

# Supporting Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs) in their role

## MANUAL



**Gender Equality  
Rapporteurs  
Training Tools**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

# Supporting Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs) in their role MANUAL

**Gender Equality Rapporteurs  
Training Tools**

French edition:

*Manuel*

*Soutenir les rapporteurs  
pour l'égalité entre les femmes  
et les hommes dans leur mission*

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# Foreword

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” Promoting equality between men and women must be at the heart of everything we do

Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe



**F**or the Council of Europe gender equality must be achieved *de facto* not only in words.

Over the years we have created a solid legal framework, and efforts have been stepped up to ensure its implementation. In 2012, the Council of Europe launched its Transversal Programme on Gender Equality. It aims to increase the impact and visibility of gender equality standards and bring us closer to the goal of real equality between women and men. In November 2013, the Committee of Ministers adopted the first ever Gender Equality Strategy of the Council of Europe which will guide

the activities of our Organisation in the area of gender equality for the next four years. A balanced, flexible and focused document, the Strategy builds upon the strengths, specificities and added value of the Council of Europe and places strong emphasis on the implementation of existing standards at the national level.

One of the pillars of the Transversal Programme on Gender Equality is formed by the Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GER); experts that are appointed in intergovernmental committees to ensure that gender issues are mainstreamed in all our intergovernmental activities. I am pleased to see the positive response and engagement by all intergovernmental committees and to see that some of the monitoring mechanisms have also taken the initiative to appoint a GER.

Working together and giving the different pillars of the Transversal Programme the support they need is crucial to achieving our objectives. In this process, a special gender mainstreaming training programme has been put in place to ensure that all relevant stakeholders have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their task.

Using a variety of methods such as tests, definitions, concrete examples and good practices, the Manual responds to the expressed need for specific methodologies to apply a gender perspective in all areas of the work of the Council of Europe. We hope the Manual will serve as a guide and an easily accessible tool for the GERs in their daily work and contribute to the achievement of the objective of the Council of Europe to make gender equality a reality.

# Warm up

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## Test your knowledge on mainstreaming a gender perspective

Test your knowledge	Correct	Perhaps	Incorrect
1. Civil servants or officials should do their job as gender neutrally as possible.			
2. Gender-based discrimination means action against another person, which would not have occurred had the person been of another sex.			
3. Mainstreaming a gender perspective entails new duties and practices for ministries and civil servants.			
4. A gender perspective in preparatory work means that one, as much as possible, strives to level the differences between women and men			
5. The easiest way to consider a gender perspective is to integrate it from the very beginning. It then also affects the outcome.			
6. Women and men often have different life situations and this is worth considering in preparatory work.			
7. All ministries have duties where gender perspective is needed.			
8. Data and statistics on people, in general, should be broken down by sex only if sex-disaggregated information is readily available.			
9. A gender perspective does not need to be included in planning the operations and finances for a ministry, but only in the de facto activities of the ministry.			
10. The official or unit responsible for promoting gender equality also carries out gender impact assessments for other parts of the state administration.			

For answers see page 39



## Chapter I

# Basics

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Obtaining formal (or *de jure*) equal rights is not enough to eliminate all types of imbalances between women and men. Gender is not about the biological differences but about the unequal position of men and women in society. It is about material and social cultural differences between men and women: labour participation, income, property, education, norms, habits, culture, roles attributed to women and men in society. Men are still being represented as being the norm, the “standard human being” in policy-making. To reach the goal of gender equality, strategies are needed which take relevant gender differences into account from the very beginning of the policy-making process. Gender mainstreaming is such a strategy.

This paper is meant as a short outline summarizing key definitions and principles with regard to gender mainstreaming.

### Always remember the basics: What is Gender?

Gender, as defined by the **Council of Europe**, shall mean:

” the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men (Istanbul Convention)

Gender relationships vary from place to place and over time; they change in response to altering circumstances. Sex, by contrast, identifies the biological difference between women and men.

Gender is

- ▶ a social, ideological and cultural construct
- ▶ learned and internalised by socialisation
- ▶ not constant - varies within and across cultures
- ▶ about (unequal) power structures (the distribution of resources, wealth, work, decision-making and political power and enjoyment of rights and entitlements within the family and in public life).

Discussion on gender in a nutshell:

Since 1985 the concept of gender has appeared in the international fora and since the 1990s definitely in international documents, such as of human right organs of the UN. In March 2012, during the 56th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) a discussion was raised about the definition and use of the concept of gender. According to Scott (2013), theoretically, gender can refer to three differences: the biological and anatomical differences, the gender identity (social expectations and norms attached to the masculine and the feminine) and sexual orientation. A very restrictive interpretation of gender focuses only on the biological and anatomical differences. A very progressive interpretation includes sexual orientation.

Defining sex/gender is difficult, since there are so many deeply set cultural conceptions and assumptions about gender. Linguistic challenges also play a role: In some languages (for example Finnish) the same word is used for both sex and gender. The interpretation depends on the context, sometimes an expression corresponding to "socially constructed sex" is used. Some languages (for example Dutch) do not have a word for gender.

**Gender equality** usually refers to equality between women and men (however the concepts of sex and gender are more varied than merely this dichotomy). A situation in which women and men enjoy equal rights and opportunities, in a way that the behaviour, aspirations, wishes and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured.

