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A Feminist European Green Deal

Towards an Ecological and Gender Just Transition

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Women Engage for a Common Future (WECF) is a network of 150 women's and environmental organisations in 50 countries. For 25 years, WECF has aimed at strengthening female leadership and gender equality in the field of sustainability. With our activities aimed at capacity building, influencing policy and raising awareness, we strengthen the position of women worldwide.



The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) is Europe's largest network of environmental citizens' organisations. It brings together over 170 civil society organisations from more than 35 European countries. The EEB stands for sustainable development, environmental justice and participatory democracy.



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PREFACE

Over the past decade of crises, the European Union has been able to demonstrate its strengths – but it has also revealed its weaknesses. Crises like the current pandemic make one thing clear: the EU is in urgent need of reform. It must exist as an independent actor and show sovereignty from an internal and external perspective.

This publication is part of the FES Project “Sovereign Europe”, in which the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) develops ideas and proposals in five fields of action on how the EU can become a more capable and independent actor in global politics: Democracy and Values, Socially Just Economy, Social-Ecological Transformation, Actionable Peace Power, Multilateralism and Geopolitics. With regard to a social-ecological transformation, the narrative for a “Sovereign Europe” is clear. In order to achieve the 1.5-degree target set in the Paris Agreement in 2015, climate neutrality must be achieved worldwide by 2050 at the latest. The European Green Deal shows a tangible path toward decarbonisation and climate neutrality that now needs to be fleshed out.

It sparks important debates about the sustainability of our continent’s future. Alongside ecological concerns, important social questions are raised with it, as the climate crisis lays open the vulnerabilities of our societies, the weaknesses in our social and health systems as well as deeply rooted inequalities. Climate change and our response to tackle it affect everyone. The just transition, the promise that no one shall be left behind in the transition, is therefore rightly at the heart of the European Green Deal.

But not everyone is impacted equally. Many crises rest disproportionately on the shoulders of women. Also, in the midst of the ecological crisis, women will be – and already are – facing increased vulnerabilities due to their different social roles, status, resources and power.

And yet, the European Green Deal’s just transition principle has mostly taken a narrow focus, e. g. by seeking to open up pathways into a clean energy future for – mostly male – workers in the old fossil fuel-based industries and coal-dependent regions. While this is certainly important, we need to broaden our understanding of the just transition. The European Green Deal has paid too little attention to

gender and intersectional inequalities. As the authors of this study point out, it has been gender blind. We need to step up the game. The European Green Deal’s just transition needs to address more broadly how people are impacted differently as a result of systematic exclusion, oppression and negligence and to ensure that priorities, plans and policies bring about transformative, systemic change.

So far, the European Green Deal has mostly been a strategy, a declaration of intent. With its concrete policy recommendations, this report comes at a timely moment, now that the European institutions are entering negotiations to bring the European Green Deal to life with laws and policies. It sheds light on some of the – to many people – hidden gendered and intersectional impacts of our climate policies. We are glad that with Women Engage For a Common Future and the European Environmental Bureau we found great partners to propose concrete solutions that policy-makers can use to eliminate the European Green Deal’s gender blindness. For a truly sustainable future, that understands sustainability holistically as the interplay of economic development, ecological improvement and social progress.

The European Green Deal will not be sustainable and just if it is not fair to over 50 per cent of the population. This is why we urgently need a feminist European Green Deal!

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report utilises an intersectional, ecofeminist analysis to identify gaps in three key areas of the European Green Deal's policy making: energy, transport and agriculture. The European Green Deal (EGD) remains gender blind to a large extent despite the Von der Leyen Commission's objective of achieving a Union of Equality. This report makes recommendations on how European Union (EU) policies seeking to reduce carbon emissions must shift from being gender blind to gender transformative policies to deliver better on both climate and equality targets. Putting the question of gender equality into the wider context of the transformation of the EU's economic system, it suggests a reimagining of the European Green Deal away from being a growth strategy still focused on increasing the volume of the economy (as measured in gross domestic product (GDP) growth) towards a true wellbeing economy centred on care for people and the planet. Alongside general tools and recommendations to ensure climate policies increase and do not undermine gender equality (such as the need to collect gender-disaggregated data, systematic gender budgeting, ex ante gender impact assessments, improved strategies to ensure parity in political representation and climate negotiations), the report provides specific, sectoral recommendations for climate-related policies which are currently on the political agenda.

ENERGY

- Resubmit a gender-aware version of the Renovation Wave and Renewable Energy Directive funding scheme that integrates criteria to increase the share of women in the sectors benefiting from it and includes the care sector as one of the beneficiaries.
- Revise the approach of how to make consumers key actors of the energy transition within the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) II with a gender responsive prosumer model, ensuring that women and men participate in and benefit from decentralised concepts.
- Introduce a common definition of energy poverty covering its multifaceted nature and contributing factors, including gender.

TRANSPORT

- Massively expand the public transport sector with low (eventually zero carbon), fair, affordable, safe and accessible mobility services that benefit all, with particular attention to women's mobility needs as well as low-income groups and marginalised urban and rural communities (in particular racialised communities), people with other, specific mobility needs (e.g. people with disabilities and older people), and people with a specific need for safety on public transport (e.g. trans and non-binary people).
- Concentrate funding from polluting transport sectors towards clean and public or shared mobility solutions; ban environmentally harmful subsidies such as tax breaks for aviation fuels and public investment in airports or motorways.
- Ensure that investments into public transport and transport policies make it more attractive and easier to shift from individual modes of transport to cheaper and cleaner mobility alternatives such as low or free of cost subscriptions for public transport and stakeholder targeted tariffs, improve service provision (e.g. better service outside peak hours), establish safe and functional cycling infrastructure, and improve accessibility, safety and comfort of transportation modes with particular attention to dimensions of gender and vulnerable people (e.g. better street lighting and awareness raising campaigns).
- Refocus transport policies on sufficiency in mobility by reducing the need for transportation through proximity cities and towns where all essential services are available within a radius of a 15-minute walk which benefits all in society, in particular those with care duties as well as those with less access to mobility.

AGRICULTURE, NATURE AND FOOD SECURITY

- Place a ceiling on subsidy payments (e. g., at 60,000 euro per farm) to ensure the EU's support budget is redistributed to medium-sized and smaller (family-run) farms.
- Include mandatory social and gender equality conditionalities in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) to support invisibilised women farmers and undocumented workers. CAP direct payments must be conditional on respect for the applicable working and employment conditions under the relevant collective agreements, national and EU law as well as International Labour Organization (ILO) and UN Conventions.
- Guarantee and increase dedicated support – human resources, technical and financial – to agroecological and organic farming, to young farmers, to women farmers and rural women entrepreneurs and farm labourers.
- Strengthen food security and sustainable rural livelihoods by ensuring fair prices for farmers and sufficient incomes for all consumers; provide technical, financial, and regulatory support and tax incentives to prosumer initiatives.
- Ensure that both agroecological and organic farming practices and gender equality goals are mainstreamed and integrated into the work programmes of all government ministries.

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INTRODUCTION

Climate change and its environmental, social and economic consequences have disparate impacts on men and women. These are linked to socially constructed gender roles and underlying power dynamics under which men and women live. At the same time, men and women contribute differently to environmental pressures, including to carbon emissions. Gender roles influence, amongst other things, career choices and the means available to invest in low-carbon solutions, different mobility and energy needs and other consumption patterns as well as gendered values around sustainability, which all shape the individual environmental footprint and behaviour. Recent studies have shown that men cause higher CO₂ emissions mostly due to higher fuel and meat consumption, even where men and women spend similar amounts of money.¹ Research has also shown that women have higher levels of socialisation to care about others and to adopt environmental behaviours. This comes with the risk, linked to gender roles and women being major care providers in their homes and families, of putting an additional, ecological burden on women. Examples include targeting environmentally friendly household products at female consumers or ecological practices (such as cooking meals from scratch, buying locally or zero waste, recycling or repair work) which add to chores still predominantly undertaken by women. These constructed gender roles also have a detrimental effect on men, who may reject more sustainable behaviour out of the fear of being perceived as effeminate.² Workplace segregation is another key factor concerning the transition to carbon neutrality. The current carbon-intensive sectors – energy, transport, building, agriculture – are heavily dominated by a male workforce due to gender stereotypes in the work culture, which in turn has repercussions on how these sectors are governed. At the same time, the creation of jobs in green sectors is likely to offer more employment opportunities for men again due to workplace segregation. While women are highly present in civil society and are leading agents of change in the youth climate movement, they remain underrepresented in international climate negotiation, policymaking and corporate decision-making around the transition to carbon neutrality. Yet a focus on individual gendered differences is not enough, as wider systems of oppression such as patriarchy have a dynamic relationship with individual factors, and in turn hinder effective solutions.

The policies and instruments through which we seek to halt and mitigate climate change are likely to have different impacts on men and women, whether these are carbon taxes, job creation measures and reskilling or investments and subsidies in particular sectors or technologies. If climate policies are gender blind, they are likely to perpetuate or even deepen gender injustice. Intersectional effects linked to factors such as income, age, ability/disability, racialisation or sexual identity compound with gendered injustice and may exponentiate disproportionate impacts caused by the climate and environmental crises or the policies set out to mitigate them.

The path to carbon neutrality, zero pollution and restored biodiversity must tackle the root causes of inequality through a just transition that leaves no one behind. In that context it is also important that gendered effects of climate change and climate policies are considered to achieve a truly inclusive approach towards a just transition. Gender transformative climate and environmental policies with an intersectional approach are designed to deliver the best possible results to reduce climate and environmental impacts while challenging patriarchal and other discriminatory structures. While more gender equality is not a magic wand to solve all our environmental challenges, there is evidence that more gender-equal societies can also deliver better results for the environment and climate. A better recognition of the gender-environment nexus can improve environmental outcomes and increase gender equality while increasing the acceptance of measures that are socially just.

At the international and European level there are three important cornerstones that guide the path to climate neutrality:

- In 2015, the international community adopted the **2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** with the EU and its member states playing a key role in negotiating it. This Agenda was agreed upon as a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity globally. Countries pledged to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions and to take bold and transformative steps to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path, leaving no one

behind. The SDGs seek to realise the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality while protecting the planet from degradation and taking urgent action on climate change.³ The 2030 Agenda presents a holistic approach to sustainable development seeking to integrate policy across sectors to achieve sustainability.

