

# **GLOS- SARY**

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**A tool for the use of  
gender-inclusive language**

**metropolis ●**

Metropolis advocates **engaged metropolitan governance** that attends to social life in all its complexity, seeking to enhance the **quality of life of all citizens** living in metropolitan spaces. To do so, it is crucial **to incorporate a gender perspective** in the structure of the organisation, while drafting every public policy, and while managing the services offered in our metropolises.

It is part of Metropolis' mission to provide more visibility on the involvement and commitment of our membership as they work towards ensuring that women and girls have the **right to the city, by drawing up policies, strategies and instruments that promote gender equality**.

This Glossary was conceived in response to Metropolis Action Line 2, which claims for the **strengthening of urban capacities** for good metropolitan governance, indicating as a specific measure the creation of a **full gender-sensitive** and effective plan on learning and capacity building. Developed within the Metropolis Secretariat General, this Glossary represents a tool for promoting the use of a common and **inclusive language** in metropolitan governance. The listed terms aim to raise the **awareness of gender-inclusivity** in the context of sustainable urban development.

Intended since its conception as **work in progress**, Metropolis' Glossary will be reviewed periodically to keep the terminology **updated and consistent** with the rapidly changing urban reality. Our members and partners are invited to give their **contribution and feedback** during this process, sending an email to [metropolis@metropolis.org](mailto:metropolis@metropolis.org)



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## 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The plan of action adopted by the United Nations in 2015 for “people, planet, and prosperity” that includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals. It builds on the Millennium Development Goals.

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## Awareness raising

The spreading of information or encouragement of conversation on a topic or issue through media/advertising campaigns, education campaigns, or community organization run campaigns.

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## Autonomy

The concept of autonomy refers to people’s capacity to make free and informed decisions about their lives, enabling them to be and act in accordance with their own aspirations and desires, given a historical context that makes those possible. Women’s autonomy is often conceptualized as having three dimensions:

1. Physical autonomy (the freedom to make decisions regarding sexuality, reproduction and the right to live a life free from violence);
2. Economic autonomy (right to work and earn one’s own income, distribution of paid and unpaid work between women and men); and
3. Autonomy in decision-making (women’s participation in all branches of government, signing of CEDAW optional protocol, positioning of national machineries for advancement of women).

# B

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## Best practices for gender equality

Accumulation and application of knowledge about what works and what does not work in terms of promoting gender equality and non-discrimination against women in different situations and contexts.

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## Beijing Platform for Action

The Beijing Platform for Action is a landmark document that came out of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, convened in Beijing, China in September, 1995. reviewed past progress and new requirements to accelerate the global march towards gender equality and the empowerment of women. The articulation of Member States and civil society understanding and agreement was contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The Declaration embodies the commitment of the international community to the advancement of women and to the implementation of the Platform for Action, ensuring that a gender perspective is reflected in all policies and programs at the national, regional and international levels.

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## Big data

Information assets characterized by such a high volume, velocity and variety to require specific technology and analytical methods for its transformation into value.

# C

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## Care economy

Part of human activity, both material and social, that is concerned with the process of caring for the present and future labour force, and the human population as a whole, including the domestic provisioning of food, clothing and shelter.

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## Care work

Work of looking after the physical, psychological, emotional and developmental needs of one or more other people.

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## Categorizing nations

Developed country, developing country, first/third world country, all these are outdated manners of categorizing nations. The most adequate classification of today for Metropolis to follow would be the World Bank's country income classification, which is one of the criteria used in the calculation of the association's membership fees.

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## Cisgender

A person whose gender identity fits societal expectations based on their sex assigned at birth; someone who is not transgender.

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## Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Established in 1946, the CSW is dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the advancement of the status of women. It is the principal global policy-making body, meeting annually to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and the advancement of women worldwide.

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## **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

CEDAW, known as the international bill of rights for women, was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly to articulate the nature and meaning of sex-based discrimination and gender equality. The Convention covers not only discriminatory laws, but also practices and customs and lays out State obligations to eliminate discrimination and achieve substantive equality.

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## **Cultural Violence**

Aspects of culture and social life – exemplified by religion, ideology, language, art, law and science – that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence, making direct and structural violence look, or even feel, right – or at least not wrong.

# D

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## Decision-making and participation

Women's participation in public life, specifically in public decision-making, is a key measure of the empowerment of women and a strategy for bringing about gender equality. It is important to recognize that decision-making refers to many different areas of public life – such as the areas of art, culture, sports, the media, education, religion or law, including but not limited to decision-making positions in Governments, legislative bodies, and political parties.

