

# GENPROCURE

GENDER INCLUSION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT



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## GenProcure – Integrated Action Plan

### 1. Executive Summary

The Integrated Action Plan of the GenProcure project serves as an operational tool and an useful guide to implementing gender equality in public procurement. It encompasses purchases, supplies, and services within the public sector, ensuring that both suppliers and buyers incorporate environmental and social criteria into their contracts. Additionally, it emphasises gender interests to reduce inequalities and raise awareness within public administration and the wider community, promoting a shift in attitudes and behaviours.

The general objective of this IAP is to provide the Municipality of Messina with a strategic tool in order to use the public procurement tool no longer as a simple provider of money for the purchase of goods and services, but as a means for the implementation of gender, environmental sustainability and social inclusion policies.

In recent years, the gender issue has occupied a large space in the political agenda of the city of Messina. This is due both to a radical change in the policies conducted by local administrations and to an active ferment on the part of the local world of associations. The expectation of the local administration of Messina is to be able to define a strategic planning of gender policies at the local level through the extensive involvement of local actors. The goal is to put order on this topic considering the often different addresses of the various political and administrative bodies at the local level.

The plan is drawn up by the Urbact Local Group (ULG) of Messina with the collaboration of Period Think Tank APS<sup>1</sup> - an intersectional feminist think tank dealing with advocacy, policy and data and operating both in the Italian and in the international landscape.

The ULG is made up of the Comitati Unici di Garanzia (CUG) for equal opportunities, a public body foreseen by the Italian legal system and which in every local authority government aims to prevent forms of gender discrimination and at the same time to raise awareness of both political bodies and public employees on the issue of equal opportunities.

1 [www.thinktankperiod.org](http://www.thinktankperiod.org)

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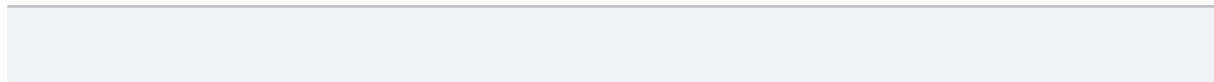
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A considerable number of associations have also joined the ULG of Messina which for years have been carrying out prevention and fight against gender discrimination activities in the local area. A detailed list of the members of the Messina ULG can be found in paragraph 2.5

The plan was developed in cooperation between the various members of the ULG and Period Think Tank, through face-to-face meetings where the topics to be discussed were decided by mutual agreement.

The vision of Messina in relation to the GenProcure project is to be able to develop a more inclusive procurement management system that takes into account vulnerable subjects such as young women and the elderly. The project is broken down into specific objectives all aimed at encouraging greater participation of the female gender in public procurement.



KEY ACTIONS	
1	Policy and Legislative Alignment
2	Capacity Building and Training
3	Gender-Sensitive Procurement Criteria and Tools
4	Promoting Women's Participation in Public Procurement
5	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability
6	Collaboration with Civil Society and Stakeholders
7	Public Awareness and Advocacy
8	Sustainability and Long-Term Impact

## 2. Introduction

The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) for the GenProcure project in Messina has been meticulously crafted through the collective efforts of URBACT Local Groups (ULG) in Messina. This group comprises pivotal stakeholders who have each contributed unique perspectives and expertise to the development process. The ULG of Messina includes essential entities such as the Municipality of Messina, the Metropolitan City of Messina, professional bodies like the Order of Doctors and Order of Lawyers, the University of Messina, the Port System Authority of the Strait, the CESV (Volunteer Service Center), CIRS (Italian Committee for Social Reintegration), trade unions and local non profit associations deeply rooted within the community. Both the design and the testing phase of the IAP for the GenProcure project in Messina exemplifies a collaborative and inclusive approach to addressing gender disparities in public procurement. Guided by a structured methodology and

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enriched by the collective expertise of diverse stakeholders within the ULG, as well as from the exchange of experiences and best practices with European partners, Messina is poised to implement impactful strategies that promote gender equality across its public procurement processes. This concerted effort not only aims to enhance inclusivity and fairness but also to contribute to broader societal advancements toward gender equality. Through the active engagement of key stakeholders, Messina demonstrates its commitment to fostering positive change and creating a more equitable urban environment for all its residents.

### **2.1 An introduction to the GenProcure APN and its thematic focus**

GenProcure is one of thirty Action Planning Networks (APNs) funded through the URBACT Programme. Operating between June 2023 and December 2025, GenProcure aimed to support nine partners in developing Integrated Action Plans (IAPs) focused on Gender Responsive Public Procurement. Through a series of transnational and local level learning and knowledge exchanges, GenProcure will enable partners to implement strategies that integrate gender equality into public procurement processes.

By fostering collaboration and shared learning among its partners, GenProcure seeks to create actionable and impactful plans that address gender disparities in public procurement. This initiative aims not only to enhance the inclusivity and fairness of procurement processes but also to contribute to broader societal change toward gender equality.

### **2.2 An introduction to your city and why you decided to participate in the GenProcure APN**

#### **2.2.1 Demographics and socio-economic context**

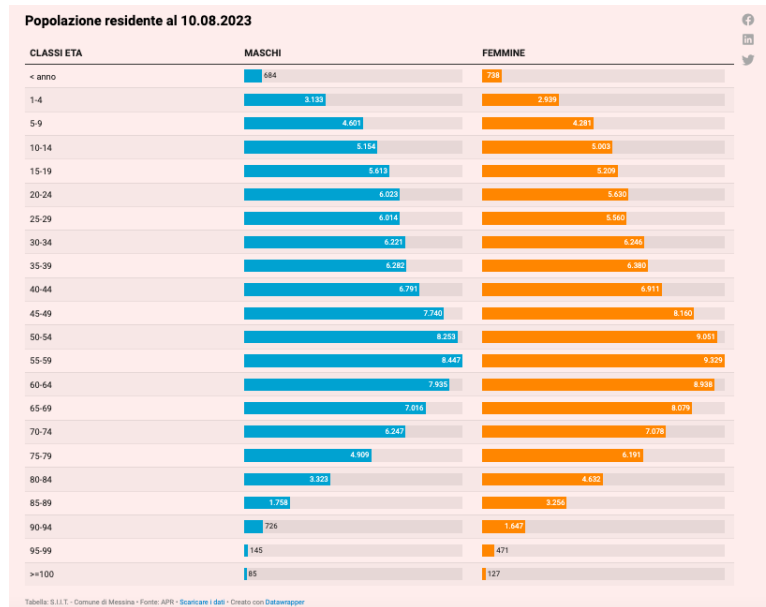
The City of Messina, a city of approximately 220,000 inhabitants, is the capital of the Province of Messina in Sicily, Italy. The city faces several socio-economic challenges that significantly impact its development. Among these challenges are a low employment rate, a lack of entrepreneurial culture, and de-urbanisation, all of which contribute to widening the gap between northern and southern cities in Italy.

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Resident population in 2023 - data disaggregated by age class and by sex  
Source: <https://messinaincifre.comune.messina.it/> (accessed on August 2024)

Although the economic crisis has somewhat reduced the gender gap, it remains considerably high. In Messina, the largest employers are public sector companies and third-sector organisations. While the distribution of personnel between men and women in the municipality is relatively balanced, the female workforce in companies such as Messina Servizi Bene Comune (waste management) and ATM (public transportation) does not exceed 30%. The difficulties associated with the economic crisis, which, moreover, affect the entire country, have an influence significantly on the well-being of the community of Messina. In 2021, in the province of Messina only 44.9% of people aged 20 to 64 are employed, 2.9 percentage points less than what was recorded in 2020. This level of employment is 0.7 points lower than in the South of Italy and by 14.9 points compared to the national average.

## 2.2.2 Employment and income statistics

Related to the market situation of work, including that of well-being, household income shows problematic data. Disposable income in 2022 per capita of households in the province of Messina was equal to 12,939 euros, in decrease of 1.7% compared to the year previous (221 euros less). The value of the province is higher than the regional one (12,265 euros) and the South (12,775 euro) but is significantly lower than the national one (17,307 euros), which, however, decreased by a good 421 euros compared to 2021.

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Tasso di occupazione (15-64 anni) per grande comune anni 2015-2022 (valori percentuali)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Torino	63,2%	62,9%	64,6%	67,8%	68%	64,5%	64,9%	66,7%
Genova	64,5%	63,6%	64,2%	65,1%	63,9%	63,2%	64,7%	67,0%
Milano	70,2%	70,7%	70,9%	71,3%	72,6%	69,4%	70,4%	72,4%
Verona	64%	64,5%	63,8%	66%	71,3%	67%	68%	70,7%
Venezia	61,4%	65,2%	70,9%	68,1%	67,4%	63,1%	61,6%	70,6%
Bologna	70,9%	71%	71,7%	74,3%	74,7%	70,7%	70,3%	73,0%
Firenze	66,8%	69,1%	69,5%	71,9%	72,3%	65,9%	67,4%	71,9%
Roma	64,6%	65,1%	66,1%	66%	65,9%	63,7%	63,7%	65,5%
Napoli	36,2%	37,5%	39,3%	39,2%	39,1%	38,2%	37,4%	39,4%
Bari	47,7%	46,5%	48,8%	49,8%	53,3%	52,6%	52,8%	54,7%
Palermo	41,1%	40,1%	40,7%	41,3%	41,3%	41,2%	42,5%	43,3%
Messina	41,2%	40,4%	40,6%	37,9%	34,5%	35,4%	35,1%	39,2%
Catania	41,5%	41%	40,2%	40,6%	43%	38,2%	38,7%	41,0%

Tabella: S.I.I.T. - Comune di Messina - Fonte: Istat.it - Scaricare i dati - Creato con Datawrapper

Tasso di occupazione (15-64 anni) per grande comune Sicilia anni 2014-2022

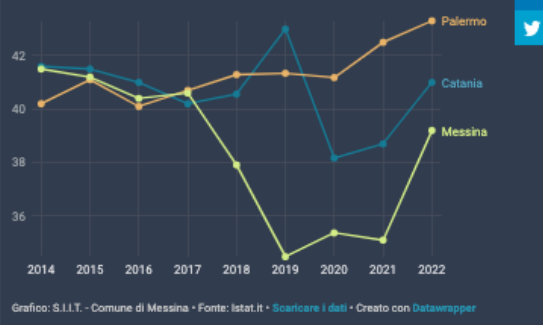


Grafico: S.I.I.T. - Comune di Messina - Fonte: Istat.it - Scaricare i dati - Creato con Datawrapper

Tasso di occupazione grandi comuni, Anno 2021



Grafico: S.I.I.T. - Comune di Messina - Fonte: Istat.it - Comune di Messina - Scaricare i dati - Creato con Datawrapper

Employment rating in the main Italian cities

Source: <https://messinaincifre.comune.messina.it/> (accessed on August 2024)

### 2.2.3 Gender equality as a priority in Messina - Political context and actions of the Municipality of Messina

Gender equality is a deeply felt issue within the Messina municipal administration and among the city's third-sector associations.