- In the same year, another landmark was achieved with the **Paris Agreement**, a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at the Conference of the Parties (COP) 21 in Paris on 12 December 2015 and entered into force in November 2016. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. Countries have committed to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century. For the first time, a binding agreement brings all nations into a common framework to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change. By 2020, countries were asked to submit their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to communicate the action they pledge to take to reduce their emissions.⁴
- The **European Green Deal**, first presented by the European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, in December 2019, has been framed as the European Union's main strategy to implement the SDGs and to live up to its commitments under the Paris Agreement. The main goal of the EGD is to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. It covers virtually all relevant sectors and policy areas for the transition such as mobility, energy, buildings, agriculture and finance. Climate neutrality by 2050 is now enshrined in legislation with the EU climate law. At the same time, the new Commission President has declared the Union of Equality a political priority, followed by the new European Gender Equality Strategy in 2020.

Not only research but also international organisations including the UN Environment Programme and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have pointed out and provided expertise on the need to base environmental and climate policy on robust gender analysis and to fully integrate equality objectives throughout. Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, the international community agreed on the Gender Action Plan (GAP).⁵ The GAP promotes capacity-building, gender balanced participation, measures for policy coherence, gender-responsive implementation as well as monitoring and reporting on gender outcomes.

Against this background, it is even more surprising that the European Green Deal, when it was first presented in December 2019, was entirely gender blind. The **European Green Deal** Communication does not refer to gender at all. After the adoption of the Gender Equality Strategy, the European Commission set up the Equality Task Force within the Secretariat-General to mainstream equality concerns across policy areas. While some of the laws and strategies subsequently developed within the framework of the EGD refer to gender, for instance, the Strategy for Sustainable Chemicals,⁶ the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy⁷ and the Social Climate Fund, gender is far from being systematically integrated into all climate and environmental policies. While some strategies and laws simply ignore gender effects, others deplore the lack of gender-disaggregated data without proposing measures. Only a few new instruments introduce gender equality measures; however, these are limited to specific aspects of a much wider problem.

The purpose of this report is to offer a gender analysis of some of the EGD's most relevant sectoral policies to achieve carbon neutrality. The report investigates potential gendered effects of EGD policies or unintended negative side effects. It asks whether men and women equally benefit from measures or whether these reinforce existing gender stereotypes. It then offers concrete recommendations for gender-transformative climate policies to ensure that these policies deliver well on both our climate and gender equality objectives. We have chosen three sectoral policy areas which are intended to significantly reduce carbon emissions by 2030: energy (including building renovation), transport and agriculture. More specifically, this report analyses the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II), the Energy Efficiency Directive and the Renovation Wave, the Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy and the Urban Mobility Strategy, the Common Agricultural Policy and the Farm to Fork Strategy from a gender equality angle. We have analysed existing research and grey literature and have conducted 12 qualitative interviews with stakeholders from the European institutions and national governments, academia and civil society.

The methodological framework applies an **intersectional analytical perspective** regarding existing inequalities, asking not simply about the effects climate change policies have on women, but how they are affected in relation to other cross-cutting inequalities based on characteristics such as income, age, ability/disability, racialisation or sexual identity. Before looking into the specific policies listed above, we suggest how the EGD can be reimagined. A **feminist European Green Deal** goes beyond policies to achieve carbon neutrality and aims at a systemic transformation of our economic, social and political system away from the fixation on GDP growth towards values of inclusion,

care and wellbeing for people and planet, where nature and its resources are regarded as the essential life support on which we all depend. A **feminist and intersectional approach to the just transition** goes beyond a few temporary distributive measures and seeks to tackle the root causes of the different forms of inequality. It rebalances existing power structures, centring the most marginalised in Europe and globally. Within this new model for a care-based wellbeing economy, work that has not been recognised before and which is mostly provided by women or other marginalised groups is accorded value.

The EU's economy, its consumption and production patterns and its global trading practices result in an **environmental and climate footprint affecting people around the world**, in particular in the Global South, where European supply and value chains source raw materials, agricultural commodities and labour, in particular women who are often amongst the most vulnerable in their societies and economies. A feminist and intersectional EGD also means reflecting on Europe's role in (neo)colonial processes and rectifying the power imbalances when it comes to accessing resources and labour and in international-level decision-making. A just transition means stopping harmful practices, labour exploitation and resource exploitation with regards to women workers and local communities affected in the Global South. While policy recommendations to achieve climate and gender justice through the EU's external policies, including trade and cooperation, are beyond the scope of this report, our methodological framework around a feminist and intersectional EGD includes a strong vision for global environmental, climate and gender justice.

REIMAGINING THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

The EGD, first launched in December 2019, has introduced higher ambitions regarding climate action and environmental protections, in particular carbon neutrality by 2050, zero pollution, restored biodiversity, sustainable food systems and an economy that works for people. The EU's improved ecological and social objectives are more than timely, even though many of the strategies and laws introduced under the EGD lack sufficient ambition and speed in their implementation. One key example is the 55 per cent emission reduction target for 2030 compared to 1990 levels, whereas science requires at least a 65 per cent reduction to achieve the Paris Agreement goals.

The EGD has been presented as the EU's "new growth strategy" aiming to "transform the EU into a fair and pro-

sperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient, and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use".⁸ The EGD relies on similar concepts as the previous Europe 2020 strategy for "smart, sustainable and inclusive growth".⁹ Sustainable, sometimes also referred to as green growth, is based on the belief that as an economy and society we can reduce the overall material throughput and pollution without an overall reduction from current over-consumption to consumption levels necessary to ensure human wellbeing.

Viewed alongside the objectives of carbon neutrality, zero pollution and biodiversity restoration, the EGD's fixation on economic growth is paradoxical. As early as 1972, the European Commissioner for Agriculture Sicco Mansholt wrote a letter to the then Commission President warning that it "is clear that tomorrow's society cannot be concentrated on growth, at least not as far as material goods are concerned".¹⁰ Now, 50 years later, there is a wide scientific consensus for the need to decarbonise our economies and to reduce our resource use; however, boosting economic growth has remained one of the main political objectives at the EU and member state level. While climate change and the environmental crises directly threaten the livelihoods of current and future generations globally, Europe continues to consume more and more. The economies of the EU-27 and the UK fall short both on achieving emission reduction targets to meet the Paris Agreement goals¹¹ and their own social objectives including improved healthcare, more public transport, cleaner energy, more ecological agriculture, and land use or closing the gender employment and remuneration gaps.¹²

The 8th Environmental Action Plan adopted in 2020 reads (referring to the European Environmental Agency's report on the European environment – state and outlook 2020): "With the current growth model, environmental pressures are expected to increase further, causing direct and indirect harmful effects on human health and wellbeing. This is especially true for the sectors with the highest environmental impact – food, mobility, energy as well as infrastructure and buildings".¹³ In early 2021, the European Environmental Agency went a step further in its argument stressing that: "Economic growth is closely linked to increases in production, consumption and resource use and has detrimental effects on the natural environment and human health. It is unlikely that a long-lasting, absolute decoupling of economic growth from environmental pressures and impacts can be achieved at the global scale; therefore, societies need to rethink what is meant by growth and progress and their meaning for global sustainability".¹⁴

The fixation of the current economic system on economic growth is based and structurally dependent on the constant expansion of extraction, production, and consumption of material goods as well as services. It is measured as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth instead of defining success in terms of increased human and planetary wellbeing. An economic system which gives primacy to resource-based GDP growth over other objectives comes with certain implications.¹⁵

First, the current economic system undervalues the most important forms of sustaining life such as care or ecological processes that are not or less profitable from a market perspective. Our economies are characterised by a separation between a productive sphere that includes all market goods and services and a reproductive sphere that includes largely non-monetised, unpaid, and unrecognised caring activities. These jobs are mostly carried out by women (in all their diversity).

Secondly, our economic system perpetuates an unequal distribution of power, income, and wealth. For example, while the legal rights of women in many European countries have significantly improved, the socio-economic and political reality is still one of stark inequalities, for instance, if we look at participation in decision-making both in the political and economic sphere, at income and lifetime earning gaps or the distribution of unpaid care work. Moreover, white people (understood as people who enjoy the privilege of not being racialised, stereotyped or discriminated against due to their ethnic origins) regularly enjoy structural advantages and rights that racialised and ethnic groups cannot enjoy, both at a collective and an individual level. Ethnic minority communities regularly face intersecting inequalities in access to decent work, adequate housing, and quality education. They are often disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards such as air pollution or extreme weather events.

Despite these well-known realities, most of the EGD policies lack any deeper and substantial gender and intersectional analysis of existing inequalities. For example, the proposal for the Social Climate Fund,¹⁶ intended to compensate the 'social' costs of the transition and protect vulnerable groups as part of the 'Fit for 55' legislative package does acknowledge the fact that women are disproportionately impacted by carbon pricing. However, it fails to consider the root causes for this situation (see section 2.1 Energy).

There is a strong risk that the EGD and its policies will not bring about the necessary systemic, transformational change that would ensure economic, environmental, and social justice, including gender equality while bringing our economies

within the ecological limits of the planet. We argue that the EU must fully orient and integrate climate and environmental as well as social and economic policies towards minimising environmental impacts and eradicating inequalities. It must challenge existing power structures rooted in patriarchal values and address the root causes of our current unsustainable system. If not addressed, structural discrimination risks leaving large parts of society behind in the green transition.¹⁷ Certain elements within the EGD provide interpretative elements moving beyond green capitalism. For example, while the EGD does not explicitly mention post-growth ambitions, it does acknowledge the premise of a restored ecosystem for human health as well as the need to restore and protect the commons from industrial exploitation.¹⁸ It does call for a deep transformation of industry away from a focus on continued exploitation.¹⁹ While there is no clear wording on what the transformation looks like in practice in terms of a reduction in throughput, it emphasises the need for business models that offer "re-usable, durable and repairable products" as well as a right to repair for consumers to end the obsolescence of products.²⁰ Furthermore, the framing that "a new pact is needed to bring together citizens in all their diversity" hints to the importance of 'environmental citizenship' and the participation and recognition of citizens and other stakeholders.²¹ EGD policies can only be successful if stakeholders are involved in the design from the start.

TRANSITION TOWARDS A FEMINIST WELLBEING ECONOMY

Achieving ambitious and transformative climate and gender policies requires a fundamental shift in the concepts underlying our policies, including a strong intersectional approach. It requires a transformation of our economies towards a feminist wellbeing economy that centres around care and wellbeing for human beings and nature instead of GDP growth. It also needs to address power dynamics based on gender and how these intersect with other identities such as age, income, class, wealth, racialisation, ethnicity, abilities, and other dimensions of diversity. As argued above, the EU and its EGD can potentially play an important role in this regard as it provides entry points for transformative change. We propose to further tap into these windows of opportunity to broaden our understanding of a just transition and to bring forward policies that deliver gender and climate justice.

