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Empowering women
in EU and neighbouring countries

salto|youth

Summary

EMPOWERING WOMEN
in EU and neighbouring countries
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CONTENT

Introduction

The idea of this study has been growing since the implementation of the cycles of "Empowering women" seminars organised by SALTO Euro-Med RC and the French National agency with the backing of various stakeholders.

The seminars were conceived as partnership building activities, giving participants' own experiences a fundamental role in the development of the process. Participants came from both EU Member States and neighbouring countries (MEDA, SEE and EECA).

In the seminar we set out to analyse the topic of gender equality through the constructive lens of women's empowerment and by touching on different themes. In the first seminar (Strasbourg, end 2010), we investigated the concept of empowerment in general and more specifically in a variety of sectors (economy, politics, education and health). In the second session (Paris, beginning 2012), we limited the concept to the area of the third sector (community and voluntary sectors, not-for-personal-profit social firms), focusing also on the approach to gender equality in NGOs, deliberately intending to be a bit provocative by analysing the effective actions developed for gender equality and women's empowerment "at home".

The last seminar (Paris, 2013) was imagined as a bigger event, with more

«Remember, no one can make you feel inferior without your consent». Eleanor Roosevelt

participants and took place simultaneously with a conference on the topic organized by INJEP. Our goal was to examine how non-formal education could reinforce young women's employability skills and competences and help them in the fight against job segregation.

When we began writing a paper to try to pin down all the different issues after such an in-depth examination of a wide and complex topic during the seminars, we immediately came up against a major obstacle, namely the variety of themes and approaches, which would have required an encyclopaedia to analyse in any real detail! The decision was taken, therefore, to limit this study to an overview of the

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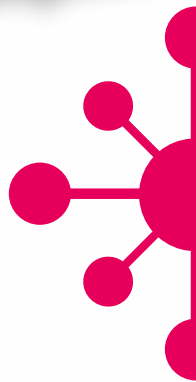
different areas in women's empowerment and also looks at the different approaches to the topic.

A basic clarification needs to be made at the outset: women's empowerment is not a 'women only' issue and the responsibility for action is not only in women's hands as it is not only women who will benefit from it.
Only when men (and women) understand that women's empowerment is essential for the growth and

development of societies will we have effective and sustainable empowerment policies.
We will therefore be speaking of gender empowerment, not just women's empowerment.

This study wants to be above all it a tool and a source of inspiration for youth workers active in the field.
We hope you will enjoy reading it and be inspired!

THE CONCEPT OF EMPOWERMENT

The term of 'empowerment' is now widely used, but quite often its definition remains rather hazy and the meaning it is given depends on the context.

This difficulty is further enhanced when different languages come into the equation and a precise translation for the term is needed but rarely found. Again, the different contextual meanings make it very hard to find an equivalent term in most languages (in some Latin languages a periphrasis has to be used to avoid having to employ obsolete terms, while in most Nordic languages the term does not exist at all). Consequently, the English term is generally transposed into other languages, making it even more difficult to spread its meaning and essence among non-experts. The etymology refers to the concept of power and the "investment of legal power" (i.e. permission to act) and literal translations also evoke this aspect:
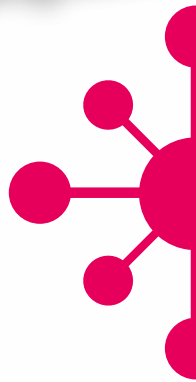
The origin of the theory of empowerment is attributed to Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed and his premise of liberation through education (via three steps: "conscientizing" - learning about social inequality; "inspiring" - encouraging people by making them feel confident about achieving social equality and finally "liberating" them).
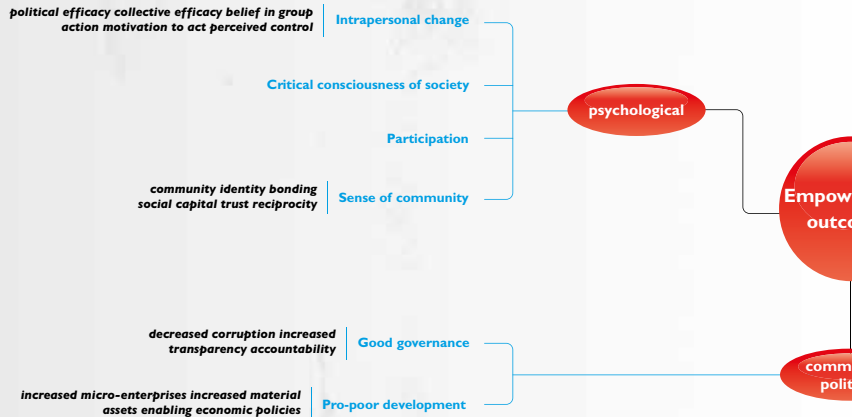
In the first empirical studies - mainly in the context of Afro-American civil right struggles in the 70s - the term was used in a more literal sense (i.e. "to give power to") while later on the term was given a more articulated meaning, modifying the concept of static power to a power which can be transformed, acquired and above all shared. Empowerment refers both to the dynamic of the PROCESS and to its OUTCOMES. Linked to Freire's theory, we find the concepts developed by Parpart, Rai and Staudt of POWER WITHIN, POWER WITH and POWER TO: "empowerment must be understood as including both individual conscientization (power within) as well as the ability to work collectively that can lead to politicized power with others, which provides the power to bring about change."[1]

power within

power with

power to
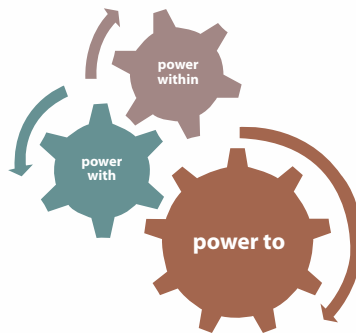
"To be empowered" thus became a constant in the use of the term in different fields and linked to the outcome of influencing people's own lives and society itself. Empowerment connects both external and internal change in an interlaced evolution and may be applied at different levels:

1. Mann Hyung Hur, Empowerment in terms of theoretical perspectives: exploring a typology of the process and components across disciplines, Journal of Community Psychology, Volume 34, Issue 5, pages 523–540, September 2006, p.529

political efficacy collective efficacy belief in group action motivation to act perceived control — **Intrapersonal change**

Critical consciousness of society

Participation

community identity bonding social capital trust reciprocity — **Sense of community**

psychological

Empow outco

decreased corruption increased transparency accountability — **Good governance**

increased micro-enterprises increased material assets enabling economic policies — **Pro-poor development**

comm polit

- Personal/psychological
- Organisational
- Community/political

Individual empowerment became closely linked to the community and gradually transformed into a bottom-up strategy, in contrast to the top-down approaches of the 60s and 70s: "Empowerment is an action-oriented concept with a focus on removal of formal or informal barriers and on transforming power relations between communities and institutions and government. It is based on an assumption of community cultural assets that can be strengthened through dialogue and action".[2]

This bottom-up approach has characterized the empowerment processes since the 90s in the field of social sciences and in other disciplines such as psychology, social work, education, gender studies, sociology, political theory and management and above all in the development field[3].

Wallerstein gives precise strategies and consequent outcomes for the different fields of action in empowerment, focusing on personal skills, supportive empowerment and attentive policies.
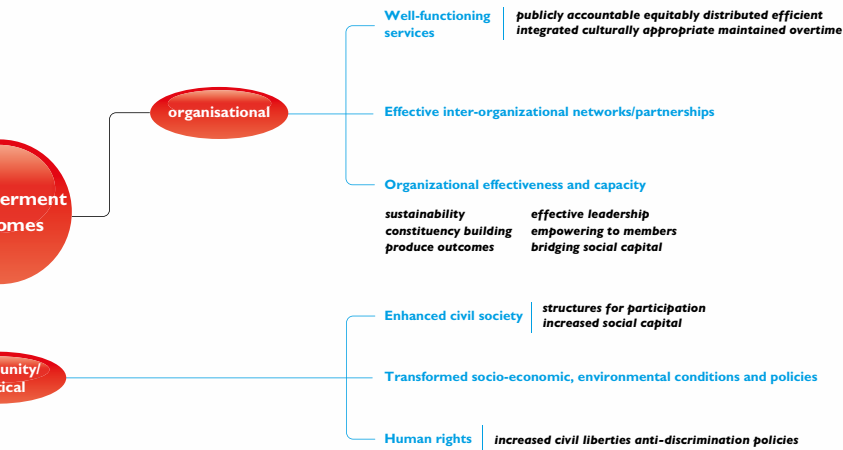
Women's empowerment

To understand women's empowerment it is important to keep in mind that it relates to gender and thus to society in its totality and not simply to the

2. Wallerstein Nina, What is the evidence on effectiveness of empowerment to improve health?, WHO Regional Office for Europe's Health Evidence Network (HEN) February 2006 , p.18.
3. For the United Nations it becomes a pillar in fostering people participation in decision-making processes for the achievement of goals of poverty reduction, social inclusion and sustainable development: "it is the process of enabling people to increase control over their lives, to gain control over the factors and decisions that shape their lives, to increase their resources and qualities and to build capacities to gain access, partners, networks, a voice, in order to gain control" (Empowerment: what does it mean to you, UN social development networks http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ngo/outreachmaterials/empower-ment-booklet.pdf)

