



Module 2

Gender Equality in the European Union



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Pivot

Module 2

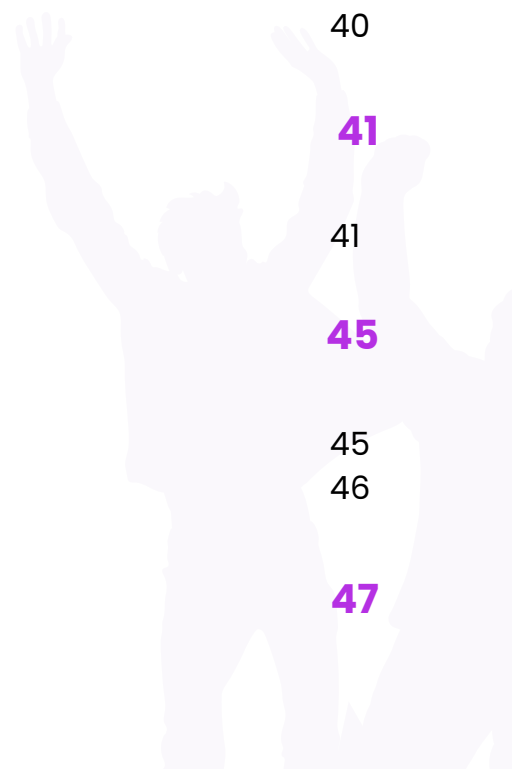
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Introduction

We aim to enhance your understanding of gender equality, a key to building fair, healthy, and thriving communities. This module tackles the crucial aspects of gender equality, including its definition, importance, and the effects of inequality. We'll explore intersectionality, feminism's impact, and historical and current challenges to gender equality across different regions, like the European Union and Spain.

Additionally, we'll look into the Gender Equality Index, the role of social movements and policy changes, and how the EU Green Deal intersects with gender equality. Covering gender inequality in various policy areas, current policy priorities, and youth engagement, this module offers comprehensive insights and quick facts to broaden your understanding.

Before we dive in, take a moment for a quick quiz to gauge your current knowledge and get you thinking about the issues at hand. Are you ready to join us on this journey toward a more equal and inclusive world? Let's start with the quiz!

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Chapter 1

Understanding Gender



Foundations First:

What is Gender?

Gender refers to the roles, behaviors, expressions, and identities that society assigns to girls, women, boys, men, and those with diverse gender identities. It's more than just male or female; it includes a spectrum of identities that might change as people grow and society changes.

These aspects are deeply influenced by cultural and societal norms, meaning what's expected in one culture might differ in another, and these expectations can shift over time. Gender impacts how individuals view themselves and how they are viewed by others, shaping interactions, the roles individuals adopt, and their access to power and resources within their community. Essentially, gender is about the complex ways people experience and express their identities to the expectations placed on them by society.

1.2 Beyond Binaries:

Understanding gender diversity

Have you ever thought about the "male" or "female" checkboxes on forms and wondered why those are the only options? Gender isn't just a two-way street; it's a vast network of paths, each representing different experiences and identities. Let's dive into gender diversity, moving beyond the traditional male and female categories to acknowledge the wide variety of gender identities.

The binary perspective

Historically, society has placed people into two categories, male and female, based on physical characteristics at birth. This binary view simplifies gender into two roles, overlooking the complexity of individual identity. However, this perspective only captures part of the spectrum of human experience.

Gender as a spectrum

Contrary to the binary model, viewing gender as a spectrum allows us to recognize and validate a wide range of gender identities. Here are a few key terms that showcase this diversity:

Non-Binary

Individuals who identify as non-binary don't fit neatly into 'male' or 'female.' They might embody qualities of both, neither, or define their gender in entirely different terms.

Genderqueer

Similar to non-binary, genderqueer people challenge traditional gender distinctions, often expressing their identity in ways that don't conform to conventional male or female norms.

Genderfluid

For genderfluid individuals, gender identity can shift over time. They might feel more aligned with being male, female, or another gender at different moments.

Agender

Some people feel an absence of gender, identifying as neither male nor female. This lack of gender identification is referred to as agender.

Bigender

A bigender person identifies with two genders, either simultaneously or fluctuating between them.

Two-Spirit

This term is specific to some Indigenous North American cultures, describing a person who embodies qualities of both traditionally recognized genders. It's a reminder of the diverse understanding of gender roles across different cultures.

Embracing gender diversity is crucial for creating a society where everyone feels respected and recognized.

Understanding these concepts is about more than just terminology; it's about acknowledging individuals' unique experiences and identities. It challenges us to think beyond our assumptions and create inclusive and welcoming spaces for all.

As we move forward, let's remember that gender is a personal and complex aspect of who we are. Recognizing the spectrum of gender identities helps us appreciate the richness of human diversity and encourages a more empathetic and inclusive world.

1.3 Equality for All: The Core of Gender Equality

What is

GENDER EQUALITY?