TOWARDS A JUST TRANSITION

The EGD stresses the importance of the social dimensions and the need for a ‘just and inclusive transition’ as one of its main objectives.²² The European Commission follows a relatively narrow approach with the just transition instruments mostly focusing on the negative impacts of the transition on specific regions and economic sectors, such as coal mining regions and high carbon industries. The first instrument to mitigate potential social consequences was the creation of the Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) and a Just Transition Fund presented as a “key tool to ensure that the transition towards a climate-neutral economy happens in a fair way, leaving no one behind”.²³ It supports sectors and regions that will be hardest hit given their reliance on fossil fuel and carbon intensive industries with at least 150 billion euros over the period 2021–2027. There is no question that moving away from a fossil fuel-based economy towards renewable energy requires the reskilling and upskilling of important groups in the workforce and support to communities to ensure their resilience. According to the World Resources Institute, the transition to renewable energy may create 18 million jobs by 2030 globally, while an estimated 6 million jobs in coal-powered electricity, petroleum extraction and other high carbon sectors are likely to disappear by 2030.²⁴ Many of the new green jobs will require different skills than previous energy jobs or will be in new locations. However, with a sectoral and territorial focus, the largest share of the funds allocated so far is directed towards a predominantly male workforce, while sectors predominantly chosen by women – which often suffer from low wages and job insecurity – are not invested in. The mechanism does not address gender and intersecting inequalities. There is also a risk of new job opportunities, e.g., in the renewable energy sector mainly benefitting male workers and reinforcing existing gender segregation and other inequalities in these sectors and the labour market more generally.

The EU’s labour market employs around 79 per cent of men compared to 67 per cent of women, resulting in an employment gap of 12 percentage points.²⁵ Examining this figure with an intersectional lens, the numbers are worse. For instance, only 21 per cent of women with disabilities, compared to 29 per cent of disabled men, in the EU are employed.²⁶ The energy sector employs relatively few women, accounting for 32 per cent of the workforce.²⁷ While women hold 46 per cent of the administrative posts, they only occupy 28 per cent of technical and 32 per cent of senior management positions in the sector.²⁸ Beyond employment, women are regularly underrepresented in new energy projects, including those focused on renewables,²⁹ which further restricts their participation in the energy

transition through, for example, their lack of involvement in citizens’ energy communities.³⁰ This gender gap has been extensively researched and originates in patriarchal norms and perceptions.³¹ These continue to create structural and cultural barriers to women’s full participation in crucial sectors, such as energy. In short, gendered stereotypes, gendered orientation in higher education, unconscious biases in recruitment, sexist work cultures, difficulties for women, and generally people in care roles, in striking a work-life balance and the unequal distribution of domestic and care work all limit women’s participation in the renewable energy transition.³²

A sector which is problematic from a reverse angle is the health and care sector with 76 per cent female workers, increasing to 86 per cent for personal care workers.³³ The numbers are likely to be even higher as a large share of these jobs are performed informally.³⁴ Care and domestic work are sectors dominated by precarious working conditions such as short-term, part-time (or no) contracts, low pay and a high risk of occupational diseases.³⁵ Many care workers are intra-European and non-European migrants. They leave their children and families behind to take on care work for families in places where women have better access to the labour market.³⁶ Women’s unpaid care burden has been exacerbated with the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown measures. For example, studies drawing on data from Germany, France, the UK, the US, and Italy have shown that women contributed on average 15 hours more to unpaid care work per week than men.³⁷

Besides gender and intersectional concerns, the European Commission’s just transition approach and its JTM has been criticised for being unfit to achieve social justice and wellbeing for all. The 17.5 billion euro volume of the fund is far too small to cover the social costs of the transition towards climate neutrality.³⁸ Furthermore, the mechanism makes far too little reference to inequalities and social rights. A narrow definition of the just transition focusing on workers gaining the necessary skills needed in a green economy ignores larger distributive justice aspects of climate policies and wider concerns around social protection and inclusion.³⁹ It lacks a “substantial definition of what could be a just transition for people (and not companies)”.⁴⁰ In order to achieve a just transition to a wellbeing economy, we believe an ecofeminist approach to policy making is needed.

AN ECOFEMINIST APPROACH TO A FAIR AND JUST TRANSITION?

For the EU to realise the goals of its equality strategies and the objectives of the EGD, an ecofeminist approach can

challenge the patriarchal, (neo)colonial and capitalistic structures that are the origin of and have perpetuated the climate crisis to rectify the injustices suffered by many in Europe and worldwide. To ensure an economy which is both gender just and inclusive and delivers on climate objectives, we need a holistic understanding of sustainability and of the necessary transition. It cannot be limited to the fields of energy, buildings, transport, digitalisation or agriculture, all sectors with a predominantly male workforce and leadership, but must include all sectors crucial for our societies, including those with a mainly female workforce. Instead of profit, it should be centred around care as well as class, ethnic, economic, environmental, and intergenerational justice. In other words, we need a transition towards a gender just, inclusive, redistributive, sustainable economy.

For this transition, we must thus move away from an understanding of ‘green’ or sustainable jobs as employment only related to energy production, energy efficiency and environmental management, sustainable mobility, or agriculture. Sustainable jobs in an ecofeminist wellbeing economy include all jobs that contribute to preserving or enhancing the wellbeing of people and nature. Care and education are two particularly female-dominated sectors that need to be included as jobs at the core of the transition, equally redistributed between genders and conferred with the same economic and social advantages that traditional ‘green’ jobs hold (such as decent work standards, fair wages, job security and safety, access to social protection and child-care). This is firstly because, given their high labour-intensity rather than energy or raw material use, care and health jobs can already be considered as low carbon jobs. They contribute to the wellbeing of different generations and the resilience and health of society in general.⁴² Secondly, research suggests that climate change and environmental degradation, in particular widespread pollution, will put more pressure on health and care in addition to the increasing needs created by an ageing population in Europe.⁴³ For example, temperature rise and heatwaves are associated with increased dehydration, heat strokes and cardiovascular diseases.⁴⁴ Zoonotic diseases that put enormous pressure on our health systems are likely to increase in the future, in particular if global action against the environmental crises does not significantly improve.⁴⁵ Finally, education is decisive for societies’ long-term sustainability to equip future generations with ecological knowledge and the necessary skills and tools to respond to environmental challenges, including climate change. The European Commission itself highlighted the key role of education and training by putting forward a proposal for a Council Recommendation on education for environmental sustainability.⁴⁶

What is Ecofeminism?

Ecofeminism is a concept that emerged during the second-wave feminist movement in the 1970s. The concept examines how the exploitation of nature, and the exploitation of women as unpaid or low-paid workers are interlinked. While some of its proponents, in particular in its early days, also presented essentialist arguments linked to the idea that women are closer to nature or are per se caretakers of nature, we work with an understanding of ecofeminism that opposes the binaries that underlie patriarchy and colonialism including the different roles, spaces and power relations assigned through binaries such as man-woman, white-non-white or straight-queer. Ecofeminism unpacks these binaries to show the lived experiences of marginalised groups, such as women in all their diversity, ethnic minorities and indigenous groups, the landless and others under the conditions of environmental destruction and climate change. It demonstrates how marginalised groups bear a disproportionate burden of these impacts, but also promotes their agency to attain justice. This report aligns with the non-binary view that gender is socially constructed and that normative assumptions around gender have been used for the benefit of a few within patriarchal, (neo)colonial and capitalist structures. We understand gender as the interrelationship between someone’s physical body, their identity (how they view their gender) and their social gender (the attributes society imposes). This interrelationship is dynamic as these categories are not fixed and therefore a person’s gender can change.

Ecofeminism has evolved since its inception, largely due to the work of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer (LGBTIQ)⁴¹ + and Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPoC) activists who apply an intersectional concept of ecofeminism. Although gender and its link to European climate policies are the focal point of this report, it would not be effective without intersectional analysis and recommendations. The concept of intersectionality can be accredited to Kimberlé Crenshaw, a black law professor who highlighted the invisibility of black women’s experience in the law, as women could make discrimination claims based on their gender or their race but not both. Intersectionality is the understanding that a person can face multiple forms of oppression at the same time which accumulate. The concept can be used for a variety of intersections: racialisation, age, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, (dis)ability, socio-economic status, religion, caste, and others. The European Gender Equality Strategy states that its implementation will be intersectional to acknowledge the heterogeneity of women’s experiences and to link the strategy with other strategies such as the LGBTIQ Strategy or the Anti-racism Action Plan. Yet this must be based on disaggregated data along multiple lines of self-identification in order to realise intersectional policy-making.

Gender equality needs to be mainstreamed into all sectors needed for long-term sustainability, in particular renewable energy, building, transport, and agriculture. This can be done by incorporating gender equality into all aspects of the specific sectors, raising awareness on the multiple roles that

women can play in the transition, breaking with cultural and social norms as well as promoting specific training and skill development for women to attract talent.

FROM GENDER BLIND TO GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE POLICIES: PRACTICES AND MECHANISMS

Achieving a gender just and inclusive transition towards a carbon-neutral Europe requires transformative measures.

- Working with the system that causes (gender) injustices will only reproduce it. The climate crisis is a direct result of our economic system which is based on fossil fuels and allows for profit made based on past and current injustices, exploitative structures and an imbalance of political and economic power. This is evident in the profits that are being made due to post-colonial structures or injustices within societies, for example, the wage dumping of care workers, seasonal workers or the fact that a large part of the Global North's wealth has been created through exploitation during colonial times. It depends on GDP growth and ever-increasing consumption which drives extraction. The EGD and other main policy frameworks need to tackle the root causes of those injustices and overcome prevailing systems of oppression.
- The EU must adopt a broader and more holistic concept of sustainability and a just transition centred around care, solidarity, equality, and nature protection. Gender equality must become a core objective of climate and environmental policies. To increase acceptance for a transition and to make sure that everyone in Europe benefits from it, an intersectional framing needs to be followed systematically.
- A transformation of our economies is vital. The EU needs to reframe its core policies away from GDP growth and towards the wellbeing of people and the planet. To measure these new goals, we must find more accurate measures and replace GDP as an overall indicator for prosperity with more suitable indicators to measure wellbeing. Unpaid and paid care work must be recognised as a central component of the economy.
- To implement gender transformative climate and environmental policies in practice, the EU should support awareness raising efforts on gender and the environment and climate through initiatives such as roundtables, campaigns, and dedicated funding. To inform policy, the EU should ensure the collection and analysis of intersectional data and close the data gap on the gender and environment nexus. The provision of dedicated funding could help to better understand the interlinkages of gender and climate and environmental policies.
- Representation must be gender balanced and reflect the diversity of people in Europe. The EU must promote women as active drivers of change, involve women and vulnerable groups proactively in consultation, planning and policy design, and strengthen social dialogue and collective bargaining to tackle discrimination and unequal treatment. The EU must step up its effort to increase the representation and participation of women, especially at the intersection of different forms of racism and discrimination, at EU and the national level, business level, going beyond tokenism. This could be achieved, for example, by parity measures and binding targets, mechanisms to enhance participative democracy and by ensuring transparent, inclusive, and meaningful engagement and consultation of stakeholders committed to gender, climate and environmental justice in all their diversity in climate and environmental policymaking. Inclusive climate policies depend on equal participation.

