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BEIJING+30 REGIONAL REVIEW MEETING

“Reviewing 30 years of Beijing Commitments to Accelerate Gender Equality in the UNECE Region”

22 October 2024

Building E, Room XVII, Palais de Nations, Geneva

Tuesday, 22 October 2024 (11:30 – 13:00, GMT+2)

Item 8. Thematic session: Leveraging financing for gender equality in the UNECE region

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Background and context

Progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), which aims to achieve gender equality, has been slow, with only a small percentage of indicators on track to meet the 2030 targets. The latest data indicates that a mere 15.4 per cent of Goal 5 indicators with data are “on track,” while 61.5 percent are moderately off track, and 23.1 per cent are far or very far off target. To bridge these gaps, an additional \$360 billion annually is required. Global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and geopolitical tensions and conflicts have strained fiscal space, making it more difficult to invest in the SDGs and initiatives critical for achieving gender equality and creating more equitable and resilient societies.

Restructuring funding across all sources is crucial to ensure comprehensive financing for gender equality across all SDGs. This requires systematic scrutiny of how funds from various sources are allocated and spent, ensuring they

prioritize gender equality. Without this, existing funding gaps will persist, hindering progress. In the UNECE region, while gender equality is improving, most targets remain unlikely to be met by 2030 unless there is a fundamental shift in how resources are managed.

Migration is one of the issues that many UNECE region is facing. Migrant women, in particular, make significant contributions—both financial and—to the economies of both their communities of origin and destination. However, they often face double discrimination due to their gender and migrant status. As such, the [Global Compact for Migration](#), rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, explicitly calls for gender-responsive action and specific budget allocation for the empowerment of women migrants as agents of change targeted action to address these intersectional gaps.

Countries face difficult policy choices amid multiple crises and limited fiscal space. While some UNECE countries have made strides in gender-responsive public finance management, many still lack the substantial investments required to close gender gaps. Inconsistent and partial implementation of gender-responsive budgeting has further slowed progress. Official Development Assistance (ODA), for example, has focused mainly on immediate humanitarian needs, often at the expense of long-term gender equality objectives. Between 2021 and 2022, only 4 percent of ODA was dedicated to programmes with gender equality as the principal objective.

To overcome these challenges, it is crucial to integrate gender-responsive and human rights-based approaches into broader macroeconomic policies. This includes increasing the share of funding dedicated to bridging gender gaps, embedding gender considerations into financial instruments and private and public sector investments and intensifying gender audits of financial allocations. These efforts would help ensure that all resources – public, private and international – are aligned with commitments to gender equality, even amidst crises.

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2. Objectives

The thematic session will address progress, challenges and opportunities in leveraging financing flows for gender equality and women's empowerment in the ECE region to accelerate implementation of the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action \(BfPA\)](#) and the SDGs over the next five years, including expanding gender-responsive budgeting, enhancing public-private partnerships, increasing transparency through gender audits and CSO engagement and integrating gender considerations into humanitarian financing, climate action and crisis recovery efforts.

3. Tentative Guiding Questions:

What actions are required to increase financing for development and gender equality, and women's empowerment in the UNECE region as a critical catalyst for implementing the BPfA and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

- What are the critical components for effectively integrating gender into the Public Financial Management (PFM) system to better support policy decisions and accountability on gender equality?
- How can governments create more fiscal space for gender equality and women's empowerment amidst climate change, armed conflicts, geopolitical tensions and public health crises?
- How can we leverage the advantages that safe and orderly migration to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women migrants for sustainable and inclusive development through specific actions and budgetary allocation?
- How can bilateral and multilateral organizations integrate gender considerations into their planning, budgeting and performance reporting processes to ensure their financial resources effectively support gender equality?
- How can private investors and venture capital firms enhance economic opportunities for women?

4. Agenda

11:30 – 12:15	<p>Moderated panel</p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Anna Collins-Falk, International Coordinator and Senior Advisor at the Swedish Gender Equality Agency</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Iryna Postolovska, Deputy Minister of Social Policy, Ukraine • Mr. Arthur Erken, IOM Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia • Ms. Diane Elson, Emeritus Professor, University of Essex, and Former Member of the UN Committee for Development Policy • Ms. Selma Prodanovic, Vice President and Chair of the Gender Committee of European Business Angel Network (EBAN) • Ms. Marija Savovska, Executive Director at Association for Advancement of Gender Equality Akcija Združenska, Republic of North Macedonia
12:15 – 13:00	Open discussion with member States, civil society, experts.

5. Expected outcome

To set out at least three key policy actions to increase effective investments in gender equality in the UNECE region as a critical catalyst for implementing the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action \(BfPA\)](#) and achieving the SDGs in the next five years.



6. Background documents

- [Parliamentary document “Leveraging financing flows for gender equality and women’s empowerment in the Economic Commission for Europe region”](#)
- [Parliamentary document “Empowerment and Equality for Migrant Women and Girls: Progress and Opportunities in the Economic Commission for Europe Region”](#)
- [Key trends on gender equality across the Economic Commission for Europe region. Regional review of progress: regional synthesis](#)
- [Guidance Note for Comprehensive National-Level Reviews](#)
- [UN Women CSW69 / Beijing+30 Preparations Web Page](#)
- [UNECE Gender Portal](#)