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Resolutions

NCW Annual General Meeting

July 2021

National Council of Women
Affiliated to the International Council of Women

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1. Title of Resolution

Digitalisation and Sustainability - need for action from a civil society perspective

Justification/s and current situation to be addressed
Towards a socially, environmentally and economically sound digitalisation
Current situation and looking towards the future

- The pandemic has transformed many of our daily routines into a large-scale field trial of digital implementation.
- Governments temporarily closed schools, asking pupils, students and teachers to work online, and employers quickly had to rethink their approach to remote working.
- As we slowly emerge from confinement, we need to reflect on how much digitalisation is desirable and appropriate, and how we can maintain intra- and inter-generational fairness aligned with the SDGs in the process.
- Addressing the digital divide within Member States requires public and private investment; the pandemic has highlighted both the opportunities and disadvantages of digital communication, particularly for those living in rural areas.

Recommendations

- Policies on a digital economy need to incorporate our societal values, to ensure that a digital wellbeing economy is as inclusive as possible, allowing workers, consumers, SMEs, large companies and non-profit economic actors to benefit alike, especially in rural areas
- The COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to reflect on how we can remodel and innovate our economy to make it more environmentally and socially sustainable; the crisis should not distract the EU from its green and sustainability objectives.

A Sustainable Digital Revolution

As we reflect on the impact of COVID-19 at National, EU and at global level it is clear that a sustainable digital revolution entails:

- Human factors as well as maintaining non-digital solutions, and carefully assessing the risks involved with special emphasis on resilience need to be equally addressed
- Equally addressing the digital divide both between and within countries worldwide, with special focus on the Member States, and with an eye on enlargement.
- The focus needs to be on SDG8 (decent work), SDG12 (consumption and production) and SDG13 (climate action), and will therefore strongly link factors for environmental and social sustainability

EU Policies need to be further embedded in a digital economy incorporating our societal values, thus ensuring that a digital wellbeing economy is as inclusive as possible, allowing workers, consumers, SMEs, large companies and non-profit economic actors to benefit alike, especially in rural areas.

Such policies should include:
- developing fiscal policy to ensure that digital businesses pay their fair share of taxes;
- building upon the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to develop a distinctive law on data protection in the workplace, on social media and in e-commerce
- adjusting current competition and monopoly law in order to regulate digital platform markets; production chains, ambitious energy standards and an extension of the EU eco-design directive and
- review of corporate environmental, social and governance reporting and disclosure, 2019.

The European Commission needs to further address legislation:
- adapting EU legislation to make online shopping more sustainable, and develop
- responsible policies on packaging, deliveries and return of packages;
- protecting small operators in the market against monopolistic platforms;
- developing a comprehensive set of criteria and indicators for sustainable software
- products and a digital product pass;
- improving GDPR regarding data sufficiency;
- imposing restrictions on online advertising to create ad-free spaces.

Measures should include
- The COVID-19 pandemic led to a sudden and significant **decrease in transportation, production and consumption**; the increased use of ICT mitigated energy-intensive working practices and lifestyles.
- There is therefore the need for appropriate political measures to help consolidate these positive aspects after the pandemic. This, of course, raises wider questions about the energy efficiency of the "cloud" and the data centres that sustain it.
- establishing an EU inventory of data centres (covering energy efficiency, lifecycle, construction materials, etc.) and a top-runner scheme, to ensure that the most energy-efficient data centres become the norm;
- requiring new data centres to be run by 100% renewable energies;
- using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support the climate and energy transition;
- suggesting measures for sustainable AI solutions

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2. Title of Resolution

Youth engagement in climate change and sustainability

Justification and current situation to be addressed
Current situation – looking ahead

The **UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** represent a turning point in the way the international community has decided to tackle global issues by bringing together economic, environmental and social dimensions in an integrated manner.

The world today is facing **a climate emergency**. The response of governments to the climate crisis thus far has not been sufficient and the world is not on track to meet the objective of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs. Civil society has been calling forcefully for more ambitious and urgent climate action. The most dramatic demonstration of these calls are the youth climate strikes.

The Agenda 2030 is a people-centred project designed to leave no group behind and intergenerational equity is a concept inherent to sustainability. The young generation should not be left to deal with the consequences of unsustainable policies they have not contributed to shaping.

The intergenerational aspect of climate and sustainable development policies and implementation mechanisms needs to be reflected in strong meaningful youth engagement at all stages of EU decision-making processes, from the drafting of legislative proposals and initiatives through to implementation, monitoring and follow-up.

Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the European Green Deal requires a new approach to a more inclusive multi-stakeholder governance model that would put young people at the heart of the engagement process and go way beyond ad hoc meetings and mere calls for consultation.

Recommendations - the way forward
The role of youth organisations

- Youth organisations play an important role in this context, as they represent the interests of millions of young people in Europe and globally through their wide networks. They are key actors in ensuring that young people are not only present in institutions but are also enabled to contribute to the decision-making process in a meaningful way.

- Youth organisations can play multiple other roles. **Youth work and non-formal learning** have a positive impact on sustainable development, as its purpose is to build empowered young individuals that actively contribute to our society. Youth organisations can also help to amplify youth voices to collectively push for sustainable development at local, national, regional and global level and to hold governments and institutions to account on their commitments.
- Quality youth participation and representation mechanisms create an opportunity for a **partnership between policy makers, young people and youth organisations** to shape decisions that impact young people's lives. It is important to take this opportunity to also ensure the stability and resilience of our democracies for which participation of all groups of society in decision-making processes is a prerequisite.
- All aspects of policy need to consider the impact on youth and their perspectives, including for future generations. From climate change investment to Farm to Fork, the role of youth is especially important when considering social aspects and future-proofing policies.
- The youth movement has demonstrated great adaptability during the pandemic lockdown. Their message has resonated through online mobilisation and innovative ways of spreading their message using all forms of communications from policy asks to humour. This innovative and ambitious approach to designing our future needs to be recognised and included.

The link between climate change and youth engagement
- Young people have the right to have a say on matters that concern them. **The right to participate is anchored in the UN Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda, which acknowledges youth as "critical agents of change", as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals.**
- No other issue has mobilised more young people around the world in the last years than climate change. Young people aged 15 to 24 represent 16% of the world population and will reach 1.3 billion people by 2030. The decisions on climate change and other environmental issues taken by political leaders today will affect generations to come. This principle is known as intergenerational equity.
- **Young people possess the energy, creativity and motivation to challenge current unsustainable models**. Social change led by young people extends beyond generational, cultural and geographical boundaries. Less bound by ideological and institutional structures, young people have demonstrated the ability to think outside the box and develop innovative solutions for society as a whole.
- Since climate change disrupts the basic necessities of life – shelter, food and water – it is regarded as the biggest global human health threat of the twenty-first century. Children and young people are amongst the most vulnerable when it comes to climate change impacts, with the World Health Organisation estimating that children will suffer more than 80% of the illnesses, injuries and deaths attributable to it.
- **Children** are also more susceptible to indirect effects of climate change, such as **food shortages, intergroup conflict, economic dislocation and migration.** The vulnerability of children has been highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as their exposure as a dependent group has been clearly identified.
- Moreover, **the psychosocial impacts of climate change** arise not only from directly experiencing its effects but also from vicarious experience and knowledge of the threat it poses for the future. There is clear evidence of widespread emotional reactions to climate change, even in high-income countries that are not yet suffering its direct effects. Surveys have found that many young people experience fear, sadness, anger and a sense of powerlessness.

- Furthermore, **the climate crisis causes the breakdown of our economic and social support structures**. Young people must grapple with serious economic, social, cultural, political and environmental problems inherited from previous generations. Young people are disproportionately affected by economic crises and subsequent austerity measures.
- **The most disadvantaged among young people experience precariousness and prolonged poverty.** They face additional obstacles, such as difficult living conditions and barriers to jobs opportunities, due to their socio-economic background, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, ethnicity or race, migratory status, disability and/or other status.

Youth engagement at national level – examples of good practice

- Some EU countries have since created mechanisms to include **the voice of youth representatives in policy-making on climate.** The Youth Climate Council in Denmark is an independent youth-led advisory board to the climate minister. It gathers input from young people all over the country and formulates tangible policy proposals to the minister. The proposals are then included in the policy processes to give young people a channel for directly influencing the development of climate policies. Moreover, local level Youth Climate Councils exist in some cities in Denmark.[1]
- **Many young entrepreneurs think of the ecological and social aspects** of their activities right from the start. Business practices aiming to reduce environmental impact should be supported at national level, for instance, by tax exemptions and encouraged as positive trends mobilising young entrepreneurs' energy to create sustainable business models.
- Initiatives like the **Green Students' Parliaments in Hungary**, which provide proposals on environmental matters to city administrations, are important, as they not only educate but also provide an opportunity for schools to strengthen links with city residents and between schools and parents.

Youth engagement at European level

The **EU Youth Dialogue** is an EU participatory process enabling young people to engage with decision-makers on a given topic by bringing their ideas and proposals on youth policy-related topics in the EU. It supports the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 and is organised into an 18-month work cycle.

The **Council of Europe Advisory Council on Youth** is the non-governmental partner in the co-management structure which establishes the standards and work priorities of the Council of Europe's youth sector and makes recommendations for future priorities, programmes and budgets. It is made up of 30 representatives from youth NGOs and networks in Europe and its main task is to advise the Committee of Ministers on all questions relating to young people. It promotes a co-management system in decision-making processes at all levels as good practice for youth participation, democracy and inclusion.

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[1]   Source: UN Youth Climate Council.

Youth engagement at UN level

- At UN level, the Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY) is the UN General Assembly-mandated, official, formal and self-organised mechanism for young people to meaningfully engage in the UN. UN MGCY has working and coordination structures responsible for different aspects of its work, as well as several formal mandated positions.

