

Gender Equality in Leadership: Latvia Context

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Abstract

Promoting gender equality is a widely shared goal within the European Union, seen as crucial both internationally and domestically. This ambition is evidenced by significant initiatives like the Gender Equality Strategy (2020-2025), which outlines seven major principles, including ensuring gender parity in decision-making roles.

The "A Drone to Promote Gender Equality in Political and Economic Decision-Making" (ProPEGE) project tries to address the issue by evaluating the present conditions through the analysis of key stakeholders' views on gender matters, exploring effective methods and tools used across member states to highlight the urgency of bridging the gender gap and emphasizing the essential involvement of women in political and economic leadership roles. The project aims to create new strategies and tools for joint learning efforts among key actors.

In pursuit of these objectives, focus groups were organized, drawing from a diverse array of sectors such as media, trade unions, and NGOs, aiming for equitable representation across political, economic, and social spheres.

The discussions revealed a general acknowledgment of the significance of gender equality and the need for women to have equal opportunities in leadership. Despite Latvia's legal commitments to gender equality, variations in progress are observed across sectors, with some facing challenges like women's underrepresentation and lack of self-confidence. The pandemic highlighted the importance of flexible work arrangements, nonetheless, issues such as domestic violence remain, alongside efforts to dismantle gender stereotypes, particularly in caregiving roles, and to encourage equal sharing of domestic responsibilities to foster gender balance in both home and professional settings.

These efforts also extend to tackling challenges in remote work management and addressing biases in hiring practices that disadvantage women, especially those with children or those who may plan to have children, indicating a persistent undercurrent of gender bias despite advancements.