2

GENDER ANALYSIS OF EU CLIMATE POLICIES

In the following section we will analyse the three sectors of the European Green Deal that are particularly important due to their high level of emissions:⁴⁷ energy, transport and agriculture. By utilising interviews with key stakeholders as well as research into the respective policies laid out in the European Green Deal, we set out an ecofeminist analysis and make concrete policy recommendations. These sectoral chapters are followed by a discussion of the Social Climate Fund and how it could be used to implement these recommendations and a short chapter on horizontal recommendations, as there are some common trends that we would like to highlight.

2.1. ENERGY

The energy sector in the EU is responsible for 75 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions and therefore an essential area to tackle.⁴⁸ A key aim of the energy transition, which needs to go beyond old energy patterns and fossil sources, must also ensure that no one is left behind. The European Green Deal Communication identifies the need “to rethink policies for clean energy supply across the economy, industry, production and consumption, (...) construction, taxation”.⁴⁹ This section analyses proposed new EU legislation to revise existing directives related to energy such as the Renewable Energy Directive (RED), the Energy Taxation Directive, the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED), and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive from a gender perspective.

THE GENDER AND ENERGY NEXUS

Recognising the nexus between gender equality and energy policies is a prerequisite to paving the way to ambitious gender-responsive and intersectional energy policies.⁵⁰

- **Productive work:** The energy sector remains heavily dominated by men who represented 80 per cent of the total workforce in 2019.⁵¹ Women are more active in the renewable energy sector, accounting for on average 35 per cent of the workforce in 2016.⁵²

The data shows that women still face barriers when entering the energy sector. This is mainly due to existing gender stereotypes which are powerful already in early education. A workplace culture lacking an inclusive environment such as flexible working hours or training opportunities are other factors.⁵³ Beyond the energy sector, the persistent gender pay gap in the EU, which stands at 14.1 per cent,⁵⁴ automatically leads to a gender pension gap of around 30 per cent.⁵⁵ Women therefore have less resources for investments in energy efficient appliances, small scale renewable energy solutions, energy communities and energy efficient renovation of homes.

- **Reproductive work:** Reproductive work is mainly unpaid care work such as taking care of children, older persons, household chores and community work. Around two thirds of unpaid care work in the EU is provided by women.⁵⁶ This contributes to gender differences in energy consumption patterns since care work is mostly home based. Even though women tend to use less energy overall (for the gendered use of transport see the following section), they consume more within the household given their care activities. Different gender roles and their impact on consumption patterns need to be considered when shaping energy policies and legislation such as the revision of the Renewable Energy Directive and the Energy Taxation Directive.
- **Power and decision-making:** According to a European Commission study, the share of women in EU member states’ ministries of energy is 44 per cent,⁵⁷ and in 2020 their share in national parliaments in the EU-28 was 32.7 per cent and 39.1 per cent in the European Parliament.⁵⁸ The lack of representation of women in all their diversity in decision-making on energy and related issues is likely to marginalise the experiences and needs of women and to lead to policies that lack gender responsiveness with an androcentric effect on the energy transition.

GENDER GAPS WITHIN THE ENERGY TRANSITION

To deliver on the 2030 climate targets, the EGD envisages a ‘fair, competitive and green transition’ through measures such as increased renewable energy use, energy savings and taxation reform. The energy transition is likely to reinforce existing power inequalities if these are not addressed. However, gender equality is not mentioned as an objective of the energy transition, for instance, in the Clean Energy Package of May 2019. Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action,⁵⁹ part of the Clean Energy Package, is an exception when referring to the Paris Agreement⁶⁰ and its commitments to human rights and gender equality. EU member states are called on to “integrate the dimensions of human rights and gender equality in their integrated national energy and climate plans (NECPs) and long-term strategies”.⁶¹ Yet, analysis shows that of the 27 NECPs only 8 mention gender, mainly within the preambular section evoking the existence of other (international) commitments. A motivating factor in this regard should be the European Commission’s newly adopted Gender Equality Strategy⁶² which promises gender mainstreaming in all policy areas and refers to upcoming policies under the EGD. However, a more thorough analysis of the following draft proposals for EU legislation shows very little concrete commitment towards a gender-transformative energy system and only a few explicit links to gender equality.

REVISION OF THE RED II (PROPOSAL)

The European Commission proposes that the Renewable Energy Directive (RED)⁶³ should be revised in 2022 to contribute to the EU’s increased climate ambitions for 2030 and 2050. In 2009, the RED was adopted with the declared goal of a minimum 20 per cent share of renewables in final energy consumption by 2020. It was substantially revised in 2018 (RED II) to deliver on the new goal of a minimum 32 per cent share of renewables. The proposal from July 2021 is to increase the binding target to 40 per cent renewables by 2030. A key sector in the share of renewables is the building and housing sector. Therefore, the proposal to revise RED II continues the approach for consumers to become key players in the energy transition with a right to produce and trade energy. Producers and consumers as ‘prosumers’ have the possibility to participate in all markets with decentralised and participatory concepts, be it as individuals or as communities. However, this concept needs a gendered approach to reach its full potential.

A small interview-based study in Norway and the UK on energy production in the home reveals that women are

generally interested in prosuming due to the environmental benefits, but that “existing social differentiation along gender lines, where ‘modern’ technology continues to be perceived as a masculine domain, constitutes a barrier to most women becoming fully engaged prosumers”.⁶⁴ A study in Germany revealed similar results for energy communities linked to gender inequalities, showing that differences in care responsibilities are a driver for women’s and men’s agency and capabilities to participate in renewable energy communities.⁶⁵ Therefore, policies need to promote inclusive practices that target a more diverse group of prosumers in order to increase the numbers of households producing energy. Both studies conclude that gender-specific occupational segregation, which manifests itself both in fewer women working in the renewable energy sector and in fewer women having top managerial positions, perpetuates the limiting effects of gender norms.

REVISION OF THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY DIRECTIVE AND THE RENOVATION WAVE

The new 2030 target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 per cent compared to 1990 levels also requires a recast of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED)⁶⁶ proposed in July 2021.⁶⁷ The proposal promotes the principle of ‘energy efficiency first’ to cut CO₂ emissions. It sets a 9 per cent reduction target for energy consumption for 2030 from the level of 2020.

The new proposal pursues the call for the protection of vulnerable consumers,⁶⁸ since EU member states are asked to prioritise vulnerable customers, people living in energy poverty⁶⁹ or those living in social housing when implementing energy efficiency obligation schemes (Articles 8 and 9). Furthermore, the proposal aims to prevent energy efficiency measures having negative effects on these groups. Suggested measures for EU member states include targeted information and awareness raising to empower these groups as well as making use of public funding to invest in energy efficiency measures specifically for vulnerable consumers and establishing networks of relevant stakeholders. The inclusion of energy poverty into energy efficiency measures is not new; however, the empowerment aspect of Article 22 of the proposal, including concrete recommendations on how to deliver on it, is new. Proposed measures include the fostering of technical assistance for social actors to promote vulnerable consumers’ active engagement in the energy market and positive changes in their energy consumption behaviour (Article 22(3)(e)) and ensuring access to finance, grants and subsidies bound to minimum energy gains (Article 22(3)(f)).

Research shows that women and women-led households are disproportionately affected by energy poverty.⁷⁰ Energy poverty is aggravated by other social dimensions that intersect with gender, e. g. age or ethnic background.⁷¹ Currently, there are no policies or measures within the EU that directly address the nexus between gender and energy poverty.⁷² Article 22 of the proposed recast of the EED requires EU member states to strive for gender balance within networks of experts to be established in order to assist decision makers in alleviating energy poverty. Additionally, the task of the networks may include, in accordance with Article 22(4)(d), assessing why women might be more affected by energy poverty as well as proposing possible remedies. These aspects are promising since they open doors for (mandatory) gender analysis in this sector, a demand which has been called for by gender experts and stakeholders for a long time.⁷³

The EU's Renovation Wave⁷⁴ with the aim to renovate private as well as public buildings is another key initiative to drive energy efficiency. Together with the 2018 amendment to the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive⁷⁵ it sends a strong political signal to increase and improve building renovations. By 2030, 35 million buildings could be renovated and up to 160,000 additional green jobs could be created in the construction sector. Energy poverty is another segment of this package that is tackled; however, again with the significant absence of a gender perspective. Housing conditions vary between women and men, and studies reveal that women more often live in poor housing conditions. The European Parliament (EP) recognised early in 2021 "that women are particularly exposed to the housing crisis; [it] emphasises that women are more affected by poverty, due in part to the wage and pension gap between women and men, and the fact that they more often have part time jobs; (...) [it] calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop a gendered approach in their housing policies, particularly by supporting women who face specific situations such as single parenthood".⁷⁶

The EP's Resolution also recognised the intersectional dimension of the housing crisis: "access to decent and affordable housing is harder for vulnerable groups such as the working poor, women, young people, in particular young unemployed persons, single parents, large families, the elderly, especially those living alone, LGBTIQ persons, migrants, refugees, persons with disabilities, people with physical or psychiatric illnesses, and people from marginalised communities, including Roma".⁷⁷ However, the Affordable Housing Initiative, part of the Renovation Wave strategy, does not seem to include a gender analysis and the funding calls under the initiative do not highlight the need to integrate gender equality.

