



Scientific Analysis and Advice
on Gender Equality in the EU

Annual Seminar report

Reviewing Progress & Looking Ahead'

(15 November 2024)

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ABOUT

This report summarises the SAAGE hybrid seminar held on 15 November 2024 in Brussels.



Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini S.r.l. SB (FGB SRL SB) is an Italian independent research centre inspired by the principles of labour and social inclusion, gender equality, cultural diversity and respect for fundamental human rights, welfare promotion, territorial cohesion, sustainability, and technological innovation to boost economic growth, attention to the environment, access to employment through new skills, and participation for local development.



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1. OPENING

Karen Vanderkerckhove, Head of Gender Unit of DG Just opened the annual seminar, welcoming participants.

She highlighted two important elements that have emerged from the political guidelines presented by the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen: the preparation of a Roadmap on Women's Rights to be completed within the first one hundred days of the new Commission; and the development of a new EU Gender Equality Strategy for the period from 2026.

A broad exercise is envisaged in the preparation of the new EU Gender Equality Strategy. The work of SAAGE will contribute to this. The European Institute for Gender Equality are preparing a foresight report as well as a study on Beijing +30 for the Polish Presidency. An exchange with the European Network of Legal Experts in Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination is planned. An OECD study will be completed at the end of the year on the policy mixes that are most effective to advance gender equality. A public consultation will be organised in Spring 2025.

2. REVIEWING PROGRESS – MEMBER STATE ORIENTATION

2.1 Respect

Respect focuses attention on the social domain for equality and equality in access to and enjoyment of relationships of care, solidarity and respect. This is a field where equality that is compromised by such as discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment, gender stereotyping, and sexual and gender-based violence.

Respect was examined by: Ivanka Buzov, SAAGE Expert, Croatia; Anna Pluta, SAAGE Expert, Latvia; and Raluca Popescu, SAAGE Expert, Romania.

In Croatia...

The system of combating violence against women and in the family is not organised to effectively address and remove the causes through prevention, resocialisation and education, but relies on addressing the consequences of violence through criminal policy and punishment. Obstetric violence is not recognised in the Law on Protection of Patients' Rights. This is a systemic problem in the health system, with traumatic experiences with childbirth in public health institutions. ILO Violence and Harassment Convention No. 190 (C190) in the world of work has not been ratified. Employers are still not meeting their obligations.

There have been positive recent developments in steps that have been taken to strengthen legislation in relation to gender-based violence with a package of amendments to reflect a policy of zero tolerance for violence. Sex education is mandatory in education at all levels. A comprehensive national plan to address Gender-Based Violence is in place for the period up to 2028. Action plans to address sexual violence and sexual harassment are in place.

There is a need to strengthen preventive mechanisms in relation to gender-based violence, with training provided for key staff and development of inter-departmental cooperation on the issue.

Reproductive health and rights are not adequately addressed in public policy and there is insufficient availability of health services for the termination of pregnancy. A 2017 Court order, required the Parliament

to pass a law regulating a women's right to freely decided on the birth of children and termination of pregnancy, but such a law has not yet been passed. The Committee for Gender Equality of the Parliament discussed the Final Proposal of the Law on Medical Termination of Pregnancy in 2022, and left oriented members of the Committee pointed to the significance of a new Law for a safe, accessible and free medical procedure for termination of pregnancy and accessible and free contraception to prevent further erosion of women's rights. A new Law on Medical Termination of Pregnancy is required with action to enable the availability of all procedures, health services and information related to termination of pregnancy.

In Latvia...

Latvia ranks third in the EU for the number of women killed by intimate partners. There is a need to introduce legislation on femicide and, more broadly, for an ongoing campaign to inform women of the support measures available and their rights, if they face domestic violence.

There have been some positive legislative developments in relation to gender-based violence. The law has also been amended on sexual harassment in relation to administrative liability, but the fines are low and possible measures need to be considered to criminalise this, especially if a repeat offence. The Istanbul Convention has been ratified.

There have been some positive developments in relation to parental leave and the sharing of parental leave. However, this decreased the leave available to women, which means that the leave ends before they can enrol the child in a kindergarten. Fathers tend not to take this leave up, or take it up at a minimal level, as they choose to keep their salary in a context where parental leave payments are low.

There needs to be action on gender stereotypes, in particular where they condition women to be silent if they experience domestic violence. Action needs to be taken to ensure abusers know they will be punished.