The local network “RETE CUG” and “CPO” is actively committed to promoting equality and equal opportunities while preventing and combating all forms of discrimination and violence. Comitati Unici di Garanzia (CUG), are joint committees established within public administrations. They have a proactive, consultative, and supervisory role concerning equal opportunities and organisational well-being. Their purpose is to contribute to optimising the

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productivity of public work by enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of services and ensuring a work environment free from any form of discrimination against employees.

The Equal Opportunities Committee (CPO) is responsible for proposing measures to achieve substantial equality between male and female workers and removing obstacles that hinder its realisation. As a consultative body, it collects data, formulates proposals, and provides non-binding opinions on topics such as training, information, and aspects of work organisation that affect the balance between professional commitments and caregiving responsibilities (e.g., caring for children or other family members). Consequently, the CPO addresses issues related to equal career opportunities. The commitment to equal opportunities through daily dedication contributes to making society just and inclusive.

The Municipal Administration of Messina has also implemented the guidelines established by the Italian legislator through the adoption of Council Resolution no. 364 of 07/14/2023, promoted by the Equal Opportunities Department and entitled "*Guidance Act for Investee Companies regarding obtaining Conformity with ISO standards*". Specifically, this resolution establishes the principles and guidelines that the Municipality and the Municipality-owned companies will have to follow to equip themselves with national and international standards relating to the quality of management of the services provided, as well as the commitment to the topic of Gender Equality in the field of work through obtaining specific certifications such as ISO 9001 and ISO 30415:2021.

The Municipality-owned companies of Messina, in following up on the City Council's policy on the topic of Gender Equality in the workplace, obtained, for each of them, the ISO 30415:2021 certification, which contains the UNI/PdR 125:2022 "*Guideline on management system for gender equality*"

On the occasion of International Women's Day, 8 March 2023, the Municipality of Messina with Resolution no. 134 approved the "Charter of Intent" of the CUG and CPO Network of the municipal territory. This Charter was signed, as well as by the Municipality, by the Metropolitan City, by University Hospital of Messina, by the Strait Port System Authority, by the University of Messina, by the Asp Messina (Azienda Sanitaria Provinciale - Provincial Health Company), by the IRCCS Piemonte Neurolesi (Istituto di Ricovero e Cura a Carattere Scientifico - Institute of Scientific Hospitalization and Care), by the Chamber of Commerce, by the Order of Doctors of Messina, by the Order of Lawyers of Messina and by the Order of Accountants of Messina.

On November 27, 2023, a counseling desk for the employees of the Municipality of Messina was inaugurated in the Town Hall. This desk carries out actions of protection in favor of employees who report violent or harassing behavior as well as gender discrimination and acts as a climate sensor within the organization to collect information useful for introducing further actions in favor of organizational well-being and to prevent any type of discrimination

With Council Resolution no. 623 of 19 December 2023, promoted by the Equal Opportunities Department, the "Alias Career Regulations" was approved which aims to eliminate any

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situations of discomfort and discrimination against employees transgender from the Municipality of Messina.

Furthermore, Messina has launched initiatives and projects to promote equal opportunities, such as “*IncludiME*”, a project financed under the PN Metro Plus 2021-2027 whose general objective is to promote information, training and awareness on theme of equal opportunities, in order to encourage active inclusion, non-discrimination and active participation in the democratic life of people with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community and of migrants.

And again, the Municipality of Messina draws up an annual performance report where there is one specific dedicated section, entitled "Gender Budget - Equal Opportunities", seen as "*the budget document that analyzes and evaluates from a gender perspective, the political choices and economic-financial commitments of an administration. Reading the budgets of public bodies from a gender perspective means integrating this perspective at all levels of the budgetary procedure and restructure revenues and expenditures in order to ensure that the needs of the entire community are adequately taken into consideration*" (Gender budget guidelines – Italian National Department of Public Function)

Hence, the City of Messina decided to participate in the GenProcure APN to promote positive actions aimed at fostering change and breaking down the barriers that still hinder the realisation of equal opportunities today. These actions include the promotion of female entrepreneurship and positive actions for gender equality.

Through participation in GenProcure, the City of Messina aims to acquire experiences and knowledge from other partners, which can be utilised within the local context to contribute to the sustainable development of the labour market. This approach is particularly focused on protecting the most disadvantaged groups, such as women and youth. The ultimate goal is to create a programmatic document that can guide the administration's choices toward more effective and inclusive gender policies.

The City of Messina, through its Urban Local Group (ULG), plans to begin with a qualitative and quantitative analysis of gender equality data. The local group is divided into two subgroups: one comprising public entities and the other comprising associations. Data collection will be tailored to the characteristics of each group. Public entities will predominantly provide numerical-quantitative data, while associations will start with a questionnaire to understand how gender equality is perceived in the urban context.

### 2.2.4 City of Messina's involvement in the GenProcure APN

In Italy, monitoring on the application of GRPP is limited to Next Generation EU funding plan funds and procurement with reward measures for realities committed to reducing the gender gap. The Italian Plan for Recovery and Resilience (PNRR), aimed precisely at promoting gender equality by integrating gender-sensitive criteria into public procurement

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processes. The use of European funds has spurred legislators and implementers to embark on the long journey to harmonise the national system with the European one and to promote women's employment and participation in traditionally male-dominated sectors by rewarding companies that are able to put in place actions for reducing different forms of gender gaps. Specific measures include mandatory gender reporting by companies and prioritisation of contracts that demonstrate commitment to gender equality.

However, according to the National Anti-Corruption Authority (ANAC), these measures have achieved limited results.<sup>2</sup> The percentage of contracts that meet gender equality criteria, particularly with regard to female and youth employment quotas, remains low, and many organisations opt for exemptions due to implementation difficulties. In addition, ongoing monitoring by civic groups, such as Period Think Tank, highlights gaps in transparency and effectiveness. Data reveal a persistent gender imbalance in sectors benefiting from NRP funding

Having made these due clarifications, participating in the GenProcure APN presented an invaluable opportunity for the City of Messina to collaborate with other European cities facing similar challenges. By engaging in transnational and local-level learning and knowledge exchanges, Messina can develop integrated action plans that address its specific issues related to gender-responsive public procurement. This collaboration will help the government of the City of Messina to implement strategies that incorporate gender equality into public procurement processes, ultimately leading to a more inclusive and equitable society.

In conclusion, the City of Messina's participation in the GenProcure APN is driven by a strong commitment to gender equality and the desire to learn from and collaborate with other cities. Through this initiative, Messina hopes to create effective policies and actions that will promote sustainable urban development and improve the quality of life for all its residents.

### **2.3 An introduction to URBACT, the concept of Sustainable Urban Development, the Integrated and Participatory Approach, and APNs**

URBACT is a European program co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and member states. Its main objective is to promote sustainable urban development by facilitating the exchange of experiences and the dissemination of knowledge among European cities. The program focuses on managing urban systems amidst the current international economic crisis, adopting an integrated and sustainable approach to urban growth, and fostering effective partnerships and multilevel governance processes. These three transversal approaches characterise the partnerships within URBACT IV.

URBACT IV specifically aims to help cities develop concrete, innovative, and sustainable solutions that integrate economic, social, and environmental dimensions. It enables cities to

<sup>2</sup><https://www.anticorruzione.it/-/cs.20.05.25>

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share best practices and experiences with other cities, as well as with urban policy professionals and experts from across Europe. Social inclusion is one of the most important themes of the program, offering cities opportunities that can have positive repercussions on the local labour market and economy. To achieve this, cities need to adopt a broad vision and work towards an inclusive urban model that removes barriers and encourages active citizen participation in local decision-making processes. Only through a shared vision can cities create integrated action plans that guide the implementation of urban development policies tailored to the socio-economic context we live in.

The concept of sustainable urban development is central to URBACT's mission. This concept emphasises the need for urban growth that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It involves balancing economic development, social equity, and environmental protection. Sustainable urban development requires cities to innovate and find new ways to address challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, social inequality, and economic instability. By fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange, URBACT helps cities to explore and implement sustainable solutions that can improve the quality of life for their residents.

An integrated and participatory approach is fundamental to URBACT's methodology. This approach recognizes that urban challenges are complex and interconnected, requiring holistic solutions that cut across different policy areas and involve a wide range of stakeholders. Integration means considering the economic, social, and environmental impacts of policies and actions, ensuring that they are mutually reinforcing and contributing to overall sustainability. Participation involves engaging citizens, local authorities, businesses, and other stakeholders in the decision-making process, ensuring that their needs, perspectives, and expertise are reflected in the solutions developed. This approach not only leads to more effective and sustainable outcomes but also builds trust and ownership among stakeholders, enhancing the resilience and adaptability of urban communities.

Action Planning Networks (APNs) are a key component of URBACT's structure. APNs bring together cities to work collaboratively on developing integrated action plans that address specific urban challenges. Through APNs, cities can learn from each other's experiences, gain insights from experts, and co-create solutions that are tailored to their local contexts. The networks facilitate transnational and local-level learning and knowledge exchanges, enabling cities to build their capacities and improve their governance practices. By participating in APNs, cities can develop more effective policies and actions that contribute to sustainable urban development.

