



Cities social trends paper: Gender equality in cities

Eurocities supports cities to work on gender equality by sharing knowledge and good practices, learning from one another through peer learning, policy transfer and critical friend reviews, and by building capacity to follow and implement the European strategy on gender equality. This work is done in the framework of Eurocities initiative to support cities in the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, principle 2 on gender equality.

With support from the European Union's programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI grant 2018-2021), Eurocities has produced:

1. A mapping report on Cities Delivering Social Rights, including a chapter on gender equality, outlining cities' competences, trends, challenges and good practices
2. City pledges to promoting gender equality – political commitments by city leaders supported by municipal budget for concrete measures, as part of Eurocities initiative 'Inclusive Cities 4 All' to implement the EPSR principles in cities.

1. Mapping of cities' role in gender equality

Eurocities published [a report](#) mapping cities' existing policy measures that are in line with the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights, one chapter dedicated to principle 2 on gender equality. The report presents the findings from primary data collected by Eurocities via a survey to 20 cities in 12 EU member states governing a total of 20 million people. The evidence was gathered directly from city authorities and their relevant administrative departments. The responses fed into a comparative analysis to identify trends and map inspiring practices. The report outlines city competencies on gender equality, trends and current challenges at local level, good practices of city measures, obstacles cities still face and policy recommendations.

Four cities reported having full competence in tackling gender equality at local level (**Barcelona, Gothenburg, Malmo, Stockholm**). For example, **Barcelona** has a municipal law to promote the full integration and participation of women in society and fight against gender discrimination. The municipal law gives the city the responsibility to plan and implement gender equality policies and organise municipal services providing support for carers. Cities in Sweden are responsible for local policies of gender equality in line with the Swedish Discrimination Act. Two in three cities mainstream gender equality in their policies via a dedicated strategy or action plan. **Barcelona** adopted the 'Strategy against the feminisation of poverty and deprivation 2016–2024'. The strategy aims to reduce poverty among women and include a cross-sectoral approach to gender equality in all local measures.

The mapping report found that cities are placing **gender equality at the core of municipal strategies and action plans**. Many cities are working **in partnership with local employers and NGOs** to promote gender equality, such as by using **gender clauses in public procurement**. Cities also play a key role in **raising public awareness** of gender inequalities as well as of domestic violence and protecting victims whilst providing **targeted support**.

How cities take concrete measures to promote gender equality:

- **Cities are mainstreaming gender equality in municipal strategies or action plans.** For example, **Lille Metropole** adopted a 'Gender equality strategy for 2016-2020', to include a gender-based approach in all its policies. **Vienna** introduced gender budgeting in all policies and programmes.
- **Targeted support for women to address the barriers they face:** **Vienna** has a women's department for the promotion and coordination of women's affairs, offering support and information for girls and women. The department finances women's shelters for women who flee from domestic abuse, give financial support to women NGOs, run a 24-hour emergency hotline to help victims of gender-based violence, offer legal counselling free of cost, organise conferences to raise awareness of gender issues, and runs girl empowerment workshops for girls. It also provides an education box for pedagogues with gender sensitive teaching materials such as literature, games and empowerment tools for girls and boys in pre-primary
- **Cities invest in childcare services that** are affordable, available where families live and flexible (opening times) to meet the working parents' needs. **Warsaw** runs a programme 'Mother Work and Me' to support the labour market activation of women combining training with support for childcare and matchmaking with job offers from local employers.
- **Many cities deliver targeted measures to empower women from most vulnerable groups** (single mothers and women from migrant or ethnic groups). For example, **Amsterdam** has a tailored approach to empowering refugee women in their access to the labour market. The 'Language and Parenting Commitment' programme has mothers get together in small groups with a certified teacher at the school of their children during class hours to learn Dutch.
- **Cities are setting up centres to support victims of gender-based violence.** For example, **Nantes** invested €1 million to open such a centre in autumn 2019
- **Cities set up anti-discrimination offices in cooperation with equality bodies.** For example, **Leipzig** established an 'Advisory Board for Gender Equality' while **Vienna** has a women service centre to help and advice women.
- **Cities introduce gender clauses in public procurement.** For example, in **Barcelona**, 79 new public contracts have included gender clauses along the city's new contracting criteria since July 2017.
- **Cities are investing in capacity building and raising public awareness.** For example, to tackle gender-based stereotypes on the labour market and in society, **Vienna** produced a toolkit for educators to work with young children in early childhood education and care based on a gender-sensitive pedagogy. Moreover, **Vienna's** department for women's affairs runs 'girl empowerment workshops' where city staff work directly with young women to raise awareness about women's rights, gender stereotypes and media portrayal.