In Romania...

Gender-based violence and domestic violence are significant issues. There is a lack of an integrated system of data collection on gender-based violence, which renders the issue invisible. There is no data on some forms of violence, such as obstetric violence, early marriage and forced marriages. There is the barrier of a generalised conservative politics and a lack of political will to regulate behaviours and attitudes counter to traditional gender roles. EU provisions are key to any progress made.

There are no gender-related topics on the school curriculum. Sex education, termed health education, was eventually introduced for those in 8th grade (15 year olds) and only with parental consent. Romania has a quarter of the minor mothers in the EU. Most schools choose not to teach this topic. An NGO produced the first textbook for schools on gender equality and this became a target of attack from the conservative politics in play. The only focus on such issues in schools is confined to what is termed the annual alternative education week.

An equality strategy with a pillar on domestic violence and violence against women, and a strategy on sexual violence, are in place. Despite, action plans and monitoring arrangements, policy implementation is poor. Legislative developments on the issue of gender-based violence, include action on cyber violence as a form of gender-based violence. However, practice by those charged with implementing legislation is at issue with, for example, police officers trying to dissuade women from taking a case in instances of domestic violence, and suppressing cases in other instances, and with few cases actually coming to court. There are ten support centres for victims of sexual violence, but most are not yet functional and low numbers of women benefit.

There is a need to develop an integrated data system on all forms of gender-based violence. A focus on obstetric violence, early marriage and forced marriage needs to be included in the strategy on gender-based violence. Legislative change is required to introduce gender equality and sex education teaching in schools. Campaigns and training are needed to combat gender stereotypes, with a particular focus on the police, the judiciary, health service staff, and education staff.

2.2 Representation

Representation focuses attention on the political domain for equality and equality in access to and application of influence. This is a field where equality that is compromised by gender imbalance in such as political representation, economic decision-making, leadership roles in the public realm, the judiciary, and cultural and media institutions.

Representation was examined by: Ruta Braziene, SAAGE Expert, Lithuania; Robert Plasman, SAAGE Expert, Luxembourg; and Rose Marie Azzopardi, SAAGE Expert, Malta.

In Lithuania...

In national politics slow progress on gender balance is evident, but fewer women candidates are presenting and there is a low representation of women in the highest positions. There is a similar picture at local government level. In the economic field there is a disparity between women and men with an increasing number of men as employers in all age groups. Participation by women in entrepreneurship is increasing.

The 'Political Participation of Women for Progress: From Analysis to Action' project is one exemplar of positive initiative to encourage women to participate in politics and to reduce gender stereotyping in this sphere. Project activities included: communication initiatives to shape public discourse on the issue; analytical initiatives to monitor election programmes for their focus on gender equality, and the participation of women in politics and elections; and the preparation of fact-based educational tools to empower women for more active political participation.

There is a need for the political space to enable a balance of professional and caring responsibilities, and for financial supports to enable women to enter politics.

Participation by women in entrepreneurship has been increasing. There is support for women in entrepreneurship, with specific programmes, including Women in Tech, of support through mentoring, networking event, and financial incentives.

In Luxembourg...

Decision making is a topic for the Observatory on Equality with detailed and updated data. In politics there is slow and slight improvement in the level of women in political representation at national and municipality level. There is a requirement at national level that requires 40% of candidates on the electoral list to be of one gender. The same rule does not apply at municipality level and the gender balance is worse at that level. At the municipal level, a quota is needed.

In the administration and companies with a state involvement there is an objective of the Ministry of Equality to reach 40% presence of each gender. This target is being approached though not yet reached. The situation in private companies is not as positive but there is improvement there too.

The particularity of the Luxembourg labour market with a high level of cross-border workers, and residents of foreign nationality has consequences for the position of women in decision-making in the economic sphere.

In Malta...

The presence of women in the social sector is 'good', in the political sector is bad, and in the economic sector is ugly'. In the social sector, there is a strong involvement of women in civil society organisations, especially in environmental and social organisations, though less in traditional male arenas such as AI and technology related organisations.

In 2022 a quota system was applied in national elections, with twelve additional women added to those elected, six for each party. This has not been seen as positive by women's organisations. Improvement in gender balance is seen as requiring women being enabled to compete and win on the same level as men. This so-called 'gender corrective mechanism' was not used in subsequent local elections. Gender balance in ministerial positions remains distant. There are issues to be considered in the design of the quota system and in its marketing.