Well-functioning services — *publicly accountable equitably distributed efficient integrated culturally appropriate maintained overtime*

organisational

Effective inter-organizational networks/partnerships

Organizational effectiveness and capacity

*sustainability
constituency building
produce outcomes*

*effective leadership
empowering to members
bridging social capital*

Enhanced civil society — *structures for participation
increased social capital*

Transformed socio-economic, environmental conditions and policies

Human rights — *increased civil liberties anti-discrimination policies*

feminine part of it, which is why we should speak of gender empowerment rather than women's empowerment: "Gender equality implies a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, outcomes, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. Equality between men and women exists when both sexes are able to share equally in the distribution of power and influence; have equal opportunities for financial independence through work or through setting up businesses; enjoy equal access to education and the opportunity to develop personal ambitions. A critical aspect of promoting gender equality is the empowerment of women, with a focus on identifying and redressing power imbalances and giving women more autonomy to manage their own lives. Women's empowerment is vital

to sustainable development and the realization of human rights for all".[4] As mentioned earlier, it is quite difficult to find a single and comprehensive definition of women's empowerment, although we can find several specific ones linked to a specific field of action. We are going to focus here on more general approaches, common to all the contexts, which illustrate the essential components involved:

1. women's sense of self-worth;

2. their right to have and to determine choices;

3. their right to have access to opportunities and resources;

4. their right to have the power to control their own lives, both inside and outside the home;

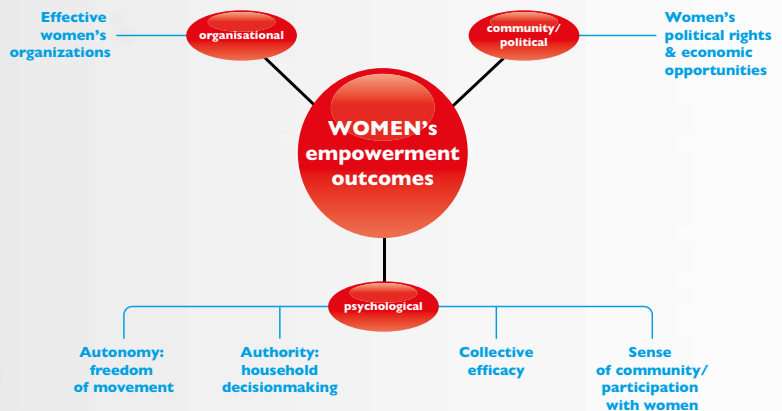5. their ability to influence the direction
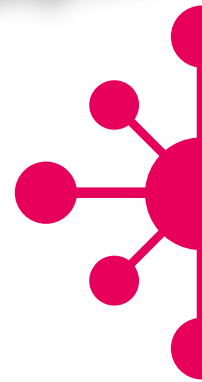
of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally[5].

Recurrent terms often overlap in the various definitions of women's empowerment: options, choice, control, power and above all agency (i.e. self-efficacy: women are actors themselves of the process of change, which does not necessarily mean that they are solely responsible for the process; the bottom-up process has to be supported by top-down community resources). Agency is one of the characteristics of women empowerment that distinguishes it from other gender topics (i.e. gender equality and equity) together with the fact of it being a PROCESS from a state of inequality to a state of equality. The fact that it is so changeable makes it very hard to measure. This process is a win-win process, where there are no losers or winners (women or men) and everyone benefits: "I believe that gender equality is not a zero-sum equation: for women to gain power, men need not lose it. We can share. It will do no harm. The letters «anti» do not appear in women's empowerment.
No one is losing. It's all win"[6].
Women empowerment is - or rather "should be" - a transversal issue in all the sectors from psychology to political theory and should involve all levels of individual and community life. Wallerstein explains the different outcomes as follows[7]

Effective women's organizations

organisational

community/ political

Women's political rights & economic opportunities

WOMEN's empowerment outcomes

psychological

Autonomy: freedom of movement

Authority: household decisionmaking

Collective efficacy

Sense of community/ participation with women

5. http://www.un.org/popin/unfpa/taskforce/guide/iatfwemp.gdl.html
6. Willa Shalit, Four Principles of Women's Empowerment, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/willa-shalit/women-empowerment_b_1320695.html
7. Feminist approaches tend to combine the personal and the political levels as two sides of one coin, not dividing what is worth publicly speaking and what should remain private: "This division defined women's problems as private, prevented public recognition of their importance, excluded them and separated them from one another, and thus prevented them having a community life which would strengthen their perceptions, establishing a vicious circle that augmented their exclusion and institutionalized their disconnection from politics." (http://www.mpow.org/elisheva_sadan_empowerment_chapter2.pdf)

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

UN and Beijing Declaration

The concept of women's empowerment has been clearly recognised since the 1990s, when the topic was included in declarations and platforms for action in a variety of intervention sectors (the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the 1993 Human Rights Conference, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the 1995 World Summit for Social Development), reaching a peak with the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 where the Platform for Action (BPfA) expressly introduced an agenda for women's empowerment: "It aims at accelerating the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and at removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. This means that the principle of shared power and responsibility should be established between women and men at home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities."[8] The platform highlights twelve critical areas for urgent intervention, common in different measures to women all over the world[9].
The platform reference to the stereoty-

ping women encounter in every sphere and at every level is also noteworthy. However, it has to be said that while considerable progress has been made in many countries, we are still far from the objectives set.

Women's empowerment was included in the list of eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)


to be reached by 2015, which also highlighted the fact that women continue to encounter discrimination in many countries with regard to access to education, work, economic assets and participation in government.

EU legislations

Since the majority of interventions regarding women's empowerment refer to development policies and approaches, gender inequality is still a crucial arena for all countries, in different measures and with different priorities. The Constitution of the European Community set out in the Treaty of Rome (1957) already mentioned gender equality as a fundamental principle in article 119 (now 157 TFUE), referring to equal pay for equal work . In the labour relations field, the decision from the European

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8. http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/plat1.htm
9. Women and Poverty; Education and Training of Women; Women and Health; Violence against Women; Women and Armed Conflict; Women and the Economy; Women in Power and Decision-making; Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of Women; Human Rights of Women; Women and the Media; Women and the Environment; The Girl Child.
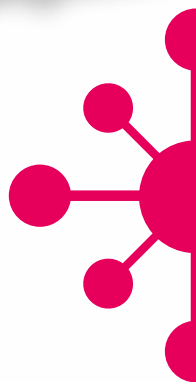
Court of Justice in 1977 in the Defrenne vs Sabena case represented an important milestone, with the Court supporting the principle of equal remuneration for equal work.[10]

Gender equality and parity between men and women were reiterated and expanded in both the **Maastricht Treaty (1992**, see art. 3 and 119) and the **Amsterdam Treaty (1997)**, where the concept of discrimination based on sex was introduced (art 13). The controversial decision in the **Kalanke v Freie Hansestadt Bremen** case from the European Court of Justice in 1995 declared affirmative action with automatic preference given to women to be unlawful, stressing the need for proper legislation to ensure substantial equality (concept repeated in the Marshall decision in 1997). With the coming into effect of the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000)**, any form of discrimination[11] was banned (art 21) and equality between men and women reaffirmed in all spheres of individual and social life (art 23). The Charter became binding with the **Lisbon Treaty (2009)** that stressed the necessity of affirmative action to guarantee equal rights to the under-represented sex.

With its **Strategy for Equality Between Women And Men 2010-2015**[12] the EU has established a basis for concrete steps to close the gaps in gender equality. It incorporates the priorities defined by the **Women's Charter (2010**[13]**)**, it constitutes the Commission's work programme and describes the key actions planned for the period 2010-2015. The strategy also provides a basis for cooperation between the Commission, other European institutions, Member States and other stakeholders, within the framework of the **European Pact for Gender Equality**[14]. In the forward, Viviane Reding - Vice-President of the European Commission - envisages a common effort to pursue gender equality as it is "more than just a slogan; it is our social and economic responsibility". The strategy starts from the basic concept that inequalities between women and men violate fundamental human rights but goes further by pointing out how gender equality can contribute significantly to the achievement of the objectives of **Europe 2020**[15]. The Strategy follows the five priority areas defined in the Women's Charter, adding a new area dealing with horizontal discrimination issues. For each area, it indicates key actions based on the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific measures. The six priority areas and the main topics of the key actions:

Gender equality mechanisms in neighbouring countries

The external policy stresses the role of the EU in promoting human rights and women's empowerment: the matter of gender equality is regularly reviewed in neighbouring policies and direct pressure to improve equal

10. the concept of work of equal value was introduced by the directive 75/117/CEE. **11.** The concept of indirect discrimination will be dealt with the directive 2002/73/CE and expanded in the directive 2006/54/CE. **12.** http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/employment_and_social_policy/equality_between_men_and_women/em0037_en.htm. **13.** Adopted to mark the 15th anniversary of the BPfA and the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). **14.** Adopted in 2006 to encourage Member States and the European Union to take action on closing gender gaps in the labour market, promoting a better work-life balance for all and reinforcing governance through gender mainstreaming and better monitoring. **15.** EU's growth strategy with five ambitious objectives - on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy - to be reached by 2020

Srategy of Equality between Women ans Men 2010 - 2015

equal economic indipendence
- Europe 2020 strategy
- female entrepreneurship and self-employment
- family-related leave
- childcare facilities
- immigration and integration of migrants

equal pay for equal work and work of equal value
- transparency of pay
- equal pay initiatives at the workplace
- European Equal Pay Day
- woman in non-traditional professions

equality in decision-making
- improve the gender balance in decision making
- monitor the 25% target for women in top level decision-making position in research
- monitor progress tow ards the aim 40% of members of one sex in committees and expert groups established by the Commission
- support efforts to promote greater participation by women in European Parliament elections including as candidates.

