



COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION



## Council conclusions - "Advancing Women's Roles as Decision-makers in the Media"

*EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY, HEALTH and CONSUMER AFFAIRS*  
*Council meeting*

*Brussels, 20-21 June 2013*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

### "NOTING THAT:

1. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, identifies "women and the media" as one of twelve critical areas of concern, and notes that "the potential exists for the media to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women." The Beijing Platform also lays down two strategic objectives to: (J.1) increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication; and (J.2) promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.
2. Equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the European Union enshrined in the Treaties and is one of the objectives and tasks of the European Union and mainstreaming the principle of equality between women and men in all its activities represent a specific mission for the Union.<sup>1</sup> Gender equality is also enshrined in Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.
3. In Conclusions agreed in 1996 on "Women and the Media", the UN Commission on the Status of Women recommended an initiative, consistent with freedom of expression, to "support and encourage women's equal participation in management, programming, education, training and research, including through positive action and equal opportunity policies, with the goal of achieving gender balance in all areas and at all levels of media work, as well as in the media advisory, regulatory and monitoring bodies ... while public media, where they exist, should be encouraged to set an example for private media by their commitment and contribution to the advancement of women".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Articles 2 and 3(3) TEU And Article 8 TFEU.

<sup>2</sup> The agreed conclusions and resolutions adopted for the fortieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women: *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No.6 (E/1996/26-E/CN.6/1996/15)*.

4. Cognisance must be taken of the importance of the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of expression.
5. This set of conclusions builds on the political commitments voiced by the European Parliament, the Council, the European Council, the Commission and other actors in this area, including the documents listed in Annex II.

**RECALLING THAT:**

6. Since 1999, successive EU Presidencies have developed indicators on individual areas of concern of the Beijing Platform. The EPSCO Council has adopted conclusions endorsing these indicators which facilitate the measurement of progress by the Member States in achieving the objectives of the Beijing Platform.
7. The Council Conclusions on "Beijing +15: A Review of Progress"<sup>3</sup>, adopted in November 2009, recommended that Member States develop indicators in areas of concern not previously addressed, using the expertise of the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE) and that the Commission work with the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming in planning this work.
8. On 21 September 2010 the European Commission adopted its new Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015<sup>4</sup>, which identifies equality in decision-making as one of its priority areas for action. The European Pact for Gender Equality 2011-2020<sup>5</sup> adopted by the EPSCO Council in March 2011 also prioritises the promotion of the equal participation of women in decision-making.
9. "Women and the Media" is one of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform yet to be addressed by the Council. The topic is a vast one and the present Conclusions are necessarily limited in scope, focusing on one key issue, namely, the presence of women in decision-making roles in media organisations, building on previous work to foster women's empowerment in political and economic life.
10. Several studies indicate that an increased presence of women in decision-making roles in the media is likely to lead to more gender-sensitive media content and programming, presenting a more balanced picture of women's and men's lives and women's contribution to society, which would have a positive impact on public policies, private attitudes and behaviour.

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<sup>3</sup> 15992/09.

<sup>4</sup> 13767/10.

<sup>5</sup> 7775/1/06 REV 1.

11. In 2010, the European Commission's Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men published a report entitled "Breaking Gender Stereotypes in the Media"<sup>6</sup>, which included a recommendation on the need to collect data and information in order to monitor women's presence in decision-making in the media.
12. The Audiovisual Media Services Directive of 10 March 2010 requires Member States to ensure that "audiovisual media services provided by media service providers under their jurisdiction do not contain any incitement to hatred based on race, sex, religion or nationality."<sup>7</sup> In addition, this Directive requires Member States to ensure that audiovisual commercial communications do not inter alia "prejudice respect for human dignity;" or "include or promote any discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation."<sup>8</sup>

