



UnlockEquality: Level up your workplace

2.EU Legislation on Everyday Behaviours

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Overall Connection to Organisational Policies

EU legislation on gender equality and non-discrimination provides a clear framework that organisations must translate into their internal policies, procedures, and everyday practices.

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In the context of *Everyday Behaviours*, these legal principles require organisations to go beyond formal compliance and actively address subtle, everyday forms of inequality that shape workplace culture.

Directives such as Directive 2006/54/EC and Directive 2000/78/EC require organisations to ensure equal treatment in all aspects of employment, including informal interactions, communication styles, and participation in decision-making processes. Behaviours such as interruptions, exclusion from meetings, biased communication, or unequal recognition of contributions must be recognised as potential forms of discrimination.

Organisations must establish clear anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies that include subtle and cumulative behaviours such as microaggressions, aggressive communication patterns, and indirect exclusion. These policies should define unacceptable behaviour, outline reporting procedures, and ensure protection from retaliation.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union reinforces the obligation to respect human dignity and ensure equality between women and men in all workplace practices. This requires embedding respect, fairness, and inclusivity into organisational culture and everyday communication.

The Work-Life Balance Directive (2019/1158) highlights the importance of equal participation regardless of caregiving responsibilities. Employees must not be excluded from decision-making, networking, or career development due to parental or caregiving roles.

In practice, organisations should:

- ensure equal participation in meetings and decision-making
- monitor and address biased communication patterns
- prevent exclusion from informal networks
- ensure fair task allocation
- provide training on inclusive behaviour and unconscious bias

Directive 2006/54/EC (Equal Treatment of Men and Women)

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Full Title

Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in employment and occupation.

Summary

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This directive establishes the principle of equal treatment between women and men in employment, including working conditions, career progression, and pay. It defines harassment and sexual harassment as forms of discrimination and requires protection against such behaviours.

Connection to Organisational Policies

This directive applies directly to everyday workplace behaviours such as communication patterns, participation in meetings, and access to decision-making. Organisations must prevent microaggressions, exclusion, and unequal treatment that may create a hostile or discriminatory environment.

Official EU Reference

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32006L0054>

Directive 2000/78/EC (Equal Treatment Framework)

Full Title

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Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation.

Summary

This directive establishes a framework to combat discrimination based on religion, disability, age, and sexual orientation. It defines harassment as a form of discrimination when it creates a hostile or degrading environment.

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Connection to Organisational Policies

Relevant to everyday behaviours such as aggressive communication, exclusion, and biased interpersonal treatment. Organisations must actively prevent hostile environments and ensure respectful interaction among employees.

Official EU Reference

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32000L0078>

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Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

Full Title

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2012/C 326/02)

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Summary

The Charter establishes fundamental rights within the EU legal framework.

- Article 1: Human dignity
- Article 21: Non-discrimination
- Article 23: Equality between women and men

These principles form the foundation of EU equality law.

Connection to Organisational Policies

The Charter underpins respectful communication, equal participation, and inclusive workplace culture. Organisations must ensure dignity, prevent discrimination, and promote equality in both formal and informal workplace interactions.

Official EU Reference

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT>

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Directive (EU) 2019/1158 (Work-Life Balance Directive)

Full Title

Directive (EU) 2019/1158 on work-life balance for parents and carers.

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Summary

This directive promotes gender equality by supporting employees with caregiving responsibilities and ensuring equal participation in the workplace.

Connection to Organisational Policies

Particularly relevant for preventing exclusion from meetings, decision-making, and career opportunities based on caregiving roles, pregnancy, or parental status.

Official EU Reference

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1158/oj>

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European Commission - Gender Equality Strategy

Full Title

European Commission Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025

Summary

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This strategy defines EU priorities for achieving gender equality, including equal participation, safe workplaces, and elimination of structural inequalities.

Connection to Organisational Policies

Supports inclusive workplace cultures, equal participation in leadership and decision-making, and the elimination of subtle discrimination such as microaggressions and exclusion.

Official EU Reference

https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en

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European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

Full Title

European Institute for Gender Equality – Resources on gender equality and workplace inclusion

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Summary

EIGE provides research, tools, and guidance to support gender equality and inclusive workplaces across the EU.

Connection to Organisational Policies

EIGE guidance helps organisations identify and address biased communication, exclusion, and structural inequalities in workplace culture.

Official EU Reference

<https://eige.europa.eu>

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ILO Convention C190 (Violence and Harassment)

Full Title

ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment in the World of Work

Summary

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This convention recognises the right to a workplace free from violence and harassment, including psychological harm and hostile communication.

Connection to Organisational Policies

Organisations must prevent aggressive communication, intimidation, and exclusion that undermine psychological safety. Clear reporting procedures, protection from retaliation, and promotion of respectful behaviour are essential for compliance.

Official EU Reference

<https://www.ilo.org>

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