Renovation regularly makes housing more expensive and risks driving women, especially those in vulnerable situations, out of homes they are unable to afford after an expensive refurbishment. Even though one aspect of the Renovation Wave package is affordability, with the aim of keeping energy-performing buildings available to medium and low-income households, inequality in this sector already exists and must be addressed actively in order to avoid 'renovictions', i.e. the eviction of previous tenants in favour of renovation.⁷⁸ This process is closely linked to the problem of gentrification where the most disadvantaged sections of the population are forced to move to other cheaper neighbourhoods where renovation lags behind and which are generally less well connected, increasing their dependence on public transport.

Beyond the potential impacts of even higher rents, the question of gendered differences in home ownership is also important. While there is very little data about women and home ownership in the EU, a recent study found that "women are generally more likely to be excluded from home ownership than men". The report also found that this is in particular the case for certain household types: "Older women are almost as twice as likely as men to live alone, which is associated with a particular low likelihood to be homeowners virtually in every European country".⁷⁹ Women who do not own their home are likely to have less influence on renovation-related decisions (with the exception of cooperative and similar housing projects) and thus their specific needs risk not being met.

Beyond the direct impact on tenants and homeowners, women's representation in the building sector is particularly low, accounting for less than 9 per cent of the workforce.⁸⁰ If this workspace segregation is not tackled, women risk not benefitting from job opportunities created through new policies.

REVISION OF THE ENERGY TAXATION DIRECTIVE

Taxes account for a significant share of the final prices that consumers pay for energy. They therefore influence consumption patterns and impact investments. Hence revision of the 2003 Energy Taxation Directive⁸¹ is necessary, to end incentives for fossil fuels. Energy taxation needs to be fully aligned with climate objectives. The process to recast the Directive is currently underway. A major change is that those fuels most harmful to the environment will be taxed most. Furthermore, exemptions for fossil fuels used in home heating and in certain products will be phased out with measures to support vulnerable households and alleviate energy poverty.

In general, a gender-blind tax system, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), implicitly enhances the gender gap.⁸² The new Energy Taxation Directive must therefore be based on a thorough gender analysis that considers the differentiated impact on men and women. Energy taxation is mainly a consumption tax, and energy consumption needs, and practices vary between women and men due to their different gender roles. Gender budgeting is a good tool to address this. Therefore, a gender demand is to integrate into consumption tax regulations either compensation measures or social hardship provisions.⁸³

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Resubmit a gender-aware version of the funding schemes behind the Renovation Wave and Renewable Energy Directive to integrate criteria to increase the share of women in the benefitting industries and to include the care sector as one of the beneficiaries.
- Improve the approach of making consumers key actors of the energy transition within the RED II through a gender responsive prosumer model, encouraging women and men to participate in and benefit from decentralised concepts.
- Strengthen research efforts to assess why women are more affected by energy poverty and how the impact of other social dimensions intersecting with gender are exacerbating the situation.
- Introduce a common definition of energy poverty covering its multifaceted nature and contributing factors, including gender.
- Establish a gender-responsive tax system that takes gendered consumption patterns into account and introduces compensation measures.

2.2. TRANSPORT

Making transport more inclusive, accessible, and sustainable is one of the core priorities of the EU and the EGD.⁸⁴ Mobility, whether to commute to work, for care work or leisure, is a basic human right and essential for the everyday lives of citizens, but it is currently far from being sustainable or inclusive.

Transport represents 29 per cent of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions and is one of the biggest drivers of air pollution in cities.⁸⁵ To make matters even worse, in contrast to other sectors, emissions from transport continue to increase and are higher than in 1990.⁸⁶ The majority of those emissions are caused by road transport (74 per cent).⁸⁷ The top 10 per cent income group uses around 45 per cent of the energy for land transport and around 75 per cent of the energy for air transport, making transport one of the most unequal consumption categories.⁸⁸ At the same time, people living in vulnerable situations are often disproportionately affected by the negative impacts of our unsustainable transport system such as noise and air pollution.⁸⁹

Gender is one of the most robust determinants of transport choice.⁹⁰ However, mobility systems are not gender neutral, but dominated by masculine norms. While research shows that women are more willing to adopt sustainable and green transport choices, their needs are less likely to be considered, and women are more likely to be affected by transport poverty.⁹¹ Consequently, mobility and transport benefits men more than women and other vulnerable groups. At the same time, the transport sector is among the EU's most male-dominated sectors, most likely due to persistent gender stereotypes and (harsher) working conditions.

This section analyses new EU legislation related to sustainable transport, in particular the Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy (SSMS), from a gender and intersectional perspective.

GENDER AND TRANSPORT

Research shows that women are more likely to walk and use public transport (especially buses) whereas men use more private modes such as car, motorcycle, bicycle, and new forms of mobility services such as ridesharing and bike sharing. Interestingly, when there is safer cycling infrastructure, women and men cycle equally.⁹² In terms of cars, men are also more likely to possess a driving licence and have access to a car, whereas women are more likely to be in the passenger seat. For example, according to the Federal Motor Transport Authority, 62 per cent of cars in Germany are registered to men and only 38 per cent to women.⁹³

Men and women in Europe also follow different mobility patterns linked to structural inequalities in a patriarchal society. As discussed, women still perform the lion's share of care work. Care work influences how they move. Women often make several, shorter trips (referred to as trip-chaining), travel at off-peak hours and choose more flexible modes with multiple stops to fulfil caring activities such as

accompanying children or relatives, grocery shopping or providing care to family members outside their home. Journeys made by men tend to be more individual trips commuting from and to the workplace.

As women are more dependent on public transport, they have been disproportionately hit by the limited public transport supply due to COVID-19.⁹⁴ For example, research has shown that the mobility of women in Italy, Spain and Portugal three weeks after the lockdown declined by 28 per cent, for men only by 21 per cent.⁹⁵ Although women represent a larger share of public transport users, they face barriers that can limit their mobility and access to jobs and services such as education and healthcare. Women are socialised to be more concerned about safety. Moreover, women also adapt their choice of travel mode, route, and time due to the possibility of harassment when walking or using public transport. For example, almost twice as many women than men feel unsafe when using public transport in London.⁹⁶

Women make up only 22 per cent of the transport workforce, with women underrepresented in all levels of decision-making.⁹⁷ According to a study commissioned by the European Transport Workers Federation (ETF), the dominant culture of masculinity was regarded as the main challenge for women to enter or remain in the sector. This manifests itself in discrimination of women at work in terms of pay rises, equal pay, or promotions. The survey found that nearly one quarter of women feel that being a woman has a negative impact on opportunities for promotion and development. Another contributing factor are workplace conditions that fail to meet women's needs linked to their additional burden with care work, such as long, non-flexible and irregular working hours. Limited access to clean sanitary facilities and unsafe workplaces adds to the list.⁹⁸ Another study by the ETF on violence perpetrated against women in the transport sector found that more than half of the respondents had experienced violence at least once, one quarter of the respondents at least four times.⁹⁹

GENDER AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT IN THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

The Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy (SSMS) was released in December 2020 together with an action plan of 82 initiatives in 10 key areas (so-called flagships) and provides the overall direction of future EU transport policies. The strategy has three key objectives: making the European transport system sustainable, smart, and resilient. As outlined in the EGD, this plan aims to achieve a 90 per cent cut in emissions by 2050 by delivering a smart, competitive,

safe, accessible and affordable transport system.¹⁰⁰ As part of the strategy, the European Commission commits “to make mobility fair and accessible for all and to apply equality mainstreaming to its transport related policy”.¹⁰¹ This requires that any future transport policies must be compliant with the European Commission's Gender Equality Strategy,¹⁰² EU Anti-racism Action Plan,¹⁰³ LGBTIQ Equality Strategy¹⁰⁴ and Disability Strategy.¹⁰⁵ In that sense, there is a clear commitment to ‘leave no one behind’ in the transition. It thus goes beyond gender equality by highlighting the need to integrate the needs of people in vulnerable situations in all their diversity in transport policies.

As regards gender-specific actions and measures, the strategy aims to make the transport sector more attractive for women (and young people) as a workplace in light of the digital transformation. The primary focus is on the continuation of the Women in Transport – EU Platform for change launched in 2017.¹⁰⁶ The aim of the platform is to increase female employment and equal opportunities in the transport sector by giving stakeholders a platform to connect and share best practices and advice.¹⁰⁷ Engagement on the platform by members takes place through events, meetings, conferences and sharing of information about their initiatives. Members of the platform evaluate initiatives to track progress and achievement of targets. Most of the initiatives concern mentoring programmes and girls' days, specific forums, and seminars to exchange views and share experience, but also concrete actions such as on-demand night bus stops for women free of charge to increase safety.¹⁰⁸ Additionally, Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) commissioned four studies to address aspects of the gender dimension in transport.¹⁰⁹

One of the recent guidelines under the 2013 Urban Mobility Package (itself part of the SSMS) is the only European Commission document that directly addresses gender and mobility patterns.¹¹⁰ The European Commission has initiated the concept of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) that provide guidance to local authorities to shift towards sustainable mobility in urban areas. One of the recent guidelines focuses specifically on the integration of gender and inclusivity into SUMP.¹¹¹ The participation of cities in the SUMP scheme is increasing,¹¹² but no evaluation or assessment of how far cities have integrated gender dimensions has been conducted or planned. The EU urban mobility framework is further under revision to adapt to challenges and to align with social, climate and digital ambitions. The roadmap mentions the goal of inclusiveness as an objective but no other reference to gender or intersectionality is made, not even in terms of employment.^{113 114}

Despite its efforts, the SSMS fails to be game changing,

both in terms of (gender) inclusiveness and in sustainability. First, the strategy only covers gender with regards to employment. While reducing workplace segregation, the SSMS needs concrete measures and actions on how to mainstream equality in all transport and mobility policies and the sector.

Second, the strategy largely focuses on the promotion of electric cars and other vehicles such as buses and high-speed rail traffic as well as more efficient air transport, that is, a strategy focused on greening the existing traffic infrastructure through improved technology. It does not provide enough direction or measures on how to shift to more sustainable modes of transport, e. g., with a concrete target to reduce the number of passenger cars across the region as the numbers have been constantly going up and electric cars have significant impacts (raw material use, electricity use and congestion). Hence, it continues to prioritise private and individualised mobility and aviation over other, more sustainable transport modes and infrastructure which also benefit people more equally. Many Europeans do not own a car, with vast disparities between the richest and the poorest parts of the region.¹¹⁵ As mentioned before, women have less access to cars. The same is true for low-income communities. The strategy continues to favour male and middle-class mobility needs and patterns at the expense of the environment and all other users, potentially reinforcing current inequalities.

