



# Gender Mainstreaming Policy

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## Background

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LevizAlbania (LA) is the Local Democracy project of the Swiss Government implemented by a consortium of Open Society Foundation for Albania (OSFA), Partners Albanian and Co-Plan. Since 2015, LA has supported civic actors, non-for-profit organizations, informal groups, and active citizens in their demand for transparent and accountable local governance, and efficient public services. In Phase I, LA attracted overall 1298 project ideas and supported 166 projects (108 NPOs and 58 individuals), in 56 municipalities (92%). The project supported various stakeholders' joint action to improve local democracy countrywide. Since, LA has been recognized as an important actor (brand) in laying the ground for inclusive citizen engagement and action at local level.

LevizAlbania's Phase II will continue its support toward civic actors, building on its previous experience and lessons-learned. The overall goal of LA Phase II will be: Albanian population benefits from an improved democracy at local level. To achieve this goal, the project will deliver along two outcomes:

Outcome 1 - Civic actors influence the local priority setting, decision-making and the effectiveness of service delivery by local authorities.

Outcome 2 - Civil society actors engage in strategic/ joint actions to address structural/ systemic challenges relate to good governance and local level.

LevizAlbania's interventions to improve local democracy in Phase II will focus on promoting:

- Meaningful and enhanced participation of citizens in local decision-making processes;
- Accountable and transparent local government;
- Improvements in public services provision by LGUs as a result of enhanced demand from communities.

The intervention strategy of LA will continue along the same core lines as in Phase 1 as the bottom up approach used by LA proved successful. In the Phase II, LA will deploy two (2) types of instruments:

1. Demand-driven interventions (grants): Action oriented Grants, Community Action Initiatives (CAI), Strategic Grants and Rapid Response Grants;
2. Value-Added Support Services (VASS): horizontal services (e.g. local and national data, mentoring, coaching, facts and evidences, services for specific target group such as youth) that will serve to support grantees and synergize with their actions to lead to improvement in local democracy at the cross-community and national level.

Gender mainstreaming has been a transversal approach for LA Phase I, and was included in all its activities and grants. Out of the 166 funded grants, LA has supported 9 women's organizations (organisation working specifically on gender issues), while 40% of fellows' grantee were women (19 out of 48). Other projects have had an impact from a gender perspective, including active participation of women and girls in forums/boards with municipalities; budgeting of priorities affecting mainly girls and women; monitoring and bringing change in the delivery of municipal services that that are mostly used by women such as social housing, residential services, local referring mechanism on domestic violence, health centres, kindergartens, elementary education system, public transport service, etc. Furthermore, it is estimated that 40% of beneficiaries involved in the activities of 166 supported projects are women.

LevizAlbania will continue to have gender as a cross-cutting theme in Phase II. During Phase II, LA committed to revise the 'Gender Mainstreaming Policy' and produce a 'Guide for Grantees on Gender Mainstreaming', aiming to put emphasis on the integration of a gender perspective in all the upcoming Calls for Application, grants implementation and other LA activities. Furthermore, the gender will be mainstreamed in monitoring,

evaluation and learning activities, to be able to generate and analyze qualitative and quantitative data about: a) the contribution and participation of women and men in the realization of LA's objectives and b) the effects of the project on gender relations and disparities. Likewise, the reporting of grantees is required to highlight qualitative and quantitative sex disaggregated data and gender sensitive information.

## **Gender mainstreaming: what is it and why?**

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Gender mainstreaming is the integration of a gender equality perspective at all stages and levels of policies, programmes and projects – in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – with the purpose to advance equality between women and men. Women and men have different needs, perceptions, views, social statuses and social positions, often unequal access to and control over power and resources, but they must enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. Gender mainstreaming aims to reduce evident and sometimes hidden gender inequalities. It is therefore a tool for achieving gender equality.

*“Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.”*  
Council of Europe, 1998.

