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SCRATCHING THE SURFACE:

Assessing implementation of gender equality standards in the EU Accession process for the Western Balkans.



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Author: Giulia Pasquinelli

Reference group: Ristin Thomasson, Stina Magnuson Buur, Voskre Naumoska Ilieva,

Design and layout: Kontura

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OVERVIEW OF EU ACCESSION IN THE WESTERN BALKAN REGION

Accession to the EU is disciplined by Article 49¹ of the EU treaties. Countries wishing to apply for membership must respect and promote the EU's fundamental values, which are set out in Article 2.² These include respect for democracy, rule of law and human rights, as well as the protection of minorities. More specific criteria were established at the European Council meeting in Copenhagen in 1993.³ The so-called Copenhagen criteria⁴ state that countries must have stable, functioning democratic institutions, which can ensure the protection of the EU's fundamental values. They must also have functioning market economies, with the ability to withstand competition in the single market. Finally, they must be able to implement the EU *Acquis communautaire* (the full body of EU laws) and be able to take on the administrative demands of membership.

With the adoption of the revised methodology for EU Accession "[Enhancing the Accession process: A Credible EU Perspective for the Western Balkans](#)" proposed by the European Commission in February 2020 and officially endorsed by the EU Member States in the March 2 2020 [Council Conclusions](#), a greater focus has been placed on fundamental reforms, including the rule of law and functioning of democratic institutions, and a clustering of Chapters (therefore criteria) is meant to ensure that these "heavy" Chapters are opened first and closed last. Also, the European Commission committed to make greater use of the conditionality principle, increasing rewards for progress and sanctions for lack of progress and backsliding, and to clearly spell out conditions and benchmarks in the Country Reports. Finally, the revised methodology was meant to provide for greater transparency and inclusivity of the process.

In 2022, the countries in the Western Balkans are at different stages in the Accession process. Montenegro, which has been holding candidate status since 2010, needs to fulfil the interim benchmarks set under Chapter 23 and 24, in particular in the areas of freedom of expression, media freedom, fight against corruption and organised crime, and credibility of the judiciary. In order to achieve this, it needs political stability, something that has been missing in recent years.

Serbia, which has been holding candidate status since 2012, together with Montenegro is at a more advanced status in the negotiations. However, democratic backsliding, government inaction on key reforms and the lack of alignment to the EU's foreign and security policy positions, namely on sanctions against Russia, are currently holding Serbia back, preventing any meaningful progress in the path towards EU membership. The Serbian government will need to show it is unequivocally committed to the EU strategic direction and reform path, including by moving forward on reforms and addressing shortcomings in the judiciary and fight against organised crime, freedom of the media, freedom of assembly, domestic handling of war crimes and stopping glorification of war criminals.


Albania and North Macedonia were granted candidate status in 2014 and 2005

1 [EU Treaties](#)

2 [Ibid.](#)

3 <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21225/72921.pdf>

4 https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/glossary/accesion-criteria_en



respectively, but some Member States blocked the opening of accession negotiations until the European Council in March 2020 finally decided to give the green light. The draft negotiating frameworks were later presented to the EU Member States, yet progress was obstructed by Bulgaria due to a bilateral dispute with North Macedonia over historical issues. On 24th June 2022, lawmakers in Sofia lifted the veto on EU membership talks for North Macedonia and on 18th July, with the Council's approval of the negotiating framework for North Macedonia, the EU started the opening phase of accession negotiations with both countries. As part of the deal reached with the EU, North Macedonia will need to amend its Constitution to include Bulgarians among the building nations. Albania is expected to start negotiations immediately. Both countries need to intensify efforts in the areas of rule of law, fight against corruption and organised crime.

In October 2022, the EC recommended granting Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) candidate status, provided there is progress on the 14 key priorities established in the EU Opinion. BiH submitted its application in February 2016, yet political instability and inability of the ruling parties to agree on a common way forward hampered the country's progress on key reforms. The European Commission's (EC's) decision after years of stalemate comes more as a reward for citizens who deserve a better future than as a recognition of any actual progress on the ground. Meeting the key conditions established by the EC will be the litmus test to ascertain whether political elites are committed to becoming part of the EU family.

For Kosovo* the European path is still hampered by the lack of recognition as a state by five EU Member States⁵ and ongoing dispute with Serbia with which normalization of relations is still looming in the distance. The country needs to intensify efforts to strengthen democracy, public administration, rule of law and to fight corruption. While the country has fulfilled the conditions for visa liberalisation, the decision is still pending in the Council, contributing to frustration and disenchantment of Kosovo citizens.

The EU Accession process for Western Balkan countries has been painstakingly slow in recent years and while the EU has been affected by the "accession fatigue", in the region "reform fatigue" and frustration have grown exponentially. In 2022, according to the Balkan Barometer⁶, 60% of citizens in the Western Balkan countries are supporting EU membership but for the first time there was a break in a steady growth and the percentage is down by 2 points from 2021. Only 22% of citizens think that EU integration will happen by 2025 (down from 28% in 2019) and 67% of young people claim that they would leave the region for work or study. The EU should not underestimate the growing dissatisfaction of citizens in the Western Balkan countries vis-à-vis the EU, particularly in those countries where the fulfilment of criteria has not resulted in concrete steps forward (see Albania and North Macedonia for the start of accession talks and Kosovo for Visa liberalization).

5 Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Spain, Slovakia.

6 [Balkan Barometer 2022](#), Regional Cooperation Council (2022).

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Gender equality in the EU Accession process

The main strategy used by the EU to achieve gender equality through policy-making and programming is, since the 1990s, that of gender-mainstreaming. A 1996 European Commission Communication states:

“Gender mainstreaming involves not restricting efforts to promote equality to the implementation of specific measures to help women, but mobilizing all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality by actively and openly taking into account at the planning stage their possible effects on the respective situation of men and women (gender perspective). This means systematically examining measures and policies and taking into account such possible effects when defining and implementing them.”⁷

The principle of gender mainstreaming entails the recognition of the impact of gender on every aspect of political and economic life.⁸ Gender mainstreaming principles were later included in the TEU article 2, 3 and 13 with the revisions introduced by the Treaty of Amsterdam. Equality between men and women became thus one of the objectives of European integration.⁹

Gender equality is also a key component of the Accession process, part of the fundamental rights agenda included in Chapter 23 of the negotiating frameworks and now among the Chapters opened first and closed last according to the new methodology for the EU Accession process proposed in February 2020 and adopted in March 2020 by the EU Member States. Western Balkan countries are meant to align their legislation to the EU *Acquis communautaire* on gender equality and ensure implementation thereof.

In addition, the EU adopted Gender Action Plans I and II for external relations, the main policy frameworks articulating EU’s support to gender equality and women’s empowerment in partner countries, which also apply to the Accession countries, complementing provisions that are already part of the Accession process and methodology. In particular, the GAP III, building on the commitments of GAP I and II, confirms the “three-pronged approach” to gender equality based on gender-mainstreaming, the use of political dialogue and the adoption of specific actions targeting gender equality. GAP III confirmed the objective of 85% of all new Actions to have gender as a main objective (gender marker 1) and added the objective of 5% of all new Actions to have gender as a principal objective (gender marker 2)¹⁰. In addition, the GAP III introduced the Country Level Implementation Plans (CLIPs), which adopted by the EU Delegations/EU Office (EUD/Os) are meant to translate overall policy commitments into context-specific objectives. Moreover, the use of gender analysis is meant to inform the CLIPs, sector specific analysis, policy-specific analysis, the Gender Country Profiles and Foreign Policy Instruments actions.

⁷ [Incorporating Equal Opportunities for Men and Women into All Community Policies and Activities](#), European Commission (1996).

⁸ Gender, Mainstreaming and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Roberta Guerrina (2003).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ The use of gender markers is based on the OECD/DAC methodology [Handbook of the OECD/DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker](#), OECD (2016).

All in all, the commitments are now very clear and concrete, the question is rather whether the EU, as well as candidate and potential candidate countries, are well equipped to meet those commitments. This report examines the extent to which the EU and governments of Western Balkan countries are fulfilling their obligations in relation to gender equality, as provided for in the Treaties and in the relevant EU policies.

Background and methodology

This report was produced by the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation as a partner of the EQUAPRO Coalition, led by Reactor – Research in Action (North Macedonia) and implemented with the Albanian Women’s Empowerment Network (AWEN) (Albania), Kosovo Women’s Network (Kosovo), the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (Sweden), Rights for All (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Women’s Rights Center (Montenegro). The Coalition was supported by the Action “Furthering Gender Equality through the EU Accession Process”, funded by the EU and Sida, Sweden, which aims to enhance and broaden existing regional cooperation in the Western Balkans, to strengthen participatory democracies and to bring about an inclusive and gender-transformative accession process.

In order to inform and gender-mainstream the EU Accession process and successfully undertake evidence-based advocacy on the gender aspects in the EU Accession process at national, regional and EU level, it is necessary to monitor and report on the key EU-related processes and political dialogues in the countries where the Action is implemented, and in the region as a whole. For this purpose, the EQUAPRO Coalition, together with an external expert, developed a comprehensive methodology for monitoring and reporting on areas relevant to the EU Accession process from a gender perspective¹¹.