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## Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

In 1993 the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which establishes that violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, within the general community and perpetrated or condoned by the state. In this sense, it argues that states should condemn violence against women and should not invoke any custom, tradition, or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination.

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## Diversity

Differences in the values, attitudes, cultural perspective, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, skills, knowledge and life experiences of each individual in any group of people.

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## Discrimination against girls and women

Discrimination against girls and women means directly or indirectly treating girls and women differently from boys and men in a way which prevents them from enjoying their rights. Discrimination can be direct or indirect.

**Direct discrimination** is generally easier to recognize as the discrimination is quite obvious. For example, in some countries, women cannot legally own property; they are forbidden by law to take certain jobs; or the customs of a community may not permit girls to go for higher education.

**Indirect discrimination** can be difficult to recognize. It refers to situations that may appear to be unbiased but result in unequal treatment of girls and women. For example, a job for a police officer may have minimum height and weight criteria which women may find difficult to fulfill. As a result, women may be unable to become police officers.

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## Dual approach to gender equality

Dual approach to gender equality refers to complementarity between gender mainstreaming and specific gender equality policy and measures, including positive measures. It is also referred to as twin track strategy.



# E

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## **Economy violence**

Acts of control and monitoring of the behaviour of an individual in terms of the use and distribution of money, and the constant threat of denying economic resources.

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## **Empowerment of women**

Empowerment of women concerns women gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness-raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. The process of empowerment is as important as the goal and it facilitates women's articulation of their needs and priorities and a more active role in promoting these interests and needs.

# F

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## **Femicide**

Crime involving the violent and deliberate killing of a woman.

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## **Feminization of poverty**

A series of phenomena within poverty affect men and women differently, resulting in poor women outnumbering poor men, women suffering more severe poverty than men, and female poverty displaying a more marked tendency to increase, largely because of the rise in the number of female-headed households.

# G

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## Gender

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. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. They are context/ time-specific and changeable.

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## Gender Expression

External characteristics and behaviors that may be perceived as masculine, feminine and/or neutral based on societal and cultural norms. These are often expressed through clothing, hair, body language, etc.

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## Gender Identity

A person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender (e.g. of being a man, a woman, in-between, neither or something else), which may or may not correspond to societal expectations based on their sex assigned at birth.

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## Gender analysis

Gender analysis is a critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/ entitlements affect men, women, girls and boys in certain situation or contexts. Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males and their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated into all sector assessments or situational analyses to ensure that gender-based injustices and inequalities are not exacerbated by interventions, and that where possible, greater equality and justice in gender relations are promoted.

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## Gender audit

Definition: A tool/process based on a participatory methodology to promote organizational learning at the individual, work unit and organizational levels on how to practically and effectively mainstream gender. A gender audit is essentially a “social audit”, and belongs to the category of “quality audits”, which distinguishes it from traditional “financial audits”.

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## Gender awareness-raising

The process that aims at showing how existing values and norms influence our picture of reality, perpetuate stereotypes and support mechanisms (re)producing inequality. It challenges values and gender norms by explaining how they influence and limit the opinions taken into consideration and decision-making. Besides, awareness-raising aims at stimulating a general sensitivity to gender issues.

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## Gender balance

Gender balance is commonly used in reference to human resources and equal participation of women and men in all areas of work, projects or programmes.

In a scenario of gender equality, women and men are expected to participate proportionally to their shares in the population. In many areas, however, women participate less than what was expected based on the sex distribution in the population (underrepresentation of women) while men participate more than expected (overrepresentation of men).

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## Gender-based Violence (GBV)

GBV is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between females and males. The nature and extent of specific types of GBV vary across cultures, countries and regions. Examples include sexual violence, including sexual exploitation/abuse and forced prostitution; domestic violence; trafficking; forced/early marriage; harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation; honour killings; and widow inheritance.

There are different kinds of GBV, including (but not limited to) physical, verbal, sexual, psychological, and socioeconomic violence.

