

Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)

2026–2029



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Education International represents organisations of teachers and other education employees across the globe. It is the world's largest federation of unions and associations, representing thirty million education employees in about four hundred organisations in one hundred and seventy countries and territories, across the globe. Education International unites teachers and education employees.

Introduction

Since its Founding Congress in 1993, Education International (EI) has consistently highlighted the need to achieve gender equality in unions, in education systems, and in all societies. The aim of the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) is to provide a framework for deepening this commitment and translating it into action, offering strategic guidance and a shared direction as EI and its member organisations work to create societies in which women in all their diversity have an equitable share in the distribution of power, knowledge and resources, and enjoy equal opportunities, rights and obligations.

Concrete measures are needed for change to occur, and the 2026-29 Gender Equality Action Plan sets out EI's priorities for advancing gender equality up to the 11th World Congress in 2029, building on the Strategic Plan adopted by the Executive Board in December 2025.

EI's commitment to gender equality

Gender equality, anti-discrimination, and women's leadership are core principles for EI. Article 2 and 3 of the EI Constitution form the basis of EI's work on gender equality, and set out the aims and objectives of EI and its member organisations in this area of work:

| Article 2:

- c) The elimination of all forms of discrimination in education and in society, whether based on gender, race, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, political affiliation or opinion, social or economic status, or national or ethnic origin, and the promotion of understanding, tolerance and respect for diversity in communities;

| Article 3:

- j) foster a concept of education which seeks to develop international understanding and good will, the safeguarding of peace and freedom, and respect for human dignity;
- k) to combat all forms of racism and of bias or discrimination in education and society due to gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, political opinion, social or economic status or national or ethnic origin;

- l) develop the leadership role and involvement of women in society, in the teaching profession and in organisations of teachers and education support personnel;

Article 10 of the EI Constitution establishes in subsection c) that at least five (5) of the 10 open seats on the Executive Board shall be held by women; at least three (3) of the group comprising the President and Vice Presidents, and at least one member from each region shall be women.

As a further operationalization of the commitment to gender equality, the constitution establishes a Status of Women Committee (article 14):

- a) A Status of Women Committee shall be established to recommend policies and activities to be undertaken by Education International to promote equality of women and girls in society, in education and in the trade union movement.
- b) The Status of Women Committee shall be composed of women by the Executive Board from among its members. The Chairperson shall be elected by the Committee. The Executive Board shall determine its purposes and procedures.

World Congress provides guidance and oversight. The Women's Caucus brings together women representatives of member organisations to monitor progress, exchange experiences and strategies, and guide EI's future work on gender equality, while Congress resolutions remain the principal vehicle for articulating and agreeing on new policy and determining new priorities. In 2011 and 2015, respectively, World Congress adopted the *Policy Paper on Education* and the *Policy Paper on Human and Trade Union Rights*, which consolidated all EI's policies on gender equality while integrating them within a broader policy and rights framework. EI's policy was further developed through a resolution on *Multiple and Intersecting Forms of Discrimination* adopted at the 8th World Congress, which commits EI to an intersectional approach to gender equality and across areas of work.

El's resolutions on Gender Equality issues since 1995

2024	<u><i>Achieving SDG4 and getting more girls into education</i></u>
2024	<u><i>The urgent need for intensified action on child labour and education as a response to massive setbacks due to political choices, the pandemic, conflicts and climate change</i></u>
2024	<u><i>Curriculum in the fight against fascism</i></u>
2024	<u><i>Defending democracy against right-wing populism and extremism in education</i></u>
2024	<u><i>Tackling the teacher shortage</i></u>
2024	<u><i>Education and wellbeing of children during periods of military conflict</i></u>
2019	<u><i>Eliminating All Forms of Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence within Education Unions</i></u>
2019	<u><i>Multiple and Intersecting Forms of Discrimination</i></u>
2019	<u><i>Condemnation of Racist Appeals of President Donald Trump and in Solidarity with Women of Colour in the US Congress Attacked by him</i></u>
2015	<u><i>School-related Gender-based Violence</i></u>
2011	<u><i>Gender Equality</i></u>
2011	<u><i>Education and the Elimination of Violence against Women</i></u>
2009	<u><i>Declaration: Schools Shall be Safe Sanctuaries</i></u>
2009	<u><i>Vocational Education, Gender and Inclusiveness</i></u>
2007	<u><i>Gender and Pay equity</i></u>
2004	<u><i>Gender and HIV/AIDS</i></u>
2001	<u><i>Trafficking in Women, Girls and Boys</i></u>
2001	<u><i>Gender Perspective in Development Cooperation</i></u>
1998	<u><i>Support to Afghan Women</i></u>
1998	<u><i>Global March for Women in the Year 2000</i></u>
1998	<u><i>Feminised Nature of the Teaching Profession</i></u>
1998	<u><i>The Girl Child</i></u>
1995	<u><i>Policy Declaration on Women in Education and Teachers' Organisations</i></u>
1995	<u><i>Violence against Women and Girls</i></u>

