

# Monitoring progress in reducing the gender gap in labour force participation

International Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
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### **Summary**

In November 2014, the G20 Leaders committed to reduce the gender labour force participation gap by 25% by 2025, as a collective commitment at G20 level. As an input to that decision, the G20 Labour and Employment Ministers issued a Declaration which included this issue and set forth 11 policy areas for potential action. This note proposes options and approaches for tracking the Leaders' commitment to reduce the gender gap.

#### ***Policy measures:***

EWG members would be asked to report back every year or every two years (to be decided) in more detail on the implementation of policy measures to reduce gender gaps in participation and job quality.

- Option A: This would be carried out through the monitoring process of the implementation of the Employment Plans.
- Option B: A separate questionnaire would be sent out to collect this information.

#### ***Indicators:***

Develop a set of key indicators to monitor developments in closing the gender gap in participation and other labour market outcomes. To the extent possible, these indicators would be updated annually by the international organisations to reduce the reporting burden by EWG members.

## Introduction

In their Communiqué of the Brisbane Summit and the Brisbane Action Plan G20 leaders tasked the OECD and ILO with supporting the follow-up of the gender target:

“...Promoting greater participation by women in the labour market and improving the quality of their employment will contribute to stronger and more inclusive growth. To achieve this we agree to the goal of **reducing the gap in labour force participation rates between men and women in our countries by 25 per cent by 2025**, taking into account national circumstances. This will bring more than 100 million women into the labour force, significantly increase global growth and reduce poverty and inequality. We recognise the significance of this commitment and will seek the support of international organisations, led by the ILO and OECD, in measuring our progress. ...”.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, drawing on the OECD Gender Recommendation and ILO Conventions and Recommendations on gender equality, the G20 Ministers of Labour and Employment (Melbourne, September, 2014) identified in their Declaration a set of **policy priorities for boosting female participation, quality of employment and gender equity** (Box 1).

### **Box 1. G20 policy priorities for boosting female participation, quality of employment and gender equity**

At their meeting on 10-11 September 2014 in Melbourne, G20 Ministers of Labour and Employment agreed to implement measures across a range of key policy areas to boost female workforce participation, subject to national circumstances, including to:

1. Support lifelong access to education and training, matched with the needs of business and communities
2. Provide access to affordable and quality child care, paid parental leave, family-friendly work opportunities and conditions, and support for elderly care
3. Support women to pursue self-employment and become entrepreneurs, including through equal property rights, improved financial literacy, access to financial markets and advisory services
4. Widen access to services for women (in the formal or informal economies) in order to support their employment prospects and mobility, including tailored employment services, active labour market programmes and skills development opportunities
5. Address legal, regulatory, cultural and behavioural barriers to employment opportunities for women
6. Promote non-discriminatory practices at the workplace, including on pay and career progression
7. Extend social protections, especially to those in poor households or those working in the informal economy, including in regard to work safety, health services, pensions and income security
8. Improve work incentives, income support, other transfer payments and related forms of social security
9. Enhance the female share of executive positions in the public and private sectors
10. Work with social partners to develop new employment opportunities for women
11. Collect and report timely data related to gender.

Source: G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Declaration. Annex D, Melbourne, 10-11 September, 2014.

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1. G20 Brisbane Action Plan, 2014, p. 7.

Therefore, the purpose of this note is to put forward various options for tracking the commitment to reducing gender gaps in labour force participation and quality of employment and to facilitate a sharing of policy experience across the G20 economies. Options are presented both for keeping track of policy developments and for developing a set of key indicators of progress in promoting greater gender equity in the labour market, in line with the priorities of the G20 Turkish Presidency.<sup>2</sup>

### Monitoring progress: tracking policy developments

Two possible options are proposed to take stock of existing policies, whilst tracking and understanding new policy developments for the policy priority areas identified by the G20 Ministers of Labour and Employment for boosting female participation, quality of employment and gender equity. The first option (Option A) is to carry out this exercise through the regular monitoring of the Employment Plans by asking each G20 member to report in more detail on the implementation of existing measures and any new measures to promote greater gender equality in the labour market. The second option (Option B) is to send out a separate questionnaire to collect this information.

