

Civil Society Forum

of the Western Balkans Summit Series

CSF Vienna

Working Groups' Recommendations

Gender Issues in the Western Balkans

Institutional-procedural recommendations

- All issues discussed under the Berlin process should include a gender perspective, with a particular emphasis on security topics and economic development.
- The Regional Co-operation Council should create a regional task force for gender equality issues, including both governmental representatives and women civil society organisations' representatives;
- Governments should ensure financial support to regional cooperation of women CSOs (possibly through the regional task force, as a supporting structure to women CSOs in the region)
- Governments should support the creation of gender knowledge (online) exchange platform at the regional level;
- Governments should ensure structured cooperation between women CSOs and gender equality bodies at national and regional level, institutionalised participation in development and monitoring of gender equality policies, with budgets allocated for the advisory role of the gender CSOs (e.g. through multilateral match funding between donors and governments – for support to implementation of policies – see BiH example);
- Governments should ensure gender mainstreaming in the EU integration process and gender mainstreaming in donor funds programming, with support of gender organisations. Moreover, furthering gender equality should be mainstreamed in all forms of political dialogue, policy reforms, and programming in accordance with GAP II and with the EU Comprehensive Approach on the UNSCR 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security (15671/1/08 REV 1),
- Governments should commit to strengthening independent national bodies for protection against discrimination;

Policy recommendations

Gender based violence

- Governments should commit to full implementation of the Istanbul Convention, and especially move from legislation to implementation. Governmental actions at both national and regional level need to include funding for women CSOs working on gender violence and specialised services providers;
- Governments should step up efforts on collection of data on all forms of gender-based violence;
- Within the framework of the Istanbul Convention, more emphasis should be given to sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence;

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Gender stereotypes

- Governments should include the problem of gender stereotyping in the media in all media strategies and policy documents and propose concrete actions to combat gender stereotypes in the media space. The role of the independent media regulatory bodies should be strengthened in this sense;
- Governments should revisit all education policy strategies and action plans, from primary to tertiary education, from the perspective of gender stereotyping, with a special emphasis on development of curricula and textbooks. Developing gender sensitive curricula for teacher education faculties should particularly be addressed;

Discrimination in the labour market

- Governments should include the gender perspective in all policies and cooperation in the sphere of economic development, with particular recognition of the vulnerable position of women in the labour market and in the informal economy;
- Governments should align with EU legislation promoting quotas in governance and decision-making bodies in the companies (both public and private sector);
- Governments should develop work–life balance policies and policies in support of changes in parental gender roles;

Participation in politics and decision making

- Governments should commit to respect quotas for political participation of women at all levels and introduce them, where they do not exist;
- Legislation should include quota for women in decision-making bodies of the political parties and promote the role of women in political life;
- Governments should promote adoption and implementation of gender sensitive codes of conduct for political parties;

Gender mainstreaming

- Governments should work towards development of joint methodologies, guidelines and toolboxes for gender mainstreaming through the regional cooperation mechanisms, using international good practices;
- Governments should encourage regional exchange of experiences and good practices on gender mainstreaming, relying on the existing gender infrastructure as well as the enhanced role of the Regional Co-operation Council's gender equality task force.

