

EU SUPPORTS GENDER EQUALITY

in the Eastern Partnership

#StrongerTogether #EU4GenderEquality



Gender equality is a core value of the EU and a universally recognised human right. It is an imperative for a functioning democracy, wellbeing, economic growth, prosperity, good governance, peace and security.

EU Support for Gender Equality

Relevant regional projects promoting gender equality in the Eastern partnership include:

- ✓ **The EU4Gender Equality: Reform Helpdesk** supports Eastern partnership governments' reform work towards equal opportunities for women and men.
- ✓ The **EU4Business** initiative supports women-led SMEs. In 2020, more than **24,000 women-led SMEs** received support.
- ✓ **Awareness raising initiatives** implemented by UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund. Campaigns have reached more than **3,4 million people** in the Eastern partner countries with messages of gender equality and non-discrimination. With more than **20 Fathers' Clubs** opening across the region, men are empowered to be more involved in childcare and to maintain caring and violence-free relationships.
- ✓ **EU4Dialogue** supports the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the region through promoting the **inclusion of women in peace processes**.
- ✓ **Partnership for Good Governance: Women's access to justice** supports the delivery of the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards in the Eastern partner countries, by strengthening the competences of legal professionals in delivering gender sensitive justice without discrimination or arbitrary barriers through institutional reform and capacity building.

Impact of COVID-19

The OECD estimates that the **COVID-19 pandemic could set progress towards gender equality back 15 years across the Eastern partner countries**, as gaps in pay, access to finance and digital opportunities widen. Women face a higher risk of losing their job and income, and face increased risks of violence during times of crisis and quarantine. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed and exacerbated gender inequalities in the division of care responsibilities.



Future commitments

With the adoption of the **EU Gender Action Plan III**: An ambitious agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in EU external action and the NDICI, the main financial tool of the EU's international cooperation, the importance of gender equality is clearly reaffirmed. Moreover, the EU has committed to ensuring that at least 85% of its external actions should have gender equality as a principal or significant objective.

Through the renewed Eastern Partnership agenda of recovery, resilience and reform¹, the EU is committed to support the Eastern partner countries in their efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in all policy areas and support equal access to resources through systematic gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting.

¹ JOIN(2020) 7 final; SWD(2021) 186 final



Photo credits

Doctor - Egor Tetiusev, UNFPA Moldova, UN Women Moldova, 2021
Father with child (painting) - Ion Buga, UNFPA Moldova, 2021
The pilot - Egor Tetiusev, UNFPA Moldova, UN Women Moldova, 2021
Man and woman, house chores - Egor Tetiusev, UNFPA Moldova, UN Women Moldova, 2021

For more information on EU support for gender equality in the Eastern Neighbourhood, please visit:
<https://euneighbourseast.eu/topics/gender-equality/>