The role of the GEAP

First and foremost, the GEAP seeks to ensure gender justice in the implementation (or fulfillment) of EI's strategic plan. It outlines the actions that EI will take in the 2026-2029 period to promote gender equality in education unions and systems.

The implementation of the GEAP is done by EI's head office in close collaboration with the regional offices, with all parts of the organization being expected to contribute to implementation. In addition, member organisations are encouraged to align their on-going work towards achieving gender equality with the priorities identified in the GEAP.

The format of the GEAP has changed following the Executive Board's adoption of the 2025-29 Strategic Plan, which in itself provides a framework for action, built around five Ps. The GEAP is, therefore, an articulation of the gender dimension of the goals under each P, and mirrors the structure of the plan:

Profession – *Improve and promote status and well-being of our profession: The gender dimension of Profession recognises that the teaching profession is female-dominated and ensures that all professional issues are seen through a gender lens and designed to advance gender justice.*

Public Education – *Ensure quality public education for all: The gender dimension of Public Education interrogates the gendered impact of how education is funded and puts forward a feminist analysis of both education financing and the teacher shortage through the Go Public Campaign.*

People – *Defend human and trade union rights, gender equity, and social justice: The gender dimension of People reinforces EI's commitment to defending women's human and trade union rights, including through the multilateral systems, and supports women's leadership within unions and society.*

Planet – *Promote peace, democracy, and climate justice: The gender dimension of Planet places gender equality and women's leadership at the heart of peace, democracy, and climate justice, raising awareness of the gendered impact of war, authoritarianism and climate crisis, and supports education unions in taking collective action.*

Power – *Building union power to 'Power our Plan': The gender dimension of Power focuses on building power through inclusive unions and by strengthening women's leadership, participation, and representation at all levels of union structures.*

Advancing gender equality through an intersectional approach

In line with EI policy, the GEAP takes an intersectional approach to gender equality. It recognises that women teachers face particular challenges in accessing equal rights and opportunities in a patriarchal society, and that “particular groups of women and girls are especially vulnerable to disadvantage, exclusion, violence and discrimination because of their social location on the basis of age, religion, sexual orientation or identity, ability, poverty, race, indigeneity, migrant or immigrant status, among others, and that women and girls in situations of war and armed conflict are especially vulnerable to disadvantage, exclusion, violence and discrimination” (Resolution on Multiple and Intersecting Forms of Discrimination).

EI is committed to addressing multiple and overlapping forms of discrimination in its work to advance gender equality and gender justice.

The GEAP was drafted with women in all their diversity in mind. We recognise the diversity of identities, experiences and needs of women; for ease of reading, we have used the term women throughout the plan to mean women in all their diversity.

Gender Dimension to EI Strategic Priorities 2025-2029

1. PROFESSION

Improve and promote status and the well-being of our profession

1.1 Human-centred AI

Strategic objectives

- a) Advocate for teacher-led approaches to technology and Artificial Intelligence in education
- b) Strengthen professional practice and defend education as a relational and human endeavour

Actions

Strengthen the gender dimension of EI's advocacy for a human-centred approach to AI, ensuring safety, non-discrimination, and support for teachers' professional practice, through the AI and Technology network as well as global and regional women's structures.

Raise awareness of the impact of AI on professional practice from a feminist and intersectional perspective, including through a blog series on AI that features feminist experts and members of the SWC, Regional Women's Committees, and/or the AI Network.

1.2 The recommendations we need for the profession we want

Strategic objectives

- a) Ensure maximum influence in the renegotiation of the 1966 and 1997 instruments

Actions

Consult the membership on ways to enhance and mainstream a gender perspective in the revision of the 1966 and 1997 instruments.

Develop policy briefings that articulate the need and rationale for a stronger gender dimension in the 1966 and 1997 recommendations on the status of teachers.

Additional actions to improve and promote the status and wellbeing of teachers and education support personnel:

Ensure all EI policy on the teaching profession includes a gender analysis and is designed to advance gender justice.