In both cases, the EWG will have to decide whether this information is provided **every year** or only **every two years**. A two-yearly cycle of reporting would reduce the reporting burden on countries and possibly take better account of the frequency of policy changes. In alternate years, more detailed information could be collected about policy developments in other priority areas such as improving youth employment outcomes. In line with the principles set out by G20 Ministers of Labour and Employment in their 2014 Melbourne Declaration, the information on policies to address gender gaps in the labour market could cover measures in four broad policy areas:

- (i) Eliminate unequal treatment of men and women in the labour market (Declaration policy priorities 5, 6).
- (ii) Promote an enabling environment for gender equality in the labour market (Declaration policy priorities 1, 2, 4, 10, 11).
- (iii) Make work pay, improve job quality and reduce informality (Declaration policy priorities 7, 8, 9).
- (iv) Promote entrepreneurship (Declaration policy priorities 3).

### Monitoring progress: strengthening the evidence base

Collecting timely data on developments in the labour market by gender was recognised as one of the policy priorities identified by G20 Ministers of Employment and Labour for boosting female participation, quality of employment and gender equity. Therefore, it is proposed to establish a set of G20 key indicators of gender gaps in the labour market that could be produced annually. This would include the gender gap in participation and the progress achieved in meeting the target of a reduction of 25% by 2025. However, it is proposed to extend the list of indicators to cover other areas that are crucial for promoting greater access to quality jobs for women.<sup>3</sup> An illustrative set of key indicators that are proposed is laid out in Box 2, together with the coverage of G20 countries. These indicators have been selected on the basis of: the extent to which they are relevant and widely available on an annual basis. In order to minimise the reporting burden on countries, the international organisations

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2. Prime Minister of Turkey (2014), “Turkish G20 Presidency Priorities for 2015”.

3. OECD, ILO, IMF, World Bank (2014), “Achieving stronger growth by promoting a more gender-balanced economy”, Report prepared for the G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting Melbourne, Australia, 10-11 September 2014. <http://www.oecd.org/g20/topics/employment-and-social-policy/ILO-IMF-OECD-WBG-Achieving-stronger-growth-by-promoting-a-more-gender-balanced-economy-G20.pdf>

could carry out the bulk of the updating based on the statistical information they collect regularly. This would also help to ensure the comparability of the data.

### **Box 2. G20 key indicators of gender gaps in the labour market**

#### **Gender gaps in labour market outcomes**

1. Labour force participation rate among women and men aged 15-64 (source: ILO, OECD; coverage: all countries).
2. Employment /population ratio for women and men aged 15-64 (source: ILO, OECD; coverage: all countries).
3. Proportion of youth not in education, employment and training (NEET), 15-24 (source: ILO, OECD; coverage: all countries)
4. Incidence of part-time employment among women and men (source: OECD, ILO; coverage: 18/20)
5. Gender gap in the incidence of senior managers, 15+ years (source: ILO, OECD; coverage: 18/20)
6. Incidence of entrepreneurs among women and men (source: OECD; coverage: 18/20)
7. Gender pay gap<sup>5</sup> (source: OECD, ILO; coverage: 15/20)
8. Gender Gap in PIAAC numeracy proficiency, 15-64 (source: OECD; coverage: 12/20)

#### **Gender gaps in opportunities**

9. Gender gap in OECD PISA reading and mathematics performance (source: OECD; coverage: 18/20)
10. Gender gap in the proportion of the population who have attained tertiary education, 25-64 (source: OECD; coverage: 19/20).
11. Percentage of tertiary qualifications awarded to women in engineering (source: OECD; coverage: 18/20)
12. Differences in legal treatment of men and women (source: World Bank; coverage: 19/20)
13. Legal incentives to encourage women to work (source: World Bank; coverage: 19/20)
14. Gender gap in informal employment as share of total employment (source: ILO, coverage 15/20)
15. Gender gap in coverage of social protection systems (e.g., cash transfers, unemployment benefits, pensions; source: ILO, coverage 15/20)
16. Proportion of respondents who agreed with the statement: when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women (source World Value Survey (20/20)
17. Total weeks of paid leave available for mothers and the exclusive use of fathers (source: OECD; coverage (19/20)
18. Preschool enrolment rate for children aged 3-5 years (source: OECD; coverage 17/20).

*Note:* For more details on definitions and additional indicators that could be covered, see OECD, ILO, IMF, World Bank (2014), "Achieving stronger growth by promoting a more gender-balanced economy", Report prepared for the G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting Melbourne, Australia, 10-11 September 2014.

<http://www.oecd.org/g20/topics/employment-and-social-policy/ILO-IMF-OECD-WBG-Achieving-stronger-growth-by-promoting-a-more-gender-balanced-economy-G20.pdf>