Gender equality refers to the equitable distribution of **rights, responsibilities, and opportunities** among all genders, ensuring that individuals' access to these aspects is not determined by their gender at birth. It encompasses a commitment to ensuring that both women and men, as well as girls and boys, experience the same **degree of freedom to pursue personal development, make choices without the constraints of strict gender roles, and have equal standing in society.**

This concept emphasizes the importance of creating a societal framework where **gender does not dictate one's abilities, potential, or value**, advocating for a balanced and fair treatment of all individuals, regardless of gender.

Why do we need it?

Gender equality is foundational for creating safer, healthier, and more prosperous societies. By promoting gender equality, we directly contribute to the prevention of violence against women and girls, addressing a critical issue that affects millions worldwide. Furthermore, gender equality is intrinsically linked to economic prosperity. When women and men are afforded equal opportunities to contribute to the workforce, pursue education, and participate in decision-making processes, economies grow more robust and resilient. Societies that embrace gender equality as a core value tend to be safer and exhibit higher levels of health and well-being among their citizens.

Inequality affects us all

Inequality, deeply rooted in gender norms, affects us all, weaving its threads through various aspects of life and society. Women often encounter significant obstacles that men may not face to the same degree, such as wage disparities, a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic labor, exposure to violence, and underrepresentation in leadership roles and public positions. These challenges are manifestations of pervasive gender inequality.

Moreover, individuals who identify or express their gender outside traditional binary norms face discrimination, exclusion, and harassment. Such societal rejection not only hampers their participation in community life but can also lead to adverse health outcomes, financial instability, and social isolation.

Men and boys, constrained by societal expectations to adhere to a rigid masculinity that valorizes strength, emotional stoicism, dominance, and aggression, suffer as well. These pressures compromise their physical and mental well-being. Despite a higher prevalence of mental health issues among women and girls, **men are less likely to seek help due to the stigma associated with vulnerability**. In the workplace, men may feel inhibited from challenging outdated gender norms or embracing policies designed for work-life balance, such as flexible working hours or parental leave.

Entrenched notions of masculinity contribute to the perpetuation of violence against women and gender-diverse individuals. To dismantle these harmful stereotypes, it's imperative to engage boys and men actively in the quest for gender equality, encouraging them to challenge these norms and support a culture of equality and respect.

True gender equality promises many benefits for society - **it fosters a safer, healthier, and more cohesive community where every individual, regardless of gender, can thrive.**

The path toward equality **demand**s a **collective** effort to recognize and address the varied impacts of gender inequality, ensuring that every person has the opportunity to live freely and fully, unencumbered by gender-based discrimination or expectations.



1.4 Intersecting Identities: The Importance of

INTERSECTIONALITY

What is it?

Intersectionality describes how systems of inequality based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class, and other forms of discrimination “intersect” to create unique dynamics and effects.

It is like looking at the world through a special pair of glasses that help us see how different parts of our identity—like our gender, skin color, who we like, whether we have disabilities, and how much money our family has—work together to shape how we experience life. It tells us that our experiences aren't just because of one part of who we are but because of how all these parts come together.

Example

Job Hunting

Consider two friends, Alex and Taylor, who are both applying for jobs. Alex is a Black woman, and Taylor is a white, transgender man. Alex might face discrimination because of her race and gender, possibly seeing doors closed to her that she's equally qualified for. Taylor, on the other hand, might encounter biases against him for being transgender, even though he's just as capable as other candidates. Their experiences in finding a job are shaped by the intersections of their race, gender identity, and the prejudices that come with those identities.

When was it first used?

The term "intersectionality" was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American civil rights advocate and leading scholar of critical race theory, in her 1989 paper for the University of Chicago Legal Forum titled "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." Crenshaw used the term to describe the experiences of Black women who face overlapping forms of discrimination that could not be fully understood through the exclusive lenses of either race or gender alone.

The roots of intersectional thought, however, extend much further back and can be traced to the Black feminist movement and other social justice movements that highlighted the complex interplay of race, gender, and other social categories.



1. Multidimensional identities

We're not just one thing. Your race, gender, class, sexuality, and other aspects of your identity don't exist in isolation - they interact and influence your experiences and how the world perceives you.



2. Interconnected oppressions

Different systems of oppression, like racism, sexism, and ableism, aren't separate issues. They're intertwined, affecting people in complex, compounded ways.



3. Inclusivity is key

Actual progress in social justice and policy requires hearing from those who live at the intersections of multiple identities, ensuring policies and actions don't just benefit those with the most privilege.



4. Unique experiences

Intersectionality reveals that people with overlapping marginalized identities face unique challenges that can't be fully understood by examining single aspects of their identity in isolation.



5. Systems of power

Recognizing and challenging the historical and systemic power structures perpetuating inequality is essential. This means looking at the big picture of how societies function and who they benefit.



6. Fluidity and change

Identities and how they intersect can shift over time and across different contexts. Intersectionality accommodates the fluid nature of identities and experiences.



7. Aim for equity

The ultimate goal is to achieve equity, acknowledging that equal treatment doesn't always mean fair treatment. Solutions should be tailored to address the specific needs and challenges of diverse groups.



