

PARITY DEMOCRACY FOR EUROPE

A political system that works for women



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Introduction

Women are not a minority group in society – they make up half of it. However, for a myriad of reasons, women are underrepresented in many decision-making areas, including in politics. This leads to a deficit in our democratic systems which, in turn, undermines their legitimacy. Nevertheless, women contribute to public bodies [1], enable the completion of policies and enrich their value – an essential perspective which is lost if over 50% of the population is excluded from political life.

Albeit true that many international agreements and the commitments they make refer to gender inequalities in all areas, including politics, there is a complex and entrenched discrimination of women, which translates into women not being able to fully exercise their rights to political participation. Although progress is being made, it is too slow. At the current rate, the World Economic Forum [2] estimates that closing the gender gap in politics will take 95 years. For parliaments, IDEA (Institute for Democracy) calculates that parity will not be achieved before 2069.[3]

PES Women believes this needs to change to ensure real, parity democracies, with equal representation and participation of women and men in politics. When we discuss women in politics, we refer to women who participate actively, such as elected politicians at all levels, political candidates, party members, officials, and civil servants, and also women in diplomatic positions. Additionally, we also mean women voters who exercise their political rights, and political activists.

In this paper, PES Women sets out its vision of how a fairer gender representation and participation in politics can be achieved with a mix of initiatives at different levels. These can lead the way to modernise our politics and also bring us closer to real gender equality.



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Inequalities in representation

There are currently more women in governments and parliaments than ever before in history. Institutions and policies recognise the gender dimension more and more, and implement programmes accordingly. Furthermore, attitudes are changing: the #MeToo movement and others have shed light on sexual harassment towards women in many areas, including politics, and sexist behaviour finds less social acceptance. Demonstrations for women's rights, such as those on the 8th of March, International Women's Day, are gaining momentum: more and more women and men are taking part in them, their scope has increased and they regularly make headlines. A great deal of these advancements for women's rights have come to be thanks to feminist movements and progressive governments working hand in hand.

However, many inequalities remain and sexism in politics prevails. These gaps can and must be addressed in order to create truly equal and inclusive societies. There is also still a huge data gap when it comes to women's political representation. No EU-wide disaggregated data exists on political representation of women from different groups, such as women from ethnic minorities, LGBT women, older or younger women, or women with disabilities, but the data available suggest that these groups are further under-represented [4].

Looking at the horizontal gender segregation of policy institutions, women may have reached equality in so-called "soft policy" areas, such as in social, migration and civil liberties. However, many other domains remain overwhelmingly male dominated, such as in economic and financial decision-making or in conflict resolution matters. A clear example of this is the French government, which is gender equal in terms of number of ministers. However, the unequal distribution of ministries means that women lead seven out of nine social portfolios, while four out of five executive ministries are headed by men [5]. Horizontal differences also became visible during the pandemic, when media coverage was evidently dominated by male experts, or when observing the absence of women in negotiation and peace talks throughout the war in Ukraine, just to name a few examples.

Facts and figures

European Parliament

In 2022, twenty years after the EU Parliament last had a woman as president, Roberta Metsola became the new EP President, thereby becoming the youngest ever person to occupy the role, and the third woman, after Simone Veil (1979-1982) and Nicole Fontaine (1999-2002).



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2022 saw, for the first time in history, three women running for the role, and it has also become the first time three major EU institutions are led simultaneously by women, with Roberta Metsola joining EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and Christine Lagarde as President of the European Central Bank. This is a sign of progress. Nevertheless, up to now, all women who held the post of EP President belonged to liberal or conservative parties. This is inevitably mirrored in the formulation of feminist policies, and we reiterate that we do not only need more women in key posts, but also a more feminist vision of politics, also led and supported by men.

The recent #SofaGate [6] incident has been proof to that, and also shows that even women in the highest political level are not free from sexism and discrimination. In this regard, we commend the efforts of late EU Parliament David Sassoli, who was a strong advocate for gender equality in the institution [7]. In 2019, Maltese Labour politician Helena Dalli became the first EU Commissioner for Equality. Her efforts have brought forward many policies to promote gender equality in the EU, including a solid EU Gender Equality Strategy.

