



The EU Mutual Learning Programme in Gender Equality

Synergies between gender equality and climate action

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Comments paper – Spain



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A just transition from a gender perspective

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Abstract

In Spain, a sound legal and policy framework for the climate change and energy transition has been set up, where the main instruments are gender sensitive. At the same time, the strategic framework for equality between women and men specifically addresses the challenges for gender equality of the green transition. Recent policy initiatives both at national and international level aim at both contributing and benefiting from this approach. Relevant efforts are being made towards the production of sex-disaggregated and gender sensitive information and good practices exist that are contributing to mainstreaming gender into the green transition, largely funded with the recovery and resilience EU-funds.

1. Relevant country context

The so-called Spanish National Framework for Energy and Climate is made mainly of four instruments: the [Climate Change and Energy transition Law](#) 7/2021, the [National Integral Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030](#) (NECP), the [National Plan for the adaptation to Climate Change 2021-2030](#) (NAP) and the [Just Transition Strategy \(JTS\) 2020-2024](#). While the Law adopts equality between women and men as one of its guiding principles and the NECP includes a firm commitment with the gender perspective, the other two instruments additionally promote specific measures and programmes to close gender gaps in the ecological transition.

On the other hand, one of the work packages of the [Spanish Strategic Plan for the Effective Equality of Women and Men \(PEIEMH\) 2022-2025](#) has a specific focus on the ecological transition, and includes measures such as promoting ecofeminism, alphabetisation, programmes to identify and exploit synergies between gender equality, ecological transition and green jobs, training, creation and retention of talent with a gender intersectional perspective, creating and improving sex disaggregated indicators and periodic publication of relevant data and analysis on women and the green transition.

Collection of gender-disaggregated data

All four instruments of the above mentioned National Framework for Energy and Climate as well as the PEIEMH commit with the production of gender-disaggregated data that measure economic and labour activity related to the ecological transition, on climate change exposure, vulnerability and impacts; and also of indicators that monitor alternative economic initiatives that include a gender perspective and contribute to visualising women entrepreneurs and self-employed in green activities and the impact on women of the ecological transition. Two recent initiatives are worth mentioning:

- In 2023, the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge (MITECO) published a report and an [excel database](#) on “[Women’s green entrepreneurship and women’s entrepreneurship in rural areas](#)”(summary in English). Through sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators both the report and the database help to compare women and men salaried and self-employed in green and other activities, in the rural and urban fields and in Spain and the EU-27. A key outcome for comparability is the operative definition of the “green sector”.
- Also in 2023, following a collaboration between the Just Transition Institute (JTI, embedded in MITECO and leader of the JTS) and the Naturgy Foundation, the report “[Employment of Women in the Just Energy Transition in Spain](#)” was elaborated, analysing employment gender gaps linked to the energy transition (in Spain and EU).

Women in STEM and green jobs

The limited presence of women in green jobs and related education and training pathways, often highly male dominated, is also being addressed in Spain. In this context, the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge (MITECO) and the Institute for Women (IW) have joined the “[STE\(A\)M Alliance for the female talent](#)” launched on 2021 by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, which aims to attract the interest of girls and young women to STEM studies and professional careers. Additionally, the IW and the JTI signed in 2021 a protocol to jointly promote entrepreneurship and improve the employability and working conditions of women in the territories affected by the energy transition. Private companies are also promoting STEM vocations among girls and women, an example of which is a [recent agreement between Naturgy and the Madrid Chamber of Commerce](#) to train women in data analytics.

Women in green decision-making

As revealed by EIGE’s gender equality index ([Spain. Gender Equality Index](#)), women are underrepresented in decision-making roles. In Spanish ministries dealing with environment and climate change, 35 % of senior administrators employed were women in 2022, which compares with 44% at EU level; however, 39.4 % of decision-makers in parliamentary committees dealing with environment and climate change were women, which was only 30.4% at EU-27 level.