For the **Council of Europe**, gender equality means "an equal visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. Gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference".

## Definition Gender Mainstreaming

The concept of gender mainstreaming appeared for the first time in international texts after the United Nations Third World Conference on Women (Nairobi, 1985) in the debate on the role of women in development. The Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) called for the promotion of gender mainstreaming. In 1998, the **Council of Europe** defined gender mainstreaming as:

the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.

## Two faces of gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming cannot replace specific policies which aim to redress situations resulting from gender inequality. Specific gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming are dual and complementary strategies and must go hand in hand to reach the goal of gender equality.

## Characteristics of gender mainstreaming

- ▶ Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for policy quality improvement (efficiency, effectiveness). Policy and resources can be allocated more accurately.
- ▶ Gender mainstreaming is a long term strategy.
- ▶ People involved in policy-making (and not just gender equality experts) should be involved in gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is not an extra burden; it helps solving problems.
- ▶ Gender mainstreaming should intervene at an early stage, during the first preparatory phases of policy making but should not be limited to that stage. Gender mainstreaming should intervene in several (all) stages during the policy-making process: policy preparing and planning stage, policy deciding stage, policy implementing stage and policy evaluating stage.

- ▶ Gender mainstreaming is relevant for all policy areas and at all policy levels. Policy areas, which at first sight do not seem relevant, might contain (hidden) aspects of gender inequality.

## Why Gender mainstreaming?

- ▶ Gender mainstreaming makes policy-making more effective and efficient.
- ▶ Gender mainstreaming is mandatory, according to the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. Since 1997 there is a Deputy UN Secretary-General as Special Advisor on Gender Mainstreaming. The UN Woman's Treaty (CEDAW) requires that states must strive for actual gender equality with all means – hence in regular policy too.

## Prerequisites

1. Political will
2. Gender-sensitive and gender disaggregated data and statistics
3. Comprehensive knowledge of gender relations
4. Necessary funds and human resources
5. Knowledge of the administration (organisation of responsibilities, procedures and communication)

## Getting started with Gender mainstreaming: steps in assessing gender impact

- 1. Put on your gender glasses**  
Decide to integrate a gender perspective.  
Challenge (own) assumptions and so-called gender neutral policy and legislations.
- 2. List relevant gender differences**  
Which relevant social and cultural differences between men and women might play a role in the selected field?

### **3. Collect and analyse facts and figures**

How to find and collect more information and (sex disaggregated) statistics on the possible differences?  
Conduct further research, ask experts and interest groups.

### **4. Reflect and make policy decisions**

How should policy/a project take those differences into account?  
Which carefully weighted policy decisions should be made?

### **5. Evaluate**

How to monitor and evaluate policy? Request sex disaggregated data. Start planning the evaluation from the beginning of the policy making process

*Useful tools and techniques* in the above mentioned steps could be:

- ▶ *Analytical*: statistics, surveys and forecasts, cost-benefit analyses, research, checklists, guidelines and terms of references, gender impact and assessment methods.
- ▶ *Educational*: awareness-raising and training courses; follow-up actions, mobile or flying expertise, manual and handbooks, booklets and leaflets, educational material for use in schools.
- ▶ *Consultative and participatory*: working or steering groups and think tanks; directories, databases and organisational charts, participation of both sexes in decision-making, conferences and seminars, hearings.

NB: “Assessing Gender Impact” is not Gender Impact Assessment (GIA). GIA is quite a heavy tool and related to gender budgeting as defined by the Council of Europe (see glossary).

## Examples

### A gender perspective on the regulation of occupational safety in Finland

A good example of the importance of a gender perspective in preparatory work was the reform of the legislation on occupational safety and health at the beginning of the 21st century. In Finland, the labour market is strongly segregated by sex, and the work and working conditions differ for men and women. The Committee on occupational safety and health legislation took this into consideration in its work and discovered that changes regarding the content of workplace legislation inevitably had differential consequences for men and women.

While preparing the proposition, the Committee changed course from an approach that focused on accidents in the workplace towards one that focused more broadly on investigating hazards in the workplace. In this way, the Act better responded to the typical risks found in female-dominated sectors (for example, harassment, workload, and fatigue). As a result of the preparatory work, the concept of occupational safety was broadened and the Act now better serves the occupational safety needs of both women and men.

### Gender perspective and snow

SALAR Starter Kit for Sustainable Gender Equality

How do I use gender management to achieve an overall improvement of services and operations? And how do I make improvements sustainable?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYikioYiilU>

For more examples, see factsheet “GERS: Right Reflexes Practice FAQ & Assessing Gender Impact”.

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**MAKING GENDER EQUALITY A REALITY**  
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[www.coe.int/equality](http://www.coe.int/equality)

**50/50**  
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**Training on Gender mainstreaming**  
Formation sur l'approche intégrée de l'égalité  
entre les femmes et les hommes

**Gender Equality Rapporteurs**  
Rapporteurs sur l'égalité entre  
les femmes et les hommes

**It's my turn  
A mon tour**

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## Chapter II

# GER: The Right Reflexes – Overview

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### **A. Know your role as Gender Equality Rapporteur**

#### **Three roles of GER**

##### **1. Put on gender glasses**

The GER ensures that a gender perspective is properly integrated into a committee's activities. It is, most of all, about a change of approach. It does not imply additional tasks or a requirement to embark on new additional activities. The GER is not required to make reports.