While women outperform men at third-level education, and have since the mid 1990s, this is not reflected in the labour market. Segregation in topics studied, influenced by family expectations and guidance counsellors, is an issue. The public sector is better, with more balance in middle management grades, though not so much at the upper level of the civil service and particularly for CEOs of government entities where it remains male dominated.

Progress is too slow. Laws lack enforcement, and plans tend to remain on paper.

2.3 Resources

Resources focuses attention on the economic domain for equality and equality in access to income, wealth, employment, and the full spectrum of social goods including accommodation, health and education. This is a field where equality is compromised by the unequal distribution of these resources, and by gendered poverty and economic disadvantage.

Resources was examined by: Ursula Barry, SAAGE Expert, Ireland; Daniele Muelders, SAAGE Expert, Belgium; and Thomas Georgiadis, SAAGE Expert, Greece.

In Ireland...

Employment is at a record high with the gender gap narrowing, but low pay is endemic, ranking Ireland second in the EU, and the majority of those on low pay are women. There is a strong representation of women within third level education sector, but gender occupational inequality in employment at all levels of education.

There are significant cost-of-living issues. Those most vulnerable to poverty include lone parents, older women, large families, migrant women, Travellers and Roma and disabled people. There are positive policies on the minimum wage, which is the highest in the EU after Luxembourg, but it remains lower than the living wage. Progressive fiscal policies in terms of transfer payments reduce inequality, but reinforce dependence on the state, and structural inequality issues remain unaddressed, including low levels of investment in core public services. While leave entitlements have increased substantially, they remain below the EU average

There is a crisis in long-term care services with no statutory right of access and high levels of unmet demand for home and community-based care. There has been significant increase in public funding of childcare services, but starting from a very low base. Despite public funding, childcare services continue to be delivered by the private sector at high cost to households. Universal publicly-funded quality social services need to be in place that ensure adequate levels of access to both social care and healthcare, based on statutory rights.

At an EU level, more complex measures of social change are needed than GNP and GDP to address deep-rooted gender inequalities. There is an imperative to move from household data to individualised measures of income and wealth, to ensure both gender equality and the inclusion of minorities that are excluded under current systems. Gender disaggregated data on care (including unpaid care), poverty and wealth are needed.

Social investment in the labour-intensive care economy is critical across the EU to address gender inequality, to include Barcelona-type targets for the provision of long-term care- such investment should be viewed as part of green agenda of climate action. There needs to be a focus on minimum levels of reproductive health across the EU, homelessness and housing needs to be placed centrally on the EU gender equality agenda, and migrant integration needs to be part of gender equality strategies. A socially just and feminist transition needs to be the reference point for the EU Gender Equality strategy into the future.

In Belgium...

There is an absence of government at the federal level and the political priority is primarily focused on the budget and reducing the public deficit. Income is key when it comes to resources.

Income inequalities experienced by women increase as one moves from a focus on the overall wage. Fringe benefits favour men. Social transfers are higher for men. Individualisation of social rights is not complete, so while the same amount might be paid, women don't secure the same amount.

The wage gap is narrowing, with strong legislation and in-depth studies on classification of functions assisting. However, controls to underpin this legislation are inadequate and need investment. Part-time work which mainly involves women is a significant cause of the gross wage gap. Part-time work has stopped growing and full time work is increasing. The Pay Transparency Directive could lead to improvements, but there is a concern as to how possible it will be to change Belgian law to comply with the Directive.

Retirement places women at risk of poverty, due to their predominance in part-time work and given the system is based on the full-time worker. The pension gap has increased slightly, in particular the complementary pension.

There is a need to define the employment rate in terms of equivalent full-time rate in order for real comparisons to be made. There is a need to reconsider the pension system in terms of a universal payment. Poverty needs to be measured in individual terms, not in household terms as if resources were shared equally within the family. There is gender bias in the building of statistics which needs addressing.

In Greece...

There is a significant difference in employment outcomes for women in Greece, with their employment rate being the second lowest in the EU and with the highest gender employment gap in the EU. However, women's employment rate is increasing and is at an historically high level. Still, women have low levels of economic independence, and there is a significant gender pension coverage gap in favour of men.