Chapter 2

Movements, perspectives, and policies



2.1 Feminism and gender equality

Let us start with understanding what feminism is.

Feminism is a social, political, and cultural movement that establishes and advocates for equal rights and opportunities for women. It seeks to address and challenge the various forms of inequality and discrimination that women face based on their gender. Feminism encompasses a wide range of theories and practices focused on issues such as equal pay, reproductive rights, sexual harassment, gender representation in politics and business, and the promotion of women's rights and well-being across the globe. While there are multiple waves and branches of feminism, each with its own focus and methodologies, the core principle remains the pursuit of gender equality.



The feminist movement is often described in waves, each marking different historical periods with unique focuses and achievements:

First Wave (Late 19th to Early 20th century)

Concentrated on legal inequalities, especially women's suffrage. It arose during the industrial society era, leading to women achieving voting rights in many countries.

Second Wave (1960s–1980s)

Extended the discussion to include equality in law, sexuality, family, work, and reproductive rights. Known for the slogan "**the personal is political**," it spotlighted how personal experiences are influenced by political and societal structures, leading to major legal and social reforms.

Third Wave (1990s–Early 2000s)

A response to the perceived shortcomings of the second wave, especially its approach to race, class, and sexuality. This wave focuses on diversity, intersectionality, and challenging traditional notions of femininity and gender, advocating for a more inclusive feminism.

Fourth Wave (2010s–present)

Known for emphasizing **intersectionality** and **leveraging the internet and social media for activism**. It addresses sexual harassment, body shaming, rape culture, and continues the fight for equality. The **#MeToo movement**, highlighting sexual assault and harassment, especially in the workplace, is a significant aspect of this wave.

Each wave of feminism has contributed to the progress made by previous generations, adapting to the evolving contexts of women's lives. The movement keeps evolving, facing new challenges, and widening its scope to more broadly address issues of gender equality and justice.

Adopting a feminist approach is crucial in the fight towards gender equality because it provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and combating the multifaceted forms of discrimination and inequality that women face.

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a white rectangular card. The card has the hashtag "#METOO" written on it in bold, black, hand-drawn capital letters. The background is a blurred pink and purple color.

Taking a feminist approach in the fight for gender equality is vital for several reasons:



1. Addresses systemic inequality:

Feminism recognizes that gender inequality is systemic and deeply embedded in societal norms, institutions, and structures. By tackling these root causes, feminism aims to dismantle the barriers that prevent equality for all genders.



2. Promotes intersectionality:

Feminism, especially in its more contemporary forms, emphasizes the importance of intersectionality. This perspective acknowledges how different forms of discrimination, such as those based on race, class, sexuality, and gender identity, intersect and amplify each other. It ensures that the fight for gender equality is inclusive and responsive to the needs of the most marginalized in society.



3. Challenges patriarchy

Feminism directly confronts patriarchal systems and ideologies that often prioritize male authority and marginalize women and other genders. **It advocates for the redistribution of power across all genders, leading to more equitable societies.**



4. Broadens the understanding of gender issues

A feminist approach benefits not just women but also challenges harmful stereotypes and expectations placed on all genders. It encourages a broader understanding of how gender norms affect everyone, including men, and promotes more fluid and inclusive concepts of gender.



5. Fosters personal and societal growth

Feminism supports individuals in asserting their rights, autonomy, and the freedom to make choices about their own lives. This support is crucial for personal development and the realization of one's potential, contributing to healthier and more dynamic communities.



Drives social change

The feminist movement has been instrumental in achieving significant legal and societal changes that benefit not just women but society as a whole. These include the right to vote, reproductive rights, protections against gender-based violence, and more equal opportunities in education and employment.



Creates equitable policies

A feminist approach in policy-making ensures that legislation considers the different impacts on various genders, leading to more equitable and effective policies. It addresses specific needs and challenges faced by women and marginalized genders in areas like health care, employment, and education.



Promotes diversity and inclusion

Feminism advocates for diverse and inclusive environments, whether in the workplace, education, or public spaces.

Valuing diversity leads to richer, more creative, and innovative societies.



2.2 Policy changes



A Brief History

Pre-EU Foundations and early stages (Before 1957)

Before the European Union (EU) was formed, European countries had diverse laws and practices concerning gender equality. The aftermath of World War II catalyzed movements toward significant social and economic reconstruction, including reevaluating gender roles.

Treaty of Rome (1957)

The Treaty of Rome marked the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC), which is the EU's precursor. It introduced Article 119, mandating equal pay for equal work between men and women, and laid the foundational legal framework for gender equality within the EU.

Expanding scope and legislation (1970s–1990s)

During the 1970s and 1980s, the European Economic Community (EEC) broadened its focus from equal pay to wider issues of gender discrimination. This period introduced directives on equal treatment in employment, social security, and access to goods and services. The Single European Act of 1986 embedded equality goals into the European Community's broader objectives.