Dignity, integrity and an end to gender violences
- EU-wide strategy on combating violence against women
- ensure that the EU asylum legislation takes into account gender equality
- draw up Men's Health report

Gender equality in external actions
- monitor and support adherence to the Copenhagen criteria for accession to the EU
- implement the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empow
- encourage ENP partner countries to promote gendre equality
- integrate gender considerations into EU humanitairian aid.

Horizonal issues
- non discriminatory gender roles
- law against sex descrimination
- implementation of the Bejing Platform for Action
- annual report

treatment between men and women is applied on candidate and potential candidate countries.

In South-East and Eastern Europe and in Caucasus countries, the period following BPfA has seen numerous changes in socio-political structures and a growing attention to the issue of gender. The approach of the centrally planned economy during the Soviet period brought fundamental changes to the status of women (guaranteeing equal access to education, employment and participation in social, cultural,

and political activities): the Soviet Union had the highest rates for women's participation in the world (the Soviet Communist Party introduced the system of quotas for women in all elected bodies in 1937). However, real equality was never reached, with the female workforce remaining concentrated in subsidized sectors of the economy (see the idea of the five Cs, page 18) and only on rare occasions were women to be found in top positions, either in management or in politics. Following the dismantling of the Soviet Union, the situation of women got even worse (quotas were abolished and political participation collapsed, violence against women rose and economic independence was totally erased). During the democratisation process in the region, while gender equality institutions and bodies were created, cultural barriers were raised at the same time, with the patriarchal

system reclaiming its position of power. The effort made by governments in signing international agreements and conventions (CEDAW was ratified without reservation by all the States) and in establishing bodies for gender equality at a national and local level are insufficient: while a great deal has been done, stronger commitment is needed to make the efforts efficient and sustainable[16].

In **Southern Mediterranean** neighbouring countries, the European Commission and UN Women have launched a new joint regional programme for the region and its women entitled **Spring Forward for Women**: the programme aims to support national and regional stakeholders to empower women economically and politically in the context of the changes that have followed the Arab Spring[17].

The path towards gender equality finds obstacles in these countries that are very difficult to overcome: while CEDAW was ratified by 9 countries[18], all presented reservations regarding articles 2 (policy measures to curb discrimination), 9 (nationality), 15 (equality before the law, freedom of movement), 16 (marriage and family law) and 29 (dispute regulation/supremacy of international law). Nevertheless, the commitment to CEDAW and other international agreements has definitely brought changes in the process of gender equality (mainly regarding the revisions of family codes with different approaches

16. For a deep analysis of the mechanisms for gender equality in the area see: Abdurazakova, D., Strengthening national mechanisms for gender equality and the empowerment of women - National Mechanisms for Gender Equality in South-East and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia - Regional Study, United Nations 2010 (www.unece.org). **17.** http://www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id=475&id_type=10. **18.** Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Tunisia by signature while Algeria, Lebanon, Libya and Morocco by accession and by the Palestinian Authority (symbolically).

and successes on themes such as divorce, polygamy and forced marriage[19]). Strong obstacles to real equality remain, however: equal treatment of all citizens is often not translated into legislation, penal codes often discriminate against women and cultural heritage is often misused to justify discrimination against women.

The Istanbul Process was launched by the first EuroMed Ministerial conference on "Strengthening the Role of Women in Society", held one year after the Barcelona Declaration, which made equality between men and women one of its objectives: "The conference adopted a common Framework of Action for five years,

indicating a true commitment to work for universal human rights and specifically the equal access of men and women to full economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. (…) The message is clear: as long as we do not help women to exercise their role in all spheres of life, society will never reach its full development potential[20]."
The main topics dealt with were:

1) Women's rights as a guarantee of human rights and greater democracy

2) Women's access to education and employment

3) The role of culture and the media as key instruments for changing perceptions of gender.

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19. See Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality in the Southern Mediterranean – EUROMED (http://www.euromedgenderequality.org/image.php?id=295)
20. Introduction to the Istanbul Conference conclusions by Benita Ferrero-Waldner (Commissioner responsible for external relations and neighbourhood policy of the European Commission) (http://www.euromedgenderequality.org/image.php?id=393)
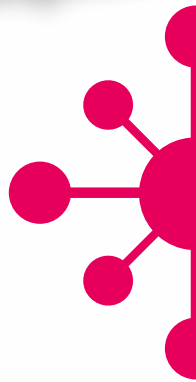
WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN DIFFERENT SPHERES OF LIFE AND ITS MEASUREMENT

The process of empowerment has to be understood as the change from a status to an improved one: as status is attached to a given role and women exercise several distinct roles, it is misleading speaking of a women's "status"[21] in the singular. Thus inequality and empowerment can vary from one dimension to another, from household to political participation: a woman can be empowered in one field but still facing strong inequalities in others.

For this reason, measurement of empowerment is extremely difficult, as indicators derive from various dimensions - with sub-domains - that all have to be considered[22]: economic, socio-cultural, familial/interpersonal, legal, political, and psychological. The indicators also refer to various levels of social aggregation: the household and the community, as well as regional, national and even global levels. Several committees and institutions have been established at international and European levels for the promotion and monitoring of gender equality parameters:

- **The European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM)** is engaged in the promotion of gender equality in all policy areas reviewed by the European Parliament.

- **The High Level Group on gender mainstreaming** was created in 2001 to support the principle EU bodies on gender policies and is the main forum for planning the strategic follow-up to the BPfA, including the development of indicators. It has also contributed since 2003 to the preparation of the **Report on equality between women and men.**

- **The European Institute for Gender equality (EIGE)** - established in 2007 - is a centre at European level that collects, analyses and diffuses reliable and comparable data regarding gender equality. The institute has developed an online index - the Gender **Equality Index** - that was launched in June 2013, although operational in terms of data collection since 2010. The need for an index on gender equality in the EU was first mentioned in the Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006–2010 and included in its strategic action plan for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015. The index collects and measures data on gender equality - not women's empowerment - by combining gender indicators in six core domains (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health) and two satellite domains (intersecting inequalities and violence). The Gender Equality Index assigns scores to

21. Acharya, Meena and Lynn Bennett, Women and the Subsistence Sector: Economic Participation and Household Decision-making in Nepal, Working Paper Number 526, Washington DC: World Bank, 1983
22. Malhotra, Measuring Women's Empowerment as a Variable in International Development, Gender and Development Group of the World Bank, 2002

Member States ranging from 1 (total inequality) to 100 (full equality).

- The World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index examines the gap between men and women in four fundamental categories: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment.
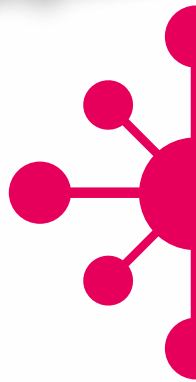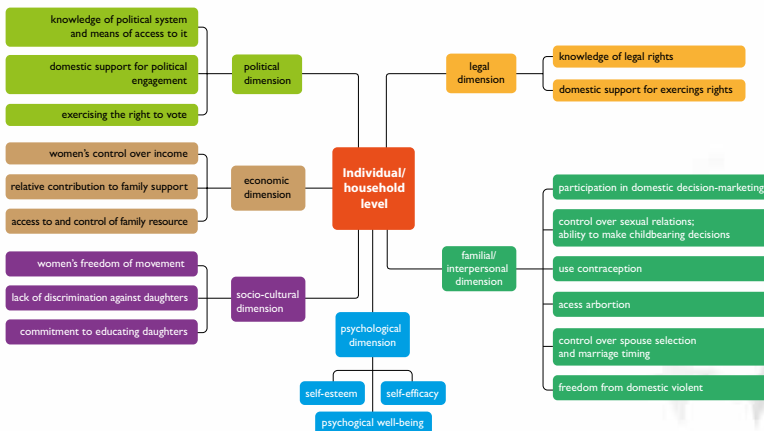
Empowering women in the private/household life

The empowerment of women in private life is more affected by social and cultural constraints than other spheres: it touches on sensitive topics such as reproductive rights, marriage habits, discrimination against daughters and women's and girls' self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Policies and customs have a strong impact on household management and consequently on women's empowerment. General indicators have proven to be difficult to adapt to different cultures.

