



Declaration of principles for a gender-equal society

Thursday 16th October 2025





Declaration of principles for a gender-equal society



Principle 1: Freedom from gender-based violence

Every woman and girl has the right to security and to be treated with dignity, both on-line and off-line, in public and private life.

Upholding and advancing this principle includes pursuing the following objectives:

- preventing and combating all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, femicide, and technology-facilitated gender-based violence;
- preventing and combatting sexual violence, including rape, based on lack of consent;
- preventing and combatting harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and forced marriage;
- making the digital environment, including online platforms, a safe place for women and girls, in all their diversity, free from violence, sexism, hate speech, and harassment;
- preventing and combatting exposure of boys and girls to sexualised violence online, and other harmful sexist digital content;
- preventing and combatting all forms of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict;
- preventing and combatting all forms of sexual exploitation, including in the context of trafficking in human beings;
- providing adequate, victim-centred support and protection to victims of violence against women and domestic violence, and ensuring their effective access to justice.



Principle 2: The highest standards of health

Every woman has a right to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health.

Upholding and advancing this principle includes pursuing the following objectives, fully respecting the Member States' responsibilities for the definition of their health policy including bioethical questions and for the organisation of health services and medical care:

- promoting women's and girls' physical and mental health, including through improving access to evidence-based information on women's health and sexuality;
- protecting women's health by supporting and complementing, in full respect of the Treaties, health action by the Member States regarding women's access to sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- ensuring respectful and high quality obstetric, gynaecological, antenatal, childbirth and postnatal care, free from discrimination and combatting harmful practices;
- access to affordable menstrual hygiene products and contraception;
- gender-sensitive medical research, clinical trials, diagnostics and treatments.





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Principle 3: Equal pay and economic empowerment

Every woman has the right to equal pay for equal work or work of equal value and to be economically independent.

Upholding and advancing this principle includes pursuing the following objectives:

- closing the gender pay gap and gender pension gaps;
- tackling the undervaluation of jobs predominantly done by women and ensuring pay transparency;
- combating women's poverty, including energy poverty;
- promoting financial literacy among women and girls as a foundation to their financial security and resilience;
- promoting gender-equal access to finances and economic opportunities, including entrepreneurship;
- promoting taxation and social protection reforms that support the economic independence of women;
- promoting women's rights and the economic empowerment of women through economic and trade policy, international development and partnerships.



Principle 4: Work-life balance and care

Every woman has the right to balance her professional and private life.

Upholding and advancing this principle includes pursuing the following objectives:

- promoting the equal sharing of care responsibilities between women and men;
- promoting working conditions that facilitate the reconciliation of private, family and working lives;
- widespread access to flexible work arrangements for all;
- encouraging fathers to take up paternity and family leaves;
- ensuring affordable, accessible, and quality early-childhood education and care for all children;
- affordable and accessible high-quality long-term care;
- promoting investment and formal employment in the care sector, ensuring quality care jobs.





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Principle 5: Equal employment opportunities and adequate working conditions



Every woman has the right to equal employment opportunities and adequate working conditions.

Upholding and advancing this principle includes pursuing the following objectives:

- eradicating the gender employment gap, paying specific attention to occupational segregation and to the employment of under-represented groups;
- quality jobs and decent work, taking into account, in particular, psycho-social risks at the workplace, working time arrangements, access to training, and equal career prospects;
- eliminating gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the world of work;
- ensuring a high level of protection of health and safety against risks in the physical working environment and safety equipment fitting female workers.

Principle 6: Quality and inclusive education



Every girl and woman has the right to high quality and inclusive education and training, free from discrimination.

Upholding and advancing this principle includes pursuing the following objectives, while fully respecting Member States' competences in this area:

- promoting a gender-balanced perspective in education, including in curricula, teaching materials, textbooks, teacher training and guidance, at all levels of education;
- promoting comprehensive sexuality education;
- ensuring equal opportunities and access to vocational training as well as upskilling and reskilling;
- ensuring zero-tolerance for gender-based violence, harassment and bullying in education;
- encouraging girls and women to engage in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics sectors;
- encouraging boys and men to engage in the education, health and welfare sectors;
- encouraging women and girls' acquisition of digital skills and competences, including in artificial intelligence.





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Principle 7: Political participation and equal representation

Every woman has the right to actively and safely participate in public life.

Upholding and advancing this principle includes pursuing the following objectives:

- promoting gender-balanced representation in positions of responsibility and decision-making and women's full, equal and meaningful participation in all spheres and at all levels of public and political life;
- promoting gender balance in management and decision-making at all management levels and across the public and private sectors;
- promoting gender balance in participation and leadership in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts and crises, preparedness, security and peace-building;
- ensuring the safety of women in public life and zero tolerance towards violence, hatred or harassment against women and girls in public life, both online and off-line;
- preventing and combatting sexism in media and advertising.