**STRESSING THAT:**

13. There is still a need to achieve de facto gender equality in the European Union, and that this requires a multi-faceted approach including legislation, awareness-raising to promote attitudinal change and positive action programmes, in line with the aims of the European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020) and the relevant economic and social policies of the Union.
14. Equal participation of women and men in decision-making is needed to better reflect the composition of society and in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning. It is also likely to benefit the EU's economic growth and competitiveness.
15. Research shows that gender-based prejudices and stereotypes help to perpetuate gender-segregated educational choices, curtailing the labour market choices made by women and severely hampering their advancement into decision-making roles, and that these prejudices and stereotypes contribute to the economic inequality between women and men and also prevent Europe's well-educated female population from fulfilling its potential and from contributing to the economy, with a negative impact on the EU's competitiveness and the pursuit of the Europe 2020 employment target.
16. The media has enormous capacity to contribute positively to the achievement of gender equality at all levels for example by promoting balanced and non-stereotyped portrayals of women and men, including in advertising, and by portraying women in decision-making roles and in positions of power.

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<sup>6</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/advisory-comittee/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/advisory-comittee/index_en.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Chapter III, Article 6.

<sup>8</sup> Chapter III, Article 9.

17. **WELCOMING THE STUDY**, entitled "Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations,"<sup>9</sup> undertaken by EIGE, at the request of the Irish Presidency, which measures the presence of women in senior roles in a sample of broadcast and news media companies in all EU Member States.
18. **NOTING THAT** while there has been an increase in the number of women entering media organisations and in the percentage of women students obtaining degrees in the field of journalism, research shows that comparatively few women are reaching the highest levels as decision-makers in the media sector.
19. **TAKING NOTE OF** the set of three indicators focusing on the presence of women in decision-making roles in the media developed by EIGE for the future review of progress:
  - Indicator 1: Proportion of women and men in decision-making posts in media organisations in the EU;
  - Indicator 2: Proportion of women and men on the boards of media organisations in the EU; and
  - Indicator 3: Policies to promote gender equality in media organisations.<sup>10</sup>

## **THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**CALLS ON THE MEMBER STATES AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION in accordance with their respective competencies, while fully respecting the freedom of the press and the right to freedom of expression, to:**

20. Take active and specific measures to foster gender equality at all levels including women's advancement into decision-making roles in accordance with the European Pact for Gender Equality 2011 – 2020 and the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015, in all sectors, including in the media industry.
21. Continue to encourage employers to promote equal treatment for men and women in a planned and systematic way in the workplace, in accordance with national law, collective agreements or practice, including through the provision of information on equal treatment in the undertaking and on possible measures to improve the situation in cooperation with employees' representatives, in accordance with Article 21(3-4) of Directive 2006/54/EC (recast).
22. Encourage media organisations to design and implement recruitment and promotion processes on the basis of pre-established, clear, transparent, neutrally formulated and unambiguous criteria.

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<sup>9</sup> 10366/13 ADD 1.

<sup>10</sup> CZ: reservation.

23. Encourage media organisations to promote an employee-centred organisational culture and gender sensitivity in senior management and to adopt a planned and systematic framework to foster gender equality within their organisations, including by developing specific mentoring and leadership training programmes for women and by identifying and addressing the root causes underlying women's under-representation in decision-making and in senior positions, where necessary.
24. Encourage media organisations to promote better work-life balance for women and men and facilitate the reconciliation of work, family and private life.
25. Engage, as appropriate, in dialogue with media organisations with a view to encouraging them to play an active role in promoting awareness of and fostering gender equality in the media.
26. Encourage, as appropriate, the regulatory bodies for the media, be they statutory or self-regulatory, to adopt a proactive approach to the promotion of gender equality within their organisations, including through the development, where necessary, of codes of conduct and guidelines, so as to foster gender equality and promote the advancement of women within the sector.
27. Consider making funding available for projects on women and the media, complementing, where relevant, work already being undertaken by civil society.
28. Promote, through appropriate institutions and organisations, awareness-raising campaigns and the exchange of good practice on combating gender stereotypes and the advancement of the realistic and non-discriminatory portrayal of girls/women and boys/men in the media.
29. Encourage dialogue between non-governmental organisations and professional media organisations to enhance awareness of gender equality within the sector and of the benefits to be achieved by enhancing the role of women and increasing their participation and by promoting women into decision-making roles.
30. Promote the exchange of good practice between Member States on positive action programmes on gender equality in the workplace within the media industry, including the participation of women in decision-making.
31. Improve the collection and dissemination at both national and EU level of comparable, reliable, regularly updated statistical data on the participation of women and men in decision-making roles in the print and broadcast media, working in cooperation with national and European statistical offices and making full use of and the work of the EIGE where appropriate, and to support research and the exchange of good practice in this field.

