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GENDER MAINSTREAMING GUIDANCE: GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF LANGUAGE AS A DRIVER OF EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVITY



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**GUIDELINES FOR THE USE
OF LANGUAGE AS A DRIVER
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This publication is produced in the framework of the EU-funded “*Gender Equality Facility*” project, implemented by UN Women. It is partially sourced from materials of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and the Council of Europe (CoE), and also draws from UN guidance. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of UN Women, the European Union, or any of its affiliated organizations.

Author: Dolly Wittberger

Editing and Proofreading: Lum Gashi

Layout and Design: Dafina Visoka

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AVMSD	Audiovisual Media Services Directive
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BRIDGE	specialized gender and development research and information service based in the Gender and Sexuality Cluster at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), in the UK
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CETS	Council of Europe Treaty Series
CSO(s)	civil society organization(s)
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EU FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
EU	European Union
GBV	gender-based violence
GEF	Gender Equality Facility
GRB	gender-responsive budgeting
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
ILO	International Labour Organization
LGBTI/ LGBTIQ+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, intersexual and any other individuals whose sexual orientation, gender identity expression, and/or sex characteristics differ from the cis-heterosexual
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
SOGIESC	sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics
TFEU	Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union
UN Women	UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN-INSTRAW	United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council
VaW/VAW	violence against women
WHO	World Health Organization ⁴

Introduction

This gender mainstreaming Guidance is part of a series of resources made available through technical support from the EU and UN Women to the Government of Kosovo for accelerating the process of EU integration. The aim of this series is to ensure that future policy, planning, and programming documents align more closely with the EU legal and policy framework on gender equality (the “Gender Equality *acquis*”), and thus enhance equality outcomes for all women, men, girls, and boys in the country. This Guidance is addressed to development and integration partners involved in policy, programming, and planning initiatives in the EU accession context and related reforms. This group includes primarily government staff developing policies and drafting EU-funded programmes, experts providing technical assistance, EU Office Task Managers, donors and international development partners supporting EU-aligned reform, as well as civil society organizations engaged in accountability and consultative processes.

Language and communication play an essential role in influencing attitudes, behaviors and perceptions, shaping people’s reality and impacting on policy dialogue.¹ The media has been recognized as having an influential power to challenge the negative and degrading images of women projected through media content, and to promote positive images of both women and men and support gender equality. Shifting harmful gender norms involves challenging deep-seated beliefs, laws, policies, and practices, which sometimes can be met with resistance. This necessitates awareness raising among and collaboration with multiple partners, allies, and institutions over extended periods, with media serving as a catalyst for change.² For this reason, this specific guide on language and communication is intended for wider dissemination and use by, for example, media houses, media practitioners, journalists, editors, institutions that monitor media, the Independent Media Commission and the Association of Journalists of Kosovo, Information Offices and officers within institutions, Parliamentarians and parliamentary assistants, and communications specialist.

The purpose of this Guidance is to provide succinct information on the key gender equality aspects to be considered in using language (across policy areas and sectors), and to show how gender equality and non-discrimination principles can be applied in practical terms. The Guidance document is envisaged to serve as a basis for reflection and an initial primer. It can be used as a reference document in individuals’ daily work, and it also serves as training material in an effort to establish capacity and skills in gender-sensitive and inclusive language use.

Equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the European Union. The right of women to equal treatment is, above all, a fundamental human right. EU Law recognizes discrimination as politically unacceptable, economically unprofitable, and punishable by law. For this reason, countries are required to comply with the *acquis* on gender

1 Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (1995). See: <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

2 UN Women’s 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held 10 to 21 March 2025 in New York, ‘Shifting the Story: Advancing gender equality in a changing world’. Session held on Friday, 14 March 2025, hosted by BBC Media Action. See: <https://www.bbc.com/mediaaction/insight-and-impact/insightblog/media-for-gender-equality>

equality and non-discrimination when acceding to the EU. Language and communication are essential components of gender equality, and in the EU, non-stereotypical and non-sexist communication is the chosen way to educate, raise awareness, and prevent sexist behavior.³ Furthermore, “actions of Member States must be targeted at the promotion of the use of non-sexist language in all sectors, particularly in the public sector”.⁴

Structured in three brief sections, this Guidance on gender-sensitive and inclusive language use supports stakeholders to:

- Understand the relevance of language and communication for promoting gender equality in society;
- Learn about related EU Recommendations and Directives;
- Apply key EU and UN principles/strategies for gender-sensitive and inclusive language use in their work;
- Know about key gender equality terms and their definition;
- Contribute to wider efforts in promoting gender equality and preventing discrimination and sexism through the use of language and communication materials.



GENDER EQUALITY IS NOT JUST ABOUT ‘WOMEN’.

Rather it is about the different realities and needs of women and men across society; and the recognition that these realities and needs should be valued and - importantly - nurtured.

This necessitates ensuring that all people are empowered to take a full and productive role in the family, community, society, and the economy. To be in control of their own lives, to make the choices they wish, and thus have fair and equal access to services, support, and opportunity.

Gender-responsive governance is therefore about making sure that in all its policies, programmes, activities, priorities, and budgets, government takes into account the different needs and concerns of women and men, and addresses and reduces inequalities between them.


3 Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec(2003)3 on the balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making, Explanatory Memorandum. See: <https://rm.coe.int/1680519084>

4 Council of Europe Committee of Ministers to Member States, including Recommendation No R(90)4 on the elimination of sexism from language, and Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)17 on gender equality standards and mechanisms.

1. GENDER-SENSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE


1.1. Background

Language describes what is. In this way, language powerfully reflects and influences attitudes, behavior, and perceptions. Embracing the principles of non-discrimination, recognition and equality, efforts have been employed since the 1980s in support of a gender-neutral, gender-fair, and non-sexist use of language, so that no gender is privileged, and prejudices against any gender are not perpetuated. Related guidelines implemented at international and national level include UN agencies and European institutions (including WHO, ILO, UNDP, the European Parliament, Council of Europe, the European Commission), and professional associations, universities, major news agencies and publications have adopted guidelines for the non-sexist use of language, either as separate documents or as specific recommendations included in their style guides.



Gender-inclusive language means “speaking and writing in a way that does not exclude or discriminate against a particular sex, gender or gender identity, and does not perpetuate sexism or gender stereotypes.”

Source: Council of Europe (2024). *Guidelines for the use of language as a driver of inclusivity*, see: <https://rm.coe.int/guidelines-for-theuse-of-language-as-a-driver-of-inclusivity/1680aec235>



Gender-sensitive and inclusive communication promotes gender equality and the fair and equal visibility of women and men in all their diversity. The purpose of gender-sensitive, non-sexist, inclusive language, or gender-fair language is to avoid word choices which can be interpreted as biased, discriminatory or demeaning by implying that one sex or social gender

is the norm. Using gender-fair and inclusive language helps reduce gender stereotyping, promotes social change, and contributes to achieving gender equality.⁵

The need to tackle sexism, sexist norms and behavior, and sexist speech is implicit in a number of international and EU instruments. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, Istanbul Convention)⁶; Directive (EU) 2024/1385 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on combating violence against women and domestic violence⁷; and the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)⁸ recognize a continuum between gender stereotypes, gender inequality, sexism, and violence against women and girls. Within this continuum, the use of gender stereotypes, acts of 'everyday' inequality, and seemingly inconsequential sexism contribute to a social climate where women are demeaned, made invisible, their self-regard lowered, and their activities and choices restricted, including at work, in the private, public or online sphere. The internet has provided a new dimension for the expression and transmission of sexism.

