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To: Delegations

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Subject: Enhanced measures to reduce horizontal gender segregation in education
and employment

- Council Conclusions

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on Enhanced measures to reduce horizontal gender segregation in education and employment, adopted by the EPSCO Council at its 3569th meeting held on 7 December 2017.

**Enhanced measures to reduce horizontal gender segregation in education and employment
Council Conclusions¹**

EMPHASISING THAT:

1. Equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the European Union enshrined in Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and one of the objectives and tasks of the Union, and that mainstreaming the principle of equality between women and men in all its activities is a specific mission of the Union.

RECALLING:

2. The Rome Declaration of 25 March 2017, in which the Leaders of 27 Member States and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission pledged to work towards a Social Europe: a Union which, inter alia, promotes equality between women and men as well as rights and equal opportunities for all.
3. The Interinstitutional Proclamation on a European Pillar of Social Rights, which sets out an agenda for better-performing economies and more equitable and resilient societies, enshrines gender equality as one of 20 key principles and rights essential for fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems, and stresses that equality of treatment and opportunities between women and men must be ensured and fostered in all areas.
4. The Europe 2020 Strategy, which fosters smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and sets interrelated headline targets, including raising the employment rate among women and men to 75%.

¹ Conclusions adopted within the framework of the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, with particular reference to critical areas of concern "B: Education and training of women," "L: the Girl Child," "K: Women and the Environment" and "F: Women and the Economy."

5. The Commission's Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019, which identifies several key areas for action, including equal economic independence for women and men and equal pay for work of equal value, and notes that "women are more likely to have a higher education degree but remain overrepresented in fields of study that are linked to traditional female roles such as care-related fields and are under-represented in science, mathematics, IT, engineering and related careers."
6. The New Skills Agenda for Europe, which aims to ensure that people have the right skills throughout their working lives, not only in order to improve their prospects of entering, remaining and advancing in the labour market, but also to enable them to fulfil their potential as confident, active citizens.
7. The Commission Communication on the EU Action Plan 2017-2019 tackling the gender pay gap.
8. The United Nations' Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the twelve critical areas of concern identified therein.
9. The United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which outlines a set of 17 universal, integrated and transformative Goals, all of which are to be systematically gender mainstreamed, and which also includes a specific gender equality goal.²

WELCOMING:

10. The report on the Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States entitled "Gender segregation in education, training and the labour market"³ prepared by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) at the request of the Estonian Presidency of the Council of the EU, which provides an analysis of gender segregation in tertiary and vocational education, training and the labour market, including the links between gender segregation and the gender pay gap.

² Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

³ Doc. 14624/17 ADD 2. An executive summary appears in 15648/17 ADD 1.

NOTING THAT:

11. The notion of gender segregation refers to the concentration of one gender in certain fields of education or occupations (horizontal segregation) or the concentration of one gender in different grades, levels of responsibility or positions (vertical segregation). These Council Conclusions focus on horizontal segregation.
12. This set of Conclusions builds on previous work and political commitments voiced by the Council, the European Parliament, the Commission and other relevant stakeholders in this area, including the documents listed in Annex II.

STRESSING THAT:

13. Horizontal gender segregation continues to restrict the life choices and the education and employment options of women and men. It leads to inequality in terms of pay, pensions, lifelong earnings, working conditions and the working environment, reinforces gender stereotypes and limits access to certain jobs while also perpetuating unequal power relations between women and men in the public and private spheres. Moreover, gender segregation is one of the reasons behind skills mismatches, leads to a waste of human capital, resources and investment, distorts the effectiveness of policy tools, and hinders attempts to adjust to changes in the labour market, thus preventing the realisation of the EU's full innovative and economic potential.
14. Accelerating efforts to abolish horizontal gender segregation by addressing gender gaps in education and employment could unlock new opportunities for individuals, the economy and society. According to EIGE, closing the gender gap in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects would contribute to an increase in EU GDP per capita by 2.2 to 3.0% and increase EU employment by 850 000 to 1 200 000 jobs by 2050. For example, in the ICT sector, which is growing particularly rapidly, and which is also highly segregated, the equal participation of women would lead to a gain of around EUR 9 billion in the EU GDP each year.