The monitoring framework which includes 50 bespoke indicators under 10 criteria, including 45 national and 5 regional indicators, aims to monitor the inclusion of a gender perspective and/or gender expertise in: the EC Country Reports; the Stabilisation and Association Committee and Sub-Committee meetings; the EU’s strategic engagement at country-level; the programming of the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) and the work of the National IPA Coordinators (NIPACs); the state statistical offices and collection and publication of sex-disaggregated data and statistics; the work of government bodies mandated to lead the process of negotiation for EU Accession; the national transposition of the EU *acquis communautaire* and political dialogues on accession processes; and the extent to which women’s civil society organisations are consulted and involved in different processes related to EU Accession.

The monitoring framework draws from the revised methodology for the EU Accession process included in the Communication “[Enhancing the Accession process: A Credible EU Perspective for the Western Balkans](#)” published by the European Commission in February 2020 and officially endorsed by the EU Member States in the March 2 2020

¹¹ The full methodology is available in Annex 1.

[Council Conclusions](#) and from the Joint Communication on the new [Gender Action Plan III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in External Action](#) accompanied by [Objectives and Indicators](#) (GAP III). GAP III calls for a more strategic EU approach to gender equality in partner countries tailored to the context and based on a CLIP to be developed together with national stakeholders, including gender equality bodies, ministries and civil society.

Last but not least, the monitoring framework also looks at how bilateral funding provided by the EU to candidate and prospective candidate countries in the Western Balkans include gender equality objectives. To do so, it draws from the [regulation for the Instrument for Pre-Accession](#) (IPA) III and the Strategic Responses developed by the individual countries.

The same monitoring framework was applied in each country to produce national monitoring reports covering the period from January to December 2021. The present regional report aims to complement the national reports by collating information and data from the six national reports and identifying main challenges and opportunities for progress at regional level. It also aims to support the European Commission, EUD/Os and governments with lessons learnt and specific recommendations on how to better deliver on gender equality commitments. The next iteration of the regional report will be produced in 2023.

Rating system

The following rating system was used for the qualitative indicators.

Rating	Definitions
Not Applicable	The indicator does not apply to the specific context
Cannot be concluded	Information and data are insufficient to draw a conclusion and / or data is not made available to the public
Not at all	Does not meet any requirement. Poor performance
Minimally	Meets a few requirements. Performance is still below average
Moderately	Meets some requirements. Performance is acceptable but there is room for improvement
Extensively	Meets most of the requirements. Performance is above average
Fully	Meets all of the requirements. Performance is excellent

Data sources

For the national reports, on which the regional report is based, both primary and secondary data sources were used. Primary data sources included interviews with key informants in the EUD/Os, national administrations and ministries; focus groups with women’s civil society organisations (WCSOs) in the respective countries and data requests to key actors, including EUD/Os. Secondary data sources included websites

(of the EC, EUD/Os, national governments' and other official webpages) and existing official EU and government's publications and reports obtained following email requests. Triangulation was used to ensure, to the extent possible, the accuracy of the data. The final drafts of the national reports were shared with the national bodies for EU integration, national gender equality machineries and EUD/Os to check the accuracy of the data collected and analysis.

The rating of each indicator is assigned based on the data collected and analysis carried out by the authors of the national reports. Some degree of subjectivity in the selection of the rating for the qualitative indicators may exist, based on the author's perspective.

FINDINGS

Criterion A. Country Reports are gender mainstreamed

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB	Average
1. Number of times gender is mentioned in the Country Report ¹²	28	17	28	19	22	14	21,3
2. Number of times women/girls are mentioned in the Country Report	44	30	57	42	34	32	39,8
3. Number of times boys/men are mentioned in the Country Report	3	6	13	9	4	3	6,3
4. % of Chapters gender-mainstreamed	15%	6,1%	50%	6,06%	6,06%	3%	14,35%
5. Number of official recommendations on gender equality included in the Country Report	1	0	3	3	2	1	1,6
6. Number of other recommendations with a gender perspective included in the narrative of Chapters	5	4	44	5	9	3	11,6

¹² This report refers to the 2021 Country Reports.

7. Extent to which Country Report uses sufficiently sex-disaggregated data	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately	Minimally	Moderately
8. Extent to which issues recommended by women's organisations are included in the Country Report, based on your knowledge	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately	Extensively	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately

Data collected from the 2021 Country Reports for the Western Balkans show that much remains to be done to ensure full gender-mainstreaming of the reports. **The average percentage of Chapters gender-mainstreamed¹³ does not reach 15%, indicating that the EU's approach is to gender-mainstream only a few chapters**, usually the ones on political criteria, chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental rights), to a more limited extent Chapter 24 (Justice, freedom and security) as well as chapter 19 (Social Policy and Employment). Beyond numbers, an accurate analysis of the reports shows that even in these chapters only certain sections include a gender perspective and/or references to the situation of women and girls. **Men are considered the default category and the specific needs of men and boys are rarely explicitly mentioned or fleshed out, as indicated by the numbers in the table.** Only the Kosovo Country Report stands out for the gender mainstreaming of 50% of its chapters.

The number of official recommendations (in the grey boxes) specifically related to gender equality issues in the Country Reports ranges from 0 (BiH) to 3 (Kosovo and Montenegro). Unofficial recommendations included in the narrative vary from 3 (Serbia) to 44 (Kosovo) showing a considerable disparity between countries. Most Country Reports are considered to use sex-disaggregated data to a moderate extent (4 out of 6) and, similarly, most reports include the recommendations and inputs by women's civil society organisations (WCSOs) to a moderate extent (5 out of 6).

Overall, the national WCSOs' reports indicate that while gender-mainstreaming of Country Reports has improved overtime, **stronger language and more action-oriented official recommendations are needed in relation to gender equality.** The Country Reports could benefit from including additional input from a variety of WCSOs, representing the specific needs of women and men with different abilities, ethnicity, age, and geographic differences, ensuring an intersectional approach.

¹³ A gender mainstreaming approach requires each Chapter to include specific reference to the situation and needs of women and girls, men and boys in a particular sector/domain or/and specific gender aspects emerging from sector-analyses. Sex-disaggregated data and statistics also need to be included and, ideally, an analysis of key barriers preventing progress in a specific sector/domain such as, for example, lack of housing, land and property rights, access to economic rights.

Criterion B Stabilisation and Association Committee meetings include gender issues

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB
9. % of SAA Committee meetings with gender equality issues on the agenda	Cannot be concluded	0%	50%	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded
10. % of Sub-Committee meetings with gender equality issues on the agenda	Cannot be concluded	16,6%	33%	Cannot be concluded	16%	Cannot be concluded
11. Extent to which women's organisations were consulted by the EU ahead of the sub-committee meetings	Not at all	Not at all	Moderately	Moderately	Minimally	N/A
12. Extent to which SAA committee and sub-committee meetings conclusions attend to gender equality issues	Cannot be concluded	Not at all	50% (SAA) 33% (SAA SC)	Cannot be concluded	Minimally	N/A

Information under this criterion was often not publicly available as neither agendas nor conclusions from the Stabilisation and Association Committee and Sub-Committees meetings are regularly published by the EU or by the relevant governments in the six Western Balkan countries in any single location. Information could be retrieved in some cases from the list of documents shared with the Council Working group on Accession and Enlargement Negotiations (COELA) or through explicit requests via email addressed at the EUD/Os and competent ministries.

For most indicators under this criterion, the data sample collected is insufficient to allow for any meaningful regional analysis.

On the extent to which WCSOs were consulted by the EU ahead of SAA SC meetings, the rating ranges from not at all to moderately. Under this indicator, **the good practice of Kosovo can be highlighted, where both the EU Office and the government organise consultations with CSOs prior to some, albeit not all, SAA and SAA SC meetings, sharing the agenda points beforehand.** Further, the EU Office shared feedback during the consultation or afterwards, in relation to recommendations made by CSOs.

All in all, the failure to publish agendas and conclusions of SAA and SC meetings suggests limited transparency of the process in most countries and hinders accountability of the governments responsible for implementing recommendations. The example of Kosovo in ensuring greater transparency and inclusivity of the process can be replicated in other countries.