Principle 8: Institutional mechanisms that deliver on women's rights

Advancing women's rights requires effective gender mainstreaming, financing and institutional infrastructure, as well as gender-sensitive research, data collection, design and planning that address women's needs with an intersectional approach.

Upholding and advancing this principle includes pursuing the following objectives:

- specialised institutional infrastructure for gender equality and gender mainstreaming, and independent equality bodies;
- sustainable funding for gender equality policies, and for women's rights organisations;
- effective gender mainstreaming in all policy areas and in budgets, including the EU budget;
- leveraging diplomacy and strategic partnerships to promote gender equality on the global political agenda;
- research and innovation addressing women's needs and closing the gender knowledge gap;
- the systematic collection of sex-disaggregated data and assessing the gender impact of public policies;
- systematic consideration of anthropometric data and factors affecting women's lives, including in relevant European standards;
- gender-sensitive spatial planning and transport infrastructure;
- the design and use of digital tools mindful of gender equality, bias and gender stereotypes.





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Endorsed in Brussels on 16th October 2025

European Commission

Hadjia Lahbib, European Commissioner for Equality, Preparedness and Crisis Management

European Economic and Social Committee

Oliver Röpke, President

European Committee of the Regions

Kata Tüttő, President

European Parliament¹

European Investment Bank Group

Nadia Calviño, President

Slovenia

Luka Mesec, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

Austria

Eva-Maria Holzleitner, Federal Minister for Women, Science and Research

Belgium

Rob Beenders, Minister of Consumer Protection, the fight against Social Fraud, Persons with Disabilities and Equal Opportunities

Bulgaria

Borislav Gutsanov, Minister of Labour and Social Policy

Croatia

Marin Piletić, Minister of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy

Cyprus

Marios Hartsiotis, Minister of Justice and Public Order

Czechia

Martin Dvorak, Minister for European Affairs of the Czech Republic

Denmark

Magnus Heunicke, Minister for the Environment and Minister for Gender Equality

Estonia

Erkki Keldo, Minister of Economy and Industry

Finland

Sanni Grahn-Laasonen, Minister of Social Security

France

Aurore Bergé, Minister for Equality and Fight against Discrimination

Germany

Karin Prien, Federal Minister for Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Greece

Domna Maria Michailidou, Minister of Social Cohesion and Family Affairs

Hungary

Balázs Hankó, Minister for Culture and Innovation

Ireland

Norma Foley, Minister for Children, Disability and Equality

¹European Parliament resolution of 9 October 2025 on the declaration of principles for a gender-equal society (2025/2780(RSP))



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Italy

Eugenia Roccella, Minister for the Family, Natality and Equal Opportunities

Latvia

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Lithuania

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Luxembourg

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The Netherlands

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Slovakia

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Spain

Ana Redondo, Minister of Equality

Sweden

Nina Larsson, Minister for Gender Equality

Portugal

Carla Rodrigues, Deputy Minister and for Youth and for Equality

Malta

Rebecca Buttigieg, Parliamentary Secretary for Reforms and Equality

Poland

Katarzyna Kotula, Secretary of State for Equality in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister

European Trade Union Confederation

Gloria Mills, President of the ETUC Women Committee

European Institute for Gender Equality

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European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

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Equinet – the European Network of Equality Bodies

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Anne Gaspard, Co-Director

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Emőke Péter, President

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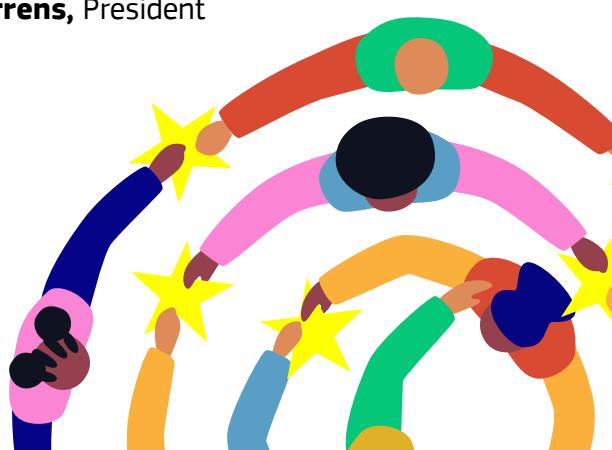
Anu Viks, Chair Executive Council BPW Europe, Regional Coordinator BPW Europe

Business and Professional Women France

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COFACE Families Europe

Antonia Torrens, President





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End Female Genital Mutilation European Network (End FGM EU)

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European Women's Lobby

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