32. Monitor the presence of women in decision-making roles in the print and broadcast media by using the indicators as set out in the Annex, and promote further research on other aspects related to this area of concern, such as the field of advertising, including with a view to further developing and improving these indicators so as to allow for efficient monitoring and comparability, making use of the work of the EIGE.
33. Regularly review progress achieved on those critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action for which indicators have already been developed and develop indicators in accordance with the mid-term plan developed by the Commission; and
34. **CALLS ON** the Commission to take the outcome of these reviews into account in its annual Report on Progress on Equality between Women and Men.

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## **INDICATORS REGARDING "Advancing gender equality in media decision-making"**

The role of women in the media (critical area of concern J) is one of the critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action for which indicators have yet to be developed to monitor progress within the European Union. Based on research undertaken on behalf of the Irish Presidency 2013, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has developed indicators to measure progress on objective J.1 of the Beijing Platform for Action which aims to:

*"increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication".*

Two of the indicators propose the analysis of women's presence in decision-making positions in media organisations and on decision-making boards of media organisations. The third indicator analyses existing policies in media organisations for promotion of gender equality. The paragraphs which follow explain their rationale.

### **INDICATOR 1: Proportion of women and men in decision-making posts in media organisations in the EU.**

#### **Concept**

The indicator measures the extent to which women occupy positions associated with senior decision-making across a range of management and operational functions within media organisations, incorporating both strategic and executive decision-making, so as to include both policy-makers and media content makers.

The indicator encompasses four different decision-making levels, from the highest strategic roles to middle managers as follows:

- **Level 1: the highest decision-making level** covering all strategic decisions related to the organisation. The titles covered are: Chief Executive Officer, Chairperson, President, Director, or similar. The person holding this position is likely to chair the most senior strategic or policy-making board or committee/s of the organisation.
- **Level 2: the chief senior operational managerial position**, who operates at the top level of decision-making and has under his/her responsibility budgetary control, overseeing programmes and editorial policy. The titles covered are General Manager, Director General, Executive Director, Editor-in-Chief, or other similar positions. The person holding this position is likely to chair the most senior operational decision-making committee/s.

- **Level 3: the senior operational management positions**, who operate as decision-makers and have oversight of specific programmes/media content and execution of budgets. The titles covered under this level are: Heads of Department, Acting Directors, Management team members, or similar positions. These positions are likely to be members of the operational decision-making committee/s.
- **Level 4: the managerial positions that entail responsibility for one of the main operational units of the organisation** – for example, television, radio, sport, entertainment, news, or significant areas of administrative responsibility, e.g. digital services, finance, HR. The titles covered under this level are: Heads of divisions responsible for specific sub-areas (e.g. Head of News, Head of Sport, Head of Culture, Head of HR, Head of Management Unit, etc.).

## **INDICATOR 2 : Proportion of women and men on the boards of media organisations in the EU.**

### **Concept**

This indicator provides information on the proportion of women and men on the boards of media organisations. Boards are generally strategic decision-taking bodies of media organisations, and in some instances may also have executive decision-making responsibilities.

The members of the board form the most senior external oversight committee, either of the organisation or of its parent company, and in many cases are not paid employees of the media organisation.

## **INDICATOR 3:<sup>11</sup> Policies to promote gender equality in media organisations**

### **Concept**

The indicator tracks the extent to which media organisations address the issue of gender equality within their internal policies. It reviews the presence of codes of conduct, mechanisms for implementation and monitoring gender equality, and also practical measures adopted by organisations in order to support women's career development and to improve gender balance.

