



RED DE POLÍTICAS DE IGUALDAD
ENTRE MUJERES Y HOMBRES
en los Fondos Comunitarios

Network on Gender Equality Policies in Community funds in Spain

The Network on Gender Equality Policies in Community funds was established in 2009 with the aim of making the gender equality objectives set out in the Community and national regulations applicable to the IEE and Cohesion Funds a reality. <http://www.igualdadgenerofondoscomunitarios.es/> (only in Spanish)

The Network of Policies for Equality between Women and Men, co-financed by the ERDF, is composed of the bodies responsible for gender equality policies and the administration and management of European Funds in the State Administration, the Autonomous Communities and Cities, and the European Commission.

Based on the experience and the good results in the 2007-2013 programming period, the activity of the Network has continued in the current programming period 2014-2020, reaching ten years of existence in 2019. This track record has strengthened its essential role in coordinating and developing gender equality in the European Structural and Investment Funds (ERDF, ESF, FEMP and EAFRD).

The fundamental objective of the Network is to contribute to the **gender mainstreaming** in the use of the IEE Funds in Spain.

The Network's work approach has the following specific objectives:

- Generate new links and strengthen the existing ones between the Women's Institute and the intermediary bodies and/or national administrators, and between the regional equality bodies and the regional intermediary bodies and/or funds managers.
- To strengthen the performance of the existing equality bodies in the Autonomous Communities, in order to combine efforts and reinforce the real and effective application of gender equality in the European Funds framework.
- To highlight the Network's value and achievements to date, giving more visibility to the accomplishments and gaining greater practical implementation of the results obtained.
- Strengthen the Network's structure and content in terms of its performance in the assistance on the implementation of the principle of equality between women and men.
- To make the Network into the key forum for improving the integration of equality between women and men in the programming period 2021-2027, promoting coordination between the managing bodies and the equality bodies.

To this end, the Network has conducted a work over the years that has involved:

- Development of tools that facilitate the introduction of the gender approach in all phases of programming.
- Training of those who work directly with structural funds.
- Compilation of useful documentation to incorporate the gender approach.
- Coordination between the different actors involved in the management of funds
- Compilation of best practices.
- Convening between the various bodies involved in the IEE Funds.

The development of all these actions has been articulated through the celebration of plenary meetings of the Network, technical meetings, technical conferences with specific themes, the ad hoc creation of working groups on topics of interest to members of the Network, meetings of the Forum for coordination of the Equality Bodies of the Autonomous Communities, training and capacity building in the Autonomous Communities, the creation of a web platform that brings together all the information related to the Network, its actions and the IEE funds, which is being updated.

The important collaboration established between the Network and the Funds Managing Authorities should be highlighted, which has involved an active participation in the elaboration of the Association Agreement; in the creation of the ESF, ERDF and FEMP Multiregional Programmes ; in the elaboration of the Selection Criteria of Operations, for the preparation of the Evaluation Plans and Communication Strategies of the IEE Funds Operational Programmes and the definition by the Network of the Model of Equality Opinion of the Operational Programmes of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020.

Looking to the present and the future

All the experience accumulated over these ten years has allowed the Network to expand its range of action, which is transformed into new challenges that arise every year.

In this regard, by 2020, in addition to continuing to work along the same lines as in the past, the intention is to set in motion the creation of networks at a regional level, composed of the equality bodies and the intermediary bodies and/or fund managers of each one of the Spain regions.

The aim of creating these networks is to replicate the successful formula of the national network in the various Autonomous Communities and cities, to ensure that the horizontal principle of equality between women and men is properly implemented in all regional operational programmes.

This way of articulation will allow to reinforce coordination and cooperation between equality bodies and the bodies responsible for developing the programming of the funds for the next period. The active support of the equality bodies in the planning and design phase of the operational programmes will make it possible to apply a dual strategy that contemplates both positive actions and gender mainstreaming, thus influencing the processes and also the policies, seeking to guarantee the impact of the actions contemplated in the operational programmes by reducing or eliminating the gender gaps that have been detected.

Transferability of a successful model of collaboration and public policy management

Taking into account,

Equality between women and men is enshrined in the European Union Founding Treaties and therefore must be applied transversally in each and every Community policy, starting with the Cohesion Policy.

The integration of the gender perspective in the actions co-financed by the IEE Funds is a legal obligation established by the European regulations,

Equality between women and men is a matter of social justice and an indicator of the level of democracy in a society.

Achieving equality between women and men builds more sustainable, competitive, and economically profitable societies.

The working formula based on coordination and cooperation between equality bodies and intermediary and fund management bodies gives efficiency and quality in the results obtained.

The Network on Gender Equality Policies in Community Funds recommends to transfer the experience at European level with the creation of a Transnational Network on Gender Mainstreaming in the European Cohesion, Structural and Investment Funds. This Network would be composed of representatives of equality bodies, intermediary bodies and national fund managers from all Member States, representatives of DG Regio and DG Justice/Equality.

This European Network was already created during the period 2007-2013

The objective of this Transnational Network would be to establish a space for collaboration and debate to achieve the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the actions co-financed by European funds in the EU Member States.

The creation of a Transnational Network of this type would favour the exchange of knowledge and experiences between the different Member States, allow the sharing of resources and facilitate a common strategy that would make easier a direct and fluid communication with the European Commission for the definition of the strategy to be followed for the implementation of the gender perspective in the implementation of the European IEE and Cohesion Funds. In short, to promote the values of the EU, **building a more social, more competitive and more egalitarian Europe.**