

EQUINET Work-life Balance and Pregnancy Related Discrimination

How to bring about *cultural change in
times of stagnation?*

European Women's Lobby



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Mary Collins
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Structure of presentation

1. Context of stagnation
2. Guiding principles for reconciliation policies
4. Recommendations to Equality Bodies



1) Context of Stagnation

Gender Equality Index (EIGE) 2015

52.9 points in 2015

Increased by 1,6 points in 10 years !

Scores decreased in five countries

EU – half way to a gender equal society



The Paradox of a growth driven paradigm

...

Europe needs more women on the labour market
Europe also needs more women to have more children

BUT

Limited reconciliation policies and in particular restrictive
Maternity Leave policies



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Backlash

Anti-feminist discourses – Rise in populism

Contested “gender” concepts

Revival of “**old demons**” – questioning what was thought to have been gained forever

Diversity versus equality - hierarchy of rights
– multiple standards? (equity)

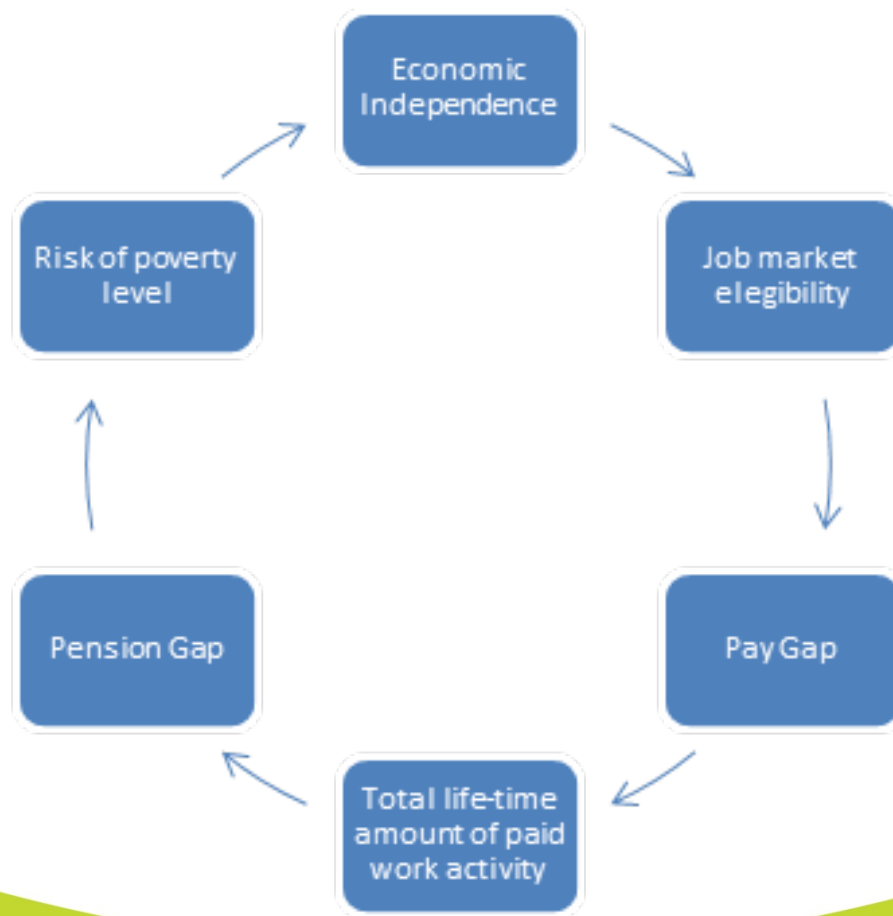
Merging gender equality/equality for all –
cutting funds or closure of Equality Bodies

Weaker gender equality institutional

Funds for women’s NGOs



WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND WOMEN'S ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE IN A LIFE CYCLE PERSPECTIVE



Clear Distinction...

- ✓ MATERNITY = pregnancy and childbirth
- ✓ CARE = life long begins at birth
- ✓ CARE = NOT A WOMEN'S ISSUE ONLY –
Parental Leave /Paternity Leave / Carers Leave





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4 years overdue...

#DeliverNow

Put the Maternity leave Directive back on the Agenda



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3) Guiding principles for reconciliation policies

Women and Men: Equal Earners/Equal Carers:

- ✓ **Guarantee women's and men's financial security and independence** while they care for someone else
 - ✓ **Radically increase men's participation in care-work; make their equal participation socially accepted**
 - ✓ **Take account of the different forms of families** remove any form of discrimination
 - ✓ **Introduce other forms of statutory leave** based on real needs of women and men
 - ✓ **Protection and rights must be extended to all workers, including workers in atypical forms of employment**
- Accessible, affordable and good quality care services for all dependents.**



4) Recommendations to Equality Bodies

- ✓ Ensure that existing legislation is fully complied with in MS and that ongoing monitoring is in place to capture evolution of change
- ✓ Ensure that women know their rights – collaborate with women's organisations and the EWL
- ✓ Support women (pregnancy related discrimination) to go to Court
- ✓ Ensure that gender equality is central to the work of equality bodies, particularly those that have merged all forms of (in) equality and/or human rights in to one body
- ✓ Collaborate with EIGE in developing the index on intersecting inequalities (2017)

Link with the European Semester Officers in MS



To Conclude

RECONNECT – economic/social/gender equality

REMOBILISE – strengthen partnerships

RESIST – anti-feminist forces



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

For more information:
www.womenlobby.org



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