*“Gender mainstreaming is the integration of the gender perspective into every stage of policy process – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – with a view to promoting equality between women and men. It means assessing how policies impact on the life and position of both women and men – and taking responsibility to re-address them if necessary.”* European Commission

Gender mainstreaming is valuable in policy-making and policy-implementation and has a greater importance for society, because it makes policies and actions respond more effectively to the different needs of women and men, girls and boys. The purpose gender mainstreaming is to consider these differences when designing, implementing and evaluating policies, programmes and projects, so that both women and men benefit, and achieve gender equality.

## **LA's commitment to equality**

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LA is committed to the achievement of human rights and gender equality in Albania. Gender mainstreaming makes LA's interventions more effective and ensures that LA's agenda challenges inequalities and promote equality.

This Gender Mainstreaming Policy builds on LA's previously existing policy (from 2015) and aims to ensure gender mainstreaming in all LA programme and operations activities. As such, this policy should guide all LA project management and staff, grantees, partners and contractors in implementing a gender equality approach at all levels, at all areas of their work. The responsibility for implementing the gender mainstreaming policy lies within the entire LA project team, grantees and contractors under the leadership of the LA management, even though a specific responsible staff is appointed for this purpose.

## Gender mainstreaming in LA

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Gender mainstreaming is a transformative approach with a huge ability for social change, especially when properly tailored and implemented. It is a long-term effort that leads to a long-term effect, and every single effort and resource committed counts towards this change. However, it often requires some time until it is fully recognized and implemented. Therefore, consensus is required between LA management, staff, grantees and partners towards gender equality, combining gender mainstreaming measures and equitable resource allocations through grants program.

Gender mainstreaming requires a two-fold approach:

### 1. Ensuring equal representation in the LA management and administration.

- Uneven and unbalanced representation of women and men at all levels, at operations and management, who contribute in planning and decision-making processes of LA may affect the desired outcomes with a different impact on women and men. LA programming and operations benefit from diverse perspectives. An equal and balanced representation of both women and men brings in different perspectives and experiences that lead to improved decision-making process and overall LA programme results.
- The policy goal is to support an equal and fair working environment where men and women have equal rights, opportunities, say, and access to LA resources so that they can fulfil their potential and contribution.
- This policy is guided by the LA values and the policy covers gender equality in all aspects of LA operations and management, such as mainstreaming gender in internal office procedures and practices, including 'Operating Rules and Procedures of LA', 'Internal Procedure of LA', etc.
- The policy urges for affirmative actions as an approach to achieve gender equality through the human resource policy/regulation, for encouraging equality in recruiting, training and qualification, and promoting staff, and having a working and learning environment that stipulate mutual respect for all genders.
- The policy recognizes the performance and achievement of staff, and LA staff performance grants men and women equal opportunities to be rewarded.
- The policy demands to provide staff with adequate office space, safe, clean, and comfortable working and learning environment. Women and men perform well when they feel calm and secure. Security as an important and specific gender element, mostly related to women, takes considerations by LA, especially to accommodate specific needs of women who must work late, attend evening events, are away from home in long-term missions, etc.

### 2. Integrating a gender perspective to the core of both two LA's instruments (phase II): 'demand-driven interventions (grants), and 'value-added support services (VASS).

- Since 2015, the previous policy emphasized a gender equality approach in the grants program/instruments on the assumption that women and men are both as beneficiaries. However, gender inequalities are still present in society and further efforts are still needed.

The following represent key features of gender mainstreaming in the two LA's instruments. Gender is a key criterion considered for the approval and management of grants and the following could serve as checklists for

LA Grant Board, staff, partners, contractors and grantees. The latter are guided by the “Guide for Grantees on Gender Mainstreaming.”