Criterion C EU Strategic Engagement on Gender Equality at Country-level is in place

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB
13. CLIPs for GAP III agreed and transmitted to HQ (Brussels) (indicator 5.1 GAP III)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
14. Gender Country Profile conducted / updated	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
15. Fully-fledged gender analysis conducted / updated	Cannot be concluded	No	Yes	No	No	No
16. Number of sector-specific gender analyses for the priority areas under the programming cycle 2021-2027 developed and transmitted to HQ (Brussels) (indicator 5.2)	0	0	0	1	0	1

17. Extent to which EU Delegation engages in dialogue on gender equality with governments, national gender equality mechanisms, parliaments and other institutional actors (indicator 7.1)	Extensively	Moderately	Moderately	Extensively	Moderately	Moderately
18. Extent to which EU Delegation consulted civil society including WCSOs for the development of the CLIP	Fully	Moderately	Fully	Extensively	Fully	Moderately
19. Extent to which EU Delegation engages in dialogue on gender equality with civil society including WCSOs (indicator 7.2)	Minimally	Moderately	Moderately	Extensively	Moderately	Minimally
20. Extent to which EU Delegation engages in dialogue with civil society on women, peace and security issues in partner countries (indicator 7.2)	Moderately	Moderately	Minimally	Not at all	Moderately	Minimally

Significant results were achieved under this criterion, primarily related to the implementation of GAP III at country level. **Country-level Implementation Plans (CLIPs) and Gender Country Profiles (GCPs) are in place in all Western Balkan countries** (with the exception of North Macedonia for the GCP) showing commitment by EUD/Os in the region to implement the GAP III provisions. CLIPs constitute the basis for an EU engagement on gender equality issues tailored to the specific context and the needs of women and girls.

According to the information collected, in most countries EUD/Os consulted WCSOs to a large extent for the development of the CLIP. On this indicator, Albania and Kosovo

stand out as WCSOs led the consultation processes with other CSOs in close cooperation with the EUD/Os. **This is a best practice that could be replicated in other countries to ensure pro-active engagement of WCSOs.** On the future implementation of the CLIPs, WCSOs indicated that there should be further clarity about their role and the envisaged cooperation between WCSOs and EUD/Os, since many CLIPs fail to address this aspect. The Kosovo CLIP provides a best practice example in that it clearly articulates modalities of cooperation between the EUO and WCSOs in the implementation phase.

Four out of six countries indicated that EUD/Os engage in dialogue with government, gender equality machinery, parliament and other institutional actors moderately, while two countries indicated dialogue takes place extensively. While dialogue between the EU and WCSOs on gender equality varies considerably from country to country (from minimally to extensively), the narrative explanations in support of the scores indicate that the dialogue tends to focus more on programming than policy issues and it does not take place on a regular basis. **WCSOs in the national reports suggest that regular and structured dialogue between WCSOs and EUD/Os on priority policy issues is crucial both for the implementation of GAP III and for the EU Accession process.**

Dialogue between EUD/Os and WCSOs on women, peace and security issues (WPS) was rated on average as minimal. This is of particular concern given the post-conflict status of the region, the renewed commitments to the WPS agenda in GAP III and the fact that the EU has a clear leverage in supporting reconciliation and normalization of relations among countries in the region, including through the EU-facilitated Kosovo-Serbia dialogue.

Criterion D EU mainstreams gender in all actions and targeted actions

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB	Average
21. Number and % of new actions ¹⁴ that are gender responsive / targeted (GM1 + GM2) at country level (indicator 1.1 GAP III)	5 / 5 100%	4 / 9 44,4%	6 / 6 100%	5 / 5 100 %	4 / 6 67%	1/4 25%	72,73%
22. Number and % of new gender targeted action (GM2) implemented from national allocation (indicator 1.2 GAP III)	0	1	0	0	0	0	

¹⁴ Based on guidance from the EC, this criterion refers to Action Documents and not individual contracts.

23. Total funding in support of gender equality at country level (GM1 + GM2) (indicator 1.3 GAP III)	64 million EUR	33 million EUR	63,96 million EUR	33,51 million EUR	N/A	12 million EUR	
24. Amount of funding directed towards women's organisations and movements at country level (indicator 1.4 GAP III)	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	488,300 EUR	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	
25. % of new actions supporting public finance management reforms that include a gender budgeting component (indicator 3.1 GAP III)	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	100%	N/A	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	

Data collected under indicator 21 shows that on average 72,7 % of the new actions is gender-responsive (e.g. having gender as a significant (GM1) or principal (GM2) objective according to the OECD/DAC criteria)¹⁵. However, an analysis of the Action Documents showed that, in many cases, these were marked incorrectly and that they did not fulfil the minimum OECD/DAC criteria for the GM1 (e.g. gender analysis conducted, findings from gender analysis have informed the design of the Action, presence of at least 1 gender equality objective backed by 1 gender-specific indicator; data and indicators disaggregated by sex; commitments to monitor and report on gender equality results).

As most of the Actions have been marked incorrectly, the total amount of funding in support of gender equality in each country, deriving from the total sum of GM1 and GM2 Action Documents in each country, cannot be considered a reliable figure. Even if the Actions Documents had been marked correctly, the system does not account for the fact that in a GM1 Action, where gender equality is a significant but not a principal objective of the action, only a proportion of its funding is directed to gender equality. The EU does not yet have a system for an accurate tracking of the total funding in support of gender equality provided through external funding instruments.

Also, despite the inclusion of indicator 1.4 in GAP III, **the EU does not have a system to track the amount of funding contributing to gender equality allocated to women's organisations and movements in partner countries**, so this data is generally not available. In fact, the EU does not have a system to track the percentage of funding for gender equality to any beneficiary, be it the government of partner countries,

¹⁵ Handbook of the OECD/DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker, OECD (2016).

international entities such as the U.N., or international or national NGOs and grassroots organisations.

Only Bosnia Herzegovina reported having new GM2 Action Documents during 2021.

Criterion E The EU leads by example

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB
26. Number and % of women in senior and middle management positions in the EU Delegation/Office (indicator 10.1 GAP III)	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	7 (42%)	57%	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded
27. % of management trained on gender equality and GAP III in EU Delegation and CSDP mission (indicator 10.2)	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	100%	14% ¹⁶	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded
28. % of management trained on women, peace and security in EU Delegation and CSDP mission (indicator 10.2)	N/A	N/A	11%	Not at all	N/A	N/A
29. Number of Gender Adviser / Gender Focal Points in the EU Delegation and CSDP mission	1	3	14	2	1	1

Indicators under this criterion are derived from the GAP III section EU Leading by Example. However, for most countries the data was not provided by the EU Delegations. Only Kosovo and Montenegro could access some data through the EUD/O yet the sample is too small to allow for any meaningful analysis or comparison.

For indicator 29, it should be noted that **Gender Focal Points and Gender Advisers are usually double-hatted and are in charge of other portfolios in addition to gender, including human rights and relations with CSOs, limiting the time allocated to gender issues.** Also, there is no standard job description for Gender Focal Points and their responsibilities in relation to gender are often not specifically mentioned in their job descriptions, despite this being a requirement in GAP III.

¹⁶ One out of seven. Same source of information.

Criterion F Government adopts legislation in line with the EU Acquis Communautaire on gender equality and consults with women's organisations

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB
30. Extent to which gender equality is addressed in the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA)	Extensively	N/A	Extensively	Minimally	Minimally	Moderately
31. Extent to which key laws on gender equality and EU Accession are open for public consultation	Fully	Minimally	Fully	Fully	Moderately	Moderately
32. Extent to which inputs on Laws / amendments / policies by WCSOs in line with the EU Acquis on gender equality are taken on board	Extensively	Minimally	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately	Minimally
33. Extent to which new sectoral strategies are publicly available	Extensively	Fully	Fully	Fully	Fully	Fully
34. Extent to which new sectoral strategies mainstream gender equality	Minimally	Moderately	Moderately	Minimally	Moderately	Moderately
35. % of sector working groups (or the like) with WCSOs included/ represented	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	N/A	14%	25%	Cannot be concluded

The extent to which gender equality is included in the National Programmes for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) varies considerably, ranging from “extensively” in Kosovo to “minimally” in Montenegro. As BiH does not yet have an NPAA, the EC included its adoption among the 14 priorities for BiH to be granted candidate status.

In most countries, **laws and public policies to be adopted as part of the Accession process are generally made available for public consultations.** Methods and rules vary from country to country, but all countries now have online consultation platforms and methodologies which should ensure more transparent and potentially inclusive

processes. However, the introduction of more accessible platforms for consultations, often online, has not always contributed to making the process more meaningful and inclusive. **A best practice example was reported in Montenegro where the government publishes on its website reports from the public debates held with CSOs, including detailed explanations about the adopted or refused suggestions made by CSOs.**


New sectoral strategies appear to be in the majority of cases publicly available and developed on the basis of public consultations. However, the extent to which they mainstream gender equality appears to be limited (with scores ranging from minimally to moderately). In Montenegro public consultations were regularly conducted for adopting new sectoral strategies directly impacting women, including the *Strategy on the development of female entrepreneurship 2021-2024* and the *National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2025*. However, this does not apply across the board and strategies on issues that are not traditionally considered “women’s domains”, such as digital transformation, fail to include gender expertise and perspectives.

Each country decides the composition of the sector working groups set up with the purpose of EU integration. From the data collected for the report, three countries could not verify whether WCSOs are involved in the sector working groups (Albania BiH, and Serbia), in one (Kosovo) the working groups have not been set up yet, while in North Macedonia and Montenegro in 14% and 25% of working groups respectively WCSOs are included. The percentages suggest that CSOs’ participation is not uniform or formalised in all sector working groups, but according to the theme. Education, employment and social policy and health seem to be considered more relevant to WCSOs while agriculture, transport and energy seem not to be - excluding the participation of WCSOs from the relevant working groups.