Women are outperforming men in tertiary education. However, this is not translating into the labour market, where a male-breadwinner model still dominates and there is limited application of work-life balance policies.

There is a bias in the way poverty is measured, with the assumption that household resources are equally distributed. There are higher levels of poverty evident among single women than among single men.

There is a need to support the activation of women into the labour market, to release their potential and achieve equality alongside economic gains. Policies for gender equality need to present gender equality as a tool for progressing other societal ambitions.

2.4 Recognition

Recognition focuses attention on the cultural domain for equality and equality in how difference is recognised in terms of the diversity of women and in terms of needs specific to women. This is a field where equality is compromised by an inadequate focus on intersectionality and by a failure to respond to needs specific to women in terms of such as reproductive rights and healthcare and care work and the unequal sharing of caring responsibilities.

Recognition was examined by: Claudia Sorger, SAAGE Expert, Austria; Anita Nyberg, SAAGE Expert, Sweden; and Boglárka Herka, SAAGE Expert, Hungary.

In Austria...

There is little attention given to women with disabilities and they are seldom a focus for action on gender equality and the disability rights agenda. Women with disabilities are not adequately addressed in the data and can suffer an invisibility.

Participation by people with disabilities on the labour market is still low, and it is lower for women with disabilities than for men with disabilities. Women with disabilities can often withdraw from or not enter the labour market. Part-time work is important for women with disabilities but it can put them at a disadvantage in relation to losing receipt of social transfers. Obligations on employers to employ people with disabilities are ignored as they prefer to pay the fines involved. Women with disabilities face more discrimination than men in the labour market. The situation in the labour market is also difficult for women

who have children with disabilities which often leads to the loss of jobs and to de-qualification. Women with disabilities are at high risk of poverty, can lack independence, and suffer exclusion as a result. There is inadequate implementation of inclusive school requirements of the UNCRPD. Specific training opportunities and guidance counselling can reflect gender stereotyping. Further, the lack of accessible childcare for children with disabilities has a negative impact on their mothers' employment. The national action plan on disability did raise awareness of women with disabilities and advanced studies, events, and publications and action through the work of organisations of women with disabilities. However, the focus on women with disabilities has not translated into many specific measures. Comprehensive data is required to inform policies for an inclusive labour market and inclusive schools. Women with disabilities need access to gainful employment, and real opportunities with wages instead of receiving pocket money in workshops. Investment is required in labour market services to achieve this. Targeted measures for women with disabilities are required.

In Sweden...

Foreign-born (migrant) women have a lower employment rate than Swedish-born women, and the gender gap for foreign born women is much higher than for Swedish-born. Support for establishment in working life for foreign-born people, differs depending on the reason for residence in Sweden. People with refugee status and their relatives get most support.

Women coming to Sweden from non-EU countries as relatives of a person who is a Swedish citizen or who has a permanent residence permit, face a high level of risk of exclusion and don't get the same support as refugees. A relatively large group of these women are outside the labour market, outside of the education system, and face language barriers. Often have children shortly after arriving in Sweden, and go on parental leave which can derail their integration.

It is important that these women are given opportunities in terms of language development and of making contacts. Under an agreement between the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and national government, an open pre-school initiative has been put in place, with a low threshold for participation, to support language learning, parents to meet, and integration as well as to increase children's participation in regular pre-school. Women and children make positive progress from this provision.

Young Swedish-born women with two foreign-born parents have a positive take up of university studies, and the next generation is clearly taking advantage of such possibilities. The open pre-school initiative is an important recognition of needs specific to foreign-born women. These women can make gains in a context of strong gender equality measures put in place in Sweden a long time ago. Current policy directions are, however, not promising.

In Hungary...

Looking to needs specific to women requires a focus on gender-based violence. The Hungarian government refuses to ratify the Istanbul Convention stating that the concept of gender is unacceptable. The national strategy on gender equality had no focus on gender-based violence and was critiqued by civil society. It took EU pressure to get it included, but this did not reflect a change in the lack of commitment. While the number of victim support centres has increased, they do not specifically cater for victims of domestic and intimate partner violence.

Looking to the heterogeneity of women, the Government has not recognised the specific needs of women migrants among the recent refugees from Ukraine, and they face difficulties in access to contraception and abortion due to lack of information and care. There has been a recent modification to the criteria for access to accommodation for Ukrainian refugees, putting housing at risk for refugees, including pregnant women and mothers with young children. Those unable to work or afford accommodation, and whose request for special consideration was denied, have been forced to return to Ukraine or seek refuge in other countries, and in many cases this also resulted in family separations.