Malhotra gives the following ones for empowerment measurement: While the EIGE index takes several indicators regarding gender equality data into account, I will now focus on the domain of time (i.e. compromised time sharing between job, care-taking and other social activities). Using the index, the European Union reaches a score of 45.5 regarding care activities and a sad 33.0 regarding social activities, with an average score of 38.8: when we examine the scores by Member State, we find huge discrepancies between the average score of 17.3 for Bulgaria and 71.3 for the Netherlands. However, the index is definitely a useful means for pushing towards adequate reforms in the field to reach the goals of the Strategy for Equality between Women And Men 2010-2015 and consequently those of Europe 2020.

knowledge of political system and means of access to it

domestic support for political engagement

exercising the right to vote

political dimension

women's control over income

relative contribution to family support

access to and control of family resource

economic dimension

women's freedom of movement

lack of discrimination against daughters

commitment to educating daughters

socio-cultural dimension

Individual/household level

legal dimension

knowledge of legal rights

domestic support for exercings rights

familial/interpersonal dimension

participation in domestic decision-marketing

control over sexual relations; ability to make childbearing decisions

use contraception

acess arbortion

control over spouse selection and marriage timing

freedom from domestic violent

psychological dimension

self-esteem   self-efficacy

psychological well-being

The **European Pact for Gender Equality** was adopted in **2006** by the European Council to bring about a decrease in gender gaps in the labour market between Member States, especially through the promotion of a better work-life balance.

Work-life balance means harmonizing, standardizing the needs, activities and interests in key planning and organizational management areas in families, in private and public companies and in society as a whole.

The so-called «reconciliation policies» can be divided into:

a) interventions that reduce or otherwise articulate the working time (part-time, job-sharing, time bank, etc.).

b) means that free time (differentiated articulation of parental leave, company crèches, additional support structures for children and the elderly, etc.)..

An interesting in-depth analysis has been carried out by EIGE (as part of the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action across the Member States on a yearly basis) on the topic (Reconciliation of Work and Family Life as a Condition of Equal Participation in the Labour Market) and released early this year.

The research analysis ranges from legislative achievements in the Member States in related topics (maternity, paternity and parental leave) to sex disaggregated data on job/care/ social activities time reconciliation.
The indicators used in the report refer to BPfA specified domains: allocation of parental leave between women and men, types of childcare services, policies to promote reconciliation of work, family and private life, use of care services for dependent elderly and the gender dimension of time distribution. The last topic gives interesting results as it focuses on the tied time[23] spent per day by each employed parent (with children under 12 years): women's workload results are much higher (with the exception of Sweden, more men than women declare that their tied time is more than 70 hours per week). In 16 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia), the percentage fell significantly between 2005 and 2010, while it increased in others (Belgium, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, and the United Kingdom).

23. "Tied time refers to the sum of paid working time (or time spent on producing goods and services as part of the aggregate domestic product), commuting time (time spent travelling to and from work), and unpaid working time (basic time spent on domestic work and other time devoted to the family: upbringing and care of children and care of dependant adults)" EIGE, Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action: Women and the Economy Reconciliation of Work and Family Life as a Condition of Equal Participation in the Labour Market p. 21.

EVERY
GIRL
IS A
SUPER
HERO
SOMETIMES

The welfare support system with dedicated services for children and elderly dependents clearly has to be reinforced in several countries and adapted to the need for flexibility imposed by the economic crisis. But a more important and difficult element still has to be faced: the cultural aspects of shared tasks in parenthood remain attached to the stereotype of men as the sole breadwinners. At the private level, a transformation in the time organization of dual-earner families is therefore needed and the multitasking roles of women need to be shared and supported.

policies should also play an important role: promoted by the the BPfA[24] as a tool for gender mainstreaming fulfilment, gender budgeting has been considered as a necessary measure by the EC Commission since 2002[25]. Interesting projects were developed in the field by UNIFEM in four South East European countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia and Serbia) from 2006 to 2010[26]: the project approached GRB in a variety of ways in terms of its promotion and implementation ("The experiment demonstrates the richness of GRB as a tool and proves that there are no cast-in-stone "recipes" for its implementation. They also demonstrate the challenges experienced in introducing a new tool in environments where sometimes even the basic preconditions for gender mainstreaming are missing")[27].

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB)

Male percentages

Female percentages

Source: EWCS

24. Strategic objective F.1. "Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources" action to be taken (i): "Facilitate, at appropriate levels, more open and transparent budget processes"
25. Résolution du Parlement européen sur le gender budgeting - Établissement des budgets publics. selon la perspective de genre (2002/2198(INI)).
26. Gender-Responsive Budgeting In South Eastern Europe: Unifem Experiences http://www.unwomen.org/~/media/Headquarters/Media/Publications/UNIFEM/GRB%20KP%20Final%20web.pdf
27. http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2010/1/gender-responsive-budgeting-in-south-eastern-europe-unifem-experiences

17
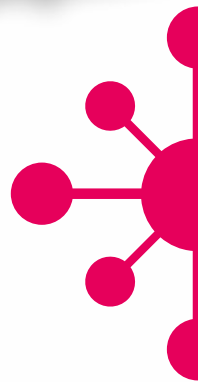
The Eurofond has conducted a survey on working conditions in Member States - **the European Working Conditions Survey EWCS 2010** - including also some SEE countries and Turkey. The results regarding the hours per week spent in paid and unpaid work (an average of 70 hours) show very different colours on the map when male and female results are compared:

In Southern Mediterranean countries, unpaid work falls almost totally on the shoulders of women, largely influenced by the socio-cultural perceptions of the female reproductive role, and is generally worse in rural locations than in urban areas[28].

Empowering women in the work world

One of the priorities of the Strategy of Equality Between Women And Men 2010-2015 is equal economic independence, which is a prerequisite of empowerment and necessary to give women the possibility of "choice". Moreover, the participation of women in the workforce becomes a condition for counterbalancing the impact of the decline in the active population and has direct effects on public finances and social protection systems. One of the objectives of Europe 2020 is to have 75% of the working-age population (20-64 years) in work. The Agenda for new skills and jobs was launched in 2010

The reconciliation of work and family time has been put forward by COFACE (The Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union) as the main theme for the European Year 2014, which is also the 20th anniversary of the UN International Year of the Family.

The campaign[29] will focus on four themes: work family life balance, improving social integration, addressing child and family poverty and providing quality employment (which will cover care services, satisfactory wages, job security and working conditions that acknowledge family life)[30]. The proposal was supported officially in February 2013 by over half of the European Parliament (388 signatures) but the EU Commission and the Member States have not yet taken the final decision.

with a view to reaching EU targets by - among other actions - improving flexibility and security in the labour market ('flexicurity'), improving the quality of jobs and ensuring better working conditions.

The graph below shows the data on female employment rates in 2012 (age 20-64) in EU Member States, pre-accession countries, EFTA, the US and Japan.

Although we have moved - at EU levels - from a female employment rate (age group 20-64) of 57.3% in 2000 to 62.5% in 2009, it should be noted that the employment rates of specific groups (older women, di-

28. Comparative Analysis Of Economic Situation In Ten South Mediterranean Countries- Euromed http://www.euromedgenderequality.org/image.php?id=211
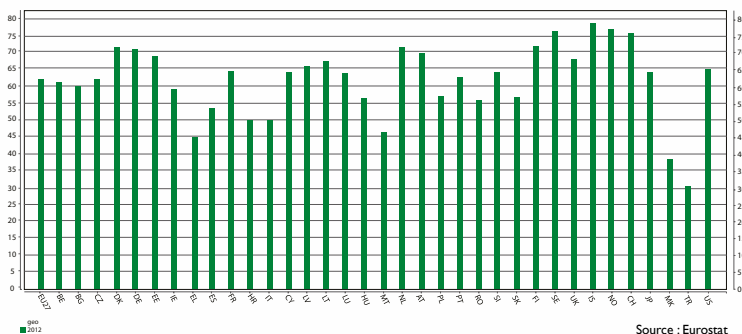**29.** http://ey2014.eu/
30. http://europa.eu/epic/news/2013/20130308-coface-2014-european-year-reconciling-work-family-life_en.htm

Employment rate by sex, age group 20-64
%
Females

geo
2012

Source : Eurostat

sabled women, migrant women and women from ethnic minorities, single parents) is still low. Self-employment and entrepreneurship is also low (33% in 2010), despite the fact that entrepreneurship is considered one of basic skills for employability.
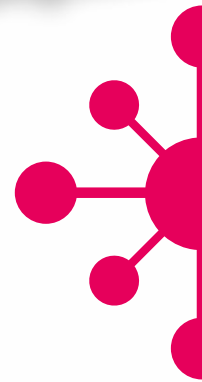
''Employability is the combination of factors which enable individuals to progress towards or get into employment, to stay in employment and to progress during their career. Employability of individuals depends on:

• personal attributes (including adequacy of knowledge and skills);

• how these personal attributes are presented on the labour market;

• the environmental and social

contexts (i.e. incentives and opportunities offered to update and validate their knowledge and skills);

• the economic context.''[31]

Ten years after the adoption of BPfA, one of the weaknesses highlighted during the Conference held in Geneva in 2004 by the **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)** is that the situation of women in UNECE has only partially improved. Women were referred to as 'the forgotten partner of social security reforms'[32] especially in terms of self-employability and entrepreneurship, where the main challenges remain access to finance, information and networks, markets and training. In other words, almost ten years down

31. CEDEFOP Terminology of European education and training policy A selection of 100 key terms, 2008 http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/Files/4064_EN.PDF

the road, the principle obstacles for women entrepreneurs remain the same.

Employability is also one of the objectives of the **European Employment Strategy (EES)** - a 'soft' law mechanism designed to coordinate employment policies in EU Member States where the objectives, priorities and targets are agreed at EU level, while the policies are implemented by national governments - adopted in 1997. In both the Lisbon 2000–2010 strategy and the Europe 2020 strategy, employability is a prerequisite for any employment rate growth.

Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015: despite EU and National legislation, an analysis of Eurostat[33]

Gender pay gap in unadjusted form
% - Nace Rev.2 (Structure of Earnings Survey methodology - 2011)

COUNTRY	GENDER PAY GAP
Belgium	9
Bulgaria	13,6
Czech Republic	26,2
Denmark	17,1
Germany	23,2
Estonia	30,9
Ireland	17,1
Greece	22
Spain	16,1
France	17,1
Italy	4,9
Cyprus	21,6
Latvia	13,4
Lithuania	21,6
Luxembourg	12,4
hungary	17,5
Malta	8,6
Netherlands	19,6
Austria	25,5
Poland	9,8
Portugal	9,2
Roumania	9
Slovenia	8,5
Slovakia	20,9
Finland	20
Sweden	17,1
UK	21,4
EU 27	17,5

shows that in 2011 in the European Union (EU-27), as well as in the Euro Area (EA-17), women's gross hourly earnings were still on average 16 % below those of men. The **unadjusted Gender Pay Gap (GPG)** represents the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees. The percentage varies widely among Member States for several reasons (career breaks due to childbearing, kind of jobs held by women). GPG can also be analysed in terms of part-time or full-time work. The GPG for part-time workers varies in EU countries by a factor of 51 percentage points - from the lowest recorded in Ireland (-17 %) to the highest in Spain (35 %) - but this data has to be evaluated based on the actual participation of men and women in part-time work.

The GPG percentage for full-time work among EU countries falls to 20 points, with the highest levels in Slovakia and Germany (20 %) and the lowest pay gap, actually no pay gap at all, in Italy (0 %). GPG is also lower for young employees and increases for older employees, especially in relation to career ladders.

The 2012 World Economic Forum Gender Gap report[34] gives interesting results on incomes with Iceland

32. http://www.unece.org/press/pr2004/04gen_p14e.html
33. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Gender_pay_gap_statistics#Gender_pay_gap_levels

WOMEN
Like men,
only cheaper.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT,
HELP US FIGHT IT.

ranked first (followed by Finland, Norway, Sweden and Ireland), while Norway ranked fourth for economic participation and Syria came last.

The inequality of earnings for work of equal value can be linked to several causes, which go beyond EU directives and recommendations and national backgrounds on collective pay agreements: the "choice" of a part-time job - 32% of women against 8.7% of men - is a crucial factor as well as the interruption in career due to childbearing.

Job gendered segregation can therefore be a cause and a result of unequal treatment. **Horizontal segregation** has been a topic of discussion since the 60s and was initially put down to the assumption that women's work - given that there were not so many female paid workers at the time – and men's work were radically

different. Since then things have changed in terms of family planning and task division but women and girls entering the job market continue to err - consciously or not - on the choice of feminine or masculine jobs: this is a common feature of all societies, especially the wealthy industrialized ones.

To understand the role of women in the work world, we need to review the roles assigned to women in history. The sector-based division of tasks has dominated societies since the Neolithic ages, until women were able to turn their condition of subjection to men around with the discovery of agriculture, which allowed them to bear children - the only activity allowed them until that point - and to produce food at the same time. In ancient western societies, in Greek[35] and Roman[36] times women were banished from active positions in society, with only Etruscan society giving high consideration to and recognising the rights of women.

Unfortunately for women, the Etruscan culture did not survive. In the Middle Ages the birth of a daughter was seen as a tragedy and the subjugation of women to men became even stronger in the Renaissance era. In modern times, we find different realities – in the lower classes, in the agricultural field and the industrial one. While in agriculture the family is seen as the main production unit, the

34. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2012.pdf
35. Euripides said that the woman was the «worst of evils», while for Plato there was no place for a woman in a good social organization. For Aristotle a woman was by nature «defective and incomplete» and Pythagoras claimed that the woman had been created «by the bad principle that created the chaos and darkness»
36. Interesting the cases of Aphrania and Hortensia, two Roman lawyers and orators. Hortensia is famous for giving a speech in front of the members of the Second Triumvirate in 42 B.C. that resulted in the partial repeal of a tax on wealthy Roman women.
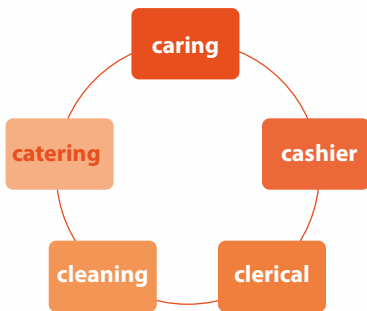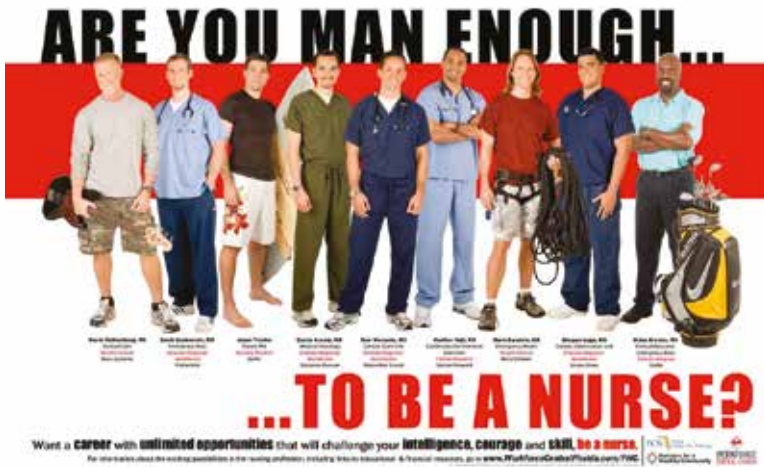
division of labour is an "internal affair" within the family: family roles and tasks are divided among men and women - although they continue to be mainly female tasks – and productive tasks are interchangeable between the sexes (especially when it comes to hired hands). Industrialization accentuated the division of labour by gender between domestic (i.e. unpaid) tasks and paid jobs. Between the XIX and XX centuries, the middle class family gradually became the core of society and large families tended to disappear, while women tended to specialize in tasks mainly related to caring of others. In the poorer classes, reproductive tasks continued to be linked to productive ones. With the arrival of third sector jobs, the segregation of women became mainly a question of money. While clerking professions and elementary teacher jobs could be considered as gender neutral occupations (no particular biological prerequisite is needed), women tend to be more employed in these sectors because their salaries are lower.

The biological factors that can be put forward as reasons for sector-based gender segregation are thus based only on prejudices and stereotypes, to which women have been subjected for centuries. Horizontal segregation continues to be a work and action theme, since notwithstanding laws and so-called positive discrimination, many ways continue to be found to create discriminating organisational barriers - strictly illegal and still hard to identify - especially when we refer to indirect **discrimination**.

Gendered vocational choices therefore plays a fundamental role, as under-investment in human capital (schooling or training) is considered as key factor in horizontal segregation: a strategic objective (B.3) in the BPfA is precisely the improvement of women's access to vocational training, science and technology and continuing education. Governments - as well as employers, workers and trade unions, international and non-governmental organizations, including women's

and youth organizations and educational institutions – need to "diversify vocational and technical training and improve access for and retention of girls and women in education and vocational training in such fields as science, mathematics, engineering, environmental sciences and technology, information technology and high technology, as well as management training"[37].

37. http://www.un.org/esa/gopher-data/conf/fwcw/off/a--20.en

ARE YOU MAN ENOUGH...

...TO BE A NURSE?

Want a **career** with **unlimited opportunities** that will challenge your **intelligence, courage** and **skill, be a nurse.**

- caring
- cashier
- clerical
- cleaning
- catering

The Oregon Center for Nursing (OCN) launched the "Are You Man Enough To Be A Nurse" campaign.

Women are clustered in a few areas of economic production. In the report The life of men and women in Europe (Eurostat, 2008)[38], the main areas of female job segregation are linked to six main categories[39] that can be summed up as the **"five Cs"** (see left). We learn from the results that "the highest concentration of women's employment in top feminised jobs is found in Cyprus and Romania, where in each case over 50 % of the women employed worked in the six largest occupational groups in 2005. In Cyprus, around 19% of women in employment worked as 'domestic and related helpers, cleaners and launderers', reflecting the importance of employment in hotels and private households in that country; and in Romania, just over 27 % worked as 'crop and animal producers', reflecting the importance of agriculture. The lowest concentration was in Italy and Latvia, where the top six occupations accounted for 32–33 % of all women in work[40].

38. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-80-07-135/EN/KS-80-07-135-EN.PDF
39. Shop salesperson and demonstrators, Domestic and related helpers, cleaners and launderers, Personal care and related workers, Other office clerks, Administrative associate professionals, Housekeeping and restaurant services workers
40. Gender segregation in the labour market - Root causes, implications and policy responses in the EU

23

EIGE's Gender Equality Index scores sector-based segregation (as an average at EU level) for women at 29.4% and 7.9% for men.

The private sector in Southern Mediterranean countries – often considered unfriendly to women due to the perception of higher costs for female employees – is currently showing a high female presence but with a strong sector-based segregation, with women in underpaid works and positions. The gap increases when we move from urban areas to rural ones[41].

When entering the job market, women are confronted by another difficulty in seeking full recognition of their work, which is **vertical segregation**, i.e. the concentration or the over-representation of women at certain levels (i.e. low levels) of the professional ladder.