Criterion G Government implements recommendations on gender equality included in the Country Report

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB
36. Extent to which recommendations on gender equality included in the Country Report have been implemented by the government/ institutions	Moderately	Minimally	Minimally	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately

The extent to which governments implemented in 2021 the recommendations included in the 2020 Country Reports for the Western Balkans ranges from minimally to moderately. Most countries have taken steps to meet the recommendations of the EC, but full implementation is yet to come.



In **Albania**, the government took steps to ensure adequate funding for the implementation of the dedicated strategy of the rights of persons with disabilities, adopted a new strategy on gender equality 2021-2030 and adopted the by-laws linked to the Law on Social Housing in response to the 2020 Country Report recommendation to improve institutional mechanisms for protecting children, protecting victims of domestic violence, promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, guaranteeing gender equality, and providing minimum health and social services, especially at the local level.

In **BiH**, limited progress was registered in relation to the 2020 Country Report's recommendation to harmonise maternity leave benefits and protection throughout the country. There has been some improvement in instituting maternity benefits for future mothers in the Federation of BiH, but lacking country-wide harmonization in this regard. Despite the lack of progress, the recommendation was removed from the 2021 Country Report.

In **Kosovo**, despite the EC's recommendation to strengthen the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality (LGE) and ensure proper functioning of the system of protection, prevention and adjudication of all forms of gender-based violence, some aspects of the LGE are poorly implemented, such as ensuring availability of sex-disaggregated data, gender equality at all levels of government and public administration, and gender responsive budgeting, for example. In relation to the recommendation to adopt and enforce the Law on Labour in line with relevant EU *acquis*, the needed amendments in line with the EU Work-Life Balance Directive, have not yet been completed and the law has not been adopted. In relation to other recommendations included in the narrative of the chapters, implementation has been minimal.

In **Montenegro**, the government adopted the *National Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2025* as well as the accompanying action documents. However, in relation to the recommendation to ensure a better and more systematic access to justice, complaint system and free legal aid for victims of crimes, including women and children victims of violence, much remains to be done. In particular, the relevant legislation including the Criminal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Law on Free Legal Aid and Law on Protection from Family Violence need to adopt adequate definitions of gender-based violence, including all forms of gender-based violence. In response to the recommendation to develop quality employment measures, the government adopted the Strategy for development of Women Entrepreneurship 2021-2024 and related action plans.

In **North Macedonia**, the government implemented one of the two official recommendations from the 2020 Country Report by adopting the new Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination and appointing the members of the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination. The other official recommendation regarding activation measures for long-term and low-skilled unemployed people, including women, persons with disabilities and Roma, remained the same in the 2021 Country Report indicating lack of progress in this regard. Other recommendations included in the narrative of the Chapters were implemented, for

example, the adoption of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in May 2021 and of the second National Action Plan for of North Macedonia for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 - Women, peace and security 2020-2025.

In **Serbia**, the government adopted a *National Strategy for Prevention and Combating Gender-based Violence* to address the EC's recommendation to ensure a more comprehensive response to violence against women, though the 2021 Country Report notes that definition of rape still has to be amended in the criminal code in order to comply with the Istanbul Convention.

Criterion H Programming of IPA III at National Level Prioritises Gender Equality

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB
37. Extent to which responsible government bodies consulted WCSOs for the development of the IPA III Strategic Response	Minimally	Cannot be concluded	Not at all	Moderately	Minimally	Not at all
38. Extent to which IPA III Strategic Response includes gender equality objectives	Not at all	Cannot be concluded	Cannot be concluded	Minimally	Moderately	Cannot be concluded
39. Extent to which Action Documents contain a gender perspective	Fully	Moderately	Extensively	Fully	Moderately	Minimally

Western Balkan governments were asked to prepare a Strategic Response to IPA III, to ensure consistency between the key EU areas of intervention and the priorities expressed by the beneficiary countries. In half of the countries, the Strategic Responses are not publicly accessible (BiH, Kosovo, Serbia). In Montenegro, a public debate on the IPA III Strategic response was organised in 2021, following a public call allowing CSOs to provide written input. In Albania, one consultation was organised by the IPA Coordinator on the role of CSOs in the IPA programming process. In North Macedonia, some CSOs were consulted in preparation for the Strategic Response, however opportunities were limited and not systematic.

Of the IPA III Strategic Responses accessed, North Macedonia's includes gender equality priorities under four different thematic priorities. Montenegro's prioritises gender equality to a minimal extent while Albanian's does not prioritise gender equality at all.

About the Action Documents more detailed information is included under criterion D.

Overall, findings from this criterion show that **the process of developing IPA III Strategic Responses at country level, with the exception of Montenegro where efforts were made to reach out widely to CSOs through a public consultation and debate, lacks transparency, is not based on a wide and inclusive consultation process and include gender equality priorities to a limited extent.** Of particular concern is the failure by the governments to publish these documents and to make them accessible, given the strategic importance they hold in setting priorities for EU funding designed to support Western Balkan countries in meeting the accession requirements.

Criterion I Sex-disaggregated data is collected by National Statistical Offices

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB
40. The Country has an updated Gender Equality Index (GEI) at national level ¹⁷	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
41. Whether National Statistical Offices publish a report with easily accessible sex-disaggregated data that is sufficient for the public's use (based on Women & Men publication)	Extensively	Extensively	Moderately	Moderately	Extensively	Moderately

In 2021, Gender Equality Indices had been published for Albania (2020), Montenegro (2019), North Macedonia (2019) and Serbia (2016, 2018, 2021). A partial Gender Equality Index is being developed for BiH (focusing on two domains) and Kosovo was still lacking one, though some domains reportedly are being established. These reports are helpful in providing data on different domains (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health), assessing progress overtime and comparing results with the EU Member States. **Yet their use would be greater if they were published at regular intervals, for example every other year, and be timed so that they could inform Country Reports (which can only use official data from the previous year).** Of particular importance is the ongoing work to establish composite indicators for the domain of violence against women in the Western Balkan countries. This would be a

¹⁷ "Yes" means that the Index was updated in the reporting year or previous year, whereas "no" means that it is more than 2 years old or does not exist. The reporting year is 2021.

key step forward to ensure the collection of harmonised data across the region and enable the development of more evidence-based policies and strategies on gender-based violence.

National Statistical Offices collect sex-disaggregated data in some domains of the Gender Equality Index, which are then published in the “Women and Men” publication. However, **in many domains, sex-disaggregated data is lacking, including on transportation, agriculture, rural development, technology, environment, informal economy, unpaid labour, gender-based violence, pay gaps and pension gaps.** In most countries these publications can be further expanded to include areas where sex-disaggregated data is not currently collected (such as those mentioned above) and should further adopt an intersectional approach looking at women facing intersectional forms of discrimination.

Criterion J National Bodies Responsible for EU Integration Include Staff with Gender Expertise

Indicators	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	NM	SRB
42. Extent to which gender expertise exists in the government body responsible for EU integration	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately	Minimally	Minimally	Moderately
43. % of staff trained on gender equality in the national body responsible for EU integration	Cannot be concluded	10%	0%	Cannot be concluded	3,6 %	Cannot be concluded
44. Extent to which Gender Focal Points are consulted in the IPA programming	Moderately	Cannot be concluded	Minimally	Minimally	Minimally	Minimally
45. Extent to which gender equality expertise exists in national statistical offices	Extensively	Moderately	Minimally	Cannot be concluded	Minimally	Moderately

On average, bodies responsible for EU integration in the six Western Balkan countries only include gender expertise to a moderate extent. From the information collected, only in half of the countries are staff in these institutions trained on gender equality issues. Gender Focal Points, where present, are only minimally consulted for the IPA programming. Gender expertise in National Statistical Offices varies from minimal in Kosovo to extensive in Albania.

Regional-level indicators

Indicators	Baseline
46) Number and % of new actions ¹⁸ that are gender responsive / targeted (GM1 + GM2) at regional level (indicator 1.1 GAP III)	10 19
47) Number and % of new gender targeted action (GM2) implemented from regional allocation (indicator 1.2 GAP III)	0 20
48) Gender regional profile with GAP III priorities and actions developed (indicator 8.1 GAP III)	No
49) Number of joint EU positions for key gender regional events and negotiations	Cannot be concluded
50) Number of statement and commitments made by EU officials on GEWE and WPS including women's participation in peace processes (indicator 16 WPS)	Cannot be concluded
51) Number and details of EU and MS regional dialogues that include WPS-related priorities and commitments (indicator 19 WPS)	Cannot be concluded

There is a total of 21 **regional Action Documents** available online under Multi-country financial Assistance under IPA II²¹ referring to **2021**. They are as follows:

- 1 under the Civil Society Facility and Media Programme in favour of the WB and Turkey;
- 17 under the financing of the multi country multi annual plan in favour of the WB and Turkey;
- 3 under the financing of multi country multi annual plan in support of the Western Balkan Investment Framework.

