

New “European Pact” for gender equality for the period 2011-2020

On 7th March 2011 the Council of the [European Union](#) (at a meeting of the Employment, [Social Policy](#), [Health](#) and [Consumer Affairs](#) Council) adopted a new “European Pact” for [gender equality](#) for the period 2011 -2020. It has attracted very little attention in the media, but could have a real effect on social policy, and [employment relations](#) in the coming months.

It urges action by the member states and the Union, by taking measures to :

- eliminate gender stereotypes, ensure [equal pay for equal work](#) and promote the equal participation of women in decision-making; improve the supply of affordable and high-quality childcare services and promote [flexible working](#) arrangements; strengthen the prevention of [violence against women](#) and the protection of victims, and focus on the role of men and boys to eradicate violence.
- It also reaffirms the importance of integrating the gender perspective into all policies including external actions of the EU.

Gender equality is enshrined in the EU treaty, which states “*that the Union shall promote equality between women and men, and that this aim is to be pursued in all Union’s activities*”.

Many will question whether this will be the hammer to finally break the [glass ceiling](#).

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