When it comes to MEPs [8], men make up 61% of the total, compared to 39% women. Per country, there are stark differences: Cyprus does not have any female MEPs, Romania has 15.2%, Slovakia 21.4%, and Greece 23.8%. Whereas Finland and Sweden are the only two countries with more women MEPs than men, at 57.1%. Denmark, Latvia, Luxembourg and Slovenia have 50% of men and women representatives; and France, Portugal, the Netherlands, Austria and Spain are narrowly close with over 40% of women MEPs. All other countries have fewer than 40% of women MEPs.

This pattern also extends beyond the initial election process. Only around one third of MEPs (34%) that replace outgoing members of parliament during the term are women, further extending the underrepresentation over the course of the term [9].

The proportion of female MEPs has increased steadily with each round of EU elections [10]. In 2012, there were 35.1% of female MEPs. In 1999 there were only 30% of women, and before the rate was even lower. The EU Parliament also created the Women's Rights and Gender Equality committee (FEMM) in 1984 with the aim to mainstream the gender perspective into its work. Since this year, FEMM is chaired by Robert Biedron (S&D) [11], which is a good step to show that gender equality concerns everyone in society, not just women. Since 2019, the S&D Group is chaired by Spanish MEP Iratxe Garcia Perez, the only woman to single-handedly lead a Group in the European Parliament [12].



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The EU Parliament states that gender equality is one of its top priorities. However, research by the German Marshall Fund of the US warns us: “the informal structures and power plays within the [EU Parliament] and in interactions with stakeholders in other EU institutions demonstrate that it is not always living up to its claims” [13]. Studies indicate that prominent characteristics at political party or group in the EU Parliament that influence the election of women are [14]:

- **Party ideology:** this is the highest variable leading to more women in politics, with progressive parties ensuring equal access to political opportunities in a much higher proportion to conservative-ideology parties, which still limit women’s representation (up to three times lower).
- **Female leadership:** in the EU Parliament, research proves that having female leaders entails having more women candidates on lists and better representation (close to an 8-percentage point difference).
- **Party size:** larger parties have a tendency to also have higher shares of female politicians.
- **Quotas:** quotas have largely been seen as a useful tool to promote women’s participation in a much faster and more efficient way than other methods. Some countries have introduced binding quotas (France and Belgium require parity lists; Italy and Portugal require one third of representation at least of each gender, and for Slovenia and Spain it is of 40%; Poland has a 35% quota), some countries, such as Finland and Sweden have voluntary quotas. With the reform of the EU Electoral Law, the S&D is promoting compulsory zipped lists, quotas, or similar methods to ensure gender parity [15]. When using quotas, usually a placement mandate is also necessary to ensure women are not systematically placed in unelectable positions, as the EU Commission has noted [16].

Member States - national parliament and heads of state

In 2012, 86.9% of major EU political parties the leader and deputy leaders were men. Back then, no country had more women than men leaders [17]. Nowadays, Finland and Sweden have more women in top government positions. This is reflected in the EU Council meetings, where PES Prime Ministers Sanna Marin (Finland), Magdalena Andersson (Sweden) and Mette Frederiksen (Denmark) account for 3 out of the just 5 women present, of a total of 27 heads of state or government, and the Presidents of the EU Council and Commission, who attend.

Progress in this area is slow. In 2021, 6 EU countries still had all male leaders in their largest political parties (Czechia, France, Poland, Croatia, Malta and Romania), compared to 15 countries in 2012.



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In national parliaments [18], no countries have more women or an equal number of men and women parliamentarians, in lower or upper houses, or in single houses. When it comes to the positions of President, Leader or Speaker of national parliaments or assemblies [19], women occupy this role in just 4 EU countries, with 6 other countries having gender parity in said positions.

Political party leaders

Political parties are key players when it comes to recruiting, nominating, and electing female candidates for public positions. They also contribute to disseminating information and exposing citizens to democracy [20]. Therefore, they have direct influence over representation in politics: they have the power to act as gatekeepers or to enhance women's participation at all governmental levels, and also within parties. Political parties can also address violence against women in politics in several ways, such as expressing their commitment to eliminate it and rejecting publicly, as well as taking disciplinary actions within their organisations.

In 2021, EU major political parties' leaders and deputy leaders were predominantly men. For leaders, only Finland and Sweden had more women in these top positions, with parity in Denmark. For deputy leaders, there was an average of 65.6% men in the EU-28, and 34.4% women [21].