For the purpose of the regional assessment, **these 21 Action Documents were analysed, with particular focus on how they are marked using OECD DAC criteria²² and whether they fulfil the minimum requirements for GM1 or GM2**. A brief overview of the analysed Action Documents shows that:

- The Action Document under the Civil Society Facility and Media Programme is marked GM1
- Nine out of 17 Action Documents under the financing of the multi-country annual plan in favour of WB and Turkey are marked GM1
- All 3 Action Documents under the financing of multi-country annual plan in support of WB Investment Framework are marked GM0
- No Action Document is marked GM2

¹⁸ Based on guidance from the EC, this criterion refers to Action Documents and not individual contracts.

¹⁹ Of the **Cross-border Action Documents** available online under Multi-country financial Assistance under IPA II for 2021, none uses formally the Gender Marker but claim to be gender-mainstreamed. For consistency purposes, they are not accounted for in the table above.

²⁰ Of the **Cross-border Action Documents**, none includes gender objectives, one uses gender analyses and very few indicators are sex-disaggregated, therefore they do not fulfil the criteria for GM2. Also, none includes SDG 5 as main goal the AD is contributing to.

²¹ https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance/multi-country-financial-assistance-under-ipa-ii_en (accessed 20.10.2022)

²² Handbook of the OECD/DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker, OECD (2016).

10 out of 21 Action Documents are marked GM1 and none are marked GM2. Of the 10 marked GM1 however, only 2 comply with the OECD/DAC requirements for GM1, with the exception of the gender analysis which could not be verified. The other 8 Action Documents do not comply with the OECD/DAC requirements for GM1 (gender analysis conducted, findings from gender analysis have informed the design of the Action, presence of at least 1 gender equality objective backed by 1 gender-specific indicator; data and indicators disaggregated by sex; commitments to monitor and report on gender equality results). A full analysis of the Action Documents and the extent to which they comply with OECD/DAC requirements is available in Annex 2. In relation to indicators 49 to 51, written data requests were sent both to the EU Delegations and to DG NEAR in Brussels but data was not provided.


CONCLUSIONS

Respect for fundamental rights, including gender equality, is part of the Copenhagen criteria to be fulfilled by a country prior to joining the EU²³. Gender equality principles, standards and laws are part of the EU *Acquis Communautaire*, and are - or should be - included in the political dialogue between the EU and the governments, as one of the cross-cutting priorities of the IPA III. This regional report, complementing the national reports produced by the EQUAPRO Coalition for each Western Balkan country, examined how gender equality commitments are taken forward both by the EU and by national governments in the framework of the EU Accession process.

Gender mainstreaming of Country Reports is limited to selected chapters and, particularly, the political criteria, chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental rights), to a limited extent chapter 24 (Justice, freedom and security) and chapter 19 (Social Policy and Employment). This contradicts the spirit of gender mainstreaming, first endorsed by the EU in 1996 and later included in the EU Treaties, which entails the recognition of the impact of gender on every aspect of political and economic life. While this requires a considerable investment in time and resources, the EU will need to progressively move towards the gender-mainstreaming of the entire Country Report if it expects governments in the Western Balkans to also take gender equality commitments seriously.

National governments in Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia took steps to **address the official gender equality-related recommendations included in the Country Reports** to a moderate extent while in BIH and Kosovo only to a minimal extent. This suggests that the political will and commitment to follow suit on the EU recommendations in this domain is not sufficient. The EU should further use its leverage to push national governments to comply with the recommendations through political dialogue and ensure the recommendations are specific, action-oriented and achievable within the expected time frame. Also, they are not to be removed until they are fully implemented.

²³ These [Copenhagen criteria](#), were established by the Copenhagen European Council in 1993.



Greater **transparency and inclusion** were among the aspirations of the new accession methodology proposed by the EC in 2020 and called for by citizens in the region, for a process that is often viewed as exclusionary and privileging communication with political elites over ordinary citizens. Both the EU and national governments are taking steps to be more transparent and involve citizens at key stages of the process, yet efforts remain elusive. For example, agendas and conclusions from the Stabilisation and Association Committee and Sub-Committees meetings are not publicly available and could not be retrieved in three out of six countries. In those countries where information was shared, with the exception of Kosovo, women's CSOs reported that they were consulted only to a limited extent.

On inclusion at national level, the report looked at the **composition of the sector working groups set up with the purpose of EU integration** and whether they foresee the participation of civil society, including WCSOs. From the data collected, three countries could not verify whether WCSOs are involved in the sector working groups (Albania BiH, and Serbia), and in one (Kosovo) the working groups have not been set up yet. In North Macedonia and Montenegro in 14% and 25% of the working groups respectively, WCSOs are included. While countries may have different models for CSO inclusion, the composition of the sector working groups should be publicly available and WCSOs' participation should be foreseen.

Programming of IPA III funding from both the point of view of transparency and inclusion as well as gender mainstreaming, remains problematic. In three (BiH, Kosovo, Serbia) out of six countries, the **IPA III Strategic Response is not publicly available**. In the other countries, the analysis of the Strategic Responses shows that only in North Macedonia does it extensively include gender equality objectives, while only to a limited extent in Montenegro and in Albania not at all.

While there are efforts to meet with the GAP III ambition to have 85% of new Actions marked GM1 and 5% GM2, **an analysis of the Action Documents showed that, in most cases, they were marked incorrectly and did not fulfil the minimum OECD/DAC criteria for the GM1**. This means that the total amount of funding in support for gender equality in each country, deriving from the total sum of GM1 and GM2 Action Documents, cannot be considered a reliable figure. Even if the Actions Documents had been marked correctly, the system does not account for the fact that in a GM1 Action, where gender equality is a significant but not principal objective of the action, only a proportion of its funding is directed to gender equality. **The fact that the EU, the largest donor in the Western Balkans, does not yet have a system to accurately track the total funding in support of gender equality provided through external funding instruments should be addressed as a matter of priority**. Furthermore, the system does not allow for tracking the amount of funding allocated to WCSOs in partner countries and so this remains unknown.


The EU has stepped up its strategic engagement on gender equality at country level through the adoption of CLIPs in all countries, as mandated by the GAP III. Five out of six countries (with the exception of North Macedonia) also have updated Gender Country Profiles. Also, WCSOs reported that they were extensively consulted for the development of the CLIPs by the EUDs, having also led the consultation process

in at least two countries (Albania and Kosovo). This puts the region in a good place for future implementation of GAP III. Yet, **greater clarity is needed in relation to the role WCSOs can play as partners of the EU in the implementation phase of the CLIPs**, in view of their unique expertise on gender equality issues, established networks at national and regional level and ability to reach out to and express the needs of the most marginalised groups of women.

Overall **dialogue on gender equality issues** between the EUDs and WCSOs takes place to a moderate extent and mostly in relation to programming, while WCSOs call for greater involvement also at policy level. Meanwhile, dialogue on women, peace and security issues is lagging behind, with three out of six countries indicating that this is hardly taking place. This raises questions about the level of commitment and relevance afforded by the EUD/Os to women, peace and security issues in a post-conflict region which is still grappling with the legacies of the 1990s wars. Dialogue on gender equality between the EU and partner governments, national gender equality mechanisms, parliaments and other institutional actors was rated positively (from moderate to extensive), although there is always room for improvement.

On the **approximation of the Western Balkan countries' legislation to the EU Acquis**, the analysis shows that only two of the National Programmes for the Adoption of the Acquis extensively address gender equality while the others do so to a lesser extent (BiH does not yet have one). In most countries, laws and public policies put forward as part of the accession process are generally made available for public consultations, including through new online platforms. However, the introduction of more accessible platforms for consultations, has not always contributed to making the consultative process more meaningful and inclusive. A best practice example was reported in Montenegro where the government publishes on its website reports from the public debates attended by CSOs, including detailed explanations about the adopted or refused suggestions made by civil society.

On the **collection of sex-disaggregated data at national level**, most countries indicated that the National Statistical Offices are collecting sex-disaggregated data on different domains and publishing it through the "Women and Men" publication every other year. While these publications are considered helpful, suggestions were made to expand the remit of the publication to include also transportation, agriculture, rural development, technology, environment, informal economy, unpaid labour, gender-based violence, pay gaps and pension gaps and to introduce an intersectional lens to capture the incidence of intersecting inequalities on women and girls. In 2021, four out of six countries had Gender Equality Indices which contain useful data and statistic, **yet their use would be greater if they were published at regular intervals, for example every other year, and be timed so that they could inform Country Reports**. A partial Gender Equality Index is under development for BiH while Kosovo is still lacking one, which seriously hinders evidence-based policy-making from a gender perspective.



Four out of six countries considered that in the government bodies responsible for EU integration **staff have moderate gender expertise**. When it comes to the EU, for most countries, data on the percentage of women in senior and middle management positions in the EUDs, or on the percentage of staff trained on gender equality and GAP III in the EUDs and on women, peace and security in CSDP missions could not be retrieved.