- 1. Physical violence:** Physical violence is an act attempting to or resulting in pain and/or physical injury. At its most extreme, physical violence may lead to femicide, or the gender-based killing of a woman. Some classifications also include trafficking and slavery in the category of physical violence.
- 2. Psychological violence:** Psychological violence can include, for example, threatening behaviors that do not necessarily involve physical violence or even verbal abuse. Psychological violence may also be perpetrated through isolation or confinement, withholding information, disinformation, etc.
- 3. Sexual violence:** Sexual violence includes many actions that are equally hurtful to every victim and are used similarly in the public and private sphere. Examples include rape, marital rape, attempted rape, forced unsafe sex, sexual harassment, and, in the case of women, abuse related to reproduction (forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilization).

#### 4. **Socio-economic violence:**

Socio-economic violence is both a cause and an effect of dominant gender power relations in societies. Some of the most typical forms of socio-economic violence include taking away the victim's earnings, not allowing her to have a separate income (forced 'housewife' status), or making her unfit for work through targeted physical abuse. In the public sphere this can include denial of access to education or (equally) paid work, exclusion from certain jobs or denial of the enjoyment and exercise of civil, cultural, social, or political rights.

5. **Verbal violence:** Verbal abuse can include put-downs in private or in front of others, ridiculing, the use of swear-words that are especially uncomfortable for the other, threatening with other forms of violence against the victim or against somebody or something dear to them. Other times the verbal abuse is related to the background of the victim, insulting or threatening her on the basis of religion, culture, language, (perceived) sexual orientation or traditions.

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## Gender budgeting

Application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It entails 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.

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## Gender disaggregated data

Definition: Information differentiated on the basis of what pertains to women and their roles and to men and their roles. USAID from the American People (United States Agency for International Development).

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## Gender discrimination

Gender discrimination is defined as: “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 the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”

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## Gender equality

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.

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## Gender equity

Definition: Fairness of treatment for women and men according to their respective needs. A gender equity goal often requires measures to rectify the imbalances between the sexes, in particular to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women. Equity can be understood as the means, where equality is the end. Equity leads to equality. IFAD.

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## Gender gap

The gap in any area between women and men in terms of their levels of participation, access, rights, remuneration or benefits.

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## Gender inequality index (GII)

The Gender Inequality Index (GII), developed by UNDP in 2010, is an index for measuring gender disparity in three dimensions: (1) reproductive health, (2) empowerment, and (3) the labor market. According to the index, there is no country in the world where women are equal to their men. In other words, gender equality remains a distant reality still.

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## Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach, a means to achieve the goal of gender equality. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities - policy development, research, advocacy/ dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.

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## Gender parity

Gender parity is another term for equal representation of women and men in a given area, for example, gender parity in organizational leadership or higher education. Working toward gender parity (equal representation) is a key part of achieving gender equality, and one of the twin strategies, alongside gender mainstreaming.

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## Gender perspective

A gender perspective is an instrument for approaching reality by questioning the power relationships established between men and women, and social relationships in general that helps to see whether the needs of women and men are equally taken into account and served by [a] proposal and guides decisions, broadens and alters views, and that enables us to reconstruct concepts, scrutinise attitudes and identify gender biases and conditionings, for subsequently considering and modification through dialogue their revision.



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## Gender-responsive budgeting

Gender-responsive budgeting or GRB is a method of determining the extent to which government expenditure has detracted from or come nearer to the goal of gender equality. A gender-responsive budget is not a separate budget for women, but rather a tool that analyzes budget allocations, public spending and taxation from a gender perspective and can be subsequently used to advocate for reallocation of budget line items to better respond to women's priorities as well as men's, making them, as the name suggests, gender-responsive.

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## Gender roles

Collectively, gender roles often determine the traditional responsibilities and tasks assigned to women, men, girls and boys (see gender division of labour).

Gender-specific roles are often conditioned by household structure, access to resources, specific impacts of the global economy, occurrence of conflict or disaster, and other locally relevant factors such as ecological conditions. Like gender itself, gender roles can evolve over time, in particular through the empowerment of women and transformation of masculinities.

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## Gender-sensitive

Policies and programmes that take into account the particularities pertaining to the lives of both women and men, while aiming to eliminate inequalities and promote gender equality, including an equal distribution of resources, therefore addressing and taking into account the gender dimension.

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## Gender-sensitive language

Language not only reflects the way we think; it also shapes the thinking of listeners or readers and influences their beliefs and behaviour. Gender-sensitive language relates to the use of the written and spoken language so that women and men are equally treated and considered, in terms of value, dignity, integrity and respect.

It requires avoiding talking in generic masculine terms, excluding women or reflecting stereotyped assumptions about gender roles.