15. Early occupation-related choices lead to strong segregation of career pathways. This reflects the fact that choosing a gender-atypical occupation is hardest for adolescents.
16. Across the EU, women have better educational outcomes than men, yet women remain over-represented in many sectors and jobs that are under-valued, have low socio-economic status and offer low pay. They also continue to be under-represented in decision-making positions at all levels, even in the sectors and occupations where they dominate.
17. Boys are at a higher risk of early school leaving than girls. Early school leaving often has a negative impact on future labour market opportunities, particularly as low-skilled jobs are more at risk of disappearing due to automation. The prevalence of gender segregation in occupations that involve unskilled work and require lower qualifications can hinder attempts to find alternative employment.
18. While the challenges of a technology-based society and an ageing population include growing labour demand and shortages in both the STEM and EHW (education, health and welfare) sectors, gender segregation remains high in these fields in education and training as well as in the labour market.
19. The emergence, prevalence and perpetuation of segregation in education and training and the labour market are the result of a range of factors at the structural, organisational and individual levels. Gender stereotypes and the lack of social acceptance of gender non-conforming behaviour have a negative impact at all levels.
20. Differences in the organisation of work in gender-segregated sectors, including differences related to working time, influence the educational and occupational choices and decisions of women and men. The working environment can also affect choices, with, for example, workplace harassment and sexism deterring women especially from participating in certain sectors.

21. At present, the labour market participation of women is lower than that of men throughout the EU, with the gender employment gap currently standing at 11.6 percentage points and reaching more than 18 percentage points in terms of full-time equivalent. Women's labour market participation as well as their career choices and opportunities are greatly affected by the unequal sharing of domestic and care responsibilities between women and men. These problems can be reduced by means of well-designed and adequate work-life balance policies, including the provision of quality, accessible and affordable formal care services for children and other dependants, flexible working arrangements and incentives for men to assume more domestic and care responsibilities.
22. The gender pay gap, currently around 16.3% in the EU, and the concomitant gender gap in pensions, currently around 37.6%, reflect differences in the labour market participation of men and women, including horizontal segregation. The resulting loss of income accumulates over the lifetime and leads to a gender gap in overall earnings.
23. Skills stereotypically attributed as natural to women, can often be invisible, which leads to their undervaluation. It is important to recognise that the work mainly performed by women in areas such as care and education is indeed work, that it requires skills obtainable through formal education and that it has an economic value. The undervaluation of traditionally female-dominated occupations is reflected in underpayment, a form of inequality that also reduces men's motivation to move into and remain in such occupations.
24. Despite the efforts made at both the European and national level, there is still insufficient progress on commitments made within the context of the Beijing Platform for Action, and a need for clear indicators specifically devoted to the issue of gender segregation.
25. In its report on "Gender segregation in education, training and the labour market", EIGE suggests a new set of indicators for monitoring gender segregation in education, training and the labour market, based on existing indicators, and including two new indicators focused on the proportion of girls and boys expecting to work in science-related occupations and the share of women and men employed in the STEM and EHW fields.

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26. Welcomes the proposal to restructure the indicators for the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with respect to gender segregation in education, training and the labour market as set out in Annex I, including the establishment of two new indicators.

CALLS ON THE MEMBER STATES, in accordance with their competences and taking into account national circumstances and respecting the role and autonomy of the social partners, TO:

27. Develop and implement comprehensive, integrated, sustainable, multi-dimensional and gender-sensitive policies for tackling gender segregation in education, training and the labour market, combining universal and targeted measures and addressing the whole range of relevant factors in order to bring about structural change and narrow the differences in life course patterns between genders. This set of policies should address the need to combat gender discrimination, segregation and stereotypes and promoting gender equality at all levels of education and training and in career guidance throughout the life course. It should also address issues such as the working environment, including the aspects of gender based hate speech and sexual harassment, working arrangements, work-life balance, health and safety at work and the gender pay gap in order to both attract and retain women and men in gender-atypical occupations and sectors.
28. In order to reduce horizontal gender segregation and enable and encourage girls, boys, women and men from all backgrounds to choose educational fields and occupations in accordance with their interests and skills, including in gender-atypical areas, and to access work opportunities in all sectors on an equal basis, take relevant measures such as the following:
- a. raising awareness among pupils, students, parents, teachers, counsellors and other persons involved in education at all levels, career guidance, recruitment and active labour market policies, focusing in particular on gender inequality, on its underlying causes and different manifestations including segregation, on the interlinkages between gender and other aspects of identity, and on possible measures that can be taken in this field;

- b. tackling gender stereotypes and other gender prejudice in teaching content and methods and making available educational and other tools to combat gender stereotypes and to promote equality between men and women at all levels of education;
- c. increasing the attractiveness of the STEM and EHW fields to students of both sexes, including, where relevant, by linking STEM teaching to economic, environmental and social challenges, or to arts and design, and by linking EHW teaching to traditional male-dominated fields such as STEM, keeping in mind digitalisation and the changing world of work;
- d. alerting both girls and boys, women and men to existing and future job opportunities in the STEM and EHW sectors;
- e. building closer links between schools and workplaces so as to enable better informed occupational choices for girls and boys. Encouraging employers and other stakeholders to play a more prominent role in challenging negative and misleading perceptions of STEM or EHW careers, especially by providing accurate information about these fields, by promoting positive role models of both sexes and by offering students opportunities to gain work experience;
- f. introducing both girls and boys to ICT and care-related skills starting from an early age, with a particular focus on inspiring more girls to develop and maintain an interest and talent in the digital field and more boys to do the same in care-related fields;
- g. taking steps to address the problem of early school-leaving, which particularly affects boys and men; and

- h. creating or funding specific incentives and support structures for encouraging more women to enter and remain in STEM fields and more men to enter and remain in EHW fields, including incentives and structures that help employers to address the problem of unconscious bias in recruitment and career progression, to foster a more gender-sensitive and welcoming climate in the workplace, to show-case possible career paths and to offer mentoring programmes;
 - i. promoting lifelong learning so as to ensure the possibility for men and women of all ages to change career pathways.
29. Take measures to target gender-segregation-related causes of the gender pay and pension gaps, including by:
- a. increasing pay transparency;
 - b. developing and making available job evaluation tools to help to determine, in an objective and non-discriminatory manner, what constitutes work of equal value and raising awareness among employers and employees about the concept of work of equal value;
 - c. stepping up efforts to attribute equal value to the skills of women and men, including by supporting the better recognition of all skills, including those traditionally associated with women, and of women's performance in the workplace and their contribution to the economy;
 - d. re-evaluating care-related paid work and reviewing wage structures and remuneration in all female-dominated jobs and occupations, with a view to breaking down gender stereotypes linked to the pay gap, as well as to improving pay in EHW sectors; and
 - e. implementing and enforcing legislation to guarantee the rights of women and men to equal pay for work of equal value.

CALLS ON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND THE MEMBER STATES, in accordance with their respective competences and respecting the role and autonomy of the social partners, TO:

30. Step up efforts to mainstream the gender perspective into national and EU level skills and labour market policies and measures, including funding, focusing in particular on initiatives related to the upscaling of existing and the acquiring of new skills, and to digitalisation, science, research and development, with a view to equipping both women and men with the skills and qualifications suited to the structure and demands of the present and future labour market and necessary for accessing quality jobs.
31. Take steps to systematically advance desegregation when designing and implementing national and EU level policies for stimulating sustainable economic growth, supporting the creation of new jobs, and addressing labour shortages and the effects of automation, so as to ensure that women and men will benefit equally from all employment opportunities.
32. Monitor labour market and education policies from a gender perspective throughout their implementation, and take steps to ensure that increases in women's employment rate do not result in increased horizontal segregation or a widening of the gender pay gap.
33. Step up efforts to provide sufficient funding for new policies and for strengthening existing policies for reducing horizontal gender segregation and its causes and effects at both national and EU level, taking a long-term strategic approach and making efficient use of EU resources and programmes, including the European Structural and Investment Funds, and Erasmus+.
34. Ensure that vocational education and training policies, including apprenticeship systems and programmes, contain measures to mitigate occupational segregation and that EU and national educational funds and initiatives are also used to support women and men entering and moving to jobs in occupations where the opposite sex is over-represented.

