



Council of European Municipalities and Regions  
*European Section of United Cities and Local Governments*

**EQUALITY UPDATE**  
**Issue n°2, March 2020**

**CEMR NEWS**



# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Wishing everyone a feminist International Women's Rights Day 2020! Thank you for your commitment and energy. Let's continue our work together to make gender equality a reality, starting from the local level!

## **CEMR elected representatives speak out on 8 March 2020 in favour of local equality**

### **For information**

CEMR's members and elected representatives mobilised quickly last week to send video messages following the cancellation of the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (originally planned for 9-20 March).

### **For action**

- We encourage you to check out the videos on Twitter, retweet and promote on your social media channels.

- [Silvia Baraldi, Councillor of Legnago, Italy \(AICCRE\) and Co-Chair of the CEMR Standing Committee for Equality](#)
- [Alison Evison, Councillor of Aberdeenshire \(Scotland\), President of COSLA](#)
- [Tamar Taliashvili, Member Tbilisi City Assembly, CEMR Equality Committee, and representative for Georgia at the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities](#)
- [Ritva Viljanen, Mayor of Vantaa \(FI\)](#)

A huge thanks to them for their support and to the member associations for their assistance in this campaign. #Power2Her

## **2020 meetings- CEMR Standing Committee for Equality & gender equality expert group**

### **For information**

1. **28-29 April:** The Chair of the Standing Committee will present CEMR's study "Women in politics: Local and European Trends" to the FEMM Committee during their meeting on 28/04 (am). The CEMR Standing Committee for Equality and gender equality expert group meeting will continue on 29/04 in the first half of the day.

**29 April:** Breakfast meeting with MEP Maria Noichl (S&D, DE), rapporteur on EU gender equality strategy 2020-2025 (please see **page 4** for more information on the lobbying timeline for the EU gender equality strategy)

Draft agenda to be sent soon.

- 2. 16-17 September:** Note: The meeting will begin on 16/09 in the afternoon and continue on 17/04.

**For action**

- Please register for the 28-29 April meeting via the following link (**deadline to register 23 April**): <https://forms.gle/2yx4ovZUEZjYvRdZ8>

**CEMR/PLATFORMA activities for 64<sup>th</sup> UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW64) cancelled/postponed until further notice**

**For information**

As you know, CEMR/PLATFORMA and SALAR planned a number of events and activities around the 64th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, which was scheduled to take place in New York from 9-20 March.

Unfortunately, in light of the current concerns regarding coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the updated WHO recommendations, the [UN has decided](#) to scale back the CSW64 to a minor format where only the permanent UN-representations in New York will participate. No general debate and no side events will be held.

We await further news from UN Women concerning the rescheduling of the session and will keep you informed of any developments.

**UCLG statement to UN CSW64**

UCLG has shared the Statement of Local and Regional Governments to CSW64 (in attachment and available on the Extranet).

This statement has been structured around the key messages and priorities of the constituency to each of the Generation Equality Action Coalitions and will ultimately give policy recommendations based on the selected themes of each coalition.

It is the result of several months of co-creation: from the Durban UCLG Congress to CSW64, and with a participatory approach involving UCLG regional sections and membership, as well as experts and other relevant stakeholder contributions.

The statement will be publicly disseminated to the international community and CSW64 stakeholders on Monday 9 March in order to take part to the global conversation on equality.

**UCLG contact for additional information:** Sarah Vieux, [sarah.vieux@agenda21culture.net](mailto:sarah.vieux@agenda21culture.net)

**UCLG “Gender Week”**

Given the previously mentioned circumstances concerning CSW64, the ultimate cancellation of all side and parallel events of CSW64, UCLG has informed us that they will organise a series of remote activities on equality.

These activities will be carried out at the World Secretariat in Barcelona with most participants joining remotely, and will include several workshops, as well as a Town Hall session which will allow to pursue the conversation initiated with civil society key partners during the Durban process despite the context.

On this occasion, a more political moment will be held on next Thursday 12 March and will allow further discussion on the UCLG statement and position towards the items to be discussed, and

decisions to be taken, in response to the outcomes by the UN on 9 March.

The full programme of these activities on gender is attached and available on the CEMR Extranet.

#### For action

- To participate in the activities remotely, please use the following link and credentials.

Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/759897146?pwd=MHloOThmNUVJNTZHRIFoeUpuZUEzdz09>

ID: 759 897 146

Password: 637041

**UCLG contact for additional information:** Sarah Vieux, [sarah.vieux@agenda21culture.net](mailto:sarah.vieux@agenda21culture.net)

### MEMBERS SECTION

#### CEMR organises “Equality Journey” gender equality workshop at PLATFORMA Coordination seminar – Tbilisi, Georgia

##### For information

CEMR and our Georgian association (NALAG) held a workshop on 18 February in Tbilisi on how to better implement gender equality in municipalities’ day-to-day work. Four Georgian signatories to the European Charter for Equality – Kutaisi, Lagodekhi, Ozurgeti and Rustavi – presented their reasons for signing up and the actions they are taking.