Third, there are no measures or recommendations on how to increase the safety of women and people in vulnerable situations both as transport users and workers. Safety issues are reduced to road safety (such as driver fatigue).¹¹⁶ Although digitalisation is regarded as an “indispensable driver for the modernisation” of the transport system,¹¹⁷ there is no reference to social aspects.¹¹⁸ It fails to address sexist or racist patterns of algorithms in mobility products or how to ensure better standards for inclusive safety, vehicle design, transport equipment and dummy tests to overcome existing data bias.¹¹⁹

Finally, the lack of gender disaggregated and intersectional data on mobility is mentioned, but not prioritised. Moreover, if gender is considered, it often translates only into binary male/female without consideration of other gender and social categories.¹²⁰ This is problematic as six out of ten transgender people avoid being open on public transport.¹²¹

Other transport policies such as the CO₂ Standards for Cars Regulation or the Trans-European Transport Network, which are gender blind, might also benefit from a gender analysis.¹²²

ACHIEVING CLIMATE AND GENDER JUSTICE IN TRANSPORT POLICIES

The EU’s transport systems are neither sustainable nor socially just. The SSMS is too weak to turn the wheel; more ambitious and profound structural changes are needed. More efforts must be made to fully integrate the rights and needs of women and vulnerable groups into the strategy. Specific measures to tackle the root causes are needed to challenge masculinity as the dominant norm in the transport sector. Studies have shown that women’s transport behaviour is more climate friendly.¹²³ At the same time, women also consider sustainability aspects when making choices, regardless of their income groups.¹²⁴ Sustainable modes of transport must be made attractive for women so that they do not switch to unsustainable modes of transport and for men to shift to more sustainable options.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy:

- Massively expand the public transport sector with fair, affordable, safe, and accessible mobility services that benefit all, with particular attention to women, racialised people, trans and non-binary, disabled people.
- Apply a sufficiency perspective on mobility by reducing the need for transport and commuting. This could be achieved, for example, through the generation of proximity cities where all services and needs are available and accessible within a radius of a 15-minute walk.
- Fully shift funding from polluting transport sectors towards clean and public mobility solutions; ban environmentally harmful subsidies and public investments such as tax breaks for aviation fuels, investments in the expansion of airports and motorways; and expand public investments into public transport.
- Promote policies that make it more attractive and easier to shift from private modes of transport to cheaper and cleaner mobility alternatives such as low-cost or free subscriptions for public transport and stakeholder targeted tariffs, improved service provision (e. g. better service outside peak hours), safer cycling infrastructure; improved accessibility, safety and comfort with particular attention to dimensions of gender and vulnerable people

(e. g. lighting, stewards, awareness raising campaigns against gender-based violence or racism, women-only carriages where requested).

- Adapt public transport systems to the needs of parents with children (which due to persistent gender roles are still predominantly mothers, female relatives and caretakers), people with disabilities and non-binary people (e. g., working elevators and adequate space for prams inside carriages; gender-neutral, clean, and safe sanitary facilities).
- Include clear criteria to reflect interests and needs of women and vulnerable groups as users and employees as well as environmental considerations when revising the State Aid rules and Public Service Obligations.
- Promote women as active drivers of change, involve women and vulnerable groups in consultation, planning and policy design; strengthen social dialogue and collective bargaining to tackle discrimination and unequal treatment.¹²⁵

Urban Mobility Package:

- Pay particular attention to gender and inclusiveness when revising the Urban Mobility Package; develop clearer guidance for EU member states on how to integrate gender and inclusive dimensions into mobility management at local and regional level (including urban planning and connectivity between urban and rural).
- Introduce binding targets at EU, national and local level for public and active transport modes (such as cycling).
- Pay particular attention to gender and inclusiveness considerations when integrating new mobility services and Mobility-as-a-Service platforms (MaaS).¹²⁶
- With regard to Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs): make the development of SUMPs mandatory for cities with more than 10,000 residents; guarantee compulsory, transparent and open participation of residents in all their diversity, civil society organisations, trade unions and social dialogue when drafting and developing the plans; link funding to SUMPs and make access to funds for urban mobility conditional on the existence of an inclusive SUMP, include conditionalities to align with 1.5 degrees Celsius goals and gender and inclusiveness.

2.3. AGRICULTURE, NATURE AND FOOD SECURITY

The agricultural sector is not only key for ensuring healthy food for all, but also to ensure social, economic, and environmental justice in the EU and globally. Agriculture and food production have significant effects on climate change, biodiversity, and pollution, and have impacts on food security. In terms of employment, 22 million people regularly work in farming in the EU member states; overall, the rural economy provides nearly 40 million jobs.¹²⁷ At the same time, 13 million people across the EU face moderate to severe food insecurity, with the trend rising since 2015. Most affected are women, children, and marginalised groups.¹²⁸ The sector obviously has an inherent social equality and gendered impact.

The EU has developed a web of policies relevant to rural regions, agriculture and food production, the protection of nature and biodiversity as well as gender equality that all come into play for this analysis. Measures contained in the EGD include the Climate Law,¹²⁹ the Biodiversity Strategy, the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Nature Restoration Law, the revised Effort Sharing and Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry Regulations¹³⁰ and regulations on the circular economy. In addition to the EGD, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the Common Fisheries Policy, due diligence regulations and other strategies and regulations regulate the sector.

In terms of its overall approach of supporting farms by farm size, the thrust of the EU's agricultural policy has for generations been biased to the promotion of intensive, large-scale farming and farm concentration.¹³¹ Policies have also favoured harmful chemical inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides. In the current system, even organic agriculture tends to be more viable if it is large scale, relies on heavy equipment and machinery, and large output.¹³² The system, as is, requires large numbers of low-wage, flexible, seasonal workers. Due to immense cost pressure on producers, exploitation and abuse are common, undermining the EU's own social and labour standards.¹³³ Moreover, gender does not feature in a proactive or progressive way in the CAP and other related policies: gender equality and its intersectional dimensions are mentioned in passing or not at all.

In addition to its failure to ensure sustainable livelihoods in particular for small and family farms, and particularly for women farmers, as well as for farm labour, the CAP has been complicit in the environmental harm caused by unsustainable farming. Intensive agriculture is the single biggest driver of species extinction and creates 15 per cent of

Europe's climate emissions. There is widespread pesticide contamination of farmland and fertile soil is being lost faster than it can regenerate in over 10 per cent of Europe's land area, cutting production by an estimated 1.25 billion euro per year. Droughts and heatwaves linked to a warming climate are increasingly hitting farm production.¹³⁴ An alternative vision for the European food system would promote sustainable agriculture which can produce sufficient and nutritious food for all, respect plant life, farm animals and biodiversity, help tackle climate change, and ensure a mode of production that unites rather than divorces producers and consumers.

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SITUATION IN THE RURAL EU

Across the EU, rural areas tend to face challenges in terms of overall employment, mobility, internet connectivity, and access to higher education. Rural incomes, and notably agricultural per capita incomes, are among the lowest in each country.¹³⁵ Data on farm incomes is patchy, but productivity differences and income inequality between large and small farms are marked.¹³⁶ Gender gaps, which are known across sectors, remain immense across the EU member states in terms of employment, pay (or income) and lifetime earnings, as well as time devoted to care work, and pensions, and as discussed before, all of these gendered gaps intersect with social exclusion processes based on class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, living with a disability, status as a refugee or migrant, and many others. These issues are especially stark in rural areas. For example, rural women are more likely to resort to part-time work,¹³⁷ and thus many women have precarious contracts as, for example, seasonal workers. According to the European Commission, they regularly "play an 'invisible role' in rural societies (e. g., assisting spouses), which may leave them exposed to vulnerable situations (such as no access to social protection or maternity benefits, in some cases)".¹³⁸

In the EU member states, the actual share of women farmers is disguised as most farms in the EU are family-owned, and women do not regularly appear as owners or managers. Statistically, women farmers make up 28 per cent of farm managers, with women managing 45 per cent of farms in Latvia and Lithuania, and 30 per cent or more of farms in Romania, Estonia, and Italy. However, only 4 per cent of these female farmers are younger than 35, while 42 per cent are over 65 (by contrast to 29 per cent for men), so the gender and age gap in terms of ownership is likely to widen in future years.¹³⁹

Women farm holders have significantly smaller farms than men in terms of land area and output and tend to operate

farms that are not specialised.¹⁴⁰ Farms run by women have on average a lower net value added per work unit than farms run by men by almost 40 per cent.¹⁴¹ In Ireland, for example, women farmers make only 69 per cent of male farmers' earnings, in a sector where earnings overall are the lowest in the entire economy.¹⁴²

Women do register, however, as major providers of farm labour.¹⁴³ Women represented 53 per cent of total part-time employment in agriculture. Family labour is often unpaid.¹⁴⁴ Family workers do not receive a separate income, nor do they acquire entitlements to social security or property rights to land or farms.¹⁴⁵ Also in relation to the EU payment schemes, women are disproportionately disadvantaged.¹⁴⁶

Conversely, despite these gender gaps playing out to the detriment of women, their role in rural economies is recognised as dynamic and ecologically progressive. As the European Commission puts it: "women represent a significant driving force for prosperity and social inclusion in rural areas, notably through entrepreneurship".¹⁴⁷ They are also drivers in ecological farming: for example, while only 2 per cent of farmers engage in organic farming, in 2013, women represented 24 per cent of those in organic farming.¹⁴⁸

Although sufficient data exists, and despite acknowledgement of the significant gender gaps, on the one hand,¹⁴⁹ and women's potential role, on the other, this insight and evidence barely informs EU policy.

GENDER, THE COMMON AGRICULTURE POLICY AND RELATED EU STRATEGIES

The new CAP will enter into force in 2023.¹⁵⁰ It lays out nine stated objectives, namely, to ensure a fair income for farmers, to increase competitiveness, to rebalance the power in the food chain, climate change action, environmental care, to preserve landscapes and biodiversity, to support generational renewal, vibrant rural areas and to protect food and health quality. It contains provisions for social and 'green' conditionality and to improve the position of farmers in the food supply chain.¹⁵¹

On the environmental side, the CAP 2021–2027 proposes to give 25 per cent of income support to farms conditional on ecological and climate change action. This has been criticised as too little to address the climate crisis and biodiversity loss, while the concrete practices applied remain at the discretion of EU member states. To transform the current food system, the CAP overall would have to change systematically in favour of smaller, bio-diverse, and ecological farms.

