

# BRUSSELS DECLARATION

## a manifesto for equal opportunities

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“What world do we want to create for our daughters and sons?”  
There's still something to do!

The Berlin Declaration in Germany gave this appeal to politicians on the occasion of the 2017 federal elections in Germany. As an initiative from 17 women's associations in Germany, the Berlin Declaration started communication with politicians to work on more gender equality in Germany.

There is still something to do!

We, the undersigned associations are following up on the European level, aiming to increase gender equality throughout Europe. We strive for the implementation and monitoring of gender equality in our political, institutional, economical and social life. We want to start a discussion with the decision makers at the European level and be their sparring partners for the decisions that will shape our future.

We are

- 8 organisations representing more than
- 40 000 women all over Europe, with
- 1 vision and goal: increasing gender equality throughout Europe

There is still something to do!

There have been a lot of improvements during the past decade. Still, the COVID-19 situation has shown us how quickly we revert to old role models and habits. We need to find a way to check what is missing through an analysis of cause and effect, to gather existing directives and monitoring systems, to improve them and connect them with a working sanctioning framework to make sure implementation is happening and follow-ups are in place.

The current time necessary to close the global gender gap has gone from 99.5 years to 135.6[1] in recent years. We need to speed up !

We have identified the following areas for discussion and formulation of actions:

- Legal framework
- Investment and funding
- Equal responsibility for family related duties
- Change of mindset driven by education

All of this areas need to be taken into account and contribute to achieving our goals towards shaping a more equal world.

This declaration states the situation and necessary actions at the time it was drafted. It is meant to be a living document that will be adapted, added to and changed with every success we manage to achieve, with new challenges emerging and with new cooperation and discussion partners, contributing their experience and expertise.



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# Our Manifesto

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What do we need to work on – and how can we do it?

We have identified several goals and possible actions to achieve them from the four areas mentioned above.

All of them aim to include men as inclusivity is the only way, involving men in the gender debate, to set the right diagnosis, to agree on solutions and to get the buy-in needed for sustainable and substantive change.

## Ending gender-based violence, challenging gender stereotypes

- Accelerate the introduction of European legislation to prevent and combat gender-based violence, including domestic and online violence.

## Addressing the gender pay and pension gaps

- Adoption of the proposed new Directive to strengthen equal pay between men and women and to introduce mandatory gender pay monitoring for large companies, is strongly supported.
- Pay transparency measures
- Gender pay gap reporting

## Closing the gender finance gap

- Increasing the private and public funding amount and private and public funding opportunities to women led startups and women led funds
- Including the gender factor of public procurement
- Gender budgeting transparency/ Increase data reporting
- Financial sector incentives, tax reductions and incentives for investors investing in women-led startups cross border, cross region
- Facilitate funds going to support financial mentoring and networking for women led startups, women led funds and women led research.
- Support activities to support women led startups, women led funds and women led researchers to access branding, PR, press, marketing and sales knowledge to increase the visibility and performance of their vision and projects.

## Closing the gender care gap

Currently, responsibility for care work – be it children or relatives in need of care – is mostly done by women, unpaid and unrecognized. This leads to a disproportionate burden, often connected with financial disadvantages as unpaid time and negative effects on pension.

We need to involve all stakeholders and work towards a different understanding about the responsibilities as well as create more possibilities.

- Monitor implementation of the new Work-Life Balance Directive 2019/1158
- Promote the benefits of parental leave and flexible working to ensure equal uptake between men and women and a fair distribution of caring responsibilities between men and women.
- Improve maternity provisions for women entrepreneurs & start-ups
- Sharing of good practice across Member States to support self-employed women during pregnancy and maternity
- Increase maternity protection + parental leave (around birth/ during childhood)
- Support reintegration into e.g. equal jobs after leave periods
- Eliminate discriminatory/ discouraging tax law models, increase number of fostering laws
- Realize Universal Childcare, which has shown to have a positive ROI



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### Gender equality in practice in working life and decision making

- Importance of positive action, within the scope of Article 157(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), as a mechanism to focus on results and achieve substantive equality rather than formal.
- Clarify the scope and objectives of EU legislation that allows for positive action
- Provide guidance about the use of positive action measures and to facilitate the sharing of examples of good practice to achieve gender equality.
- Accelerate the introduction of the Directive on improving gender balance on company boards
- Implement gender parity targets for senior position across society
- Binding objective of at least 40% of board members of each gender by 2026

### Gender mainstreaming

- Strengthen gender mainstreaming and ensure that considerations about the impact of budgetary and policy decisions on progressing gender equality are taken into account in the EU budget and in post-pandemic recovery funds. Promote through gender mainstreaming better understanding of the interdependence between gender equality and the economy.
- Gender lens in budgeting, funding and reporting
- Support green and digital growth by the economic empowerment of women
- Develop women's financial literacy and introduce funds for female entrepreneurs.
- Implement compulsory finance, innovation and entrepreneurship education at schools and universities with gender balanced role models and success stories.

### Improve monitoring and communication of gender equality

#### Monitoring

- Monitoring systems with fixed and clear goals and indicators for implementation of actions based on evaluation results
- Definition of a long term, transparent monitoring framework to measure success and reach sustainability
- Reinforcement through definition of the best body for monitoring and evaluation

#### Communication

- Communication of EU gender equality law: Improve public and stakeholders understanding of the EU legal framework on gender equality and its level of implementation among Member States.
- Share good practice of legal implementation across Member States through user-friendly materials such as factsheets and case studies.
- Neutral vocabulary, design and equality of role models representation in Media and press outlets
- Increase the visibility of female role models
- Work on mindset towards roles & professions in education and companies
- Communicate positive effects of diversity & inclusion (financial, societal, ...)
- Foster understanding from both "sides" to change unconscious bias overtime

Brussels, October 26th, 2022



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