



EFFAT Gender Equality Plan 2011 - 2014

adopted by the EFFAT Executive Committee on 4 November 2011

Gender Equality in Europe

Equality between women and men is a founding principle of the European Union and a long standing commitment of EFFAT. A balanced participation by women and men in society's major political and economic decisions is a key element to developing real democracy and it has also proved to be an essential factor contributing to economic growth.

Despite the feminisation of the labour market and the high educational attainments of female students in most of the European countries, women encounter difficulties in achieving roles of responsibility at many levels: in economy, politics and often also within trade unions.

Progress has been made since the first European Community Treaty more than 50 years ago introduced the obligation to guarantee 'equal pay' for men and women. Since then, an extensive body of equal treatment-legislation has been developed. The labour market participation of women has been steadily increasing. However, progress has come to a halt in recent years, and in some countries reverse trends can be observed.

Current situation

- The employment rate for women has increased from 51.1% in 1997 to 62.5 % in 2010, and thereby met the objective of the Lisbon Strategy (60% by 2010), but there is still a long way to go to reach the objective of the Europe 2020 Strategy (75 % by 2020)¹.
- The increase of female employment has been mostly in highly feminised jobs and sectors, such as public and private services, and they tend to have more precarious employment conditions (part time, fixed term and other forms of 'flexible' contracts).
- Women's high level of education is not directly reflected in the positions they hold in the labour market. Women are mainly working in 'feminised' sectors and professions and mostly remain in lower job categories with less access to senior positions.
- Childcare and other facilities and measures to improve reconciliation of work and private life are in most countries still very insufficiently available and often of poor quality or at too high a price. Moreover, they are still seen as 'facilities for women' instead for parents.

¹ Commission Report "Equality between women and men - 2009", COM(2009) 77, 27.2.2009, and Commission "Report on Progress on Equality between Women and Men in 2010", 2011

- The gender pay gap between women and men in Europe is still around 18 % on average, with a variation from 5 % to 31 %², and in many countries the gap is increasing, again.
- Women form around 40 percent of trade union membership³, but in most cases their representation and visibility at all levels of decision-making is far from proportionate.

Recent actions

In the last years, increased attention was paid at EU level to the importance of taking action on gender equality issues, e.g.

- The European Social Partners concluded a “Framework of actions on gender equality” in 2005, addressing gender segregation at the labour market, women in decision-making, work-life balance, and the gender pay gap, and published annual progress reports on its implementation.
- The Council of Ministers adopted at the Spring Summit of 2006 a Gender Pact⁴, calling on all actors at national and European level to increase efforts and actions on gender equality, close the gender gaps in employment and social protection, and meet the demographic challenges by promoting better work-life balance for women and men.
- The European Commission launched an EU-wide campaign on the gender pay gap in 2009, and provides a wide range of instruments e.g. background information, campaign material, pay gap calculator, etc.⁵
- The European Commission issued annual Reports on Gender Equality, and published a “Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015”⁶, focussing on equal economic independence, equal pay for equal work and work of equal value, equality in decision-making, dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence, gender equality in external actions.

In all these documents, a clear reference is made to the importance of full and equal participation of women and men in the workplace, the labour market and the society at large as being vital to the development of a democratic, prosperous and competitive Europe.

² Council Conclusions on strengthening the commitment and stepping up action to close the gender pay gap, Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council meeting, 6 December 2010

³ The EFFAT “Survey on the proportion of women and men in the EFFAT Member Organisations and on their gender equality policies” carried out in 2007 showed that the EFFAT affiliated trade unions have an average of 40% women in their membership across all sectors

⁴ European Council, Presidency Conclusions: European Pact for Gender Equality, 23/24 March 2006

⁵ See Commission website: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_en.htm

⁶ COM(2010) 491, 21.9.2010

EFFAT Gender Equality Policy

Since the early days of its foundation, EFFAT has been striving for equal opportunities for women and men, e.g. by putting principles on gender equality in the EFFAT Constitution, by implementing the EFFAT Work Programme on Gender Equality, by pursuing the incorporation of the dimension of equal opportunities and the gender perspective in the EFFAT policy fields, by enhancing the participation of women in the EFFAT decision making bodies, by organising regular meetings of the EFFAT Women's Committee.