On the social policy side, CAP beneficiaries will have to respect certain European social and labour law standards to receive CAP funds. An income distribution measure – such as a ceiling on payments to individual farms – and support for young farmers (under 40) are also components of the CAP.¹⁵² However, while EU social and labour legislation includes gender equality objectives, this does not feature explicitly in the CAP as formulated at present.

The new CAP can contribute to the objectives of the Farm to Fork and other strategies.¹⁵³ The Farm to Fork Strategy cites the “key principles enshrined in the European Pillar of Social Rights”, and raises the situation of precarious, seasonal, and undeclared workers. However, it remains gender blind and does not address the well-researched fact that this precarity affects rural women and ethnic minority women in particular.

With respect to integrating agricultural with ecological and climate justice policies, the Farm to Fork Strategy¹⁵⁴ spells out goals such as increasing organic farming, reversing biodiversity loss, curbing food waste, and reducing dependency on pesticides, antimicrobials, and excess fertilisation. It proposes an EU code of conduct for responsible business and marketing practice, accompanied with a monitoring framework. It also puts forward concrete proposals such as supporting carbon sequestration by farmers and foresters.

A major shortcoming, however, is that access to food is not spelt out as a concern, despite the large and growing inequalities experienced across EU member states. This would require an integrated approach to food security aiming at equitable access to nutritious food for all. As in energy and mobility, access to food is an issue of income, availability, and affordability. If organic farming, biodiversity, and externalities are to be genuinely integrated into the market prices of food, far more policy attention is needed on two levels: first, ending food waste and reducing the consumption of animal products to free up land for less intensive production and, second, increasing the incomes of the lowest income groups. As one ecological farmer explains: there is a slightly better margin for the farmer in the niche market for green foods with less of the costly agrochemical and other inputs needed, but output decreases. This type of farming is more labour intensive, so the intermediary buyers would need to pay better prices, as would consumers, if farms are to have a reasonable margin. This model could reduce food waste while fewer farmers would have to give up their farms.¹⁵⁵ It is pursued by the circulatory and solidarity farming movement.¹⁵⁶ As the ecological farmer comments: consumers need to understand the complexity of farming, which would make them more willing to pay more for food and other agricultural products, but such

knowledge has disappeared in recent decades. And one would need more leisure time so that consumers could become hands on co-engaged in eco-farming, only then could small eco-farms which operate in tune with nature and do not self-exploit become sustainable in every sense of the word.¹⁵⁷

Indeed, across the policies reviewed, the centrality of social and gender equality issues has not permeated plans and strategies. The Farm to Fork Strategy¹⁵⁸ makes but one explicit reference to gender equality.¹⁵⁹ This is despite its awareness of the social dimensions of agriculture and food policies, and in disregard of the fact that a number of countries, inside the EU and beyond, refer to the significant role of women in biodiversity actions.¹⁶⁰ According to a cabinet member of the EU Agriculture Commissioner¹⁶¹ this was due to the Commissioners still being new in their roles, and the fact that achieving policy coherence across the DGs takes time.

Through the new CAP, the European Commission is relegating responsibility for gender equality aspirations and commitments back to the EU member states. “Gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, is taken up in the specific objectives of the CAP Strategic Plans. Member States are required to examine and address the situation of women and design appropriate action according to the needs identified”.¹⁶² The development of these strategic plans is left to each country.¹⁶³ The European Commission also appears to be levelling down its gender equality instrumentation, for example resorting to ‘flagship initiatives’ to address some of the challenges, instead of placing them firmly into the policy documents. Its long-term Vision for the EU’s Rural Areas (2021), for example, features a (short) section on social resilience and women in rural areas.¹⁶⁴ However, many of the EU’s strategies are voluntary, hence left to the discretion of its member states, and are not justiciable, so they do not have the needed traction.

OUTLOOK

What does the lack of a decisive commitment to the centrality of ecological, social and gender justice in all its diversity in the context of agricultural policies imply? It means that for the new CAP and other climate and rural policies to move towards a socially transformative, gender and ecologically-just direction, the push for gender equality will need to come from progressive farmers and civil society. As a government official from an EU member state put it: “The majority of CAP beneficiaries are men – how can we change that? We need affirmative action, which many member states do not like. Why are there not measures in

the CAP to get gender mainstreaming done? And we need ex post analysis, too, to measure and strengthen the gender balance. For all this, we need a critical mass of women and of gender equality advocates in all EU processes".¹⁶⁵

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Place a ceiling on subsidy payments (e. g., at 60,000 euros per farm) so that the bulk of the EU's overall support budget is redistributed to medium-sized and smaller family farms.¹⁶⁶
- Include mandatory social and gender equality conditionalities in the CAP to support invisibilised women and undocumented workers and to create a more stable and sustainable agricultural system. CAP direct payments must be conditional on respect for the applicable working and employment conditions under the relevant collective agreements, national and EU law as well as ILO and UN conventions.¹⁶⁷ These conditionalities must be justiciable.
- Guarantee and increase dedicated support – human resources, technical and financial – to agroecological farming, in particular organic farming, to young farmers, to women farmers and rural women entrepreneurs and farm labourers.
- Ensure food security for all by promoting fair prices for farmers and fair incomes for consumers and by promoting organic farming.
- Provide technical and financial support and tax incentives to prosumer initiatives.
- Ensure that organic and agroecological farming and gender equality goals and commitments are mainstreamed and integrated into the work programmes of all government ministries, both those directly concerned and other ministries that affect policy outcomes.
- Ensure that progressive civil society, representing farmers, farm workers, consumers, climate, gender, and environmental activists, of all generations are enabled to advocate for gender justice at EU and member state level regarding policies related to agriculture, the rural economy, nature, and climate.

2.4. THE SOCIAL CLIMATE FUND

As part of the 'Fit for 55' legislative package, the European Commission has proposed the Social Climate Fund.¹⁶⁸ The fund aims to counterbalance the negative impacts of increased consumer prices for home heating and car fuels and to support investments. It will provide 72.2 billion euros, doubled through national contributions to 144.4 billion euros, for the funding period 2025–2032. It will be financed partly through the EU's own resources (revenues from the extension to the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) form around 25 per cent) and complemented by national revenues. Each EU member state is required to submit a Social Climate Plan together with updated National Energy and Climate Plans. It recognises energy poverty as well as the fact that women are disproportionately affected by carbon pricing.¹⁶⁹

Decarbonisation, in particular in road transport and buildings, will lead to higher prices for consumers while they will not yet have access to affordable and available alternatives. Higher carbon prices disproportionately affect low-income households, where women-led households are overrepresented, pensioners and single parents. Costs for heating and fuel make up a larger share of these households' disposable income while they may not have the means for upfront investments in low-carbon products such as electric vehicles, solar panels or geothermal heat pumps which would later ensure low operating costs. Carbon pricing has also other negative impacts when viewed from a gender perspective. For example, care work can lead to higher heating costs due to longer periods in the home. Trips to take care of children and relatives such as dropping off and picking up children from school are becoming more expensive whereas (longer distance) journeys to work are often compensated.¹⁷⁰ Applying an intersectional lens, other groups with vulnerabilities such as LBGTIQ+ and people of colour are probably disproportionately impacted by carbon pricing (as also shown with energy poverty¹⁷¹), but this is difficult to prove due to a lack of data.

The Social Climate Fund is an important and necessary tool; however, in its current form social justice advocates have described it as unsatisfactory for falling short of being an effective and fair compensation mechanism. The just transition needs to address various inequalities across the very heterogeneous economic area of the EU-27,¹⁷² which the current Social Climate Fund does not do. First, it is uncertain whether the amounts budgeted are sufficient to ensure the intended impact. Only 25 per cent of ETS II revenue will go into redistribution, not full redistribution.¹⁷³ Moreover, only a part of the fund is meant to ensure social compensation. The fund will also create incentives for elec-

tric vehicles, investments in charging infrastructure and decarbonisation of buildings. While these investments are necessary, the European Trade Union Confederation has questioned whether low-income households benefit from these measures or whether these investments favour wealthy households (and are therefore not a social measure).

The Social Climate Fund mentions gender but does not address the root causes of energy and fuel poverty and why women are disproportionately affected. Given the higher incidence of fuel poverty among women, the fund should be linked to specific targets and measures for women. As the section on transport highlights, investments in electric vehicles benefit men more than women, who rely more on public transport and would benefit, for instance, from reduced price or even free public transport. Finally, the fund does not go beyond temporary financial compensation as a response. The underlying problem is persistent inequality: despite some degree of economic development there are many low-income households, increasing numbers of working poor and significant and growing income and wealth disparities. Ensuring a just transition must therefore be connected to wider redistribution measures in society, for instance, through substantial tax reforms, higher levels of minimum wages and decent work regulation, in sectors with an overwhelming female workforce such as the care sector, and a financial recognition of unpaid care work, e.g., through the pension system and stronger social protection measures.¹⁷⁴

2.5. HORIZONTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the sectoral analyses above, there are a few general recommendations that can be made to achieve a gender just implementation of the EGD.

- Challenge the existing norms that work against gender equality, e.g., through campaigns, awareness raising amongst policymakers or increased support for civil society organisations that work on issues concerning women, gender equality and the most climate and environmentally relevant sectors such as transport, energy, and agriculture.
- Fully integrate the commitments of the EU Gender Equality Strategy, the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Gender Action Plan and the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy into European Green Deal policymaking and all environment and climate related strategies and laws.
- Make social and gender equality conditionalities explicit and mandatory for all policies and introduce a mandatory assessment of social and gender impacts for all reviews and amendments to existing policies and measures.
- Introduce instruments at the European Commission level for monitoring gender equality against a benchmark with agreed indicators covering all main policy areas.
- Collect gender-disaggregated data with an intersectional perspective for all policy areas.
- Introduce systematic gender budgeting, make the allocation of funds and their impact on gender equality visible and increase gender equality by targeted allocation.
- Institutionalise and facilitate gender-balanced representation in all negotiations and decision-making, in the most climate-relevant sectors such as transport, energy, building and agriculture, e.g., setting quotas and targets for public and private decision-making bodies.
- Ensure that civil society, representing workers, consumers, climate, and environmental activists as well as gender equality advocates of all generations and in all their diversity are enabled to advocate for gender and environmental justice in all EU member states and at the European level regarding policies related to agriculture, transport, the energy transition, employment practices, the rural economy, environmental protection, and climate action.
- Address gendered economic inequalities that lead to the pay and pension gap, with the aim of reducing such gaps to allow women to better manage the climate crisis (e.g., energy poverty).
 - Actively promote the diversification of the workforce to allow women in all their diversity to join these sectors, e.g., through better work-life balance, zero-tolerance policies towards harassment and improvement of working, safety, and health conditions.
 - Promote the redistribution of unpaid care work in society, addressing the care trap.

3

CONCLUSION

The EGD is incongruent with the gender equality strategies of the Von der Leyen Commission. Many of the new strategies and laws put forward within the framework of the EGD are either fully gender blind or are not sufficiently based on gender analysis. Even where gendered differences are acknowledged, the policies, as a rule, do not sufficiently address these. This report recommends a reimagining of the EGD to incorporate gender equality at all stages of policy-making and implementation. This includes a reframing of the EGD from a green growth strategy still aiming at GDP growth towards a new economic model measured in terms of its ecological and social achievements and valuing the unpaid and systematically underpaid care work provided by women in all their diversity. We call for the care economy to be recognised as sustainable jobs and for the EU to broaden its conceptualisation of sustainability beyond sectors such as energy, digital technologies, construction, or agriculture in which gender segregation is particularly marked. The report recommends moving towards a well-being economy that focuses on economic, environmental, intergenerational, class and gender justice. Climate policies should move from gender blind to gender transformative. They must be based on gender-disaggregated data and actively seek to rectify social inequalities rather than perpetuating them. If properly applied, a gender analysis of the EU's Social Climate Fund could greatly help in this regard, as described in the previous chapter.

To give concrete examples and recommendations on how the EGD can be reimagined to ensure gender equality and deliver on its climate and environmental objectives, this report has utilised an ecofeminist perspective to analyse gaps in three key areas: energy, transport, and agriculture. These sectors were chosen as they play a significant role in contributing to CO₂ emissions and, at the same time, have important gendered impacts, which thus far have not been sufficiently acknowledged. Across these very different sectors, we have argued for gender-disaggregated data as an urgent priority, a reduction in gender segregation in the workforce and increased numbers of women in decision-making roles coupled with policies that equally consider the lived experiences of women and girls in all their diversity to overcome the androcentric bias.

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⁶⁹ Energy poverty can be seen as a situation in which a household lacks a socially and materially necessitated level of energy services at home. Households affected by energy poverty experience inadequate levels of essential energy services, due to a combination of high energy expenditure, low household incomes, inefficient buildings and appliances, and specific household energy needs. (Definition according to [EmpowerMed](#) (last accessed on 8.10.2021)).

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 2. [Study on the social dimension of the transition towards automation and digitalisation in transport, focusing on the labour force](#) (published November 2021).
 3. [Educational toolkits to help fight gender stereotypes based on the example of the transport sector – final study report on the development of the toolkits](#) (published October 2021).
 4. The social dimension of the future EU transport system regarding users and passengers (working title) (publication planned for 2022).
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- 131 Alan Matthews** (2016): [Focus on the distribution of direct payments](#). CAP Reform blog.
- 132** Interview with an ecological farmer (livestock and vegetables), member of the community and solidarity farming association, central Germany. On community-supported agriculture, see [European CSA Declaration](#); also see **Gabriele Koehler** (2016): [Assessing the SDGs from the standpoint of eco-social policy: using the SDGs subversively](#). *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy*, Vol. 32(2), pp. 149–164.
- 133 Marguerite Culot** (2021): Who’s left behind in the post 2020 Common Agriculture Policy. Policy Brief for the EU Environmental Policy & Law Programme of Université Saint-Louis Bruxelles. Unpublished. In 2016, 10 of 21 EU countries (e.g., Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom), “Agriculture, forestry and fishing” has been ranked as the first among the top economic sectors with workers exposed to the risk of labour exploitation. Examples of labour exploitation include poor working conditions, unfair wages and violence, people trafficking, forced labour, health and safety violations, financial exploitation, housing abuse, lack of holiday and/or sick pay, immediate dismissals and other violations of workers and human rights. This is widespread and particularly affects undeclared and informal workers who represent 61 per cent of the EU’s agricultural labour force. Also see **Aldone Zawajska** (2016): [Exploitation of migrant labour force in the EU agriculture](#). *Zeszyty Naukowe SGGW – Ekonomika i Organizacja Gospodarki Żywnościowej*, No 116, pp. 37–55; **Colin C. Williams** (2019): [Tackling undeclared work in the agricultural sector: a learning resource](#). European Platform Tackling Undeclared Work.
- 134 European Environmental Bureau** (2021): [New EU farm policy will worsen environmental crises for years](#).
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- 138 European Commission** (2021): Communication from the Commission [A long-term Vision for the EU’s Rural Areas – Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040](#), COM(2021) 345 final, Brussels, p. 5.
- 139 European Commission News** (2021): [Females in the field](#) (8.3.2021).
- 140** Only 27 % of livestock farms – which are more lucrative – are run by women farm holders, while 38 % of poultry farms are run by women farmers. See: **European Institute for Gender Equality** (2016): [Gender in agriculture and rural development](#), Vilnius, p. 5. Also see **European Commission** (2018): [EU Farm Economics Overview](#).
- 141** Austria and Latvia are exceptions. **European Commission** (2018): [EU Farm Economics Overview](#), p. 17.
- 142 Central Statistics Office** (2019): [Women and Men in Ireland. Table 4.1](#).
- 143** Official statistics underestimate women’s work and its contribution to national wealth for several reasons, including (1) the invisibility of women’s work; (2) the seasonal and part-time nature of women’s work; and (3) the role of unremunerated family labour. From: **European Institute for Gender Equality** (2016): [Gender in agriculture and rural development](#), Vilnius.
- 144** The percentage of family labour hours was 74 per cent of the total labour hours in the EU and was the most prevalent form of labour in most Member States (except for Slovakia, Czechia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Estonia and Denmark). From: **European Commission** (2018): [EU Farm Economics Overview](#), p. 4.

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- 152** Ibid.
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- 154 European Commission** (2020): [Farm to Fork Strategy. For a fair, healthy, and environmentally friendly food system](#).
- 155** Interview with an ecological dairy farmer, southern Germany.
- 156** “People who work in agriculture usually only have the choice of either exploiting nature or themselves. Their existence depends on subsidies and market or world prices. Both are factors on which they have no influence, and which often force them to go beyond their personal load limit as well as that of soil and animals, or to get out of agriculture altogether. Organic farming is also not exempt from this mechanism.” (Authors’ translation) Original text in German: [Solidarische Landwirtschaft](#) (2021).
The objective of the circular and solidarity economy movement is to reconnect producers and consumers and provide innovative solutions for living within our planetary boundaries, while ensuring the social foundation for inclusive and sustainable development. From **FAO** (2020): [Agroecology Knowledge Hub](#).
- 157** Ecological farmer (livestock and vegetables), member of the community and solidarity farming association, central Germany.
- 158** “The Commission will incorporate all the above-mentioned priorities in the programming guidance for cooperation with third countries in the period 2021–2027 with due consideration to transversal objectives such as human rights, gender, and peace and security.” **European Commission** (2020): [Farm to Fork Strategy. For a fair, healthy, and environmentally friendly food system](#), p. 18.
- 159** The same applies for the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: “In all of its work, the EU will strengthen the links between biodiversity protection and human rights, gender, health, education, conflict sensitivity, the rights-based approach, land tenure and the role of indigenous peoples and local communities.” **European Commission, Directorate-General for Environment** (2019): [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#), p. 31.
- 160 Barbara Clabots and Molly Gilligan** (2017): [Gender and biodiversity: Analysis of women and gender equality considerations in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans](#). International Union for Conservation of Nature. In their key findings on p.IV, the authors write: “With respect to how women and women’s participation are characterized in NBSAPs, the most countries (37 % of the 174 Parties included in this analysis) indicate inclusion of women as stakeholders; 27 % include reference to women as beneficiaries; 17 % refer to women as vulnerable; and the fewest, 4 % (seven countries) characterize women as agents of change.” Moreover, the [2015–2020 Gender Plan of Action](#) under the Convention on Biological Diversity is available as a reference, with its declared objective to “[m]ainstream gender into national biodiversity strategies and action plans” and setting out very specific proposals.
Looking beyond the EU region, women produce more than 50 per cent of world food production. See **FAO** (1997): [Women’s contributions to agricultural production and food security: Current status and perspectives](#), Women in Development Service.
- 161** Interview with an EU member of cabinet on agriculture.
- 162 European Commission** (2021): [A Greener and Fairer CAP](#), p. 10.
- 163** Ibid. Member States have until 31.12.2021 to submit their draft plans.
- 164** “Support for women will be provided for entrepreneurship, participation in decision making and investments in work-life balance services, such as early childhood education and care, as well as services for older people. There can also be opportunities to increase women’s integration in the labour market.” See **European Commission** (2021): Communication from the Commission [A long-term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas – Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040](#), COM(2021) 345 final, Brussels, p. 21.

165 Government official from the agriculture ministry of an EU member state. Interviewee agreed to be quoted.

166 Marguerite Culot (2021): Who's left behind in the post 2020 Common Agriculture Policy. Policy Brief for the EU Environmental Policy & Law Programme of Université Saint-Louis Bruxelles. Unpublished.

167 The conditionality would cover various areas such as declared employment, equal treatment, remuneration, working time, health and safety, housing, gender equality, social security and fair conditions for all workers employed in agriculture, including mobile and migrant labourers. In October 2020, the EP voted to include mandatory references to 'social conditionality'.

Marguerite Culot (2021): Who's left behind in the post 2020 Common Agriculture Policy, Policy Brief for the EU Environmental Policy & Law Programme of Université Saint-Louis Bruxelles. Unpublished.

Also see: **Natasha Foote** (2021): [Social conditionality set to be sticking point in CAP negotiations](#). Euractiv.

168 European Commission (2021): [Social Climate Fund](#).

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172 Béla Galgóczi (2021): [Is Europe socially fit for the 'Fit for 55' package?](#), Social Europe (19.7.2021).

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174 See for instance UNRISD (2021): [A New Eco-Social Contract. Vital to deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). Issue Brief 11, pp. 2–3.

List of acronyms

BIPoC	Black, Indigenous and People of Colour
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
COP	Conference of the Parties
DG MOVE	Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport
EED	Energy Efficiency Directive
EGD	European Green Deal
ETF	European Transport Workers' Federation
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
JTM	Just Transition Mechanism
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer
MaaS	Mobility-as-a-Service
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NECPs	National Energy and Climate Plans
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RED	Renewable Energy Directive
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSMS	Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy
SUMPs	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

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