##### **2. Multiply knowledge and inspire others**

The GER should not do the work alone. Integrating a gender perspective in the committee is the responsibility of the committee as a whole. The GER also raises the awareness of his/her colleagues from the committee.

##### **3. Be well-connected; maintains and develops adequate network**

The GER liaises with others GER to learn from one another and exchange good ideas and experience.

The GER liaises with the Gender Equality team of the Secretariat with regard to assistance, advice and information needed.

The GER gives feedback on the experience of being appointed and functioning as GER. As appointing GER's is a new initiative, the tasks of the GER will be further refined with time and in the light of experience.



The GER engages in regular exchanges of views with the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), which is required to maintain close links with the other elements of the Transversal Programme. These exchanges will most likely be organised on either a collective or thematic basis.

This can be used as a self-assessment tool for your functioning as a GER: for each role what is going well now? What can be better? Is there a correct balance within the three roles in your one function? Or which role is prominent? Which role needs more attention? Does it depend on the functioning and agenda of the committee?

## **B. Adopt the mindset of a Gender Equality**

### **Rapporteur**

#### **Use the programming process of the committee as an outline**

- ▶ Decide for yourself that you will do your best to ensure that a gender perspective is properly integrated into your committee's activities. Decide to put on the gender glasses.
- ▶ Look at the long term planning of the committee. Identify priorities and make a plan of what you want to do. Prepare activity proposals. Find allies.
- ▶ When there are elections, what could be used to achieve more equal representation of men and women?
- ▶ Check your own stereotypes and assumptions on a topic.
- ▶ Before each meeting of the Committee, look at the agenda and ask yourself in which topics and activities might a gender perspective be relevant?
- ▶ Remind yourself and the committee of the added value of integrating a gender perspective

#### **Preparing the meeting of the Committee**

- ▶ What is on the agenda?
- ▶ Reflect on the topic for yourself: what are your own assumptions on the topic? Challenge your stereotypes. Put on your gender glasses.

- ▶ Eventually share your own preparation and reflection on the subject in the committee meeting. It will give an example of how integrating gender perspective in the committee begins with a personal decision and reflection on one's own mind-set.
- ▶ Do the members of the committee speak the same language when it comes to gender?
- ▶ Do the members of the committee know why they do what they do? (Use the "test your knowledge" exercise.)
- ▶ Emphasise the added value of integrating a gender perspective for the members of the committee, as well as for the content - give examples related to the topic of the committee.
- ▶ Show the 'win-win' situation. Keep it pleasant and challenging but without judgment.

Involve people in the committee, find allies, ask them for suggestions. Encourage questions: Remember that formulating a good question is the beginning of good solutions.

- ▶ Disseminate information on the gender perspective in the topic.
- ▶ Look for an evidence-based approach in the work of the committee.
- ▶ Analyse and discuss the process with the members of the Committee: Highlight the (potential) results of assessing gender impact and how the assessment can or could have been made. If gender impact is not assessed, ask the reasons why.
- ▶ If necessary, review the basics on gender, gender mainstreaming and assessing gender impact. Make sure you can answer the FAQ for yourself and others.

## **Invest in terminology and common language**

- ▶ Make sure everyone (in the committee) knows what they are talking about and uses the same terminology. Agree on the same understanding. Investments in time and effort in a common language will pay off and will make your work more effective. Common language is crucial and indispensable even to be able to agree to disagree.
- ▶ Be aware of possible linguistic challenges with regard to gender.

## Compile good examples and best practices.

- ▶ Identify a GEC member/National Focal Point (NFP) or GER who has developed activities that could be useful for your committee and ask for advice.
- ▶ Ask the secretariat to collect examples of initiatives developed in other committees; get specialised information and training for committees with similar challenges such as those with a strong legal content who might want to join forces in gathering and obtaining specialised background information.
- ▶ Other example: the content of some committees obviously deal with gender aspect like prenatal sex selection, while other committees might still struggle to find the gender aspect. Other good practices might be easily transferable. Think of the example from the sport committee (CAHAMA) on women representation in positions of decision-making. Others might want to write a report like the Youth Sector, or the EPAS and its handbook on good practices on gender equality in sport, but this is not absolutely necessary.

## Organising a training session, conference or other event

- ▶ Are women and men equally represented among those giving their opinions as well as in the organisations and stakeholders they represent?
- ▶ Investigate the impact on both men and women and ensure the results benefit both sexes.

## Always think “Assess Gender Impact”

- ▶ New activity proposal? Identifying priorities? Preparing a legislative text? Giving advice on legislation? Monitoring a convention? Assisting member states in promotion, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the national measures?
  - Think “Assess Gender Impact”!

Or in other words:

1. Might differences between men and women play a role?
2. Which relevant social and cultural differences between men and women might play a role?
3. How should the suggested activity/legislative text/policy take those differences into account?