More recently, EFFAT adopted an action plan on promoting gender equality in EWCs, incorporated the gender perspective in the fight against precarious work, gave support to the ILO Convention on Domestic Workers, etc.

Furthermore, EFFAT always pursued to be in line with the gender equality policies of IUF and ETUC.

In many of EFFAT's member organisations the increase in membership has been female. A survey among EFFAT affiliates showed that there is a persistent representation gap, and gender mainstreaming is still not properly implemented⁷. To make trade unions even more attractive for women, they have to increasingly organise female workers and better defend the interests of women.

Achieving equality between women and men is not a "woman's" concern, but is fundamental to the aims of all trade unionists. Dynamic measures that target women are required in order to redress existing discrimination and change attitudes and conditions in and by the trade unions, and there is still much to be done to ensure stronger mainstreaming of gender issues, greater consistency across policy areas, improved awareness of gender perspectives, and fairer distribution of resources.

Concrete measures need to be taken to improve the performance of EFFAT and its affiliates, to close the representation gap between women and men at all levels in the trade unions, and to ensure gender mainstreaming in all processes of policy and decision making in the interest of both women and men and of the future of the trade union movement.

At the labour market, women need better access to qualification and training measures, to facilitate their entry to more qualified jobs, and this in combination with more efficient measures enabling them to reconcile work and family life.

The EFFAT Congress in October 2009 adopted a Motion which instructs the EFFAT Executive Committee to develop a gender equality plan that sets clear targets, defines instruments and timetable for implementation, as well as measures for monitoring and reporting.

The agreed objectives of the EFFAT Gender Equality Plan are:

- a substantial reduction of income disparities between women and men in the EFFAT sectors
- a gender-balanced participation in all EFFAT bodies
- the integration of the gender dimension and gender mainstreaming in all EFFAT policy fields

⁷ See footnote 3

Objective 1: Equal pay for women and men in the EFFAT sectors

The average gender pay gap of 18% across Europe results both from the non respect of equal pay legislation and from a number of structural inequalities such as labour market segregation, differences in work patterns, undervaluing of women's work, biased evaluation and pay systems, problems in balancing work and private life, traditions and stereotypes, etc.

The EFFAT Women's Committee identified the pay gap between women and men as one of the priorities of its work, as the problem prevails in all EFFAT sectors. In some countries, the pay differentials in our sectors are 30% and more.

Target: Significantly reduce the pay gap between women and men in the EFFAT sectors

Implementation and timetable

2011-2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise awareness on the gender pay gap between women and men<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ø encourage EFFAT member organisations to calculate the pay differentials between male and female workers in their sectorsØ provide information about existing campaigns, tools, etc. for awareness raising
2012-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take up the gender pay gap in the EFFAT sectors<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ø put the gender pay gap on the agendas of the sector meetings, e.g. general assemblies, social dialogue committees, etc.• Take up the gender pay gap in the EFFAT coordination of collective bargaining<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ø invite EFFAT member organisations to fix targets for the reduction of income disparities between women and men⁸
2013-2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compilation of initiatives adopted by EFFAT member organisations to achieve equal pay• Publication of good practices• Evaluation of progress in the reduction of the gender pay gap

Accompanying measures:

- Raise the awareness of the need to foster on gender equality in collective bargaining, e.g. by
 - explicitly inviting, supporting and training women to participate in collective bargaining committees and negotiating teams, including in EWC's
 - training of collective bargaining negotiators, men and women, at all relevant levels in gender equality issues
 - conveying clear messages that a gender perspective should be included, not only when discussing specific facilities for women/parents such as childcare and flexible working arrangements, but also when negotiating recruitment, pay systems and wage increases, lifelong learning, restructuring etc.
- Pursue the reduction of the pay gap between women and men in negotiations at company or local level, e.g. by taking stock of the income disparities in an undertaking, agreeing on measures to tackle the problem and jointly evaluating the progress. Such initiatives could also be taken up / reported about in EWCs.
- Campaigns to eliminate gender stereotypes in employment, e.g. encouragement of young women to enter into male dominated professions ('girls' days').

⁸ To be defined by each member organisation in view of the specific situation in the respective country and sector.

Objective 2: A gender balanced participation in all EFFAT bodies

The strengthening of women's participation in the trade union decision-making bodies at all levels is one of EFFAT's political goals. The EFFAT Constitution stipulates that the proportion of mandates allocated to women in the EFFAT bodies and working structures should correspond to the proportion of their membership. Furthermore, the EFFAT Constitution sets clear rules for the participation of women and men.