35. Take steps to reduce the gender gap in the ICT sector within the framework of the Digital Single Market Strategy. Encourage employers, especially companies involved in the Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, to put a particular focus on equal career opportunities for women and men and on promoting gender equality in their organisations.
36. Facilitate the reconciliation of work, family and private life for women and men by introducing well-designed work-life balance measures and ensuring their widest possible availability in all sectors and occupations, including for parents and caregivers taking up new forms of work, especially by:
 - a. taking effective action to encourage and support the equal sharing of domestic and care responsibilities by women and men, in particular through incentives encouraging men to take up family-related leaves;
 - b. stepping up efforts to provide quality, affordable and accessible care services for children or other dependants;
 - c. supporting both public and private sector employers in offering measures to facilitate the reconciliation of work, family and private life, including by means of incentives to implement flexible working arrangements and family-friendly measures in the workplace, making full use of the possibilities for "smart" working;⁴ and
 - d. investing in a targeted manner in digital working practices in order to improve work-life balance for all.
37. Regularly follow up on the indicators set out in Annex I for systematically monitoring progress, making full use of the work of EIGE and Eurostat. Analyse the results and, where relevant, take further action at both Member State and European Union level.

⁴ "Smart" working arrangements in the context of possibilities offered by modern technology (for example, teleworking and flexible working hours).

38. Continue to pursue the gender dimension of the European Semester, including in line with the principles set out in the Interinstitutional Proclamation on the European Pillar of Social Rights, and with the measures set out in the Commission Communication on an initiative to support Work-Life Balance for working parents and carers.

CALLS ON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO:

39. Encourage the Member States, the social partners and other relevant stakeholders and actors to step up efforts to reduce horizontal gender segregation, including by highlighting the substantial economic benefits of desegregation and its crucial importance in the context of the future of work.
40. Support initiatives to establish desegregation programmes in particular fields, in accordance with the findings of EIGE's report on "Gender segregation in education, training and the labour market", which confirm the shortage of female participation in particular in STEM fields and of male participation in EHW fields. Pilot those programmes and assess their impact, so as to facilitate the design of evidence-based policy in the Member State as well as at the EU level.
41. Advance cooperation between the Member States in order to facilitate mutual learning and the exchange of good and promising practices so as to enhance capabilities and encourage networking.
42. Hold regular exchanges with the European social partners in the context of the tripartite dialogue on these issues.
43. Monitor more closely from a gender perspective the targeting and usage of innovation-related investments and funding so as to avoid reinforcing stereotypes and in order to promote desegregation.
44. Implement the measures announced in the EU Action Plan 2017-2019 tackling the gender pay gap and keep collecting and providing the relevant data about the existing gender pay gap and its consequences on earnings and pensions.

Indicators on gender segregation in education, training and the labour market⁵

Critical area of concern B: Education and training of women

Indicator 1: Proportion of women and men graduates in tertiary (ISCED levels 5-8) and vocational (ISCED levels 3-4) education and training in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and in the field of education, health and welfare (EHW) – of all graduates in the study field.⁶

Critical area of concern L: The girl child

Indicator 2: 15-year-old girls and boys: performance in mathematics & science.⁷

Indicator 3: Proportion of all and top performers girls and boys in science aged 15 expecting to work in science-related occupations at age 30.⁸

Critical area of concern K: Women and the environment

Indicator 4: Proportion of women and men among tertiary graduates of all graduates (ISCED levels 5 and 6) in natural sciences and technologies.⁹

Critical area of concern F: Women and the economy

Indicator 5: Gender segregation: average gross hourly wages of female and male workers in the 5 industry sectors (and in the 5 professional categories) with the highest numbers of female workers and the highest numbers of male workers; pay gap in management professional categories.¹⁰

Indicator 6: Share of women and share of men employed in occupations of STEM and EHW employment fields.¹¹

⁵ For further details, see EIGE's report in doc. 14624/17 ADD 2.

