



Federal Ministry for
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth



Germany's Presidency of the Council of the EU 2020

Focus areas and objectives of the Federal Ministry for
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth for
Germany's Presidency of the Council of the EU 2020

Dear citizens,

The COVID-19 pandemic has plunged Europe into a state of emergency. The economic and social consequences of this will be felt in Europe for a long time yet. The crisis has also shown us what we lack when European achievements disappear. We can no longer imagine a Europe without freedom of movement and open borders.



In the coming months, it will be crucial that we tackle the effects of the crisis together. This aim is at the core of Germany's Presidency of the Council of the EU. Europe will be emerging stronger from this crisis if we recall the founding principle of the European idea. We are all better off in Europe if we cooperate and address problems together. After all, people spent decades fighting for the idea of a united Europe. It is our responsibility to preserve the achievements made for future generations and to work together in order to ensure our continued well-being.

For this to succeed, Europe needs to be visible to all of us in our personal lives. For this reason, we want to focus on what constitutes a good life for people in Europe: young people taking part in political processes; women having the same opportunities as men; people actively participating in society – old and young alike, no matter where they are from.

We aim to strengthen cohesion among Europeans so that Europe is preserved for future generations.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. Franziska Giffey".

Dr Franziska Giffey
Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth

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Sharing means winning. With this guiding principle we want to help shape a EU that relies on the commitment to democracy of its citizens and that delivers on its promise of gender equality.

Europe for YOUth. YOUth for Europe.

Young people are full of enthusiasm for Europe. Over 70% of 16- to 26-year-old Europeans believe that their home country is better off within the EU. For many of them, the EU guarantees democracy. We want to strengthen trust in the EU so that this positive perception can withstand uncertain times.

- We also want to ensure that young people's views and ideas for democratic togetherness in Europe are heard. To this end, we are organising a virtual **EU Youth Conference** from 2 to 5 October 2020.
- **We promote communication between young people** so that they become actively committed to Europe.
- **We strengthen young people growing up** through our youth work, we provide impetus for further developing youth work in Europe, and promote the European perspective in child and youth services.
- **We exchange information on good practices in democracy work with our European partners** (for example on "Live democracy!", one of Europe's largest support programmes, focusing on "Promoting Democracy – Shaping Diversity – Preventing Extremism").





Women can do anything.

Seventeen out of the twenty countries worldwide in which women have the most comprehensive rights and opportunities are in Europe. We have fought hard for this. But there is still a lot to be done. In order for women to achieve their full potential, the framework conditions need to be right – more than ever in times of crisis. At a meeting of EU gender equality ministers in Potsdam from 19 to 20 November 2020, we want to consolidate the exchange on gender equality at EU level and provide fresh impetus.

- **We will focus on promoting high standards throughout Europe for the protection of women against violence.** We want to improve access to protection and counselling for everyone, starting with a Europe-wide helpline for women affected by violence. We want to exchange information on the experiences made during the crisis and the rapid response services which have been created in many places.
- **We promote gender equality in working life.** We want to reduce the gender pay gap. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the fact that unpaid care work is mainly carried out by women. For this reason, we want to discuss measures for an equal valuation and distribution of professional and care work.

So that every child will make it.

We want to strengthen children and families in Europe. We are aware that measures to curb the COVID-19 pandemic also put a financial burden on many families and children. Therefore, **combating child poverty** continues to be a key challenge for us. We welcome the EU Child Guarantee announced by the European Commission and we will be accompanying the social debate on it. Moreover, we acknowledge the particular **need for protection of children and young people** and we promote their protection and access to support services. We want children's rights to be taken into account in all political decisions and support the European Commission's planned EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child.

Everyone is equal under the rainbow of diversity.

We are committed to promoting the rights of LGBTI persons and support the LGBTI Strategy announced by the European Commission. We want to give LGBTI people – especially lesbian women – a voice. We want to ensure that rainbow families within the EU receive full recognition and enjoy the right to freedom of movement. We want to advance this approach not only within the EU but also across the whole of Europe. To this end, we will hold an event in Berlin from 18 to 19 November 2020 in conjunction with Germany's Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Working together for older people.

During the COVID-19 crisis, older people across Europe have been severely restricted in their everyday lives. Social distancing has been particularly challenging for people living on their own or in nursing homes. **We aim to strengthen the rights of older people and their equal participation in an increasingly digitalised society.** We want to defend their interests and thus strengthen cohesion across generations and across countries.

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-  Commitment
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-  Equality
-  Children and Youth