## Use complementary strategies

- ▶ Gender mainstreaming (i.e. integrating a gender perspective in regular policies and activities) cannot replace specific policies which aim to redress situations resulting from gender inequality. Specific gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming are dual and complementary strategies and must go hand in hand to reach the goal of gender equality.
- ▶ If necessary plan specific gender equality activities in your committee. It is compatible with efforts to integrate a gender perspective in regular activities and policies.

## Your committee, gender and the media

- ▶ Do not underestimate the possible interest of the media in the committee's activities with regard to the gender perspective. Some committees, such as the CEPEJ for instance were confronted with media. Keep this in mind while planning your activities: plan an adequate and complementary communication. Be aware of the political and societal trends around your topic and gender. Use potential media interest for the advantage of the committee.

## C. Know your FAQ – the FAQ you might ask yourself and those you might get asked as GER

- ▶ Most of the factsheet on Gender Mainstreaming focuses on integrating a gender perspective in policy. It is important that you know the basics and understand how a gender perspective can be integrated in policy-making. The relevant issue therefore is: how does this knowledge translate into the work of a GER? What does it mean for a GER and the rest of the members of the committee? Why? (See FAQ factsheet.)

## **More questions? More support? Suggestions?**

- ▶ Don't hesitate to contact the Gender Equality Team.

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## Chapter III

# GER – The Right Reflexes Practice FAQ & Assessing Gender Impact

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### FAQ you might ask yourself and you might get asked as a GER

#### Why a gender perspective in the work of the committee?

- ▶ Integrating a gender perspective into a committee's activities is a practical follow-up to the Madrid Declaration.
- ▶ People are at the very heart of the Council of Europe's *raison d'être* – human rights, rule of law, democracy – so most activities, if not all, will impact in some way on women and men.
- ▶ Integrating a gender perspective is a strategy for quality improvement of activities and policy. It is part of the usual work, not an extra burden. Take the example of legislation: the quality of legislative drafting improves by incorporating a gender perspective. Different points of view produce distinct information on the scope, implementation and effects of legislation, thereby producing a law better suited to the *de facto* life circumstances and needs of people. At the same time, one may also ensure in advance that legislation does not have adverse effects on either sex. As a result of a gender perspective, the predictability and impact of the legislation improve.
- ▶ Remind yourself and the committee of the added value of integrating a gender perspective.

## Always remember the basics first!

- ▶ Make sure you remember and address all aspects of the definition of gender in your approach to Gender Mainstreaming. If necessary, review the factsheet on Gender Mainstreaming, the basics and the glossary, including the “test your knowledge” exercise.
- ▶ Gender refers to the social differences between women and men. To name a few: differences between men and women in terms of economic status, decision-making power, professional life, education, well-being, health and safety. Learn and read about these differences, especially in relation to the activities and topics of the committee. It is about filling the gap between *de jure* and *de facto* gender equality.
- ▶ “The” woman does not exist. Take into account the diversity within women (age, ethnicity, disabilities - to name a few).
- ▶ Keep in mind that a gender perspective includes both men and women. Assessing gender impact should therefore take into account men’s needs and circumstances also. Gender equality is an issue for both men and women.
- ▶ It is not about additional activities but about a change of approach and mind-set.

## Facts or feelings in the Committee? Look for an evidence-based approach!

- ▶ It is generally assumed that policy and legislation are generally effective for both men and women as they are gender neutral or appear gender neutral. In reality, they may have a different impact on women and men, even when such an effect was neither intended nor envisaged. Policy areas, which at first sight do not seem relevant, might contain (hidden) aspects of gender inequality. Assess the gender impact to avoid unintended negative consequences and improve the quality and efficiency of policies or even come up with innovative solutions.
- ▶ Choose an evidence-based approach: seek first the facts and figures then make decisions based on them instead of acting on stereotypes and general assumptions (everyone has assumptions and stereotypes – the key is to be able to reflect and challenge them.)

## How to assess Gender Impact?

- ▶ New activity proposal? Identifying priorities? Preparing a legislative text? Giving advice on legislation? Monitoring a convention? Assisting member states in promotion, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the national measures?

Think “Assess Gender Impact”!

Or in other words:

1. Might differences between women and men play a role?
2. Which relevant social and cultural differences between women and men might play a role?
3. How should the suggested activity/text/policy take those differences into account?

### 1. Might differences between men and women play a role?

- ▶ Use the following **checklist** to identify if a gender perspective is relevant.

#### Checklist: Gender perspective relevant or not?

The following checklist can be used to decide whether or not integrating a gender perspective is needed in a certain (existing or new) policy area or committee’s activity:

**1. Will/does the policy/activity directly or indirectly affect people?**

- a. If no: no integrating of gender perspective
- b. If yes: go to question 2.

**2. Will/does the policy/activity concern both women and men?**

- a. If no: go to question 3.
- b. If yes: go to question 4.



**3. Could the policy/activity also be applicable to/have consequences for the other gender?**

- a. If no: no integrating of gender perspective
- b. If yes: go to question 4.

**4. Are there important differences between women and men in the policy area/activity?**

Remember that these differences may change (even inverse) over time and between states

- a. If no: no integrating of gender perspective
- b. If yes: there is enough reason to investigate the possibilities of integrating a gender perspective.

Source:

Adapted from Handleiding Gender Mainstreaming;

dr. M.J. Meesters & drs. A. Ouderjans.