It encompasses:

- **Policy measures**, to include for example policies on gender equality/codes of conduct; equal opportunities/diversity (to include gender); sexual harassment in the workplace; dignity at work; maternity, paternity and parental leave; flexible working;

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<sup>11</sup> CZ: reservation.

- **Implementation and monitoring mechanisms:** committee on equality policy issues; harassment advisors; equality/diversity department or officer;
  - **Practical measures to foster women's advancement and the portrayal of women in the media** including trainee positions specifically for women; leadership/management training for women; equality awareness training for staff.
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**References**

**1) EU Legislation**

Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast). OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23.

Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive). OJ L 95, 15.4.2010, p. 1.

**2) European Parliament**

Resolution of 13 March 2012 on "equality between women and men in the European Union -- 2011."<sup>12</sup>

**3) Council Conclusions, Resolutions and Recommendations**

All Council Conclusions adopted on the review of the Beijing Platform for Action,<sup>13</sup> and especially those cited below.

Resolution of 5 October 1995 on the image of women and men portrayed in advertising and the media (9415/95).

Council Conclusions of 22 October 1999 on the review of the implementation by the Member States and the European Institutions of the Beijing Platform for Action (11862/99).

Council Conclusions of 1 December 2003 on the Review of the implementation by the Member States and the EU institutions of the Beijing Platform for Action (15205/03).<sup>14</sup>

Council Conclusions of 30 May 2007 on the Review of the implementation by the Member States and the EU institutions of the Beijing Platform for Action; Indicators in respect of the Education and Training of Women (9152/07).

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<sup>12</sup> P7\_TA(2012)0069.

<sup>13</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/tools/statistics-indicators/platform-action/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/tools/statistics-indicators/platform-action/index_en.htm)

<sup>14</sup> These Conclusions focused on female representation in economic decision-making centres.

**P R E S S**

Council Conclusions of 9 June 2008 on Eliminating Gender Stereotypes in Society (9671/2008).

Council Conclusions of 9 June 2008 on the Review of the implementation by the Member States and the EU institutions of the Beijing Platform for Action: Women in political decision-making (9670/08).

Council Conclusions of 8 March 2010 on "the Eradication of Violence Against Women in the European Union" (6585/10).

Council Conclusions of 7 March 2011 on "the European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020)" (OJ C 155, 25.5.2011, p. 10).

Council Conclusions of 19 May 2011 on "an EU framework for national Roma integration strategies up to 2020" (OJ C 258, 2.9.2011, p. 6).

Council Recommendation 96/694/EC of 2 December 1996 on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process (OJ L 319, 10/12/1996, page 11-15)

#### **4) European Council**

The Presidency Conclusions of the Madrid European Council of 15-16 December 1995 (00400/95).<sup>15</sup>

#### **5) Commission**

Communication from the Commission: - A Strengthened Commitment to Equality between Women and Men: "A Women's Charter - Declaration by the European Commission on the occasion of the 2010 International Women's Day in commemoration of the 15th anniversary of the adoption of a Declaration and Platform for Action at the Beijing UN World Conference on Women and of the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" (7370/10).

Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 (13767/10).

Staff working document to the first Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of The Regions on the application of Directive 2010/13/EU "Audiovisual Media Service Directive" (9500/12 ADD 1.)

Commission Staff Working Document: "Report on Progress on Equality between Women and Men in 2012" (9297/13 ADD 1).

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<sup>15</sup> Conclusions in which the European Council undertook to monitor annually the Beijing Platform for Action.

## 6) Other

European Commission Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *Opinion on "Breaking gender stereotypes in the media"*, Brussels, European Commission, 2010.

Murphy B., *Gendering the media: stereotypes at work, strategies for change*, in J. Borg & M.A. Lauri (Eds.), *Exploring the Maltese media landscape*, Allied Publications, 2009, pp. 137-154.

Conference report *Elimination of Gender Stereotypes: Mission Impossible*. Ljubljana: Government of the Republic of Slovenia / Office for Equal Opportunities, 2008.

Conference report *The European Conference on new ways in overcoming gender stereotypes*. Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, 2009."

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