Regional and local representation

In the EU, the PES Group in the Committee of the regions underlines that just 15% of all mayors are women, 21% regional presidents, and 35% members of regional parliaments, with an even lower representation in rural areas [22]. The PES Group has analysed the issues women face in local and regional politics and has developed practical proposals on how to enhance women's participation in these levels. They also state that cities and regions which are progressive do implement many policies which enhance women's participation in politics, which are successful. However, much more remains to be done given the well-documented benefits of including women in the political sphere: "The more gender balanced, the better the government is." In 2018, the PES Group has also adopted a Code of Conduct on gender equality, which aims at a 50-50% parity goal for PES members by applying a strict gender equality policy in different areas, such as through appointments and in representation [23].



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Reasons behind women's underrepresentation

Research shows that women's underrepresentation in politics occurs for many reasons [24]. Some complex and interconnected barriers which women face are: the electoral and legal system they operate in, factors of socioeconomic, cultural and contextual significance, as well as ideologies and systems within parties.

These barriers can be sorted into the following categories:

·Selection of candidates

Patriarchal structures mean that men act as gatekeepers, and both parties and voters may judge candidates' qualifications and experience differently. Here, party statutes, parity in candidate lists, quotas, and a combination of other solutions can contribute to more gender equal politics. Whereas headhunting for people who have previously held positions of power often leads to perpetuating the cycle of only selecting men.

Moreover, parties act as gatekeepers in several ways: people who are in positions of power, mainly men, tend to surround themselves by, and also select their teams and successors, based on their own appearance and qualities, in a "mirror effect" manner.

The problem of underrepresentation is often framed as a 'natural consequence of not having enough women candidates'. However, the real issue lies elsewhere: there is a strong bias in recruitment which neglects women. This is due to a lack of long-term strategies within parties for greater inclusiveness of underrepresented groups.

·Investments

Overall, women have fewer resources to invest into a career in politics, in terms of financial inequalities (gender pay gap), and time poverty (family and domestic discriminatory roles), as well as smaller networks. Female candidates need more support from political parties when fundraising for their nomination and electoral campaigns. Some parties have measures for female candidates such as waiving fees or offering subsidies [25].

Work-life-balance, childcare, and maternity leave

Women still take on much more unpaid care work and household work than men. This has been exacerbated by COVID-19: before the pandemic, women would carry out these tasks for 15.8 hours a week, compared to men's 6.8-hour average. Since the pandemic began, women have been working for 18.4 hours a week, and men for 12.1 at home and caring for others [26].



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This means that women are automatically left less time to invest in other activities, including their participation in politics, and fewer economic resources to invest in this career path, amongst many other consequences.

Issues with maternity leaves for politicians also create large obstacles which can strongly discourage women of childbearing age to run for public posts. This has been denounced at national level, for example by UK Labour MP Stella Creasy, who is running a campaign to fight the ‘motherhood penalty’ in the party’s selection process [27]. Creasy has long advocated for changes to maternity rules for women in politics: she threatened to sue the UK Parliament after her request for full maternity cover was rejected. She argued that it can discourage voters as well as women themselves.

In Ireland, Social Democrat TD Holly Cairns said she is pushing for legislation to permit maternity leave for elected officials [28]. For example, the Irish Constitution does not consider the possibility a female politician could be a minister, so there is no possibility for maternity leave, as it was drafted 100 years ago [29].

At EU-level, the S&D Group has been calling for a reform of the EU Electoral Law to include provisions for motherhood and paternity leave. A prominent figure for these demands has been MEP Lara Wolters, who has campaigned publicly and raised that MEPs cannot take leave, as this would deprive them from voting, because nobody can substitute the member under current rules. In Wolters’ case, she, just as Creasy did, had to take her baby to voting sessions [30].

Gender Stereotypes in society and the media

There is an underlying bias that men perform better and voters prefer them [31]. The PES Group in the Committee of the regions highlights: “Gender stereotypes still play a role when it comes to gender inequality. We need to promote more information on measures and best practices aimed at eliminating these stereotypes in areas such as formal and informal education, the world of work, language use, communication and advertising” [32].