- On climate, YOUNGO is the official youth constituency at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). YOUNGO is made up of organisations and individuals who identify as young. It is not an organisation, but rather a unified open formal engagement mechanism for groups and/or individuals to provide an input into UNFCCC processes in a frequent, formalised, democratic and inclusive manner.

- **The need for greater involvement of young people was recognised in September at the Youth Climate Summit in New York on 21 September.** The Kwon-Gesh Pledge, which calls on young people to hold their governments and leaders accountable, has been endorsed by over 50 countries since the Summit took place.

- **The UN Youth Strategy 2030** aims to address the needs, build the agency and advance the rights of young people, and to ensure their engagement and participation in the implementation, review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as other relevant global agendas and frameworks.

- **Initiatives like the Green Students' Parliaments in Hungary**, which provide proposals on environmental matters to city administrations, are important, as they not only educate but also provide an opportunity for schools to strengthen links with city residents and between schools and parents.

Practical implementation of the vision by all EU institutions

- Young people and youth organisations should be involved in the EU's continuing response to the COVID-19 crisis and working towards fundamental change in our social, economic and political systems, with sustainable development principles at the heart thereof.

- The over €500bn response package announced in April 2020 needs to ensure that these principles are at the core of its deployment. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to redress systemic inequalities and transition away from unsustainable practices.

- It is important that youth organisations benefit from capacity-building efforts that help them navigate regulatory and administrative environments. Providing capacity-building, political and financial support, as well as facilitating networking and connections, will empower young people and facilitate their engagement in the decision-making processes.

Vision for meaningful youth engagement

- It is clear that youth organisations do not want to create new engagement mechanisms for processes that they do not deem meaningful in the first place.

- The climate crisis has deeper roots and proposing solutions to it means asking fundamental questions about what society we want to live in in the future and what vision of the economy we want to create to sustain our climate-neutral society.

- "If the goal is to change the underlying system, not the climate, it may be necessary to do more than just educate young people about climate change and encourage youth activism.

- For the engagement to be meaningful, young people should be included throughout the entire institutional process: preparatory phases, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the initiatives

and policy processes. Many consultation channels already set the frame and lead to power imbalances. It is important that young people have ownership over their own engagement and are able to co-create the agenda with institutional stakeholders.

- As a starting point, it would be beneficial to identify obstacles to young people's participation, which could be legal or administrative in nature or due to lack of awareness or lack of access to information regarding youth participation and representation mechanisms. Social, economic and cultural obstacles hindering young people's participation should also be addressed. Participation should be clearly understood to be for everyone.

- Resources are needed to provide support to build necessary knowledge and skills and ensure equal opportunities for meaningful participation, as well as for young people who are taking part in youth participation and representation mechanisms. Governments and relevant institutions should provide sufficient, structural, reliable and sustainable resources and necessary political support for youth organisations to engage in youth participation and representation mechanisms.

- The youth climate movement and its activists have a right to have their voices heard in the decision-making processes that will have an impact on their lives. This is also a clear component of the intergenerational aspect of Climate Justice.

Tangible proposals

- At European level, there is the need for structured involvement of civil society is necessary, and a clear mandate for civil society's participation in the development, implementation and monitoring of policies and strategies aiming to achieve climate neutrality should be provided.

- The EU currently has an opportunity to create engagement mechanisms via a European Climate Pact. The youth engagement mechanism on climate and sustainability should be an integral part of this Pact, facilitated by youth organisations.

- The EU decision-makers should create a space for regular and meaningful dialogue with young people on policy proposals and strategies in the area of climate and sustainability. Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables facilitated by the First Executive Vice-President of the European Commission should take place twice a year in Brussels.

- These Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables should be hosted by the EESC in cooperation with the European Commission and the European Parliament. Young people's input to the Round Tables should be formally sent to the EP and EC with both institutions providing a written response, which would outline which proposals can and cannot be implemented and why. The Round Tables must not become a "talking shop" but rather demonstrate meaningful engagement and responses from policy makers.

- To create a channel of communication with young people, a "Youth Climate and Sustainability Dialogue mailing list" should be created and managed by the Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Table facilitators, building on the example of the UN youth constituencies' organisation.

- The EU decision-makers should ensure high-quality involvement of youth organisations in the development, implementation and follow-up of different mechanisms for structured youth engagement on climate and sustainability in the EU decision-making processes. It will help create engagement that fosters young people's creativity and ideas while at the same time making sure that these ideas are translated into policies.

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3. Title of Resolution

New Skills/Social Inclusion - Strengthening EU member states in the global race of future skills and education, while ensuring social inclusion

Justification/s and current situation to be addressed
Current Situation

The rapid progress in digitalisation and AI challenges the EU to be well equipped to succeed in global competition. The improvement of skills and competences plays a key role and requires the active development of education and training, which should also help people meet evolving demand and shape progress, by following its different forms and implications.

The role of Skills and Competences

- Skills and Competences play a key role in ensuring national, European and global competition with respect to digitalisation and AI. In addition to ensuring high-level talent,
- There is a need for society as a whole to be equipped with the necessary understanding, knowledge and skills for the "AI era", so as to make full use of the overall potential and to keep everyone on board.
- As stated in the **European Pillar of Social Rights,** access to continuous and **lifelong learning** must be an individual right for everyone in order to cope with digital and AI developments, shape progress and keep "humans in command"

Recommendations

- Therefore there is the need for developing an EU strategy to enhance continuous, learner-centred learning, with digitalisation and the deployment of trustworthy AI at its heart, taking into account differences in national systems.
- Digitalisation and AI are linked in several ways with education and skills development.
- They generate new demand for skills and competences, and also enable new ways of learning and teaching.
- Digital and AI techniques can also be used to anticipate changes in work and everyday life and thus in education and training needs.
- Moreover, education and training enable people to shape digital development.
- Inclusiveness requires that everyone has access to digital and AI technologies and to the necessary skills, irrespective of gender, age or socio-economic background.

Three questions to be considered. To respond to the question on digital and AI related skills and education from the points of view of both success in global competition and social inclusiveness, the following three questions need to be considered :

- ✓ What kind of skills and competences are most valid in the AI era?
- ✓ How would these skills and competences be best acquired and enhanced?
- ✓ What kind of policies are needed at national and EU levels to promote this progress?

Artificial Intelligence - Skills

- The AI era requires a strong foundation in cross-cutting skills such as logical reasoning, critical thinking, creativity and interaction skills. It also needs solid competences in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and in arts and social sciences.
- Ethical thinking and an entrepreneurial approach are also a central part of skills and competences of the AI era.
- Inclusiveness requires that everyone has access to digital and AI technologies and to the necessary skills, irrespective of gender, age or socio-economic background.
- **The role of public education** is essential. Non-formal education also plays a significant role in enhancing inclusiveness and active citizenship. Special attention should be paid to ensuring the **skills of women and girls**, as well as **elderly people.**
- **Competitiveness** requires both top-level talent and a broad base of educated and skilled people.
- Professional qualifications must be adjusted constantly to match new developments and the competences needed.
- New world-class talent can be best promoted **through research projects.**
- **Cooperation** projects with industry are one way of keeping talent in the EU and attracting foreign talent.
- Close cooperation is vital between **policymakers, education providers, social partners and other civil society organisations** with respect to digitalisation and AI and the related education and skills development.
- As the social partners play a specific role defined by the Treaty regarding **labour-related issues,** they should be involved, in accordance with relevant national rules, in decisions concerning investments, technologies and the organisation of work.
- **Digitalisation and AI** are also linked with **inclusiveness** in a number of ways. For example, they help people with disabilities to work and better manage their lives. They can also help reduce people's isolation.
- On the other hand, inclusiveness requires that everyone has access to these technologies and the necessary skills, irrespective of gender, age or socio-economic background

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4. Title of Resolution

Gender Equality in the Energy Sector

Current situation to be addressed

In **2020 – the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration[2]**- the EU **presented** *the strategy document Women, Gender Equality and the Energy Transition in the EU*, to take the necessary steps to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between men and women by means of a new strategy.

Equality is a core value of the EU, a fundamental right and a principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights. It is part of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) makes it a horizontal clause, mainstreaming equality in all policies.

The Commission believes that "in business, politics and society as a whole we can only reach our full potential if we all use our talent and diversity. Gender equality brings more jobs and higher productivity – a potential which needs to be realised as we embrace the green and digital transitions and face up to our demographic challenges".

Energy is a huge segment of the economy: it covers raw materials, finished products and services, including mining, production, sales, transport and distribution, diplomacy, and physical and geopolitical security, thus using coal, wood, oil, gas, nuclear energy, wind, the sun, water, etc. to ensure that citizens, consumers and businesses have access to electricity, heating and independent transport. One particular feature of this sector is that it is a key lever for other economic sectors. It needs all available talent.

All aspects of the energy sector are very stereotyped in terms of gender, with men in a dominant position, which leads to major career imbalances between men and women in both the public and private energy sectors, with no widespread willingness to take action to "en-gender" the value chain as a whole.

Recommendations

The **position of women** is never considered as an issue in itself even though women are in a weak position in the energy sector and are always first in line for redundancies during crises, regardless of the nature of the crisis.

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2   https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/about

The policy gap cannot be closed without taking specific measures in their favour in all policy areas – especially given that this is part of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

There is the need to speed up the pace of change and to take simultaneous action in a number of areas to narrow the gender gaps, which are cumulative and interconnected including:

- **The energy access gap**
- **The policy gap**
- **Labour Market Gaps**
- **Training and Skills**
- **Careers and Salaries**
- **The role of national and European social dialogue**
- **Collective agreements**

Is the energy transition an opportunity or a risk for women?

What is the added value of women?

Is it to be social, a human face, capable of filing and making the coffee?

Or is it to be technicians, engineers, researchers?

