Gender budgeting

Steps for defining partnerships and multi-level governance

The CPR offers guidance on multi-level governance in relation to:

Defining groups of partners to include in stakeholder consultations

1. **Urban and other public authorities**
   
   Bodies responsible for promoting gender equality in urban and other public authorities include government agencies, such as advisory councils on gender equality, semi-autonomous central administrative bodies, and entities at the sub-national/provincial and municipal levels[1].

   Gender relevant partners may include focal points, or individuals responsible for promoting gender equality with legal or administrative roles, or sector-specific competences.

2. **Economic and social partners**
   
   Country-specific economic and social partners can include gender equality bodies who are enhancing gender equality in the labour market and via workplace social dialogues. They include trade unions, industry bodies and local economic development agencies.

3. **Relevant bodies representing civil society, environmental partners and bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, fundamental rights, the rights of persons with disabilities, gender equality and non-discrimination**
Representation on monitoring committees

Monitoring committees guide the implementation of ESIFs and ensure that this meets the criteria set out in Article 39 of the CPR: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value. Gender inequalities impact all of these criteria. Therefore, ensuring that these criteria are met requires high levels of gender competence, in the form of guidance from gender relevant partners and experts. Representation on monitoring committees should take different aspects into account:

- **the representation of gender relevant stakeholders**: that is, ensuring the representation of the aforementioned gender relevant stakeholders – especially gender experts – in monitoring committee consultation activities; and

- **the representation of both women and men**: ensuring gender balance among group members (i.e. at least 40/60 representation) is vital. This also means looking at the representation of women and men as policy beneficiaries and in decision-making processes. Women should benefit from EU policies to the same extent as men. Yet, compared to men, they are significantly underrepresented in decision-making positions. When there is a gender imbalance in participation related to planning and decision-making processes on policy actions, this affects the outcomes – with serious impacts for women and men. Policies benefit from diverse perspectives. More gender balanced representation brings in different experiences that can improve decision-making processes and overall results.

Austria: civil servants increase their knowledge on equality and monitoring within the ESIFs

Under the auspices of Austria’s Partnership Agreement, the country has taken multiple steps towards the inclusion of gender experts and partners. As discussed earlier in this toolkit, these include:

- forming focus groups that include experts on gender equality.
The civil servants involved in the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) benefitted from training for gender equality initiatives organised through technical assistance in the framework of the fund. The evaluation of the ERDF’s Operational Programme includes a distinct evaluation of the horizontal principles, including gender mainstreaming activities across the individual priority axes. The evaluation also actively involved relevant stakeholders by including them in steering groups and workshops. In terms of the fund’s implementation, monitoring and the steering of activities, gender experts and partner representatives are included in the monitoring committee. As members, they ensure the balanced, diverse representation of different perspectives.

To ensure that applicants and managing authorities’ staff understand gender equality, two different measures are implemented, targeting these two groups separately. Each applicant receives an ‘equal opportunities questionnaire’, which boosts their awareness of existing gender inequalities and how to address these within funded activities. At the same time, training for gender equality sessions are conducted to increase staff knowledge.

ESF measures also include efforts to increase the ‘knowledge bank’ for gender equality within the fund. Intermediary agencies (Zwischengeschaltete Stellen) are supported, as are beneficiaries engaged in implementing gender equality systematically within all project phases. In each ESF investment priority, at least half of the budget must target women and at least half of all participants in planned activities are women. To monitor the ESF, two separate focus groups were set up – one for gender mainstreaming and one for gender equality. Created during the planning phase and intended to last for the entire lifespan of the fund, these groups monitor progress on reducing identified inequalities between women and men through ESF measures.

Footnotes

[1] For more information on national gender structures for each EU Member State, see: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/countries