The UN Special Report on violence against women in politics also underlines that there are strong stereotypes in society which associate men to the public sphere, and women to the private one. This also leads to tolerance of discrimination towards women. The violence itself can also take place in the private sphere, for example, when a woman’s own relatives, peers or friends advise her not to be active in politics. Moreover, women are likely to hide violence against them out of worry to appear weak, or they face re-victimisation when denouncing these events, as well as other barriers to access justice [33].



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The media play an important role in how women in politics are viewed by society. Research into 25,000 politicians shows clearly that media outlets cover men and women politicians differently: the latter receive fewer reports overall, but in contrast, there is a much higher number of stories about women in politics' personal lives, their appearance, as well as more content including negative viability and gender stereotypes [34].

The issue of gender discrimination in media coverage is gaining momentum following the releasing of private footage of Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin and friends enjoying their free time. The videos and photos were published by media outlets worldwide, leading the Prime Minister to take a drug test and to face harsh criticism with a clear gender component [35]. The story has sparked the debate on the double standards which women in politics face [36], and triggered waves of feminist support for the Prime Minister [37].

Gender-based violence

Cases of harassment and violence towards female politicians are still all too common. The UN Women's Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on "Data and violence against women in politics" (VAWP) on 4–5 December 2019 concluded there is a lack of research and that this type of violence is still considered as "part of the job" [38].

Discrimination and violence against female parliamentarians are widespread: over 80% of MPs from 39 countries have suffered psychological violence and over 60% received sexist remarks. More than 40% of these women received threats of physical violence [39].

The most common forms of violence against women according to the UN Special Report on the matter is verbal harassment, which also points out that online attacks are increasing. One of the latest attacks targeted Tanja Fajon, lead candidate for the Social Democrats in Slovenia, who received misogynist comments from members of the conservative opposition party, who photoshopped images of her during a live debate, as well as some media channels, which focussed their discussions on her physical appearance. UK Labour MP Angela Rayner has also faced gender-based violence online through social media platforms and voice messages [40]. The MP herself has described the attacks as 'misogynistic', 'sexist' and 'steeped in classism' [41].

These are unfortunately not isolated cases, with women on all sides of political parties facing discrimination towards their appearance, sexualised comments, and threats of physical and sexual violence [42]. This includes violence in the digital sphere, such as the doxing – publication of private information – which PM Sanna Marin was the victim of.



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The most extreme cases of violence against women in politics are femicides, such as was the case of UK Labour MP Jo Cox, who was brutally murdered while she was carrying out her public duties in 2016 [43].

Violence against women in politics is a huge barrier to the exercising of their political rights. The UN Special Report on Violence Against Women in Politics notes that this violence occurs in a systematic and widespread manner, with “a chilling impact on the political ambition of young women, with inter-generational consequences for the full realization of their political rights”. The report points out that men in politics also face violence, but that in the case of women, it takes place on the basis of gender and it takes the form of sexist and sexual threats, harassment and violence. Moreover, certain groups of women are more exposed to these attacks, such as young women, LGBTI activists, and women belonging to minority groups or those who defend “controversial” opinions or defend human rights.

Furthermore, this violence has the aim to perpetuate gender stereotyped roles and inequalities in politics and is thus rooted in a deeply unjust and unfounded power imbalance. Sexual misconduct allegations are all too common inside parliaments: in the House of Commons, just in the first months of 2022, cases of sexual assault and harassment by MPs, and viewing pornography during parliamentary sessions, have emerged [44]. Our political systems are unwelcoming for women, and reflect deeper societal models which are perpetuated by “old boys' clubs” [45], who are putting women off politics. There is the risk that this will deter women from engaging in politics at all because they find the environment too toxic.

Does representation equal participation?

For PES Women, parity is not only a question of figures, but also of true representation: women from all kinds of backgrounds exercising real influence and having their voices heard, thereby truly guiding policies and law-making. Only by achieving this can we speak of parity and participatory democracy. And without gender equality, democracy is not complete: “Gender equality and good governance are part of a virtuous cycle. A necessary condition linking gender equality and good governance is female political leadership. Without women in political office, government measures reflect the status quo, male-dominated policy environment” [46].

PES Women stands for making women’s voices heard and count; it is a matter of social justice. The best way to deliver good policies is to take the whole population into account and therefore, it is crucial not to content ourselves with token inclusion only.