⁶ This indicator merges and revises two current indicators under Area B and an indicator on the share of "girls students in tertiary education" under Area L.

⁷ Existing indicator.

⁸ New indicator.

⁹ Existing indicator.

¹⁰ Existing indicator.

¹¹ New indicator.

References**1. EU Legislation:**

- Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation (OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16)
- Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services (OJ L 373, 21.12.2004 p. 37)
- Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast). (OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23)
- Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC (OJ L 180, 15.7.2010, p.1)

2. Council:

All Council Conclusions adopted on the review of the Beijing Platform for Action¹² and other Council Conclusions on gender equality, including especially those cited below:

- Council Conclusions of 9 June 2008 on Eliminating Gender Stereotypes in Society (9671/08).
- Council Conclusions of 30 May 2008 on Family Friendly Scientific Careers: towards an Integrated Model (9026/1/08 REV 1)
- Council Conclusions on Strengthening the commitment and stepping up action to close the gender pay gap, and the review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (18121/10).
- Council Conclusions of 7 March 2011 on the European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020) (OJ C 155, 25.5.2011, p. 10).
- Council conclusions adopted on 7 March 2011 on The European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion (6917/11).
- Council Conclusions adopted on "Equal income opportunities for women and men: Closing the gender gap in pensions" adopted on 18 June 2015 (10081/15).
- Council Conclusions entitled "Towards social investment for growth and cohesion" adopted on 20 June 2013 (11487/13).

¹² http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/tools/statistics-indicators/platform-action/index_en.htm

- Council Conclusions on Moving towards more inclusive labour markets adopted on 9 March 2015 (7017/15).
- Council Conclusions on Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 of 26 October 2015 (13201/15).
- Council Conclusions on Towards making-work-pay strategies of 15 June 2017 (9647/17).
- Council Conclusions on Enhancing the Skills of Women and Men in the EU Labour Market (6889/17).

3. European Commission:

- Communication from the Commission of 3 March 2010: "Europe 2020: A Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" (COM(2010) 2020 final).
- "The Role of Men in Gender Equality -- European Strategies & Insights"
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/gender_pay_gap/130424_final_report_role_of_men_en.pdf
- Commission Recommendation of 7 March 2014 on strengthening the principle of equal pay between men and women through transparency OJ L 69, 8.3.2014, pp. 112-116.
- Commission Staff Working Document "Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019" (SWD(2015) 278 final).
- Opinion of the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men on how to overcome occupational segregation
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/opinions_advisory_committee/151125_opinion_occ_segregation_en.pdf
- Commission Staff Work Document "2017 Report on equality between women and men in the European Union" (SWD(2017) 108 final).
- Communication from the Commission of 26 April 2017: "An initiative to support work-life balance for working parents and carers" (COM(2017)252 final).
- Communication from the Commission on the EU Action Plan 2017-2019 Tackling the gender pay gap (COM(2017) 678 final).
- Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition
<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/european-commission-invites-organisations-attract-more-girls-and-women-digital>

4. European Parliament:

- European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2013 on eliminating gender stereotypes in the EU (P7_TA(2013)0074);
- European Parliament resolution of 28 April 2016 on gender equality and empowering women in the digital age (P8_TA(2016)0204).

5. EIGE:

- EIGE's report "Gender segregation in education, training and the labour market" (14624/17 ADD 2);
- EIGE's briefing paper "Economic benefits of gender equality in the EU. How gender equality in STEM education leads to economic growth".
<http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/economic-benefits-gender-equality-eu-how-gender-equality-stem-education-leads-economic-growth>

6. Other

- Interinstitutional Proclamation on the European Pillar of Social Rights signed by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/social-summit-european-pillar-social-rights-booklet_en.pdf
- The Paris Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/news/2015/documents/citizenship-education-declaration_en.pdf