The EU has been committed to using inclusive language for over three decades, initiated by three key documents:

- **Committee of Ministers Recommendation No. R(90)4 of 21 February 1990 on the elimination of sexism from language⁹**, recommending Member States to use language reflecting the principle of equality and take concrete measures with a view to:
 - Encouraging the use of non-sexist language to take account of the presence, status and role of women in society, as current linguistic practice does for men.
 - Bringing the terminology used in legal drafting, public administration and education into line with the principle of gender equality.
 - Encouraging the use of non-sexist language in the media.
- **Council of Europe Instruction no. 33 of 1 June 1994 concerning the use of non-sexist language at the Council of Europe¹⁰**
- **Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 on preventing and combating sexism¹¹**, proposing specific tools and measures to prevent and combat sexism and sexist behavior in the areas of language and communications, Internet and social media, media and advertising. Among others, this Recommendation specifically requests Member States to:

5 European Parliament (2018). Gender-neutral language. See: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL_Guidelines_EN.pdf

6 See: <https://rm.coe.int/168008482e>

7 Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1385/oj/eng>

8 United Nations General Assembly (1979). Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). See: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>

9 See: <https://rm.coe.int/1680505480>

10 See: <https://rm.coe.int/1680781cf4>

11 See: <https://rm.coe.int/cm-rec-2019-1-on-preventing-and-combating-sexism/168094d894>

- Undertake a systematic review of all laws, regulations, policies, etc., for sexist language and reliance on gendered assumptions and stereotypes with a view to replacing them with gender-sensitive terminology.
- Establish good practice, including the preparation of practical guides for language and communication that are non-sexist and without gender stereotypes for use in public administration documents.

Many EU Member States have adopted language policies and introduced guidelines at various levels. It is recommended that “**law and policymakers always aim to use gender-sensitive language [...]**. Recognizing and giving visibility to the gender dimension is an essential precondition for laws, policies, and programmes to reach citizens, in all their diversity, more effectively and avoid negative impact. While in some cases, the gender perspective may not be immediately obvious, there is almost always an important gender dimension to all public policies”.¹² For this reason, and in line with EU Guidance on language, it is recommended to avoid using generics and aggregates such as ‘people’, ‘children’, ‘adults’, ‘youth’, ‘the poor’, ‘the vulnerable’, etc., since these terms obscure the gender dimension, i.e., the de facto inequalities that exist between the sexes.

BOX 1: THREE ASPECTS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN ADOPTING A GENDER-INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO LANGUAGE

1. Recognize and challenge gender stereotypes.
2. Maintain inclusivity by ensuring the visibility of women, men, girls and boys in all their diverse situations.
3. Uphold the values of dignity, respect and equal treatment.

¹² European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) [Online]. Toolkits and Guides. Gender-sensitive Communication. See: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-sensitive-communication>

BOX 2: SELECTED GUIDES ON GENDER-SENSITIVE AND INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE USE

Council of Europe (2024). Guidelines for the use of language as a driver of inclusivity. See: <https://rm.coe.int/guidelines-for-the-use-of-language-as-a-driver-of-inclusivity/1680aec235>

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2024). Words Matter: Supporting Gender Equality Through Language and Communication. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/toolkits-guides/words-matter>

The corresponding web-page features practical examples, games, and quizzes.

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2019). Guide on gender-sensitive communication. Available at: https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/toolkits-guides/gender-sensitive-communication/test-your-knowledge?language_content_entity=en

Oxfam (2023). Inclusive Language Guide. Available at: <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/inclusive-language-guide-621487/>

This guide focuses on ending intersecting forms of inequality through written communication. It provides advice on the language preferred by marginalised people, groups, and communities.

UNDP (2018). 10 Principles of gender-sensitive communication. Available at: <https://www.undp.org/eurasia/publications/10-principles-gender-responsive-communications>

United Nations [Online]. Gender-inclusive language. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/>

The guidelines and toolbox provide recommendations to use gender-inclusive language in any type of communication – oral or written, formal or informal, or for an internal or external audience.

UN Women [Online]. Gender-inclusive language guidelines (English). Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/genderterm>

1.2. Specificities in the multi-lingual EU integration context

Guidelines on gender-sensitive language use in the EU integration context need to consider two particular aspects: first, the multi-lingual working environment and, second, translation efforts into the official local language(s) spoken in the EU accession/candidate country.¹³

In the environment of EU integration, the principles of gender-sensitivity in language and gender-inclusive language require the use of dedicated strategies, depending on the grammatical typology of any specific language. As far as grammatical gender is expressed in the official languages of the Union, a distinction needs to be made between the types of languages:

In so-called 'Natural gender languages', such as English, personal nouns are mostly gender neutral and there are personal pronouns specific to each gender. The general trend is to reduce the use of gender-specific terms as much as possible. In these languages, the most common linguistic strategy is neutralisation. In order to avoid gender references, gender-neutral terms can be used, i.e., words that are not gender specific and refer to people in general, with no explicit reference to women or men. In English, 'chairman' is replaced by 'Chair' or 'chairperson'; 'policeman' or 'policewoman' by 'police officer'; 'spokesman' by 'spokesperson'; 'stewardess' by 'flight attendant'; 'headmaster' or 'headmistress' by 'director' or 'principal', etc.. This gender-neutral trend replaces the older grammatical female forms, with the previous grammatical male form becoming unisex (e.g. 'actor' instead of 'actress'). Gender-inclusive language is also used by replacing, for example, 'he' as a generic reference by the terms 'he or she' as well as 'they'.

In 'Grammatical gender languages', such as German, Romance languages, and Slavic languages, every noun has a grammatical gender and the gender of personal pronouns usually matches the reference noun.¹⁴ In these languages, it is almost impossible, from a lexical point of view, to create widely accepted gender-neutral forms from existing words. Therefore, alternative approaches have been sought and recommended in administrative and political language. The use of feminine correspondents of masculine terms or the use of both terms in conjunction is an approach applied in these languages, in particular in professional contexts, such as job titles when referring to women. Increasingly, also female equivalents are used for virtually all functions that previously were of exclusively masculine gender (such as 'Kanzlerin', 'présidente', 'sénatrice', 'assessora', etc.). Also, replacing the generic masculine with double forms for specific referents ('tutti i consiglieri e tutte le consigliere') has gained acceptance in many languages. Thus, the use of generic masculine terms is no longer the absolute practice, including in legislative acts.