### Demand-driven interventions

(Action oriented Grants, Community Action Initiatives (CAI), Strategic Grants and Rapid Response Grants)

- ✓ The gender equality perspective should be clearly stated in the LA’s call for applications documents and strongly encouraged throughout all the steps of the grant-giving process;
- ✓ LA should consider equality in the representation and participation of women and men staff during consultation sessions (to define call directions), info sessions (to inform on the call), guiding sessions (to guide on the project proposal writing), orientation sessions (to orient on contractual conditions with those selected grantees).
- ✓ LA’s ‘Guide for Grantees on Gender Mainstreaming’ becomes a mandatory tool to promote gender equality throughout the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of LA grantee’s projects. The guide specifies that LA intends to achieve gender equality through the Instrument I;
- ✓ Gender equality aspect should be considered in the negotiating phase between the LA responsible staff and potential grantees;
- ✓ Promotion of gender mainstreaming at all stages of the project cycle. Men and women participate and contribute in the initial stages of project concept note, idea competition, full project proposal, approval, implementation, monitoring and reporting;
- ✓ Equality between women and men on the extent to which they are represented in the call for applications, concept note presentation (idea competitions), grant allocation;
- ✓ Stimulation of demand-driven approach at the local level that increases the prospect of proposals from women rights organizations, communities and marginalized groups;
- ✓ Reaching out to organizations and community groups focused on furthering gender equality agenda at local level;
- ✓ Consider choosing ‘gender equality’ a specific thematic area of the ‘Strategic Grants’, aiming at structural challenges through dedicated assistance that leads to advancement of gender equality, using gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting tools to influence local agenda;
- ✓ Specific reference to the application of a gender perspective in the ‘Concept Note’ and ‘Project Proposal’ and all related grant application documents, is strongly encouraged by LA;
- ✓ Considering gender as an evaluation criterion of any proposal submitted to LA, i.e. evaluation criteria for the ‘Concept Note’ and ‘Project Proposal’ should consider the extent of gender mainstreaming in the applicant’s proposal;
- ✓ Require grantees and fellows to collect and report gender disaggregated data regarding the target groups and beneficiaries of their activities;
- ✓ While reviewing grantees’ plans and reports and/or conducting on site monitoring of grantees’ activities, identify, document and discuss the degree to which grantees are implementing the gender mainstreaming measures that they had planned for in their proposal (as detailed above) and mentor them, as needed, on improving on this aspect of their work;
- ✓ Ensuring that decision makers in the grant-giving process are sufficiently knowledgeable with respect to gender mainstreaming and gender equality issues;
- ✓ Gender equality should be integrated in supporting documents; gender checklists should remind the Grant Board of the gender equality perspective and that gender equality is an important evaluation criterion. Equal gender representation of the members of the board is always encouraged;

- ✓ Evaluation of applications at the concept note phase, idea competition phase, full project proposal phase must focus on both quantitative and qualitative gender equality aspects;
- ✓ The evaluation of the overall grants' allocation (in case of external evaluation) must focus on both quantitative and qualitative gender equality performance indicators, measures, targets and gender related aspects of all grants;
- ✓ Quantitative aspects may illustrate the size and weight of grants' intervention from a gender perspective, whereas qualitative aspects may demonstrate changes, rationalisation and the quality of gender related interventions;
- ✓ Assuring that the outcome of the projects granted funding contributes to increased gender equality at local level.

### Value-added support services

Horizontal services (e.g. local and national data, mentoring, coaching, facts and evidences, services for specific target group such as youth) that will serve to support civic actors, including grantees, and synergize with their actions to lead to improvement in local democracy at the cross-community and national level.

- ✓ Ensuring that all who work to implement the different value-added support services (also known as VASS projects) are aware of and comply with LA's Gender Mainstreaming Policy. Alike other grants, VASS projects should mainstream gender in implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases.
- ✓ Continuously addressing the gender equality aspect during the programme implementation period, for example by offering a concrete approach, tool/s and/or dedicated training on gender equality, gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting, etc.;
- ✓ Providing always gender equality reference in the new project tools, e.g. a project fact sheet template should include a heading for 'gender equality' and an explanatory text with examples to track gender responsiveness of the project;
- ✓ Assessing and remodeling components of LA's instruments, if a gender pattern in funding, training, reporting, outreach is detected and needs to be adjusted;
- ✓ Inclusion of the gender aspect in internal LA programme mid-term and final evaluation;
- ✓ Ensuring that gender equality aspect is included in the final report to the SDC. Experiences and lessons learned from the LA's instruments with respect to gender equality aspects should inform both the report and the design of following intervention;
- ✓ All training programs, coaching and mentoring assistance and materials LA offers incorporate a gender perspective and promote best practices of gender mainstreaming relevant to the issue being targeted;
- ✓ Considering gender specific characteristics when training events, coaching and mentoring are organized. This includes working hours, timing, distance of training venue from home, accommodation, transport, and other issues that may impact women's and men's attendance differently;
- ✓ Ensuring a balanced representation of women and men, (at least 30% from each gender), in the LA's teams of experts, contractors, partners, etc.;
- ✓ Ensuring a balanced number of women and men, (at least 30% from each gender), as mentors;
- ✓ Ensure that all LA team of experts and contractors that deliver services and technical assistance on behalf of LA collect and report gender disaggregated data.

