

# Gender justice means social justice!

## Gender Policy Guidelines of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

The work of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is guided by the fundamental values of Social Democracy: freedom, justice and solidarity. From this derive specific political goals guaranteeing equal opportunities in order to make these values a reality as well as provide opportunities for social influence – regardless of gender, sexual identity and orientation. Social Democracy has always been a pioneer for gender justice. This applies, for example, to the achievement of women’s suffrage (1919) or equal rights for men and women enshrined in the Constitution.<sup>1</sup> This political legacy shapes our self-perception. We are of the conviction that without gender equality there can be no social justice and no strong, vibrant democracy. That is why we work to put an end to discrimination and to achieve true equality.

These **Guidelines** provide an orientation regarding the aims and objectives, basic principles and working approaches of the FES in its work to contribute to greater gender equality.

For the FES, **gender justice** means the “freedom to have different ways of being and living that are not predetermined by gender and that are instead based on equality in the distribution of resources, opportunities for influence and appreciation”<sup>2</sup>. In its work in Germany and throughout the world, the FES therefore seeks to promote the following **goals**:

→ **Independent livelihoods,  
fair distribution of income  
and equal opportunities  
for participation**

This means, among other things, a living wage for women, social security and a gender-equitable distribution of family care work, a reduction in gender-related income inequality, a fair distribution of paid and unpaid work, social and political responsibility for care work, and equal participation of women in political, economic, social and cultural life.

1: Article 3, section 2 of the German Constitution (Basic Law) states: “Men and women shall have equal rights. The state shall promote the actual implementation of equal rights for women and men and take steps to eliminate disadvantages that now exist.”

2: Pimminger, Irene, *Geschlechtergerechtigkeit: ein Orientierungsrahmen für emanzipatorische Geschlechterpolitik* (Gender justice: an orientation framework for emancipatory gender policy), Berlin, FES, 2014.  
<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/dialog/10739-20140513.pdf>

### → Dignity and integrity

This includes opposing sexism, putting an end to all forms of gender-based violence, protection against sexual exploitation, and sexual and reproductive self-determination for women.

### → Openness and diversity

This means elimination of gender stereotypes, freedom in shaping gender roles and concepts of the family, and recognition of the diversity of all genders.

The **basic principles** underlying our gender policy work are:

### → Gender equality in all areas of life and politics

Implementation of gender equality is a cross-cutting task – strategically, methodically and in terms of content. It affects all policy areas, e.g. financial policy, transport policy, climate protection<sup>3</sup> and digitalisation.

### → Gender justice in Europe and the world

Women's rights and gender equality are universal goals for national, European and international cooperation and policy. Yet at the same time these are preconditions for democracy, sustainable development, poverty-reduction and peacekeeping. These rights are based on existing international agreements, instruments and concepts, such as the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

In our **approach to work** both internally and externally, this means:

The FES actively promotes the principle of gender mainstreaming in all its areas of responsibility and work, as well as the objective of gender equality. Our Principles of Leadership, for which the Human Resources Department is responsible, state: “Executive staff at the FES foster and encourage diversity as well as gender equality and are committed to bringing about a healthy work-life balance”. The FES Equal Opportunities Officer fulfils her duties in accordance with § 6 of the General Works Agreement for the employees.

The FES supports and empowers its staff in the technical and substantive implementation of gender mainstreaming by designing gender-equitable processes and setting structures via a central gender coordination unit and gender coordinators in the work units (including divisions, departments, regional offices and national offices). Gender mainstreaming is supported by further training, but also as part and parcel of quality management, and by means of monitoring and evaluation.

3: FES Gender Briefing: Gender and climate change:  
<https://intranet.fes.de/search?term=Gender%20und%20Klimawandel>

Through our work, we would like to contribute to the surmounting of gender-related disadvantages. We convey a modern gender image enshrining equality in our programmes and formats. In our gender equality work, we adopt an intersectional perspective, i.e. we take into account the interaction of gender with other social categories such as ethnicity, religion, social position, economic inequality, disability and sexual orientation. These categories interact with gender and often reinforce social inequalities and disadvantages. Advocacy of the need to eliminate identity-based disadvantages does not stand in contradiction to efforts to overcome economic inequality, but means working together for greater justice – including social justice – for the benefit of more people.

The content, methods and products of our work are gender equality-oriented and subjected to gender analyses and evaluations on a regular basis. By that we pursue the ideal of a non-discriminatory, gender-equal and diverse society.

In our events, publications and communication, e.g. via the web portal “Gender Matters” and its social media channels, we also communicate to the public that we stand for the goal of gender justice as well as for a modern, intersectional, political feminism based on solidarity while calling for social transformation and social justice. We provide orientation for gender-sensitive communication with our guideline “Eine Sprache für Alle” (One Language for All).

These Gender Policy Guidelines dovetail with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung’s Mission Statement, which states:

**We are committed to gender justice – in every aspect of life. Because only democracy that establishes real equality between the sexes is true Social Democracy.**

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*Developed by the Gender Coordination Group of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, adopted by the FES Heads of Division on 23 September 2021.*