Maastricht Treaty (1992)

The Maastricht Treaty transformed the European Economic Community (EEC) into the EU and introduced European citizenship. It reinforced commitments to equality and launched new policies to protect and promote women's rights.

Amsterdam Treaty (1997)

The Amsterdam Treaty advanced the gender equality agenda by incorporating the principle of gender mainstreaming, requiring gender perspectives to be included in all EU policies and actions.

Charter of fundamental rights (2000)

Proclaimed in 2000 and legally binding since 2009 with the Treaty of Lisbon, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU solidified commitments to gender equality, including equality before the law and prohibiting sex-based discrimination.

Strategy and policy evolution (2000s–Present)

The EU has implemented various strategies and action plans to fight gender discrimination, enhance gender equality, and tackle issues like gender-based violence, the gender pay gap, and women's underrepresentation in decision-making roles. **The Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025** is the latest effort aiming for a gender-equal Europe, focusing on combating gender-based violence, challenging stereotypes, and ensuring equal participation across society.

Ongoing challenges and future directions

Despite considerable advances, challenges persist, including the gender pay gap, leadership underrepresentation, and increasing concerns about gender-based violence. The EU is actively pursuing legislative reforms, funding programs, and policy initiatives to overcome these challenges, with an enhanced focus on inclusivity and diversity beyond traditional gender binaries.

The journey of gender equality in the EU exemplifies the region's dedication to building a more inclusive and equitable society, highlighting ongoing efforts to address historical inequalities and adapt to new challenges in achieving gender justice.

Chapter 3

Challenges, Strategies, and Integration

3.1 Gender Equality Index 2023



Overview

The Gender Equality Index is a comprehensive benchmarking tool developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) to assess the state of gender equality across the European Union (EU) and its member states. It quantifies gender equality with scores ranging from 1 to 100, where a score of 100 represents absolute parity between women and men.

This Index evaluates six core domains: **work, money, knowledge, time, power, and health**, each further divided into **sub-domains** to detail gender equality issues within these areas. Additionally, it examines **two supplementary domains** - violence and intersecting inequalities - though these do not contribute to the overall Index score due to their focus on specific groups.

In its 2023 iteration, the Gender Equality Index showcased the EU's strides and obstacles in pursuing gender equality, noting a modest annual improvement while highlighting the unequal burdens crises place on women and girls. This edition also delved into the equitable transition under the **European Green Deal**, with a particular look at the energy and transportation sectors, illustrating how gender equality considerations are woven into the fabric of current challenges and uncertainties.

The Index serves a pivotal role by offering a tangible metric for gender equality within the EU, facilitating temporal and inter-country comparisons. It informs policymakers by pinpointing areas of progress and underscoring the need for interventions to mitigate gender disparities. **The 2023 report pointed to a general advancement across member states but also underscored varied progression rates**, indicating a movement toward uniform gender equality levels alongside persistent gaps requiring attention. For instance, Sweden emerged as a near-gender-equal society, a status few in the EU share. For the first time, the Gender Equality Index for the EU crossed the 70-point threshold, marking a significant 1,6 point increase from 2022—the most substantial annual gain since the Index's inception in 2013.

Latest findings from the 2023 Gender equality index

Overall EU score progress

The Index's surpassing of 70 points marks a historic year-on-year rise, attributed mainly to the refreshed data in the domain of time—the first update of its kind since 2016. This milestone reflects significant progress, with a 1.6-point growth from 2022, the largest annual improvement since 2013.

Continued inequalities

Despite advancements, the Index unveils enduring gender inequalities across various domains. The economic scenario, social participation, health status, and access to healthcare have witnessed growing disparities. Nonetheless, there have been improvements in unpaid care work, work segregation and quality, decision-making participation, and education.

Convergence analysis

The period from 2010 to 2021 saw an overall enhancement in gender equality across the EU, coupled with a reduction in differences among member states. However, this trend of convergence exhibits variability across countries.

Work

Gender segregation remains a marked challenge in the EU labor market, especially noticeable among couples with children and single individuals.

Money

Signs of regression in economic gender equality emerge after a period of stagnation, underlining the enduring wage disparity.

Knowledge

Marginal advancements attributed to higher attainment and participation, yet gender segregation in education persists.

Time

Persistent gender imbalances in unpaid care and social activities continue.

Power

Member states show uneven progress towards equal decision-making, with ongoing gender imbalances in political engagement.

Health

The health domain's progress has stalled, with issues like excessive drinking and the health impacts of extreme heat affecting genders differently.

Violence

Existing data on violence against women is outdated, not fully capturing the issue's scope.

Thematic focus

The Index emphasized the intersection of gender equality and the socially equitable transition under the European Green Deal, stressing the importance of gender-sensitive policy approaches, especially in energy and transport, to promote a just and inclusive green transition.

3.2 Social movements and policy changes

The EU has always been a leader in fighting for gender equality. **Throughout history, many movements have helped change laws and how people think about gender equality.** These efforts have made workplaces, laws, and society more fair.

Major social movements and their impacts

The Feminist movement

Wave and impact

The feminist movement in Europe has evolved through various waves, from suffrage in the early 20th century to contemporary issues such as workplace equality and **reproductive rights**.

Policy impact

It led to significant laws on gender equality, including the **Directive on the safety and health of pregnant workers (92/85/EEC)** and the **Gender Equality Directive (2006/54/EC)**.

The #MeToo Movement

Wave and impact

Originating in 2017, it raised global awareness about sexual harassment, especially in the workplace.

Policy impact

Prompted EU countries to adopt stricter laws against sexual harassment, influencing the EU's directive proposal on combating violence against women and domestic violence in 2021.

The Istanbul Convention

Wave and impact

This convention has spurred activism and policy reform on violence against women and domestic violence since 2011.

Policy impact

Encouraged EU countries to implement comprehensive national legislation, though its acceptance varies across member states.

LGBTQ+ Rights movement

Wave and impact

Has greatly influenced societal attitudes and policies on gender and sexual diversity, advocating for rights such as same-sex marriage and anti-discrimination laws.

Policy impact

The EU has adopted legislation to protect LGBTQ+ rights, including the Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC).

Women in STEM

Wave and impact

Focuses on addressing gender disparities in STEM fields, promoting equal education and career opportunities.

Policy impact

Led to EU initiatives like the Horizon 2020 program, aiming for gender equality in research and innovation.

EU policies on gender equality

Treaty of Amsterdam (1997)

Laid the foundation for equal opportunities and treatment in employment.

Gender Equality Directives

Encompasses directives for equal pay, equal treatment in employment, and protection for pregnant workers.

Strategic Commitments

Including the Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025, focusing on various aspects like ending gender-based violence and closing gender gaps in the labor market.

The Istanbul Convention

Shows the EU's dedication to combat violence against women and domestic violence.

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

Strengthens gender equality promotion and fights against discrimination based on sex.

Work-Life Balance Directive (2019/1158)

Improves conditions for working parents and caregivers.



Actions to promote equality and inclusion

Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025

Aims to empower women and promote equality across all spheres of life.

Women in Digital

Targets the digital gender gap and promotes women's participation in STEM.

Fighting Gender Violence

Includes initiatives like the Daphne Programme and the Victims' Rights Directive to support and protect victims of gender-based violence.

Addressing stereotypes and discriminatory thoughts

Efforts include educational campaigns and youth involvement to combat gender-based violence and discrimination, supported by EU programs like Daphne and legislative measures that align with the Istanbul Convention

3.3 The EU Green Deal

and Gender Equality

Overview

The **EU Green Deal** is an ambitious plan to make Europe's environment clean and healthy by 2050. It's all about creating a place where the economy grows in a way that's good for the planet and fair for everyone. This means cutting down pollution, protecting nature, and making sure all kinds of jobs and communities can thrive without harming the earth.

Part of making sure this plan works for everyone involves focusing on gender equality. This is important because men and women experience environmental issues differently, often due to the different roles they have in society and the different challenges they face. **The Green Deal** looks at these differences and tries to make sure that in fighting climate change and protecting nature, we also make life more equal and fair for both men and women. So, the idea is tackling both environmental and social inequalities simultaneously.

BENEFITS

for gender equality

Inclusive policy making

The Green Deal underscores the necessity of incorporating the perspectives and needs of women, especially those from vulnerable and marginalized communities, into policy-making. This approach aims to create policies that are effective in combating climate change and in fostering gender equality and social justice.

Employment opportunities

By driving the transition towards a green economy, the Green Deal opens new employment avenues in renewable energy, sustainability, and environmental protection sectors. Equal access to these opportunities for both women and men can diminish the gender employment gap and enhance economic independence for women.

Gender-sensitive actions

Acknowledging the disproportionate effects of climate change on women, the Green Deal advocates for gender-sensitive measures. These include initiatives to promote women's leadership in climate action, improve their resilience to climate change effects, and ensure their equitable participation in the green transition.

Funding and investment

The Green Deal allocates funds and investments with a focus on gender equality. It supports projects and initiatives specifically aimed at empowering women and girls within the green transition, such as entrepreneurship in green industries and education and training in STEM fields.

Research and innovation

Emphasizing research and innovation that incorporate gender perspectives ensures that technological advancements address the needs of both women and men. This approach leads to more effective and inclusive environmental solutions while advancing gender equality.

By weaving gender equality into its framework, the EU Green Deal not only confronts the pressing environmental challenges of our era but also makes significant strides towards a more equitable and inclusive society. **This holistic approach guarantees that the shift to a green economy is beneficial for everyone, regardless of gender, paving the way for a sustainable development that leaves no one behind.**

3.4 Addressing Gender Inequality in Policy Areas

Gender equality is a fundamental principle of the European Union and the global community, yet gender inequalities persist in various policy areas. Understanding and addressing these inequalities are crucial for achieving a more equitable and just society.