In conclusion, URBACT plays a vital role in promoting sustainable urban development in Europe by facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experiences among cities. Its integrated and participatory approach ensures that urban policies and actions are holistic, inclusive, and tailored to the needs of local communities. Through Action Planning Networks, cities can collaboratively develop and implement solutions that address their unique challenges, contributing to a more sustainable and resilient urban future.

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### **2.4 An introduction to how the IAP has been developed in terms of methodology and by referring to the role of Transnational Meetings and Online Masterclasses, exchange with other Partners, and the role of your ULG.**

The development of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) for the GenProcure project in the city area of Messina has been a collaborative effort, leveraging diverse methodologies and the collective expertise of various stakeholders. The process has been enriched by transnational meetings, online masterclasses, exchanges with other partners, and the active involvement of the Urban Local Group (ULG) of Messina.

## **3 Methodology**

The methodology for developing the IAP was structured around several key phases:

**3.1 Needs assessment and benchmarking:** The first phase involves conducting a comprehensive needs assessment to understand the current state of gender equality in public procurement. This involves gathering data from various sources, including public institutions and associations within the ULG, to paint a clear picture of existing challenges and opportunities. This assessment is complemented by benchmarking against international standards and successful case studies from other countries, helping to identify gaps and areas for improvement.

**3.2 Data collection and analysis:** The ULG of Messina plays a crucial role in this phase. The group is composed of diverse members, including public entities that contribute quantitative data and associations that provide qualitative insights. Public entities, such as Messina Servizi and ATM, offer data on the gender distribution within their workforce, while associations conduct surveys and interviews to gather information on the local perception of gender equality. This combination of quantitative and qualitative data allows for a holistic analysis of the gender equality landscape in Messina.

**3.3 Formulating objectives and strategies:** Based on the insights gained from the needs assessment and data analysis, the next step involves formulating concrete objectives and strategies to address identified issues. The diversity of the ULG members is particularly beneficial here, as their varied experiences and perspectives lead to a richer dialogue and more innovative solutions. The goal is to develop actionable strategies that enhance access for disadvantaged groups to public procurement opportunities, promoting greater gender equality.

**3.4 Implementation planning:** The final phase focuses on developing a detailed implementation plan, outlining specific actions, timelines, and responsible parties. This plan serves as a roadmap for achieving the set objectives, ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned and committed to the process.

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### 3.5 Role of transnational meetings and online masterclasses

Transnational meetings and online masterclasses have been pivotal in the development of the IAP. These gatherings provide valuable opportunities for dialogue and knowledge exchange among partners from different countries. Transnational meetings, in particular, have proven to be highly productive, fostering face-to-face interactions that facilitate deeper discussions and more effective problem-solving. The sharing of ideas, projects, and best practices during these meetings has significantly enriched the IAP development process. In particular, European partners highlighted how national procurement laws differ across countries, showing that while EU directives provide a common base, local adaptations are essential for practical implementation of equality measures. Furthermore, several cities emphasized that integrating gender and equality goals into procurement requires strong political commitment to drive change across departments. In relation to data collection activities, there was a shared recognition that tracking the impact of equality-based procurement is difficult without reliable data, but some cities shared promising methods for improving data collection and analysis. Many cities struggle with limited expertise in gender-responsive procurement, highlighting the importance of training and the value of shared toolkits and resources developed collectively. Finally, seeing how other municipalities implement gender-sensitive criteria (e.g., through scoring systems or supplier codes of conduct) inspired partners to adopt and adapt successful models in their own contexts.

Online masterclasses have also played a crucial role, offering flexibility and accessibility. They have allowed stakeholders to access expert knowledge and training on specific aspects of gender-responsive public procurement. However, it is acknowledged that in-person meetings tend to yield more dynamic exchanges and immediate feedback, which are often limited in virtual settings due to time constraints and the lack of physical presence.

### 3.6 Exchange with other partners

Exchanging experiences with other partners has been instrumental in shaping the IAP. By learning from the successes and challenges of other cities, Messina has been able to adopt best practices and avoid common pitfalls. This collaborative approach ensures that the IAP is not developed in isolation but is informed by a broader context of shared knowledge and experiences.

### 3.7 Role of the Urban Local Group (ULG)

The ULG of Messina is central to the development of the IAP. It supports the municipality through direct engagement among its diverse members, each bringing unique insights and expertise. Some members, for instance, incorporate gender budgeting in their financial planning, while others, such as associations, offer a grassroots perspective on gender equality issues. This diversity is a strength, enabling the ULG to develop a common vision and set concrete objectives for improving gender equality in public procurement.

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In conclusion, the development of the IAP for the GenProcure project in Messina is a comprehensive and collaborative process. It is driven by a structured methodology, enriched by transnational and online exchanges, and deeply supported by the diverse expertise of the ULG. This approach ensures that the IAP is robust, inclusive, and geared towards creating a more equitable public procurement landscape in Messina.

### **3.8 An introduction to who has developed your IAP and details on the key stakeholders that have been involved in your ULG.**

The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) for the GenProcure project in Messina has been developed by a dedicated and diverse Urban Local Group (ULG). This group is composed of various key stakeholders, each bringing unique perspectives and expertise to the table. The ULG includes the Municipality of Messina, the Metropolitan City of Messina, the Order of Doctors, the Order of Lawyers, the University of Messina, the Port System Authority of the Strait, and local associations. This diverse composition ensures a comprehensive approach to addressing gender equality in public procurement.

#### **3.8.1 ULG Messina**

- a) **The Municipality of Messina:** As the primary public authority, the Municipality of Messina plays a central role in coordinating the efforts of the ULG. It oversees the implementation of policies and ensures that the goals of the GenProcure project align with local governance and development strategies. The municipality also contributes quantitative data regarding public expenditure and procurement processes, providing a solid foundation for the IAP.
- b) **The Metropolitan City of Messina:** The Metropolitan City of Messina supports the municipality by bringing a broader regional perspective. It aids in aligning the IAP with regional development plans and policies, ensuring that the initiatives for gender equality in public procurement can be scaled and replicated across the metropolitan area.
- c) **The Order of Doctors and the Order of Lawyers:** These professional bodies contribute valuable insights into the specific challenges and opportunities related to gender equality within their respective fields. They provide data on gender representation and advocate for policies that promote equal opportunities within the medical and legal professions. Their involvement ensures that the IAP addresses sector-specific issues and leverages professional expertise.
- d) **The University of Messina:** The University of Messina plays a crucial role in research and data analysis. It contributes to both qualitative and quantitative data collection, helping to create a detailed picture of the current state of gender equality in Messina. The university's academic expertise supports evidence-based decision-making and the development of innovative strategies for the IAP.

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- e) **The Port System Authority of the Strait:** This authority oversees one of the key economic and logistical hubs in Messina. Its involvement is essential for understanding the gender dynamics within the port system and related industries. The Port System Authority provides insights into gender representation and can implement specific measures to promote gender equality within its operations.
- f) **The CESV (Centro servizi per il volontariato - Volunteer Service Center) :** CESV is engaged in an awareness and training action among voluntary organisations to train them to collect and disaggregate by gender the data necessary to build a preventive gender impact assessment of interventions, programs, projects and their monitoring. The aim is to promote, through data, awareness and advocacy actions on gender inequalities and encourage the acquisition of the skills necessary for qualified interventions. The involvement of the CESV will contribute to the collection of data and provide useful information regarding the implementation of gender equality within third sector entities and civil society
- g) **CIRS (Comitato Italiano per il Reinserimento Sociale - Italian Committee for Social Reintegration)** has as its aim the "Promotion of women" and offers a social assistance and protection service, as well as prevention, with particular reference to the field of psycho-social deviances and other marginalizations. The functions of the organisation are welfare, educational and instructive, to this end it promotes the opening of structures such as family homes, shelters, sheltered workshops, with a view to prevention and job placement of young people.
- h) The **Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL)** is Italy's oldest and largest trade union confederation. Founded in 1906, it represents millions of workers across sectors including public administration, industry, services, education, and healthcare. CGIL is known for its strong commitment to workers' rights, social justice, equality, and inclusion. It operates through national, regional, and local structures and plays an active role in social dialogue, collective bargaining, and policy advocacy. The union can help deliver or co-design training for workers, employers, and administrators on gender equality, anti-discrimination, and inclusive labor practices relevant to procurement processes. CGIL can ensure that gender equality priorities reflect real workplace conditions and challenges. It can provide insights into gender gaps in employment, pay, and working conditions within sectors affected by public procurement.
- i) **Local Associations:** Local associations are vital for gathering qualitative data and understanding the grassroots level perceptions of gender equality. These associations work closely with the community and provide firsthand accounts of the challenges faced by women and other disadvantaged groups in accessing public procurement opportunities. Their contributions ensure that the IAP is grounded in the lived experiences of the local population.

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<b>CUG (Comitato Unico di Garanzia) Comune di Messina</b>
<b>CESV Messina</b>
<b>CUG IRCCS</b>
<b>CUG Università degli studi di Messina</b>
<b>CPO (Comitato Pari Opportunità) Ordine dei medici di Messina</b>
<b>CUG (Comitato Unico di Garanzia) Città Metropolitana di Messina</b>
<b>CUG Autorità di Sistema Portuale dello Stretto</b>
<b>CUG (Comitato Unico di Garanzia) Asp (Azienda Sanitaria Provinciale) Messina</b>
<b>CIRS (Comitato Italiano per il Reinserimento Sociale) Messina</b>
<b>CPO (Comitato Pari Opportunità) Ordine degli Avvocati Messina</b>
<b>Cittadinanza Attiva Messina</b>
<b>CEDAV (Centro Donne Antiviolenza) Messina</b>
<b>Associazione 7000 ETS (Ente del Terzo Settore) Messina</b>
<b>Coordinamento donne CISL</b>
<b>Messina ANFFASS ONLUS</b>
<b>Associazione di volontariato ACISJF Terra Solidale</b>
<b>CGIL Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro - Messina</b>

### 3.8.2 Methodology and Collaboration

During the initial phases of the project, it became evident that the diverse nature of the ULG's members necessitated a division into two subgroups. This division allows for more focused and effective contributions based on the specific roles and expertise of each stakeholder.