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We must make sure that women are given real power over meaningful portfolios, that women with varied experiences can enter politics without fear of harassment and violence. Once in power, women must be encouraged to push for feminist policies that lift up other women. PES Women has repeatedly called for gender equality in institutional portfolios, a gender-sensitive Conference for the Future of Europe, and a dedicated Council configuration for anti-discrimination, diversity and gender equality, and has long highlighted the benefits of policies like 50/50 rules and “zip-lists” for elections.

Additionally, women’s rights and gender equality as a concept are constantly threatened by a far-right backlash across Europe, which goes hand in hand with reactionary, conservative governments’ violations of the rule of law and good democratic practice. Social democratic governments and parties are among the strongest in Europe when it comes to fighting this backlash and promoting gender equality in decision-making. This is also reflected in the 2021 adopted PES Presidency declaration [47] “Progressives for strong European democracies with feminist values at heart”, highlighting the interdependence between democracy and gender equality as core EU values. The declaration lists fourteen concrete points of action, from promoting gender mainstreaming to implementing the Istanbul Convention and the Article 7 procedure in cases of violations of EU values, but also concretely promotes “efforts to strengthen women's voices and their participation in all levels of decision-making bodies in parties, governments, public positions, judiciary and law enforcement institutions, the media, the private sector and civil society.”

Women voters

Women's representation in parliaments and other elected political posts is not the only means through which women are politically active and does not give a complete picture of their power. There are many studies on female voter behaviour, as well as other, non-electoral forms of political participation, such as protest participation, political persuasion and campaigning, where it has been observed that gender differences and inequalities persist [48]. Since the mid-70s, the entry of women into the labour market, their higher need for social services and their strong positions on green policies have been contributing factors for women to prefer left-wing and progressive governments [49]. This applies to most EU countries [50]. Countries with high levels of female empowerment also have more women supporting left-wing politics. This can be explained through voters’ attitudes, but also because it is more likely that higher numbers of women will complete high-level education, have access to the labour market and gain skills [51]. However, there is also a growing tendency in popularity of right-wing populist and right-wing extremist parties among women in Europe.



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As for the gender voting gaps, it is important to note that more men than women vote in European elections. This seems paradoxical considering the EU is recognised as a strong defender for women's rights, inside the EU and beyond its borders. However, the gender voting gap tends to narrow when it comes to party preference with increasing numbers of women voting for right wing parties [52].

Regarding lower political representation, data [53] on voter preferences is not conclusive. On the one hand, research from 2001 concluded that men voters tend to vote for men candidates, whereas women are split 50-50 between men and women candidates. On the other hand, there is data from 2019 showing that voters do not have a preference for male or female candidates [54]. However, in different types of lists, women are most often placed in lower positions, thereby affecting their success [55]. This demonstrates that the electoral system is central to gender equality. Citizens are ready for and supportive of female candidates, and now political parties must follow suit, as they have a great influence in the creation of party lists.

Conference on the Future of Europe

The S&D Group and PES have cooperated closely to put forward progressive proposals for the Conference on the Future of the EU, the largest ever democratic and participatory tool of the EU project, to guide our Union towards more equal societies. However, the online public consultations for the Conference have shed light on the reality of citizens' perceptions: only 15% of respondents identified as women. This seems incoherent with the fact that women, especially the younger generation, are engaged in many political causes, such as the EU project itself, the feminist movement or the predominantly young female leaders of the climate movements across Europe. The extremely low participation of women should be analysed and addressed. Moreover, the implementation of the Conference's conclusions must follow suit.

EU policy in place to support women in politics

At EU level, gender equality is enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union. There are a number of important instruments to promote gender equality as well, many of which are led by Commissioner Helena Dalli and other progressive politicians. For example, the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, which aims at achieving gender balance in decision-making and in politics [56], and the European Pillar of Social Rights, with its Pillar 2 on Gender Equality in all areas [57]. The EU Gender Equality Strategy's actions will include promoting women's participation as voters and candidates in the 2024 European elections through funding and exchanges of best practices.



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Moreover, the EU Electoral reform, led by the Socialists and Democrats Group with rapporteur MEP Ruiz Devesa, is promoting tools to facilitate women participating in politics, for example with zip lists and maternity and paternity leave provisions, which our political family has called for for many years. Other reports from the EU Parliament on gender equality in politics include the 2012 Report on women in political decision-making [58].