Issues of Gender Inequality in Policy Areas

Gender differences in education and transition to employment

Choosing what to study: Although there have been significant strides toward gender parity in education, gender disparities remain in the field of study choices and educational attainment levels. Women are more likely to graduate from tertiary education but are underrepresented in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields.

Transition to employment: The transition from education to employment is fraught with gender-based challenges. Young women often face difficulties in securing employment that matches their educational level, partly due to sectoral segregation and gender stereotypes.

Gender inequalities in labour conditions

Employment rates and job security: Women, particularly young women, often experience higher rates of unemployment and job insecurity compared to their male counterparts. This is exacerbated by gender biases in hiring practices and the undervaluation of work sectors dominated by women.

Wage gap: Despite efforts to close the gender pay gap, women continue to earn less than men for the same work across the EU. This disparity extends across most sectors and increases with age.

Work-life balance: The challenge of balancing work and family responsibilities disproportionately affects women, impacting their career progression and economic independence.

Gender Equality Policy Objectives at EU and International Level EU Level

Strategic engagement for gender equality: The EU has set forth comprehensive strategies to promote gender equality, focusing on reducing the gender pay gap, combating gender-based violence, and ensuring gender equality in decision-making processes.

Youth guarantee and employment initiatives: Policies like the Youth guarantee aim to provide young people, especially young women, with good-quality employment offers, continued education, apprenticeships, or traineeships within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

International Level

Sustainable development goals (SDGs): Gender equality underpins the SDGs, with Goal 5 specifically aimed at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. This includes eliminating discriminatory laws, practices, and violence against women.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: This landmark international agenda for women's rights and gender equality focuses on 12 critical areas of concern, including women and poverty, education, health, violence, and decision-making.

3.5 Spain case

Spain's journey towards gender equality is characterized by a progressive legislation aimed at combating gender discrimination, bolstering women's rights, and fostering equality across various spheres of life. This chronological overview highlights key laws and reforms that have significantly contributed to these efforts.

1. The Spanish Constitution of 1978

Establishment of equality

Enshrines the principle of equality between genders and mandates the state to remove obstacles that prevent full equality between Spanish citizens.

2. Organic Law 1/1981 on Equality of Opportunity between Women and Men (1981)

Foundation for gender equality

Among the earliest efforts to institutionalize gender equality, focusing on equal opportunities in employment and education.

3. Organic Law 9/1985 on the Reform of the Penal Code Regarding Abortion (1985)

Reproductive rights

Decriminalized abortion in specific cases, marking a significant step toward recognizing women's reproductive rights and autonomy.

4. Organic Law 11/1999 Modifying Organic Law 6/1985 of the Judicial Power on Domestic Violence (1999)

Domestic violence

Introduced measures to protect women from domestic violence, recognizing it as a public issue that requires legal intervention.

5. Organic Law 3/2007 for the Effective Equality of Women and Men (2007)

Comprehensive equality framework: A landmark law aiming to ensure effective equality between men and women in all areas of life, including work, politics, and education. It also mandated gender parity in electoral lists and executive boards of companies.

6. Organic Law 1/2004 on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender Violence (2004)

Gender-based violence: Established comprehensive measures to protect women from gender violence, including legal, educational, and social protections. It was pioneering in recognizing gender violence as a violation of human rights.

7. Organic Law 2/2010 on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy (2010)

Expansion of reproductive rights: Reformed abortion laws to allow abortion on demand within the first 14 weeks of pregnancy, recognizing women's rights to make decisions regarding their reproductive health.

8. Royal Decree-Law 6/2019 on Urgent Measures for Equal Treatment and Opportunities between Women and Men in Employment and Occupation (2019)

Workplace equality

Introduced measures to promote gender equality in the workplace, including equal pay for work of equal value, measures to ensure transparency in wage policies, and mandatory equality plans for larger companies.

9. "Only Yes Means Yes" Law (2021)

Consent and sexual violence

Revolutionizes the legal framework around sexual consent by establishing that only explicit verbal consent constitutes agreement to sexual activity, aiming to protect victims of sexual assault and redefine legal standards around consent.

Spain's journey toward gender equality is not solely the result of legislative reforms but also reflects significant shifts in social perceptions regarding gender roles.



The impact of global feminist movements on Spanish society, including how international dialogues and conventions have influenced local activism and policy.



The role of Spanish feminist organizations and advocacy groups in challenging traditional gender norms, organizing mass protests, and raising awareness about gender equality issues.

Chapter 4

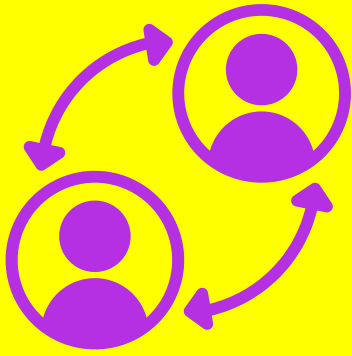
Current Policy Priorities and Youth Engagement



The European Union has outlined a series of strategic priorities and policies designed to foster gender equality, assist young individuals, and secure intelligent, sustainable, and inclusive development. This holistic strategy is intended to tackle the complex issues confronting youth in the EU, especially within the areas of education, employment, and social integration. These efforts demonstrate the EU's commitment to creating an environment that supports the diverse needs of its younger population while promoting equal opportunities for all genders.