## Gender responsive funding mechanism – the added value

Much of what LA funds is done through the two instruments, coming together to improve local democracy, through enhanced participation of citizens in local decision-making, enhanced accountability and transparency of local government, and improved local public services. Gender equality is an important matter of democracy. Most of LA interventions are implemented by strongly encouraging gender mainstreaming. The 'gender mainstreaming policy' and the 'Guide for Grantees on Gender Mainstreaming' bring some gender related results at local level. Yet, inequality and gender issues are still persistent in society and further funding effort is required. Such persistent issues can only be tackled by having a gender responsive funding mechanism. A responsive funding mechanism, such as 'financing gender equality' through 'Strategic Grants' has an added value to the LA work and effort to improve local democracy. Setting 'gender equality' as a 'specific thematic area' of the 'Strategic Grants' represents an added number of qualities that make them a useful part of LA programme to advance gender equality as well.

- Being responsive, financing gender through strategic grants can support civil society voices and initiatives (particularly those of women's groups) in advocacy and service delivery;
- Gender responsive strategic grants can be used to promote dialogue and joint initiatives between government and civil society (vertical cooperation) as well as to encourage networking among civil society organizations (horizontal cooperation) to support the implementation of national gender equality policies and actions at local level;
- Gender responsive strategic grants can be opportunistic, supporting pioneering efforts and pilot experiences that may prove worthwhile for replication;
- In the context of new phase II, gender responsive strategic grants can be used to fill any gaps of the phase I, targeting specifically gender issues and equality that may be left out of gender mainstreaming approach implemented so far.
- Despite LA's programme achievements so far, gender responsive strategic grants can build capacity and produce sustainable results to the extent that they support further local stable organizations in their efforts and technical assistance to local authorities;

Note: The effectiveness of the gender responsive strategic grants depends largely on the degree to which the LA integrates it into this 'Policy'. It is common to see a gender mainstreaming approach in funding instruments on the LA, but funding gender through 'strategic grants' may lead to interesting and constructive results for LA beneficiaries.

## Gender-sensitive language

Public relations, outreach and advocacy are important parts of LA's work. Informing and reaching out to the public is a crucial aspect of the LA's work. Quality, impartial, respectable and gender-sensitive language must be ensured so that it rather challenges than reinforces gender stereotypes. This includes LA's website and social media (Facebook page, Twitter account), public documents, such as newsletter, fact sheets, success stories, press releases, the Online Platforms, as well as LA public events. LA programme instruments are required to adhering to gender-sensitive communication style.

The following represent key features of gender-sensitive language LA is committed to:

- ✓ Crucial to promote stereotype-free and gender-sensitive language in LA's publications, promotional materials, booklets, brochures, posters, banners, mass media materials, social media, photo-releases and press-releases.
- ✓ Strive to ensure that messages delivered during and through the project's public outreach events and publications address both women and men in verbal and visual terms;
- ✓ While designing public outreach activities, consider the special channels and ways in which men and women receive and process information;
- ✓ Strive to ensure that women and men are represented in a balanced way in all project visual messages such as graphics, pictures, the Online Platforms, etc.
- ✓ Ensure that women are not depicted in a discriminatory way in presentations of project's verbal and visual messages such as the website, slogans, publications, graphics, pictures, etc. Avoiding presenting women or men only performing traditional gender roles, such as serving as an assistant to a male boss, doing household chores, taking care of the children or the elderly (for women), and doing work that requires physical strength, serving as bosses to women, and sitting around the house (for men) and seeking instead to present diverse women and men undertaking a range of activities.
- ✓ Strive to ensure that the project's public outreach efforts reach equally women and men. This includes distributing public outreach materials in various ways to ensure they reach women and men through communication channels and tools of preference to each gender.
- ✓ When organizing a public event, strive to ensure that:
  - There is balanced participation of women and men as, at least 30% from each gender, as speakers and participants.
  - Moderators and speakers encourage both women and men participants to be equally involved in the event.
  - Moderators, speakers, and participants do not use examples that discriminate against women or men.