Paradoxically, men generally occupy higher positions even in traditionally female occupations. Women still continue to be under-represented in economic decision-making positions in EU Member Countries, despite the high scores they obtain in education and the fact that they represent nearly half the workforce. The EIGE Equality index reveals the lowest representation for women in economic power: at EU level, the score (inequality/0 – equality/100) barely reaches 29.0 (as an average among the often miserable scores registered by Member States, from 4.7 and 4.8 in Cyprus and Luxemburg, to the encouraging 60.3 and 55.1 in Sweden and Finland, although these countries are almost 20% under the average in other sectors). The percentage of women on boards peaks at 12%, which is still a long way from the legal minimum quota of 30% by 2015 and 40% by 2020 being promoted by the **Resolution on women and business leadership** (6 July 2011), and by the **Resolution on equality between women and men** (13 March 2012). In response to EU Parliamentary Resolutions, the EU Commission in November 2012 proposed legislation aiming at an objective of 40% by 2020 of the under-represented sex in non-executive board-member positions in publicly listed companies, with the exception of small and medium enterprises. The proposal also includes, as a complementary measure, a **"flexi quota"**: an obligation for listed companies to set themselves individual, **self-regulatory targets** regarding the representation of both sexes among **executive directors**.

41. See for deepening Comparative Analysis Of Economic Situation In Ten South Mediterranean Countries- Euromed http://www.euromedgenderequality.org/image.php?id=211

Concrete Ceiling is the type of barrier minority women encounter in the labor market.

Celluloid Ceiling refers to the small number of women in top positions in Hollywood

Silicon Ceiling refers to the barriers faced by women entrepreneurs in the technology sector

Sticky Floor refers to women who are trapped in low-wage, low mobility jobs in state and local government

Glass Escalator is the rapid promotion of men over women

Brass Ceiling is the barrier women face in the fields of law enforcement and military service

GLASS CEILING

MIND YOUR HEAD

The barrier women face when climbing the ladder is an invisible, artificial barrier that prevents qualified individuals from advancing within their organisation and reaching their full potential. This barrier is generally referred to as the glass-ceiling[42].

The definition of the term highlights the peculiarities of the barrier:
- it is an invisible obstacle, so it can be seen through
- it is hard so you hit your head to it
- however, it is made of glass, so it can be shattered, although there's always the risk of getting hurt

Moreover it creates the impression that once it's passed, the problem is eliminated, whereas in fact there are various glass ceilings, depending on the field of work and on the woman's background. Here are some examples:

Special attention should be given to the phenomenon of the **glass cliff,** a term coined in 2004 in a study by Prof. Michelle Ryan and Alex Haslam at the University of Exeter: "women are more likely to be appointed to leadership positions that are associated with an increased risk of criticism and failure. Women's leadership positions can thus be seen as more precarious than those of men"[43].
The university study was in response to the publication of an article in 2003 in The Times, reporting a tendency for companies with women on their boards to have lower performances

42. Miller L, Neathey F, Pollard E, Hill D., Occupational Segregation, Gender Gaps and Skill Gaps, Working Paper 15, Equal Opportunities Commission, 2004
43. http://psychology.exeter.ac.uk/research/glasscliff/research/

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than those entirely led by men.
The study revealed that those compa-
nies were already experiencing hard
times and low profits even before the
arrival of women on the board and
that, on the contrary, after having
appointed a woman, a slight improve-
ment was noticed.

Glass cliff positions are common not
only in the economic sector but also
in the political sector, with risky and
unpopular positions often given to
women politicians.

Notwithstanding EU directives and
recommendations on the topic,
Member States have taken different
approaches to combating job gender
segregation[44]: in Cyprus segregation is
not seen as a policy issue, in Czech
Republic it is recognised as being one
of the main causes of disparities,
although no concrete measures have
been taken (up to 2009). Training
remains the most common policy
measure for combating segregation
and some countries have developed
specific training curricula (Austria,
Belgium, Finland, France, Germany,
Greece, Norway, Portugal, Sweden
and the UK).

Interesting approaches in management
techniques reveal that inclusion of
diversities – and gender is among
these – turns to be a necessity for the
achievement of organisational
objectives.

Diversity management was born in
the 80s in the US as affirmative action
and is a diversified approach in the
human resources management, aimed
at the creation of an inclusive working
environment and at the knowledge
and valorisation of individual potentia-
lities: "Diversity Management is the
active and conscious development of
a future oriented, value driven strate-
gic, communicative and managerial
process of accepting and using certain
differences and similarities as a poten-
tial in an organisation, a process which
creates added value to the company".[45]
As such diversity management differs
from equal opportunities policies and
positive actions for the fact that the
aims change: individual differences and
talents are seen in the optic of organi-
sation improvements, and not simply
as the overcoming of discrimination
on ethical bases.

In Italy, the Bocconi School of Manage-
ment has set up the Diversity Manage-
ment Observatory, a network of
companies with diversity management
in their mission statements.
The observatory highlights stimulating
comparisons and debate and develo-
ping operative management guidelines.

44. Gender segregation in the labour market - Root causes, implications and policy responses in the EU
European Commission's Expert Group on Gender and Employment (EGGE), 2009
45. Training Manual for Diversity Management, International Society for Diversity Management – idm, 2007, p.6

Empowering women in politics

According to the EIGE Equality Index, the political field score at European level is 49.9 in the inequality/0 and full equality/100 ladder (as an average among EU members States, with rates ranging from a high inequality rate of 15.1 for Hungary to a very positive 91.5 for Sweden).

The average EU percentage for female representation is 25% in Ministries, 23% in parliaments and 30% in regional assemblies. Clearly, all remain very far from the requisite 50%.
The wide-ranging divergence between States arises from the different ap-

proaches adopted - or not adopted - by Member States to promote equal representation of women and men in the political sphere.

"The share of women in EU national parliaments is on average 24%: since women make up half of the population, this result violates the democratic principle of equal representation of both sexes and consequently may be seen as jeopardizing the legitimacy of decisions taken in the long term."[46] Since the first election of the European Parliament on 4 June, 1979, the percentage of female representation has more than doubled (see the elections of 2009).

Election year	Men (%)	Women (%)	Countries involved
1979-1984	84	16	EU9 - 9 Member States: Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, the UK, Denmark and Ireland.
1984-1989	82	18	EU10 - The 9 Member States + Greece in 1981.
1989-1994	81	19	EU12 - The 10 Member States + Spain and Portugal in 1986
1994-1999	74	26	EU12 - 12 Member States.
1999-2004	70	30	EU15 - The 12 Member States + Austria, Sweden and Finland in 1995.
2004-2009	69	31	EU25 - The 15 Member States + Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Cyprus and Malta in 2004
2009	65	35	EU27 - The 25 Member States + Bulgaria and Romania in 2007.

46. The quota-instrument: different approaches across Europe, European Commission's Network to Promote Women in Decision-making in Politics and the Economy, 2011, p. 6
47. Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality in the Southern Mediterranean – EUROMED http://www.euromedgenderequality.org/image.php?id=295
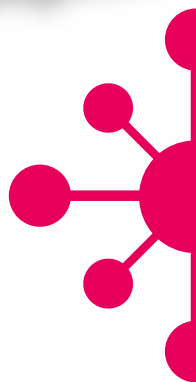
Nevertheless, the percentage remains at 35% for women members and 65% for men. We can only hope that the climb up the ladder will accelerate in coming years (otherwise it will take almost another 25 years to reach complete equality).

Gains in terms of equal political rights in southern Mediterranean countries has seen a gradual progression: while the number of seats held by women in parliament is still very low[47], with some countries recording a level of only 5%, important advances have been made (in Palestine the percent of female members of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) has risen from 5.6 percent in 1997 to 12.9 percent in 2006, making Palestine one of the Arab countries with the highest female political participation).

The concept of quotas is regularly evoked: "the quota-instrument is a positive measure that establishes a fixed percentage or number for the representation of a specific category of persons. Quotas can be included in legislation (in electoral, equality, labour, and constitutional law) or applied on a voluntary basis (like voluntary political party quotas, soft targets)"[48].

Gender quotas are a debatable measure in terms of female advancement: many –mainly feminists – see them as another form of discrimination that invalidated women's genuine progress. Others see them as the "inevitable bitter pill" that has to be taken for a limited period. None see quotas as the definitive approach to female-male equality.

The efficacy and effectiveness of quotas depend on many factors:
• the design of the electoral system and the level at which quotas are applied (pool of candidates, electoral lists or reserved seats): for example, a useful tool in the proportional system is the so called 'zipper principle' (alternation of male and female candidates in the list), while in the majority system 'women only' shortlists have been used
• the application of sanctions in case of non-compliance (such as the rejection of electoral lists).

Where are the women in politics ?

48. The quota-instrument: different approaches across Europe European Commission's Network to Promote Women in Decision-making in Politics and the Economy, 2011, p. 3

Almost half of the countries in the world are using some form of gender quotas in politics: some involve legislative quotas (meaning ruled by the Constitution or laws) and some are on a volunteer basis (at single party level). At EU level, seven countries have introduced legislated gender quotas for elections to national parliaments (Belgium, France, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia and Poland) while the majority use a voluntary approach (Austria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK). Some EU countries have no quota system at all (Denmark, or Ireland). Quotas systems have been adopted in Southern Mediterranean countries: through electoral law reform (Jordan, Palestine), constitutional reforms (Egypt, Algeria), adopting a proportional system with seats reserved to women (Morocco) or through measures adopted by parties (Tunisia).

How non formal education can contribute to women's empowerment

Non-Formal Education (NFE) has been defined by UNESCO as "any organized and sustained educational activities that do not correspond exactly to the definition of formal education. Non-formal education may therefore take place both within and outside educational institutions, and cater to persons of all ages. Depending on country contexts, it may cover educational programmes to impart adult literacy, basic education for out-of-school children, life-skills, work-skills, and general culture. Non-formal education programmes do not necessarily follow the 'ladder' system, and may have different durations, and may or may not confer certification of the learning achieved."[49] Its importance in the development of personal skills is enormous, as its approaches deal with skills and competences through various methodologies, which can be summarised as:
• communication– based methods: interaction, dialogue, mediation
• activity– based methods: experience, practice, experimentation
• socially– focused methods: partnership, teamwork, networking
• self– directed methods: creativity,

Formal Learning	Non-Formal Learning	Informal Learning
Learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment (e.g. in an education or training institution or on the job) and is	Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or	Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives,

• Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view.

• Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective.

49. International standard classification of education, UNESCO, 1997

discovery, responsibility[50]

The term **Non-Formal Learning (NFL)** is directly connected and complementary to NFE – where **learning** is defined as "a process by which an individual assimilates information, ideas and values and thus acquires knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences". The differences between **Formal Learning** and **Informal Learning** are reflected in the different approaches used[51]:
NFL is based on experiential learning, empowering learners by recognising their experience as a source of knowledge and skills.
Before going any further into the skills and competences NFE and NFL can develop, we need to clarify what we mean by these terms.

The **European Qualification Framework (EQF)**[52] is a tool for a common understanding and usage of the different qualifications across the EU's diverse education and training systems for lifelong learning. It refers to different levels indicators:

• **skill** "means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)"
• **competence** "means the proven

ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development".
• **knowledge** "means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study". In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

Skills are often subdivided into basic[53], academic, IT skills and soft-skills. NFE and NFL can develop all of them in different ways, but they mainly address soft skills, for which it is not easy to find a definition. Soft skills relate to a combination of knowledge, personal attitudes and abilities (the capacity for teamwork and for communicating effectively, a sense of initiative and self-confidence, for example) that are seen as essential in terms of employability:

NFE and NFL can contribute to the personal development of skills and competences of young people and young women in particular: they can be empowered through the enhancing of their self-esteem and of their identity and thus be an undeniable boost to their employability.

Recognition of NFE and NFL is therefore essential to an effective usage of what is learnt to advance in studies

50. Study on the impact of Non-Formal Education in youth organisations on young people's employability, European Youth Forum 2012, p. 32
51. Ibid.
52. http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/vocational_training/c11104_en.htm
53. "The skills needed to live in contemporary society, e.g. listening, speaking, reading, writing and mathematics" CEDEFOP Terminology of European education and training policy A selection of 100 key terms, 2008 http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/Files/4064_EN.PDF

and work: self-recognition tools such as the Youthpass need to be promoted and their use supported and reinforced in the work world.

Since 2006, the European Union has used The **European Framework of Key Competences**[54], to identify the competences needed for fulfilment in society, in both the personal and educational sectors and the professional ones.
The eight competences indicated in the framework are:

All of them are equally important and may overlap: all of them contribute differently to personal fulfilment, based on the background and needs of the person.

The **Agenda for new skills and jobs**, which was launched in 2010 as part of the overall Europe 2020 strategy, was designed to raise the level of employ-

ment of the working-age population (20-64 years) to 75%: the development of skills is included in the actions to be promoted (together with flexibility and security, quality of work and job creation). The initiative **New Skills for New Jobs** was launched in 2008 with the intention of creating effective job skills, along with adequate matching of skills and labour market needs and reduction of education/work gaps. A new approach to classification of skills will become available during 2013 (**the European Skills/Competences, qualifications and Occupations (ESCO)**)[55] – developed by the European Commission together with CEDEFOP and other stakeholders. . ESCO will provide jobseekers, employers and educators with a uniform categorization of skills, competences, qualifications and occupations.
It will also enable the exchange of job openings and CVs.

1- Communication in the mother tongue

2 - Communication in foreign languages

3- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology

4 - Digital competence

5 - Learning to learn

6 - Social and civic competences

7 - Sens of initiative and entrepreneurship

8 - Cultural awareness and expression

54. http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ll-learning/keycomp_en.pdf

HOW NON FORMAL EDUCATION CAN CONTRIBUTE TO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Annex 1 – Cross-cultural gender stereotypes

Masculinity and femininity are socio-cultural aspects deriving from the standardization of **gender roles**: the behavioural context of gender roles transformed into beliefs of psychological characteristics and attitudes.

The origin of feminine **stereotypes** dates back to the XIX century, when the industrial revolution created an unprecedented separation of roles - mainly in the lower classes - between men and women (see paragraph on history of feminine jobs p.21).
Before the industrial era, most people lived and worked on farms where men and women worked together, whereas with industrialisation, the new socio-economic conditions required men to leave home to earn money while women stayed behind to manage households and take care of children: this marked the beginning of the era of male breadwinner and female homemaker. Stereotypes arose as a result, with far-reaching implications for both men and women: the Victorian notion of the **Cult of True Womanhood** idealises women based on four cardinal virtues (piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity), while the **Doctrine of the Two Spheres** emphasises the different interests and thus attitudes of men and women.

Linda Brannon[56] highlights the implications deriving from the two notions for both men and women with the following results/stereotypes:

The Cult of True Womanhood	• Piety : True Women were naturally religious. • Purity: True Women were sexually uninterested. • Submissiveness: True Women were weak, dependent, and timid. • Domesticity: True Women's domain was in the home.
Male Sex Role Identity	• No Sissy Stuff: A stigma is attached to feminine characteristics. • The Big Wheel : Men need success and status. • The Sturdy Oak : Men should have toughness, confidence, and self-reliance. • Give 'Em Hell: Men should have an aura of aggression, daring, and violence.

55. http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1042&langId=en
56. Brannon, Linda Gender: psychological perspectives 4th edition – pub Allyn & Bacon, Inc, 2004, p. 160
57. Ibid, p. 160

The industrialisation era division of roles created the basis for a structured gender roles perception in western societies. Brannon draws attention to the interrelation of gender roles and gender stereotypes: "a gender role consists of activities that men and women engage in with different frequencies. (…) These gender-related behaviours thus become part of a pattern accepted as masculine or feminine, not because of any innate reason for these differences, but because of the association with women and men. A gender stereotype consists of beliefs about the psychological traits and characteristics of, as well as the activities appropriate to, men or women. Gender roles are defined by behaviours, but gender stereotypes are beliefs and attitudes about masculinity and feminity"[57].

Gender stereotypes are thus closely associated with gender knowledge and identity:

Children under 3 have no awareness of gender and only start creating selective patterns of gender stereotypes as they get older (linked to toys, games for girls and boys, behaviours...). The stronger the surrounding influences are (mainly regarding gender roles in the family, school and free time situations), the deeper entrenched these stereotypes become in the children's gender identities.

The danger of stereotypes lies in its potential development into **prejudices**, which are negative judgements based on stereotypes. The move from a prejudicial attitude to **discriminative behaviour** can be very rapid, although not ineluctable.

Gender identity refers to the notions of **femininity** and **masculinity**, which start with but differ from the terms **male** and **female**, exclusively linked to biological contexts, and enter a socio-cultural framework. Another concept has been added to the notions of femininity and masculinity since the 70s, which is that of **androgyny.** This conveys a multidimensional approach to the definition and measurement of gender identity, whereby the measurement is deduced by the intensity of both masculinity and femininity readings.

As gender identity is a social construct, it differs significantly from one culture to another, creating in some cases diverse understandings of femininity and masculinity. Williams and Best conducted a large-scale, cross-cultural study of gender stereotypes in 25 countries, applying their Five Factor Mode l (FFM) of personality: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability and Openness to Experience[58].

58. William, Best , Pancultural Gender Stereotypes Revisited: The Five Factor Model, Plenum Publishing Corporation, 1999
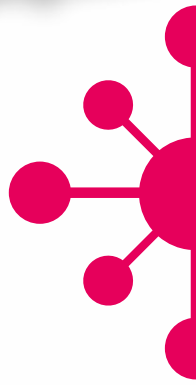
Surprisingly, the results did not show major differences between cultures: instead, in every country polled, adjectives associated with men were rated as being stronger and more active, while those associated with women were viewed as passive, weak and nurturing.

Geert Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions is based on four clusters[59] to analyse the values in different cultures, one of which is the juxtaposition of femininity and masculinity: "the masculinity side of this dimension represents a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material reward for success. Society at large is more competitive. Its opposite, femininity, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life. Society at large is more consensus-oriented"[60].

