

Gender quotas as a means to break the glass ceiling

The European Commission will highlight gender quotas as a means to break the glass ceiling for women on Wednesday 28 March from 10:00-12:00 at European Programme Support Office (EUPSO), Nicosia. The aim of the event is to raise awareness about the policies in the EU regarding gender equality, equal pay and gender quotas; to share examples from Europe on how to overcome the impact of the glass ceiling to achieve political empowerment and improvements in women's economic participation and to raise awareness about local implementations and opportunities.

The event is an opportunity to discuss the gender quota as a means to overcome the glass ceiling for women and how these can also be applied in the Turkish Cypriot community. The European Commission has supported a series of activities to raise awareness about gender equality. This includes a panel discussion on the gender pay gap, rural tours to highlight EU supported opportunities for women in rural areas, and a number projects being implemented by civil society.

Women should be equal participants in all aspects of society, including in leading positions either in businesses or the public sector. Female employment continued increase slowly but steadily and reached 66.6 % in the third quarter of 2017. Despite this progress, women are still a long way off achieving full economic independence. According to a recent [survey](#), in comparison to men, women still tend to be employed less, are employed in lower-paid sectors, work on average 6 hours longer per week than men, but have fewer paid hours, take more career breaks, and face fewer and slower promotions. Moreover, women in the EU still earn on average over 16 % less per hour than men. The gap varies greatly from one Member State to another.

Background:

In December 2015, the Commission presented the "Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019". It represents the work programme for gender equality policy during this Commission's mandate.

The Strategic engagement outlined five priority areas:

- increasing female labour-market participation and the equal economic independence of women and men;
- reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women;
- promoting equality between women and men in decision-making;
- combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims; and
- promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world.

In 2017 the European Commission concentrated its efforts on two lines of actions. In November, the Commission announced concrete action to reduce the gender pay gap through an Action Plan to be delivered between now and the end of the Commission's mandate in 2019. In the Action Plan it urges the European Parliament and the Member States to adopt swiftly the work-life balance proposal of April 2017; calls for arrangements to facilitate the adoption of the Directive on gender balance in the largest listed companies, and encourages governments and social partners to adopt concrete measures to improve gender balance in decision-making.

Interested individuals can get more information on this event by contacting the EU Infopoint: info@abbilgi.eu, 228 2577

Media contact: Selen Mesutoğlu Altan, selen.altan@abbilgi.eu or 0533 840 8583