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The activities therefore took place on two parallel tracks. On the one hand, the representatives of public bodies have concentrated their activities on the collection and analysis of data relating to the public procurement procedures carried out in their offices in recent years. On the other hand, however, the associations and unions members of our ULG, together with the Councilor for Equal Opportunities of the Municipality of Messina, have developed analyzes of the social, political and economic context of the Messina area using a gender perspective. However, the division between the two groups was not absolute as the activities and results obtained were always shared among all the members of the ULG. Furthermore, in order to optimize work times and resources, the 2 groups have always been convened together and on the same date.

One of the first steps of the ULG of Messina was the drafting and dissemination of a questionnaire designed to collect useful information on how the citizens of Messina perceive and experience the theme of gender equality and to identify areas for improvement. The usefulness of the questionnaire lies in the desire to know the perceptions of citizens on the issues related to Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities.

a) **Data Collection:** The Local associations are primarily responsible for collecting qualitative data. They conduct surveys, interviews, and focus groups to capture detailed insights into the state of gender equality in Messina. This qualitative approach helps to identify the nuanced barriers that women and other marginalised groups face. Public entities, including the Municipality of Messina and the Metropolitan City, focus on quantitative data collection. They analyse public expenditure and procurement data to identify trends and gaps in gender representation. This quantitative analysis provides a measurable basis for the IAP's objectives and strategies.

b) **Data Integration:** The integration of qualitative and quantitative data collected by the ULG offers a comprehensive and precise understanding of the current situation. This holistic view enables more informed and effective decision-making, ensuring that the IAP is both evidence-based and contextually relevant.

c) **Decision-Making:** The combined insights from both subgroups are used to formulate concrete objectives and strategies for the IAP. The diversity of perspectives ensures that the plan is well-rounded and addresses all aspects of gender equality in public procurement.

In conclusion, the development of the IAP for the GenProcure project in Messina is a collaborative effort driven by a diverse and dedicated ULG. The involvement of key stakeholders from various sectors ensures a comprehensive approach to addressing gender equality. Through a structured methodology and effective collaboration, the ULG is poised to develop and implement an IAP that promotes inclusive and equitable public procurement practices in Messina.

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### 4 Context, Needs and Vision

The City of Messina, situated in the northeastern part of Sicily, Italy, is strategically positioned with excellent transportation links through its port to mainland Italy and beyond, facilitating both local and international trade. Despite its advantageous location, being an island city presents unique economic challenges and opportunities. With a population of approximately 220,000, Messina serves as a hub not only for its residents but also for migrants and refugees seeking settlement or onward journeys within Italy and Europe, contributing to its diverse and multicultural character.

The Municipality of Messina includes a very large territory that presents objective difficulties in ensuring equal levels of services in all areas. In particular, the urban territory of Messina includes 48 villages partly located in the hills and partly along the coastline.

The broader Metropolitan Area of Messina, encompassing 108 municipalities, expands the city's influence and underscores its role as a regional centre. However, the Municipality of Messina faces significant governance complexities in delivering services through various public companies, each responsible for specific service sectors. While the city lacks a centralized Public Procurement Strategy, the Municipality has implemented a series of policy measures to encourage public companies to integrate social and environmental criteria into their procurement processes, aligning with the evolving standards set by Italy's new Procurement Law. This framework emphasises equal opportunities by diversifying supply chains and promoting inclusive workforce practices among suppliers.

In this regard, the Municipality of Messina has implemented the guidelines established by the national legislation through the adoption of Council Resolution No. 364 of July 14, 2023, promoted by the Department of Equal Opportunities and entitled "Guidelines for public utility companies of Messina regarding the Obtaining Compliance with ISO Standards". Specifically, this resolution establishes the principles and guidelines that the public utility companies of Messina must follow to achieve national and international standards regarding the quality of management of the services provided, as well as the commitment to gender equality in the workplace through the achievement of specific certifications such as ISO 9001 and ISO 30415:2021.

In compliance with the City Council's guidelines on gender equality in the workplace, the public utility companies of Messina have each obtained the ISO 30415:2021 certification, which includes the UNI/PdR 125:2022 "Guidelines on the Management System for Gender Equality."

Furthermore, the Municipality of Messina, with Resolution No. 3850 of the General Director dated May 5, 2023, entrusted the role of a Trusted Advisor, as guarantor of the principles of the Code of Conduct (Included in the PAP – Positive Action Plan). On the occasion of International Women's Day, March 8, 2023, the Municipality of Messina, with Resolution No.

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134, approved the "Charter of Intent" of the CUG and CPO Network of the municipal territory. The aforementioned Charter was signed by this Municipality, the Metropolitan City, the University Hospital of Messina, the Port System Authority of the Strait, the University of Messina, the ASP Messina, the IRCCS Piemonte Neurolesi, the Chamber of Commerce, the Order of Physicians of Messina, the Order of Lawyers of Messina, and the Order of Accountants of Messina.

The Listening Center for employees of the Municipality of Messina, located in the Palazzo Zanca municipal building, was inaugurated on November 27, 2023. This center provides protection for employees who report violent or harassing behavior and serves as a monitor of the internal organizational climate to gather useful information for introducing further actions to promote organizational well-being.

With Council Resolution No. 623 of December 19, 2023, attached to this document and promoted by the Department of Equal Opportunities, the "Alias Career Regulations" were approved. These regulations aim to eliminate any situations of hardship and discrimination against transgender employees of the Municipality of Messina.

The Municipal Administration has launched initiatives and projects to promote equal opportunities, such as "IncludiME," a project funded under the PN Metro Plus 2021-2027. Its overall objective is to promote information, training, and awareness-raising on equal opportunities, in order to encourage active inclusion, non-discrimination, and the active participation in the democratic life of people with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community, and migrants.

Finally, with Resolution No. 672 of December 23, 2024, the Mayor and City Council of Messina committed to adopting a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) for the Municipality of Messina, which defines strategic objectives, concrete actions, and monitoring indicators to promote gender equality in all areas of intervention of the Municipal Administration. Specifically, the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) must be drafted with the participation of all members of the Municipal Administration and in collaboration with civil society organizations working for equal opportunities. The Gender Equality Plan must specifically include actions aimed at:

- Removing obstacles that prevent women's full participation in the labor market, including through work-life balance policies and combating occupational segregation;
- Ensure gender equality in the leadership and decision-making processes of the Municipal Administration;
- Prevent and combat gender-based violence in all its forms, ensuring support and protection for victims;
- Promote a cultural change that counters gender stereotypes and fosters a more equal and inclusive society;

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- Integrate the gender dimension into all policies and programs of the Municipality of Messina

Looking forward, Messina envisions leveraging its strategic location and multicultural population to foster sustainable economic growth. The city aims to develop a coherent Public Procurement Strategy that not only meets legal obligations but also enhances social cohesion and environmental sustainability. By adapting procurement practices to local needs and international standards, Messina seeks to strengthen its position as a dynamic and inclusive urban centre, capable of meeting the diverse needs of its residents and stakeholders alike.

### **4.1 Details on the overarching theme of the GenProcure APN of Gender Responsive Public Procurement**

The overarching theme of the GenProcure Action Planning Network (APN) in Messina revolves around advancing Gender Responsive Public Procurement (GRPP). At its core, the Municipality of Messina prioritises in-house service provision through Public Companies, yet recognizes the necessity of Public Procurement when required. In this regard, the Municipality actively promotes the inclusion of social clauses within procurement procedures, aiming to embed social considerations into contractual agreements. Moreover, there is a concerted effort to explore the potential reservation of contracts for Social Economy organisations, such as Social Enterprises, which inherently contribute to societal well-being through their operations. Integral to this approach is a commitment to gathering detailed insights into the workforces of potential suppliers, including the representation of women within these organisations and addressing challenges related to gender pay gaps. By integrating these elements into the procurement process, Messina seeks not only to ensure compliance with national regulations but also to foster a more inclusive and equitable procurement landscape that benefits the broader community.

### **4.2 Details on the current situation in your city around both Gender Equality and Public Procurement.**

The Municipality of Messina, along with its extensive network of public, private, and social sector partners, has made significant strides in combating gender inequality in recent years. Spearheaded by a dedicated Gender Equality Commission led by the Municipal Councillor for Equal Opportunities, this initiative includes participation from municipal employees and trade unions. A collaborative network has been established among various Gender Equality Commissions across the city, encompassing entities such as Municipal Service Companies, the Port Authority, the Local Health Authority, and professional associations like engineers and lawyers.

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On March 8th, 2022, members of the Gender Equality Messina network ratified an action plan aimed at eradicating discrimination, promoting gender equality, and combating gender-based violence. The plan outlines initiatives in four key areas: raising awareness of the Commission's objectives, implementing gender equality projects, combating all forms of violence, and providing legal support to victims. Additionally, each member of the Gender Equality Commission is driving internal cultural shifts within their respective organisations to foster equality.

Specifically, the Port Authority has established its own Gender Equality Committee focused on diversifying its workforce and promoting employment opportunities for women. Initiatives include outreach programs in schools to encourage careers at the port among girls and boys, as well as specialised training initiatives. Similarly, the healthcare sector, including hospitals and research institutions, is addressing issues such as pay equity and increasing women's representation in senior medical roles. The Order of Doctors shares these objectives and focuses on women's health issues.

The Municipality of Messina is actively influencing neighbouring municipalities within the Metropolitan Area on the importance of gender equality, employing Gender Budgeting to shape policies and services. The Lawyers' Association is also committed to combating discrimination against women through advocacy and support services.

The Municipality of Messina does not have a central office responsible for public procurement procedures. Each department has its own budget and carries out procurement procedures independently. This has made data collection more difficult. Furthermore, at the national level, the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) promotes the principles of "gender procurement" in tender notices. The regulation includes clauses for access to tenders and incentive systems to promote the hiring of young people under the age of thirty-six and women, to select companies that use specific tools to reconcile work, life, and care needs, and that demonstrate a good gender balance in salary levels and among senior management. Monitoring data show that these measures are still being implemented in a limited manner, with a high percentage of exceptions to gender requirements, especially due to "low female employment in the sector."