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## Gender-specific evaluation

Focuses on the approach that has been followed to realise gender equality. Such evaluation significantly contributes to understanding what works well and where the difficulties are, allowing for fine-tuning of the gender mainstreaming approach in future actions.

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## Gender statistics

Gender statistics are defined by the sum of the following characteristics: (a) data are collected and presented disaggregated by sex as a primary and overall classification; (b) data reflect gender issues – questions, problems and concerns related to all aspects of women’s and men’s lives, including their specific needs, opportunities or contributions to society; (c) data are based on concepts and definitions that adequately reflect the diversity of women and men and capture all aspects of their lives; and (d) data collection methods take into account stereotypes and social and cultural factors that may induce gender biases.

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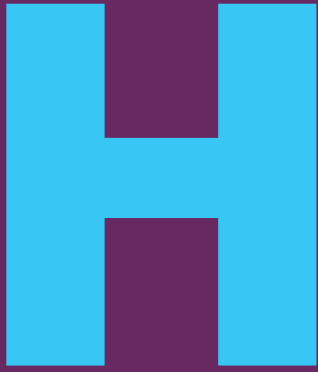
## **Gendered stereotype**

Gendered stereotype is a widely held, simplified and essentialist belief about men and/or women. Essentialist means that the justification for this belief is done through the nature of men and women, instead of considering socio-cultural influences.

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## **Glass ceiling**

The term “glass ceiling” is a metaphor that has often been used to describe invisible barriers (“glass”) through which women can see elite positions, for example in government or the private sector, but cannot reach them (coming up against the invisible “ceiling”). These barriers prevent large numbers of women and ethnic minorities from obtaining and securing the most powerful, prestigious, and highest-paying jobs in the workforce.



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## Harassment

Word, conduct or action (usually repeated or persistent) that, being directed at a specific person, annoys, alarms or causes substantial emotional distress in that person and serves no legitimate purpose. United Nations.

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## Heteronormative

The usually implicit assumption that being heterosexual and cisgender is preferred, expected or is the only reality that exists, and the integration of this assumption into social or institutional practices.

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## Homophobia

A range of antagonistic attitudes and feelings toward people who identify or are perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex. Homophobia may take the form of antipathy, contempt or prejudice, and may be expressed through words or actions. In the case of states or institutions, it may take the form of discriminatory laws or policies. See also "Transphobia."



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## Intersectionality

Intersectionality addresses the need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how individuals navigate the world, that identity categories such as gender, race, class, ability, and sexuality can overlap in individuals to create experiences of oppression or privilege that are unique.



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## LGBTI

An acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex. This acronym sometimes includes additional letters to refer to other orientations and identities.

In particular:

### **Lesbian**

A woman who experiences sexual and/or romantic attraction only or primarily to other women.

### **Gay**

A person who experiences sexual and/or romantic attraction only or primarily to persons of the same sex or gender. The term historically referred primarily to men but is used today by people of all genders as a self-descriptor.

### **Bisexual**

A person who experiences sexual and/or romantic attraction to persons of the same and a different sex or gender.

### **Transgender**

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from societal expectations of the sex they were assigned at birth. Also: “trans” for short is sometimes seen as an even more inclusive term.

### **Intersex**

A person born with reproductive or sexual anatomy, physiology and/or chromosomal patterns that do not fit conventional definitions of male or female.

# M

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## **Metropolitan governance**

The variety of coordination models among different actors responsible for the government of metropolitan spaces, where jurisdictions do not necessarily correspond to urbanization processes.

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## **Multisectoral approach**

Multisectoral approach concerns or involves more than one sector of society (such as government ministries or departments, NGOs, or academic or other community-based groups).

# N

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## New Urban Agenda

The normative international framework adopted at Habitat III, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in 2016, that sets the guidelines for a sustainable, participatory, inclusive urbanization over a 20-year period.



# P

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## Participatory Gender audit

A participatory gender audit is a tool and a process based on a participatory methodology to promote organizational learning at the individual, work unit and organizational levels on how to practically and effectively mainstream gender. It considers whether internal practices and related support systems for gender mainstreaming are effective and reinforce each other and whether they are being followed. It establishes a baseline; identifies critical gaps and challenges; and recommends ways of addressing them, suggesting possible improvements and innovations.

