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Gender Equality Index 2017: measuring gender equality in the European Union 2005-2017

Note by the European Institute for Gender Equality*

Abstract

The Gender Equality Index 2017 assesses progress and challenges in achieving gender equality across the European Union by providing scores for 2005, 2010, 2011 and 2015. It measures differences in the situation of women and men within core domains relevant to the EU policy framework (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health) on a scale from 1 (full inequality) to 100 (full equality). The core Index is complemented by two additional, equally important, satellite domains of violence and intersecting inequalities. They are a part of the framework of the Gender Equality Index in all respects but do not have an impact on the overall score of the Index.

N.b. This is an excerpt based on an EIGE summary report, ‘Gender Equality Index 2017 in brief: a snail’s pace towards gender equality’.

The full summary can be accessed online at:

<http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/gender-equality-index-2017-brief-snails-pace-towards-gender-equality>

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the main findings can be accessed here:

http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/20175493_mh0117899enn_web.pdf

and the full report here:

http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/ti_pubpdf_mh0417332enn_pdfweb_20171004153907.pdf

I. A snail's pace towards gender equality

1. Over the past decade, progress towards gender equality in the European Union has been rather slow. With an average Gender Equality Index score of 66.2 out of 100 in 2015, the EU still has a lot of room for improvement of equality between women and men. This score represents a 4.2-point increase since 2005, of which 1.2 points were gained from 2012 to 2015.
2. Sweden and Denmark have consistently been the most gender-equal societies. Italy and Cyprus show the greatest improvement in gender equality, while scores in three Member States did not change throughout the 10-year period (CZ, SK, UK). Spain, Croatia, Cyprus and Latvia improved in all six domains, and Malta, Austria and Sweden progressed in five domains. The majority of the Member States (19) progressed in either three or four domains. In nearly all Member States, the main driver of progress was improved balance in decision-making. The share of women in political and economic decision-making notably increased, especially since 2010.
3. However, a number of Member States experienced drawbacks in gender equality in the past 10 years. Nearly half of the Member States (12) had reduced scores in one domain, Finland, Germany and Slovakia in two domains, and Greece in three domains. From 2012 to 2015, progress in gender equality stagnated, largely as a result of a reversed trend in the domain of time, where the score dropped by 3.2 points. Compared to 2005, the way women and men organise their time became even more unequal in 12 Member States (BE, BG, DE, EL, FR, LT, LU, HU, NL, PL, SK, FI).
4. Furthermore, a unique feature of the third edition of the Gender Equality Index is an intersectional approach, which is applied within each domain and sub-domain. The data demonstrate how gender intersects with age, education, family composition and parenthood, country of birth and disability. The evidence calls for a gender-sensitive and intersectional approach in policymaking to target unique experiences of discrimination and disadvantage for both women and men.

Figure 1: Gender Equality Index, scores for the EU Member States, 2005 and 2015