Ministerie van SZW 2003

## **2. Which relevant social and cultural differences between men and women might play a role?**

- ▶ If a gender perspective is relevant, make an inventory of the relevant gender differences. Take the time for a broad orientation. Make an inventory of possible social, cultural and material differences between women and men within the respective policy area. Make an inventory of possible different effects of the (intended) policy on women and men. Use or make a checklist with items you come up with. Use the checklist each time you want to develop a new plan or when you want to evaluate policy.
- ▶ Learn and read about these differences, especially related to the activities and topics of the committee. Collect and analyse facts and figures. Collect facts: which (gender differentiated) statistics, research results, qualitative surveys are available on the topic of the specific policy area? Consider also differences in ethnicity, age, level of education, etc. What is the opinion of gender experts? Which good practice and experience are available from other countries?
- ▶ Integrate a gender perspective in your analysis of the gender disaggregated data. Gender disaggregated data are necessary

but not enough for a gender analysis. A gender perspective in the data analysis is also necessary. The combination of both gender disaggregated data and gender perspective in the data analysis is needed in order to obtain a gender analysis.

- ▶ How do you do a gender analysis? (see an example below at the end). Consult gender experts or organise hearings, share information with the committee in order to create a common basis of knowledge and understanding of the issue (you can also use google); ask the Gender Equality Team for advice and support.
- ▶ While assessing the gender impact, keep in mind women's and men's needs and circumstances. Be aware of differences between member states.

### **3. How should the suggested activity/ text/ policy take those differences into account?**

- ▶ Again: evidence-based approach first (seek out the facts and figures) and then make decisions based on them instead of building on stereotypes and general assumptions. After reviewing existing information and statistics, one can determine whether conclusions about the possible gender impact may be drawn on the basis of that information and how to take these differences into account in the activity. If measures are taken, immediately plan how to evaluate the results of the measures taken later on. Ask for sex disaggregated data, for example.
- ▶ It is crucial that this step (how to take differences into account) only occurs after the research and the gender analysis of the relevant facts. Then reflect on which facts are preponderant and finally decide what to do with them. Is the (intended) policy adequate for both men and women? Would it increase or decrease gender differences? Are there better alternatives to achieve gender equality? If the (intended) policy is less effective for women or increases gender differences: is the regular policy goal so important that this gender emancipation disadvantage can be accepted, or not? If gender differences are not taken into consideration, can the goal of the (intended) policy still be achieved? Which trade-offs in policy effects do you have to consider?

Take the following (Dutch) example:

Policy makers want to encourage parents not to drive their children to school. It is safer if children come by bike; it is better for the environment etc. Only, research shows that working mothers drive their children to school, so that they immediately can drive further to their work, and later on from their work to the supermarket for errands and then get the children back from school.

Such “chain transfers” are easier by car than by bike or public transportation, especially under time pressure. The trade-off there is between (public) transport policy and gender emancipation policy. Gender mainstreaming in the example does not mean that policy makers should immediately accept that cars at schools are unavoidable. Policy makers should decide what is more important in this case.

Thanks to considering gender differences, policy makers are well aware that it might be difficult to get rid of the car problem around schools without addressing the needs and lifestyles of working mothers. Alternatives could be developed, such as improving bus connections between school and train stations, for example, or providing good cycle sheds at schools so that parents can leave their bikes there.

Considering gender differences contributes to more quality and creativity in regular policy.

- ▶ This is a crucial phase where good intentions could still fail to translate into actions, as a result of trading off gender equality with other issues. That is why it is imperative that the committee is committed to promoting gender equality.
- ▶ You might want to summarize for yourself, as a GER or for the committee, the conclusions of assessing the gender impact.

#### Assessing gender impact in a committee's activity

A paragraph on assessing gender impact could contain the following information :

- ▶ The reasons for which gender impact is assessed. For example, a short review of the important relevant differences between men and women for the selected activity.
- ▶ How a gender perspective is or could be addressed in the committee's activity.
- ▶ The expected added value of integrating a gender perspective in the activity.

Source:

Adapted from Handleiding Gender Mainstreaming;

dr. M.J. Meesters & drs. A. Ouderjans.

Ministerie van SZW (2003)

- ▶ Are you monitoring a convention or assisting member states in promotion, implementation, follow up and evaluation of the national measures? Are you checking policy documents prepared by others or giving guidelines and advice in preparation of policy making?

— Remember the prerequisites of gender mainstreaming.

They describe the ideal situation, which is often not the real situation. Nevertheless they provide useful guidelines for your work. You can ask if the prerequisites were or will be met and how. You can select the one(s) you may find most important and define them as priority for implementation, for example, sex disaggregated data. The table below gives more examples.