The way in which the principle of gender sensitivity in language is reflected in a text also depends on the type and register of the text involved. Authors should be careful to ensure that the solution chosen is appropriate for the type of text and the future uses to which it

¹³ This section is based on and adapted from: European Parliament (2018). Gender-neutral language. See: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL_Guidelines_EN.pdf

¹⁴ This includes numerous languages of the Balkans, such as Albanian and Serbian, but not Turkish.

will be put, while also ensuring sufficient visibility for all genders intended. For example, in legislation, which must be clear, simple, precise and consistent, drafting solutions aimed at gender neutrality must avoid ambiguity as to the obligations contained in the text. However, while respecting the need for clarity, **the use of a language that is not gender inclusive, in particular the generic masculine, should be avoided as far as possible in legislative acts.** Many legislative bodies in the EU Member States have already adopted recommendations and regulations in this regard.

BOX 3: UNDERTAKING A PRACTICAL CHECK

To know whether the language used is discriminatory or sexist, reverse the gender: Would reversing the designation or the term from masculine to feminine or vice versa change the meaning or emphasis of the sentence?

Would this make the sentence sound odd?

For example, check the following statements:

- Men should not aspire to get into leadership positions.
- Women cannot do two things at once.
- Men should be educated about their rights.

1.3. Strategies for avoiding discriminatory, sexist expressions or expressions that reinforce gender stereotypes

Note that strategies presented in this section stem directly from: Council of Europe Instruction no. 33 of 1 June 1994 concerning the use of non-sexist language at the Council of Europe, see: <https://rm.coe.int/1680781cf4>; and: Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 on preventing and combating sexism, see: <https://rm.coe.int/cm-rec-2019-1-on-preventing-and-combating-sexism/168094d894>

Some expressions are outright discriminatory, sexist, or convey gender stereotypes by relegating women and men to traditional and restricted roles. These expressions exist in many languages. Examples include: 'This is a man's work', 'She runs/fights like a girl', 'Thank you to the ladies for making the room more beautiful', 'Men just don't understand'. Discriminatory or sexist expressions should be removed, and those that reinforce gender stereotypes should be replaced by more neutral formulations.

It is also recommended to not use titles which refer to and indicate women's marital status, such as 'Mrs' or 'Miss', based on the logic that marital status is never specified for men. Use 'Mr' for a man; 'Ms' for a woman. If the person concerned explicitly prefers 'Mrs' or 'Miss', this may be used. If it is considered necessary to use a title, that of 'Ms' is recommended, as it is more inclusive and can refer to any woman, regardless of marital status. If it is not considered absolutely necessary to use a courtesy title, it is preferable to avoid them altogether and simply use first name and surname without a title (as in lists of participants).

Use 'Dr' for both genders (in the sense both of 'medical doctor' and 'Ph.D.');

use 'Professor' (abbreviation: 'Prof.')

for both genders.

Similarly, expressions such as 'woman president' or 'woman lawyer' should, in principle, be avoided as no one would ever say 'man president' or 'man lawyer'. This is simply not done because men in positions of power are considered the norm. However, by emphasizing the peculiarity of women in such positions, this norm is reinforced. In some exceptional instances, such expressions may be used if the emphasis is needed to explicitly raise awareness of the gender disparity.

Using gender-neutral words and avoiding stereotypes

Words that are not gender specific but are intended to include people in general should be replaced by gender-neutral terms. Among these are, especially, forms of expression that include the word 'man' and its derivatives, which should be replaced by more inclusive terms depending on the context.

LESS INCLUSIVE/AVOID	MORE INCLUSIVE/PREFERRED
Ladies and gentlemen	Colleagues, Friends, Participants
committee of wise men	advisory panel
chairman	Chair, chairperson, head
Frenchmen	the French, French people
mankind	humanity, humankind
statesmen	political leaders
spokesman	Spokesperson, press officer; or paraphrase: 'a representative for ...' or 'speaking for ...'
police man	police officer
camera man	camera operator, plural: camera crew
gentleman's agreement	honourable agreement, unwritten agreement
forefathers	ancestors
manpower	staff
manmade	synthetic, artificial, human induced
Miss, Mrs	Ms; or just first name and surname without courtesy title
fatherland	native land
mother tongue	native tongue
fraternal	warm, intimate
brotherhood	community, kinship
maternity leave, paternity leave (unless specifically addressed, i.e., in legal texts)	parental leave
motherly	loving, nurturing

Avoiding stereotypes

LESS INCLUSIVE/AVOID	MORE INCLUSIVE/PREFERRED
kingmaker	power behind the throne
lady	woman
lady-like	courteous, cultured
like a man	resolutely, bravely
maiden name	birth name
master (noun)	owner, expert, chief, superior
master (verb)	learn, succeed at, overcome
master (adj.)	expert, gifted, accomplished
master of ceremonies	host, moderator
masterful	skilled, authoritative, commanding
mastermind (noun)	genius, creator, instigator
mastermind (verb)	oversee, launch, originate
masterpiece	work of genius
masterplan	comprehensive plan, vision

Using plural pronouns/adjectives

The plural form may be used to ensure gender inclusiveness. Plural pronouns may be used with a singular antecedent as a shortcut to ensure gender inclusiveness.

LESS INCLUSIVE/AVOID	MORE INCLUSIVE/PREFERRED
The official shall carry out his duties.	Officials shall carry out their duties.
Before submitting your document, send it to the focal point for his review; he will return it to you with comments.	Before submitting your document, send it to the focal point for their review; they will return it to you with comments.
A substitute judge must certify that he has familiarized himself with the record of the proceedings.	Substitute judges must certify that they have familiarized themselves with the record of the proceedings.
When an employee attends a meeting, he should prepare a detailed report.	When an employee attends a meeting, they should prepare a detailed report.

Using the impersonal pronoun ‘one’ (plural: generic ‘they’/’them’)

The pronoun ‘one’ can be used to avoid the repetition of ‘he’ or ‘she’ and the use of the masculine form as a generic personal (he) or possessive pronoun (his), while also being inclusive of non-binary gender identities. Sometimes, rephrasing may be necessary.

Furthermore, there is an increasing tendency to use ‘they’ and its derivatives in certain contexts for a singular subject, thus not specifying the person’s gender.

LESS INCLUSIVE/AVOID	MORE INCLUSIVE/PREFERRED
A staff member in Antarctica earns less than he would in New York.	A staff member in Antarctica earns less than one in New York.
-	Someone may unintentionally cause harm to themselves.
-	Someone may not know their tax number.
-	The police officer will ask you to show them your ID.

Using the relative pronoun ‘who’

LESS INCLUSIVE/AVOID	MORE INCLUSIVE/PREFERRED
If an applicant is not satisfied with the Court's decision, he may lodge an appeal.	An applicant who is not satisfied with the Court's decision may lodge an appeal.

Omitting the gendered word

LESS INCLUSIVE/AVOID	MORE INCLUSIVE/PREFERRED
An official's salary is dependent on his length of service.	An official's salary is dependent on length of service.