Recommendations

Recommendations to DG NEAR and EU Delegations/Offices:

Gender mainstreaming of Country Reports

- Revise the internal guidelines on compiling the Country Reports and progressively include gender-sensitive questions for all Chapters
- Establish minimum requirements on gender mainstreaming of each Country Report and ensure consistency in the approach across the different countries
- Ensure there are clear and concrete action-oriented recommendations on gender equality
- Empower the Gender Adviser in DG NEAR and Gender Focal Points in Delegations/Offices to further support colleagues in gender mainstreaming the Chapters that are not currently mainstreamed
- Consult diverse WCSOs and utilise their input to better integrate attention to gender equality in different chapters

Transparency and inclusion

- Publish all the relevant documents connected to the EU Accession process on the relevant webpages, including the agendas and conclusions of the SAA Committee and Sub-Committee meetings
- Further inform and involve citizens and civil society organisations in key steps of the Accession process
- Publish all key Accession-related documents and information in local languages

Strategic engagement on gender equality

- Continue the good practice of consulting and partnering with WCSOs for the development, revision and assessment of CLIPs
- Establish a meaningful dialogue and partnership with WCSOs for the implementation of the GAP III at country level to ensure alignment of the EU priorities with those identified by WCSOs

- Increase funding to national and grassroots WCSOs as provided for in GAP III, indicating a baseline and a target
- Ensure an inclusive and participatory reporting system throughout the implementation of GAP III

Inclusive dialogue

- Increase regular dialogue with WCSOs not just in relation to programming and funding opportunities but also on policy and political issues
- Continue the good practice of consulting with CSOs, including WCSOs, and collecting written input ahead of the drafting of Country Reports
- Establish a yearly dialogue on women, peace and security issues with WCSOs providing space to discuss issues related to peacebuilding, reconciliation and transitional justice, as per the EU's commitments
- Ensure a system of feedback is in place to inform WCSOs about the uptake of their proposals and concerns

Funding for gender equality related to EU Accession


- Train EUD staff on the appropriate use of the gender markers based on the OECD/DAC criteria and establish an internal quality control system to ensure that Action Documents are marked correctly
- Improve OPSYS to track more accurately the actual amount of funding allocated to gender equality and to different beneficiaries, including specifically WCSOs
- Publish the relevant data every year on the EC and EUD/Os webpages

Collection of sex-disaggregated data

- Continue to support and fund programmes to improve data collection and management systems in Accession countries, as well as to encourage governments to improve these systems
- Urge EIGE to publish the Gender Equality Index at regular intervals and, where possible, time it so that the data can be used to inform different chapters in Country Reports

Expertise and capacities on gender equality

- Ensure at least one full-time Gender Adviser / Focal Point in the EUD/Os with a standard job description, clear responsibilities and access to senior decision-making level
- Provide regular trainings on gender mainstreaming and GAP III requirements, objectives and tools for implementation to staff and particularly management in DG NEAR, EU Delegations and CSDP missions

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- Provide regular trainings on women, peace and security issues to staff in EU Delegations and CSDP missions
 - Consider contracting WCSOs' expertise to support capacity-building in gender mainstreaming that also considers country-specific contexts

Recommendations to Western Balkan national governments:

Transparency and inclusion

- Publish information about the composition of sector working groups on EU integration
- Publish agendas and conclusions of SAA Committee and Sub-Committee meetings and provide more accurate and user-friendly information about the country's engagement in the Accession process and opportunities for CSOs to contribute to the process
- Publish the IPA III Strategic Response and make it accessible to all citizens on government's websites
- Consider quotas for the inclusion of CSOs within the sector working groups, including at least one WCSO, elected by their peers, to represent civil society interests and support the inclusion of a gender perspective across different themes
- Alternatively set up clear, structured and meaningful consultation mechanisms between the sector working groups and CSOs with minimum criteria for participation of WCSOs

Inclusive dialogue

- Strengthen consultation mechanisms as part of the EU Accession process in relation to key reforms and legislation
- Consult more with diverse WCSOs, allowing time for preparation, improving modalities for meaningful participation and providing feedback afterwards
- Consult CSOs, including WCSOs, in the development of the IPA III Strategic Response and its future revisions and in designing the action documents

Implementation of gender equality commitments

- Boost implementation of the recommendations related to gender equality included in the EC Country Reports
- Ensure progressive approximation of the national legislation to the EU Acquis on gender equality, including the Work-Life Balance Directive, Victims Directive etc.; include the adoption of relevant legislation in the National Programmes for the Adoption of the Acquis

Gender-mainstreaming

- Improve gender mainstreaming of the National Programmes for the Adoption of the Acquis
- Improve gender mainstreaming of the IPA III Strategic Responses
- Improve gender mainstreaming in future sectoral strategies
- Include gender equality on the agenda of sector working groups

Sex-disaggregated data

- Improve systems for collecting sex-disaggregated data and statistics, in a wide range of sectors and cross-sectors, including through statistically significant surveys required by the Gender Equality Index
- Develop a user-friendly online database that can be accessed by public administrations, professionals and researchers and be used as a basis for decision-making and policy-making

Programming of IPA III

- Adhere to the GAP III commitments that 85% of new actions must be GM1 and 5% GM2 when developing the IPA III Strategic Responses and designing Action Documents
- Make use of gender expertise in the drafting of Action Documents and ensure the correct use of the gender markers as per the OECD Guidelines

Expertise and capacities on gender equality

- Increase knowledge and competencies on gender equality of officials in national institutions through regular and comprehensive gender equality and gender mainstreaming trainings
- Utilise the expertise and existing capacities of WCSOs to support the trainings, compensating them for their work

- Establish and support Gender Focal Point networks among ministries, including those responsible for EU integration, to facilitate exchanges and build institutional knowledge on gender equality

ANNEX 1 GENDER-SENSITIVE MONITORING METHODOLOGY FOR THE EU ACCESSION PROCESS

Introduction

The project Furthering Gender Equality through the Accession Process, led by Reactor – Research in Action and implemented with the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (Sweden), Kosovo Women’s Network (Kosovo), AWEN (Albania), Rights for All (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Women’s Rights Center (Montenegro), aims to enhance and broaden existing regional cooperation to strengthen participatory democracies and to bring about an inclusive and gender-sensitive accession process. In particular, its specific objectives are to:

- To enhance WCSO capacities to effectively engage with governments, EU Delegations and Office (EUD/EUO), local CSOs and other CSOs in the region, making all involved actors aware of the gender dimensions of the EU Accession process;
- To improve accountability of governments and EUD/EUO in implementing commitments to gender equality and women’s rights during the EU Accession process.
- Scope of the assignment

Activity 3.4 Monitor and report to inform and gender mainstream EC Country Reports, political dialogue on Accession and IPA programming.

In order to inform and gender mainstream the EU Accession process and successfully undertake evidence-based advocacy on the gender aspects in the EU Accession process at national, regional and EU level, it is necessary to monitor and report on the key EU related processes and political dialogues in the countries and the region as a whole. Monitoring reports on different aspects of the EU Accession process will enable government officials and EU officials to have insight and recommendations on how to improve gender mainstreaming, WCSOs and CSOs will have valuable advocacy resources, while the general public will have more information on the process and how they can benefit from it.

The scope of the assignment is to develop a comprehensive methodology to monitor and reporting of the following areas relevant to the EU accession process from a gender perspective: IPA programming and the work of the NIPACs; gender mainstreaming in the work of the state statistical offices and gender statistics; the work of the government

bodies mandated to lead the process of negotiation for EU accession; the political dialogue on the accession process with reference to the gender perspective and the participation and representation of women's voices (including diverse WCSOs) and their expertise; and any additional process which are relevant and which affects the accession process and gender equality. The same methodology will be used in each country, adjusted to the specificities and stages of the accession process. Based on the developed methodology for monitoring, each partner will perform continuous country focused monitoring and produce monitoring reports on annual basis (reports will be published from the second year on) to track the progress throughout the Action's implementation period.

Based on the findings of the national level reports, Kvinna till Kvinna - with partners' support, will produce two regional reports. The first regional report will be produced after the first national monitoring reports have been published, while the second regional report will be published in the final year, providing overview of the regional developments, potential progress and achievements.

Policy framework of reference

The proposed monitoring framework takes into account recent developments at EU level in relation to the EU accession process and EU's support to gender equality through external action. In particular, it draws from the revised methodology for the EU accession process included in the Communication [“Enhancing the Accession process: A Credible EU Perspective for the Western Balkans”](#) proposed by the European Commission in February 2020 and officially endorsed by the EU Member States in the March 2020 [Council Conclusions](#). This revised approach calls for a greater focus on fundamental reforms, a greater use of conditionality with clear conditions and benchmarks spelled out in the annual report and greater transparency and inclusivity of the process.

The proposed methodology also draws from the recently adopted [Joint Communication on the new Gender Action Plan III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action](#) accompanied by [Objectives and Indicators \(GAP III\)](#). The new GAP III calls for a more strategic EU approach to gender equality in partner countries, tailored to the context and based on a Country-level implementation Plan to be developed together with national stakeholders, including gender equality bodies, ministries and civil society.