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## Patriarchy

This term refers to a traditional form of organizing society which often lies at the root of gender inequality. According to this kind of social system, men, or what is considered masculine, is accorded more importance than women, or what is considered feminine. Traditionally, societies have been organized in such a way that property, residence, and descent, as well as decision-making regarding most areas of life, have been the domain of men. This is often based on appeals to biological reasoning (women are more naturally suited to be caregivers, for example) and continues to underlie many kinds of gender discrimination.

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## Preventative policies

Policies that aim to stop crime or violence from occurring.

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## Public policy

A course of action developed by a government.

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## Public space

Space in cities outside private property and non-commercial, which is in principle accessible to most people, such as streets, markets, parks, sidewalks, or community centres.

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## Public transportation

Forms of transport available to the public, not privately-owned vehicles.

# R

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## **Responsive policies**

Policies that address incidents of violence or harm after they have occurred.

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## **Risk of poverty or social exclusion**

People are considered to be at risk of poverty or social exclusion when they experience one or more of the following conditions: a) being severely materially deprived with living conditions constrained by a lack of resources; b) living in a jobless household or household with very low work intensity; c) being at risk of poverty, having a disposable income that is below the risk of poverty threshold (which is set at 60% of the national median equivalised income after social transfers).

# S

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## Segregation

In the context of 'the future of cities', urban segregation is the unequal distribution of different social groups in the urban space, based mainly on occupation, income and education, as well as on gender and ethnicity.

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## Sex

Sex is a classification of sexually-reproducing organisms, based on a set of biological characteristics that derive from chromosomal complement and physiology. Males and females are defined according to genetics, gametes, or morphology (primary and secondary sex characteristics, which may overlap between sexes).

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## Sex-disaggregated statistics

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.

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## Sexual assault

The threatening, coercion, or forcing of a person into sexual acts.

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## Sexual harassment

Unwanted and/or unwelcome sexual attention that can be physical or non-physical. For example: unwanted touching, catcalling, whistling, staring, or honking at others without their consent.

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## Slums, informal settlements, inadequate housing

Avoid specifically local or terms that may be pejorative depending on the context they are mentioned (e.g. shanty towns, favelas, villas miseria, bidonvilles, townships).

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## Statistical gender bias

Effect that deprives a statistical result of representativeness by systematically distorting it, due to prejudiced actions or

thoughts based on gender-based perceptions that women are not equal to men.

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## Structural violence

Structural violence is often aimed at women, and is maintained through gender socialisation, gender stereotyping and a constant threat of violence, all of which insidiously identify women as inferior, influencing their actions at all levels.

Structural violence is understood as social exploitation and unequal power (and consequently, unequal life chances), which become part of the social order. With regard to violence against women, structural inequality and the unbalance of power create the conditions for the social subordination of women. Source: European Institute for gender equality.

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## Symbolic violence

Gentle, invisible, pervasive violence that is exercised through cognition and misrecognition, knowledge and sentiment, often with the unwitting consent or complicity of the dominated.



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## Technology-based solutions

Any method addressing violence that incorporates the use of technology. For example: hotlines, mobile apps, and security cameras.

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## Transformative policies

Policies that take both responsive and preventative approaches and are gender transformative, meaning they create opportunities for actively challenging gender norms, promote positions of social and political influence for women in communities, and address power inequities between persons of different genders, addressing the root causes of oppression and violence against women and girls.

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## Transphobia

A range of antagonistic attitudes and feelings toward transgender people or people perceived to be transgender. Transphobia may take the form of antipathy, contempt or prejudice and may be expressed through words or actions. In the case of states or institutions, it may take the form of discriminatory laws or policies. See also “Homophobia.”

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## Transsexual

A person who does not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth and typically has altered or identified the need to alter sex characteristics through medical transition.

# U

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## Unpaid work

Work that produces goods and services but which carries no direct remuneration or other form of payment like housework and care work.



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## **Violence against women and girls (VAWG)**

Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

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## **Vulnerables groups**

Women, children and persons belonging, or perceived to belong, to groups that are in a disadvantaged position or marginalised.



# W

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## Work-life balance

The term “work-life balance” refers not only to caring for dependent relatives, but also to “extracurricular” responsibilities or important life priorities.

Work arrangements should be sufficiently flexible to enable workers of both sexes to undertake lifelong learning activities and further professional and personal development, not necessarily directly related to the worker’s job.

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# GLOSSARY

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A tool for the use of  
gender-inclusive language

an initiative of:

**metropolis** ●

financed by:



Ajuntament de  
Barcelona