

Joint Declaration on

“Gender Equality as a Priority of the European Union today and in the future”

Equality between women and men is enshrined in the European Union’s Treaties as a fundamental right, a value, and a goal of the Union. Nine in ten European citizens believe that gender equality is important to ensure a fair and democratic society.¹ Gender equality is a vital aspect of all policy areas at both national and European level. The aim of this Joint Declaration is therefore to reaffirm gender equality as a priority of the European Union, including through the following actions:

We call for a **full realization of the dual approach** combining gender mainstreaming and specific actions. Strengthening gender mainstreaming in all policy areas, especially by including a gender equality perspective in high-level discussions and proposed policy documents is essential. A gender perspective should be integrated in all key processes concerning the future EU policies, including post-2020 programmes and funding. At the same time, gender equality depends also on its prominence as a political stand-alone goal, strong institutions and regular exchanges between relevant actors.

We call for a **high-level and stand-alone EU Gender Equality Strategy**. Such a strategy is necessary for ensuring effective long-term planning and in order to better concentrate efforts on common priorities. It is a prerequisite for meeting the needs and aspirations of European citizens and for fostering a fair and democratic society at a time of rapid change. A stand-alone Gender Equality Strategy would increase the visibility of the topic, strengthen commitment and accountability, and allow for monitoring of progress with a view to ensuring sustainable implementation.

We call for a **strong network and continuous dialogue between all relevant actors** in the area of gender equality and for systematic and effective cooperation between the Member States and the European Institutions. Our ambition is to actively facilitate regular exchanges between relevant actors. Regular meetings of EU Ministers for Gender Equality and active exchanges between the political level and relevant bodies such as the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming, the European Institute for Gender Equality, and the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men are key in this regard. Moreover we stress the impact of an active and regular involvement of gender equality expert bodies in the European Semester and cross-sectoral cooperation to promote gender mainstreaming in all EU activities.

¹ Special Eurobarometer 465 (2017).

We commit to **use the momentum of the Trio Presidency**

- by visibly joining forces in a joint Trio declaration on gender equality;
- by defining and strongly promoting shared priorities in the area of gender equality; inter alia by including a gender equality perspective in high-level discussions and proposed policy documents;
- by promoting and supporting continuity beyond the Trio Presidencies, inter alia through the exchange of good practices and lessons learned;
- by adopting conclusions within the framework of the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action; and
- by following up on the commitments and indicators agreed upon in these conclusions.

We, the signatories, are committed to actively contribute to the implementation of the above outlined actions with the aim of reaffirming gender equality as a priority of the European Union, and call upon all Member States, and the EU institutions, committees and bodies to join us in this effort.