Roma women need to be a particular focus, with low educational levels, and over-representation in public works programmes. There is a need for labour market programmes targeting Roma women. Current

programmes available to Roma women primarily focus on areas related to care work, carrying a risk of job segregation. There is no intersectional approach to foster the advancement of Roma girls in areas such as higher education.

There is no recognition for women who are not part of a heteronormative family. Unmarried women, lone parents, and same-sex couples are discriminated against and disadvantaged, when it comes to family policy. Some benefits introduced in recent years (e.g., childbirth incentive loans, loans for families with children to buy a home) are tied to heterosexual marriage. Lone parents, typically mothers, face double disadvantages: they cannot access marriage-based loans and are less likely to fully benefit from income-based tax credits due to their lower incomes compared to men and two-parent families.

3. LOOKING AHEAD – EUROPEAN UNION ORIENTATION

3.1 Presentations

Addressing Innovation

Presentation by Alena Krizkova, SAAGE Expert, Czech Republic

Innovation and entrepreneurship are gendered phenomena. The focus is often on technology rather than on real-life challenges. There is a gender gap in favour of men, particularly in the number of entrepreneurs with employees. More female role models are needed. There is a lack of intersectional data.

Qualitative research undertaken in the Gender Innovation Living Lab (GILL) project across ten countries, identified barriers to gender equality in entrepreneurship and innovation, of: culture in gendered norms, male bias, stereotypes; socialisation of women; horizontal and vertical segregation in education and the labour market; lack of work-life balance policies and unequal division of work in the home; lack of gender sensitivity; and limited supports for women. Opportunities and tools for gender equality in entrepreneurship and innovation were noted in: support systems for women in digital skills and financial resources; promotion of inclusion through quotas in politics and the economy, and of gender diversity in research teams and content; work-life balance standards; redefining innovation; and cultural change.

Three fixes are usefully identified in the Gendered Innovations project, of Stanford University and the EU:

- Fix the numbers by increasing participation of women;
- Fix the institutions by structural change in organisations, through such as work-life balance policies, gender quotas; and gender equality plans; and
- Fix the knowledge by integrating sex, gender and intersectional analysis in research, through such as a gender dimension in research evaluation, gender disaggregated data, and gender sensitive analysis.

The GILL research pointed to a further fix, to fix the culture by addressing beliefs, norms, expectations and practices in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Funding is required for women entrepreneurs to start up and survive. Further research and research funding is needed, with those applying for funding presenting gender action plans which are reviewed and monitored as they are implemented. Guidance and steps are needed to include minoritised and disadvantaged groups in the development of data and research, and to enhance data collection on intersectional discrimination. This intersectional focus should be a feature of funding and policy frameworks.

Addressing Gender-Based Violence

Presentation by Giovanna Vingelli, SAAGE Expert, Italy

The Directive on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence is a landmark step in providing a single framework and common rules in the European Union to effectively address violence against women. It has innovative elements, and is holistic in its compass. There are critical points raised in relation to the Directive that require follow-up and further action and there is the challenge of implementation.

Gaps in the Directive that remain to be addressed, include the lack of coverage of some forms of violence such as intersex genital mutilation and forced sterilisation. In addition, the dimension of economic violence needs to be further explored and mainstreamed into legislation, collective bargaining strategies and social dialogue initiatives. Disagreement over the definition of rape, meant that the definition of rape and the law on rape remain largely at the discretion of Member States.

In seeking to ensure needs are met regardless of resident status, the protection of personal data of migrant women is not addressed in the Directive and rules on this need to be harmonised if migrant women are not to be deterred from reporting. Overall, a focus on gender is important to ensure an approach that is inclusive of sexual minorities and non-binary people. A consensus on the concept of gender-based violence being understood in a more inclusive way is needed.

In progressing implementation of the Directive, the European Commission needs to provide Member States with guidance and training on meeting their obligations. Implementation of the Directive requires a multi-agency and multilevel implementation framework at Member State level. Mechanisms are required for the coordination of all stakeholders, including through advisory bodies. Data and statistics are crucial to have an evidence base for policy and there is a need for regular Member State surveys to a common methodology. Recent positive developments in this area need to be further expanded covering all Member States.

