

What has the EU done for gender equality?

- Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (introduced by Lisbon) affirms that gender equality is a core value of the EU while, the Charter of Fundamental Rights guarantees equality between women and men and allows measures to be adopted for positive action.
- The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is an autonomous body of the European Union, established in 2010. It contributes to and strengthens the promotion of gender equality, including gender mainstreaming in all EU policies and the resulting national policies. It also works to raise EU citizens' awareness of gender equality.
- The Equal Treatment Directive (which is a consolidation of previous Directives) guarantees equal treatment of women and men in the labour market (including selection criteria), education and training and obliges Member States not to pay women lower wages than men for work of equal value. It also covers working conditions (including dismissals). It requires member states to prohibit any discrimination - direct or indirect - on grounds of gender. This includes reference to family or marital status, pregnancy and maternity, harassment, and instructions to discriminate. It also protects workers who make a complaint relating to equal treatment from victimisation.
- EU law guarantees women the right to at least 14 weeks maternity leave and protection from maternity-related discrimination. Self-employed women in the EU are entitled to social protection, including maternity leave.
- To combat violence against women, the Victims Directive guarantees specialist support and protection from repeat victimisation for women; the Equal Treatment Directive which sets high standards on preventing and prohibiting sexual harassment; the European Protection Order and mutual recognition in civil matters mean women are protected from perpetrators when they travel anywhere in the EU; and the Anti-trafficking Directive which creates a comprehensive framework for prevention, victim support and police cooperation on trafficking (80% of victims are women).
- EU funded programmes and campaigns which contribute to ending violence against women, including the Daphne III Programme and now the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme have a budget of €439.5 million for the 2014-20 period.
- The EU is also funding programmes to eradicate FGM.