- Women need genuinely equal opportunities if they are to enter the energy industries, and recognition of their abilities if they are to stay and develop careers there.
- Spain has noticed that, despite the introduction of measures to increase accessibility for women, some are not geared towards technical sectors.
- The stereotypes that mathematics and physics are for boys must be abolished by modifying the structure of studies, altering the attitudes of teachers and educating parents as soon as children start primary school so that women change the way they think about themselves.

Developing a STEM-based Career

- There are some inspiring examples: in Poland, the **"Little Polytechnics for Children"** project runs sessions for primary school children (girls and boys), familiarising them with technical subjects to prevent fear of STEM.
- In their **efforts to develop a STEM-based career** (in science, technology, engineering or mathematics) in the energy sectors, women still face too many internal obstacles within their companies, in both the public and private sectors. The Commission calls for everyone to be "free to pursue their chosen path in life", in full equality.
- It needs to provide additional resources for women in a sector where **physical strength is no longer of primary importance,** but where this is still used as a yardstick of capacity.
- It must be possible to measure equality using **qualitative indicators on career opportunities** enjoyed, and by salary levels for the same qualification and grade.
- This should include **basic salaries and bonuses.**

Looking ahead: ensuring access to all aspects of energy for women

- **create the conditions for access to energy for all, reduce energy poverty**, and gather qualitative and gender-specific data with appropriate indicators
- **strengthen and enforce existing legislation on equality at both EU and national level**
- **provide for a targeted policy on gender equality in energy professions because women's talents matter**

- **create a level playing-field for training in energy-related careers in the Member States and at European level – set up a European STEM College;**
- **encourage Member States to develop "little polytechnic schools" for young children to familiarise them with STEM subjects;**
- **change the mindsets of women themselves by means of role models, and create a network of EU outreach teams**
- **change men's mindsets and management training approaches.**

Creating a level playing-field on the labour market in the energy sector:

- **present gender-specific data for all parts of the sector**, including renewable energy and energy poverty
- consider the opportunities for women but **avoid the energy and digital transitions trammelling their careers in traditional energy sectors.**
- **introduce binding measures regarding the transparency of salaries and remuneration** because this is a prerequisite for real equal pay across the board
- **enforce equality** on company boards
- **develop social dialogue and collective agreements** throughout Europe on equality in companies in the energy sector

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5. Title of Resolution

Equal participation of women and men in the labour market and the changing face of work and family life under COVID-19:

Source: COFACE

Justification and current situation to be addressed

On October 14, the German Presidency of the EU chaired an **Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council** (EPSCO) Council meeting which included a debate on **equal participation of women and men in the labour market**. They exchanged views on ways to further promote gender equality and combat the segregation of women and men in the labour market.

Negative effects on Women as a result of the COVID-19

- The compulsory lockdowns, school closure and teleworking have pushed society into a "new reality and normality" in the family, working and social spheres of life.
- Parents who can telework are confined at home, trying to balance work, parenting, care and schooling, and are under increasing pressure with further consequences for the mental health of both children and adults.
- The situation of single-parent families during lockdown reveals a harsher reality
- The vulnerabilities of families have now been magnified significantly with the global pandemic bringing all inequalities to the fore.
- "As infection numbers are climbing throughout Europe and we're in the midst of a second COVID-19 wave
- Last, but not least, there is an urgent need for going beyond the implementation of the transposition of the Work-Life Balance Directive. Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures to boost investment in **social and healthcare services** to support families, in particular as a result of the COVID-19.
- A recent Eurobarometer survey on work-life balance indicates that over half of employees in the EU cannot change their work schedule, almost three workers out of ten feel that they are discouraged from taking family leave by managers and supervisors. One out of three workers claim that making use of flexible working arrangements has a negative impact on their careers.

Situation before the Covid-19 crisis
- At the European level, and before the outburst of the Covid-19 crisis, almost 9 out of 10 mothers in the EU provided daily care for their children, compared to some 6 out of 10 fathers.
- In number of hours the gap is even wider as working women spend around 22 hours per week in unpaid work and men only 9 hours.
- This uneven share of care tasks even raises in households with children under 7 years old, where women spend 39 hours on unpaid work, 20 hours more than men do .
- On the other hand, with a gender pay gap at 16%, and that it has only decreased by 1% in the last eight years, it is cheaper for a family to renounce a woman's income instead of the man's.

Recommendations

Promoting women's role in the labour market
Gender Equality is not a luxury
The coronavirus crisis has shown women keep things running. All over Europe more than 75 percent of critical workers are women. But in leadership positions, women are underrepresented.
- Women take on the greater share of unpaid care work – often at the cost of their own career and pension.
- Gender equality in the labour market is not a luxury. On the contrary: it will make the EU more socially and economically robust, especially in times of crisis.
- The crisis had also shown the urgent need, but also valuable opportunities, to promote **gender equality in the labour market** in general and in social professions in particular.
- The need for more efforts to achieve **inclusive working environment**, **equal pay**, a **higher share of women also in decision-making**, **better remuneration** for jobs usually performed by women and **fight against gender stereotypes**.
- Other areas of importance include gender equality topics to be included in **early education** and **raising awareness about gender issues** among key groups, such as **young people**.
- The EU strategy on gender equality needs to prioritise the **EU Pay Transparency Directive** and to finally move forward with the EU 'Women on boards' directive.
- Work-life balance is not only to be achieved through family leaves and income support. Employment rights and flexible work arrangements (FWA) are an essential part of the equation, and the EPSCO Council adopted conclusions in June 2020 on "Enhancing Well-being at Work" acknowledging the links between workplace practices and work-life balance and formulating a mix of recommendations.
- Flexible Work Arrangements allow workers to better reconcile professional and private life, as well as increasing their productivity, motivation and their professional progression, reducing absenteeism, boosting chances for entering the labour market and raising gender-equal opportunities.

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6. Title of Report

The need to guarantee real rights of persons with disabilities to vote in EP elections

On 20 March 2019, the EESC sent its information report Real rights of persons with disabilities to vote in EP elections to EU institutions and Member States.
This report covers procedures in European elections, but similar or the same solutions are also applied in national parliamentary elections, local elections or referendums.

This Report was followed by the EESC own initiative opinion (Rapporteur: Krzysztof Pater (SOC/638) The need to guarantee real rights of persons with disabilities to vote in EP elections

- ✓ The EESC hopes that this report will help EU countries draw up comprehensive solutions to remove legal and technical (organisational) barriers preventing some persons with disabilities from voting.
- ✓ The EESC is counting on this information being used by civil society organisations that are seeking to remove barriers to the exercise of voting rights by persons with disabilities, and on public authorities – often from local level – which can implement many practical arrangements without any changes to national law

Summary of EESC Report
Current situation – barriers to exercising voting rights by persons with disability
- In each of the 27 EU countries, there are laws or organisational arrangements which exclude some voters with disabilities from participating in EP elections.
- About 800 000 EU citizens from 16 Member States are, on account of national rules, deprived of the right to participate in EP elections because of their disabilities or mental health problems.
- The extent of this phenomenon is very uneven across individual countries.
- Millions of EU citizens have no possibility to vote because of organisational arrangements (technical barriers) which do not take into account the needs resulting from their disability.
- The main place of voting is the polling station. Many persons with disabilities, even when given the option of alternative, more convenient forms of voting, want to vote at a polling station, recognising it as the best form of civic participation.

- In 12 countries, this may not be possible, since national legislation does not allow the polling station designated on the basis of residence to be changed to another which can better accommodate the specific type of disability.
- In other countries, participation in elections is made difficult by a number of restrictions at polling stations.
- In eight Member States, anyone who cannot to get to a polling station is not able to vote, as they do not have the option of an alternative form of voting (postal voting, voting by mobile ballot box or electronic voting). Three of these countries offer the possibility of voting by proxy.
- However, such a solution cannot be regarded as an adequate alternative. In fact, it does not allow a voter with disabilities to exercise their right to vote, but merely enables the voter to designate someone to whom they can delegate their vote.
- In 18 Member States, blind voters have no way of voting independently; they can only entrust somebody accompanying them to cast their vote on their behalf.
- Another factor preventing people from voting independently or discouraging them from doing so are specific rules and organisational arrangements – such as the absence of information adapted to different types of disability, obstacles to mobility in the polling station itself and burdensome administrative procedures – governing how voters can exercise their right to vote in an appropriately adapted form.
- If the best practices from across all countries were implemented, an ideal system would emerge in which every EU citizen with disabilities not only would have the full possibility to vote but also would be able to choose for themselves the most convenient way in which to vote.
- Current EU legislation already addresses a number of issues concerning EP elections. Thus, there are no formal obstacles to this legislation also including guarantees on voting options for persons with disabilities. In any case, however, there is a need for a formal EP legislative initiative and for it to be approved subsequently by all Member States.

Standards throughout the EU that would guarantee real voting rights for persons with disabilities, in accordance with Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The EESC calls on the EP, the European Council and Member States to urgently **amend the 1976 Electoral Act by clarifying the principles of universality, directness and secrecy of elections**, which would make it possible to implement standards throughout the EU that would guarantee real voting rights for persons with disabilities, in accordance with Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The standards should include at least the following:

- a ban on depriving people of the right to vote in EP elections on the grounds of disability or health status,
- obligation to provide information on voting rules in a form suitable to the needs resulting from the type of disability,
- allowing individuals unable to access their polling station due to their disability to vote independently outside the polling station,

- implementing solutions that would enable persons with disabilities in need of significant support – such as persons who are deafblind, blind, visually impaired or having limited manual dexterity - to vote independently, without relying on assistance from other people,
- the possibility of changing the designated polling station to one that is more suited to the needs of voters with disabilities,
- a person's right to freely choose a personal assistant who will support them in exercising their right to vote.

Implementing these rules will still give Member States broad discretionary powers but will nevertheless guarantee that as of 2024 every EU citizen will have the real right to elect their representative to the EP, regardless of nationality or country of residence.