During the workshop, participants used the [Equality Journey](#) tool to map their gender equality objectives and prioritise actions. The session was wrapped up with a short introduction to the [NALAS e-learning course](#) on gender mainstreaming at the local level.

The workshop was held in the framework of the Eastern Partnership Coordination Seminar “Reinforcing dialogue on gender equality and informed local government reform in Georgia: Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities”, co-organised by NALAS and PLATFORMA.

Photo album: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ccre-cemr/albums/72157713278004582>

### EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR EQUALITY - NEW SIGNATORIES

In the months since the last edition of the Equality Update, **12** municipalities/regions have adhered to the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, bringing the total number of signatories to **1,822** in **36** countries. More information on Charter signatories, their action plans and good practices are available on the [Observatory](#) website (\*please note that the Observatory is currently undergoing maintenance and new signatories will be added shortly).

Country	Municipality/Province/Region	Date
France	Bondy	13/01/2020
France	Sète	26/09/2019
France	Sète Agglopôle Méditerranée,	26/09/2019
France	Métropole de Lyon	20/12/2019
France	Conseil départemental de Maine et Loire	09/12/2019
France	Communauté des communes entre Juine et Renarde	22/11/2019
Spain	Logroño	28/01/2020
Turkey	Karsiyaka municipality	27/12/2019
Ukraine	Kyiv	12/12/2019
Ukraine	Myrhorod	20/12/2019
Ukraine	Odessa	04/02/2020
Ukraine	Uman	10/09/2019

## European Commission publishes EU Gender Equality strategy 2020-2025

### For information

On 5 March, the European Commission presented its [strategy for equality between women and men in Europe](#). While the EU is a global leader in gender equality and has made significant progress in the last decades, gender-based violence and stereotypes continue to persist: one in three women in the EU was subject to physical and/or sexual violence. Even though more women graduate from universities, they earn on average 16% less than men do and only 8% of CEO's of the EU's largest companies are women.

To address this, the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 sets out key actions for the next 5 years and commits to ensure that the Commission will include an equality perspective in all EU policy areas. The Strategy outlines how the Commission will deliver on the promise made by President von der Leyen that Europe provides the same opportunities for all that share the same aspirations.

The communication on the new strategy does not adequately recognise the strategic importance of local and regional governments as partners in implementing the strategy and does not provide explicit calls for support to local level actions in favour of gender equality, such as the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. These are issues to be addressed in our coming advocacy activities linked to the strategy.

Some particular areas of interest for CEMR and local governments:

- Improving women's representation in decision-making
- Legislation on violence against women and girls; tackling hate-speech and harassment online (especially towards women in public roles).
- Digitalisation (gender angle in Commission's [AI White Paper](#))
- Cohesion/social funds to help working parents
- Pay transparency ([consultation with social partners](#) – shared file with the CEMR expert group of LRGs as employers)
- Part-time work
- Improving people's lives more broadly, links with other upcoming EC strategies on : LGBTI+ rights, Disability, Roma inclusion

### NEXT STEPS:

The FEMM Committee of the European Parliament will now take up the file. The rapporteur is **Maria Noichl** (S&D, DE).

### Shadow rapporteurs:

ECR: Wiśniewska

EPP: Franssen

GUE/NGL: Pereira

Greens/EFA:

Kuhnke

ID: Anderson

Renew: Tolleret

The proposed timeline for the report within the FEMM Committee is:

- Consideration of draft report - 16 April 2020
- Deadline for tabling amendments - 22 April 2020
- Consideration of amendments - 28 Mai 2020
- Vote FEMM - 23 June 2020
- Vote plenary – tbc

Link to the legislative file:

[https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2019/2169\(INI\)&](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2019/2169(INI)&)

[=en](#)

### **For action**

- Members are invited to propose amendments to the European Commission's proposed strategy.
- In the next weeks CEMR will draft proposed amendments to the FEMM Committee report, ahead of our meeting with MEP Noichl; we welcome your input and comments.

### **DG DEVCO initiative - #WithHer: Creating a world where women and girls are safe and free**

#### **For information**

#WithHer is a digital engagement campaign designed to raise awareness of and challenge the harmful gender norms and stereotypes which perpetuate violence against women and girls worldwide.

It is a joint initiative of the European Union and United Nations under the [Spotlight Initiative](#).

For more information visit: [https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/withher\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/withher_en)

### **EPRS briefing - Women in local and regional government: Still a long way from achieving parity**

#### **For information**

The European Union has been a staunch advocate of women's participation in decision-making at all levels of governance. Gender equality is one of the founding values of the European Union, as can be seen in Article 2 and in Article 3, paragraph 3, of the Treaty on European Union. Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) also reiterates that one of the EU's missions is the elimination of inequalities and the promotion of equality between women and men in all its actions. The European Parliament has adopted a number of resolutions supporting gender balance measures in political decision-making. Nevertheless, laws determining local and regional participation fall within the remit of the EU Member States. This is an updated and expanded edition of an 'At a glance' note from March 2019, PE 635.549.

