



## EQUALITY FOR WOMEN & GIRLS IS EQUALITY FOR ALL

The EU and its Member States must play a leading role in making equality a reality for every woman and girl. We can enable women and girls to realise their rights and thrive by promoting their political, economic & social rights, supporting universal access to quality and affordable reproductive health services, supporting inclusive lifelong learning, quality education & training opportunities and empowering meaningful participation in decision-making.

### CHALLENGES

- Women account for 40% of the global workforce, but are often trapped in vulnerable jobs, with lower pay, weak social security, and little chance of training or promotion. In the EU, women still tend to have much lower employment rates than men while being paid less than men are (in 2014, women's gross hourly earnings were, on average, 16.6 % below those of men).
- Every day, over 20,000 girls under the age of 18 give birth in low- and middle-income countries. Worldwide, over 289,000 women die from complications in pregnancy or childbirth each year. Unequal access to health services for women is also a harsh reality in the EU, where 1 in 10 women do not have access to maternal care services during the first months of pregnancy. Lack of access to health services reflects a lack of respect for women's rights and their right to participate in decision-making on matters that affect them.
- Girls make up 54% of the total out of school population. Often girls are forced to drop-out due to child marriage, school fees, lack of sanitary resources, fear of sexual violence or because of less perceived value attached to their education. The lack of education & participation in decision-making massively reduces their chances of making their voices heard, ensuring their well-being and accessing decent employment as adults.



EVERY DAY, APPROXIMATELY **830 WOMEN DIE FROM PREVENTABLE CAUSES RELATED TO PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH**, WORLDWIDE. IN 2015, OVER **1800 MATERNAL DEATHS** WERE REPORTED IN THE EU.



GIRLS MAKE UP **54%** OF THE TOTAL OUT OF SCHOOL POPULATION

# FACTS AND FIGURES



## 58 MILLION

PRIMARY-SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN ARE **NOT ENROLLED IN SCHOOL** WORLDWIDE. **53 % ARE GIRLS.** THESE

CHILDREN ARE AT GREATER RISK OF **EXPLOITATION, CHILD MARRIAGE,** AND **LOWER INCOME-EARNING POTENTIAL.**

## CASE STUDY

**ROMANIA** The 'Mothers for life. Life for mothers' project sustains and integrates maternal medical services and family planning in order to reduce the very high rates of maternal mortality, unwanted pregnancies and abortion, especially among teenagers. By increasing the competencies of healthcare professionals and supporting women to access healthcare services, especially through capacity building activities, women and girls are empowered and equipped with skills to make informed choices. Local authorities together with health workers joined forces to educate, support and inform 15,000 women & 230



*Irina, 26, Romania, is a mother of five and she is four months pregnant. She had her first child at the age of 15. She has never had an ultrasound and does not even know what that is.*

medical care providers in 30 rural Romanian communities that are the most exposed to poverty. Community-based advocacy has enabled real change in the lives of all women and girls.

<https://worldvision.ro/mame-pentru-viata-viata-pentru-mame-a815.html>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The EU and its Member States should promote women and girls' social rights and economic empowerment by: (a) ensuring legal protection and reforming discriminatory laws & regulations; (b) changing societal and business culture & practice; (c) setting in place social protection schemes & systems that support parenthood, childcare, etc.
- The EU and its Member States must promote policies & programmes that strengthen health systems and secure access to health services for all women and girls. Girls must have access to comprehensive family planning and reproductive health rights education which enable them to make free and informed choices.
- The EU and its Member States should promote & implement quality education, vocational training and skills development for women and girls which are crucial to them accessing decent and fulfilling employment & entrepreneurial opportunities. Also, their voice and participation should be strengthened in social, economic, political and civil life and decision-making.



### WHO WE ARE

We are 25 NGOs from across Europe working on social issues, supporting farmers, stopping climate change, protecting the environment, defending women's rights, young people, & gender equality, supporting fair trade, development, global justice, & workers' rights.

[makeeuropesustainableforall.org](http://makeeuropesustainableforall.org)

**#FightInequalities**

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