Ensure that all sector-specific initiatives and activities are designed and implemented with a gender lens (early childhood; further and higher education and research; technical and vocational education and training; and education support personnel)

Promote women's mental and physical health as an integral part of teacher wellbeing, including through:

- the International Barometer of Education Staff (I-BEST) survey, and dissemination of and advocacy based upon its findings;
- Promotion and continuous updating of EI's Health and Wellbeing Database
- Dedicated sessions at the 5th World Women's Conference
- Dedicated sessions to exchange strategies within women's structures.

Continue exploring the links between the feminisation of the profession and its status, with a view towards better reflecting this dynamic in policy and advocacy efforts to enhance the status of the profession.

Continue efforts to enhance the status and improve conditions and salaries in Early Childhood Education (ECE), the most feminised sector within education.

Deepen the gender dimension of the work on school leadership, raising awareness of the barriers women face and advocating for policy measures for greater representation of women in school management.

Ensure a continued policy focus on violence against women as an occupational hazard for the teaching profession, including through data collection, advocacy, and capacity-building, and demand immediate policy measures are introduced.

Advocate for immediate policy responses to technology-facilitated violence in school settings targeting both teachers and students.

Raise awareness of the increase in misogyny and harmful masculinities among young men and its impact on women teachers, students, and the school environment, including by amplifying work by member organisations, and call on policy-makers to ensure targeted support and guidance for the teaching profession.

Advocate for the safety, rights and decent work, including regular salary payments, of women educators in conflict, war and crisis settings.

2. PUBLIC EDUCATION

Ensure quality public education for all

2.1 Broaden and deepen the Go Public campaign

Strategic objectives

- a) **Advocate for an increase in public education financing, including debt and tax justice**
- b) **Fight privatization and commercialization of education**

Actions

Promote a feminist analysis of austerity and privatization, highlighting their impact on women's working conditions and access to decent work; unpaid care work; and access to education, including through research, policy briefings, advocacy and capacity-building activities.

Support member organisations in addressing pay equity by convening strategy and peer learning sessions and documenting successful union strategies for ensuring equal pay for work of equal value.

2.2 Reverse the shortages

Strategic objectives

- a) **Support Member Organisations to organise and campaign to ensure governments implement the UN HLP Recommendations**

Actions

Support member organisations in applying a gender lens to the recommendations of the UN High-Level Panel on the Teaching Profession (HLP), including through a toolkit on the gender dimension of the recommendations.

Strategic objectives

- b) **Advocate for action on the teacher and ESP shortage.**

Actions

Further develop the gender analysis of the teacher shortage, including through research and policy guidance; sessions at the 5th World Women's Conference; and webinars with the full membership, featuring women leaders on the Executive Board and in the regions.

Advocate for salaries commensurate with professions dominated by men, including for different job categories of education support personnel.

Raise awareness of the impact of the teacher shortage on the equity, inclusion and quality of education, including the access and completion of education of girls and other equity-seeking groups.

3. PEOPLE

Defend human and trade union rights, gender equity, and social justice

3.1 Leverage power to enforce rights

Strategic objectives

- a) **Support Member Organisations in using UN supervisory mechanisms**

Actions

Provide support to member organisations and women's networks to advocate for the ratification and implementation of C190, including through training and capacity-building activities.

Facilitate the participation of women education leaders in international intergovernmental processes and meetings, such as the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW).

3.2 Promote equity and equality

Strategic objectives

- a) **Support an increase in women's leadership within Member Organisations**

Actions

Ensure a focus on women's leadership at the 5th World Women's Conference, allowing participants to build further capacity, including on feminist leadership practices, exchange experiences and strategies, and shape EI's future work on women's leadership.

In following up on the 5th World Women's Conference, EI will:

- **Develop** and disseminate a compendium on women's leadership for women leaders in member organisations.
- **Hold** a dedicated session within the Executive Board, where the outcomes and follow-up to the conference are discussed and agreed.
- **Hold** a webinar to present the outcomes of the conference with a view towards ensuring broad dissemination across the full membership.
- **Consider** a webinar series on women's leadership to build further capacity and provide a regular forum for peer learning and strategising, featuring insights from women on the Executive Board and regional committees, and in member organisations).

Ensure that each EI region has a women's committee and/or network, with regular meetings and secretariat support.

Explore opportunities for exchanges and peer learning between the different regional women's structures, building on the results of pilot initiatives at the 5th World Women's Conference.