Using the passive voice

The use of the passive voice may not always be appropriate since it may change the intended emphasis of the sentence. However, it may offer an opportunity to avoid a gendered construction.

LESS INCLUSIVE/AVOID	MORE INCLUSIVE/PREFERRED
The staff member should send the relevant documents to his supervisor.	The relevant documents should be sent to one's supervisor.

1.4. Strategies for making gender visible, where the context allows

Note that strategies presented in this section stem directly from: Council of Europe Instruction no. 33 of 1 June 1994 concerning the use of non-sexist language at the Council of Europe, see: <https://rm.coe.int/1680781cf4>; and: Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 on preventing and combating sexism, see: <https://rm.coe.int/cm-rec-2019-1-on-preventing-and-combating-sexism/168094d894>

Using ‘woman’, ‘man’, ‘girl’, ‘boy’

‘Female’ and ‘male’ define biological distinctions used in the fields of medicine and biology. ‘Woman’ and ‘man’ define human beings and are the correct way to indicate personhood. Using ‘female’ and ‘male’ to describe women and men reduces them to their reproductive abilities and enforces the notion that differences and inequalities between women and men are grounded in biology, instead of socially constructed roles. Use ‘woman’ and ‘man’, ‘girl’, and ‘boy’, even when you need an adjective. Examples:

✓	X
the youngest woman to be a winemaker	the youngest female winemaker
men in parliament	male parliamentarians
women farmers	female farmers
women business owners, women entrepreneurs	female businesses
labor participation rate of men	male labor participation rate

Note that European Commission documents, such as the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and the Gender Action Plan III 2021-2025(2027)¹⁵ refer to **“women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity”**. The expression ‘in all their diversity’ is used to express that, where women or men are mentioned, these are heterogeneous categories including in relation to their sex, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics. The expression affirms the commitment to leave no one behind and achieve a gender equal Europe for everyone, regardless of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.¹⁶

15 European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (2020). Objectives and Indicators to Frame the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan III (2021–2025, extended until 2027). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020SC0284>

16 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions – A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025, COM(2020) 152, 5.3.2020. Available at: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en

Using feminine and masculine pronouns

The use of the feminine and masculine forms ('he or she', 'his or her') is appropriate when the author or speaker wishes explicitly to include women and men. This can be particularly useful in the context of nominations or human resources. When using both pronouns repeatedly in the same text, it is good practice to alternate their order. Examples:

- The Secretary General is responsible to the Committee of Ministers. He or she shall provide such secretariat and other assistance as the Committee of Ministers may require.
- The Head of Unit oversees financial management. She or he shall produce annual financial reports.

Specifically mentioning genders

In cases where gender stereotypes prevail, and in which highlighting gender would make the sentence more inclusive, genders can be specifically mentioned. This strategy should be used only when popular beliefs or preconceptions may obscure the presence, action, or relevance of either gender. Examples:

- Women and men staff members are entitled to carers' leave. (common gender-stereotyped preconception: only women are caretakers)
- All the soldiers, both men and women, responded negatively to Question 5 in the survey. (popular belief: by default, all soldiers are men)
- Women journalists are confronted with a lot of hate speech. (relevance: dimension of gender-based violence)

1.5. Recommended names of professions and functions

When describing professions and functions, a term which is equally appropriate to both genders and which is not gender specific ('lawyer', 'doctor', 'nurse', 'ambassador') is to be preferred to one which uses an exclusively male or female form. Use 'Chair' instead of 'Chairman'. 'Chair' should be used consistently for both sexes (for example, the 'Conference of Committee Chairs'). In English, it is generally not difficult to find a gender-neutral term for professions, occupations, functions, etc., although there are some exceptions.¹⁷ The following is a non-binding list of recommendations, with alternatives where relevant.¹⁸

¹⁷ These include, e.g., waiter/waitress (the gender-neutral term 'server' has been proposed), and midwife (for both genders; so far, there is no widely accepted alternative for 'male midwives').

¹⁸ Based on: Council of Europe (2024). Guidelines for the use of language as a driver of inclusivity. See: <https://rm.coe.int/guidelines-for-the-use-of-language-as-a-driver-of-inclusivity/1680aec235>; and: UN Women [Online]. Gender-inclusive language guidelines (English). Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/genderterm>

LESS INCLUSIVE/AVOID	INCLUSIVE/PREFER
actress	actor (now commonly used for both genders); use 'actress' only if the person's gender is relevant
businessman	business person/executive; plural: business people, alternatively business circles or business milieux; use 'businesswoman' only if the person's gender is being stressed
chairman	Chair, chairperson, head
lady/woman doctor	doctor (for both genders)
fireman	firefighter
air hostess, steward/stewardess	flight attendant; plural: flight crew
guys (referring to men and women)	all, everyone
headmaster/headmistress	head/head teacher
layman/laymen	layperson; plural: lay people
manmade	human induced, human-made, synthetic, artificial
mankind	people, humanity, human beings, humankind, we, women and men
male nurse	nurse (for both genders)
-	official (for both genders)
ombudsman	Ombud, ombudsperson
landlord/landlady	owner
boyfriend/girlfriend; husband/wife	partner(s), spouse(s)
stateman/statemen	political leader(s)
chairmanship	presidency
policeman/policewoman	police officer; use 'policeman'/'policewoman' only when the officer's gender is relevant
salesman	sales representative
weatherman	weather reporter/forecaster
manpower	workforce/staffing

2. PRINCIPLES FOR AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS AND COMMUNICATION

Pictures, graphics, video, and audio materials are powerful communication tools. They influence perceptions, attitudes and social norms, and play a key role in shaping representation, visibility and agency of women and men, in all their diversity, in all spheres of life. For this reason, the principles for gender-sensitive and inclusive written and oral communications also apply to audio and visual materials, e.g., videos, photographs, and infographics published in print and online. As these communications products are used, produced and widely (re-)shared on a regular basis, it is important to avoid any stereotypical portrayal of women and men in terms of social beliefs, norms of expected behavior, sexual division of labor, access to and control of resources, decision making, and power inequalities.¹⁹

The principles of non-discrimination, equal opportunities, and equality are enshrined in the EU treaties. An essential precondition for democratic governance and sound decision making, they are also addressed in EU Directives applying transversally to all sectors. Achieving greater diversity and inclusion in the audiovisual sector specifically has been increasingly emphasized as a policy goal at EU level in recent years. Respective EU legal acts are listed in the table below.²⁰

19 European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2024). Words Matter - Supporting gender equality through language and communication, p.16ff. See: <https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/words-matter-supporting-gender-equality-through-language-and-communication.pdf>

The section on 'Communication Formats' includes practical exercises for images, videos, social media posts, voice-over, and events/event design.