The monitoring framework also includes bilateral funding provided by the EU to candidate and prospective candidate countries in the Western Balkans, therefore it draws from the (draft) regulation for the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance III and its draft programming framework. Both documents are at the final stages of negotiations and are expected to be adopted soon as part of the 2021-2027 Multi-annual Financial Framework of the EU.

Outlining the methodology

The proposed methodology aims to monitor how gender equality is mainstreamed in the EU Accession process in each of the six Western Balkan countries, based on both qualitative and quantitative indicators. It looks at the two key actors driving the process, namely the EU and the governmental bodies responsible for EU integration. The framework includes indicators at national level which will be monitored on a yearly basis by Coalition partners in their respective countries, to produce a national report and indicators at regional level which will be monitored by Kvinna till Kvinna for the regional reports.

National-level indicators

Indicators	Baseline - data from year 1	Data from year 2	Rating (from second year) ²⁴
a) EC Country Reports²⁵ are gender mainstreamed			
1) Number of times gender is mentioned in the Country Report			
2) Number of times women/girls are mentioned in the Country Report			
3) Number of times boys/men are mentioned in the Country Report			
4) % of Chapters gender-mainstreamed ²⁶			
5) Number of official recommendations ²⁷ on gender equality included in the Country Report			
6) Number of other recommendations with a gender perspective included in the narrative of Chapters			
7) Extent to which Country Report uses sufficiently sex-disaggregated data	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		

²⁴ Rating will be based on the Boolean system: 0: no improvement; 0,5: some improvement; 1: full improvement.

²⁵ This refers to the latest available Country Reports.

²⁶ For a chapter to be gender-mainstreamed it would need to include specific reference to the situation and needs of women and girls in a particular sector/domain or/and specific gender aspects emerging from your analysis of a specific sector/domain. It should also, ideally, include an analysis of key barriers preventing progress in a specific sector/domain such as, for example, lack of housing, land and property rights for women's access to economic rights.

²⁷ Official recommendation shall mean the recommendations included in the grey boxes at the beginning of each chapter/section.

8) Extent to which issues recommended by WCSOs are included in the Country Report, based on your knowledge ²⁸	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
b) Stabilisation and Association Committee meetings include gender issues			
9) % of SAA Committee meetings with gender equality issues on the agenda			
10) % of SAA Sub-Committee meetings with gender equality issues on the agenda			
11) Extent to which WCSOs were consulted by the EU ahead of the sub-committee meetings	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
12) Extent to which SAA committee and sub-committee meetings conclusions attend to gender equality issues	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
c) EU strategic engagement at country-level on gender equality is in place			
13) Country-level Implementation Plan for GAP III agreed and transmitted to HQ (Brussels) (indicator 5.1 GAP III)	yes/no		
14) Gender Country Profile conducted / updated ²⁹	yes/no		
15) Fully-fledged gender analysis conducted / updated	Yes/no		

28 This should be based ideally on information collected on a yearly basis from several women's organisations in each country. Where such information is not available, answers will be based on the input provided to the EU by the organisation compiling the report and incorporated in the Country Reports. This will need to be clearly indicated in the report.

29 Updated if more than 5 years old.

16) Number of sector-specific gender analyses for the priority areas under the programming cycle 2021-2027 developed and transmitted to HQ (Brussels) (indicator 5.2)			
17) Extent to which EU Delegation engages in dialogue on gender equality with governments, national gender equality mechanisms, parliaments and other institutional actors (indicator 7.1)	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
18) Extent to which EU Delegation consulted civil society including WCSOs for the development of the Country-level Implementation Plan	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
19) Extent to which EU Delegation engages in dialogue on gender equality with civil society including WCSOs (indicator 7.2) ³⁰	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
20) Extent to which EU Delegation engages in dialogue with civil society on women, peace and security issues in partner countries (indicator 7.2)	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
d) EU mainstreams gender in all actions and targeted actions			
21) Number and % of new actions ³¹ that are gender responsive / targeted (GM1 + GM2) at country level (indicator 1.1 GAP III)			
22) Number and % of new gender targeted action (GM2) implemented from national allocation (indicator 1.2 GAP III)			
23) Total funding in support of gender equality at country level (GM1 + GM2) (indicator 1.3 GAP III)			
24) Amount of funding directed towards WCSOs and movements at country level (indicator 1.4 GAP III)			

30 Extent will be defined by the number of times per year they have met with women's civil society groups to discuss gender equality issues. Dialogue shall be defined to include discussions on various political issues (not only "women's issues"). This will include a qualitative explanation of who was met (their position level) and the types of topics discussed.

31 This criterion refers to Action Documents and not individual contracts.

25) % of new actions supporting public finance management reforms that include a gender budgeting component (indicator 3.1 GAP III)			
e) The EU leads by example			
26) Number and % of women in senior and middle management positions in the EU Delegation/ Office (indicator 10.1 GAP III)			
27) % of management trained on gender equality and GAP III in EU Delegation and CSDP mission (indicator 10.2)			
28) % of management trained on women, peace and security in EU Delegation and CSDP mission (indicator 10.2)			
29) Number of Gender Adviser / Gender Focal Points in the EU Delegation and CSDP mission ³²			
f) Government adopts legislation in line with the EU Acquis Communautaire on gender equality and consults women's organisations			
30) Extent to which gender equality is addressed in the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) ³³	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
31) Extent to which key laws on gender equality and EU Accession are open for public consultation	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
32) Extent to which inputs on Laws / amendments / policies by WCSOs in line with the EU Acquis on gender equality are taken on board	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		

³² Optional interview protocol on the quality of gender advisor/GFP engagement for interested countries.

³³ The NPAA is the multi-annual plan for the alignment of domestic legislation with the EU acquis communautaire. If the NPAA is not in place / available, indicate "not applicable".

33) Extent to which new sectoral strategies are publicly available	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
34) Extent to which new sectoral strategies mainstream gender equality	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
35) % of sector working groups with WCSOs included/represented			
g) Government implements recommendations on gender equality included in the Country Report³⁴			
36) Extent to which recommendations ³⁵ on gender equality included in the Country Report have been implemented by the government/institutions	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
h) Programming of IPA III at national level prioritises gender equality			
37) Extent to which responsible government bodies consulted WCSOs for the development of the Multi-annual Indicative Programmes ³⁶	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
38) Extent to which Multi-annual indicative Programme includes gender equality objectives			
39) Extent to which annual Indicative Programs or Action Documents contain a gender perspective			
i) Sex-disaggregated data is collected by national statistical offices			

34 This refers to the latest available Country Report.

35 This refers to both, the official recommendation in the grey boxes and the recommendations included in the narrative of the Chapters.

36 The Multi-annual Indicative Programmes ensure consistency between the key EU areas of intervention and the priorities expressed by the beneficiary country.

40) The Country has an updated Gender Equality Index at national level	Yes/No ³⁷		
41) Whether National Statistical Offices publish a report with easily accessible sex-disaggregated data that is sufficient for the public's use (based on Women & Men publication)	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
j) National bodies responsible for EU integration include staff with gender expertise			
42) Extent to which gender expertise exists in the government body responsible for EU integration	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
43) % of staff trained on gender equality in the national body responsible for EU integration			
44) Extent to which Gender Focal Points are consulted in the IPA programming	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		
45) Extent to which gender equality expertise exists in national statistical offices	Not at all Minimally Moderately Extensively Fully		

Regional-level indicators (for Kvinna till Kvinna)

Indicators	Baseline (data from year 1)	Data (second monitoring)	Rating (from second year) ³⁸
46) Number and % of new actions ³⁹ that are gender responsive / targeted (GM1 + GM2) at regional level (indicator 1.1 GAP III)			
47) Number and % of new gender targeted action (GM2) implemented from regional allocation (indicator 1.2 GAP III)			

³⁷ Yes if it is from the year prior to monitoring, no if it is more than 2 years old.

³⁸ Rating will be based on the Boolean system: 0: no improvement; 0,5: some improvement; 1: full improvement.

³⁹ Action shall be defined as contracts. New shall refer to the last year, based on the date on which they were signed (as illustrated in the excel file).

48) Gender regional profile with GAP III priorities and actions developed (indicator 8.1 GAP III)	yes/no		
49) Number of joint EU positions for key gender regional events and negotiations			
50) Number of statement and commitments made by EU officials on GEWE and WPS including women's participation in peace processes (indicator 16 WPS)			
51) Number and details of EU and MS regional dialogues that include WPS-related priorities and commitments (indicator 19 WPS)			

Monitoring process and production of national and regional reports

Each Coalition partner will fill in the monitoring framework above based on publicly available documents and data requested directly from the EU Delegations/Office⁴⁰ and national governments/bodies. Based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected, partners should produce an annual Country Assessment Report⁴¹ of the extent to which gender has been mainstreamed in the national accession process. The assessment should cover the different criteria identified in the monitoring framework and highlight the key progress and challenges in integrating gender equality in the accession process. The aim is to identify areas that need improvement, and support policy makers at EU and national level to take concrete steps to prioritise gender equality in the framework of EU integration.

Kvinna till Kvinna will collect data on the regional indicators during year two of the project and in the final year. The regional report will aggregate and analyse data from the national-level and regional-level indicators, identify trends and provide recommendations.