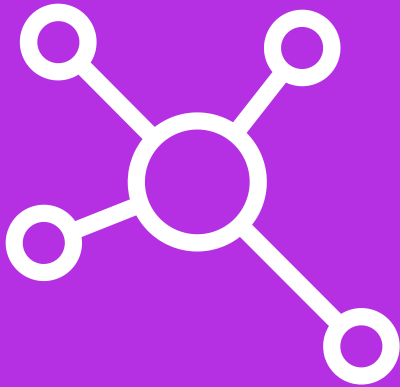
4.1 An EU Strategy for Youth

The EU Strategy for Youth, covering the period from **2019 to 2027**, aims to engage and empower Europe's youth in shaping the future of the European project. It focuses on three core areas: **"Engage," "Connect," and "Empower."** Gender equality is a cross-cutting priority, with specific attention to **eliminating gender stereotypes, promoting STEM education for girls, and ensuring equal opportunities in the digital age.**



Engage

Encouraging young people to participate in civic and democratic life.



Connect

Fostering connections between youth across different regions and cultures to build a stronger sense of European identity.



Empower

Supporting youth through quality education, training, and job opportunities, ensuring no one is left behind.

Europe 2020 is the EU's **ten-year growth strategy** with a strong focus on creating a smart, sustainable, and inclusive economy.

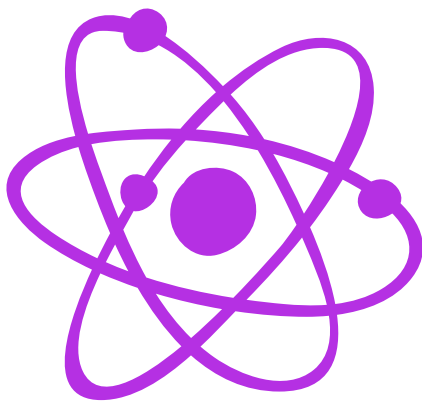
It sets ambitious targets in employment, innovation, education, social inclusion, and climate/energy.

Gender equality is integral to achieving these targets, particularly in:



Employment

Reducing the gender employment gap and supporting work-life balance to increase women's labor market participation.



Education

Decreasing the rates of early school leaving and increasing tertiary education attainment among both young men and women, with special attention to reducing gender disparities in STEM fields.



Social inclusion

Tackling poverty and social exclusion, with programs aimed at supporting disadvantaged groups, including women and girls.

4.2 Specific Programmes and Initiatives

Several EU programmes and initiatives are designed to support the objectives of the Youth Strategy and Europe 2020, providing direct opportunities for young people, including young women, to learn, work, and participate in society.

Erasmus+

This programme offers mobility opportunities for young people to study, train, gain work experience, or volunteer abroad, contributing to their personal development, employability, and understanding of the EU's cultural diversity. Erasmus+ also supports projects that promote gender equality in education and youth activities.

European Solidarity Corps

Enables young people to participate in solidarity projects across the EU, including those addressing gender equality and supporting vulnerable groups.

Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)

Specifically targets regions with high youth unemployment rates, supporting measures to provide young people, particularly young women, with employment opportunities, apprenticeships, traineeships, or continued education.

Digital Europe Programme

While focusing on digitizing the European economy, it also addresses the digital gender gap by promoting women's participation in digital jobs and entrepreneurship

Did You Know?

Learn more in **30 Seconds**



Interesting concepts and definitions

Global gender gap

- At the current pace, achieving full gender equality worldwide might take another 100 years.
- Gender equality indices reveal disparities in health, education, economic participation, and political empowerment, with many countries showing slow progress toward closing these gaps.

Voting rights

- New Zealand was the first country to grant women the right to vote in 1893.
- Finland followed shortly after, allowing women to vote and also to run for office in 1906, becoming the first European country to grant these rights to women.

Education inequality

- Over 130 million girls are currently out of school across the globe.
- In many regions, girls face significant barriers to accessing education due to cultural norms, poverty, and conflict.

Workforce participation

- Women make up 48% of the global workforce but earn about 77% of what men do for the same work.
- Occupational segregation and part-time work contribute to the wage gap, with women disproportionately represented in lower-paying sectors and roles.



Leadership roles

- Women hold about 25% of national parliamentary seats globally.
- In the corporate sector, women CEOs lead only a fraction of global companies, highlighting the glass ceiling in the highest levels of business leadership.

Understanding gender beyond binaries

- Many cultures recognize more than two genders, embracing a spectrum of gender identities beyond the male and female binary.
- Increasingly, legal systems around the world are beginning to acknowledge non-binary and third-gender categories, offering more inclusive options on official documents.

Feminism reimaged

- Feminism encompasses a broad spectrum of theories and actions aimed at achieving equal rights and opportunities for all genders.
- Intersectional feminism highlights the importance of considering multiple aspects of identity, including race, class, and sexuality, in the fight for gender equality.