20 Based on: European Audiovisual Observatory (2021). Diversity and inclusion in the European audiovisual sector. See: <https://rm.coe.int/iris-plus-2021en1-diversity-and-inclusion-in-the-european-audiovisual-/1680a299b9>

In conjunction with UN guidance on the topic²¹, they serve as the basis for adopting and applying guiding principles, with the aim of encouraging writers and producers of audio-visual materials to support the practical implementation of equality and non-discrimination throughout their work.

Table 1: Selected EU *acquis* on gender equality in the media sector, with a focus on gender portrayal and/or stereotyping in media

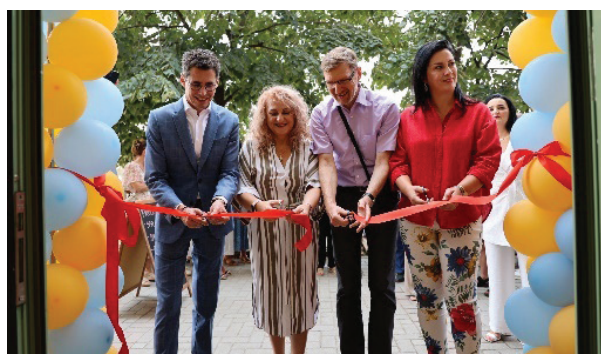
ACQUIS	MAIN TOPICS ADDRESSED
<p>Directive (EU) 2024/1385 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on combating violence against women and domestic violence (OJ L 2024/1385, 24.5.2024). Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1385/oj/eng</p>	<p>This Directive provides an EU-wide legal basis for preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence. It aims to ensure a minimum level of protection across the EU against such violence. The law criminalizes, amongst others, the following offences across the EU: non-consensual sharing of intimate images, cyberstalking, cyber-harassment, and cyber incitement to hatred or violence.</p>
<p>EU Directive 2018/1808 on Audiovisual Media Services (AVMSD) Directive (EU) 2018/1808 amending Directive 2010/13/EU on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) in view of changing market realities. See: https://eurlex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2018/1808/oj</p>	<p>This Directive addresses the issue of discrimination from a content perspective, through the prohibition of content inciting violence or hatred directed against groups or a member of a group based on any of the grounds referred to in Article 21 of the Charter (Article 6 AVMSD). Grounds of discrimination listed encompass those based on sex, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (Article 9(c)(ii) AVMSD)</p>
<p>Recommendation CM/Rec (2017) 9 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on gender equality in the audiovisual sector, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 27 September 2017 at the 1295th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies. See: https://search.coe.int/cm/?i=09000016807509e6</p>	<p>This Recommendation addresses the issues of both women's presence in the media and of women in media content and calls on Member States to promote content on gender equality in the public media and alerts them to the risks posed by a degrading portrayal of women and LGBTI and gender stereotyping in media content.</p>

21 For example: UNDP (2018). Let's Speak Gender. 10 Principles of Gender-Responsive Communications for Development. Available at: <https://www.undp.org/eurasia/publications/10-principles-gender-responsive-communications>; and UNDP Gender Equality Seal Initiative (undated). Principles of gender-sensitive communications. See: <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2024-04/UNDP%20Gender%20Seal-Principles%20of%20gender-sensitive%20communications.%20word%20.pdf>

<p>This Recommendation addresses the issues of both women's presence in the media and of women in media content and calls on Member States to promote content on gender equality in the public media and alerts them to the risks posed by a degrading portrayal of women and LGBT+ and gender stereotyping in media content.</p>	<p>This Resolution recommends that regulatory authorities set out the criteria guaranteeing stereotype-free portrayals of women and girls and that they include the possibility of removing or suspending offensive content. The need for data collection and monitoring is highlighted, as well as the need for self- and co-regulation and the exchange of good practices.</p>
<p>Council Resolution of 5 October 1995 on the image of women and men portrayed in advertising and the media. See: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A41995X1110%2801%29</p>	<p>This Resolution calls for action to promote a diversified and realistic picture of the skills and potential of women and men in society and related implementation.</p>

Representing women and men fairly and equally

When preparing written, audio and visual materials, including voice-overs, women are to feature as interviewers, interviewees and speakers (including at events). In voice-overs, it is recommended to combine female and male voices. This should be done regardless of the development topic, and it should be ensured that style of expression and content of messages convey equal status and authority when altering between male and female voices. While it may not be possible or feasible to have an absolutely equal number of women and men in every single photograph, illustration, cartoon or video segment, it is important that in the total presentation, the presence of women in society is demonstrated as balanced, instead of exceptional or sporadic. Generally, women should be portrayed as equal and active participants in all aspects of life: in the workplace, in manual labour positions and in white-collar professions; at home; in educational institutions; in politics and in civil society; in public life and in the community.



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Challenging gender-stereotypes with images

In the same way as written materials, the depiction of women and men should attempt to break with notions of gender roles that perpetuate gender inequalities. Women and men should be portrayed as equals, rather than having roles and characteristics traditionally assigned on the basis of dominant gender norms. Women should be depicted as equally capable of leveraging opportunities or as having equal opportunities; being knowledgeable and competent; holding positions of power and working in professions that tend to be less commonly linked to women such as professors, doctors or heads of states. In addition to aiming at equal numbers of women and men in image selection, it is important to be mindful of subliminal messages about gender norms. For example, it is recommended to choose images in which postures, expressions, gestures and clothing convey equal status and authority.



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Portraying women accomplishing despite structural gender inequalities

In general, the particular ways in which women keep being patronized are to be avoided. These include messages such as: “women need to be educated about their rights”; “women need to improve their self-esteem”; “women need to be motivated to participate in public life”. When talking about issues that affect women’s lives, it is paramount to take into account, focus on, and address the structural discrimination and the systematic material and educational deprivations women and girls experience over their life course.



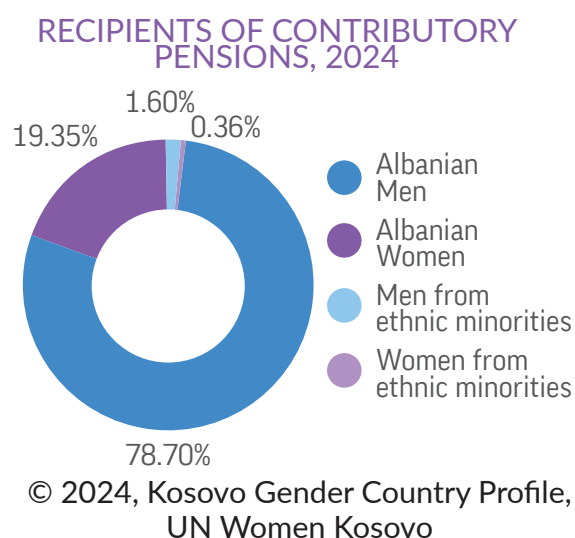
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Focusing on presenting the facts

Most people have strong opinions about gender relations and gender equality because gender shapes our lives and identities in many ways. Justifications for why all societies have historically refused women the same rights as men can still hold significant discursive power and influence the way people approach gender equality issues. It is important to be aware that every individual has a context and a background that influences their opinions. In general, it is strongly discouraged to make judgements about gender relations or infer societal trends about gender equality solely based on personal experience and anecdotal evidence. Instead, the focus should be placed on presenting facts, analyzing data and information available, and consulting with technical experts in case of doubt. For illustrating and/or personalizing a story, quotes can be used.