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7. Title of Resolution

The Underlying Factors in Bridging the Digital Gender Gap

Justification
- Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right. **It is also a keystone of a prosperous, modern economy** that provides sustainable inclusive growth.
- **Recognising that gender equality** is essential for ensuring that men and women can contribute fully **for the betterment of societies and economies at large.**
- G20 Leaders first committed to "women's full economic participation" in Los Cabos in 2012.
- Following the ambitious goal to reduce the gender gap in labour market participation by 25% by 2025 (the 25x25 target) at the 2014 Brisbane Summit, a commitment was taken to implementing a set of policies to improve the quality of women's employment and the provision of support services.
- Since then, as documented by the OECD, most G20 countries have made progress, but much remains to be done. In 2016, the gap in labour market participation rates between men and women aged 15-64 was around 26% for G20 economies.

The Current Situation
The Digital Transformation
Today the digital transformation provides new avenues for the economic empowerment of women and can contribute to greater gender equality. The Internet, digital platforms, mobile phones and digital financial services **offer "leapfrog" opportunities** for all and can help bridge the divide by giving women the possibility to earn additional income, increase their employment opportunities, and access knowledge and general information.
- **We need to seize this opportunity** to foster greater gender equality in the labour market, boost economic growth and build a more inclusive, digital world.
- The road ahead is uphill: today worldwide **some 327 million fewer women than men have a smartphone** and can access the mobile Internet.
- Women are underrepresented in the ICT profession overall. Whereas in the borader workforce women comprise around 45%, the number of women in ICT jobs is around 28%
- **Retention of female employees**: More than half of women in technology occupations quit mid-career (approximately 56%)
  ICT Career Perception and IT Teachers
- **ICT career perception is influenced by how familiar girls are with Computer Studies and its broad application**
- The need to continue to **develop the teaching and expertise skills of teachers** who are teaching Informatics/Computer Science/Information Science
- **Develop** an appropriate suite of **programmes for classroom teachers to provide them with skills to deliver digital techniques**

- ICT teachers can work on developing course content, structure and delivery which better encourage and support female participation
- **Women are under-represented in ICT jobs**, top management and academic careers and, as shown in this report, men are four times more likely than women to be ICT specialists.
- **At 15 years of age, on average, only 0.5% of girls wish to become ICT professionals, compared to 5% of boys**.
- **Women-owned start-ups receive 23% less funding** and are 30% less likely to have a positive exit compared to male-owned businesses.

Co-ordinated policy action can help narrow the digital gender gap. This requires raising awareness and tackling gender stereotypes; enabling enhanced, safer and more affordable access to digital tools; and stronger cooperation across stakeholders to remove barriers to girls and women's full participation in the digital world.

Digital technologies provide new opportunities to make progress, but technological fixes cannot address the underlying structural problems that drive the digital gender divide. Concrete policy actions are needed to foster women's and girls' full participation and inclusion in the digital economy, while at the same time addressing stereotypes and social norms that lead to discrimination against women.

The digital gender divide needs to be resolved. There is no reason for women to trail behind in the digital transformation. The cost of inaction is high and in the face of sluggish growth, ageing societies and increasing educational attainment of young women, the economic case for digital gender equality is clear.

Bridging the gender divide, also in the digital world, **can provide new sources of global economic growth,** support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and help achieve the G20 goal of strong, sustainable and inclusive growth. Together, we must and can advance in making digital gender equality a reality.

In addition, girls' **relatively lower educational enrolment in disciplines that would allow them to perform well in a digital world** – such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, as well as information and communication technologies – coupled with women's and girls' more limited use of digital tools could lead to widening gaps and greater inequality.

Acting now to reverse these trends can pay off: the OECD report finds that greater inclusion of women in the digital economy and increased diversity bring value, both social and economic

Policy Action Agenda on the Digital Gender Divide
Recommendations:
Because the digital transformation is taking over the world, we need to strongly address the challenges and opportunities for women and girls
- Awareness should be raised in schools about implications of quitting jobs for "raising the family": not only career implications but lifelong financial implications including pension. Women are most prone to poverty in old age
- Awareness should be raised that the most flexible jobs with best possibilities to work from home AND earn decent money are jobs in IT or jobs that require at least a good basic knowledge of IT
- Automation of jobs does not only concern basic jobs; parts of jobs of graduates and professionals are being automated as well: medical diagnoses, basic tax and legal advice services, etc. Young people should be made aware of jobs that are least likely to be automated.

There is strong potential **for positive policy action** in core areas. Taken together, these could provide the basis to bridge the digital gender divide and build a more inclusive digital future. A possible agenda could include:

- The **design and implementation of national digital strategies** that actively aim to close the gender digital gap
- **access, adoption and improve the affordability of digital technologies** while enhancing online safety.
- National **digital strategies should include targets** (both numbers and dates) for closing the digital gender divide across at least four dimensions, namely:
- **extend networks and digital access (e.g. through satellite) to rural areas**–
- **promote access to and affordability and use of connected digital devices** (e.g. smart phones, tablets,– laptops), especially for low-income individuals
- **boost availability and promotion of e-banking and mobile money**, especially to women and other– disadvantaged categories
- The need to increase online safety. This includes more effective Cyber Security measures, including security at ATM to ensure that cameras are not used to photo details
- Addressing the abuse against women on social media
- Reaching out to women of different ages in homes for the elderly, at childcare centres, women's shelters, meeting for elderly groups, meetings organised by NGOs for different age groups etc
- formulate strategies to **increase awareness** of the digital gender divide,
- **help address stereotypes, target existing gender biases in education curricula**,
- **encourage greater female enrolment in STEM** studies and more generally, bridge the skills gender divide in the digital era.

Awareness and strong co-operation

Addressing the digital gender divide requires **sufficient awareness and strong co-operation across stakeholders** and tackling gender stereotypes is critical. The digital gender divide is particularly large in STEM education and in high-technology sectors that require STEM degrees.

Further commitments to be made at National Level

- agree to establish **(time bound) targets** for women in STEM
- **create fund and grant schemes aimed at enhancing the enrolment of women in STEM education**
- **establish awards and prizes enhancing the visibility of women in STEM** and in high-technology sectors
- **implement awareness campaigns** tackling socio-cultural norms and biases and stereotypes.
- **Facilitate the labour market participation of women**, at the same time as **monitoring and ensuring job quality and**
- **the provision of support services** aimed at allowing women to work and pursue a career while being mothers or having a family.
- **pair labour market participation-related actions** with **actions fostering a better redistribution of unpaid childcare and housework** and
- **shaping investment for better targeted life-long training**

OECD analysis has found that

- **those countries with the highest shares of women working from home are also the ones that exhibit the highest employment rates** and that

- **greater work flexibility goes hand in hand with higher employment rates among mothers.**
- **fostering women's entrepreneurship and engagement in innovation**, through the **promotion of diversity in entrepreneurship** and within teams of researchers and inventors.

Action across a number of dimensions, include:
- promote a more gender balanced composition of financing institutions especially those receiving– public funds, including design prizes and
- incentive schemes for companies and organisations actively implementing gender neutral policies linked to measurable targets
- foster networking and gender inclusion in entrepreneurial and innovative activities.–
- The need to address accessibility so that all people, irrespective of their knowledge of technology and their age can make use of it in their every day needs especially banking.
- More training programmes focusing on their needs need to be designed in adult learning programmes
- Trained social workers to visit the elderly, accompany them to ATMs, talk to them initially to gain their trust and help feel at ease and lead them step by step to the use of ATMs.
- More security measures at ATMs
- The closing down of branches in certain towns and villages is causing difficulty of accessibility and as a result people are being forced to use ATMs
- There are difficulties in helping the elderly to change to the digital world and sometimes, depending on the mental state and the motivation of the elderly person it is not always successful

Foster evidence-based gender-related actions by collecting gender-disaggregated data.
- a **gender dimensions to data** already collected by National Statistical Offices which at present are not declined by gender (e.g. related to entrepreneurship, innovation, etc.) and
- to **design and implement the collection and publication in periodical reports** (e.g. education and employment related reports) of gender-related statistics, also linked to the targets mentioned above.
- Initiatives such as the OECD Gender Portal could further help collecting the evidence available in support of policy assessment and or monitoring and benchmarking of progresses made.
- **The publication of an annual Digital Gender Equality Report** that is **based on a common methodology** and indicators and the periodical collection.
- **The Measurement Toolkit for the Digital Economy** being prepared for the G20 Digital Economy Task Force by the OECD in conjunction with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and other international organisations is a useful and solid starting point.
- **Monitoring progress**, benchmarking initiatives and identifying best practices and high-impact measures is critical for keeping the momentum behind efforts to close the digital gender divide.

Sources: *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*
   eSkils Malta Foundation
   NCW Initiatives

FOUNDED 1964

Reaffirmation of Policy

NCW Annual General Meeting

July 2021

The Benefits of Gender Equality for the Economy

Justification/s and current situation to be addressed

The European Parliament resolution of 13.2.2019 on 'experiencing a backlash in women's rights and gender equality in the EU' addresses 'the regression of women's rights in the EU' stating that it is 'particularly worrying' as 'the level of gender equality is often indicative and serves as a first warning of the deteriorating situation of fundamental rights and values in a given society'

Equality between women and men is a fundamental value and objective of the European Union, enshrined in its treaties and commitments, and it holds untapped benefits for the European economy**.** Gender equality can contribute to economic growth and sustainable development, and thus to the wellbeing of all European citizens. Further steps to address persistent gender gaps need to be taken.

Political and societal commitment on gender equality must be renewed. However, this would not be enough. To move forward and ensure effective implementation of EU gender equality policies, all sections of societies have to engage in the process and commitments have to be followed by action

The Section for Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion (ECO) of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) organised a public debate on **"The Benefits of Gender Equality for the European Economy" (29.11.2019)** with the aim to explore how policies aimed at achieving greater gender equality could help reinforce Europe's economic performance and what role the European civil society could play in supporting the development and implementation of these policies.

