Partners for progress

Equality between women and men is one of the core values of the European Union since its establishment. In 2012, a MoU between the EU and UN Women was signed and later recommitted in 2016. Our partnership focuses on five priorities: increasing women’s leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women’s economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting.

Sharing common goals

The European Union and UN Women both share a fundamental commitment to promote gender equality in all areas of work, as enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In particular, both entities aim to deepen and strengthen their cooperation to more effectively deal with current and future challenges such as refugees and migration, climate change, violence against women and women’s economic empowerment. In addition, in the context of the Generation Equality Forum, the EU was appointed one of the leaders of the Action Coalition on gender-based violence (GBV).

In 2019, the European Union was the largest contributor to UN Women’s other resources with USD 84.4 million.

Note: The figures for 2011-2018 do not encompass funding from the European Commission received through other UN agencies (for instance the Spotlight Initiative).
Together we achieved:

Women’s Economic Empowerment in Syria

Supported by the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the EU “Madad” Fund, the two-year programme “Strengthening the Resilience of Syrian Women and Girls and Host Communities in Iraq, Jordan, and Turkey” aims to strengthen the resilience of women affected by the Syria crisis. It is a multi-dimensional programme that enables women’s resilience and empowerment by addressing issues of economic vulnerability and violence. The programme aims to reach approximately 62,400 women, girls, men, and boys (21,500 directly and 41,000 indirectly).

Women’s Empowerment Principles

The EU, UN Women, and the International Labour Organization (ILO) are partnering in G7 countries, Latin America and the Caribbean as well as in Asia to promote gender equality through the private sector and to increase women’s economic empowerment and leadership for sustainable, inclusive, and equitable growth.

Migration

Through advocacy for legislative reform and workshops for women migrant workers under a multi-country programme implemented in Mexico, Moldova, and the Philippines, UN Women is working with the EU to protect rights and promote a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach to migration governance.

Gender Handbook

Adapting to the shifting landscape of humanitarian work, UN Women and its partners are committed to putting gender equality at the core of facilitating humanitarian response. The Gender Handbook is the culmination of three years of collaborative and consultative work and was launched in April 2018 jointly by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and UN Women.

Ending violence against women in Western Balkans and Turkey

The EU-funded programme ‘Implementing Norms, Changing Minds’ (Feb 2017 to July 2021) aims at ending gender-based discrimination and violence against women in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia) and Turkey, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged groups of women.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme has been responding to the increase of violence against women through the support of women’s shelters for instance.

UN Women is one of the core agencies supporting the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, a global, multi-year initiative focused on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030.

Launched in 2017 with a seed funding commitment of EUR 500 million from the European Union, the Initiative represents an unprecedented global effort to invest in gender equality and women’s empowerment as a precondition and driver for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in five regions (Asia, the Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean).