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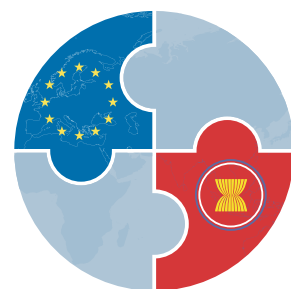


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EU-ASEAN Perspectives Policy Paper Series III

GENDER EQUALITY:

AN EU-ASEAN INTERREGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON POLICY MAKING



Editors: Chiara De Santis, Hannah Elten and Kent Tangcalagan

EU-ASEAN Perspective Policy Paper Series III

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Editors

Chiara de Santis, Hannah Elten, Kent Tangcalagan

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For the past 17 years, she has been engaged in development and democratisation work with a special focus on such spheres as human rights and gender, security and social protection. She headed a variety of women's projects across the globe and worked for the EU, the UN and the OSCE. Since October 2014 she is one of the four experts constituting the IcSP EU Gender Facility providing ad hoc technical guidance and support to EU-IcSP staff at the HQ and in the Delegations.

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Dr. Erna's organization conducts research, trainings and consultations on gender-related issues, such as prevention of violence against women and girls, gender empowerment against poverty, health. Prior to that, Dr. Surjadi was, among others, Head of Division of Gender Mainstreaming at the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia and Regional Adviser (South East Asia) for Gender for Women and Health at the World Health Organisation.



FOREWORD

By Nelly Stratieva
Head of IFAIR EU-ASEAN Impact Group



Dear Reader,

You are holding in your hands the product of inspiring collaborative work between young researchers and professionals from 11 countries in Europe and Southeast Asia. In current times when countries seem to withdraw behind the confining national borders, it gives me hope that bright young people from across the globe show they want to create a different world. I like that world. It is a world where differences are respected and used as an inspiration – perhaps not to completely transform your own society or way of doing things, but to challenge you to look at them from a different perspective. This is one of the main goals we try to achieve with the EU-ASEAN Perspectives (EUAP) initiative.

EUAP has grown tremendously with every new edition. The underlying reason for that is quite simple, in my opinion: EUAP is a unique project that addresses a persistent gap. Young people of today are international, curious about meeting people from other countries and have opinions they want to express to a larger audience. We at IFAIR know that because we are part of the same generation; we have similar views that meeting and discussing with peers from other cultures is the best way to understand each other and come up with workable solutions for our shared problems. EUAP gives this opportunity to young people from the EU and ASEAN to meet, work together and voice their ideas to the community of policy makers and experts.

I was a participant in the very first EUAP project and still clearly remember how excited I was to discover that such an initiative exists. For those of us who, for one reason or another, have developed a passion for EU-ASEAN relations, there are not so many lasting platforms that provide the structure for substantial collaborative work. EUAP takes place every year and each edition focuses on a different area of interest for EU-ASEAN cooperation.

EUAP III would not have been possible without the support of our project partners: the German Federal Foreign Office, the European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS) and the Centre for Research on Women and Gender (KANITA) at Universiti Sains Malaysia. I want to personally thank the team of the South East Asia/Pacific Unit at the German Federal Foreign Office for believing in our project and supporting it financially.

Last, but definitely not least, I'd like to extend our sincere gratitude to the two patrons of the EUAP III initiative - Helga Schmid, Secretary General of the European External Action Service, and H.E. Vongthep Arthakaivavatee, Deputy Secretary General of ASEAN for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. It is so important for young people to see that the EU and ASEAN institutions support them not only in words and declarations, but also in action.

I wish you a pleasant and informative time reading this policy paper!



FOREWORD

*By Helga Maria Schmid
Secretary General of the European External Action Service
Patron of EUAP III*

The world of foreign policy-making is changing fast. Gone are the days when, mostly male, national diplomats would hammer out international treaties behind closed doors. Some of the most critical issues that top the international agenda today, ranging from security crises to economic empowerment and the protection of human rights, call for creative and collaborative approaches that bring together a wide set of actors. It is clear that women, coming from a younger generation, have a vital role to play in shaping our collective response to these challenges. We will only find sustainable and effective solutions if we draw on the widest set of perspectives and inputs. At the same time we know that regional organisations are natural frameworks for protecting our security and our values, as well as being building blocks for a more effective rules-based system. That is why we as EU attach such importance to our cooperation with regional partners including ASEAN, which we see as our 'Partner in Integration', as highlighted in the EU Global Strategy on foreign and security policy released in June 2016 by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini.

It is for all these reasons that I am delighted to be a Patron of IFAIR (the Young Initiative on Foreign Affairs and International Relations) and their 3rd EU-ASEAN Perspectives Dialogue, which brings together students and young professionals from Europe and Southeast Asia in online and offline formats to discuss pressing international issues.

The present IFAIR policy paper on Gender Equality presents an impressive analysis of the different perspectives on gender equality and key recommendations on how the EU and ASEAN can enhance their cooperation on gender issues as part of their joint work on advancing human rights. There is already good work underway in this area, including EU sponsored policy exchanges with the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights and with the ASEAN Commission on Rights of Women and Children. Both Commissions have come to Brussels and Strasbourg for study visits and the EU will continue to support their work in the future as well as that of a broad set of civil society organisations.

The study rightly highlights the scope for the exchange of best practices between the EU and ASEAN on all gender issues and their impact on the wider foreign policy debate. I am certain that the report will be widely read and I look forward to the debate on its recommendations. There is much in fact that has been achieved in the area of gender equality – but even more work to be done.



FOREWORD

*By H.E. Vonghtep Arthakaivavatee
Deputy Secretary General for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community
ASEAN Secretariat*



I send my greetings and congratulations to the Young Initiative on Foreign Affairs and International Relations for their project, EU-ASEAN Perspectives, which aims to promote cooperation between young international relations researchers and professionals from the regions of ASEAN and EU.

This initiative is very much aligned with the recent Bangkok Declaration on Promoting an ASEAN-EU Global Partnership for Shared Strategic Goals which was adopted by the 21st ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok on 13-14 October 2016.

Over the years, ASEAN and the EU jointly promote cooperation on education as well as encourage mobility of students and academics between higher education institutions of ASEAN and EU. The ASEAN-EU Support to Higher Education in ASEAN Region (SHARE) is a flagship project of the ASEAN Education Sector that promotes harmonization of higher education and introduces an ASEAN scholarship inspired by the EU's Erasmus Mundus. This project reinforces the role of education in advancing its role in socio-economic growth in ASEAN.

As we strengthen cooperation between ASEAN and EU through academic mobility, it is my hope that that IFAIR can play a role in this mutual thrust. In particular, I am hopeful that this year's policy paper reinforces the voice of the youth and students; and enhances the quality of discourse on various issues on youth development.



1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper examines how gender equality might be improved acting from an interregional perspective, on the basis of the ties of cooperation existing between the European Union and ASEAN. The work builds on the results of IFAIR's 3rd EU-ASEAN Perspective Dialogue (EUAP III) online conference, a platform where youth from the two regions have engaged in policy debate. The conference and its outcome are described in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 gives a snapshot of the situation and main problematics regarding gender issues in the two focus regions of the paper. Three fields of interest are identified and examined in this regard: Culture and Norms, Political Participation and Economic Empowerment. This analysis highlights the differences between EU and ASEAN countries, while also pointing at what actions appear to be more effective in realising the desired outcome of guaranteeing equal rights. Best practices are described and taken as examples.

Chapter 5 is the core of this work; it provides a range of policy recommendations to be realised at a local, national, regional or interregional level. The recommendations are all presented in an extremely concrete way and they identify the actors involved. They are again exposed according to the three fields outlined in Chapter 4.

Culture and Norms

In order to advance gender equality in the different cultural contexts of European and

Southeast Asian countries, early education needs to be gender-sensitive. To achieve this goal, the paper identifies the following policy recommendations: (1) Ensure teaching materials to be gender-sensitive. (2) Introduce gender equality modules within educational institutions. (3) Fostering gender balance in filling of teaching positions.

Fostering equality in caregiving is another effective way to ensure such an advancement. In this direction, actions to be adopted should include: (1) Devising regional campaigns aimed at reframing care as socially important and requiring not only 'feminine' skills. (2) Devising/Amending legislation and sharing best practices to create a system of parental leave that allows for both parents to actively care for their infants. (3) Devising/Amending legislation and sharing best practices to establish comprehensive care systems for elderlies and to shift the division of labour within the family toward equality. (4) Supporting communication and networking among male caregivers.

More generally, the best way to reach gender equality in these diverse cultural environments is to involve men in the effort. The policy recommendations to this aim are: (1) Undertaking research in ASEAN to map potential stakeholders and resources in the region which could contribute to the improvement of men's involvement in gender equality. (2) Conducting joint research between EU and ASEAN on thematic issues of men and masculinity by involving universities and centres for women's studies in the two regions. (3) Formulating a brief guideline for



governments and civil societies on engaging men in gender equality and women's empowerment. (4) Initiating constructive dialogues at the interregional level. (5) Establishing a regular EU-ASEAN Dialogue on Gender Equality as an experience-sharing platform. (6) Initiating an EU-ASEAN Decade on Men's Involvement in Gender Equality programmes.

Networks to support each other.

Finally, Chapter 6 puts the entire work in the perspective of the EU-ASEAN inter-regional cooperation. It provides an overview of how the policy recommendations can be used more effectively if implemented at an inter-regional level by using the existing framework of the EU-ASEAN cooperation as well as expanding their means of collaboration.

Political Participation

In order to obtain a higher level of political participation, the policy measures to adopt should include: (1) Institutionalizing a Gender Management System which will identify focus areas, introduce mainstreaming policies in planning cycles and conduct pre-budget consultations. (2) Forming an alliance of influential gender equality leaders across the EU-ASEAN region from political, economic, cultural and religious institutions. (3) Implementing a three-layered review on the legal frameworks in reference to discriminating laws or policies against women and youth political participation.

Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment of women, in partnership with male entrepreneurs, needs to be promoted through the adoption of measures as follows: (1) Fostering education in entrepreneurship to equip both women and men with better skills throughout their career paths and working lives. (2) Creating an adequate business environment and eliminating the related barriers for women. (3) Promoting entrepreneurship towards young people and women and increasing their number among the workforce. (4) Encouraging the practice of finding Role Models and Mentors. (5) Establish Female Entrepreneurs



2.0 INTRODUCTION

The strong relationship between the EU and the ASEAN has remained steadfast for decades. This regional link therefore proves to be a good international avenue for exchanging best practices and experiences in terms of their trade, economic and social policies. The continuous exchange and official political ties among their member countries have proven effective in enforcing or updating policies and reinventing their implementation strategies (ASEAN-EU JCC, 2016). Despite this advanced working affiliation, much has yet to be achieved in learning from each other's practices in the promotion of gender equality in the regions (Pinhao, 2010). Both of the regions have varying progress and face different challenges in promoting gender equality in their member countries. For instance, among ASEAN member countries, only the Philippines is ranked among the top 10 gender-equal countries, a list dominated by EU countries (WEF, 2016).

In addition to this wide opportunity of exchange, the fast-paced world has displayed the need for innovation and technology to play a critical part in documenting and exhausting gender equality solutions based on past challenges and present progress (UN DAW & UNESCO, 2010). With its indispensable impact in the age of innovation and technology, the youth is recognized to be a critical agent in fostering innovation to address social challenges, including gender equality issues and concerns (WB, 2013; OECD, 2011). This underlined role of the youth is supported by the revitalized international commitment on gender equality through the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG; UN Women, 2015c). However, gender equality policy-making has

yet to focus at integrating the voices of the youth not only within the EU-ASEAN regions but even in the global scale (EU, 2015; UNDP, 2014; UN, 2010). Hence, there is a need to provide platforms and avenues for getting the insights of the youth at resolving problems concerning gender equality in their respective countries.

IFAIR has responded to this call by engaging young students and professionals through a pioneering online platform for an EU-ASEAN interregional dialogue on gender equality (see Section 3). The dialogue in 2016 has resulted in identifying core concerns about gender equality in the EU and the ASEAN in relation to culture, care, politics and economics. With contrasting situations of gender equality in these four aspects in the two regions and the orientation of the youth with regards to innovation and technology, this policy paper points out the progress, challenges and major policy recommendations in gender equality. The policy recommendations focus on strengthening current policies, amending policy flaws, instituting stronger policy implementation and providing innovative solutions. The policy paper is intended for the EU and the ASEAN implementing bodies, member countries and organizations that are continually working to achieve their gender objectives and outcomes based on UN's SDG 5. Hence, discussions in the paper are subject to the caveat that while some other more alarming and critical gender issues are present outside the EU-ASEAN region, the authors present more focused yet divergent views on prevailing experiences within the two regions only.



3.0 EU-ASEAN PERSPECTIVES DIALOGUE: A YOUTH PLATFORM FOR INTERREGIONAL POLICY DEBATE

The EU-ASEAN Perspectives Dialogue (EUAP) brings together young people from the EU and ASEAN to discuss current issues within the two regions and develop proposals for the future of interregional relations. At the basis of the EU-ASEAN Perspectives Dialogue lies the belief that using this potential would help both regions to move forward and to implement their respective agendas as well as commonly shared goals.

The EU-ASEAN Perspective Dialogue is hosted by the Young Initiative on Foreign Affairs and International Relations e.V. (IFAIR) and has first been organized in 2013. In July 2016, the 3rd EU-ASEAN Perspectives Dialogue (EUAP III) under the theme 'Gender Equality – Progress and Challenges from an Interregional EU-ASEAN Perspective' kicked off with an innovative online conference. EUAP III is under the patronage of H.E. Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, and Helga Schmid, Secretary-General of the European External Action Service. 20 students and young professionals from 14 different European and Southeast Asian countries met online to discuss issues of gender inequality in both regions and brainstormed solutions that could be part of a common agenda to push forward on gender equality. After an opening plenary, they split up into breakout groups for a more dynamic and personal exchange. Under the guidance of workshop facilitators, each group developed ideas for policy recommendations on EU-ASEAN cooperation to address issues concerning the political participation of women, their economic participation and the relation between gender and culture. The workshops were designed to capture not only the academic and policy debate, but also the personal experiences of the young participants, as their own encounters

with gender discrimination are symptomatic of the wider problems.

Each group investigated what the main problems of gender equality are, what solutions could be available, and what policies already exist at the national, regional and interregional level. The participants then formulated policy recommendations mainly addressed to the EU and ASEAN. During their work, all participants were able to draw from extensive feedback by the EUAP III expert advisors: Anne van Nistelrooij, Dr. Erna Surjadi, Luis J. Consuegra, Dr. Ma. Elena C. Javier, and Noraida Endut. The resulting four presentations were then shared in the concluding plenary on 7 August. The meeting, held over several time zones, was kicked-off by H.E. Franz Jessen, EU Ambassador to the Philippines, whose address underlined the EU's support for youth initiatives, gender equality and deeper cooperation with ASEAN.

In the following weeks the majority of the online conference participants kept working on their recommendations. Their work has resulted in the present paper, which not only provides a state of the art on gender equality in the EU and ASEAN, but also identifies challenges and makes extensive yet tangible recommendations on how to move ahead and work more closely together. The results formulated in this paper will be presented to stakeholders from both regions at a live event in Brussels in November 2016, where the participants will discuss their findings with policy makers, civil society and the general public. With EUAP III, IFAIR continues to provide a network for inter-disciplinary and intercultural learning among young people in Europe and Southeast Asia that will have a lasting impact.

**GENDER EQUALITY:
PROGRESS AND
CHALLENGES FROM
AN INTERREGIONAL
EU-ASEAN PERSPECTIVE**



4.1 EDUCATION AND CULTURE

by Serena Sorrenti and Surendra Ananth

Background

The history of EU-ASEAN relations dates back to the 1970s. Links between the two have been very prosperous in the area of trade and economic cooperation; however, when it comes to influencing policy they have been low-key and rarely built to bring change in the vision of culture, values and norms. Indeed, this is not often within the scope of the exchange between the two entities, whose core political principles appear to be considerably different.

When the focus of the discourse shifts onto the abstract validity of certain norms and the will to promote them in contexts that differ from those in which they were created, the risk is mostly to ignore that norms and values are culturally specific, and that their propagation should take into account the reality of the context in which we operate (Alec de Flers, 2010). Within feminist studies, patriarchal culture has been pointed out as being harmful for the achievement of gender equality, and appears to be the greatest challenge, which needs to be faced in a bottom-up approach, starting from the family and the community and ending with the state.

Considering a culturally specific conception of what is good, “a meaningful evaluation of EU-ASEAN relations thus needs to take into account the importance of values, norms and culture” (Alec de Flers, 2010: 9), with the guarantee that this will not prevent gender equality from ultimately being achieved.

Gender inequality and cultural norms are two intertwined spheres. Cultural norms shape gender relations as well as the way they operate in society. Since these norms are inherent to each culture, the way they are played out is deeply rooted in culture and traditions. For instance, in Asian countries like the Philippines where culture dictates a patriarchal structure in the household, men makes the major decisions which is a major gender power relations concern (Tangcalagan, 2014a).

Both top-down and bottom up approaches are hence necessary to uproot inequalities and achieve the final goal of a gender-just society. An effective gender policy will only work alongside a gender-sensitive culture; however, policy and culture should not be expected to progress at the same pace, since profound changes in culture happen over a much longer time span. By analysing the status of women and their economic development, it appears that one reason behind the gender gap in education is the influence of cultural norms on gender roles (Hiller, 2014), whose implications will be further analysed in the following section.

Challenges and Progress

It is pertinent to note that gender sensitive education refers to achieving gender equality by both women and men within the education system as opposed to equal access, participation, benefit and control of education by all.



On the ASEAN side, most countries do not provide for mandatory gender equality education at an early stage. Indonesia was the first country in Southeast Asia to pass a law that guarantees nine years of compulsory education to everyone-the National Education Law No. 2/1989 and the Government Regulation No. 28/1990.

Furthermore, Thailand has commissioned the World Bank to provide a brief review of the literature and interventions to promote gender equality through education. This was done in furtherance of the government's plan to reform the education system with the aim of promoting gender rights and gender equality (Levtov, 2014). In Indonesia, Gender Mainstreaming in Education was put into effect during the period of 2000-2015, in line with the spirit of the Millennium Development Goals. The effort was coordinated by the government at the Ministry of Education and Culture, along with the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection. Starting in June 2015, the new government of Indonesia has mandated 12 years of education for boys and girls. However, this programme needs an umbrella law so that all provinces can implement the said programme in full capacity (Galih, 2015).

On the EU side, there are a number of countries which mandate gender sensitive education from an early stage. Examples include Croatia (Gender Equality Act, 2008) and Sweden (The Swedish Higher Education Act, 1992). In Croatia, an education support program has been created to encourage teachers and textbook authors to cooperate in order to provide more balanced contents and to achieve gender sensitive education. Sweden, one of the leading countries in the domain of gender equality, has been one of the first European countries to introduce gender-sensitive schools.

Moreover, regional efforts have been taken to improve the existing educational materials. Equinet (European Network of Equality Bodies) organised seminars recently in Prague. France has undertaken efforts to organize a conference on gender equality in higher education. This conference will be inviting various actors from all European countries (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2016). The EU through the European Commission has come up with a new strategy with the aim drafting concrete policy frameworks to be included in the 2020 agenda for the EU (European Dignity Watch, 2015). The EU also produced a solid report on the status of gender equality within the EU, which includes sections on education (Zellmer, 2015).

As shown, some countries in both regions have adopted teaching manuals and are considering a specific topic on gender equality (Grgic, 2016). The problem is that there is no concrete, specific and uniform module to address gender stereotypes in education, whether in the EU or in ASEAN (Matheson, 2009). As such, gender stereotypes are still somehow present in most educational reading materials (Rosales, 2016).

Moving Forward

It is clear that legislation is required as a basic form of implementation. ASEAN countries and a large number of EU countries must get across this hurdle first. While a large number of countries have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, a substantial number of countries have not adopted the said convention via legislative means, particularly in relation to education. Most countries in the EU and ASEAN practice the dualist approach, where ratification of a convention does not per se bind the local actors. Legislative action is



still required to implement these conventions.

In the EU countries that do have gender equality legislation for education, implementation is a problem. Sweden stands out regarding successful policies. Here, gender equality is considered as a constitutive aspect of society and government policies and, being inherent to the system as a whole, it is present at all levels of society. In order to implement effectively the international conventions it has ratified, Sweden has established a Minister for Gender Equality, responsible for gender equality issues, and an Equality Ombudsman - a governmental agency fighting discrimination by granting the protection of rights and access to equal opportunities in compliance with the Discrimination Act (Gender Equality in Sweden webpage). The aforementioned Act reaffirms the principle of equal rights and opportunities to everyone regardless of "sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation

or age" (Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality, 2009). It is significant to notice the mention of different kinds of choices related to sexual life, inferring that they are not only recognised but also understood and approved.

In conclusion, and following the Swedish example, it is important to stress the need for a uniform and concrete action plan in terms of what is to be imparted and changed in the education system and legislation as a whole, promoting simultaneously mutual cooperation and understanding between the two regions. EU and ASEAN could learn a great deal from each other and take steps forward in terms of advancing gender equality according to and respecting the local context. This will be discussed further in Chapter 5.1.



TedED Conference 2014 - Women in business - Photo by Ignite New Zealand, www.flickr.com/photos/techedlive



4.2 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

by Tereza Grunvaldová

Background

Compared to many years ago, the situation for women has significantly improved worldwide especially with regard to women's political rights or women's representation in elective offices. Women have gained the right to vote and to stand for office in virtually every country of the world within less than a century (UNDP, 2014). Progress in gender equality can also be proven and measured through the valid and adopted laws and constitutions guaranteeing women's rights to political participation. As of 2014, 143 countries guarantee equality between women and men in their constituencies (UNDP, 2014).

Globally, women enjoy more decision-making power and influence in political life than ever before (O'Neil, T., Domingo P., 2016: 9). Since the 1995 Beijing Conference, women have been provided with opportunities and supported to hold positions in national parliaments, governments and executive roles. The increase of women positions in national parliaments from 11,8% in 1995 to 22,1% in 2015 has enabled women to influence existing political structures in their national governments and influence policy-making as well as a direction of the reform process (UN Women, 2015a).

Notwithstanding such global trends, there are multiple and regionally specific factors thwarting the positive developments and trends in terms of gender political equality. Stemming from the local practice and available sources, political representation is shaped through the legal rights enabling access to

political functions, and personal motivation is affected by the family and community attitudes, customs and domestic decision-making power, including engagement with critical mass. Therefore, promotion of women equality should not remain a mere rhetorical commitment: more needs to be done in order to upscale the equal treatment in the political environment. The rule of law is crucial for gender equality and anti-discrimination at workplaces, in political institutions or at home. Legal frameworks must reflect international frameworks, but also be tailored to specific contexts.

Challenges and Progress

In terms of a global legal framework, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the main point of reference for understanding the meaning of gender equality. All signatory states are obliged to take all measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life, and ensure to women have the rights to vote in all elections, to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof, and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, and to participate in non-governmental organisations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country (CEDAW, Part II, Art 7). The Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is another multilateral treaty which is 'ensuring the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights...' (ICCPR, Part II, Art. 3). This internationally



recognized system is helping to clarify the duties and rights countries have to respect and protect. In addition to the international framework, the 5th Sustainable Goal (out of the 16 Goals) is specifically dedicated to women and elimination of any form of discrimination. It calls for the guarantee of women's rights through legal frameworks, constitutions and anti-discrimination measures in public, political and private spheres.

According to the latest political developments in Southeast Asia, there are positive trends in terms of women's political participation and representation, despite strong local stereotypes prevailing and varying from one country to the next, with a very clear separation of roles and prejudices regarding women's role in society. This region has a positive trajectory especially when it comes to women's participation in elections, in policy-making processes and political representation (Labani. 2008: 6). Women's political representation in legislatures varies greatly in Southeast Asia countries, from Malaysia (10% of all recently elected members of parliament) to Myanmar (12%), Thailand (16%), Indonesia (17%), Cambodia (20%), the Philippines (27%) and Timor-Leste (38%). This variance is influenced largely by different electoral systems, with higher representation in countries where proportional voting systems

are in place (data from the Quotaproject.org).

On the other hand, according to the EC Report on equality between women and men, EU women accounted for an average of only 28.5 % of members of the single/lower houses of national parliaments in the EU in 2015 (EC Report on Equality, 2015: 14). There is however a difference between the member states. According to available statistics, Sweden, Spain and Finland had at least 40 % MPs of each gender in national parliaments. In contrast, Latvia, Ireland, Romania, Malta and Cyprus had fewer than 20 % of women in national parliaments, while the number was less than 10 % in Hungary (EC Report on Equality, 2015: 24).

Despite some positive trends in women's representation in parliaments or government institutions, the situation at grassroots level or in relation to specific policies is different, especially in Southeast Asia. This specifically refers to women's participation in post-conflict state-building or peace processes. There are pertaining factors limiting women's political participation in traditional societies of the region that have to be taken into account when enhancing women capacities or agency. The factors are as follows:

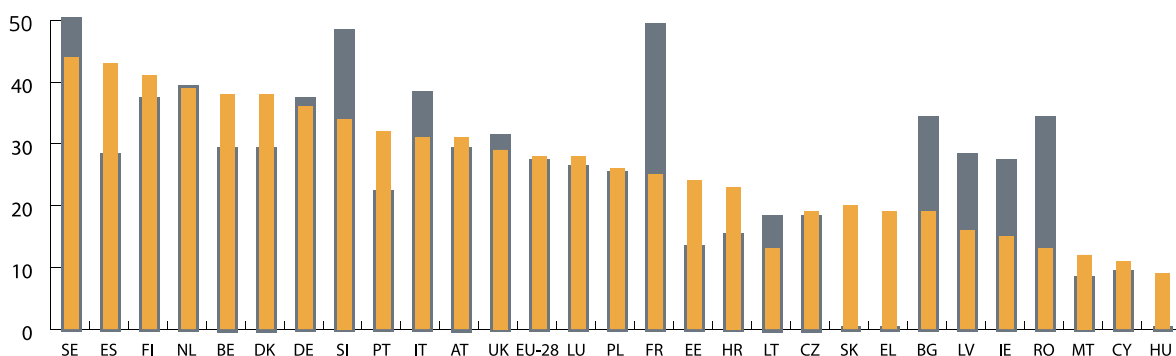


Figure: Women in national parliaments and governments in the EU (%), November 2015
Source: European Commission's Report on equality between women and men, 2015



- Social norms and stereotypes – these have an influence on political culture. In more traditional societies, these norms have the power to keep women at home and constrain their access to education, public life or employment. Awareness-raising activities and education is needed to be supported at the local level.
- Legal environment and rule of law – non-existing or fast-track political processes and temporary special measures are not only hampering women's rights but also providing fast-track solutions to complex issues. Gender-sensitive legislation drafted and adopted based on inclusive and participatory consultations is crucial for the future of women's political representation, women's rights to vote and their access to education and equal opportunities.
- Political education of young leaders – lack of political education of young women and men i with regards to women's rights and practices of equal treatment is persisting. Political education about women's political participation and rights as well as leadership exchange activities must be incorporated into local programming in order to cultivate new generation of young leaders and complement local development actions on women equality.
- Civil society – civil society often does not adequately convey ideas about women's rights and practices of equal treatment. The reason is often related to the internal processes, male-dominated and top-down leadership or lack of gender equality policies that would navigate the strategy and direction of the organisational development. Awareness-raising activities, review or assessment of organisational policies must be conducted in order to set up the gender equality processes and

monitor the performance of civil society organisations.

Moving Forward

Gender quotas

The increasing political participation of women is linked to the introduction of various types of gender quotas for elections. In Southeast Asia, there are actually few countries with a quota system, for instance Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines. However, it has to be noted that this doesn't necessarily translate into higher numbers of women in parliament. In Indonesia, according to Article 55 of Law 8/2012 on General Elections, the list of nominees of candidates for members of the House of Representatives shall contain at least 30% female candidates. The actual representation of women in the Indonesian House of Representatives has actually slightly decreased from 17.9% in the 2009 election to 17.32% in the current legislative period. Thailand has a bicameral political system, with the use of voluntary party quotas. About 16% of seats in the House of Representatives are held by women. The Philippines also have a bicameral parliament and voluntary quotas. About 27% of seats in the House of Representatives are held by women (Quotaproject.org). In order to ensure that gender quotas are carried out it is important to effectively monitor their progress and women's representation in elected bodies of government (see Chapter 5.2 - Gender Management System).

Awareness of political leaders on gender equality policies

Obviously, quotas alone will not result in equal participation. To ensure fairness between both genders, strategies and measures must



be available to compensate for women's historical and social disadvantages which prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. Men must be educated about women's rights to equal opportunities and involved in the political, social, cultural and economic activities for women empowerment.

Gender equality in the EU's policy-making, budgeting, implementation and enforcement

The EU has pledged to promote gender equality in its external relations. The current EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 provides a financial framework for a number of targeted activities, primarily through the Global Public Goods and Challenges thematic programme included in the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) 67, with around EUR 100 million committed to work to improve the lives of girls and women (EC Joint Staff Working Document, 2015: 11). Besides this, gender is also mainstreamed as a component of bilateral programmes as part of the Human Rights Programming or Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument.

The main goal of the EU's gender policies is to contribute to a world where the rights of girls and women are claimed, valued and respected by all, and where everyone is able to fulfil their potential and contribute to a fairer and more just society for all. It believes that:

- Good governance and democratic processes are closely interlinked with women's empowerment. Drafting and adopting legislation and laws together with women and strengthening their voices and participation in public affairs at all levels can have significant and positive effects on the political, social and economic environment. Good practices in women participation should be utilized for facilitation of peace, reconstruction and

state building processes.

- Gender equality is about respecting human rights for men and women, regardless ethnicity, religion or nationality. The fundamental principles and rights must be promoted at all societal levels. Systematic and consistent discrimination experienced by half of the world's population should not be ignored by anyone in the world (EC Joint Staff Working Document, 2015: 4).
- Gender equality is a fundamental element of societal, economic, political or ecological development. It is an important ingredient for social and economic empowerment. Gender equality must also be included in project monitoring systems and evaluation processes.

These convictions will have an impact on EU-ASEAN relations in the future. This policy paper explains further the policy recommendations on increasing political participation in Section 5.2.



4.3 ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

by Olivia Geymond and Lim Fang Hui

Background

The EU and ASEAN regions face very similar issues when it comes to the economic situation of women. Two of the predominant trends in both regions are (a) a significant gender gap in the labour force participation and (b) the fact that women entrepreneurs face greater challenges than their male counterparts.

This unequal share of domestic work impacts women's economic situation in that women are more likely than men to work part time or to not participate in the labour force at all. Only 65.6% of women with children under 12 work, as opposed to 90.3% of men (EU Commission, n.d.). In the EU, about a third of working women are in part-time positions compared to fewer than 10% of men.

Challenges and Progress

Unequal labour force participation

In the EU, the female employment rate reached an all-time high at around 65% last year (EU Commission, 2015). Although high, this rate remains well below men's employment rate which stands at around 75%. This brings the average EU gender gap in labour force participation to about 10%. In the ASEAN region, the issue is even more acute as the average gap across all ASEAN Member States is at about 19% (Jha and Saxena, 2015).

One of the main factor behind this divide is that both European and Asian women take a bigger share of domestic work, which impedes their access to equal economic opportunities. In 2015, European women took on three quarters of household chores and two thirds of parental care. They spent an average of 12 hours on cooking and housework and an average of 8 hours caring for and/or educating your children or grandchildren per week. In ASEAN countries, married women spend on average 3.5 hours more than men on unpaid care work every day (Jha and Saxena, 2015).

It is now clear that female labour force participation is correlated with the availability of affordable childcare services, promotion of work-life balance, and paternal involvement in child care (Guo, 2015). To improve the participation of women in the labour market, most EU countries do have policies to favour a work-life balance-in particular the provision of childcare services, out-of-school care and care for dependants; the establishment of a tax-benefit system; the provision of parental/family leaves; work arrangements. Moreover, the EU is working on a work-life balance initiative aiming at removing obstacles to the labour market for people with caring responsibilities (particularly women). Following a broad consultation, the new initiative should feed into a comprehensive policy framework for work-life balance. On top of this, the EU monitors the implementation of the existing directives on equal treatment, maternity leave and parental leave. Last year, eight Member States received a recommendation relating to female labour-market participation.

In ASEAN member states, the focus is not much (yet) on family-friendly policies or flexible working arrangements but rather on



labour laws prohibiting direct discrimination based on sex. Most ASEAN member states have adopted such policies (Jha and Saxena, 2015).

Greater barriers for women entrepreneurs

In both regions, women face additional challenges as entrepreneurs. Firstly, there are fewer of them. Secondly, women face greater difficulties in accessing capital. Some studies suggest women are asked for more financial assets as collateral, are charged higher interest rates and refused loans more often in the EU (De Jong, 2013). In ASEAN, while women are not prevented from holding property and bank accounts, assets that can be used as collateral to access credit are mostly held by men thereby distancing women from any modes of formal financing (Jha and Saxena, 2015). Finally, women face additional challenges to access networks, formal markets and new technologies which would allow them to rise their businesses above the micro and small scale. In the ASEAN region, very few women own medium or large scale businesses and are mostly engaged in informal labor markets, especially in agriculture (Jha and Saxena, 2015; Tangcalagan, 2014b). Also, businesses headed by women tend to dominate certain gender stereotyped industries such as catering, tailoring, beauty industry and food processing, while there are very few women leading businesses in the export sector.

To promote female entrepreneurship, the EU and ASEAN initiatives have predominantly consisted of developing networks. The main example for this is the European network to promote women's entrepreneurship (WES) for the EU and the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs Network (AWEN) on the side of ASEAN. Both of these networks aim at exchanging experience and propose initiatives to support female entrepreneurship. Other

examples include the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors, the European Network of Mentors for Women Entrepreneurs and the Great Women in ASEAN network.

Moving Forward

Although difficult to measure, the positive impact of such networks is undoubted. They are major sources of knowledge about women's entrepreneurship and are increasingly recognised as a valuable tool for its development and promotion. Against that background, much more still needs to be done to promote female entrepreneurship beyond the establishment of networks: promoting entrepreneurship, educating women to entrepreneurship, removing the barriers for women to enter the business world, having more role models and mentors. This paper will seek to present recommendations to address these issues in Section 5.3.

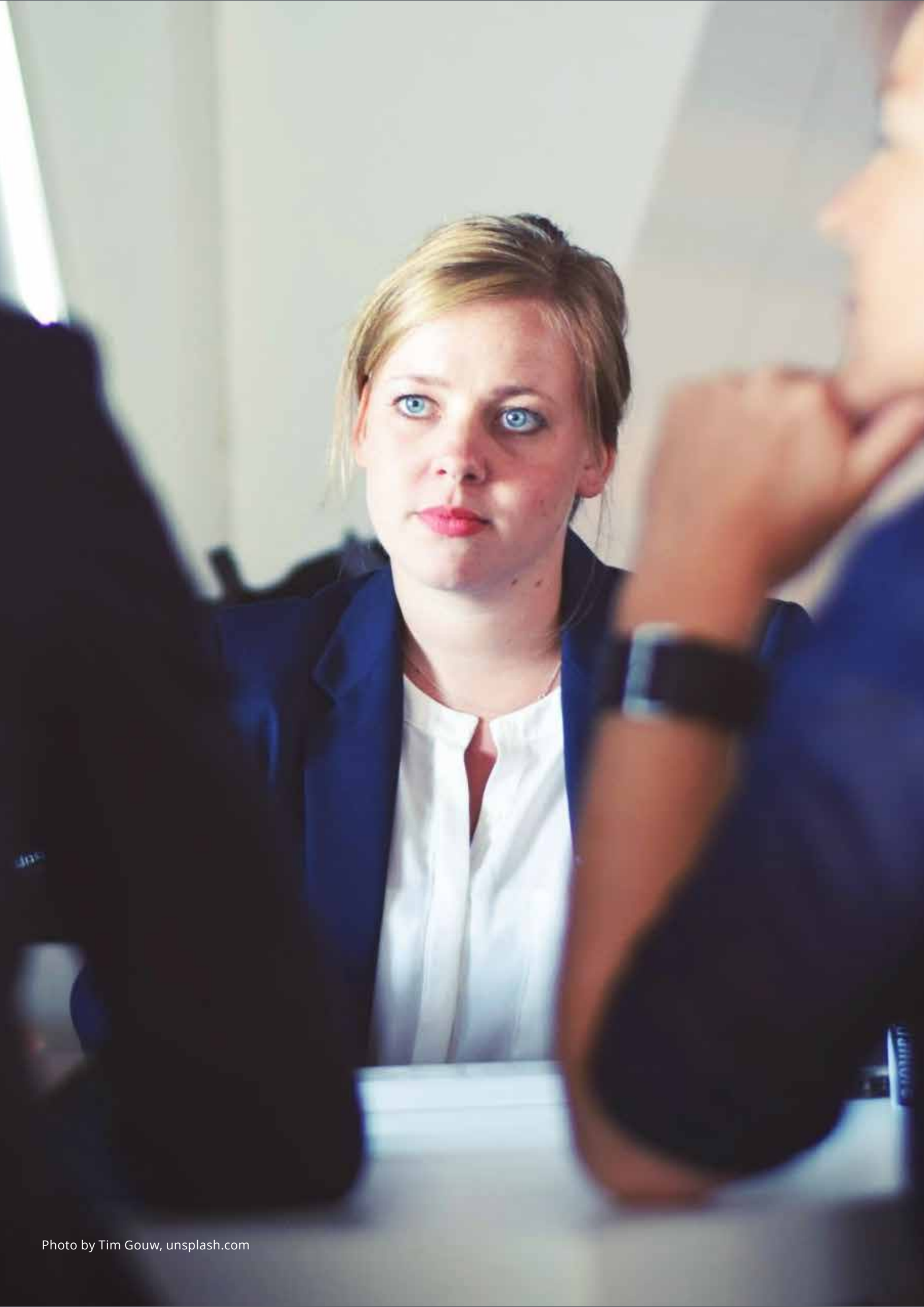


Photo by Tim Gouw, unsplash.com

**GENDER
EQUALITY: POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS
FROM AN INTERREGIONAL
EU-ASEAN PERSPECTIVE**



5.1 GENDER POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON EDUCATION AND CULTURE

A. Shaping Gender-Sensitive Early Education

*by Surendra Ananth and
Bianca C. Perina*

Background

Addressing the challenges described in Chapter 4.1 from an interregional EU-ASEAN perspective, this sub-chapter discusses the particular need to redefine and shape early education from within a gender-sensitive lens. This mechanism promises to lead to a modification of behavior at all levels of society, referred to as 'gender sensitization', and is fundamentally connected to 'gender empowerment', which involves both males and females.

Gender equality in education is something that has been vigorously advocated over the past decade. Much of the focus, however, has been on equal access to education as opposed to achieving equality within the education system. While acknowledging that the former is also crucial—for example, in some countries like the Philippines, boys are at a disadvantage over girls because they are more likely to drop out of school (Joseph, H.U, 2011). This sub-chapter will focus on gender equality within the education system.

Importance

It is established that the education systems in most countries produce gender stereotypes (Levtov, R, 2014). It is also well-known that,

globally, the main issue is societal stigma that is rooted in history, tradition and culture (Kamrany, N.M. & Robinson, C, 2014). Such stigma must be addressed at an early stage. If children are nurtured and grow into an education system filled with gender stereotypes they will be gender biased, both consciously and subconsciously, which will lastingly manifest from puberty onwards. The ultimate goal of gender equality education is to remove stigma, understand human rights and implement it accordingly; though this will only bear results in the long run.

Policy recommendations

In order to establish efficient and well-functioning mechanisms for gender sensitization within early education, we recommend a threefold approach:

First and foremost, culturally embedded gender stereotypes must be countered by teachers, educators and educational institutions with specific **gender-sensitive curricula**. This measure primarily focuses on increasing knowledge and understanding of human rights, which in practice reduces barriers to personal and economic development created by sexism (Joerger, C & Taylor, E, 2004). It should be enforced by the following means:

- Ensuring that teaching materials and teachers themselves are examined in all subjects to make sure that they are in line with the concept of gender sensitivity and are devoid of gender stereotypes. For



the text books, all book publishers must ensure that their publications are gender sensitive and include human rights topics. This includes, for example, reducing the focus on males as being traditionally placed in leadership roles and women being traditionally placed in household roles, and instead encouraging partnerships of mutual respect and harmony between men and women. Curricula must tailor subjects to avoid gender stereotypes. For example, the role of women in history, science, mathematics, politics and literature must be emphasized (Rosales, I, 2016). For teachers, training manuals and gender-sensitivity workshops/seminars must be organized to ensure that all forms of teaching are rid of gender stereotypes and geared towards promoting gender equality where possible. The UNESCO Training Manual for Sensitizing Education Managers, Curriculum and Material Developers and Media Professionals to Gender Concerns is a good starting point in this regard (Joerger, C & Taylor, E, 2004). Moreover, some emphasis must be placed on sport participation in schools, which is an entrypoint for gender awareness for the youth. There must be equal athletic opportunities, resources and benefits for both girls and boys. There should be a balanced number of female and male coaches as well as encouragement mechanisms for women being hired to sport administrative posts.

- Introducing specific modules on gender equality within the respective educational systems and institutions. The modules will aim at removing gender biases from an early stage, with the ultimate goal of removing gender stereotype stigmas from society. A good example is the Training Manual prepared by the International Centre for Research on Women (Gender

Equity Movements in Schools, 2011). A rough educational outline was also presented by Teresa Alvarez in the Equinet Seminar on Gender Equality in Education at Prague (Alvarez, T, 2016). The modules should also address issues related to the LGBTIQ communities to foster proper understanding and treatment of these among the younger generation. The misconception that gender is limited to male and female and is directly related to sex must be addressed at an early stage.

- Teaching positions at all stages, starting with nursery, must be filled in a gender-balanced way. While the proportion of female teachers in primary and secondary education has been on the rise since 1990 (UNESCO, 2012), they remain underrepresented in higher education. In contrast, male teachers remain underrepresented particularly in early education. (cf. chapters 5.1B and 5.1C).

Secondly, the EU and ASEAN should engage in **cross-border awareness campaigns** for gender sensitization. Examples would be the promotion of and demand for gender-neutral toys, children's books or societal opportunities in general as well as campaigns aiming for girls' empowerment – India's 'beti bachao, beti padhao' campaign (Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, 2015) and the private company Always' initiative #LikeAGirl (Procter & Gamble, 2016) are useful points of reference. Such activities can lastingly reduce gender stereotypes against girls and boys.

Thirdly and related, gender sensitisation can only be achieved by acknowledging **cultural particularities**. Amongst other factors, this inherently includes religious beliefs and traditions. While religious affiliation in general has significantly dropped in most EU countries in the last decade, it remains strong



in the majority of ASEAN countries. Moreover, as cultural identities fundamentally shape geopolitical disputes since the turn of the millennium, it is of utter importance for the interregional cooperation of EU and ASEAN to use mechanisms which are compatible with different cultural backgrounds and conceptions of human rights. In this way, a truly inclusive and interregional promotion of respect “for the equally valid roles that men and women play in their families, their communities and their nations” (Joerger, C & Taylor, E, 2004) can be achieved.

- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) working on issues of gender, family or education – to promote gender sensitive ideas and norms in the public discourse;
- text book publishers – to work with the Ministries of Education to ensure all publications are gender sensitive;
- families – to support their children in internalizing gender sensitive social manners.

Actors

Defining actors to be included for the policy recommendations outlined above are the following:

- parliament/Law-making bodies – to mandate gender equality education by way of legislation;
- ministries of Women’s empowerment-to stand up as counselors for the importance and the benefit of this gender equality education;
- ministries of Education – to draw up a uniform and concrete module on gender equality education applicable to all schools. To be the main and deciding authority on all issues and to ensure other actors (besides Parliament) are carrying out their functions properly, i.e. to monitor and approve all educational material to ensure they are gender sensitive;
- all educational institutions – to implement the module drawn up by the Ministry of Education and to ensure that all its personnel are trained;

EU-ASEAN Implications

It must be acknowledged that EU countries are a step ahead when it comes to gender sensitive education. ASEAN countries can learn from EU countries which have already established mandatory gender equality education, such as Sweden. Similarly, they can learn from the existing modules prepared by some EU countries. As far as EU countries are concerned, some efforts can be undertaken to better understand the cultures and religions that are rooted in ASEAN countries. This would provide a basis for the EU countries to improve their own gender equality education with a view to minority groups, which would also contribute to integrating first and second generation immigrants. These groups have been shaping and furthermore will form part of the European society over the course of time. An interregional perspective has the potential of directly addressing a common understanding towards the correlation of education, gender and culture at its core.



B. Preparing Male Caregivers and Fostering Equality in Caregiving

by Sophie Veauthier

Background

Equality in the workplace ranges high on the agenda of organizations like UN Women and the ILO and should be realized through an enhanced support for and partnership between caregivers and teachers of all genders. However, from early education to nursing, care is still mostly a female domain (European Commission, 2015). Studies show that worldwide, daughters spend more time than sons caring for elderly parents (Grigoryeva, 2014; Jang, Avendano, Kawachi, 2012) while men are also underrepresented in early education and especially infant care. This places a heavy burden on women. A report for the European Commission shows that, as a result, European women are still significantly disadvantaged in every stage of the lifecycle with regards to employment opportunities and are at a greater risk of economic and societal marginalization (European Commission, 2011, p. 7).

The proportion of female teachers in primary and secondary education has been on the rise since 1990 (UNESCO, 2012, p. 98). On the one hand, this is a positive development as female teachers can be role models sending an empowering message to young girls and boys. On the other hand, the fact that men are heavily underrepresented in early education and infant care (European Commission, 2015; UNICEF 2007) reinforces cultural stereotypes of men as breadwinners and women as caretakers. This is aggravated by the fact that female teachers are still heavily underrepresented in tertiary education.

Similar to early education and infant care, nursing care and care for the elderly is a predominantly female field of work. This involves mostly low wage jobs or informal care which often is poorly compensated. In countries facing a rapid demographic change, the lack of men in nursing care also aggravates the problem of an inadequately staffed job sector (WHO Europe, 2016). The rapid ageing of the populations of EU and ASEAN in combination with more and more women who are continuously entering the labor market puts serious strain on the formal care and health systems in both regions (European Commission, 2011, p. 5). As a consequence, there is a dire need to advance gender equality in sharing care responsibilities – in the formal as well as informal sector.

Policy Recommendations

Against the background of somewhat limited previous efforts between EU and ASEAN towards a holistic concept for gender equality in the realm of caregiving, particular attention should be attributed to the following policy recommendations:

Reframing 'Care'

A campaign aimed at reframing care as socially important, meaningful and not only requiring skills traditionally defined as 'feminine' should reflect the current reality and stress the hard work done by the female majority of workers as well as the demand and opportunity for men to step in and contribute. It should aim at increasing awareness and appreciation of caregiving overall by highlighting the growing need for elderly care and the benefits of shared infant care. Additionally, it should feature the voices of men in nursing and infant care in order to showcase and set positive examples. EU and ASEAN member states thus have to



create and distribute the following material:

- educational short films and printed material with information on the hard work of women and the current lack of men in caregiving as well as the growing need for men to step in;
- a social media platform including an easily citable campaign name, a campaign website, a site on regionally relevant social networking pages, a campaign hashtag, and a video channel. Using these channels, the campaign can reach a young demographic about to enter the workforce;
- video material featuring the winners of national caregiving competitions: states should introduce awards for outstanding male and female caregivers. Caregivers should be nominated and chosen on the local (grassroots) level first and then go in a second provincial or national round which should be judged by seasoned personnel on the basis of written testimony from the grassroots level.

The online presence of the campaign should be established on a regional level by the European Commission and within the ASEAN Economic Community. On the national level it falls under the responsibility of the respective governmental departments (health/family/labor etc.) to complement this regional effort by providing and distributing material in their national languages and appointing national spokespeople. These efforts should be reported back to the regional level in order to establish control as well as a feedback loop.

Devising/Amending Legislation and Sharing Best Practices on Parental Leave

While paid leave for mothers is nearly universal, too often it is very limited in time and does not provide adequate compensation (not less than two thirds of their previous income), based on global statistics (World Policy Center, 2016; ILO, 2014). Even worse, worldwide paid paternal and parental leave remain exceptions. The goal must therefore be to create a system of parental leave that allows for both parents to actively care for their infants for a sufficiently long period of time. We urge the EU and ASEAN to share best practices and to do so in a more institutionalized way within the interregional cooperation of EU and ASEAN. (see also ASEAN & AECID, 2013).

In order to set off change in ASEAN member countries, best practices on parental leave derived from positive examples like Sweden should be included as part of the Enhanced Regional EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (E-READI) and technical assistance drawing from these best practices should be provided to ASEAN member states through the enhanced ASEAN Regional Integration Support Programme by the EU (ARISE Plus). Assistance should aim at drafting national parental leave legislation and the establishment of national financing models, while the EU's Parental Leave Directive (Council Directive 2010/18/EU) should be used as an example for the provision of regional guidelines within ASEAN.

While it can function as a baseline example for ASEAN member states, the EU Directive on Parental Leave itself should be amended:

- It should include an obligation to pay at least for the one non-transferable



month per parent as the combination of remuneration and non-transferability is a very strong incentive for fathers to take up leave.

- Parental leave should always allow for joined leave and the Directive should suggest the introduction of tax incentives for parents who share leave.
- It should include parent's entitlement to changes in their working hours for a certain time after childbirth/adoption similar to the provisions in Sweden which allow for a reduction in working hours up to 25% until the child turns eight.
- As proposed by the European Commission (2016a, p. 54), dismissal protection for pregnant workers and women who have recently given birth should be extended to six months after the end of maternity leave, and it should include preparatory steps for dismissal as well as a right to written reasons.

At the same time, the current Directive on Parental Leave needs to be fully implemented: Not all EU member countries have introduced parental leave with a non-transferrable period of at least one month (European Commission, 2016a, p. 22). The European Semester needs to address these shortcomings and include them in its Country Specific Recommendations. We also strongly suggest a new Commission initiative for the Council of the European Union to extend the minimum maternity leave to 18 weeks. In addition, EU-level legislation on paternity leave (at least two weeks) and carer's leave needs to be devised. Apart from legal action, the EU should foster regional as well as inter-regional exchange of best practices, especially in the area of infant and childcare for children under 3 years of age.

Successful implementation of these measures, however, will also depend on contextual factors such as the relatively low pay gap between women and men in Sweden which functions as a precondition for paid leave to be equally attractive for men and women.

Devising/Amending Legislation and Sharing Best Practices on Elderly Care

In the face of demographic ageing and increasing demands for elderly care, women's participation in the labour market is becoming more important than ever. Beyond childcare, having a relative who requires care has been shown to disproportionately impact female workers who often assume the role of informal caregivers which can result in them dropping out of the workforce (European Commission, 2016b, p. 6, 9).

Japan has succeeded at containing long-term care expenditures while ensuring a high level of qualification. They have also developed an effective system of managing elderly patients which integrates a high level of service and could serve as a basis for a cross-regional set of best practices (European Commission & OECD, 2013). While Japan has an average number of long term care (LTC) workers in institutions, it has 39 LTC workers per 1000 people aged 65 years old and over in home care settings compared to the much lower average of OECD countries at about 3.1. This is a result of an active policy to position homes as settings for long term care, which was already instituted in 1989 (Japan's Nursing Association, 2013). This is a useful and necessary measure in the face of a rapidly aging population. However, it reinforces traditional gender roles with women doing most of the care work (Hashizume, 2000). Similar results can be seen



in Germany, which has been undergoing the same transition to home care, but without an equally effective system of case management. In 2015, 62% of all Germans with elderly family members in need of care provided it within the family, which means that six million people were active as informal care workers, of whom two thirds were female. Sixty-seven percent of them reported very high psychological stress levels (Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach und R+V Versicherung, 2015).

On the European side, regional legislation on carer's leave should be introduced. It should ensure that carers' leave is extended beyond the current baseline of a right to very short periods of time off for urgent family matters ('force majeure' leave). The minimum length of the leave should be set to eight weeks for each dependent relative or an equivalent account of leave credits that employees can use over their working lives. This period should be compensated with a minimum allowance at the level of sick pay. Workers should be able to take it up flexibly (e.g. full-time, part-time, in several blocks, including remote working). This would be a major improvement compared to the current situation within the EU member states and would mainly help women (and especially mothers) as they more often work in part-time arrangement and employers are still more reluctant to grant them flexible working schedules for family reasons than they are towards men (European Commission, 2016a, p. 32f). Similar to our suggestions for the development of best practices on parental leave, examples like the Northern European countries, but also extra-regional examples like Japan should be included as part of E-READI. Furthermore, the EU should provide technical assistance to ASEAN member states through ARISE Plus.

Guidelines in both regions should include financial support of formal and informal care

as well as training opportunities. EU-ASEAN cooperation on the matter has to stress the need for the accreditation of home care providers, practical help and psychological support for informal care as well as financial support for informal care and home-visit nursing. The long-term goal must be to shift the division of labor within families towards equality. In the meantime, EU and ASEAN countries with ageing populations have to provide support for female informal care workers and address men in particular in the training of formal and informal home care workers.

Supporting Communication and Networking of Male Caregivers

On the basis of Iceland's first "Barbershop Conference" at the UN in 2015, which provided a setting for constructive men-to-men discussions about tackling the problem of gender inequality and 'changing the discourse among men on gender equality' (Council of Europe, 2015), a joint ASEAN-EU Dialogue aimed at male caregivers and teachers should be initiated as a public support mechanism. While the Dialogue should not be closed to women, it would specifically target men, as our aim is to include more men in a cross-regional dialogue on gender equality which is too often regarded as a women's issue.

In addition to bilateral exchanges, the EU and ASEAN should actively support multinational campaigns and complement them from an interregional perspective, such as UN Women's 'He For She'. In this way, effective agenda setting towards gender equality in care and teaching sectors can be realized – especially when combined with a general campaign on reframing care as mentioned in the first recommendation.



EU-ASEAN Implications

Gender equality includes breaking down stereotypes against women as well as against men. The latter becomes paramount when implementing the above outlined policy recommendations. Despite relevant legislation at EU level and more and more ASEAN countries campaigning for (e.g. Indonesia (Kusumaningdyah, 2016)) and enabling (e.g. Vietnam, Singapore) parental leave laws for both genders, societal clichés – in terms of masculinity and financially providing for the family – hinder men to enact upon these laws. We have to acknowledge that policies do not necessarily change traditional social attitudes and behaviors. Men face societal prejudices as primary caretakers in the formal and informal sector and experience enormous pressure to live up to societal ideals of masculinity and manhood, preventing them from engaging in activities of care taking or teaching. The potential of the policy recommendations outlined above lies in their reciprocal effectiveness: on the one hand targeting women's unacceptable situation of disadvantaged access to the job market due to their traditional role as primary care takers; on the other hand, laying the ground for a profound movement of men's own gender-based reflection.

C. Getting Men on Board: A Strategy to Gender Equality

by Marisna Yulianti

Background

More often than not, men are excluded from the gender equality discourse. For many years, the term has been falsely presented as comprising women-only issues and largely positioned men as the long-time

opponents of the concept. Although women's empowerment is undeniably an important tool in achieving gender equality, it should not be the only one. Men, as well as women, need to be involved in deconstructing the patriarchal-based concepts of masculine men and feminine women to create an equal and just society for all.

In the context of the EU, there is a clear institutional acknowledgment of the significance of men's involvement in achieving gender equality and in the efforts to promote the process. The Council of the EU, in its Council Conclusions of 30 November-1 December 2006, affirmed that "in order to improve the status of women and promote gender equality, more attention should be paid to how men are involved in the achievement of gender equality, as well as to the positive impact of gender equality for men and for the well-being of society as a whole". More recently, in its "Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015", the EU has called for an active participation and contribution of men in achieving gender equality, including in efforts to address the inequalities that affect men and boys. The follow-up document, "Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019", further stresses the importance of the role of men in all key priority areas. Recognizing the importance of empirical data in its policies and programs, relevant studies have also been undertaken by the EU on the issue. Among others were "The Involvement of Men in Gender Equality Initiatives in the European Union" conducted by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and "The Role of Men in Gender Equality – European Strategies and Insights" as part of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity-PROGRESS Program (2007-2013) led by the European Commission. A thematic study on men's roles in achieving gender equality at home and in the workplace



was also undertaken in 2010 by the European Network of Experts on Employment and Gender Equality Issues (EGGE) titled “Men and Gender Equality: Tackling Gender Segregated Family Roles and Social Care Jobs”.

On the other side of the globe, it is worth noting that all ASEAN Member States have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)-an important signal that marks the region’s acceptance of the concept of gender equality. ASEAN’s focus on gender equality has largely been on combating violence against women and promoting women’s economic empowerment through its two main regional bodies overseeing the issues of women’s empowerment and gender equality: (1) the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women (AMMW) and its subsidiary body, the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), and (2) the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC). The issue of men’s involvement in the region is framed around the preventive efforts of violence against women. These include the development of programs that challenge male sexual entitlement and dominance over women and promoting the concept of non-violence and positive masculinities as highlighted in the recently adopted ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Violence against Women. There has not been any specific study initiated by ASEAN exclusively on men’s perspective, roles and contribution to the attainment of gender equality.

Policy Recommendations and EU-ASEAN Implications

The EU and ASEAN have been moving at a different pace on the issues of men and

masculinities. While the EU has explicitly acknowledged the importance of the role of men in addressing gender inequalities as a whole and accordingly included it in its strategic documents, ASEAN at this stage only recognizes men and masculinities as the extension of women’s issues. ASEAN has not been placing much of its resources in this area although there is a general understanding at the civil society level of the need to further engage men in gender issues, particularly in family planning and violence against women. Acknowledging the gap, it is then important to create a platform for exchanging best practices between the two regions in order to better address the challenges and to improve the already existing policies. Institutions within the EU and ASEAN which are mandated to oversee the issues of gender equality, such as the European Commission, Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO), the ACW and ACWC, need to have a regular platform of discussion on various gender issues including men’s involvement in addressing gender inequalities. The discussion can also be extended to various research institutes and centers for women’s studies in the EU and ASEAN, including the EIGE.

Taking into account the different level of awareness and commitment to the issues of men and masculinities in the EU and ASEAN, the following policy recommendations focus on the possible interventions that are considered feasible and effective. For improving ASEAN’s commitments in exploring the issues of men’s involvement in gender equality and providing the space for both the EU and ASEAN to share experiences and best practices, we suggest:

- To undertake research in the ASEAN region on mapping out the possible stakeholders and resources within the region that can contribute to the improvement of men’s



involvement in gender equality;

- To explore the possibility of conducting joint research between the EU and ASEAN on thematic issues of men and masculinities with the active collaboration of universities and centers for women's studies in the two regions and to afterwards disseminate the research results to legislators, educators, civil society, media and other relevant stakeholders in the EU and ASEAN Member States, particularly where the research was conducted;
- To formulate a brief guideline for governments and civil society on engaging men in gender equality and women's empowerment related programs based on the experience of EU and ASEAN;
- To initiate constructive dialogues through the participation of ASEAN Delegations in the Mutual Learning Programme in Gender Equality and the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming of the EU as well as the participation of EU Delegations in the AMMW, ACW and ACWC regional meetings and other related fora;
- To establish a bi-annual EU-ASEAN Dialogue on Gender Equality to share achievements and challenges faced by each regions including in involving men in gender equality related initiatives and programs;
- To initiate the EU-ASEAN Decade on Men's Involvement in Gender Equality initiative to serve as an anchor for both regions in emphasizing their commitments to address gender issues that are affecting men and boys as well as to improve the role of men in achieving gender equality.



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5.2 GENDER POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

by Elena Moreno, Hien Thi Nguyen, Hui Ying Lee,
Arliska Fatma Rosi and Sinet Seap

Background

In the past two decades, the proportion of women in politics has grown significantly. The number of women parliamentarians worldwide rose from 11.3% in 1995 to 22.1% in 2015 (IPU, 2015). Among ASEAN Member States, recent years have witnessed the rise of some high-profile female politicians, like the former Prime Minister of Thailand, Ying-luck Shinawatra, and the recently named Foreign Minister and State Counsellor after the 2015 elections in Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi (IPU, 2016). From Women in Development (WID) approaches to Gender and Development (GAD) strategies (Razavi, 1995; Rathgeber, 1998), improving women's political participation has been evolving (Reeves, 2000). Men, who have been dominating the political sphere, have also been engaged in championing gender equality in several local and international practices in order to provide women opportunities for a meaningful participation in politics (Broderick, 2013; UN, 2008). Underrepresented sectors in politics such as young girls and boys have also received increased attention over the last two decades, which underlines the importance of their views and initiatives. In fact, the UN declared the 12th of August as International Youth Day recognizing the value of youth engagement in achieving sustainable development (UN, 2016). Undoubtedly, all these positive developments reflect an international effort to improve the participation of these underrepresented groups in the arena of politics.

However, despite all of these advancements,

much remains to be done to promote the political participation of women and the youth. Both in the worldwide and the regional levels of the EU and ASEAN, these actors have experienced challenges in the field of politics as detailed in Section 4.2. To sum up:

- *The growth of women's political participation is not significant enough to reflect gender equality in political participation.* While there is a 9% worldwide increase of women parliamentarians, statistics show that only 46 single or lower houses of parliament have reached the critical mass of 30% of female parliamentarians. This reflects only the number within the minimum proportion necessary to have a significant influence in the legislatures. With a percentage of 19.5 in the lower and upper houses, Asia has one of the lowest regional average of female parliamentarians as of August 2016, compared to the Americas, with 27.7%, and Europe (excluding Nordic countries), with 24.3%, also below the indicated minimum proportion needed. In addition, there are still 72 countries that have less than 15% women in their lower houses. (IPU, 2014, 2016).
- *While GAD strategies and gender leaders, both women and men, are in place, these are often limited due to lack of political will and authority to direct the implementation.* The ASEAN Civil Society Conference (2016) concluded there is a lack of substantive compliance and implementation of international human rights treaties and



standards relating to gender equality. This is primarily due to the lack of political will to move towards a transformative agenda that would promote human rights and continue to fight inequality and discrimination. Furthermore, governments are constrained by an absence of experts to carry out gender plans (Benitez, 2016). Without an explicit gender policy to provide guidelines on how government departments should institutionalise gender, agencies are not obliged to implement, monitor or evaluate gendered development goals (Taylor, 1999).

- *Youth engagement programs are insufficient to allow real political participation among the youth.* While the international and the country level recognize the value of youth's views and initiatives, opportunities for political participation are constrained because of age policies limiting political decision-making and participation (DSPD, 2016; UN, 1981). Available youth engagement programs are also insufficient to provide significant influence in the field of politics (Youth Policy Labs, 2011).

This section seeks to lay out the different policy recommendations that can mitigate the constraints on gender equality in political participation. Also, the section explains the importance of these recommendations and which actors are necessary for their implementation.

Policy Recommendations

To address the challenges of gender equality on political participation in the EU and ASEAN regions, the paper recommends:

1. Institutionalizing a Gender Management System (GMS);

2. Setting up an alliance of gender equality leaders;
3. Reviewing legal frameworks in reference to discriminating laws or policies.

Institutionalizing a Gender Management System (GMS)

Policy Recommendation. Implement a three-pronged approach, with the existing Gender Management System (GMS) to identify focus areas followed by introducing mainstreaming policies in planning cycles, along with pre-budget consultations (ASEAN; ACWC, 2016). The three-pronged approach would include:

- Ensuring transparency and information about gender goals, objectives and strategies in budget allocations of the government. This generates a sense of accountability for gender equality in the government's hiring and election processes, actual implementation of laws and policies, and the expected associated outcomes. Only through examining these aspects it is possible to assess whether government policies are in fact addressing the identified inequalities, for example whether girls have the same access to education as boys or whether women have all available resources to equally participate in election processes. Gender Index Rankings at international and national levels should therefore integrate evaluation for budget allocation;
- Implementing mainstreaming actions and policies in planning cycles. This phase includes building the capacity and sensibility of key stakeholders by involving them consistently at regular intervals. The involvement of the civil society is also essential in raising awareness (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1999);



- Engaging the participation of NGO and civil society in ensuring the implementation of existing gender equality laws and policies. One major focal point for this is ensuring that gender quotas are carried out and do not exist just on paper. Gender quotas have proved to be an effective tool for increasing women's representation in elected bodies of government. However, research in this field suggests that an important condition for quotas to produce the desired effect is related to the context and electoral systems that apply them. A quota does not remove all societal barriers for women in politics and sometimes sexist sociocultural norms persist despite a diligently implemented quota policy. That is why they need to be complemented by other measures (IPU, 2016; UN Women, 2015b). This is where NGOs and civil society could have a role to play.

The Gender Management System also provides governments the means to develop systematic approaches for the integration of gender issues and concerns into their whole machinery. These processes allow a documentation and dissemination of gender equality promotion practices which could also be exchanged interregionally between the EU and ASEAN. The process can be initiated, for example, by a visit to each country by a Secretariat team, which works closely with the political leaders, cabinet and senior government policy makers to provide sensitisation and strategic support (Burton & Pollack, 2009).

Importance of Policy Recommendation.

The GMS creates a system for integrating gender equality tools to ensure that gender concerns and issues are addressed in policy-making, budgeting, implementation, and enforcement. Certain strategies from the

integrated three-pronged approach have shown significant progress in Spain through their GMS overseen by the Interdepartmental Commission for Equality of Women and Men (Benitez, 2016; Elizabeth & Maribel, 2009), in India through their Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB; Yamini, 2015); and in the Philippines through the leadership of the Philippines Commission on Women (WB, 2012; PCW, 2013). These different national experiences show that GMS principles and approaches can successfully be used to integrate gender matters into policy formulation, analysis, and evaluation, including program implementation of ideally all government sectors at all levels.

Aside from this systematic integration, institutionalizing a GMS at the Member States' level and the EU and ASEAN regions would increase the effectiveness of policies implementation and development. Moreover, with the documentation and dissemination of effective gender practices from the regions, this would pave the way for wider gender policy-making and for strengthening implementation (OECD, 2015; Verloo, 2011).

Setting up an Interregional Alliance of Gender Equality Leaders

Policy Recommendation. Form an alliance of influential gender equality leaders across the EU-ASEAN region from political, economic, cultural and religious institutions. The role of the interregional alliance can include:

- Developing concrete country and joint actions to tackle gender equality in the different specific fields, especially in the promotion of leadership positions for women in various institutions;
- Act as an independent body for evaluating countries' Gender Management Systems



to address deficiencies and recommend points of action based on documented best practices;

- Conduct country and interregional campaigns on fostering the synergistic roles of women and men leaders in gender equality.

Importance of Policy Recommendation. It is very essential to establish the alliance of gender equality leaders across the EU-ASEAN region as each of these leaders can use their influence in their respective fields. Each leader can utilize their influence as well as integrate gender equality into the development strategies and programmes of their sectors. In addition, these leaders can jointly commit to the promotion of gender equality by supporting strategies of the respective governments' GMS and applying the same strategies in their structures and institutions. Though the alliance of interregional gender equality leaders is a new initiative; the pilot successful initiative on "Male Champions of Change"-the most powerful and influential Australian leader group which has contributed to bringing Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) to life in Australia through collaboration and innovative strategies (Broderick, 2013) proves the feasibility of the initiative in the future. Moreover, European Commission (2012) also emphasizes the importance of engaging senior men in advancing women's participation in politics as men are often "gatekeepers" of important positions from small to big institutions in countries and the world.

Reviewing Legal Frameworks in Reference to Discriminating Laws or Policies

Policy Recommendation. Implement a three-layered review on the legal frameworks in reference to discriminating laws or

policies against women and youth political participation. The three-layered review can include:

- Conduct a review of the national laws and policies and ensure that provisions do not discriminate against women and the youth and instead provide inclusive protection against discrimination. For instance, check whether conflicting laws against enacting gender quotas and age restrictions are present in the current legal structure (IPU, 2016; USAID, 2012).
- Cross-examine the national laws and policies by regularly monitoring and evaluating them in relation to international treaties, conventions and provisions on gender equality where the concerned country is a signatory (ICCPR, n.d.).
- For non-signatory countries of international treaties, conventions and provisions concerning gender equality, undertake a comparative study on the progress and challenges of signatory and non-signatory countries to provide a perspective for decision-making. Results of this study will also provide alternatives to the contents of these international instruments.

Governments should also pay attention to follow-up legal campaigns and capacity development programs to raise awareness of anti-discrimination legislation and counter-measures among police, respective government offices and institutions, but also at schools and communities. The effects of the laws must be passed down to the lower levels of governance because they have a large responsibility for the actual implementation. For that, appropriate capacity development, political education and media awareness activities should be supported to target



all societal levels at communities and local constituencies (EU, 2015). Governments can further examine the integration of women and men in other underrepresented sectors such as LGBTI, persons with disabilities (PWDs), people living with HIV (PLHIV) and AIDS.

Importance of Policy Recommendation. An enabling legal environment and a rights-based constitution are key prerequisites for women and youth political participation. The cultivation and spread of political rights of women and youth leads to the growth of women and youth associations, civil society organizations/groups, and political representation in public affairs. Legal frameworks discussed in 4.2 provide a reference point for determining internationally acceptable legal and rights-based definition of gender equality in the political sphere (ICCPR, n.d.).

Actors

The following actors need to be engaged in order to implement the specific policy recommendations:

4. Government and state institutions

- a. Planning and budget ministries/ departments-integrate their planning and budget mechanisms and processes to the proposed Gender Management System;
- b. Education, Youth and Sports ministries/departments - provide recommendations to the congress and other lawmaking bodies towards decreasing the age limit for political electoral processes;
- c. Dedicated state-run women ministry/

department under the executive branch - oversees the implementation of the GMS and facilitates the reporting of the various government agencies on its implementation;

- d. Political parties - abide by enacted gender quotas and further seek/ provide opportunities for women's meaningful political participation;
- e. Congress and other law-making bodies of the government - conduct the three-layered review of legal frameworks and pass bills/approve existing laws that amend discriminatory laws or policies.

5. International organizations

- a. UN and its agencies (UN Women, CEDAW Committee, etc.) - provide guidance to countries in their direction towards an enabling legal environment for gender equality;
- b. EU and its different bodies (especially the European Commission's Network to Promote Women in Decision-making in Politics and the Economy) - facilitate the interregional implementation of the three major policy recommendations;
- c. ASEAN and its different bodies (especially the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children or ACWC and the ASEAN Committee on Women or the ACW) - facilitate the interregional implementation of the three major policy recommendations;
- d. International Women's Rights and Action Watch-Asia - ensures that ASEAN countries are creating an enabling legal environment for gender equality.



6. NGOs, civil society organizations, and research institutes - act as a lobbying agent for the implementation of existing gender equality laws and policies, for instance, gender quotas.
7. Women and youth organizations - actively support the institutionalization processes and mainstreaming activities under the GMS.
8. Private sphere, including the family nucleus - engage one another to create an interest in increasing the political participation of the youth.

EU-ASEAN Implications

Implementation of the above mentioned policy recommendations can be done in two ways: through vertical and horizontal approaches. The application of both approaches is necessary for achieving effectiveness and efficiency of the different recommendations.

Vertical approach. This top-down approach is necessary since it is a more direct method of policy delegation because rational politicians at the local level may be concerned with maximizing policy influence and less willing to adopt a gendered perspective. The EU already utilizes this approach for ensuring greater gender equality where specific measures were introduced by the European Commission. Parallel to it is a wider commitment to mainstreaming equal opportunities at a national level across all actions and program priorities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark, 2002). With a vertical system, the alliances of gender equality leaders and government leaders handling GMS can provide guidance and critical evaluation of gender equality principles and strategies, while maintaining a

driver role for NGOs, research institutions, civil society groups, and the government agencies on the ground. For example, in countries like Australia and Canada, the responsibility for drawing up policies lies with senior executives in departments, along with gender focal points of women's units (DAW/ECLAC, 1998). Global regulations and international instruments also work best with the horizontal approach as these frameworks work as legally binding obligations that both the EU and ASEAN and their respective Member States have to jointly act on. CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration (1995), and the EU's Fifth Framework Program are just a few of the instruments that can guide the proposed alliances and GMS government leaders in leading practical policies regarding gender equality between the regions. This approach also provides for the review of the legal environment where the establishment of a working group would come from the higher level structures and organizations.

Horizontal approach. This approach refers to the interaction across the board with synergies required between government agencies, departments within the country level closely working with private sector counterparts such as NGOs, civil society organizations, women's and youth groups, research institutions, etc. Government leaders in EU and ASEAN countries should take a pivotal role in promoting gender equality nationally and regionally by putting gender issues on the discussion agenda when building alliances with leaders from other countries. On the other hand, NGOs, women's and youth groups, research institutions should play a critical role in monitoring and evaluating the actions taken and providing timely input and advice for government leaders to implement gender equality initiatives effectively.