Proposals and Recommendations
Analyses have shown that '**gender equality would go hand in hand with higher levels of competitiveness, productivity and economic growth'**, EIGE director **Virginija Langbakk** affirmed. At present, progress on gender equality is, nevertheless, uneven amongst Member States and its pace is generally slow as shown by the Annual Gender Equality Index of the *European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).*
It is the perfect time for a renewed commitment and strategy in view of the new incoming Commission

The way forward
- **Gender Equality is not just an issue of justice.**
- Quality employment and horizontal and vertical issues need to be addressed to ensure competitivity

- **Closing gaps in STEM education** will bring about rapid progress and a much better pay
- Addressing practices in gender educational choices is currently creating an occupational divide
- **The gender gap needs to be addressed over a life-time to include the maternity gap, women at work with kids under the age of seven,** time to raise the educational level of mothers and others.
- This would require: targeted action, competition and well-being of families
- Additional proposals include addressing the concept of the **dual-carer workplace, boosting SMEs**, **female entrepreneurship** and **educating women for a digitalized workplace**

Reasons for the rather slow progress on gender equality and **potential solutions**.
- The main reasons are within the fields **of culture, care, education and pay transparency**
- **Stereotypes are deeply rooted in societies**. They have an influence on choices not only on education and training, but also recruitment and promotion. Low female employment rates in the STEM sector (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and underrepresentation of women in the private sector and top management are among the consequences.
- There is **the need of a shift in mindset across society**
- **Reaching out to young women at the places they frequent whether schools, colleges, University, places they frequent in their free time, at home if they are on maternity leave or reduced hours etc. This will help address the maternity gap and encourage education for the digital world**
- **Offer distance learning courses for women while caring for children or other members of the family so they will not be left behind when they return to the workplace. Department for Adult Learning can be approached**

The Industrial Sector

Marion Hannerup, deputy director general of the *Confederation of Danish Industry*, noted that some private businesses, for instance in the ICT section, also need to change their **corporate culture** to attract female employees.
Increased employment of women in private businesses is important for business performance.
She presented **good practices** to that end, including training to address 'unconscious bias', leadership and mentoring programmes for talented women, highlighting female role models, encouraging women's talents and introducing specific recruitment rules, such as the need to have a pre-determined share of women among the shortlisted candidates for a job opening.

The **Care Gap** was identified as another reason for persisting inequalities. Care responsibilities are still borne mainly by women, with negative effects on their economic potential and independence. It is hoped that the EU Work-life Balance Directive that includes a period of designated paid parental leave for both parents would lead to a more even division of parental leave. Social security systems should provide for adequately paid parental leave.

Gender Equality in the Family

Elizabeth Gosme, director of *Coface Families Europe*, said that gender equality in the labour market and the economy goes hand in hand with gender equality in the family. COFACE advocate for work-life support for both men and women based on a mix of access to resources, services and time to care, so that people do not have to choose between work and family. The **reconciliation of work and family life** would increase women's employment as well as general wellbeing and fertility and reduce family and child poverty. Investments in family businesses, SMEs and early child education and care are important aspects of fostering gender equality in the labour market. In the

course of the debate, participants also addressed the **gender pay gap**. The commitment by Commission President Ursula von der Leyen for binding pay transparency measures was welcomed.

The Labour Market
In this context, **Zoe Lanara-Tzotze** from the *Greek General Confederation of Labour (GSEE)*, called for a directive that included, amongst other things, a right to access information on pay levels for all workers, annual reporting obligations for companies with more than 10 staff based on the entire pay structure and a ban on secrecy clauses in contracts. Lifting the veil of secrecy would empower women, make them conscious of their rights and lead to pay equality.
In addition to pay transparency, **Lanara-Tzotze** touched on austerity policies and their impact on gender equality. She said: Such policies have been undermining or restricting collective bargaining. If we want gender equality in the labour market, **collective bargaining is essentia**l. Several participants supported her view.

General Remarks.
Opinions diverged on how to address persisting gender gaps. Soft and hard measures, nudging and legislation (e.g. gender quota), were proposed. Nevertheless, speakers and participants agreed that **gender equality needs to be reflected in all policy areas and future measures** and that the progress on gender equality requires **joint efforts** by politicians, companies, unions, individuals and families. Actions have to follow on commitments, also with a view to the increasing risk of new gender gaps.

The EESC has many times called on the policy-makers of Europe for effective measures to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the labour market, notably measures to close the gender pay gap, as well as to tackle the concentration of women and men in different sectors and occupations and in different grades, levels of responsibility or positions. The Committee will continue to advocate on the issue of gender equality and aims to lead by example through mainstreaming gender equality in its own policies and practices

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Equality Education in the Classroom

Justification/s (reason/s and current situation/s to be addressed)
- 'Education is power.
- ✓ Power to develop knowledge and skills essential for the personal and professional environment.
- ✓ Power to gain economic independence and to achieve social change.
- ✓ Power to establish an equal, productive and inclusive society that both women and men can benefit from.'
- Education is also a fundamental human right. (***Vera Jourova, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Foreword, Equinet 2018***)
- Empowering girls and boys through education helps them to pave a professional path of their choice and gain economic independence through work
- However the overall higher success rates of girls and women in terms of educational outcomes and higher education, recent statistical figures show that women remain at greater risk of social exclusion, unemployment and low-quality jobs in the EU
- For this reason, it has been one of the Commission's most relevant objectives, as part of the Gender Equality Strategy to promote well-balanced education for both girls and boys and to empower girls to participate more vigorously in the labour market and in politics as well as to obtain professional positions that better reflect their education results
- "School books and teaching material do not only have the power to determine a young girl's occupational path in the future. Gendered images and narratives diminishing the role of girls and women can fuel gender stereotypes at an early age, which can lead to gender-based violence, harassment and sexist language even in educational settings"   (***Věra Jourová, European Commissioner for Justice 2018)***

Legal Framework
The definitions and provisions of all relevant international treaties are unanimous on the right to education free of discrimination, including discrimination based on sex. At the European level, several documents (***including the Istanbul Convention and the EU equal treatment Directives***) focus on discrimination-free education. In some EU Member States, national legislation on education also includes gender equality provisions.

Mandate of Equality Bodies
Many equality bodies do not have a mandate to handle cases of discrimination in the school setting, within their equality legislation, though the principle of equality may be enshrined in other pieces of legislation at national level.
- As a consequence issues such as discriminatory content of school books may need to be tackled using alternative approaches. However in such cases equality bodies can engage making use of their promotional function instead

- Some equality bodies have carried out investigations and issued studies and recommendations on discriminatory school materials.
- Complaints received on gender and education, pertain to different situations, such as girls in school being offered stereotypical and discriminatory advice on careers.
-

Harassment, sexual harassment and gender-based bullying,
- There is a need for clearer and more gender sensitive definitions in work on bullying in schools. It is the most common form of school violence on both girls and boys
- With the development of new technologies, cyber bullying has become the most common form of aggressive act carried out, using electronic forms of contact, primarily social networks
- Equality bodies can play an important role in tackling bullying and sexual harassment in their respective countries.

Equality bodies and NGOs
Working with women's organizations/Gender Equality Organisations (NGOs) to raise awareness of gender-based violence in schools. Various women's organisations have a wide range of experience and research on education and non-discrimination which can be a source of establishing cooperation with schools in Malta in different ways, in particular through projects and training courses.
This includes:
- cooperating with schools to train teachers and help develop effective reporting mechanisms;
- raising awareness, including data collection; and
- providing schools with guidelines and policies addressing sexual harassment.
- measures for preventing sexual harassment in schools
- Harassment where teachers and students are concerned need specific training and a professional approach

Promoting Gender Equality
The wealth of good practices shared by equality bodies and NGOs in promoting equality cover a range of activities. This includes:
- supporting schools in making equality plans and gender mainstreaming;
- gender mainstreaming in teachers' and pupils' curricula that respond to the needs of the exiting education system in order to be effectively embedded and integrated with the existing education structure
- active monitoring of the content of the school curricular and the provision of recommendations to cease discriminatory practices
- gender equality as reflected in text books for schools, specifically, ensuring that they are gender sensitive
- working with and training teachers by providing training, guidance materials as well as specific training to handle complaints for minors

Challenges and Recommendations
Recommendations for equality bodies to address gender-based discrimination in schools and promote equality include:
- active monitoring of the content of school curricula;
- providing training, guidance materials and
- conducting awareness raising campaigns;

- taking an intersectional approach to gender equality with all promotion aiming to instill appreciation and respect for diversity.
- Teachers sometimes fail to consider gender equality relevant given, that girls often perform well in school;
- cooperation with established Women's Organisations
- close cooperation with Children's Ombuds.

Digital transformation: Challenge and opportunity for migrant workers

NCW to follow: Research Study: Digital transformation: challenge and opportunity for migrant workers
EUROPEAN COMMISSION JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE

Justification

- The digital transformation, from robotics to artificial intelligence, is transforming our jobs.
- It is opening up new working opportunities as our societies become more technologically advanced. At the same time, computers could soon be replacing humans and performing their tasks across a number of sectors.
- As we start to see the effects of this transformation in the EU, migrant workers are in a more precarious position compared to others.
- Around half who have come from outside the EU to make a living are performing tasks that automation could render obsolete, according to **a new study** carried out by the JRC and the University of Salamanca.
- The results of the study show that migrants are particularly exposed to the effects of the digital transformation and are therefore more in need of specific interventions – from education and training to social protection.
- These kinds of interventions can help them to take advantage of the new career opportunities the transformation could offer.
- The Skills Agenda for Europe launched 10 actions to make the right training, skills and support available to people in the EU. It also includes specific actions to support early identification and profiling of skills and qualifications of third country nationals.

Challenges and Opportunities

- However, automation poses challenges and opportunities - provided the right policies are in place to ensure we are prepared for the digital transformation - for all workers in the EU, not just migrants.
- In this context, the European Pillar of Social Rights focuses on inclusive education and training policies, the importance of which has been confirmed through the EU's **Skills Agenda for Europe** and the **European Education Area.**
- In addition, the **Upskilling Pathways** initiative, as part of the Agenda, helps low-skilled adults, including migrants, to strengthen their basic skills and align them with labour market needs.

- The Commission also acknowledged the need to support third country nationals in the context of the proposals for the EU's long-term budget 2021-2027.
- In line with the approach to invest in people, the new European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) will specifically support the socio-economic integration of non-EU nationals in the long term, with measures to reduce poverty, promote social inclusion and health, and combat discrimination and inequalities.

Education versus Automation
- Scientists considered 9 job categories and the extent to which they contain routine tasks that might readily be automated with advancements in technology.
- From office cleaners to food prep assistants, 49.54% of workers who have come from outside the EU are doing jobs categorised as 'elementary' or 'sales and service'.
- Elementary occupations are those at the highest risk of automation as jobs requiring the solution of complex problems or negotiating with people are harder to automate. This would be the case for managerial or professional occupations, where only 15.99% of non-EU workers are employed.
- A person's job depends significantly on their educational attainment and, hence, the analysis takes that into account.
- That being said, migrant workers are much more likely to be doing jobs with a high automation potential than people living and working in their home country
- Their odds of having such a job are between 2.3 and 3 times higher. This is true even for highly educated migrant workers:

  - ➢ 34.3% of EU citizens living and working in their home country have a university degree. This group has the lowest chance of working in a job with a high automation potential;
  - ➢ Graduates make up 34.9% of EU citizens who have moved to work in another European country, and 27.6% of third country nationals. However for both groups, the odds of being employed in a job with a high automation potential are 3 times that of EU citizens with university degrees who are living and working in their home country.

- **The European Social Fund** provides valuable support to migrants, helping to improve their skills and career prospects. The Fund reached 1.7 million migrants and persons with a foreign or minority background between 2014 and 2017.
- In addition, **Under the European Semester, the EU's key instrument to steer social reforms in the Member States**, several countries received recommendations to improve access to quality education and training and to social protection.

Background

- The study forms part of the European Commission **Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography's** work which provides EU policymakers with the knowledge and analysis needed to strengthen the response to the challenges of migration and to fully seize its opportunities.
- The European Commission's **2018 Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE) review** gives a comprehensive analysis of the digital transformation, how it changes the relation between labour and machines, and how it the changes the nature of work.
- The study '**Migrant workers and the digital transformation in the EU**' provides insights on the possible implications of these changes on the labour market integration of migrants.
- It is based on the most recent data from the **EU Labour Force Survey** and the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Survey of Adult Skills** (PIAAC).
- The sample data only covers the resident population so does not include information on the working activities of undocumented migrants.

To address:
- **Foreign/migrant children in primary schools who are at least 2 years lower than the Maltese children of their age, due to lack of competences especially in English – (need to check this carefully)**
- **Verifying authenticity of certificates of migrants both of school age children, young people and adults and problems they encounter to rectify their position**
- Governments should develop international standards to test knowledge of graduates from other countries, so licensing for migrants becomes easier
- Providing solutions for language barriers
- Teaching of English to non-English speaking children
- Conversation Courses for migrants- young people and adults
- Recognition of qualifications

Bridging the Digital Gender Gap

Justification
- Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right. **It is also a keystone of a prosperous, modern economy** that provides sustainable inclusive growth.
- **Recognising that gender equality** is essential for ensuring that men and women can contribute fully **for the betterment of societies and economies at large.**
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- **We need to seize this opportunity** to foster greater gender equality in the labour market, boost economic growth and build a more inclusive, digital world.
- The road ahead is uphill: today worldwide **some 327 million fewer women than men have a smartphone** and can access the mobile Internet.
- Women are underrepresented in the ICT profession overall. Whereas in the borader workforce women comprise around 45%, the number of women in ICT jobs is around 28%
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- **Women-owned start-ups receive 23% less funding** and are 30% less likely to have a positive exit compared to male-owned businesses.

Co-ordinated policy action can help narrow the digital gender gap. This requires raising awareness and tackling gender stereotypes; enabling enhanced, safer and more affordable access to digital tools; and stronger cooperation across stakeholders to remove barriers to girls and women's full participation in the digital world.

Digital technologies provide new opportunities to make progress, but technological fixes cannot address the underlying structural problems that drive the digital gender divide. Concrete policy actions are needed to foster women's and girls' full participation and inclusion in the digital economy, while at the same time addressing stereotypes and social norms that lead to discrimination against women.

The digital gender divide needs to be resolved. There is no reason for women to trail behind in the digital transformation. The cost of inaction is high and in the face of sluggish growth, ageing societies and increasing educational attainment of young women, the economic case for digital gender equality is clear.

Bridging the gender divide, also in the digital world, **can provide new sources of global economic growth,** support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and help achieve the G20 goal of strong, sustainable and inclusive growth. Together, we must and can advance in making digital gender equality a reality.

In addition, girls' **relatively lower educational enrolment in disciplines that would allow them to perform well in a digital world** – such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, as well as information and communication technologies – coupled with women's and girls' more limited use of digital tools could lead to widening gaps and greater inequality.
Acting now to reverse these trends can pay off: the OECD report finds that greater inclusion of women in the digital economy and increased diversity bring value, both social and economic

Policy Action Agenda on the Digital Gender Divide
Recommendations:
Because the digital transformation is taking over the world, we need to strongly address the challenges and opportunities for women and girls
- Awareness should be raised in schools about implications of quitting jobs for "raising the family": not only career implications but lifelong financial implications including pension. Women are most prone to poverty in old age
- Awareness should be raised that the most flexible jobs with best possibilities to work from home AND earn decent money are jobs in IT or jobs that require at least a good basic knowledge of IT
- Automation of jobs does not only concern basic jobs; parts of jobs of graduates and professionals are being automated as well: medical diagnoses, basic tax and legal advice services, etc. Young people should be made aware of jobs that are least likely to be automated.

There is strong potential **for positive policy action** in core areas. Taken together, these could provide the basis to bridge the digital gender divide and build a more inclusive digital future. A possible agenda could include:

- The **design and implementation of national digital strategies** that actively aim to close the gender digital gap
- **access, adoption and improve the affordability of digital technologies** while enhancing online safety.
- National **digital strategies should include targets** (both numbers and dates) for closing the digital gender divide across at least four dimensions, namely:
- **extend networks and digital access (e.g. through satellite) to rural areas**–
- **promote access to and affordability and use of connected digital devices** (e.g. smart phones, tablets,– laptops), especially for low-income individuals
- **boost availability and promotion of e-banking and mobile money**, especially to women and other– disadvantaged categories
- The need to increase online safety. This includes more effective Cyber Security measures, including security at ATM to ensure that cameras are not used to photo details
- Addressing the abuse against women on social media
- Reaching out to women of different ages in homes for the elderly, at childcare centres, women's shelters, meeting for elderly groups, meetings organised by NGOs for different age groups etc
- formulate strategies to **increase awareness** of the digital gender divide,
- **help address stereotypes, target existing gender biases in education curricula**,
- **encourage greater female enrolment in STEM** studies and more generally, bridge the skills gender divide in the digital era.

Awareness and strong co-operation

Addressing the digital gender divide requires **sufficient awareness and strong co-operation across stakeholders** and tackling gender stereotypes is critical. The digital gender divide is particularly large in STEM education and in high-technology sectors that require STEM degrees.

Further commitments to be made at National Level

- agree to establish **(time bound) targets** for women in STEM
- **create fund and grant schemes aimed at enhancing the enrolment of women in STEM education**
- **establish awards and prizes enhancing the visibility of women in STEM** and in high-technology sectors
- **implement awareness campaigns** tackling socio-cultural norms and biases and stereotypes.
- **Facilitate the labour market participation of women**, at the same time as **monitoring and ensuring job quality and**
- **the provision of support services** aimed at allowing women to work and pursue a career while being mothers or having a family.
- **pair labour market participation-related actions** with **actions fostering a better redistribution of unpaid childcare and housework** and
- **shaping investment for better targeted life-long training**

OECD analysis has found that

- **those countries with the highest shares of women working from home are also the ones that exhibit the highest employment rates** and that
- **greater work flexibility goes hand in hand with higher employment rates among mothers.**

- **fostering women's entrepreneurship and engagement in innovation**, through the **promotion of diversity in entrepreneurship** and within teams of researchers and inventors.

Action across a number of dimensions, include:
- promote a more gender balanced composition of financing institutions especially those receiving– public funds, including design prizes and
- incentive schemes for companies and organisations actively implementing gender neutral policies linked to measurable targets
- foster networking and gender inclusion in entrepreneurial and innovative activities.–
- The need to address accessibility so that all people, irrespective of their knowledge of technology and their age can make use of it in their every day needs especially banking.
- More training programmes focusing on their needs need to be designed in adult learning programmes
- Trained social workers to visit the elderly, accompany them to ATMs, talk to them initially to gain their trust and help feel at ease and lead them step by step to the use of ATMs.
- More security measures at ATMs
- The closing down of branches in certain towns and villages is causing difficulty of accessibility and as a result people are being forced to use ATMs
- There are difficulties in helping the elderly to change to the digital world and sometimes, depending on the mental state and the motivation of the elderly person it is not always successful

Foster evidence-based gender-related actions by collecting gender-disaggregated data.
- a **gender dimensions to data** already collected by National Statistical Offices which at present are not declined by gender (e.g. related to entrepreneurship, innovation, etc.) and
- to **design and implement the collection and publication in periodical reports** (e.g. education and employment related reports) of gender-related statistics, also linked to the targets mentioned above.
- Initiatives such as the OECD Gender Portal could further help collecting the evidence available in support of policy assessment and or monitoring and benchmarking of progresses made.
- **The publication of an annual Digital Gender Equality Report** that is **based on a common methodology** and indicators and the periodical collection.
- **The Measurement Toolkit for the Digital Economy** being prepared for the G20 Digital Economy Task Force by the OECD in conjunction with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and other international organisations is a useful and solid starting point.
- **Monitoring progress**, benchmarking initiatives and identifying best practices and high-impact measures is critical for keeping the momentum behind efforts to close the digital gender divide.