Universal gender rights

- The declaration that "women's rights are human rights" emerged as a global rallying cry after the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights.
- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 specifically targets achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls, underscoring the global commitment to this issue.



Economic empowerment

- Increasing female employment rates in OECD countries to match Sweden's could boost GDP by over \$6 trillion.
- Women's economic empowerment is crucial for poverty reduction, as women tend to invest more in their families and communities than men do.

Historic moments in women's sports

Women first competed in the Olympics in 1900 in Paris.

- The FIFA Women's World Cup, established in 1991, has become one of the world's most watched sporting events, showcasing the growing popularity and recognition of women's sports on a global scale.

Access to reproductive health rights

- Over 1.2 billion women and girls live in areas with restricted access to safe abortion, impacting their health and rights.
- Comprehensive sexual education and access to contraception are critical for reducing unintended pregnancies and improving women's health outcomes, yet remain inadequate in many parts of the world.

Prevalence of intimate partner violence

- More than 1 in 10 women and girls globally were subjected to sexual and/or physical violence by an intimate partner in 2021.
- Legal reforms and social programs are essential for protecting victims and preventing violence, yet many countries lack adequate laws and support structures.

Child marriage concerns

- Every year, 12 million girls under 18 are married, often resulting in early pregnancy and discontinuation of education.
- Legal frameworks prohibiting child marriage and promoting girls' education are vital for ending this practice, but implementation and enforcement vary widely.



Female genital mutilation (FGM)

- Female genital mutilation affects over 200 million girls and women globally, recognized as a violation of human rights.
- Efforts to end Female genital mutilation include legislation, community education, and the promotion of alternative rites of passage, emphasizing the health risks and human rights implications.

Youth shaping EU policies

- The European Youth Event (EYE) 2023 allows young Europeans to influence European policies with innovative ideas.
- Youth participation in policy-making processes, such as through youth councils and forums, is crucial for addressing the concerns and priorities of younger generations.

As we finish our course on gender equality, we've learned about its history, the issues we face today, and the efforts to make everyone's lives more equal. We started by understanding what gender means and looked at laws and movements aimed at creating fairness. This course was designed to help you think deeply about the importance of treating all genders equally. We've seen efforts by groups like the European Union and countries like Spain to make society more inclusive, and how big initiatives like the EU Green Deal consider both men and women equally. Now, as we reach the end, we ask you to take a final look at what you've learned. This isn't just a test of your knowledge, but a chance to think about how you can use this understanding to make a difference in the world around you. How will you use what you've learned to promote fairness and equality in your life and in the lives of others? Let's all work towards making gender equality a reality for everyone.

FINAL QUIZ

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1XQgJGbkuwEIPnGhWAXt_vmAAwxv60Z2EGStipddCwFQ/edit

Activities

Activity 1

Role-play debate on intersectionality



Objective

To deepen understanding of intersectionality and how different identities impact experiences of discrimination and privilege.

Description

Preparation

Divide the group into small teams. Assign each team a different identity profile, which includes various intersections such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status. For example, one team could represent a middle-class, heterosexual white woman, while another could represent a working-class, gay, Black man.

Scenario development

Each team develops a brief backstory for their assigned profile, considering the challenges and privileges their character might face in specific contexts like employment, education, or healthcare.

Role-play debate

Host a moderated debate where each team presents their character's perspective on a common issue, such as workplace discrimination or access to education. Teams should argue how their character's intersecting identities affect their experience and viewpoints.

Discussion

After the debate, facilitate a group discussion. Encourage participants to reflect on the complexity of intersectionality, how different forms of discrimination intersect, and the importance of inclusive policies and practices that recognize these nuances.

Materials Needed

Identity profiles, debate questions, and a discussion guide.

Activity 2

Gender equality world café

Objective

To explore diverse perspectives on gender equality, understand the importance of gender equality in society, and identify actions to promote it. The "World Café" method is a conversational process used to facilitate open and intimate discussions, and share knowledge.

Description

Preparation

Arrange the room with several tables, each dedicated to a topic related to gender equality (e.g., workplace equality, reproductive rights, gender stereotypes, etc.). Assign a facilitator for each table to guide discussions and take notes.

Rotation

Participants spend a set amount of time at each table, discussing the topic with their tablemates. After the allotted time, they rotate to a new table with a different topic. This rotation continues until everyone has visited each table.

Sharing insights

After the rotations, gather as a large group. Facilitators summarize the discussions from their tables, highlighting key insights, common themes, and differing opinions.

Action planning

Engage the group in identifying actionable steps they can take individually or collectively to promote gender equality in their communities or spheres of influence. This could include advocacy, awareness campaigns, or supporting relevant organizations.

Reflection

Conclude with a reflection session, where participants share what they learned and how they plan to apply these insights in their lives.

Materials needed

Table topics, notepads for facilitators, and a large space to accommodate multiple discussion tables.

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PiVot



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