ANNEX 2 Analysis of regional Action Documents published in 2021

Under the *EU Civil Society Facility and Media Programme*, the Action document **EU Civil Society Facility and Media Programme Multi-country 2021-2023**⁴² is marked with GM1. In the mainstreaming section it commits to promote gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) throughout the action by promoting gender mainstreaming through the use of gender analysis, during the execution of the support to third parties and in the support to local public funding of CSOs. Two indicators at output level are gender sensitive. The narrative description of the activities explains how certain activities will affect gender equality and one *"will include financial support to third parties to incentivize the implementation of CSO-led initiatives at the local level, including, where relevant, women's rights, youth and/or environmental protection organisations"*.

⁴⁰ Kvinna till Kvinna will support partners in the collection of data under selected indicators related to the EU Delegations where partners request so.

⁴¹ A standard template for the Country Assessment Report is available as Annex 1.

⁴² <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2001%20MC%20CSF%20and%20Media%202021-2023.pdf> (accessed 21.10.2022)

None of the outcomes/outputs is gender sensitive. This Action Document does not fully comply with the criteria to be marked with GM1.

All three Action Documents under the *financing of the multi country multi annual plan in support of the WB Investment Framework*⁴³ indicate that GEWE is not targeted (GM0). Nine of the 17 Action Documents under the *financing multi country multi annual plan in favour of WB and Turkey* mark GEWE as a significant objective (GM1). Below is an analysis of these nine Action Documents, and whether they fulfil the minimum OECD/DAC criteria for GM1 marking.


1. The Action Document **EU support to fundamental rights of Roma in the Western Balkans and Turkey**⁴⁴ has three components and states that it includes promoting the inclusion of Roma women as a mainstream principle in all of its activities, including policy advice, monitoring (statistics disaggregated by sex), participation of women, etc. under the first component. Under the second component it aims to provide education opportunities for Roma women and Roma girls, thus making a contribution to the long-term women's empowerment. And under the third component it aims to promote the inclusion of Roma women as a mainstream principle in all of its activities and the award criteria, including participation of women, etc. Two outcomes are gender sensitive under this Action Document: *Educational outcomes (including preventing school drop-out) improved at all educational level with a special focus on reducing the wide gap between male and female education levels* and *Transition of Roma students between education and employment improved with a special focus on reducing the wide gap between male and female education levels*. There are also gender sensitive indicators for these two outcomes. There is only one information in the Problem Analysis section referring to the employment of Roma women, but it remains unclear whether a gender analysis was carried out to support this Action Document. This Action Document fulfils the criteria to be marked GM1, with the exception of the gender analysis.
2. The Action Document "**Support to the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA)**"⁴⁵ says that gender mainstreaming shall be discussed as a fundamental cross-cutting issue in one paragraph under the mainstreaming section. The rest of the document does not mention or address gender issues and does not refer to women/girls or men/boys. None of the outcomes is gender sensitive and indicators are not gender disaggregated. This document does not fulfil the criteria to be marked with GM1.
3. The Action Document **EU Integration Facility, including EU support for the participation of IPA III beneficiaries in EU Agencies and Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX)**⁴⁶ states that all components will strive to

43 https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance/multi-country-financial-assistance-under-ipa_en (accessed 21.10.2022)

44 <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2004%20W1-MC%20Fundamental%20rights%20of%20Roma%20WBs%20and%20TR%202021.pdf> (accessed 21.10.2022)

45 <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2006%20W2-MC%20ReSPA%20WB%202021.pdf> (accessed 21.10.2022)

46 <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2008%20W2-MC%20EIF-Agencies-TAIEX%202021-2022.pdf> (accessed 21.10.2022)



promote gender equality as well to take measures to achieve equal opportunities for male and female in all aspects regarding the implementation of the action. It also says that gender equality incentives will be incorporated particularly in the activities concerning capacity building and where possible, the action will provide for sex-disaggregated data. *TAIEX instrument comprises a gender perspective and gender issues remain high in TAIEX activities' agenda.* This information is included in the mainstreaming section but there is no reference to gender analysis. None of the outcomes are gender sensitive and only two indicators mention they will include sex disaggregated data. This Action Document does not fulfil the criteria to be marked with GM1.

4. The Action Document **EU4Youth: EU Scheme for Young Professionals in the Western Balkans**⁴⁷ under the short problem analysis includes information concerning gender stereotyping. Under the mainstreaming section it states that the action will strive to ensure gender balance among the participants in all of the activities. It also commits to include indicators disaggregated by gender whenever possible and to include a specific section on the progress and results of gender mainstreaming in the reporting. Only two of the indicators under one outcome and one output refer to sex-disaggregated data. None of the outcomes/outputs are gender sensitive. This document does not fulfil the criteria to be marked with GM1.
5. Action Document **“Strengthening employment, labour and social protection systems and policies in the Western Balkans with SOCIEUX+”**⁴⁸ commits to mobilise human rights and gender expertise and provide *ad hoc* technical assistance to make sure that a gender-responsive and rights-based approach is coherently integrated into all the support to partner beneficiaries' efforts to set up effective employment, labour and social protection strategies and systems. Under the mainstreaming section it states that gender equality and disability are checked ex-ante during the assessment of requests. One of the indicators under one output includes sex-disaggregated data and a few others include sex disaggregated data. None of the outcomes/outputs is gender sensitive. This Action Document does not fulfil the criteria to be marked with GM1.
6. Action Document **EU4Youth: Participation of the Western Balkans in International Assessments**⁴⁹, refers to gender equality only under the mainstreaming section. It states that this Action will strive to promote gender equality and to take measures to achieve equal opportunities for male and female in all aspects of implementation of the Action. It commits to break down results by gender as it is useful for the teachers, directors and policy makers to analyse them and develop appropriate gender-sensitive policy/practices. There is only

47 <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2009%20W2-MC%20Young%20Professionals%20in%20WBs%202021.pdf> (accessed 21.10.2022)

48 <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2012%20W4-MC%20Socioux%2B%20WB%202021.pdf> (accessed 21.10.2022)

49 <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2013%20W4-MC%20EU4Youth-International%20Assessments%20WB%202021.pdf> (21.10.2022)

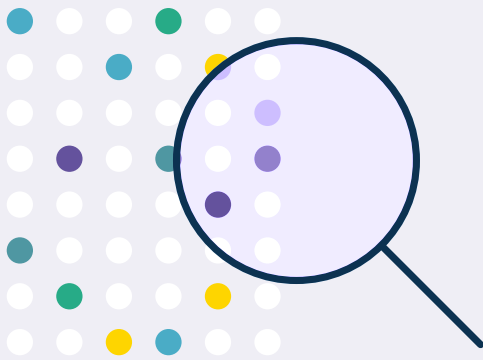
one reference to girls in the context analysis stating that girls perform better than boys in PISA-tests. None of the outcomes/outputs are gender sensitive and sex-disaggregated data is not mentioned under the indicators. This Action Document does not fulfil the criteria to be marked with GM1.

7. Action Document **EU support to Competitiveness and Sustainability in the Western Balkans and Turkey**⁵⁰, under component 1 aims to promote policy making aimed at enhancing the employment of women and under component 2 to specifically support women's entrepreneurship. However, the document does not include an analysis of the problems women face to access employment or entrepreneurship. None of the outcomes/outputs are gender sensitive and indicators do not make reference to sex-disaggregated data. This document does not fulfil the criteria to be marked with GM1.
8. Action Document "**EU support to the development of a Common Regional Market (CRM)**"⁵¹, states that women's and girl's empowerment element is enshrined in the CRM agenda, specifically under the Innovation and Industrial area, where dedicated regional actions have been devised and agreed upon as part of human capital development and prevention of brain drain in the Western Balkans region. *The element of empowerment of women and girls will be featured through regional activities of Regional Network of Women in STEM for the Next Decade as well as Western Balkans Women Entrepreneurs Network. The wider women economic empowerment agenda as part of this Action has been tailored closely to be in line with the EU gender equality strategy 2020-2025, more particularly in line with the areas of equal participation and opportunities for women in the labour market and closing the gender gap in innovation and technology fields.* One output specifically supports this statement as it refers to the support of the Regional Network of Women in STEM for the next decade with a gender sensitive indicator. However, the context section does not include an analysis of the problem from a gender perspective. This Action Document fulfils the criteria to be marked GM1, with the exception of the gender analysis.
9. The Action Document **Capacity building of veterinary and plant health services in the Western Balkans**⁵² states that gender equality will be respected in all activities of the action. None of the outcomes/outputs or indicators are gender sensitive and it does not mention gender disaggregated data under the indicators. This document does not fulfil the criteria to be marked with GM1.

50 <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2014%20W4-MC%20Competitiveness%20and%20Sustainability.pdf> (accessed 21.10.2022)

51 <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2015%20W4-MC%20Support%20to%20Common%20Regional%20Market.pdf> (accessed 21.10.2022)

52 <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/AD%2016%20W4-MC%20%20Veterinary%20and%20plant%20health%202021.pdf> (accessed 21.10.2022)



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