Prerequisites	Impact for the GER in the work in the committee
1. Political will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Check if there is political will and how it is shown?</li> <li>▶ At each level? Reporting? Is gender knowledge part of the mandate/terms of references of the committee or its bureau ?</li> </ul>
2. Gender-sensitive / gender disaggregated data and statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Check if gender disaggregated data were or will be used? Ask for gender disaggregated data.</li> <li>▶ Check if the analysis of (disaggregated) data adequately followed a gender perspective. Were statistics reviewed in a good way?</li> </ul>
3. Comprehensive knowledge of gender relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Use of evidence-based facts? How relevant and actual? Good examples from other countries?</li> </ul>
4. Necessary funds and human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Which ones? Are they enough? What is good? What could be better?</li> </ul>
5. Knowledge of the administration (organisation of responsibilities, procedures and communication)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Is integrating a gender perspective the responsibility of all in the organisation or is it more the responsibility of a small group or a co-ordinator? How is the process of integrating a gender perspective organised and embedded in organisations?</li> </ul>

Example: How to include a gender perspective in analysis of gender disaggregated data? (see 2. *Which relevant social and cultural differences between men and women might play a role?*)

Example of Gender Analysis based on gender disaggregated data and gender perspective.

Gender analysis requires these three components (sex-disaggregated data, analysis, and a gender perspective) in order to provide a reliable information base for gender mainstreaming.

Gender disaggregated data  
+ Analysis + Gender perspective = Gender analysis

Data not disaggregated by sex	Data disaggregated by sex
156 residents of an apartment block complex attended a meeting on new waste and water management systems for their community. A total of 750 adults live in this complex.	156 residents of an apartment block complex attended a meeting on new waste and water management systems for their community. 133 were men and 23 were women. A total of 750 adults live in this complex, with an approximately even split between men and women.

Analysis refers to interpretation of that data by asking, “What does this information mean?”

For example, the following provides a basic interpretation of the above data:

#### **Analysis**

Approximately one in five residents attended the meeting, which is viewed as reasonably good participation. Nearly six times as many men attended as did women.

While the above analysis notes the difference between men and women, it does not analyse the causes or consequences of this difference. Adding a gender perspective means that the interpretation of the data will occur according to established sociological (or other) theories about relations between women and men. Providing this perspective is crucial so that the analysis can be used for better policy formulation and decision-making.

Consider the difference between the following two possible interpretations of the above data:

<b>Analysis of gender differences that does not consider established theories about gender relations</b>	<b>Analysis of gender differences that includes a gender perspective based on established gender theories</b>
<p>Women were in low attendance at the meeting because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Women are not interested in waste and water management.</li> <li>▶ Women have no knowledge about waste and water management.</li> <li>▶ Men are better decision makers and leaders than women on issues of waste and water management.</li> </ul> <p>Women’s low participation in the meeting will not have any negative consequences, since they will benefit from the new solutions anyway. .</p>	<p>Because women are primarily responsible for tasks involving waste and water management, their low attendance must be due to other factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Was the meeting at a time when women could attend?</li> <li>▶ Were women informed about the meeting?</li> <li>▶ Are women systemically shut out of community decision-making processes?</li> </ul> <p>Because women are the primary managers of waste and water in the home, their low participation at the meeting is likely to result in less effective and sustainable solutions.</p>

## Chapter IV

# Glossary: words as building stones to increase effectiveness and teamwork

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### Always remember the basics first!

- ▶ Make sure you and the members of the committee remember and address all aspects of the definition of gender (social cultural construct, power structures, learned while growing up in a society and a group, can be unlearned).
- ▶ Gender equality means equal visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation for both women and men in all spheres of public and private life.

### Invest in terminology and common language

- ▶ Make sure everyone (in the committee) knows what they are talking about and uses the same terminology and agrees on the same understanding. Investments in time and effort in a common language will pay off and will make your work more effective. Common language is crucial and indispensable to even be able to agree to disagree.
- ▶ Be aware of possible linguistic challenges with regard to gender.

<p><b>Gender / Sex</b></p>	<p>Gender, as defined by <b>the Council of Europe</b>, “shall mean the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men” (see the Istanbul Convention - Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence). It identifies the socially, culturally, politically and economically determined relationships between women and men. Gender relationships vary from place to place and over time; they change in response to altering circumstances.</p> <p>Sex, by contrast, identifies the biological difference between women and men.</p> <p>Other definitions of Gender:</p> <p>Gender is the social meaning given to biological differences (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW - UN).</p> <p>Gender refers to cultural expectations and assumptions about the behaviours, attitudes, personality traits, and physical and intellectual capacities of men and women, based solely on their identity as men or women (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, UN, 2005).</p> <p>Gender is a concept that refers to the social differences between women and men that have been learned, are changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures (EC, 1998).</p> <p>Defining sex/gender is difficult, since there are so many deeply set cultural conceptions and assumptions about gender. Gender may entail gender roles, social and cultural signifiers on femininity and masculinity, gendered behaviour, or the gender identity of an individual. Gender equality usually refers to equality between women and men. It is, however, important to remember that the concepts of sex and gender are more varied than merely this dichotomy. In some languages (for example Finnish) the same word is used for both sex and gender. The interpretation depends on the context; sometimes an expression corresponding to «socially constructed sex» is used. Some languages (for example Dutch) do not have a word for gender.</p>
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<b>Male/Female</b>	Adjectives referring to the sex of people. Both female and male can also be used as nouns.
<b>Masculine/ Feminine</b>	Possessing qualities or characteristics considered typical of or appropriate or traditionally ascribed to men (masculine) or to women (feminine).
<b>Gender equality</b>	<p>A situation in which women and men enjoy equal rights and opportunities, in a way that the behaviour, aspirations, wishes and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured.</p> <p>For the <b>Council of Europe</b>, gender equality means “an equal visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. Gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference”.</p> <p>In 1988, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe affirmed that equality between women and men is an integral part of human rights and that sex-related discrimination is an impediment to the recognition, enjoyment and exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In the Council of Europe recommendation CM/Rec (2007)17 on gender equality standards and mechanisms, gender equality is a principle of human rights and women’s human rights are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. Gender equality is also a requirement for the achievement of social justice and a sine qua non of democracy. Acceptance of these principles implies not only the elimination of all forms of discrimination, legal or otherwise, on the basis of sex, but also the fulfilment of a number of other requirements that must be seen as qualitative indicators of political will to achieve substantive gender equality or <i>de facto</i> equality.<sup>1 2</sup></p>