At international level, frameworks such as Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals all defend gender equality as a key element of progress. In addition, the Council of Europe calls on governments to achieve balanced participation in political life (defined as achieving a minimum representation of 40 % of women and men) and urges local and regional authorities to encourage women to stand for election [59].

While we welcome all these achievements, most of them are frameworks, not legally-binding instruments or laws. In our view, Europe needs more than voluntary measures. It needs binding targets to promote inclusive politics based on the principle of parity democracy.

PES Women proposals towards parity democracy

Eliminating the barriers to women's political engagement is crucial to facilitate their representation in the political sphere. This requires acting to break down each of the barriers mentioned above, and also tackling them all in a holistic manner. Increasing representation and participation of women in politics is not only a matter of justice and democratic legitimacy, as women account for approximately half of the population and have the right to be represented as such, but it is also a matter of own experience and interest; women's standpoint is specific and thus needs to be reflected in discussions that result in policymaking and implementation. Further, more women will be attracted to political life if they have role models to look up to, which in turn contributes to better democracy and good governance.

PES Women's **demands** are:

- Promote a political **culture of zero tolerance towards sexism and misogyny** in the public sphere, as well as in more private spheres such as political parties themselves.
- **Monitor cases of violence** and integrate it into **election monitoring** [60]. Establish independent complaint points or external committees which can receive and process harassment cases.



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- Invest in **compulsory trainings and mentoring** programs for all genders to become aware to the reality which women in politics face and how to implement inclusive leadership. **Involving men** is important because gender equality is not a “women’s matter”, but a central element of our political agenda as socialists and democrats. For example, the S&D Group in the EU Parliament organised a **gender-sensitive training** for MEPs and called for compulsory training [61] for all MEPs. This should be the case for all elected politicians and in all levels of governments. This is key to eliminate prejudices and raise awareness inside parties themselves and externally.
- Establish **electoral systems** on national and EU level which **enable parity democracy** and puts women into winnable seats, such as zip lists, quotas, codes of conduct or other measures which facilitate gender balance. Finland and France provide positive examples of how legal quotas can be a fast-track for gender equality. This must also apply to **portfolios taken on by women**, distribution of ministries, and so on, to avoid **horizontal segregation**.
- Reform **parties’ statutes** if necessary and head-hunt female candidates. Parties can decide on internal targets and quotas, especially for leadership positions. **Legally-binding targets** could be the most effective.
- Promote **gender equal representation in exchanges**: PES promotes gender equal panels and debates. Taking this a step further could be, for example in **questions and answers**, to give the floor to participants or the audience while ensuring a balance or using a zipped system.
- Provide training, mentoring, funding and other **support for women candidates**, particularly young women and women from under-represented minority groups. Start **empowering initiatives** to promote women to run in local and regional politics in close cooperation with for example PES Committee of the Regions and PES Local.
- **Strengthen the role of women’s structures** within parties to amplify women’s voices and influence.
- **Speak out** against gender inequalities, **create a support system** for female politicians in their parties and promote female voices publicly.
- Support **gender-disaggregated data**, such as EIGE provides in the EU, as it is essential for monitoring and accountability.



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- Reform **all legislation which discriminate parents** who have children while in office, allow measures which **facilitate parental leave, childcare** and other measures for a work-life balance, including for men's care responsibilities.
- Form a **formal Council configuration for Ministers** to discuss and advance gender equality, diversity and anti-discrimination. This would lead to a more prominent forum for women's rights and gender equality issues and to echo women's voices on the highest political level.
- **Educate all children and young people** in anti-discrimination and leadership [62]. Cultural shifts in mindsets are essential for change, so citizens' awareness-raising at all ages is an asset.
- Target and lobby with **media outlets** to cover female candidates and politicians in a **meaningful manner** (challenge political issues vs. reference to their appearance). Higher media visibility can help to get more women elected. Therefore, it is also crucial to break down barriers for women online, such as harassment and violence through social media.
- Use the outcome of the **Conference on the Future of Europe** to turn citizens' concerns about gender equality into **concrete and legally-binding instruments** to promote and defend it.

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