

Gender Impact Assessment

What is Gender Impact Assessment

Gender impact assessment has been defined as an ex ante evaluation, analysis or assessment of a law, policy or programme that makes it possible to identify, in a preventative way, the likelihood of a given decision having negative consequences for the state of equality between women and men.

The central question of the gender impact assessment is: **Does a law, policy or programme reduce, maintain or increase the gender inequalities between women and men?**

The European Commission defines gender impact assessment as follows:

“Gender impact assessment is the process of comparing and assessing, according to gender relevant criteria, the current situation and trend with the expected development resulting from the introduction of the proposed policy.”

“Gender impact assessment is the estimation of the different effects (positive, negative or neutral) of any policy or activity implemented to specific items in terms of gender equality.”

The assessment involves a dual-pronged approach: the current gender-related position in relation to the policy under consideration, and the projected impacts on women and men once the policy has been implemented. It is important that the assessment is structured, i.e. systematic, analytical and documented.

The final aim of the gender impact assessment is to improve the design and the planning of the policy under consideration, in order to prevent a negative impact on gender equality and to strengthen gender equality through better designed, transformative legislation and policies. A primary objective is to adapt the policy to make sure that any discriminatory effects are either removed or mitigated. Beyond avoiding negative effects, a gender impact assessment can also be used in a more transformative way as a tool for defining gender equality objectives and formulating the policy so as to proactively promote gender equality.