Furthermore, Messina's Public Companies are implementing various gender equality initiatives. For instance, the waste collection company is actively recruiting women and promoting a gender-responsive workplace culture through initiatives like designated facilities and appropriate work attire. The assets management company is transferring under-utilised assets to NGOs addressing discrimination against women, while the public transport company aims to increase female representation among bus drivers by providing supportive services such as child care assistance.

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This multifaceted approach to gender equality in Messina is grounded in national legislation, particularly the Italian Code on Equality of Opportunity. However, it is the local Gender Equality Commission and its action plan that are driving tangible progress, evident in increased female representation in local governance, narrowed gender pay gaps within public administration, and improved accessibility of public services tailored to the needs of surrounding villages.

### **4.3 Details on how the IAP and the theme of Gender Responsive Public Procurement links to wider strategy and policy locally in your city, regionally, nationally and internationally**

Gender Responsive Public Procurement (GRPP) is an essential tool for promoting gender equality through public procurement processes. By ensuring that public procurement activities consider the different impacts on women and men, GRPP aims to reduce gender inequalities. This approach does not necessarily incur higher costs but requires knowledge and capacity to implement effectively. The IAP's focus on gender-responsive public procurement connects local, regional, national, and international strategies for gender equality. In Messina, the implementation of gender inclusion clauses and gender budgeting reflects a commitment to reducing gender disparities through public procurement. At the present Regione Sicilia lacks a regional legislative model, but other Italian regions have good practices that could serve as a model for integrating gender equality into procurement processes, influencing national policies in a sort of circular loop<sup>3</sup>. Nationally, Italy's updated procurement code ensures a standardised approach to promoting gender equality across all public procurement activities. The new Italian Procurement Code (art. 108, paragraph 7) establishes that contracting authorities provide a "*higher score to be attributed to companies that certify, also by means of self-certification, the possession of the requirements referred to in article 46-bis of Legislative Decree 198/2006*" (gender equality certification). In these terms, the formula eliminates the specific reference to (accredited) certification and expands the ways in which a company can demonstrate that it adopts policies for gender equality, replacing a certification issued by an impartial third party with a self-certification provided by the company itself. However, this method does not offer the same guarantees as certification issued under accreditation, which is a form of conformity assessment carried out by an independent and impartial third party.

<sup>3</sup> It is appropriate to mention here the case of another region in southern Italy. With an act dated 28 July 2021, the Puglia Regional Council formally introduced gender responsive public procurement as a targeted system to promote gender equality as a lever for sustainable economic development, a new social responsibility aimed at businesses and the world of work. The Apulian regional administration promotes the social responsibility of economic operators through public procurement, providing for the inclusion in the tender of targeted award criteria and specific contract execution conditions that take into account certain social aspects, with the aim of improving the living and working conditions of women, increasing female employment, reducing economic and remunerative gender discrimination

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### 4.4 Local Strategy in Messina

In the city of Messina, the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) aligns with local policies aimed at gender inclusion in public procurements. The city plans to experiment with gender inclusion clauses and adopt a gender budget. The Città Metropolitana di Messina, acting as an intermediary institution between the city and the region, will ensure that innovative practices implemented in Messina are promoted and replicated throughout the region. This initiative reflects the broader regional commitment to gender equality and is a significant step towards creating a more inclusive public procurement process. A more detailed description of the actions can be read in the following section.

### 4.5 Regional and National Strategy

Regionally, the IAP is in line with the efforts of the Regione Siciliana, which has been slightly proactive in integrating gender equality into public procurement. Unlike other Italian regions, such as Lazio, Puglia and Emilia-Romagna, national guidance on Gender Public Procurement (GRPP) has unfortunately taken little root in regional legislation. However, municipalities, such as that of Messina, can do much to chart a course on which the regional administration can also be aligned. Key legislative frameworks, such as the "Decreto Semplificazioni-bis" and subsequent guidelines, mandate the inclusion of gender equality measures in public procurements financed by the PNRR (National Recovery and Resilience Plan). The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) proposes, alongside the missions of digitalisation, ecological transition, education, mobility, and health, also that of "cohesion and inclusion". That is, it is proposed to allocate part of the funds to the reduction of gender, territorial and generational inequalities, through the development of social infrastructures and the planning of public policies. The PNRR highlights among the country's strategic needs that of mitigating the economic and social impact of the pandemic, in particular on women (art. 4, co.1 of the RRF Regulation) and of detailing the ways in which the Plan's measures contribute to gender equality/equal opportunities for all and to the mainstreaming of these objectives, in line with Principles 2 and 3 of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 and the European Commission's strategy on gender equality for the period 2020-2025.

The PNRR formally takes care of responding to the requirements of gender mainstreaming, but beyond the declaration of principle, it does not translate this principle into clear objectives and struggles to propose indicators and data useful for verifying the effectiveness of the policies implemented and the resources used. This gap risks being a brake on the very aims of relaunching the economy that the PNRR aims to achieve since it is historically documented that a greater presence of women in the labor market makes national economies more competitive.

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To do this it is necessary to start from the analysis of data disaggregated by gender and free from stereotypes, accessible in an open format, interoperable and available at all territorial levels, from national to municipal.

Without this data it is not possible to monitor the gender impact of public policies. The use of fair tools for the evaluation and control of public policies cannot be postponed in consideration of the fact that in the PNRR the interventions targeted at women represent only 1.6 percent of the total (approximately 3.1 billion Euros), and are concentrated in missions 4 and 5 (4. Education and research, 5. Inclusion and cohesion); 18.5 percent (35.4 billion euros) concerns measures that could have positive effects, even indirect, in reducing the gaps to the detriment of women; while, for the remaining part of the PNRR interventions (77.9 percent, equal to 153 billion euros), the possibility of having an impact on reducing existing gender gaps depends to a large extent on the details of the implementation.

### 4.6 International Strategy

However, the issue of transparency and, consequently, the availability of data on the gender impact of public policies has entered the international political agenda for some years.

For example, in the context of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) a growing number of Member States have adopted specific gender and inclusion commitments in their action plans in recent years. In Mexico's 2019 Action Plan, the National Institute for Women committed to working with the Simone de Beauvoir Leadership Institute to co-design a new national policy on public assistance services through a pilot program. The interesting aspect is that the effectiveness of this pilot program will be monitored by citizens, who are also asked to propose ideas and comments in order to reduce the gender gap in care and assistance services at a national level.

The European Union's gender equality strategy for 2020-2025 emphasises transparency in payments, work-life balance rights, and gender balance in company boards. GRPP is a critical component of the EU's gender mainstreaming efforts, promoting gender equality through strategic procurement activities. As the European Commission itself specifies, "*it is not only about ensuring that all citizens, regardless of gender, can receive equal services, but also about increasing the efficiency and quality of services because, if the integration of the gender perspective becomes a requirement, service providers will be encouraged to develop and offer services consistent with the objectives of gender equality*".

The GRPP is in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda on equality gender and women's empowerment (objective 5) and with sustainable practices in public procurement (objective 12, target 12.7). If more women are recruited as labor, they can make a greater contribution to the economy by increasing their earnings and reducing the gender pay gap. The increase of the presence of women in the workforce and the elimination of pay gap between women and men will have a positive impact on economic growth in the European Union. This could mean

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up to six million more jobs by 2050 and an increase in GDP of 5.5 % or 1 490 billion euros by 2050<sup>4</sup>

Various studies by EIGE "European Institute for Gender Equality" found that there is still a notable lack of awareness and knowledge about how gender equality can be linked to public procurement, both at EU and national level. Added to this is a general lack of data, orientation and training of officials on gender mainstreaming, GRPP and public procurement.

There is considerable awareness in the Member States of socially responsible public procurement procedures. However, awareness about the strategic use of GRPP to promote gender equality remains extremely low, too in countries that obtain a high score on the index on EIGE gender equality. GRPP is more widespread at local and municipal levels. The regions, municipalities and cities are more aware of the GRPP compared to other levels of administration. Cities often pose gender equality and integration at the center of municipal strategies and action plans, working in partnership and encouraging the use of GRPP.

### **4.7 Details on the specific problem that you are looking to address at the local level around Gender Responsive Public Procurement and the causes and effects of that problem.**

Gender Responsive Public Procurement (GRPP) aims to address the persistent gender inequalities in public procurement processes. The specific problem at the local level is the underrepresentation of women-owned businesses in public procurement contracts. This issue has multiple dimensions, including systemic barriers, discriminatory practices, and lack of supportive policies.

- In particular, many women-owned businesses are unaware of the opportunities available through public procurement or the specific requirements needed to participate.
- At the same time, procurement officials may lack training on the importance of gender inclusivity and the benefits of GRPP.
- Women-owned businesses often have less access to financial resources and credit, making it difficult to meet the financial requirements of public tenders. Furthermore, women entrepreneurs frequently have limited access to business networks that provide information and support for bidding on public contracts.
- The complexity of the procurement process and excessive bureaucratic hurdles in the Italian legal system can disproportionately affect smaller women-owned businesses.

<sup>4</sup> EIGE «Economic benefits of gender equality in the European Union» (<https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/policy-areas/economic-and-financial-affairs/economic-benefits-gender-equality>).

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- On the other side, a lack of disaggregated data on the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement makes it challenging to identify gaps and measure progress.
- From an economic point of view this complex problem has the effect that women-owned businesses miss out on significant revenue opportunities from public contracts, limiting their growth potential and broader economic contributions.
- Furthermore, reduced opportunities for women-owned businesses to secure public contracts can result in fewer job opportunities, particularly for women, exacerbating unemployment and underemployment.
- The underrepresentation of women-owned businesses in public procurement perpetuates gender inequalities in the business sector and society at large.

On the other side, limited participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement undermines efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable society. Public procurement involves large amounts of government spending. If women-owned businesses rarely benefit from this spending, they miss out on opportunities to grow, hire employees, and build wealth. This widens the economic gap between men and women, rather than closing it. An inclusive society requires that all groups have fair access to economic opportunities. When women entrepreneurs face barriers—such as limited information, complex bidding processes, or discrimination—they are effectively excluded from competing on an equal footing. Women-owned businesses bring different perspectives, innovations, and solutions. When they are underrepresented in procurement, governments miss out on diverse suppliers who could improve the quality, relevance, and creativity of public services. Public procurement is a major source of economic influence. If contracts continue to flow primarily to male-dominated firms, existing power structures remain unchanged, making it harder for women to gain economic and social influence.

