ Council of Europe, [Handbook on gender budgeting](#), 2009.

as well as indicators with a view to providing an insight on gender impact. Staff training about PMM will include a gender mainstreaming strand. A gender equality expert has been recruited for the Ukraine Council of Europe office. A short training session on gender mainstreaming for projects under the [Horizontal Facility](#) was organised in March 2017. There is a [dedicated webpage on gender mainstreaming](#) in the internet site on “Project Management Methodology”, which looks at the entire project cycle to integrate gender equality considerations at every stage. The website includes links to tools, guides and a blog other useful resources within the Organisation, as well as external resources.

The programme of Confidence-Building Measures implemented by the Council of Europe in post-conflict areas contains combating violence against women, including domestic violence, and promoting women empowerment as one of its topics. Different co-operation activities, for example in in Abkhazia and Belarus, have gender equality-related aspects, notably on violence against women, gender stereotypes and media, and participation of women in political life.

I. Gender mainstreaming activities of the Commissioner for Human Rights

[Women’s rights and gender equality, including combating violence against women](#) feature prominently on the agenda of the Council of Europe [Commissioner for Human Rights](#), Nils Muižnieks. The Commissioner selected these issues as specific areas of focus in many country visits and reports (Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Finland, Ireland Latvia, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Poland, San Marino and Serbia) and made specific recommendations to these countries on how to improve the situation. Recent thematic activities related to women’s rights and gender equality include a Human Rights Comment entitled “[Human rights of refugee and migrant women and girls need to be better protected](#)”, a Human Rights Comment on [protecting women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights](#) and a [letter](#) to the Czech authorities urging them to adopt a bill on reparations for involuntary sterilisation of Roma women. Previous Human Rights Comments have addressed issues such as women’s rights in time of [economic crisis](#), [hate speech](#) against women and the need to remove obstacles to the work of [women’s rights defenders](#). A document summarises the [work of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe](#) on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality from April 2012 to November 2016. The Commissioner was also active in promoting the Istanbul Convention, asking countries to ratify it (letters to Latvian and Croatian authorities) and meeting with GREVIO. The Commissioner also issued an [Op Ed on domestic violence in the Russian Federation](#) following the decriminalisation of this form of violence in this country. He is preparing an Issue Paper on sexual and reproductive rights of women in Europe which will include recommendations addressed to all member states (to be published by the end of 2017).

The Human Rights Commissioner has a [thematic page on women’s rights and gender equality](#) on his website.

m. Gender mainstreaming activities of the Council of Europe Development Bank

Gender equality is included as a cross-cutting theme and a screening criterion for the development of new lending projects in the new Development Plan 2017-2019 of the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB). The Bank will deploy efforts for the identification and mainstreaming of gender equality actions during the appraisal of its projects in an effort to influence gender dynamics, reduce inequalities and improve the social outcome of its investments.

CONCLUSIONS

The Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers on gender mainstreaming and related work undertaken by the different Council of Europe committees in the fields of education, media, sport, audio-visual, and health provide the basis and tools to make sure that a gender equality perspective is integrated

in all aspects of the work of the Council of Europe and its member states in these areas. Other sectors of the Council of Europe have undertaken innovative activities (e.g. regarding Roma and Travellers, drug abuse policy or electoral assistance). However, a number of services/departments remain yet to make progress on mainstreaming gender in their field of activity.

New initiatives by different sectors of the Organisation to mainstream a gender equality perspective in their field of activity can build upon the examples provided in this document, which is kept under review and frequently updated. A very good step would be for all relevant bodies and services to give more visibility to their gender mainstreaming activities and tools in their own websites, as it has already been done for some of the policy areas highlighted in this document.