### LA monitoring and evaluation

A detailed system of data collection and exchange is imperative to feed the monitoring of indicators, outputs and outcomes of LA. Ensuring sex disaggregated data collection is core to LA monitoring and evaluation work.

Likewise, gender equality should be an important aspect of the mid-term review and final evaluation of the programme. On this note, gender-sensitive indicators, outputs and outcomes must be defined in the project's logframe and reported. At the end, it is the impact of gender equality measures supported by the project that counts. The 'Guide for grantees on gender mainstreaming' highlights few points to help grantees track sex disaggregated data and report accordingly. Few guiding points for LA staff, managers and contractors are presented below as well:

- ✓ Keep track and report gender-disaggregated data on all LA-supported events: meetings, training activities, roundtables, conferences, consultation meetings, etc.
- ✓ Project reports should feature data and pictures that capture the balanced participation and contribution of men and women in project-supported activities.
- ✓ Prepare and distribute success stories on the contribution of LA in addressing gender equality issues in the context of LA's goal and work;
- ✓ Field visits, including monitoring missions and participatory appraisals, incorporate gender-based indicators to track the status of gender mainstreaming in grantees' projects.
- ✓ Progress on gender mainstreaming must be integrated in the LA's interim, annual, and final reports to the donor.

- ✓ Reporting the progress of gender equality through LA instruments to donors, national and international partners portrays an added value and increased accountability of the LA programme. Prepare to explain how a gender equality perspective has been ensured throughout the grant allocation process and value-added support services;

## Accountability

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All LA staff, managers, grantees, and contractors are responsible for implementing this policy in their day-to-day work. LA's Executive Director is accountable to ensure that LA staff is briefed, acquainted, and properly trained on the policy and have necessary knowledge and skills to apply the policy. All LA staff is vested with the responsibility to present it to potential LA grantees during the information sessions that LA holds regularly and/or in other occasions the policy may apply. An orientation session on this policy is planned for all staff. In addition, LA's Grant Managers are responsible for providing all LA's grantees with a copy of this policy. LA's Financial Manager is responsible for providing all LA's contractors and individual contractors with a copy of this policy. The 'Grant Board' shall be properly informed and acquainted and should be encouraged to apply gender checklists and gender-sensitive criteria to assess and screen projects for how they mainstream gender. The policy will be reviewed periodically, but at least every five years to take account of emerging issues and trends. A dynamic gender action plan outlining how the commitment will be operationalized will be developed in the first year of the implementation of the policy.

## Definitions

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**Gender** refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age.

**Gender equality** refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development.

**Gender mainstreaming** is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a way to make women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

**Gender budgeting** is the application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality.

**Gender perspective.** An analysis from a gender perspective helps to see whether the needs of women and men are equally considered and served by [a] proposal. It enables policy-makers to develop policies with an understanding of the socio-economic reality of women and men and allows for policies to take (gender) differences into account. A gender perspective is an instrument for approaching reality by questioning the power relationships established between men and women, and social relationships in general. It is a conceptual framework, an interpretation methodology and critical analysis instrument that guides decisions, broadens and alters views, and that enables us to reconstruct concepts, scrutinize attitudes and identify gender biases and conditionings, for subsequently considering and modification through dialogue their revision.