To tackle this problem, it is essential to develop and implement comprehensive strategies that include:

- Awareness campaigns: educating women entrepreneurs and procurement officials about the benefits and processes of GRPP.
- Capacity building: providing training and support to women-owned businesses to navigate the procurement process.
- Policy reforms: introducing specific policies, quotas, and incentives to promote the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement.

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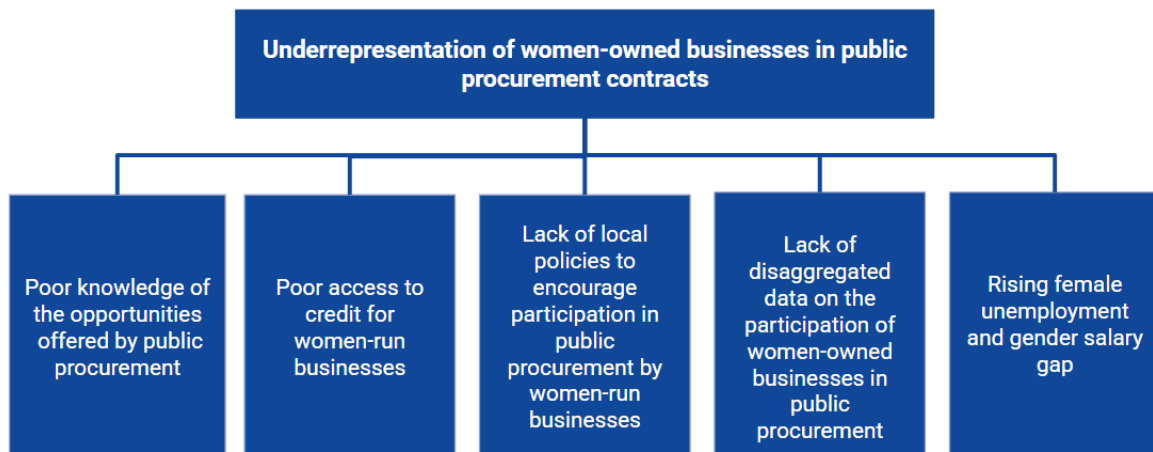
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- Data collection: Improving data collection and analysis to monitor the participation of women-owned businesses and evaluate the effectiveness of GRPP initiatives. By addressing these issues, the Municipality of Messina can help create a more equitable and inclusive economy, enhancing the role of women in public procurement and contributing to broader gender equality goals.

### PROBLEM TREE



### Detail on the Vision you are looking to realise through the IAP.

The general objective that specifies the vision of the Municipality of Messina is to create a public procurement system that is inclusive, equitable, and transformative, ensuring that women-owned businesses have equal opportunities to compete for and win public contracts. This will contribute to sustainable economic growth, reduce gender disparities, and empower communities.

In particular, the aim is to:

- 1) Establish an equitable procurement environment where women-owned businesses have the same access to opportunities as other businesses.
- 2) Eliminate systemic barriers that prevent women-owned businesses from participating fully in public procurement.

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From this perspective, the strategic vision of the ULG of Messina envisages providing tailored training, resources, and support to women entrepreneurs to help them navigate and succeed in public procurement as well as building a supportive ecosystem that includes mentorship, networking, and financial assistance.

To this end, it will be important to collect, analyse, and use data on the participation of women-owned businesses in public procurement to inform and refine policies and practices as well as continuously monitor and evaluate the impact of gender-responsive procurement policies to ensure they are effective and equitable.

In order to realise the vision it will be necessary to adopt strategic actions in order to develop and implement procurement policies that mandate a minimum percentage of contracts be awarded to women-owned businesses as well as simplify procurement procedures to make them more accessible to small and women-owned enterprises.

In parallel, the Messina ULG has launched public awareness campaigns to highlight the benefits of gender-responsive public procurement and the success stories of women-owned businesses as well as to engage with media, civil society organisations, and the private sector to build broad support for gender equality in procurement.

### **5. Discussion around the concept of Integration and which of the 12 aspects of Integration are most important for the topic of Gender Responsive Public Procurement and for your city. It should also include an assessment of current levels of Integration and the key aspects of Integration for improving through the IAP.**

Integration is fundamental to achieve the aim set with this IAP, in fact, the objective of Messina is to achieve, precisely through the integration between the different local actors of the project, a cooperation that leads them to develop good practices that can be replicated elsewhere, inside and outside the urban context. Among the 12 aspects of integration, we chose to give greater importance to the following points:

- 1) Stakeholder involvement in planning
- 2) Consistency with existing strategies
- 3) Sustainable urban development

1) The involvement of stakeholders means activating a process of inclusiveness, sharing, listening and this generates trust and affects the achievement of objectives and the sustainability of actions over time, even after the end of the project. Women entrepreneurs often face obstacles that decision-makers may not fully see—such as limited access to information, capital, networks, or mentorship.

Through stakeholder engagement, the municipality can hear these challenges directly, making the design of procurement procedures more accurate and responsive. Messina, like many cities in Southern Italy, faces:

- ✓ lower female employment rates;

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- ✓ limited representation of women in entrepreneurship;
- ✓ higher levels of informal and precarious work among women

To design procurement tools that truly respond to these local challenges, the municipality must work closely with women's associations, local enterprises, unions, and the community. Stakeholder involvement in planning is essential for ensuring that Gender Responsive Public Procurement is effective, feasible, and adapted to local needs.

Since the start of the project activities, the European Policies Planning and Strategic Programming Service of the Municipality of Messina, in concert with the Department of Equal Opportunities, has aimed to achieve the objective of as broad an involvement of local stakeholders as possible. The very wide participation of local stakeholders in the activities of the Messina ULG has been a constant feature. If on the one hand this sometimes led to difficulties in managing the group's work, on the other hand this strengthened skills, trust, and collaboration among all actors, was in line with URBACT's participatory philosophy and provided the guarantee that GRPP becomes a long-lasting tool for inclusion in Messina

2) In order to carry out long-lasting, effective and sustainable action, it is necessary that all strategies are implemented in a coherent manner. This presupposes the co-construction and sharing of a vision and synergistic work in all areas. Gender equality cannot be the exclusive prerogative of one sector, but must concern all sectors and every strategy, action, intervention must contribute to achieving gender equality and guarantee services that facilitate its implementation.

3) Although GenProcure focuses primarily on Gender Responsive Public Procurement (GRPP), the broader URBACT framework encourages cities to link gender equality goals with the pillars of sustainable urban development — economic, social, and environmental sustainability. To integrate sustainable urban development into GenProcure, the Municipality of Messina can position gender-responsive procurement as a strategic tool contributing to all three pillars. Public procurement—when oriented toward gender equality—can influence how the city spends resources, who benefits from public contracts, and what values those contracts reinforce. Since procurement governs how public money is transformed into services, infrastructure, and urban transformation, it is a *powerful lever* for shaping sustainable cities. A sustainable city is one where all social groups have equal access to opportunities. Integrating GRPP into sustainable development means acknowledging that gender inequality is a barrier to social cohesion, inclusive growth, and fair access to urban resources. GenProcure therefore strengthens the “social pillar” of sustainable urban development by creating a more equitable distribution of economic opportunities in Messina. In Messina—where female unemployment is disproportionately high—GRPP becomes a mechanism for injecting public resources into underrepresented entrepreneurial groups, boosting overall economic resilience. Thus, integrating sustainable urban development into GenProcure means using procurement to:

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- ✓ stimulate the local economy;
- ✓ broaden market participation;
- ✓ reduce economic dependency;
- ✓ and build long-term resilience.

Messina can review its local sustainability plans (e.g., environmental plans, social cohesion strategies, digital transition plans) and explicitly connect procurement actions to those frameworks.

Messina faces challenges typical of many southern European cities such as lower female employment rates, economic fragility, limited participation of SMEs in public contracts, environmental vulnerabilities and the need for urban resilience.

GenProcure offers Messina an opportunity to:

1. Make gender equality a structural component of the city's development strategy,
2. Use public procurement as a lever for sustainability,
3. Strengthen local businesses and reduce inequalities,
4. Align with European Union priorities, since the EU views gender equality and sustainable development as inseparable goals.

Thus, integrating sustainable urban development into GenProcure enhances the strategic relevance of the project and positions Messina as a model city that uses procurement to address multiple dimensions of sustainability simultaneously.

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## 6. Overall Logic and Integrated Approach

### 6.1. Overarching Strategic Objectives for the IAP

The strategic objectives for Messina's IAP should align with both EU and local goals for gender equality and sustainable development. These objectives should focus on integrating gender-sensitive policies into public procurement, which could include:

- **Promoting Gender Equality in Procurement:** Ensure that public procurement processes are designed to actively promote gender equality. This means incorporating gender considerations in the selection of suppliers, in the content of contracts, and in how public resources are allocated.
- **Raising Awareness and Capacity:** Improve the awareness of procurement officers and other public administration staff about the importance of gender equality in procurement. This involves providing training and tools that enable local authorities to incorporate gender-sensitive criteria effectively.
- **Empowering Women's Participation in Public Procurement:** Increase the participation of women-owned businesses and organizations in the public procurement process.
- **Monitoring and Assessing Gender Impact:** Develop mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the gender impact of public procurement practices. Regular reporting and assessment will ensure transparency and accountability.