Sources: *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*
eSkils Malta Foundation
NCW Initiatives

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Inequalities in the access for young people to information and support services

Justification and current situation to be addressed

Young men and women are the future of European societies. However, there are concerns at EU and national levels that the combined stresses from school, expectations from parents, and peer and societal pressures can create challenging transitions to adulthood and have a long-lasting impact. **The need for a revision of the curriculum to reduce the pressure on young people of all ages and to ensure that this includes a curriculum program that focuses on participation of young people in the classroom and a methodology that develops thinking skills**

There are also concerns about inequalities of opportunities and resources, including those for coping with social or health problems. **To reduce inequalities, ensuring access to key services is vital.** It is therefore necessary to review inequalities in young people's access to information and support services and how these inequalities can be overcome focusing on the 12–24 age group; and where possible, information should be is provided separately for ages 12–17 and 18–24

Initiatives by the European Commission

In May 2018 the European Commission proposed a new framework for cooperation on youth for the period 2019–2027, **which emphasises partnership and cross sectoral work**. The Youth Strategy points to cooperation between schools, youth workers, health professionals and sports organisations to ensure better access to opportunities.

The importance of public services is highlighted in the European Pillar of Social Rights, which includes a focus on using services to support education, training and lifelong learning, equal opportunities, gender equality and active support to employment.

OECD Report on Mental Health

Another issue, not mentioned so explicitly in European Commission policy documents but which has received a lot of attention from a number of international organisations, is **mental health and in particular the mental health of vulnerable groups, including young people.**

Recent warning comes in the OECD report Health at a glance 2018, which notes that **the growing issues of mental health pose a heavy burden not only for the individuals concerned but also for society, including increased spending on social and health services.**

The report calls for **more investment in timely and preventive social and health services**, both universal in nature but **also targeting children and young people so that they are not scarred by mental health issues throughout their adult lives** (OECD, 2018).

Key findings issues around mental well-being affect many young people in Europe.
- **Socioeconomic status** has a strong impact on whether young people are at risk of depression. Those living in households in the lowest income are more likely to be at risk.
- There is also **a strong gender dimension to issues of mental health, with young women (15–24 years) being more prone to depression**
- **The use of social media and the too frequent use of mobile phone** in particular, is very often isolating young people from the rest of society, including their peers, which in itself is another source of lack of mental well-being
- **Issues around mental well-being affect many young people in Europe.** Data for 2016 show that 14% of Europeans aged 18–24 were at risk of depression. Young people in Sweden were most at risk of depression, followed by those in Estonia, Malta and the Netherlands
- Data for 2014 show that 4% of Europeans aged 15–24 were chronically depressed. The highest rates were in Ireland (12%), followed by Finland (11%), Sweden (10%) and Germany (9%).

Increase in Bullying and Cyberbullying
- The incidence of both bullying and cyberbullying are on the rise in several countries, with the highest prevalence in the Baltic states and the French-speaking community in Belgium.
- Given that issues around health and mental well-being are among the most prominent problems affecting young people, access to relevant services is key to addressing associated risks.
- Yet a **significant proportion of young people have difficulties in accessing services.**

Access to health care,
- **The most important access issues are delays in getting an appointment and long waiting times on the day.**
- **There is also the question of the adequacy of the services**.
- There is evidence that in addition to dealing with **perceived stigma and confidentiality issues**, young people also **struggle with the affordability of services.**
- Eurofound data shows that 20% of young people cited **cost as prohibitive** in the EU (72% Cyprus, 61% in Malta and 56% Greece)
- Overall, in the EU**, young people with disability or chronic illness** are more likely to report difficulties in accessing healthcare – especially in terms of delays, waiting time and finding time to get to the doctor.

Recommendations and Success factors underpinning efforts to reduce inequalities in access include:
- **Family life: More attention needs to be given within the family atmosphere to ensure that young people are listened to with care and to have adequate space to voice their concerns**
- **adaptability** – services and professionals need to adopt new tools in line with trends among young people
- **guidance** – some young people may not be in a position to immediately know what type of service they need ›

- the need for **high degree of knowledge of and familiarity with the issues of concern to young people** ›
- **empathy** with young people and an understanding of their needs, which translates into greater involvement of young people themselves as service providers through, for example, peer-to-peer support. **Schools are the place where youths spend most of the time. Mental health should be addressed in schools in the form of support groups and group discussions**
- **special attention to be given to young adults with intellectual disabilities as well as young refugees(possibly still suffering from post traumatic stress disorder)**
- **Identifying individuals who are going through some form of stress and directing them towards help, as very often young people are shy of seeking help**
- **At Primary, Secondary and tertiary level a toolkit (in the form of a booklet suitable to the different age groups) should be provided**
- **The need for more PSD teachers, School Counsellors and psychologists, specialising in youth issues; the latter need to be more often on the school premises**

Policy pointers for service providers
Service providers should: ›
- **respect and protect the privacy of young people** needing help (as well as the privacy of parents) › consider the differences among young people and tailor services to individual situations
- take into account **emerging issues such as cyberbullying** and **rising levels of homelessness**
- consider going beyond a simple concept of 'hard to reach' and **invest in understanding the causes of inequalities** in access to services in order to provide solutions ›
- **be flexible, without putting unnecessary pressure on young people** to use certain services for further referrals
- **Sports organisations can plan programmes with the help of psychologists to deal with lack of mental wellbeing amongst young people**
- **Doctors need to take stress and anxiety claims seriously and not dismiss claims or indicative signs**
- **Mental health issues need to be more effectively recognised at school and workplaces, irrespective of age especially when issuing medical certificates – issues such as burn-out, depression, anxiety at the workplace or at school should be adequately dealt with immediately**
- **Training teachers in schools and managers in companies to address issues of mentalhealth.Eg: Richmond Foundation deliver Mental Health First Aid for managers; this could be extended to teachers, community workers and NGOs**
- **Put in place in schools meetings of students with School Counsellors on a regular basis similar to PSD sessions where they can share their experiences. If necessary schools can engage outsource trained Counsellors**

- **NGOs need to ensure service providers are trained specifically to deal with children/students with special needs and if not refer to a specialised professional**

Policy pointers for policymakers
Policymakers should take a broader, more holistic view that focuses **on issues beyond employment and draw on a life-course perspective.**
- Policymakers should: **ensure the availability of a network of services to cater for the social and health needs of young people**, with the help of **public and non-governmental providers** that have the competencies and experience to deliver such services
- **examine young people's environments at home and in school** so new and emerging risks, such as rising levels of cyberbullying, can be detected early
- promote **closer cooperation between mainstream services and schools to provide more school-based interventions**: for example, around mental health issues (understanding of mental health disorders, mental health literacy) ›
- **put in place and support initiatives grounded in national programmes** to improve the coverage and quality of social and health services for young people
- when establishing eligibility criteria for services and allowances, **attention to the age range 12–17 (who are covered by child protection policies) should be given without forgetting those aged 18–24 (or even up to age 29). The differences in the age groups need to be critically addressed separately**
- **Provide online initiatives that help the younger age-group (12 -17) in the form of a FB of a support line containing posts of awareness raising and encouragement. A similar one for the 18 -24 age groups can be provided offering a support system of motivation and encouragement messages adapted to their age**

Policy pointers for the EU
The EU should:
- **through its Youth Strategy, explicitly mainstream youth into the European Pillar of Social Rights** and related initiatives not only in relation to employment and education, but equally in terms of social protection and access to essential services
- support **the provision of more comparative data** on access to social and health services in the Member States
- **promote and support research on the causes and consequences of inequalities between young people** in their experience of health and social problems and access to services as well as on the impact of various initiatives to increase access ›
- **provide budget to organisations that facilitate access to information and support for young people** beyond the mainstream environment, **especially social enterprises or non-governmental organisations engaged with or providing service**

Source: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)
Publication: Inequalities in the access of young people to information and support services

Publication: (//www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2019/inequalities-in-the-access-of-young-peoplee-to-information-and-support-services)

International Labour Organisation (ILO):
Ending Violence and Harassment in the World of Work
Convention No190 Accompanying Recommendation No. 206

Justification and current situation

"**Violence and harassment constitutes one of the greatest threats to decent work**. No more excuses. Let's work together and make the promise of Convention No. 190 a reality for all," says ILO Director-General.

ILO Statement - 25 November 2019
'On this International Day the world is taking a stand against rape and all forms of violence and harassment against women. Violence against women is one of the most pervasive forms of discrimination, one of the most insidious means of undermining women's dignity, autonomy and independence.'

Violence and harassment in the world of work has no regard for occupation or position. No country, sector or occupation is immune.

'**Violence and harassment can, and must, end**. In June 2019, governments and employers' and workers' organizations from across the world adopted the Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 206) . For the first time we have an international treaty that sets out the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment, and shows how that right can be realized'.

This **commitment now needs to be turned into concrete, practical action**. So, on this International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the ILO calls for the widest ratification of this ground-breaking Convention. Ratification will accelerate action on the ground, including the adoption and enforcement of national laws, systems for prevention and methods of effective redress.

Violence and harassment in the world of work has **enormous human, social and economic costs**. Violence and harassment constitutes **one of the greatest threats to decent work**. No more excuses. Let's work together and make the promise of Convention No. 190 a reality for all

Recommendations

Core Principles
All Women regardless of their identity or employment status whether working in the formal or informal economy, **have the right to work free from violence and harassment**
Gender Equality and decent work are fundamental pre-conditions for safe, healthy and dignified work-places and are particularly important in challenging social and cultural norms that devalue women's participation in society and at work
Safe cities and communities are essential to foster a safe environment in publics paces, which are often workplace and in transport to and from work.

- In adopting and implementing the inclusive, integrated and gender responsive approach referred to in Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Convention, **Members should address violence and harassment in the world of work in labour and employment, occupational safety and health, equality and non-discrimination law, and in criminal law**, where appropriate.
- **Members should ensure that all workers and employers**, including those in sectors, occupations and work arrangements that are more exposed to violence and harassment, **fully enjoy freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining** consistent with the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).
- Members should take appropriate measures to:
- ✓ **promote the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining** at all levels as a means of preventing and addressing violence and harassment and,
- ✓ to the extent possible, mitigating the impact of domestic violence in the world of work; and
- ✓ **suppor**t such collective bargaining **through the collection and dissemination of information** on related trends and good practices regarding the negotiation process and the content of collective agreements.

  Members should ensure that **provisions on violence and harassment in national laws, regulations and policies take into account the equality and non-discrimination instruments of the International Labour Organization**, including the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) and Recommendation (No. 90), 1951, and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) and Recommendation (No. 111), 1958, and other relevant instruments.

Scope of ILO Convention

Article 2
- This Convention **protects workers and other persons in the world of work**, including employees as defined by national law and practice, as well as persons working irrespective of their contractual status, persons in training, including interns and apprentices, workers whose employment has been terminated, volunteers, jobseekers and job applicants, and individuals exercising the authority, duties or responsibilities of an employer.
- This **Convention applies to all sectors, whether private or public, both in the formal and informal economy, and whether in urban or rural areas.**

Article 3
This Convention **applies to violence and harassment in the world of work occurring in the course of, linked with or arising out of work**:
(a) in the workplace, including **public and private spaces** where they are a place of work;
(b) in places **where the worker is paid, takes a rest break or a meal, or uses sanitary, washing and changing facilities;**
(c) **during work-related trips, travel, training, events or social activities;**
(d) **through work-related communications, including those enabled by information and communication technologies;**
(e) **in employer-provided accommodation;** and
(f) when commuting to and from work.

Definitions
For the purpose of this Convention:

(a) **the term "violence and harassment" in the world of work** refers to a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence and harassment
(b**) the term "gender-based violence and harassment"** means violence and harassment directed at persons because of their sex or gender, or affecting persons of a particular sex or gender disproportionately, and includes sexual harassment.
(c) Without prejudice to subparagraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph 1 of this Article, definitions in national laws and regulations may provide for a single concept or separate concepts.

Protection and Prevention
- Occupational safety and health provisions on violence and harassment in national laws, regulations and policies should take into account relevant
- occupational safety and health instruments of the International Labour Organization, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and
- the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187).
- Members should, as appropriate, specify in laws and regulations **that workers and their representatives should take part in the design, implementation and monitoring of the workplace policy** referred to in Article 9(a) of the Convention, and such policy should:

- Companies should state that **violence and harassment will not be tolerated; a clause should be included in the company's policy documents that proper conduct on issues of harassment are clearly stated or defined**

- **Companies should be required to publish in its financial statements wages split between men and women to ensure that measures are taken to reduce the gender gap and the abuse of power**

- **Companies should keep a logbook with attendance of people in meetings where policy is discussed and ensure that both men and women are engaged fairly in these discussions**

- **How can psychological abuse be tackled This is difficult to justify in court**

(b) establish violence and harassment **prevention programmes** with, if appropriate, measurable objectives;

(c) **specify the rights and responsibilities of the workers and the employer**

(d) contain **information on complaint and investigation procedures;**

(e) provide that all internal and external communications related to **incidents of violence and harassment will be duly considered, and acted upon as appropriate;**

(f) specify **the right to privacy of individuals and confidentiality**, as referred to in Article 10(c) of the Convention, while balancing the right of workers to be made aware of all hazards; and

(g) include **measures to protect complainants, victims, witnesses and whistle-blowers against victimization or retaliation.**

(h) provide free legal advice

Risk Assessment
The workplace risk assessment referred to in Article 9(c) of the Convention **should take into account factors that increase the likelihood of violence and harassment, including psychosocial hazards and risks.** Particular attention should be paid to the hazards and risks that:

(a) **arise from working conditions and arrangements**, work organization and human resource management, as appropriate;

(b) **involve third parties such as clients, customers, service providers, users, patients and members of the public**; and

(c) **arise from discrimination, abuse of power relations, and gender, cultural and social norms** that support violence and harassment.

Members should take **legislative or other measures** to **protect migrant workers**, particularly women migrant workers, regardless of migrant status, in origin, transit and destination countries as appropriate, from violence and harassment in the world of work.

Members should adopt **appropriate measures for sectors** or occupations and work arrangements in which **exposure to violence and harassment may be more likely**, such as night work, work in isolation, health, hospitality, social services, emergency services, domestic work, transport, education or entertainment

In facilitating the **transition from the informal to the formal economy**, Members should provide resources and assistance for informal economy workers and employers, and their associations, to prevent and address violence and harassment in the informal economy.

Members should ensure that **measures** to prevent violence and harassment **do not result in the restriction** of the participation in specific jobs, sectors or occupations, or their exclusion therefrom, of women and the groups referred to in Article 6 of the Convention.

The reference **to vulnerable groups** and groups in situations of vulnerability in Article 6 of the Convention should be interpreted in accordance with applicable international labour standards and international instruments on human rights

Guidance Training and Awareness Raising
Members should **fund, develop, implement and disseminate**, as appropriate:
(a) **programmes aimed at addressing factors that increase the likelihood of violence and harassment in the world of work**, including discrimination, the abuse of power relations, and gender, cultural and social norms that support violence and harassment;
(b) **gender-responsive guidelines and training programmes** to assist judges, labour inspectors, police officers, prosecutors and other public officials in fulfilling their mandate regarding violence

and harassment in the world of work, as well as to assist public and private employers and workers and their organizations in preventing and addressing violence and harassment in the world of work;

(c) **model codes of practice and risk assessment tools** on violence and harassment in the world of work, either general or sector-specific, taking into account the specific situations of workers and other persons belonging to the groups referred to in Article 6 of the Convention;

(d) **public awareness-raising campaigns in the various languages of the country**, including **those of the migrant workers residing in the country**, that convey the unacceptability of violence and harassment, in particular gender-based violence and harassment, address discriminatory attitudes and prevent stigmatization of victims, complainants, witnesses and whistle-blowers;

(e) **gender-responsive curricula and instructional materials** on violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment, **at all levels of education and vocational training,** in line with national law and circumstances;

(f) **materials for journalists and other media personnel on gender-based violence and harass**ment, including its underlying causes and risk factors, with due respect for their independence and freedom of expression; and

(g) More public awareness of harassment at the workplace: **public campaign**s aimed at fostering safe, healthy and harmonious workplaces free from violence and harassment.

(h) Companies, in particular through the Human Resources Management be trained to identify if there are cases of domestic violence in the home and connected with harassment at the workplace that also should be addressed

Enforcement, Remedies and Assistance
The remedies referred to in Article 10(b) of the Convention could include:

(a) the **right to resign with compensation;**

(b) **reinstatement;**

c) **appropriate compensation for damages;**

(d) orders requiring **measures with immediate executory force** to be taken to ensure that certain conduct is stopped or that policies or practices are changed; and

(e) **legal fees and costs** according to national law and practice.

Victims of violence and harassment in the world of work should have access to compensation in cases of psychosocial, physical or any other injury or illness which results in incapacity to work.

The complaint and dispute resolution mechanisms for gender-based violence and harassment referred to in Article 10(e) of the Convention should include measures such as:

(a) **courts with expertise** in cases of gender-based violence and harassment;

(b) **timely and efficient processing;**

(c) **legal advice and assistance for complainants and victims**;

(e) **guides and other information resources** available and accessible in the languages that are widely spoken in the country; and

 (f) **shifting of the burden of proof, as appropriate**, in proceedings other than criminal proceedings.

S**upport, services and remedies for victims** of gender-based violence and harassment referred to in Article 10(e) of the Convention should include measures such as:

(a) **support to help victims** re-enter the labour market;

(b) **counselling and information services**, in an accessible manner as appropriate;

(c) 24-hour hotlines;

(d**) emergency services;**

(e) **medical care and treatment and psychological support;**

(f) **crisis centres, including shelters**; and
(g) **specialized police units or specially trained officers** to support victims.

Appropriate measures to mitigate the impacts of domestic violence in the world of work
referred to in Article 10(f) of the Convention could include:
(a) leave for victims of domestic violence;
(b) flexible work arrangements and protection for victims of domestic violence;
(c) temporary protection against dismissal for victims of domestic violence, as appropriate, except on grounds unrelated to domestic violence and its consequences;
(d) the inclusion of domestic violence in workplace risk assessments;
(e) a referral system to public mitigation measures for domestic violence, where they exist; and
(f) awareness-raising about the effects of domestic violence.

Perpetrators of violence and harassment in the world of work. Companies should be held **accountable and providecounselling** or other measures, where appropriate, with a view to preventing the reoccurrence of violence and harassment, and facilitating their reintegration into work, where appropriate.
Labour inspectors and officials of other competent authorities, as appropriate, **should undergo gender-responsive training** with a view to identifying and addressing violence and harassment in the world of work, including psychosocial hazards and risks, gender-based violence and harassment, and discrimination against particular groups of workers.

The mandate of national bodies responsible for labour inspection, occupational safety and health, and equality and non-discrimination, including gender equality, should cover violence and harassment in the world of work.

 Members States should make **efforts to collect and publish statistics on violence and harassment** in the world of work disaggregated by sex, form of violence and harassment, and sector of economic activity, including with respect to the groups referred to in Article 6 of the Convention.