- **Cities collect data on gender inequalities**, such as ‘gender monitors’. For example, Berlin publishes an annual ‘Gender Data Report’ with data on gender equality in Berlin.

2. City pledges on gender equality

Since 2019, Eurocities has been running the campaign ‘**Inclusive Cities 4 All**’. This initiative engages city mayors to pledge on delivering concrete measures in line with the principles of the EU Pillar of Social Rights. In doing so, the aim is to build inclusive cities for all people.

So far, 8 cities have committed to promote gender equality by investing in specific policy actions:

- **Bologna**: comprehensive system for reception, counselling and support to victims of gender violence, counselling to men, and good practice exchange among companies to tackle gender pay gap.
- **Gijon**: has Integral Care Centre for Women Victims of Gender Violence; implement specific programmes for training, employment and active inclusion of women in under-represented sectors; support work-life balance by making childcare easily available through extensive opening hours.
- **Ljubljana**: gender mainstreaming in all municipal policies and services; Improve gender equality in the city administration as employer; training courses and educate citizens, from a young age, to overcome traditional social roles; supporting victims through counselling, sheltering, crisis management. Appointed a Coordinator for Equal Opportunities.
- **Lyon**: training courses on raising awareness of gender equality among the staff of metropole
- **Madrid**: supports the Network of 17 Gender Equality Spaces to prevent, detect and raise awareness about violence against women. collaborating with 200 companies in the city to create equality plans and measures that facilitate the work-life balance. Fight against the feminisation of poverty especially of the most vulnerable women, from single-parent homes, migrant women and older women
- **Nantes**: set up a Gender Equality Council composed of 600 members (among them inhabitants, associations, companies, institutions) and chaired by the Mayor. opening a post-trauma consultation centre for women victims of violence of €1 million euros.
- **Vienna**: Free childcare for all children from 0-6 years. Support participation of over 3,000 girls and 160 businesses each year to the ‘Take Our Daughters to Work Day’ to empower girls from an early age to overcome gender-role stereotypes and explore careers in all fields of work. Vienna Business Agency supports career development of women in traditionally male-dominated sectors by granting bonuses for women in top jobs.
- **Barcelona**: 41% of its budget positively impacts gender equality, whereas 5% of the local funding is allocated for gender equality promotion activities. The Second Plan for Gender Justice (2021-2025) acts in four strategic axes from the institutional level to the domestic sphere. It aims to consolidate an organisational change to ensure gender mainstreaming in the council’s functioning, practices, public management tools, and culture.

3. Policy recommendations from cities – Promoting gender equality on the local level

Women have been at the forefront of fighting the pandemic. At the same time, they are hit harder than most men by the impact of this crisis as women are more likely to be in temporary, part-time and precarious employment. Many cities have signed the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life within the last decade and set up gender equality action plans. This know-how should inform the recovery plans at EU and national level. Therefore, we call on the EU to:

- Promote participation of women in all decision-making bodies and processes at EU, national, regional and local levels.
- Improve recognition of care work and support programmes that offer alternatives to public childcare, care for the elderly and other dependent persons during pandemics like COVID-19.
- Give special support for setting up funds dedicated to female-led businesses and start-ups.
- Build capacity of cities to collect data on gender violence based on common methodologies.

4. Useful references

- Eurocities (2020). City dialogue on covid-19 pandemic impact on gender equality: <https://eurocities.eu/latest/cities-coming-together-for-gender-equality/>
- Eurocities (2019). Cities delivering social rights – Chapter 2: Cities promoting gender equality: https://eurocities.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/EUROCITIES_report_Cities_delivering_Social_Rights-1.pdf
- Eurocities campaign: www.inclusivecities4all.eu
- Bologna pledge: <https://inclusivecities4all.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Bologna-pledge-Principles-2-19.pdf>
- Gijon pledge to gender equality: <https://inclusivecities4all.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Gijon-pledge-Principle-2.pdf>
- Ljubljana pledge: https://inclusivecities4all.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Ljubljana_pledge_3_-_gender_equality.pdf
- Lyon pledge: <https://inclusivecities4all.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Lyon-pledge-Principles-2-4-9-11-19.pdf>
- Madrid pledge: https://inclusivecities4all.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Madrid_pledge_gender_equality.pdf
- Nantes pledge: <https://inclusivecities4all.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Nantes-pledge-Principle-2.pdf>
- Vienna pledge: https://inclusivecities4all.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Vienna_pledge.pdf



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