



Commission presents new Gender Equality Strategy 2026-2030 for a more equal, cohesive and successful Europe

Brussels, 5 March 2026

Today, the European Commission is presenting its new [Gender Equality Strategy for 2026 to 2030](#). The Strategy **embeds gender equality into every aspect of life**, online and offline, from education and health to work and public life, and addresses modern threats such as **cyberviolence** and AI-related risks, which particularly affect women.

While progress has been made, estimations by the European Institute for Gender Equality suggest that, at the current pace of change, **it would take 50 years for the EU to reach full gender equality**. Disparities among Member States also persist. The new Strategy turns the objectives of the [Roadmap for Women's Rights](#), presented by the Commission and endorsed in 2025 by all Member States, into concrete actions to **empower women and girls, engage men and boys, vigorously oppose any backtracking on fundamental rights, and accelerate progress towards a truly gender-equal Europe**.

Presented ahead of International Women's Day on 8 March, this Strategy builds on the milestone legislation adopted under the [Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#), including rules on [Combating Violence against Women](#), on [Pay Transparency](#) and [improving Gender Balance on Corporate Boards](#), and as well as the implementation of rules on [Work Life Balance](#) to promote equal sharing of care responsibilities.

A renewed Strategy for the next five years

The new Strategy will **reinforce EU action in key areas, address emerging issues, and intensify the work on implementation of existing legislation and policies** by:

- **Continuing the fight against gender-based violence with a strong emphasis on fighting cyberviolence**, which disproportionately impacts women and girls. This includes measures to combat sexually explicit deepfakes and deepnudes, and improve the protection of women online. This will be done through a structured regulatory dialogue with very large online platforms based on the robust safeguards under the [Digital Services Act](#). The Commission will also support full implementation of the [Violence Against Women Directive](#) and the [new Action Plan on Cyberbullying](#) presented in February 2026.
- **Engaging men and boys in the fight for gender equality**, recognising its benefit for them, as well as their important role in bringing about societal change. The Strategy will focus on how to counter information manipulation and disinformation to avoid growing polarisation between women and men, particularly among young people. The Commission will carry out a study on online networks and narratives that target young men and boys and will engage men and boys in community building initiatives.
- **Promoting the highest standards of health and healthcare systems built for all**. For the first time, healthcare is covered as a dedicated policy area in the Gender Equality Strategy, including a flagship initiative together with the [World Health Organization](#) to improve the quality and accessibility of women's healthcare. The Strategy presents new measures to address the lack of gender-sensitive medical research, diagnostics and treatment, for example the Commission will work with the European Medicines Agency to investigate the feasibility of developing a gender-sensitive check when medicines are formulated, approved and given to patients. The proposed revision of the Clinical Trials Regulation under the [EU Biotech Act](#) will also require new trials to reflect population diversity, including women and vulnerable groups.
- **Boosting prosperity by promoting gender equality across economic sectors**. The Strategy will launch a new Action Plan on Women in Research, Innovation & Startups to attract

more women to this sector within the EU. In parallel, the Strategy presents actions attracting women to STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) careers as well as a new 'Boys in HEAL' approach, which will encourage men to study and work in Health, Education, Administration and Literacy fields.

- **Tackling the gender pay and pension gaps**, including by supporting Member States to fully and effectively implement the [Pay Transparency Directive](#), and work with the European Investment Bank to improve access to finance for women entrepreneurs and boost female representation in the financial sector. The Commission will also organise an exchange of best practices on measures to effectively combat menstrual and menopause poverty at national level.
- **Taking further steps to support women's equal and safe participation in politics**. The Commission will update its mapping of measures in Member States that promote the participation and leadership of women in politics, public administration and parliaments to address the current lack of representation of women across the EU. In addition to presenting a Recommendation on safety in politics, which will pay specific attention to women, the Commission will further promote the participation of women in politics and public life and tackle information manipulation and interference online which often drives polarisation between women and men.
- **Continue to promote gender equality on the global stage** by developing and presenting a new Gender Action Plan IV for 2028-2034, as well as a new Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security. The EU will also launch a new dedicated flagship initiative 'SHIELD' which will focus on improving access to sexual and reproductive health and supporting survivors of gender-based violence, in line with our gender-responsive and principled humanitarian aid.

Background

Gender equality is a fundamental right and one of the EU's core values. The EU's gender equality agenda is based on the foundational treaties of the EU and on the [EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#), which states that equality between women and men must be ensured in all areas.

The 2020-2025 Strategy saw the introduction of significant legislative initiatives aimed at advancing gender equality within the EU. The [Roadmap for Women's Rights](#) reaffirmed the European Commission's commitment to gender equality by presenting a long-term vision for progress and calling on other actors to support its objectives. The [Gender Equality Index 2025](#) from the European Institute for Gender Equality and results from the [Annual Report on Gender Equality](#) highlight the ongoing need for action to achieve gender equality.

The European Commission remains dedicated to creating a fair and equal society, ensuring that gender equality is realised at every level.

For more information

[Gender Equality Strategy 2026-2030](#)

[Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#)

[Roadmap for Women's Rights](#)

[Annual Report on Gender Equality](#)

[Gender Equality Strategy Monitoring Portal](#)

[Questions and Answers](#)

[Factsheet](#)

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Quote(s):

"I cannot accept in 2026 that school results, career chances, medical treatments and political participation still depend on gender. That one out of three women in the EU has experienced physical or sexual violence is nothing less than unacceptable. The new EU Gender Equality Strategy is an invitation for everyone to work together to ensure truly equal chances for women and men in the spirit of the Union of Equality. A gender-equal society means a stronger economy and a more robust democracy. It is not only a shared responsibility, it is a legal obligation, a moral duty and beneficial for all of us."

Roxana Mînzatu, Executive Vice-President for Social Rights and Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness - 05/03/2026

"Gender equality is the engine of strong democracies. This Strategy is a legacy moment for Europe, and it must be a legacy of action. That's why we are taking concrete steps: to tackle gender-based violence, boost women's economic empowerment, promote gender-sensitive healthcare and education, encourage equal sharing of care responsibilities, and increase women's leadership. Gender equality is not a women's issue, it benefits everyone. It means unlocking the full potential of women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity. Men and boys are not bystanders in this change; they are partners, and they benefit from it too. While others turn back the clock on gender equality, the European Union is moving forward. We will protect hard-won rights, reignite stalled progress, and face pushback with courage and clarity. Equality makes our societies more innovative and our economies more competitive. Equality for all is our goal. This is the Europe we want to live in."

Hadja Lahbib, Commissioner for Equality, Preparedness and Crisis Management - 05/03/2026

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Related media



[Press conference by Roxana Mînzatu, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission, and Hadja Lahbib, European Commissioner, on the strategy for equality between men and women 2026-2030](#)