<p><b>Gender equality policy</b></p>	<p>For the <b>Council of Europe</b>, the setting of legal standards to guarantee the enjoyment of the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination is not sufficient to achieve substantive gender equality. To comply with the commitments made, governments must put in place and efficiently implement proactive policy measures and various strategies which have been recognized by international organisations as indispensable to pursue the objective of gender equality in an effective way. Elements indicating states’ political will and commitment to gender equality in this regard include in particular that gender equality policies be devised and included in the overall framework of human rights protection and promotion, even if specific programmes and responsible institutions are required in particular areas.<sup>2</sup></p>
<p><b>Gender impact assessment (GIA) or assess gender impact</b></p>	<p>For the <b>Council of Europe</b>, gender impact assessment is an evaluation of budgets either after completion or when carrying out the budget or during the preparatory phase of the budget proposal. GIA is probably the most extensive and complex tool of gender budgeting, since it refers to short and long-term budgetary effects on the distribution of and access to resources (including time) and on gender roles and norms. GIA therefore requires not only data on both the market and the care economy, paid and unpaid work, but also on gender stereotypes, gender specific perceptions, rules, symbols, traditions and discriminating practices within societies. Generally speaking, these are methods of an analysis after completion to gain knowledge about gender gaps. Application of these methods might lead to the identification of hidden gender inequalities and indicate a need to reformulate or for a shift in political priorities policies and programmes.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>According to the European Commission, “Gender Impact Assessment is the assessing of policy proposals on any differential impact on women and men, with a view to adapting these proposals to make sure that discriminatory effects are neutralised and that gender equality is promoted”.<sup>4</sup></p>

	<p>Assess Gender Impact could be seen as a light version of Gender impact assessment and entails assessing the consequences that a measure has from the perspective of both women and men. The purpose is to promote gender equality and to prevent effects that are unwanted from a gender perspective. The assessment may, for instance, examine how measures affect the societal circumstances and resources of women and men. Based on the assessment, amending proposals can be made in order to reduce discrimination and unwanted effects, and to eliminate obstacles to gender equality. Gender impact should be assessed at an early stage in legislative drafting.</p>
<p><b>Gender-based discrimination</b></p>	<p>Gender-based discrimination entails placing women and men in adverse circumstances due to their gender. Discrimination also includes sexual harassment and molesting, as well as placing persons in a less favourable position due to pregnancy, childbirth, parenthood, family care responsibilities, or other gender-based grounds. Indirect discrimination entails that some neutral measure(s), for instance, legislation, regulations, policies or practices have a negative effect on one or the other sex.</p> <p>Article 14 of the <b>European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)</b> secures the enjoyment of rights and freedoms without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.</p> <p>Protocol No. 12 of the ECHR in 2005 represents an important step forward for building equality between women and men by securing a general prohibition on discrimination by any public authority on inter alia the grounds of sex, regarding the enjoyment of any right set forth by law and not only rights and freedoms of the ECHR. Also the <b>European Social Charter (Part V, Article E)</b> specifically defines the right to equal opportunities and equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation without discrimination on the grounds of sex.<sup>5</sup></p>

<b>Indirect sex discrimination</b>	Where a law, regulation, policy or practice, apparently neutral, has a disproportionate adverse impact on the members of one sex, unless the difference of treatment can be justified by objective factors (Council Directive 76/207 of 09/02/76, OJ L 39).
<b>Gender mainstreaming a gender perspective</b>	For the Council of Europe, gender mainstreaming is “the (re) organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making”. <sup>6</sup>  “The systematic integration of the respective situations, priorities and needs of women and men in all policies and with a view to promoting equality between women and men and mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality by actively and openly taking into account, at the planning stage, their effects on the respective situations of women and men in implementation, monitoring and evaluation” (Commission Communication COM (96) 67 final of 21/02/96). <sup>4</sup>
<b>Gender analysis</b>	“The study of differences in the conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, control of assets, decision making powers, etc. between women and men on their assigned gender roles.” <sup>4</sup>
<b>Gender blind</b>	“Ignoring/failing to address the gender dimension (as opposed to gender sensitive or gender neutral).” <sup>4</sup>
<b>Gender neutral</b>	“Having no differential positive or negative impact for gender relations or equality between women and men.” <sup>4</sup>  Policy decisions that appear gender neutral may have a differential impact on women and men, even when such an effect was neither intended nor envisaged. Assess the Gender impact to avoid unintended negative consequences and improve the quality and efficiency of policies or even come up with innovative solutions.
<b>Gender sensitive</b>	“Addressing and taking into account the gender dimension.” <sup>4</sup>