2. Policy debate

An [update of the National Integral National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030 \(PNIEC\)](#) has been drafted and made available for public consultation in June 2023. This draft includes one specific measure aimed at **reinforcing the transversal integration of the gender dimension in all PNIEC measures that have a direct or indirect impact on people**, mostly in employment in the energy sector, but also in leadership positions, in entrepreneurship and innovation, as well as in the analysis and promotion of sustainable energy production and consumption patterns. **The declared objectives of this measure are to achieve balanced representation of women and men at all levels and areas of the transition;** and to gender mainstreaming the energy transition.

In November 2023, the [Framework of Actions for the sustainable territorial development of the area of influence of the Doñana natural space](#), endowed with near

EUR 700 million, has been adopted. This territorial project focuses on the ecological transition and adopts both a transversal gender equality perspective and specific measures. Considering that the actions of this framework will be funded through public grants, public procurement or public-private partnerships **the staff involved** in the management of these public funds **and the beneficiaries** will be trained in incorporating the gender mainstreaming approach across the processes and projects. Moreover, **Doñana women's employability and entrepreneurship** will improve through training, hiring benefits, accompaniment and mentorship, mutual support women networks, collaboration and learning spaces and sex disaggregated and gender sensitive indicators.

Further, in October 2023 **the government announced that Spain signed on the [Equal by 30 campaign](#)** and its commitment to: i) increasing the visibility of women workers or students in energy transition fields, strengthening the educational and reskilling opportunities and increasing their interest in these fields; ii) progressing towards effective equality between women and men in the energy transition regarding employment, entrepreneurship, innovation, and leadership; iii) systematically generating, spreading and analysing data, indicators and studies on gender and energy; iv) collaborating with drivers of gender balanced participation in the energy transition, and sharing knowledge and good practices. Spain is also a commitment maker on the [Feminist Action for Climate Justice](#) of the United Nations (FACJ). At the same time, the Council of Ministers has recently adopted the [Feminist Foreign Policy Plan 2023-2024](#), which includes specific measures related to the incorporation of the gender approach in adaptation and mitigation measures against climate change adopted in multilateral and regional forums.

3. Good practice examples

Database and report on “[Women's green entrepreneurship and women's entrepreneurship in rural areas](#)”

Additional to sex-disaggregated data (described above), the report analyses the gender mainstreaming of MITECO grants and barriers faced by women green entrepreneurs and makes recommendations for improvement.

Guide for mainstreaming gender in public procurement

The Women's Institute has elaborated a [Guide for incorporating the gender perspective in projects funded with the Spanish Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan](#) (English version) that eases the inclusion of gender equality clauses in public procurement processes (that is, grants, public contracts and public-private partnerships) related to the Spanish Recovery Plan, endowed with EUR 140,000, 40% of which are estimated to be related with the ecological transition. As a result, the design and implementation of projects funded with the recovery plan should be gender mainstreamed. The Guide targets public servants in charge of public procurement processes as well as private companies, NGOs and other public-private partnerships institutions bidding and developing projects funded with these funds.

The Spanish Just Transition Strategy (JTS) and the Just Transition Institute

The aim of the JTS is to maximise the benefits of the ecological transition, in particular in terms of creation of green jobs, and to minimise the negative impacts on employment,

workers and territories, including boosting the training required by the labour market for such a transition. In this context, one main objective of the JTS is to guarantee equal access of women to the opportunities of the ecological transition. The main gender mainstreamed projects/activities are: i) grants for large and small businesses' investment that create employment, that prioritise projects that create employment for women; ii) grants for environmental, social, digital and cultural infrastructure projects that create jobs for women, contribute to economic dynamization led by women and contribute to closing the gender digital gap; iii) Support Plan for vocational training and labour insertion, preferably women and persons at disadvantage. EUR 1 299 million are foreseen for the just transition in 15 Spanish territories in the period 2009-2027. The Just Transition Institute also mainstreams gender across its internal activity.