We're pleased to see that CEMR's study "Women in Politics: Local and European Trends" is mentioned several times in the briefing!

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/646196/EPRS\\_BRI\(2020\)646196\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2020/646196/EPRS_BRI(2020)646196_EN.pdf)

### **2020 Women's Budget Group (WBG) Briefings: Local government and gender**

#### **For information**

New resource published by the UK Women's Budget Group on local government funding for gender equality.

<https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/final-local-gov-2020.pdf>

### **Council of Europe publication - Protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls**

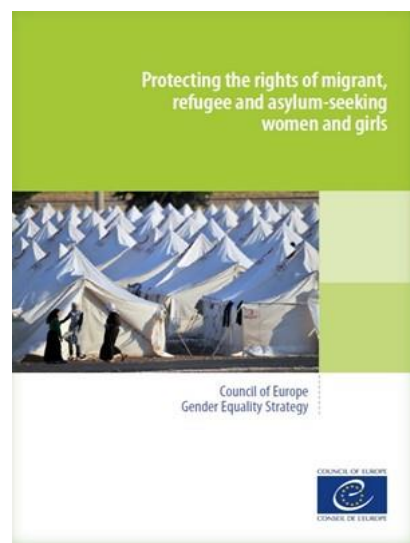
52% of migrants who came to Europe in 2017 were women, according to the 2017 United Nations International Migration Report. Together with children, women and girls are the other most vulnerable groups most at risk from all types of abuses including trafficking, forced marriage or sexual exploitation. Up to 94% of them were trafficked for sexual exploitation in 2016.

For these reasons women require specific protection which should be ensured through a gender-sensitive approach in migration and asylum policies that take into account the particular harm or persecution that women may experience.

The Council of Europe has developed a number of legal instruments to cope with the protection of migrant women. The most significant is the "[Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence \(Istanbul Convention\)](#)". Its importance lies in the fact that

state parties have to investigate allegations of sex-specific violence and prosecute the perpetrators. However, despite all the existing legal provisions, monitoring bodies like [GREVIO-the Group of Experts on Action against Women and Domestic Violence](#) report that many women and girls who migrated in recent years are subjected to various forms of violence in accommodation, reception and detention centres suffering from a lack of sanitary facilities, sex-segregated spaces, safe spaces or specialist counselling services.

The publication [Protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls](#) details threats to, and gaps in, the protection of women travelling to and within Europe, and highlights challenges and opportunities for the integration of these women, noting that they constitute the largest over-qualified and under-employed group in Europe. The document further analyses gender stereotypes, stressing that migrant women often face double discrimination: because of cultural codes within their own communities and also due to stereotypes and institutional barriers in their host countries.



Paper copies of this publication available in English and French can be ordered via [docrequest@coe.int](mailto:docrequest@coe.int)

## OTHER NEWS

### UN Women Generation Equality 7-8 May & 7-10 July 2020

#### For information

The [UN Women Brussels Office](#) announced the launch of the momentous [Generation Equality Forum](#), a civil society-centred, global gathering for gender equality, co-hosted by the governments of Mexico and France. Kicking off in Mexico City, Mexico on 7-8 May 2020, the Forum will culminate in Paris, France on 7-10 July 2020.

The Generation Equality Forum will celebrate the historic 25th anniversary of the fourth World Conference of Women and the adoption of its landmark outcome framework for gender equality and women's rights, the Beijing Platform for Action. In addition to celebrating progress on the gender equality agenda, the Forum will foster a global public conversation for urgent action and accountability for key challenge areas that will unlock important progress for women's rights.

At the end, the Forum will set in motion concrete, ambitious and transformative actions to achieve immediate and irreversible progress towards gender equality over the next 5 years.

Action coalitions, information sheet

## EVENTS / DATES TO REMEMBER

<b>19 March</b>	FEMM Committee meeting, 10.00 - 11.30 in room 3E-2 Altiero Spinelli (ASP), <i>Brussels</i>
<b>28-29 April</b>	Joint meeting of CEMR Standing Committee for Equality and gender equality expert group, <i>Brussels</i>
<b>29 April</b>	Breakfast meeting with MEP Maria Noichl, European Parliament, <i>Brussels</i>
<b>6-8 May</b>	CEMR Congress – <i>Innsbruck, Austria</i>
<b>7-8 May</b>	<a href="#">Generation Equality Forum</a> – <i>Mexico City, Mexico</i>
<b>7-10 July</b>	<a href="#">Generation Equality Forum</a> – <i>Paris, France</i>

## CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION





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