Clear guidelines should be provided for training on the issue for relevant professionals, namely police and court officials, lawyers, judges and prosecutors, health professionals and media professionals. Member States should be supported to: adopt the comprehensive prevention approach outlined in the Directive in a manner that is tailored to the local context and recognises civil society as an actor, in particular primary prevention initiatives; provide mandatory comprehensive sexuality education that includes consent education and challenges harmful gender norms and stereotypes; and develop measures to prevent and combat all relevant forms of gender-based violence in the world of work.

Gender-based violence cannot be addressed as a stand-alone issue. Gender-based violence is a cause of and a consequence of gender inequality. As such, in the next period, the European Commission needs to be concerned with ensuring effective gender mainstreaming; ensuring proper implementation and evaluation of recent legislation, embracing intersectionality; promoting an international alliance to counter the gender backlash; and undertaking awareness-raising campaigns.

Implementation is key with action required to translate legislation into action plans and action plans into real equality. Sufficient, predictable and sustainable resources need to be invested in this work.

Addressing Labour Market Participation and Work-Life Balance

Presentation by Anna Amilon, SAAGE Expert, Denmark

Care work and paid work are inter-related. Inequality in one domain leads to inequality in the other. Both domains must be considered to advance work life balance and gender equality. High-quality low-cost public care is a prerequisite for high female labour force participation and, hence, for gender equality.

The work-life balance Directive is now implemented in all Member States with improvements in leave arrangements and right to request flexible working. This reflects necessary progress, but it is women who take career breaks, parental leave, and part-time employment with spillover effects on their labour market position, relation to pay and progression, and on their labour market choices, moving into jobs with limited career progression and wage growth.

There are potential threats to such progress, in relation to the financing of long-term care and childcare. Childcare is not available for all in many Member States. The situation is worse in relation to long-term care, where the number of long-term care workers per 100 people aged 65+ varies greatly across the Member States, and this number is decreasing. It is mainly women who step in to fill these gaps.

There is a need to improve availability of high-quality low-cost childcare and long-term-care. More equal

sharing of caring responsibilities between women and men is required. More parental leave needs to be afforded to and taken up by fathers. However, there is an issue as to whether families can afford this, with fathers' earnings surpassing mothers' earnings. More men need to work in the caring professions, and approaches to secure this need to be found.

3.2 Table Debates

The gender backlash requires specific and strategic attention. Issues of disinformation, undermining of the values of the EU, and polarisation need to be addressed. In this, there is a challenge to engage and prioritise the values of the EU, put more focus on gender equality, and address the cultural sphere to secure a culture positive to gender equality. Stereotypes need to be combatted, with a focus on educators and on family as a source. Men need to see liberation in gender equality. Gender equality needs to be seen as improving economic performance.

Turning policy into real change requires specific attention. There is a need to look beyond just have a gender equality action plan, to examine what commitments are in it, and to assess monitoring arrangements so as to track implementation. Gender mainstreaming needs to be a prominent feature in this. Impact needs to improve and this requires more effective implementation.

Data gathering needs to be individualised, intersectional and harmonised across the Member States. More information on migrant women and their situation on the labour market is needed to inform new action on their situation. Gender disaggregated data on care (including unpaid care), poverty and wealth are needed. There is an imperative to move from household data to individualised measures of income and wealth.

A care crisis needs to be avoided. Quality of work in the care sector needs to be addressed if it is to offer decent work and retain staff. Long-term care is a particularly important problem to solve. Targets akin to the Barcelona style targets need to be set and reported on, alongside targets for affordability, availability, and quality, which could be viewed as part of the wider green agenda on climate action. Funding for long-term care needs to be secured, with arguments developed for this based on savings in expensive health services and gains to the economy from enabling women carers' participation.

The terminology of work life balance needs review as there is too much emphasis on work and a greater focus on life is needed. Care of children leave that is equal and non-transferable between the mother and the father might serve better than the focus on parental, paternity and maternity leaves. Campaigns are needed to drive attitudinal change to care among men. The issue of compensation levels in parental leave needs to be addressed, which could be a focus of strategic litigation.

Gendered poverty issues need to be a focus for action. Financial independence of women needs to be a focus. The focus on the household obscures that certain women have no access to finance even if the household is not poor. Specific funding is required for women's entrepreneurship. More visibility is needed for women role models as entrepreneurs, making it on their own.