The full achievement of a gender balanced participation in decision-making bodies and working structures requires specific policies and effective measures, including positive actions, equality plans, mentoring and targeted training.

In any case, a stronger participation of women needs to start at the very basis of all trade union work, i.e. in the companies and at local and regional level, as a gender balanced participation in decision making at European level can only be achieved, if women are empowered throughout the whole trade union structures.

Target: Achieve the full respect of the rules on gender-balanced participation in the EFFAT bodies and working structures laid down in the EFFAT Constitution

Implementation and timetable

2011 -2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitoring of the<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ø composition of the EFFAT decision-making bodies e.g. Congress, Executive Committee, Management Committee, Regional and Standing Committees, Sector Boards, Social Dialogue Committees, etc.Ø nomination of participants to EFFAT meetings, e.g. general assemblies, sectoral or thematic conferences, etc.Ø nomination of EFFAT representatives to other organisations / bodies, e.g. Commission Advisory Committees, ETUC Congress, etc.
2012-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update of the collection of gender segregated data on affiliates and decision-making bodies of EFFAT member organisations• Collection and dissemination of examples of EFFAT member organisations' positive actions to overcome direct and indirect discrimination against women taking up leadership positions in trade unions
2013-2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluation of the progress with regard to gender balanced participation• Proposals for further actions to the EFFAT Congress

Accompanying measures:

- The EFFAT secretariat monitors the composition of the decision-making bodies and alerts the respective nominating instance (e.g. member organisation, country, region) in case of non-compliance with existing rules
- In each communication dealing with meetings, nominations, etc. EFFAT shall point out the need to respect a gender balanced representation.
- The timing of meetings shall fit in with family responsibilities of women and men.

Objective 3: Gender mainstreaming of EFFAT policies

Gender equality is an essential element of democracy in the workplace and in society. EFFAT and its member organisations confirm their commitment to pursue gender equality as part of their broader agenda for social justice, social progress and sustainability in Europe, and therefore adopt a gender mainstreaming approach as an indispensable and integral element of all their actions and activities.

EFFAT wants to secure equal opportunities, equal rights and equal treatment for women and men in the food industry, in agriculture and in the tourism sector in Europe, as well as in the trade unions organising the workers in these sectors and representing their interests.

EFFAT and its member organisations adopt a clear commitment to incorporate the dimension of equal opportunities and of the gender perspective in all fields of policy planning and activity, and recognize that this demands the development and adoption of tools, mechanisms and guidelines.

In order to achieve gender mainstreaming, each EFFAT member organisation and each EFFAT body, within the scope of its respective area of competence, has to ensure that equal opportunities and the gender perspective are taken into account in all the areas of EFFAT policymaking.

Target: Incorporate the gender dimension and gender mainstreaming in all EFFAT policy fields

Implementation and timetable

2011-2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inventory<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ø of how gender equality issues are taken up in the various EFFAT policies, e.g. in sectors, social dialogues, European Works Councils, coordination of collective bargaining, etc.Ø of EFFAT member organisations' good practices on gender mainstreaming
2012 -2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of a 'gender audit' mechanism with key criteria and a checklist to evaluate whether the integration of the gender mainstreaming principle is effective in the different areas
2013-2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementation of the gender audit• Evaluation of the progress

Accompanying measures:

- Include gender equality on the agenda of each meeting of the Management and the Executive Committee
- Adapt the EFFAT web site to show the policies and activities on gender equality
- Training of the trade union staff on gender mainstreaming
- Every EFFAT policy document must contain a 'gender impact assessment', or at least indicate with a short motivation how the gender perspective has been taken into account.

Evaluation and reporting

- Reports on the progress of the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan to the EFFAT Women's Committee and to the EFFAT Executive Committee
- Mid-term review of the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan and the reaching of the targets
- Report to EFFAT Women's Conference and EFFAT Congress in 2014

Resources

- Sufficient resources should be made available for the accomplishment of the Gender Equality Plan, such as
 - finances (e.g. through Community funding)
 - staff (e.g. part-time or trainee)
 - support from member organisations
- If deemed necessary, working groups on specific items could be set up