Explore mentoring options at the regional level through Women's Networks and/or John Thompson programmes, engaging women leaders from each region.

Strategic objectives

b) Ensure an intersectional approach to equity and equality

Actions

Ensure that all research, policy and advocacy; campaigns and communications; capacity building; event organisation, administration and IT systems apply an intersectional lens and are designed to advance equality.

Facilitate the participation of women in all their diversity, recognising that intersecting inequalities will make it harder for women and for other equity-seeking groups, such as but not limited to disabled, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, racialized people, etc. as speakers and presenters at EI meetings and events.

Organise capacity-building on intersectionality for the full membership, including an introduction to intersectionality as a workers' issue and a presentation of how intersectionality can be applied in collective bargaining.

4. PLANET

Promote peace, democracy, and climate justice

4.1 Develop and Execute EIs Democracy Action Plan

Strategic objectives

a) Defend Academic Freedom as a pillar of democracy

Actions

Defend academic freedom in relation to issues related to gender equality as well as the broader diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) agenda.

Collect evidence from member organisations, particularly those in further and higher education and research, on violations of academic freedom in relation to gender equality and DEI, including as they relate to funding patterns and tenure, and ensure that this is reflected in global advocacy.

Strategic objectives

- b) **Support unions to be a force for peace, democracy, and climate justice**

Actions

Develop a section on advancing gender equality in EI's Democracy Action Plan.

Support unions' understanding of the additional toll climate change, conflict, and authoritarianism take on girls, women and other equity-seeking groups.

Offer specific sessions related to the gendered impact of climate change and conflict at the EI conferences on Climate and Peace and publish summaries for all member organisations.

4.2 Promote a pedagogy of solidarity for the world we need

Strategic objectives

- a) **Advocate for education for peace, democracy, human rights, and climate justice as part of a broad understanding of quality education**

Actions

Promote gender-transformative education as part of a pedagogy of solidarity.

Advocate for both initial teacher education and continuous professional development to address gender-related norms and stereotypes and equip teachers with the competences required for gender-transformative education.

Advocate for gender-transformative education as a global policy priority to be reflected in curricula as well as teaching and learning materials, in particular in relation to UNESCO and their normative frameworks.

Strategic objectives

- b) **Climate Education and Action – Teach for the Planet**

Actions

Raise awareness of links between the climate crisis and gender inequality, including through a policy briefing and sessions of the Climate Network and the Global Climate Conference.

5. POWER

Building Union Power to 'Power our Plan'

5.1 Grow and strengthen

Strategic objectives

- a) Support Member Organisations to organise, grow, and strengthen across all sectors
- b) Support more inclusive, representative, and democratic unions

5.2 Engage and organize

Strategic objectives

- a) Support Member Organisations in leveraging workers' capital
- b) Build powerful engagement and strengthen our networks

Actions

Implement gender parity (as a minimum standard) for participation in EI conferences and meetings, including for all assistance schemes.

Create spaces for women to meet and exchange experiences and strategies at EI events (i.e. the women's caucus at Congress and regional conferences).

Ensure a continued focus on eradicating violence and harassment in and around unions, including by convening exchanges and strategy sessions at regional and global events and within the Executive Board.

Prominently feature women leaders in EI communications, including in photo, video, news items, and social media.

Ensure that the Executive Board has professional learning on gender equality at least once in their term.

Ensure that the secretariat staff (head office and regional offices) has professional learning on gender equality at least once per Congress term.

Convene a session for the men on the Executive Board on the role of men in supporting women's leadership and gender equality, with a view towards identifying concrete ways in which the Executive Board can encourage and support women's leadership across EI and its member organisations.

Ensure that the statement on safety and respect is introduced at the start of all EI events and that at least two persons of trust are available throughout the event.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the GEAP

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) allow EI and its member organisations to track progress, identify emerging challenges, and adapt the GEAP as necessary, ensuring that activities remain relevant and evidence-based.

While the Executive Board oversees the implementation of both the Strategic Plan and the GEAP, the Status of Women Committee is tasked with engaging more closely with the GEAP, reviewing progress and providing guidance on any adjustments. The implementation of both the strategic plan and the GEAP is supported by an operational plan, which is developed and overseen by the EI secretariat.

Monitoring

EI will monitor the implementation of the GEAP at global and regional levels through:

- Annual review of GEAP implementation by the Status of Women Committee (SWC);
- Annual reports to the Executive Board (ExBo);
- Continuous engagement with regional offices, including an invitation to regional networks to review progress annually;
- GEAP review as part of the monitoring and review processes of the strategic plan by the EI secretariat.