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Zero tolerance regarding the depiction of condescending, derogatory or demeaning attitudes and expressions, and violent behavior.

BOX 4: INCLUSIVITY AND RESPECT DISCLAIMER

We are committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all participants. We expect all attendees to treat each other with respect and kindness, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religion or any other characteristic. Discrimination or harassment of any kind including sexual harassment will not be tolerated. By attending this event, you agree to uphold these values and contribute to a positive and respectful atmosphere.

Source: EIGE (2024). *Words Matter - Supporting gender equality through language and communication*, p.24ff. See: <https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/words-matter-supporting-gender-equality-through-language-and-communication.pdf>

3. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Gender-responsive communication avoids the perpetuation of repressive power relations and is based on collaboration, trust, and looking after one another's rights. Therefore, communicating in a gender-responsive manner involves the habit of using language that is not confrontational and competitive but understanding and solidarity-oriented. Changing communication culture starts with actively listening, empathizing, and exhibiting respect for the concerns and well-being of others. Open exchange of views and collaboration replace individualist, competitive behavior and power-oriented relationships, and are the basis for enabling gender-responsive communication.²²

Principles for enabling and cultivating dialogue

LESS INCLUSIVE/AVOID	INCLUSIVE/PREFER
Assuming that there is one right answer (one's own)	Assuming that many people have parts of the answers
Combative: Participants focus on proving the other side wrong	Collaborative: Participants work together towards a common understanding
Being the winner by all means	Exploring common ground
Searching for flaws in an argument and making counter arguments	Listening to understand, find meaning, and contribute to reaching a consensus
Defending one's own assumptions/truths	Admitting that other people's thinking can improve one's own
Searching for flaws and weaknesses in others' positions to make a counter argument	Searching for strengths and value in others' positions
Discouraging further discussion	Keeping the topic going even after the discussion has formally ended
Seeking a conclusion or vote that justifies and endorses primarily one's own position	Discovering new options, working towards consensus

22 UNDP (2021). A Gender-Responsive Communication Guide: Rethinking Communication. See: <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke3226/files/migration/tr/UNDP-TR-GENDER-RESPONSIVE-COMM-GUIDE.pdf>

4. GENDER EQUALITY GLOSSARY

This section provides a list of key gender terms and concepts, and their respective definition what these concepts refer to. It is intended as a helpful introduction and also serves as a reference for translators and practitioners working with gender concepts in local languages.

Terms are from various official UN sources and international women's human rights instruments, complemented with language from the European Union and Council of Europe legislative acts, strategies, and policy documents on gender equality and gender mainstreaming.²³

Affirmative (positive) action refers to 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). (European Commission, 1998)

Decision-making refers to a key aspect of changing gender relations at individual, household, group, village, and societal levels. (ILO, 2002)

De facto and **de jure** gender equality: *De jure* equality (sometimes called 'formal equality' or 'paper governance') refers to equality under the law. *De facto* equality refers to equality in practice. (UN Women, 2011)

Empowerment Empowerment implies people—both women and men—taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, gaining skills (or having their own skills and knowledge recognized), increasing self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance. It is both a process and an outcome. Empowerment implies an expansion in women's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them. (UN-INSTRAW)

Equal opportunities for women and men are the absence of barriers to economic, political, and social participation on the ground of sex. (European Commission, 1998)

Femicide refers to all types of gender-related killings of women and girls as described in the 'Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls (femicide/feminicide)', approved by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2022. Femicide represents the most extreme manifestation of gender-based violence against women and girls. It is rooted in societal norms and stereotypes that consider women to be subordinate

23 European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) Thesaurus [Online], available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1217?lang=en>; and: UN Women Training Centre eLearning Campus [Online], Gender Equality Glossary, see: <https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/mod/glossary/view.php?id=36>

to men, as well as in discrimination of women and girls, inequality, and unequal power relations between women and men in society. (UNODC and UN Women, 2021)

Gender refers to the roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for women and men. In addition to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male, and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, gender also refers to the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context-/ time-specific, changeable over time, and vary within and across cultures. Gender determines what is expected, allowed, and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, as are other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis, including class, race, poverty level, ethnic group, sexual orientation, age, etc. (UN Women OSAGI)

Gender analysis is a systematic examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect women, men, girls and boys in certain situation or contexts. Gender analysis examines the relationships between women and men/girls and boys, and their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other. Gender analysis can also include the examination of the multiple ways in which women and men, as social actors, engage in strategies to transform existing roles, relationships, and processes in their own interest and in the interest of others. A gender analysis should be integrated into all sector assessments and situational analyses to ensure that gender-based injustices and inequalities are not exacerbated by interventions, and that greater equality and justice in gender relations are promoted. (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women)

Gender-based discrimination is any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex, which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of women and men, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. Discrimination can stem from law (de jure) or from practice (de facto). The UN CEDAW Convention recognizes and addresses both forms of discrimination, whether contained in laws, policies, procedures, or practice. (UN Women)

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person or group of people because of their factual or perceived sex, gender, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Gender-based violence is based on an imbalance of power and is carried out with the intention to humiliate and make a person or group of people feel inferior and/or subordinate. This type of violence is deeply rooted in the social and cultural structures, norms, and values that govern society, and it is often perpetuated by a culture of denial and silence. Gender-based violence can happen in both the private and public spheres. Although not exclusive to women and girls, GBV affects women and girls disproportionately. Gender-based violence can be sexual, physical, verbal, psychological (emotional), or socio-economic. GBV can take many forms, such as: domestic violence; verbal violence and hate speech on the Internet; sexual exploitation and forced prostitution;

trafficking; forced/early marriage; honor killings; harmful practices such as female genital mutilation; rape; and murder. It can be perpetrated by anyone: a current or former spouse/partner, a family member, a colleague from work, schoolmates, friends, an unknown person, or people who act on behalf of cultural, religious, state, or intra-state institutions. (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women; Council of Europe)

Gender blind means ignoring or failing to address the gender dimension (as opposed to gender sensitive or gender neutral). (European Commission, 1998)

Gender blindness refers to the failure to recognize that the roles and responsibilities of women/girls and men/boys are assigned to them in specific social, cultural, economic, and political contexts and backgrounds. Projects, programs, policies and attitudes which are gender blind do not take into account these different roles and diverse needs. They maintain the status quo and will not help transform the unequal structure of gender relations. (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women)

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It incorporates a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and in restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality. GRB also examines how budgetary allocations affect the social and economic opportunities of different groups of women and men. Hence, a gender-responsive budget is not a separate budget for women, but a tool for analyzing and adjusting budget allocations, public spending, and taxation with the aim to better respond to women's as well as men's needs, rights, and entitlements. (ILO, Council of Europe)

Gender diversity is a term that recognizes that many peoples' preferences and self-expression fall outside commonly understood gender norms. It refers to the complete spectrum of gender identity and expression within humanity and includes cisgender, transgender, agender and non-binary people.