**Gender indicators** are established to measure and compare the situation of women and men over time. Gender indicators can refer to quantitative indicators (based on statistics broken down by sex) or to qualitative indicators (based on women's and men's experiences, attitudes, opinions and feelings). Gender-sensitive indicators allow changes to be measured in the relations between women and men in relation to a certain policy area, a specific programme or activity, or changes in the status or situation of women and men.

**Gender inequality** is the unequal access to and control over the various material and non-material resources and assets of the society. In all societies the woman's role is the inferior one in the relationship. There is still no country in the world where women have equal access to power and decision-making, and to decent and well-paid jobs.

**Gender sensitive evaluation.** A method of gender mainstreaming which integrates gender equality concerns into the evaluation objectives but also into the evaluation methodology, approaches and use. As part of the programme-cycle approach, it contributes to evidence-based policy making, and when it comes to gender mainstreaming, evaluation is one of the policy processes through which the gender perspective is integrated and mainstreamed across sectors.

**Gender-sensitive language** not only reflects the way we think; it also shapes the thinking of listeners or readers and influences their beliefs and behavior. Gender-sensitive language relates to the use of the written and spoken language so that women and men are equally treated and considered. It requires avoiding talking in generic masculine terms, excluding women or reflecting stereotyped assumptions about gender roles. Being aware of the importance of gender-sensitive language could lead to the promotion of gender sensitivity, and also to a higher degree of precision.

**Sex** refers to the biological characteristics which define humans as female or male. These sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive as there are individuals who possess both, but these characteristics tend to differentiate humans as males and females.

**Sex-disaggregated statistics** are data collected and tabulated separately for women and men. They allow for the measurement of differences between women and men on various social and economic dimensions and are one of the requirements in obtaining gender statistics. Having data by sex does not guarantee, for example, that concepts, definitions and methods used in data production are conceived to reflect gender roles, relations and inequalities in society, therefore collecting data disaggregated by sex represents only one of the characteristics of gender statistics.

## References

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This policy is in line with key international conventions and national laws of relevance to the advancement of gender equality in Albania. The most important documents are as follows:

The **Constitution of the Republic of Albania**: It stipulates in Article 18 that all nationals are equal before the law and no one may be unjustly discriminated against on grounds such as gender, race, religion, political or philosophical beliefs, language, economic condition, education or social status.

The **UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** 1978, ratified by the Parliament of Albania by Law No. 7767, dated 9 November 1993, and the **Optional Protocol** to this Convention ratified in 2003, by Law No. 9052, dated 17 April 2003. Article 1 of CEDAW prescribes the following definition for gender-based discrimination: *“any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”*

The **Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with European Union**: The Articles 77 and 99 of SAA stipulate that Albania needs to comply in offering equal opportunities to all, with the intention of bringing Albanian legislation into line with the EU *acquis*.

The **Beijing Declaration** and the **Platform of Action** of the Fourth World Conference on Women: It identified twelve concrete areas calling for intervention which obligated 180 countries, including Albania, to develop legislation, platforms and strategies in support of women’s rights and gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming is mandated by the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action as a strategic approach for achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment at all levels of development. The Platform commits all stakeholders in development policies and programmes, including United Nations entities, Member States, the international development community and civil society actors, to take action.

The law No. 9970, date 24.07.2008 **“On gender equality in society”**. This law “regulates fundamental issues of gender equality in public life, the protection and equal treatment of women and men with regards to equal chances and opportunities for the exercise of their rights, as well as their participation and contribution in the advancement of all social spheres.”

The **National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Action Plan 2016-2020**. The strategy and its action plan show commitment of the Albanian Government with concrete interventions in terms of economic empowerment of

women and men; guaranteeing effective participation and engagement in political and public decision-making processes; reducing gender-based violence and domestic violence; strengthening the coordinating and monitoring role of the national gender equality mechanism.

Gender Equality Index for Albania, 2020.

<http://www.instat.gov.al/en/publications/books/2020/gender-equality-index-for-the-republic-of-albania-2020/>

LA Gender Mainstreaming Policy, 2015.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

Gender mainstreaming knowledge webpages:

<https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/what-is-gender-mainstreaming>

<http://standard.gendercop.com/about-the-standard/what-is-gender-mainstreaming/index.html>