5.3 GENDER POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

*by Ratha Pen, Tereza Grunvaldová,
Lim Fang Hui and Olivia Geymond*

Background

Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment is seen as one of the most important driving forces behind reducing poverty and aiding economic growth. In every part of the world, women are paid less for their work and see fewer benefits of their labour. Discrimination and extra household responsibilities reduce their access to decent work, capital, and time needed to improve their businesses. In recent years, women have been challenging the existing norms and today finally seem to be making headway in leadership in business and politics in many countries. Entrepreneurship is increasingly seen as a key driver for job creation, competitiveness, and growth. To improve growth and job creation, ASEAN and the EU need more entrepreneurs. The European Commission has published an action plan to unleash Europe's entrepreneurial potential for women, and to remove existing obstacles. To support this, the EU has established the European network to promote women's entrepreneurship (WES), which consists of 31 European countries (the EU-28, Iceland, Norway, and Turkey).

Similarly, ASEAN has established the ASEAN Women's Entrepreneurship Network (AWEN) since April 2014 to promote the economic development of young women in Southeast Asian countries. AWEN is a network of business women in the region, operating to exchange experiences, develop and propose initiatives to promote economic and trade activities in order to enhance gender equality,

empower and strengthen entrepreneurship skills for women in the ASEAN Community, create favorable environment for female-headed enterprises, and raise awareness and support for women entrepreneurship in the region.

All countries around the globe consider entrepreneurial promotion as a crucial policy for sustained employment creation, as well as innovation in products, production processes and organizations (OECD Council Report, 2012). Countries with high total entrepreneurial activity rates are also associated with high female entrepreneurial activity rates (Verheul et al., 2004). The number of female entrepreneurs across the world has been gradually growing in recent years; researchers and policy makers have been paying more attention to female entrepreneurship (Nedelcheva, 2012).

Policy Recommendations

Female entrepreneurship can be reinforced through:

Gender mainstreaming. This can be done through data accumulation and evaluation. The data can then be used to improve EU and ASEAN policies and action plans. Also, data could guide the development of systematic policies that are gender-sensitive and consider entrepreneurship in terms of differences, not from a phallogocentric perspective.



Promoting innovative, high value start-ups. Accentuate and support the role of female entrepreneurs, especially young women, as opportunity businesswomen capable of growing innovative and high value start-ups, through facilitating access to funds, business consulting, incubators and competitions.

It is clear that there are many activities that can be done to empower female entrepreneurs. The government, NGOs, policy makers and other related stakeholders should implement the following actions to empower female entrepreneurs.

Education for entrepreneurship. The first priority is to get more females to participate in the labour market and to equip them with better skills throughout their career paths and working lives. We strongly support the actions of the European Commission to invest in entrepreneurship education and the call made to EU Member States to ensure that the key competence of entrepreneurship is embedded into curricula across primary, secondary, vocational, higher, and adult education.

Adequate business environment and the elimination of barriers. Having a high quality regulatory framework that provides legal certainty and predictability is a prerequisite for setting up a business. It is crucial that the EU and ASEAN drastically cut the barriers and challenges that limit women entrepreneurs to join economic activities. The quality of legislation needs to be considerably improved. The promotion of the “think small first” principle in legislation, especially in the fields of taxation, consumer protection, labour law, and environmental policy is also key.

Promotion of entrepreneurship towards young women. As regional organisations, the EU and ASEAN have an important role, and a

unique position, in raising awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship in society. A better integration of women in the labour force is a key element to fight unemployment. We also support the emphasis placed on developing transversal and entrepreneurial skills to improve the employability of young people, as they are the majority of the workforce in the commerce sector.

Accessibility of information and technology. Resources that need to be accessible to these young women include business information and opportunities, education, increasing awareness of entrepreneurship from younger age, capital or financial aid. Technologies, networks and innovations have proven to be effective for reducing labor intensity for women in the formal agricultural sector (Javier, et. al., 2014). The access to these resources can be facilitated through existing networks such as the ASEAN Women’s Entrepreneurship Network (AWEN).

Actors

Equality between men and women is a core EU value and is enshrined in its legal and political framework. The EU is at the forefront of the protection and fulfilment of girls’ and women’s rights and vigorously promotes them in its external relations. In 2015, the EU adopted the Joint Staff Working Document, that is providing the framework for results-oriented measures for “Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020”. It is a guiding document that enshrines fundamental principles as well as measurable indicators for women equality in external relations.

NGOs are the main implementers of international aid and therefore the policy



recommendations should be carried into effect by them. NGOs often operate at local or grass-root levels, and can therefore bring the local experience and knowledge to higher-level policy platforms. Female entrepreneurship commitments must be materialized and translated into real project actions through NGO involvement and through sharing best practices and lessons-learned. A responsibility of the NGOs is also to put pressure on the EU as well as on ASEAN to adhere to their commitments and human rights principles.

UN Agencies have power to influence local policy making processes. It affects the shaping the local legal framework as well as the environment for stakeholder dialogue and networking. The UN can be involved in relation to association, networking or legal framework initiatives. The UN is also the guardian of the Sustainable Development Goals, in which equality between men and women is an explicit goal. It is also significant that the UN engages with ASEAN countries in a manner that recognizes the cultures of ASEAN countries.

At the local level women are found to prioritise the wellbeing of their communities as a whole. Human rights defenders, women's organisations and women leaders play critical roles too, often putting themselves at risk.

Interregional EU-ASEAN Implications

The framework for the EU-ASEAN interregional relations is constituted by a number of treaties and agreements. In 2015, the EU adopted the landmark Joint Communication "The EU and ASEAN: A partnership with a strategic purpose". In terms of trade and business relations, there is constant dialogue at ministerial level and ASEAN-EU Business Summits are held on a

regular basis. These meetings of business leaders, including small and medium-sized enterprises, with ASEAN Trade Ministers and the EU Trade Commissioner generate a host of recommendations for both parties to facilitate trade.

Financial and technical support is provided via the ASEAN-EU Programme for Regional Integration Support (APRIS), which acts as a catalyst by way of sharing experience and know-how on key issues for ASEAN's regional cooperation and integration and, in particular, regional economic integration. APRIS is an avenue for initiating policy dialogue in areas of common interest and for undertaking joint studies on economic integration.

Rather than creating new platforms for entrepreneurship cooperation, it would be more efficient to build upon these already existing fora.



CONCLUSION



6.0 CONCLUSION

The EU and ASEAN are the two most prominent regional integration initiatives in the world and share similar goals for their citizens. They have a good track record of cooperation that dates back to the 1970s. The strong partnership is based on commercial ties. However, both regions are also working closely on issues like climate change and poverty reduction. Moreover, the EU gives direct support to ASEAN to foster its regional integration. Even though the level of challenge will vary across and within regions, the EU and ASEAN could be natural partners in addressing gender inequality in their future cooperation.

This policy paper identified several areas in which collaborative action between the EU and ASEAN to promote gender equality could be particularly successful. These areas include, among others, education, care, the political and entrepreneurial sectors.

In education, gender-sensitive courses from an early age, supported by adequate teaching materials and a balance between male and female teachers, could shape gender understanding and tolerance in the new generation. It is crucial that any cooperation between the EU and ASEAN in this regard respects cultural traditions and the fact that they might influence the pace of change. Therefore, a “one size fits all” approach for both regions is not recommended. Instead, it could be helpful to jointly conduct extensive research on local customs and barriers to achieving gender equality in both regions and then develop specific and tailored guidelines which would provide meaningful, long-term solutions. An important aspect of gender-

sensitive education is the involvement of men in the process. In this regard, the EU seems to be more advanced, and the countries of the ASEAN region could benefit from an exchange with EU governments in order to develop guidelines for policy makers and civil society on engaging men in gender equality and female empowerment. Furthermore, ASEAN Delegations could participate in the Mutual Learning Program in Gender Equality, as well as in the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming of the EU. Similarly, EU Delegations could participate in AMMW, CW and ACWC regional meetings where they could share European best practices.

In the care sector, it is important in both regions that governments and civil society initiate campaigns to reframe the public image of care work and show that it requires the involvement of both men and women. Such campaigns could include short films, an online presence as well as printed materials in order to reach all parts of society. Government backing of such campaigns is crucial to achieve the aim of changing the public opinion. This also includes conscious policy making that allows married couples to split the care work, both for children as well as the elderly. One of the best examples for developing efficient policies in this regard is the Swedish framework for parental leave which is designed to actively promote gender equality and could be used as a basis to work towards the implementation of agreed standards. For ASEAN, exchange of best practices on parental leave with the EU should lead to drafting national parental leave legislation and the establishment of national financing models for all Member States. The



EU Parental Leave Directive could be used as an example for the provision of regional guidelines within ASEAN.

This does not mean that situation in the EU is ideal - the current Parental Leave Directive needs to be amended in order to include the provision of parental leave with a non-transferrable period of at least one month in its country-specific recommendations. Moreover, we strongly suggest an extension of the minimum maternity leave to 18 weeks and the introduction of EU-level legislation on paternity leave of at least two weeks, as well as carer's leave to take care of the elderly. Specific attention at the interregional level should be given to the inclusion of men in the care sector, for instance through the establishment of an EU-ASEAN dialogue on male caregivers and teachers that would function as a public support mechanism. The UN Women campaign "He for She" could serve as a basis for such a dialogue.

In the political sector, the institutionalization of a gender management system would address the transparency and implementation of gender strategies, from budgeting to planning, up to the actual implementation of government programs. The systematic integration of the GMS does not only resolve gender concerns at the country level but also enables an effective exchange of best practices and documents gender equality concerns in the two regions. Gender inequality is a global problem which means that international cooperation is critical. An interregional EU-ASEAN alliance of gender equality leaders from different non-governmental organizations could help develop and enforce concrete actions against gender-related problems outside the political arena, for instance, those in the cultural and religious spheres. The section also underlined the importance of ensuring that available legal frameworks in member countries and

the two regions should be clear from any discriminating laws or policies towards the participation of women and the youth in the political scenes. These three proposed policy recommendations should be implemented using both the horizontal and vertical approaches to make sure all important potential agents of change are engaged.

In the entrepreneurial sector, the first priority in both regions should be to encourage the participation of more women in the labour force, including among executives. It is crucial that both the EU and ASEAN reduce the barriers which limit access of female entrepreneurs to economic activities and step up the teaching of key entrepreneurial skills. Both regions have an important role in the raising of awareness in society that female participation in the labor force is an important but underutilised factor for achieve economic growth and development.

To sum up, the EU and ASEAN should establish a platform for regular dialogue on gender issues at region-to-region level. The platform should be a way of knowledge transfer about best case examples, common challenges and lessons learnt. As a forerunner in implementing gender policies, the EU should take the initiative on establishing this dialogue. However, there must also be a willingness to listen to ASEAN counterparts, particularly to national government executives from the line ministries. To be successful, the dialogue must be based on common understanding of the goals and mutual respect - anchor elements that have already been successful established in EU-ASEAN programs in other fields. This interregional cooperation would help create a broad coalition of actors and build up the awareness of decision makers regarding ways to tackle gender inequality.

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