Language also has a crucial function in the construction of gender role identities and stereotypes. Both languages with (French) and without grammatical gender declinations (English) can be discriminative, since the principle of universal male is the same for both, with the attribution of female pronouns to cars, boats, hurricanes ... (after feminist protests in recent years, the latter has stopped)[61]. Discrimination lingers on in the construction of names referring to professions but also to humankind: in English the use of the masculine "neutral" with man/

men compounds (such as mankind, congressman, policeman…) as well the masculine pronoun he being used to refer to both sexes can be ambiguous and lead to sexist bias. An even stronger impact is found in the languages with grammar gender: not only are nouns inflected in the masculine version - referring to both genders - but articles and adjectives also are. In many cases the feminine form (mainly for professions) does not even exist or sounds either unsuitable or downright disparaging, to the extent that it is avoided in primis by women themselves. Italian, for example, is based on an "androcentric principle"[62] making MAN the parameter of the language universe and some nouns have completely different meanings when declined as masculine or feminine:

LA GOVERNANTE
(the housekeeper)

IL GOVERNANTE
(the ruler)

An interesting and innovative effort has been carried out by the Municipality of Florence in collaboration with the Accademia della Crusca[63] - the most distinguished representative body to supervise evolutions in the Italian language – to legitimise the use of feminine forms for profession names in the administrative context:

58. William, Best , Pancultural Gender Stereotypes Revisited: The Five Factor Model, Plenum Publishing Corporation, 1999
59. Power Distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance. A fifth dimension was added in 1991: Long-Term Orientation
60. http://geert-hofstede.com/dimensions.html
61. Sabatini, A. Il sessismo nella lingua Italiana, PRESIDENZA DEL CONSIGLIO DEI MINISTRI 1993
62. Ibid, p. 24

we can now hear terms like la ministra (for a female minister) on TV and in newspapers, which until a few years ago sounded really strange and seemed to reduce the importance of her title compared to the masculine equivalent[64].

You mean a woman can open it ?

Also media may play a controversial role in the construction of gender stereotypes, by influencing our perception of reality: advertising and marketing make systematic and repetitive use of stereotypes (such as the idealised use of a women's body as an object)[65]. The subject is part of an ongoing social debate pitting supporters of freedom of expression against supporters of the protection of women's dignity. This distortion of reality is also found in children's programming:

although positive steps have been taken regarding the female characters' personalities and their dependence on male characters (witness the contrast between Snow White and Mulan). A great deal remains to be done in terms of physical appearance, with women still generally portrayed with a perfect, slim body (although male characters also suffer from this stereo-

type). There is extensive literature dealing with the topic of the portrayal of women and men in children's programming and elsewhere on TV and cinema[66].

The topic is at the centre of attention with regard to EU initiatives and legislation (Motion For A European Parliament Resolution on eliminating gender stereotypes in the EU of December 2012) where the gender/media combination is considered as one of the most urgent areas for intervention: "(...) gender discrimination in the media, communication and advertising is still frequent and facilitates the reproduction of gender stereotypes, especially by portraying women as sex objects in order to promote sales; (…) advertising and the media can, nevertheless, also be a powerful catalyst in combating stereotypes and gender-based prejudices; (…) children are confronted with gender stereotypes at a very young age through role models promoted by television series and programmes, discussions, games, video games and advertisements, study materials and educational programmes, attitudes in schools, the family and society, which influence their perception of how men and women should behave and which have implications for the rest of their lives and their future aspirations"[67].

63. http://www.accademiadellacrusca.it/en/pagina-d-entrata **64.** http://unimore.academia.edu/CeciliaRobustelli
65. Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Opinion on "Breaking gender stereotypes in the media", EC, 2010
66. Interesting analysis can be found at: http://www.seejane.org/

Annex 2 - Glossary of terms[68]

Affirmative (positive) action Measures targeted at a particular group and intended to eliminate and prevent discrimination or to offset disadvantages arising from existing attitudes, behaviours and structures (sometimes referred to as positive discrimination).

Capacity building: Helping organisations to develop their resources (people, buildings etc.) so that they are better able to accomplish their goals. Commonly used when an initiative or training programme is likely to improve the ability of individuals or organisations to improve their performance, or take the lead in specific economic or business development activities.

Diversity Management is the active and conscious development of a future oriented, value driven strategic, communicative and managerial process of accepting and using certain differences and similarities as a potential in an organisation, a process that creates added value for the company.

Equal opportunities for women and men: the absence of barriers to economic, political and social participation on the grounds of sex.

Equal pay for work of equal value is attributed without discrimination on the grounds of sex or marital status with regard to all aspects of pay and conditions of remuneration.

Gender identifies the social relations between men and women. It refers to the relationship between men and women, boys and girls, and how this is socially constructed. Gender roles are dynamic and change over time.

Gender balance refers to equal representation and participation of women and men.

Gender budgeting: an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality.

Gender equality is the result of the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex in opportunities and the allocation of resources or benefits or in access to services.

Gender equity entails the provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men. The concept recognises that women and men have different needs and power and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalances between the sexes.

Gender identity: a person's sense of being male or female, resulting from a combination of genetic and environmental influences and a person's concept of being male and masculine or female and feminine, or ambivalent.

Gender mainstreaming: concerns planning, (re) organisation, improvement and evaluation of policy processes so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated into all development policies, strategies and interventions, at all levels and at all stages by the actors normally involved therein.

Gender neutral: having no differential positive or negative impact for gender relations or equality between women and men.

Gender pay gap: The gender pay gap refers to the difference in average hourly earnings for men and women. The causes of the gender pay gap are complex and reflect to some extent current and historical choices. Key factors include: human capital differences: i.e. differences in educational levels and work experience; part-time working; travel patterns and occupational segregation. Other factors include: job grading practices, appraisal systems, and pay discrimination.

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is government planning, programming and budgeting that contributes to the advancement of gender equality and the fulfilment of women's rights. It entails identifying and reflecting on the interventions needed to address gender gaps in sector and local government policies, plans and budgets. GRB also aims to analyse the gender-differentiated impact of revenue-raising policies and the allocation of domestic resources.

Gender roles are learned behaviours in a given society/community or other special group that condition what activities, tasks and responsibilities are perceived as male or female. Gender roles are affected by age, class, race, ethnicity or religion and by the geographical, economic and political environment. Changes in gender roles often occur in response to changing economic, social or political circumstances.

Gender sensitive: addressing and taking the gender dimension into account.

Glass ceiling: A glass ceiling is an unofficial barrier to an upper management or otherwise prominent position within a company or other organization that certain groups, particularly women, are perceived to be unable to cross, due to discrimination. The term refers to the invisible nature of such barriers, compared to formal barriers to career advancement.

Good governance: the transparent and accountable management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for the purposes of equitable and sustainable development, in the context of a political and institutional environment that upholds human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law.

Horizontal segregation refers to the gendered division of labour and clustering of women in certain sectors and professions. It refers to the concentration of either men or

women in different occupations such as e.g. company directors (men) and child-minders (women).

Prejudice is a negative evaluation of an entire group, which allows prejudiced people to react to members of the group without any personal contact or without knowing anything about people in the group as individuals.

Reproductive rights: the right of any individual or couple to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, along with the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health.

Quota-instrument is a positive measure that establishes a fixed percentage or number for the representation of a specific category of persons. Quotas can be included in legislation (in electoral, equality, labour, and constitutional law) or applied on a voluntary basis (voluntary political party quotas, soft targets).

Sex identifies the biological differences between men and women, whereby women can give birth while men provide sperm. Sex roles are universal.

Sex disaggregated statistics: the collection and separation of data and statistical information by sex to enable comparative analysis, sometime referred to as gender disaggregated statistics.

Sex discrimination – direct: where a person is treated less favourably because of his or her sex.

Sex discrimination – indirect: where a law, regulation, policy or practice, apparently neutral, has a disproportionately adverse impact on the members of one sex, unless the difference of treatment can be justified by objective factors.

Stereotypes: a fixed idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially when that idea is incorrect.

Vertical segregation exists when men and women both work in the same job categories, but men commonly do the more skilled, responsible or better paid work. For example the majority of school heads may be men while the majority of teachers are women, the majority of hospital consultants may be men while the majority of nurses may be women.

Work-life balance is the term used to describe working practices that acknowledge and aim to support the needs of staff in achieving a balance between their home and working lives.

Useful links

http://eige.europa.eu/content/gender-equality-index
http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/
http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/fwcw.htm
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf
http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/surveys/
http://www.coface-eu.org/en/Projects/2014-Campaign/
http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2012
http://www.euromedgenderequality.org
http://www.osce.org/gender
http://www.unwomen-eeca.org/en/news/news/?start_8en=80?1604160843
http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2010/1/gender-responsive-budgeting-in-south-eastern-europe-unifem-experiences
http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/74656/E88086.pdf
http://www.unfpa.org/gender/empowerment.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sp/gender-toolkit/en/pdf/section3.pdf
http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/human_rights/Resources/WEP_EMB_Booklet.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/report08/emploi_en.pdf
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sp/gender-toolkit/index.htm

"Empowering women" seminars organised by SALTO EuroMed RC and the French National agency with the backing of various stakeholders.
The seminars were conceived as partnership building activities, giving participants' own experiences a fundamental role in the development of the process. Participants came from both EU Member States and neighbouring countries (MEDA, SEE and EECA).
This study wants to be above all it a tool and a source of inspiration for youth workers active in the field. We hope you will enjoy reading it and be inspired!

Author: Lucia Barbieri

Crédit photo : iStock

SALTO-YOUTH EuroMed Resource Centre
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