### 6.2. Overarching Areas of Action and Intervention

The key areas of action should focus on practical, actionable interventions that address structural barriers and promote gender integration in procurement. The selection and choice of the key areas where to intervene were the result of an elaborate and careful evaluation carried out by the ULG of Messina. In particular, the need for specific training courses to be carried out for the benefit of those employees of the Municipality of Messina who usually deal with procurement procedures was highlighted. This evaluation was determined by the acknowledgment of a clear lack of knowledge on the part of operators regarding the possibilities currently envisaged by the Italian legislative system to introduce social, environmental and equal opportunities clauses into procurement procedures. The municipal administration of Messina accepted this request from the ULG and a specific training course was planned. In particular, specific workshops were held within the Municipality of Messina and, on 20 November 2025, an intense training day was held with the participation of teachers from the universities of Messina and Ferrara on the theme "*Equal opportunities, social responsibility and work inclusion in the Italian Code of Public Contracts*". This training course will continue well beyond the conclusion of the project activities also due to the

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continuous changes and updates of the Italian legislative framework regarding public procurement. The positive fact that must be highlighted here is that without the participation of the Municipality of Messina in the GenProcure project, this training activity would not have been started. Beyond the technical aspects, the key idea that inspired the training activity within the Municipality of Messina is to share and disseminate among public procurement operators the broad principle of procurement no longer as a simple technical tool for the purchase of goods and services but as a means that facilitates the application of environmental sustainability, equal opportunities and social inclusion policies. It is clear that this training is of a broader cultural nature than simply technical and that therefore the results will be evident in the medium and long term. In this regard, the need that emerged from the ULG meetings, alongside the need to carry out a specific training activity, is to prepare a regulatory instrument within the Municipality of Messina which obliges all offices to include gender, environmental and social clauses in procurement procedures. In this sense, an informal dialogue is still underway with the municipal administration of Messina and it is plausible to state that this specific result will be achieved in a short time.

Based on this premise, the main areas of intervention identified are the following:

- **Capacity Building for Public Administration:** Organize training and workshops for procurement officers and relevant stakeholders on how to implement gender-sensitive procurement. This would include developing guidelines on how to assess the gender impact of potential suppliers and their services.
- **Incorporating Gender Criteria in Tendering and Bidding Processes:** Ensure that all tendering and bidding processes for public procurement explicitly include gender-related criteria. This will involve encouraging suppliers to adopt gender-equal hiring practices or to support women's rights initiatives within their business operations.
- **Gender-Responsive Budgeting in Procurement:** Ensure that public procurement policies align with the municipality's gender political address, directing funds toward initiatives that support women's participation and promote gender equality.
- **Partnerships and Collaboration with Local Women's Organizations:** Establish close collaboration with local women's organizations, gender equality advocates, and other relevant stakeholders. This will help in designing policies that are responsive to the specific needs of women in the local context.
- **Data Collection and Gender Analysis:** Systematically collect and analyze gender-disaggregated data to understand trends in public procurement. This data can help identify gaps, challenges, and areas for improvement regarding gender equality in procurement.

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## 7 Details of each strategic objective for the IAP.

### 7.1. Enhance Capacity and Awareness of Public Procurement Stakeholders

Build the knowledge and skills of public procurement officers and other stakeholders to apply gender-sensitive criteria in their procurement processes. This objective aims to equip procurement officers and staff of the Municipality of Messina with the necessary tools, training, and awareness to effectively implement gender-responsive public procurement policies.

Public procurement staff should:

- Receive specific training on gender equality and its relevance in procurement.
- Understand how to evaluate bids based on gender-responsive criteria.
- Learn about best practices for promoting women's participation in the supply chain.

As already highlighted in other parts of this IAP, the training activities within the Municipality of Messina were started during the implementation of the GenProcure project activities. The intention of the municipal administration of Messina is to continue these activities beyond the closing date of the GenProcure actions. The complexity of the Italian regulatory framework regarding award clauses to be included in public procurement procedures and the continuous updates and changes to the legislation necessarily require constant and long-term planning of the training activity.

### 7.2. Ensure that gender equality is embedded as a core principle throughout all public procurement activities.

The main objective is to integrate gender considerations at every stage of the procurement process from the design of procurement policies to the evaluation of contracts. Public procurement should not only focus on the price and quality of goods and services but also consider how procurement can contribute to gender equality.

This could be achieved by:

- Introducing gender-sensitive criteria in tender documents.
- Encouraging suppliers to adopt gender-equal practices, such as equitable hiring policies or support for gender equality initiatives.

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- Creating guidelines that ensure all procurement procedures consider the impact on gender equality, including how the procurement process might foster opportunities for women's economic empowerment.

The Municipality of Messina does not have a central office responsible for managing public procurement procedures. Each municipal service has its own budget and is, therefore, authorized to manage procedures in compliance with the existing regulatory framework. On the basis of this specific situation, the ULG of Messina has drawn up a specific political document which requests that as soon as possible the municipal administration of Messina adopt a specific internal regulatory act which obliges all municipal services to introduce social, gender and environmental sustainability reward clauses. In this context, an informal dialogue was initiated with the municipal administration. Thanks in particular to the sensitivity shown by the equal opportunities councilor, it is plausible to believe that this crucial and tangible result will be achieved in a short time, which could represent an epochal turning point in municipal public procurement procedures

### **7.3. Increase the Participation of Women and Gender-Equal Enterprises in Public Procurement**

Foster the inclusion of women-owned businesses and gender-equal enterprises in public procurement opportunities.

This objective focuses on breaking down barriers that may hinder the participation of women-owned businesses or those with strong gender equality policies in public procurement processes. The goal is to ensure that procurement contracts are accessible and equitable for female entrepreneurs and businesses that promote gender equality. It is important to point out that the social and economic context of the Messina area has long been strongly linked to the public sector rather than to private entrepreneurship. The latter has long encountered major structural difficulties that limit its expansion. In this context it is easy to understand how the emergence of female entrepreneurship is even more difficult

In this context, it should be underlined that in the last phase of the project activities, contacts were initiated between the ULG of Messina and the Chamber of Commerce. In particular, a specific questionnaire was created for local businesses belonging to the Chamber of Commerce. The objective of the questionnaire, for which the collection of the results obtained is currently underway, is to detect the perception of local economic operators regarding the procurement procedures announced by the Municipality of Messina. In particular, we want to obtain feedback that is as specific as possible to determine whether, for example, the procedures are cumbersome, whether the technical language used is clear enough, etc.

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### 7.4. Integrate Gender-Responsive Budgeting in Procurement Decisions

Align procurement practices with gender-responsive budgeting principles to ensure that procurement decisions contribute to gender equality goals.

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) involves ensuring that public spending is directed in ways that contribute to gender equality. This objective calls for integrating GRB principles into public procurement decisions to ensure that funds are allocated to contracts that promote gender equality.

This might include:

- Directing funds toward projects that support women's empowerment, gender equality in the workforce, or access to services for women.
- Creating an evaluation system that ensures public procurement funds are spent on initiatives that advance gender equality in the community.

### 7.5. Foster Collaboration and Partnerships for Gender Equality in Procurement

Strengthen collaboration with local and European partners to enhance the impact of gender equality initiatives within public procurement.

This objective emphasizes the importance of partnerships between the Municipality of Messina, local women's organizations, businesses, and other public authorities. Collaboration and shared knowledge are essential to ensuring the success of gender-sensitive procurement.

In particular, the objective of the municipal administration of Messina is to safeguard the heritage of exchange of best practices and in general of shared work between the members of the ULG. The objectives identified are largely not achievable within the time frame of GenProcure's project activities. It is therefore necessary to consolidate the ties built within the group and possibly further broaden the composition of the Messina ULG. In this regard, a general agreement has been drawn up which, close to the conclusion of the project activities, will be signed by the representatives of the ULG members as part of a formal ceremony to be held on 11 December 2025. The members of the ULG will be asked to sign a shared document which has a predominantly political character. With this agreement in particular, all the members of the ULG undertake to continue working together in the field of equal opportunities, responsible public procurement and to identify possible forms of European funding which can be accessed through the joint drafting of project proposals.

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### **8 Details on the overarching areas of intervention that will enable you to deliver your strategic objectives and vision.**

#### **a. Policy and Legislative Alignment - Capacity Building and Training**

The training activities described above currently underway are aimed, among other things, at ensuring the procurement policies and practices of the Municipality of Messina align with national and international gender equality commitments. It should be highlighted here that, in order to ensure a broad level of sharing of the knowledge acquired, these training activities were not exclusively designed for employees of the Municipality of Messina. In fact, the objective of broad participation of both employees of other public institutions and members of trade unions and the numerous associations that have joined our ULG has been achieved so far. The achievement of an adequate level of training by public employees on hitherto almost unknown topics together with a strong commitment from the municipal administration aimed at making the inclusion of reward clauses in public procurement procedures mandatory will soon lead to the logical effect of the need to review and revise existing public procurement policies to explicitly incorporate gender-sensitive criteria, as well as environmental sustainability and social inclusion clauses. The path that has already been undertaken within the bureaucratic structure of the Municipality of Messina, primarily driven by the equal opportunities councilor, will be used as an example to emulate for the other local institutions participating in the project: Metropolitan City of Messina, Port Authority, Provincial Health Authority, University of Messina etc. In this regard, on the basis of the data collected, it should be underlined that the presence in other public institutions of a central office responsible for public procurement procedures has undoubtedly favored the research and analysis work of data disaggregated by gender. However, the percentage of gender bonus clauses currently represents an absolutely insignificant percentage.

One of the weak points of the activities carried out so far by the Messina ULG is probably that of having acquired late awareness of the need for the involvement of local economic operators. In particular, following the contacts initiated with the Messina Chamber of Commerce, it emerged that it is necessary to broaden the range of beneficiaries of the training activities to include private operators. In this regard, the Municipality of Messina undertakes, on the basis of the agreement which will be formally signed on 11 December 2025, to continue the training activities beyond the conclusion of the project by conducting, in particular, workshops for local businesses, especially SMEs and women-owned enterprises, to help them better understand public procurement opportunities and gender-inclusive practices.

#### **b. Promoting Women's Participation in Public Procurement**

The set of training activities, coordinated by a strong political impulse from the municipal councilor for equal opportunities, together with a broader and more direct involvement of local economic operators will lead, in the medium and long term, to an increase in the

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participation of women-owned businesses and gender-diverse suppliers in the procurement process.

Furthermore, the collection of data and feedback from the local production world, also through the dissemination of the questionnaire described above, will lead to implement strategies to identify and remove barriers that prevent women from participating in public procurement opportunities (e.g., access to information, financial support, or training).