Gender equality (equality of women and men) refers to the equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development. (UN Women OSAGI)

Gender equity means the enjoyment of equality at the outcome level. It requires that women and men are treated fairly according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities. In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women. (UN Women, 2011)

Gender identity refers to a person's innate, deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's physiology or designated sex at birth. It includes both the personal sense of the body, which may involve, if freely chosen, modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical, or other means, and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech, and mannerisms. The two gender identities most people are familiar with are girl and boy (or woman and man). The idea that there are only two genders—and that each individual must be either one or the other—is called the 'gender binary'. However, throughout human history, many societies have seen, and continue to see, gender as a spectrum and not limited to just two possibilities. (UNFPA & Promundo, 2010; UNAIDS, 2011)

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy which involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, strategies, budgets, spending programmes, project activities, regulatory measures, administrative functions, and institutional culture, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and preventing and eliminating discrimination. Gender mainstreaming ensures that legislative work, policy-making and implementation in all political, economic, and social spheres are of higher quality and respond more effectively to the needs of all citizens—women and men, girls and boys. With gender mainstreaming, public interventions are more effective, ensuring that inequalities are not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women, European Commission)

Gender norms are ideas about how women and men should be and act. We internalize and learn these 'rules' early in life. This sets up a life-cycle of gender socialization and stereotyping. Put another way, gender norms are the standards and expectations to which gender identity generally conforms, within a range that is defined by a particular society, culture, and community at that point in time. (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women)

Gender wage (pay) gap. Despite the recognition of the fundamental right to equal pay for equal work (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), 1957), the wage gap between women and men, measured as the relative difference in average gross hourly earnings between women and men, was estimated in the EU in 2023 at 12.0 per cent to women's disadvantage.²⁴ Measured over the lifecycle rather than on the basis of hourly earnings, the wage gap grows wider still, explaining the feminization of poverty—in particular for single mothers and in old age. Several factors are usually put forward to explain the wage gap between women and men: horizontal and vertical gender segregation in the labor market (commonly referred to as 'glass walls' and 'glass ceilings'), women's supposedly lower qualifications and lesser experience, and their atypical working hours and career structures due to childbirth and care responsibilities. However, over half of the typical gender wage gap cannot be objectively explained through such 'structural' factors and is, in reality, due to discrimination against women: to differences in access to education, training, and the labour market itself; to biased evaluation, pay, and promotion systems; and to discriminating gender

24 Eurostat [Online]. Gender pay gap statistics. See: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender_pay_gap_statistics

stereotypes and outdated gender roles. (Council of Europe, 2010; European Commission, 2014)

Gender perspective or 'gender lens' can be defined as a focus that applies a framework of analysis in order to assess how women and men are affected differently by policies, programmes, projects, and activities. It enables recognition that relationships between women and men can vary depending on the context. A gender perspective takes into account women's and men's gender roles, social and economic relationships and needs, access to resources, constraints imposed by society and opportunities resulting from culture, age, religion, and/or ethnicity. (UN Women, 2011)

Gender relations are the specific sub-set of social relations uniting women and men as social groups in a particular community, including how power and access to and control over resources are distributed between the sexes. Gender relations intersect with all other influences on social relations – age, ethnicity, race, religion – to determine the position and identity of people in a social group. Since gender relations are a social construct, they can be transformed over time to become more equitable. (UN Women)

Gender roles refer to social and behavioral norms that, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex. These often determine the responsibilities and tasks assigned to women, men, boys and girls. They vary among different societies and cultures, classes, ages, and during different periods in history. Most often, gender roles are not based on biological or physical imperatives, but rather result from stereotypes and presumptions about what women, men, girls, and boys can and should do. Gender-specific roles are often conditioned by household structure, access to resources, specific impacts of the global economy, occurrence of conflict or disaster, and other locally relevant factors, such as ecological conditions. Gender roles become problematic when a society assigns greater value to the roles of one gender – usually men's. Like gender itself, gender roles can evolve over time, in particular through the empowerment of women and transformation of masculinities. (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women)

Gender-sensitive means addressing and taking into account the gender dimension. (European Commission, 1998)

Gender sensitivity/ awareness/ responsiveness refers to understanding and considering the socio-related factors underlying gender discrimination.

Gender-sensitive indicator refers to a measurement, a number, a fact, an opinion, or a perception that focuses on a specific condition or situation which affects women/men/girls/boys and measures changes in that condition or situation over time. The difference between an indicator and a statistic is that indicators should involve comparison with a norm. Gender-sensitive indicators measure gender-related changes in society over time; they provide a close look at the results of targeted gender-based initiatives and actions. (UN Women, 2011)

Gender statistics are statistics that adequately reflect differences and inequalities in the situation of women, men, girls, and boys in all areas of life. Gender statistics are defined by

the sum of: (a) data collected and presented disaggregated by sex; (b) data reflecting gender inequality issues, i.e., questions, problems and concerns related to all aspects of women's and men's lives, including their specific needs, opportunities or contributions to society; (c) data based on concepts and definitions that adequately reflect the diversity of women and men and capture all aspects of their lives; and (d) data produced by using methods that take into account stereotypes and social and cultural factors that may induce gender bias.

Gender stereotypes are simplistic generalizations about the gender attributes, differences and roles of women and men. Stereotypical characteristics about men are that they are competitive, acquisitive, autonomous, independent, confrontational, and concerned about private matters/goods. Parallel stereotypes of women hold that they are cooperative, nurturing, caring, connecting, group-oriented, and concerned about public matters/goods. Stereotypes are often used to justify gender discrimination more broadly and can be reflected and reinforced by traditional and modern theories, laws and institutional practices. Messages reinforcing gender stereotypes and the idea that women are inferior come in a variety of 'packages'—from songs and advertising to traditional proverbs. This can result in systemic, material, and psychological barriers that prevent both women and men from making choices, free expression, and full enjoyment of their rights. (UNDP, 2005)

Heteronormativity is what makes heterosexuality seem coherent, natural and privileged. It involves the assumption that everyone is 'naturally' heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is the ideal and superior to, e.g., homosexuality or bisexuality. (EU FRA, 2009)

Informal economy/work refers to (i) unpaid economic activities done for the direct benefit of the household or of related and friends' households on a reciprocal basis, including everyday domestic work and a great variety of self-provisioning activities; and/or (ii) professional activity, whether as a sole or secondary occupation, exercised gainfully and not occasionally, on the limits of, or outside, statutory, regulatory, or contractual obligations, but excluding informal activities which are also part of the criminal economy. (European Commission, 1998)

Intersectionality is an analytical tool for studying, understanding, and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination. For example, women are not a homogeneous group. Several personal characteristics and situational circumstances often combine/intersect to deepen their exclusion and marginalization. When one or more of the factors for exclusion overlap - as is often the case for rural women, women with disabilities, women from ethnic, linguistic or other minorities, migrant women, women from the LGBTIQ+ community, etc. - the risk of social exclusion and marginalization is not only perpetuated but also acquires an enduring quality that can span over a lifetime and across generations. (UN Women, UNDP, UNODC and OHCHR, 2018)

Intersex people are persons who are born with chromosomal, hormonal level, or genital characteristics which do not correspond to the given standard of 'female' or 'male' categories as for sexual or reproductive anatomy. (World Health Organization, 2011)

LGBTIQ+ persons is an umbrella term used to encompass lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersexual, queer, and any other individuals whose sexual and/or gender identity differs from the cis-heterosexual. The '+' stands for those other identities that are not explicitly mentioned in the acronym. (European Commission, 2020)

In the international and EU context, when referring to the equal rights and dignity of all human beings, the phrase "people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics" (SOGIESC) is increasingly used.