<p><b>Gender proofing</b></p>	<p>Any policy proposal which has been verified to ensure that any potential gender discriminatory effects arising from that policy have been avoided and that gender equality is promoted.<sup>4</sup></p>
<p><b>Gender (or sex) disaggregated data</b></p>	<p>“The collection and separation of data and statistical information by gender to enable comparative analysis/gender analysis.”<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Statistics and research data are of great importance in promoting gender equality. A principal rule is that all statistics pertaining to people are to be broken down and analysed by sex. Statistics can be used to identify the circumstances or status of each sex and to detect possible injustices or flaws. It is as important to highlight and investigate the differences between men and women as it is to investigate similarities.</p> <p>Specification of data for women/girls as compared to men/boys. Breaking down (or disaggregating) social-economic statistics to show the differences and similarities between (different groups of) women/girls and men/boys. These data are fundamental for gender budgeting – otherwise it is impossible to assess the impact of budgets on gender relations<sup>1</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Gender perspective</b></p>	<p>A gender perspective entails investigating how a question concerns women and men. Sex is a biological factor according to which people are grouped, much as age, domicile, or level of education. Sex and gender should therefore be considered as an aspect in preparatory work and decision making. The definition that has been used by the <b>Council of Europe</b> is: The vision that permits one to understand and analyse the characteristics that define women and men in specific ways, including their similarities and differences.</p> <p>According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), a gender perspective “is an instrument for approaching reality by questioning the power relationships established between men and women, and social relationships in general. It is a conceptual framework, an interpretation methodology and critical analysis instrument that guides decisions, broadens and alters views, and that enables us to reconstruct concepts, scrutinise attitudes and identify gender biases and conditionings, for subsequently considering their revision and modification through dialogue.”<sup>7</sup></p>

<p><b>Gender stereotypes</b></p>	<p>According to the <b>Council of Europe</b>, gender stereotypes are preconceived ideas whereby males and females are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their sex. Sex stereotyping can limit the development of the natural talents and abilities of boys and girls, women and men, their educational and professional experiences as well as life opportunities in general. Stereotypes about women both result from and are the cause of deeply engrained attitudes, values, norms and prejudices against women. They are used to justify and maintain the historical relations of power of men over women as well as sexist attitudes which are holding back the advancement of women.</p> <p>Gender stereotypes or gender roles are simplified or formulaic expectations and assumptions about how men and women “usually” are, or how women and men should behave in order to be the “right kind of” men and women. Characteristic of gender stereotypical thinking are claims such that men are more logical and better leaders than women, and that women are more emotional and by nature tender and caring. Gender stereotypes are mostly unconscious, “self-evident” beliefs deeply ingrained in culture. Stereotypes may also include negative presuppositions that may be used in order to uphold current unjust circumstances.</p>
<p><b>Multiple discrimination</b></p>	<p>Multiple discrimination describes discrimination that takes place on the basis of several grounds operating separately. Intersectional discrimination refers to a situation where several grounds operate and interact with each other at the same time in such a way that they are inseparable.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>One factor alone may not explain why discrimination occurs. To eliminate discrimination, one needs to, in addition to gender, also investigate other personal circumstances..</p>
<p><b>Positive action (positive discrimination)</b></p>	<p>“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).”<sup>4</sup></p>

<b>Gender studies</b>	Gender studies (women’s studies) are an academic and multi-disciplinary approach to, for instance, gender relationships in society and analysing the gender dimensions of other disciplines. Gender studies investigate the gender system as well as women’s historical, cultural and societal status. Gender studies are a source of information for gender equality work.
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Adapted from:

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health “Gender glasses in use”

A handbook to support Gender Equality Work at Finnish ministries.

Helsinki, Finland (2013)

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# Answers to the Test of your knowledge on gender mainstreaming

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1. **Incorrect.** A neutral approach may in reality have a gender impact.
2. **Partly correct.** It does, however, encompass seemingly neutral practices or measures, which de facto place women and men in different positions. Discrimination may therefore occur completely unintentionally.
3. **Partly, correct.** When carried out duly and in a planned manner, it does not necessarily entail unreasonable amounts of extra work.
4. **Depends on the issue.** All differences should not be levelled, since difference does not necessarily mean inequality. Inequalities, on the other hand, should always be addressed.
5. **Correct.**
6. **Correct.**
7. **Correct.**
8. **Incorrect, or perhaps.** If it is unreasonably hard to access the information, it is advisable to find out why. Generally speaking, data on people should always be disaggregated by sex.
9. **Incorrect.** Planning and documents that guide operations and finances lay the foundation for the actual work. This is why a gender perspective is to be included in them.
10. **Correct and incorrect.** In Finland, the Equality Unit co-ordinates the government measures for promoting gender equality. The Unit does not carry out gender impact assessments per se, but can help in initiating the assessment or finding experts. Practices in different countries vary, but from a gender mainstreaming perspective it is advisable that all sectors carry out their own gender impact assessments.

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This manual is intended to serve as a guide and a comprehensive tool toward the achievement of gender mainstreaming which is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies, at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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