

Beijing+25 UNECE Regional Review Conference

TOP 4 “Key trends on gender equality across the UNECE region

Statement by Austria

(Check against delivery)

Thank you, Madame Chair,

Austria aligns herself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its Member States and would like to share the following remarks in a national capacity.

Let me start by outlining two important aspects on the way to achieving gender equality from the Austrian perspective:

It is well-known that gender equality is a prerequisite for socially fair and sustainable societies. At the same time, discussions on the so-called ‘backlash’ or the ‘anti-gender movement’ point to the persistence, and for some areas in society, also to a ‘revival’ of gender stereotypes and gender-based discrimination.

Also, it is paramount to make the voices of young people and NGOs heard and to take into account their perspectives and assessment of the key challenges as regards gender equality.

For these reasons, Austria has taken efforts to – firstly - promote gender-equality in a positive and forward-looking way.

And secondly, Austria has taken initiatives to bring together different generations of gender-equality actors from the public service and the civil society.

Let me briefly outline two initiatives to illustrate this approach:

Austria used the momentum of her Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2018 to promote gender equality.

More than 250 representatives from politics, public authorities, civil society and science participated in the presidency conference. They jointly developed visions and actions to strengthen gender equality in the EU. Special attention was paid to the active participation of young people and NGO representatives.

During the preparation process and the conference, young people highlighted that well-known topics like equality on the labour market, gender-based violence and equal participation in political leadership were also important to them.

Additionally, they pointed out new perspectives such as the need to focus on digital discrimination and on making social media more gender-equal.

Conference participants also emphasized that strengthening gender-equality needs to be done in an intersectional way.

The rights of LGBTIQ persons were outlined as a cross-cutting topic to work on in the future.

As a second example to work in a future-oriented and collaborative way on gender equality, the Austrian Federal Minister for Women, Families and Youth hosted a multi-stakeholder workshop to prepare the "Beijing+25 anniversary".

The workshop was organised together with a civil-society network that had started its work in 2015, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Beijing conference.

The workshop took place just last week. And I am happy to convey some of the results of this workshop to you today:

The Austrian Minister invited young people, experts from NGOs and the public service to discuss the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Austria.

Participants addressed achievements as well as further efforts to step up implementation. The commitment to strengthen solidarity and joint efforts was a main message of all participants.

Madame Chair, in this spirit let us bundle our efforts in order to step up implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Thank you.