Diverse SOGIESC is preferred to LGBTIQ+ as it includes people whose lives do not fall into the categories of lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, intersex or queer, including cultural non-binary people (such as hijra, waria, bakla, fa'afafine), people who use non-English terms that convey distinct experiences of gender and sexuality, and people who may view their diversity as practice rather than identity. Phrasing may vary in the country or humanitarian setting, and the best practice is to adopt the phrasing recommended by local SOGIESC civil society organizations and communities. (UN Women, 2021)

Men and masculinities refers to the social meaning of manhood, which is constructed and defined socially, historically and politically, rather than being biologically driven. There are many socially constructed definitions for being a man, and these can change over time and from place to place. The term relates to perceived notions and ideals about how men should, or are expected to, behave and perform in a given setting and conform to specific roles. Masculinities are not only about men; women perform and produce the meaning and practices of the masculine, as well. (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women)

Multiple discrimination is a concept used to describe the complexity of discrimination implicating more than one ground, also known as 'intersectional' or 'multi-dimensional inequalities'. It describes two situations: (i) a situation where an individual is faced with more than one form of grounds-based discrimination (i.e., sex plus disability discrimination, or gender plus sexual orientation). In such circumstances, all women and all persons with disabilities (both male and female) are potentially subject to the discrimination; or (ii) a situation where discrimination affects only those who are members of more than one group (i.e., only women with disabilities and not men with disabilities), also known as 'intersectional discrimination'. (ILO, 2011) Certain groups of women, in addition to suffering from discrimination directed against them as women, may also suffer from multiple forms of discrimination based on additional grounds such as race, ethnic or religious identity, disability, age, class, caste or other factors. Such discrimination may affect these groups of women primarily, or to a different degree or in different ways than men. States parties may need to take specific temporary special measures to eliminate such multiple forms of discrimination against women and its compounded negative impact on them. (UN CEDAW General Recommendation no. 25)

National women's (gender) machinery is an institutional governmental and, in some cases, parliamentary structure set up to promote women's advancement and to ensure the full enjoyment by women of their human rights. Its main function is to monitor, promote, and ensure the implementation of the law and of the principle of non-discrimination and equality between women and men. (Council of Europe, 2001)

Occupational segregation refers to the concentration of women and men in different types and levels of activity and employment, with women being confined to a narrower range of occupation (horizontal segregation) than men, and to the lower grades of work (vertical segregation). (European Commission, 1998)

Reproductive rights refer to 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, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. (European Commission, 1998)

Sex (biological sex) refers to the biological characteristics that define humans as female or male. These sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive as there are individuals who possess both, but these characteristics generally differentiate humans as female or male. (UN Women, 2011)

Sex-disaggregated data can be defined as data presenting information separately for women and men, girls and boys. Sex-disaggregated data reflect roles, real situations, general conditions of women and men, girls and boys in every aspect of society. Examples of factors include literacy rates, education levels, business ownership, employment, wage gaps, dependents, home and land ownership, access to loans and credit, debt, etc. When data is not disaggregated by sex, it is more difficult to identify real and potential inequalities. Sex-disaggregated data is necessary for effective gender analysis. Data needs to be primarily disaggregated by sex and - as relevant - further broken down by additional characteristics, such as age, socio-economic status, urban/rural location, ethnicity, disability, etc.). (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women)

Sexual harassment refers to any unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, particularly when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, including at the workplace. Acts of sexual harassment are typically carried out in the context of abuse of power, promise of reward, or threat of reprisal. (European Commission)

Unpaid care work encompasses all the daily activities that sustain our lives and health, such as housework (food preparation, cleaning, laundry) and personal care (especially of children, the elderly, people who are sick or have a disability). Across all economies and cultures, these activities are commonly performed by women in the household for free. The little social and economic value assigned to this work contrasts sharply with its actual importance to families and society at large. Unpaid care work is the invisible base of the socio-economic system. It contributes to well-being and feeds into economic growth through the reproduction of a labor force that is fit, productive, and capable of learning and creativity. It also supports the public sector by offering health services, sanitation, water and childcare when public provision of such services is lacking or insufficient. However, because care work is considered 'women's work' it is mostly unpaid; because it is not assigned a monetary value, it is not measured; because it is not visible, it is not taken into account in policymaking. Unpaid care work contributes substantially to human well-being and sustainable development but poses a disproportionate burden on women and girls. It is

estimated that if such work were assigned a monetary value it would constitute between 10 per cent and 39 per cent of GDP. (European Commission, 1998; UN-INSTRAW, 2010; UNRISD, 2012)

Violence against women is a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women including all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. Forms and manifestations of violence against women are shaped by social and cultural norms, as well as by the dynamics of each social, economic and political system. Factors such as women's racial or ethnic origin, caste, class, migrant or refugee status, age, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or HIV status will influence what forms of violence they suffer, how they experience it, and whether the human rights violation is recognized. (UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993; Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, 2011)

Women's empowerment is a 'bottom-up' process of transforming gender power relations, through individuals or groups developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge it. Women gain power and control over their lives and the capacity for strategic decision-making through this process. Women's empowerment has five components: women's sense of self-worth; women's right to have and to determine choices; women's right to have access to opportunities and resources; women's right to have power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and women's ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally. In this context, education, training, awareness raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources, and actions to transform the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality are important tools for empowering women and girls to claim and access their rights. (EIGE; BRIDGE, 1997; UN Commission on the Status of Women, 2002)

Women's economic empowerment, or gender equality in the economy, refers to women's full and equal enjoyment of their economic rights and entitlements, facilitated by enabling policy and institutional environments. Economic empowerment refers both to the ability to succeed and advance economically, and to the power to make and act on economic decisions. Empowering women economically is a right that is essential for both realizing gender equality and achieving broader goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, and improvements in social well-being. (ICRW, 2011)

Women's rights refers to the rights of women and the girl child as being an inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of universal human rights. (European Commission, 1998, Annex 1: Priority Action Alignment)