As we monitor and evaluate the progress of the GEAP, we have to recognise that there is an inherent tension between the broader goals of gender equality and women's leadership, on the one hand, and the actions included in the GEAP, on the other hand. While the actions are designed to contribute to these broader goals, the extent to which women can access leadership positions is not solely dependent on the work of EI but impacted by a range of structures and factors. However, monitoring the GEAP provides an opportunity to analyse and better understand developments and progress towards gender equality and women's leadership in the education union movement.

Evaluation

The final evaluation of the GEAP is done through the 2029 Quinquennial Survey on Gender Equality and Diversity, conducted ahead of the 11th World Congress and through a survey distributed to all EI member organisations. The survey will assess the implementation of the GEAP as well as progress made; include data on the state of gender equality and women's leadership in member organisations; and reflect on gaps and additional ways in which EI can advance gender equality.

The Quinquennial Survey is presented to the Women's Caucus at World Congress, where representatives of member organisations are invited to share further reflections and recommendations to EI.

The following timeline outlines how EI will track progress, engage the Status of Women Committee, and prepare for the 2029 Quinquennial Survey on Gender Equality and Diversity, and ensure a structured and transparent monitoring process,

2026	Launch of the new GEAP at the 5 th World Women's Conference in September 2026 Implementation starts.
2027	Annual review of the GEAP by the Status of Women Committee (Q4)
2028	Preparations for the Quinquennial Survey on Gender Equality and Diversity start (Q3). Annual review of the GEAP by the Status of Women Committee (Q4)
2029	Final review of the GEAP's implementation by the Status of Women Committee meeting (Q2) Launch and presentation of the 2029 EI Quinquennial Survey on Gender Equality and Diversity at the Women's Caucus at the 11 th World Congress First exchange on priorities for the new GEAP by the Status of Women Committee (Q4)
2030	Draft GEAP presented to the Status of Women Committee (Q2) Final adoption of new GEAP by Executive Board (Q4)

Glossary

Education support personnel (ESP) encompass a broad range of professionals who foster safe, healthy and inclusive education institutions. EI categorises ESP as working across nine occupational areas: administration; maintenance and skilled trades; food and nutrition; health and welfare; teaching and learning assistants, security; technology and communications, transport and other specialist professions. ESP work with teachers and/or school leaders and are essential for quality education.

Equality refers to the principle that all individuals should have the same rights, opportunities, and treatment, regardless of their race, gender, or background. This concept is central to efforts aimed at combating racism and discrimination, promoting gender equality, and fostering intercultural dialogue. Achieving equality is essential for a just society.

Feminisation of the teaching profession refers both to the fact that the majority of teachers globally identify as women and the impact this feminisation has on the status of the profession and working conditions (including remuneration). Feminisation is also associated with the historical and ongoing devaluation of the profession, including lower pay and reduced status.

Gender refers to the differences and commonalities between women and men which are set by convention and other social, economic, political, and cultural forces. While “sex” refers to biological differences, the term “gender” focuses on roles, relations, power dynamics and inequalities that are socially created.

Gender-based discrimination refers to the systematic, unfavourable treatment of individuals based on their gender, which denies them rights, opportunities or resources, and participation in decision-making.

Gender equality refers to equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of people of all genders including women, men, non-binary, trans, intersex, and gender-diverse people in all areas of society, politics, economy, and life planning. It means that there is no discrimination on grounds of a person’s sex or gender in accessing of resources or benefits, or in the access to services. It is the direct opposite of gender-based discrimination.

Intersectionality describes overlapping or interdependent systems of discrimination related to age, disabilities, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, sex, socioeconomic status, sexuality, etc. (Gendered Innovations)

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the gender implications of any planned action, including legislation, policies and/or programmes in order for women and men to benefit equally, and to achieve the goal of gender equality (UN A/52/3, 18 Sept. 1997).

Pay Equity is a means of eliminating gender discrimination in the wage setting system. It is sometimes called “equal pay for work of equal value”. Women who perform work that has equal levels of skill required or responsibility involved, under the same or comparable conditions, should be paid the same as men.



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Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
Internacional de la Educación
Bildungsinternationale

Head office

15 Boulevard Bischoffsheim
1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel +32-2 224 0611
headoffice@ei-ie.org
www.ei-ie.org

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