The European Economic and Social Committee is a consultative body that represents organised civil society.

“The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission shall be assisted by an Economic and Social Committee and a Committee of the Regions acting in an advisory capacity.”

Treaty on European Union, Article 13
WHAT DOES ORGÁNISED CIVIL SOCIETY MEAN?

People “on the ground” – represented by organisations of employers, workers, and various interests (including farmers, consumers, NGOs, professions, etc.) committed to defending their interests or causes (human rights, children's rights, environment, poverty, combating racism and discrimination, etc.).
The European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission are legally obliged to consult the EESC when passing new laws on a wide range of topics.

The EESC examines the proposals and draws up opinions based on agreement reached between its members.

The EESC also adopts own-initiative opinions on topics members believe to be important in the interests of EU citizens.

It also produces exploratory opinions, requested by EU lawmakers when they want an overview of civil society’s views.
The Committee can be consulted by the European Parliament, the Council of the EU or the European Commission. Opinions can be mandatory, own-initiative or exploratory.

To issue opinions, the sections usually set up study groups, each with a rapporteur.

Constructive debate in meetings to reach consensus.

A vote is taken at the section meeting, and then at the plenary session.

The final opinion is sent to the European institutions and published in the Official Journal of the EU.
AN ASSEMBLY OF 350 MEMBERS FROM ALL MEMBER STATES OF THE EU

- appointed for a **renewable five-year term by the Council** on a proposal from each Member State
- **not paid**, but travel and accommodation costs are met
- **not based full time in Brussels**: most continue their own jobs “back home”
Effect of gender equality on GDP per capita

- Slow progress
- Rapid progress

Download graph
Will you help share the goals? Pick the goals you care about and make them famous.

1. NO POVERTY
2. ZERO HUNGER
3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4. QUALITY EDUCATION
5. GENDER EQUALITY
6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9. INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10. REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13. CLIMATE ACTION
14. LIFE BELOW WATER
15. LIFE ON LAND
16. PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development
Women in the EU
A statistical portrait

EU and the Member States with the highest and the lowest result are shown.

Share of women in the EU population 2016

- EU: 51% women, 49% men
- Latvia: 54% women, 46% men
- Sweden: 50% women, 50% men
- Lithuania: 50% women, 50% men
- Luxembourg: 50% women, 50% men
- Malta: 46% women, 54% men
- EU: 260 million
- Women: 132 million
- Men: 128 million
- Latvia: 2.7 million
- Women: 1.5 million
- Men: 1.2 million
- Sweden: 10.1 million
- Women: 5.1 million
- Men: 5.0 million
- Lithuania: 2.9 million
- Women: 1.5 million
- Men: 1.4 million
- Luxembourg: 1.2 million
- Women: 0.6 million
- Men: 0.6 million
- Malta: 1.1 million
- Women: 0.5 million
- Men: 0.6 million

Life expectancy gender gap 2014

- EU: 78.1 years
- Women: 83.6 years
- Men: 78.1 years
- Netherlands: 80.0 years
- Women: 81.5 years
- Men: 78.5 years
- Lithuania: 69.2 years
- Women: 70.9 years
- Men: 67.3 years
- Luxembourg: 77.8 years
- Women: 80.1 years
- Men: 77.7 years
- Malta: 77.8 years
- Women: 78.8 years
- Men: 77.3 years

Gender gap in tertiary education 2016

- Share of women and men aged 30-34 having completed tertiary education
- EU: 44% women, 34% men
- 10 percentage points (pp)
- Latvia: 27% women, 28% men
- 1 pp
- Luxembourg: 6% women, 0% men
- 6 pp
- Germany: 34% women, 33% men
- 1 pp

Gender employment gap 2015

- Employment rate of men and women aged 20-64 (%)
- EU: 76% women, 64% men
- 12 percentage points (pp)
- Malta: 81% women, 54% men
- 27 pp
- Finland: 74% women, 57% men
- 17 pp
- Luxembourg: 78% women, 68% men
- 10 pp
- Germany: 64% women, 51% men
- 13 pp
- Malta: 81% women, 54% men
- 27 pp
- Latvia: 75% women, 54% men
- 21 pp
- Finland: 74% women, 57% men
- 17 pp
- Luxembourg: 78% women, 68% men
- 10 pp
- Germany: 64% women, 51% men
- 13 pp
Recent opinions on Gender Equality

**European Pillar of Social Rights**
References: SOC/542-01902-00-04-ac
25 Jan 2017 - 26 Jan 2017

**Inclusion of migrant women in the labour market**
References: SOC/513 EESC-2014-04856-00-00-ac-tra
21 Jan 2015 - 22 Jan 2015

**Services to the family**
References: SOC/508 EESC-2014-1456

**Women in science**
References: SOC/502 EESC-2014-0625

**Female employment in relation to growth**
References: SOC/486 EESC-2013-3611
18 Sep 2013 - 19 Sep 2013

http://www.eesc.europa.eu