Gender mainstreaming by Biodiversity Foundation

[Biodiversity Foundation](#) (BF, *Fundación Biodiversidad*), a national public Foundation embedded in MITECO, is devoted to reverse the loss of biodiversity and promote the green economy. BF manages a budget which in 2023 amounted to EUR 225 million (EU and national funds). Within the Spanish Strategic Plan for the Effective Equality of Women and Men (PEIEMH) 2022-2025, BF is responsible for implementing seven measures devoted to promoting women green entrepreneurship, also in rural areas, contributing to their visualisation and measuring the evolution; promoting participation of women (in particular from rural areas) in training and capacity building in economic activities related to the ecological transition; mainstreaming gender into the Action Plan on Environmental Education for Sustainability 2021-2025 (PAEAS); mainstreaming gender into sensitization, training, research, employability and entrepreneurship activities carried out.

On the other hand, BF is mainstreaming gender into its internal activity, which represents a “transformation from a systemic, global and sustainable approach based on equality” (as stated on the website). In 2019, a “**Commitment to equality of the Biodiversity Foundation**” was signed. BF has prepared a “[Guide to include the gender perspective into the projects developed by actors with whom BF collaborates](#)” with recommendations on how the tenders, calls and projects selected should include the gender perspective.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

- **How can EU Member States stimulate the collection, reporting and monitoring of gender-disaggregated data on the national and European level?**

Some existing (official and private) **surveys** can be exploited with a detail for women and men (e.g. LFS), also many **administrative data** (such as social security records, health, education, housing, electricity consumption...). These existing sources should be modified to better catch gender-sensitive information. The possibilities of **big data** need to be also assessed. All **policies, programmes and projects** need to set up, from the very beginning when designing them, systems to collect and analyse information that serves the purpose to evaluate their (un)intended impacts on women and men. Additional to sex disaggregated data, **gender sensitive indicators** need to be identified and produced.

When analysing employment and economic variables, one key issue is the identification of “green activities” or economic activities linked to the green transition / climate change. In Spain, two reports have produced **operative definitions of the “green sector” and “energy sector”** using the NACE rev 2 classification of activities, so as to fully exploit data on employment of men and women in a comparable manner at national and EU level.

Various **stakeholders can be engaged in improving production of information**, such as national statistics institutes, including Eurostat, universities and research centres, private companies (banks, electricity companies, producers of big data...).

- **How to stimulate a more gender equal and diverse workforce in sectors relevant for the green and just transition?**

More women and girls need to be educated and trained in activities related to the green transition and this requires efforts to reach them out, attract and retain them in occupations that are still highly male dominated. Companies need to make efforts to open up their workforce, eliminate stereotypes and integrate women and allow them to engage in fruitful career paths in the same conditions as men. Quotas have proved effective to progress towards gender balanced workforce and can be extended to programmes for vocational training and labour insertion in green activities (one Spanish program is committed to devote at least 30% of the training to women and girls).

- **How can broader communities be engaged in the green and just transition?**

An excellent example of community engagement in Spain are the so-called **just transition agreements** closed in a selection of territories. These agreements are innovative territorial governance tools that involve highly participatory, transparent and inclusive governance processes with the regional and local authorities, companies, social partners, universities, education centres, environmental NGOs (many of which rural women associations) or other interested and affected organisations. While they require efforts and time, they are effective in building inclusive communities.

Climate assemblies bring together randomly selected groups of citizens to learn, discuss and make recommendations on aspects of the climate crisis that will have significant impacts on people’s choices and behaviour. There are 13 such assemblies in the EU and UK (available [here](#)). In Spain gender balance is required. In addition, **women associations** play a crucial role when it comes to identify specific needs and wishes, such as, for example, associations of women in rural areas, in the energy sector, in the mining sector, women entrepreneurs, etc.

- **How to promote female leadership in the green and just transition particularly in the political and public sector?**

Strong political commitment with gender equality in the political and public sector is required. As stated above, quotas in some countries have proved to be an effective tool to advance towards gender balanced boards in companies and also in the public sector.

In Spain, the Institute for Women promotes the “Equality in Companies” initiative ([Igualdad en la empresa](#)) and a network of 167 large companies with the ‘Equality Label’ ([Distintivo de Igualdad](#)) has been created. In another initiative ‘More Women, better Companies’ ([Más mujeres, mejores empresas](#)) near 120 companies have joined and committed to implement measures aimed at removing obstacles to the professional careers of women.