### c. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Accountability

The main expectation on the part of the members who actively participated in the work of the ULG is, as already mentioned, the issuing of an internal regulatory act of the Municipality of Messina which entails the mandatory inclusion of social clauses in public procurement procedures. This result of epochal value which will soon be achieved, also on the basis of the discussions held with the local administration of Messina, will entail a radically new planning of the organization of activities relating to public procurement of the municipal offices of Messina. Following the issuing of the internal regulatory act indicated above, the shared planning within the ULG will lead to the creation and establishment of robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of gender equality measures in procurement practices within the Municipality of Messina, and in cascade in all the other public institutions involved in the project.

In this regard, the numerous meetings held between the members of the ULG were, among other things, concentrated: 1) on the development of a clear set of gender indicators to monitor progress towards gender equality in public procurement; 2) in setting up a transparent reporting system to track the implementation of gender-related measures in public contracts, ensuring accountability at all levels; 3) in the identification of indicators to regularly assess the effectiveness of gender-sensitive procurement policies and adjust them based on evidence and feedback. The work carried out for the purpose of drafting a document common to all public institutions participating in the project and which indicates these 3 results, also due to the considerable number of participants in the working groups, continued well beyond the scheduled times. At the moment, a definitive summary document that brings together these 3 indicators is not yet available. The hope is that as soon as possible, also and above all thanks to the decisive impulse of the Municipality of Messina, we can reach a result shared by all

### d. Public Awareness and Advocacy

Another direction of the Messina ULG's activities was to raise awareness among the city's public opinion on the issues of equal opportunities in general and on the topic of gender procurement specifically. The constant communication activity carried out through the institutional channels of the Municipality of Messina using social channels and the institutional website should be underlined here. In this context, the Municipality of Messina has implemented numerous projects in recent years, mostly financed by the PNRR, the PON Metro and the European CERV programme, on equal opportunities issues. The simultaneous

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participation of the Municipality of Messina in various projects developed on the theme of equal opportunities has led to the possibility of an interdisciplinary approach as well as a continuous exchange of practices and experiences between the various groups created ad hoc. As an example, mention may be made here of the participation of numerous members of the GenProcure ULG in the activities of the IncludiME project, financed by the PNRR and which aims to implement social inclusion policies with particular reference to issues of gender discrimination. This synergy between the various projects will be a programmatic guideline for the activities to be carried out in the medium and long term. With reference to the awareness campaigns, it is also worth mentioning the participation of the Messina ULG in the marathon which every year is organized synergistically by local institutions in memory of women victims of violence

### **8.1. Details on the specific actions you will undertake in relation to each area of intervention and that will enable you to realise your strategic objectives and vision.**

#### **a. Baseline assessment**

Objective: Understand the perception of public opinion in Messina on the issues of equal opportunities and on the Municipality's policies on this issue. The survey was conceived as a tool aimed at collecting useful information on the perception and experience of Messina citizens with respect to the topic of gender equality, with the aim of identifying possible areas for improvement. This represented one of the first actions planned by the ULG and which wanted to collect data on the general topic of equal opportunities as a starting point to then detail the work on the specific topic of gender procurement. That is, it was deemed necessary to obtain initial data from the citizens of Messina to understand the level of awareness on equal opportunities and in particular to determine the level of satisfaction regarding the policies conducted by the Municipality of Messina on this issue

The questionnaire was disseminated through the website of the Municipality of Messina and distributed mainly by the members of the ULG. The data collected were analyzed and processed by the sociologist Daniela Catanoso and are reported here in detail **in attachment no. 1** to this IAP. Some data that emerged from this investigation should be highlighted here and which are representative of the "*cultural*" situation in Messina on the issue of gender.

1) The vast majority (82%) of those who participated in the survey think that, even today, gender stereotypes influence people's choices and opportunities. The most identified area is work (71%), followed by relationships (54%) and family (36%).

2) The majority of respondents (67%) believe that a "traditional culture" is still rooted which defines the female role mainly in family and domestic terms. A large percentage (44%) also considers that men are more suited to holding roles of power, while 35% maintains that they are less likely to take care of household chores and that, for women, a professional career is

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less important (35%). The belief that it is the man's responsibility to provide for the family's economic needs also remains significant (23%).

3) As regards the perception of the role of the institutions, 47% of respondents believe that the policies and actions adopted are not yet sufficient to promote real gender equality.

### **b. Training and capacity building**

As reiterated several times, the training activity has been fundamental and preparatory for all other activities from the beginning. The training course launched by the Municipality of Messina, with the scientific collaboration of the University of Messina, saw the involvement not only of the municipal employees responsible for public procurement procedures but also of a large representation of the members of the ULG. The training program was launched both online and in person. This activity will necessarily continue in the coming years as it is an essential prerequisite for a radical change in the planning and management of procurement procedures.

In this regard, two lines of activity have been planned within the ULG which aim to guarantee the quality level and effectiveness of the training activity: 1) Resource materials: create manuals, guidelines, and toolkits to support ongoing learning and application of gender-responsive procurement practices. 2) Evaluation: assess the effectiveness of the training through pre- and post-training evaluations.

The formalization of an agreement between the members of the ULG is also aimed at finding funding sources at regional, national and European level that can ensure constant updating of training activities in the coming years

### **c. Awareness campaign**

The awareness campaign within Messina's Integrated Action Plan for GenProcure is designed to build a broad understanding of gender-responsive public procurement and to create a cultural shift in how purchasing decisions are perceived and implemented across the municipality. Its primary purpose is to make the concept of gender procurement accessible to civil servants, local suppliers, civil society organisations, and residents, helping them recognise how procurement choices can influence equality, employment conditions, service accessibility, and overall community wellbeing.

The campaign begins by clearly explaining what gender-responsive procurement means in practical terms, highlighting how public contracts can be structured to promote gender equality both inside organisations and in the services delivered to citizens. This involves translating technical concepts into everyday language and using real examples to illustrate the

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risks of gender-blind procurement and the positive outcomes achieved when gender considerations are intentionally integrated.

A core component of the campaign is communication through multiple channels—municipal websites, social media, community events, and traditional media—ensuring that the information reaches diverse audiences. Visual identity, storytelling, and testimonials from practitioners or local businesses help make the topic relatable and demonstrate that gender-responsive procurement is not an administrative burden but a tool for fairer and more efficient public spending.

The municipality also uses the campaign to strengthen internal capacity. Workshops, presentations, and informal learning moments encourage staff in different departments to understand their role in the procurement cycle and give them opportunities to raise questions or share experiences.

For local suppliers, the awareness campaign clarifies the expectations and opportunities created by gender-responsive criteria. It provides guidance on how companies can adapt or highlight existing good practices related to gender equality, encouraging small and medium-sized enterprises to participate and reducing the perception that new requirements may be overly complex.

The campaign reinforces Messina's role within the broader GenProcure network and its commitment to the URBACT principles of participatory governance and inclusive local development. By making gender procurement a visible civic issue rather than a technical niche, the awareness campaign lays the foundation for community support, shared responsibility, and more sustainable implementation of the IAP.

### **d. Gender Impact Assessments**

Within Messina's Integrated Action Plan for the GenProcure project, gender impact assessments play a central role in ensuring that public procurement decisions genuinely contribute to gender equality rather than inadvertently reinforcing existing disparities. This action focuses on embedding a systematic, evidence-based method to analyse how procurement choices affect women and men differently, both within the workforce of contracted suppliers and in the quality and accessibility of the services or goods delivered to the community.

The assessment process begins before the tender is drafted, when the municipality examines the specific sector of the procurement and identifies potential gendered dimensions. For example, it considers whether the workforce involved is characterised by gender segregation, whether working conditions may affect women and men differently, or whether the end users of the service have distinct needs or patterns of access. By collecting data, consulting

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stakeholders, and reviewing previous procurement experiences, the municipality builds a clear picture of where inequalities or risks may lie.

Once these issues are identified, the municipality evaluates the potential impact of various procurement options. This includes analysing whether particular contract requirements, performance indicators, or award criteria might contribute to reducing inequalities, promote equal opportunities, or inadvertently disadvantage one gender. The aim is not to impose rigid rules but to make informed decisions about how to shape each procurement procedure so that it aligns with the municipality's broader equality objectives. The assessments help determine when it is appropriate to include gender-responsive clauses and how to justify them in a legally sound and transparent way.

During the implementation of the contract, gender impact assessments continue to serve as a monitoring tool. Suppliers are encouraged, and in some cases required, to provide information on workforce composition, work-life balance measures, training opportunities, and actions taken to foster gender equality. This ongoing monitoring allows the municipality to verify whether the anticipated benefits are materialising and to identify any unforeseen issues. When necessary, adjustments can be made through dialogue with contractors to improve compliance and maintain the focus on equality outcomes.

Over time, the use of gender impact assessments helps create a repository of knowledge within the municipality. Lessons learned from each procurement are recorded and used to refine future assessments and strengthen institutional expertise. This contributes to a more strategic, consistent, and confident use of gender-responsive procurement across departments. It also enhances transparency and accountability, as decisions are backed by documented analyses that can be shared with stakeholders and the broader public.

This action supports Messina's commitment to integrating gender equality into everyday administrative processes. By making gender impact assessments a routine part of procurement, the municipality ensures that the principles of the GenProcure project are translated into practical, measurable improvements in how public resources are allocated and how services respond to the diverse needs of the population.

### **8.2. Details on whether each Action selected is integrated.**

#### **Training and capacity building**

The action on training and capacity building is integrated because it connects several dimensions of Messina's work on gender-responsive procurement and involves multiple actors inside and outside the municipality. It does not function as an isolated training

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programme but as a structured process that supports the broader goals of the Integrated Action Plan. The training is designed to equip municipal staff, suppliers, and local stakeholders with shared knowledge, common terminology, and practical skills, ensuring that everyone involved in procurement understands both the purpose and the methods of applying a gender perspective.

Its integrated nature comes from the way it links different levels of the administration. Staff from political leadership, procurement offices, sectoral departments, and monitoring units are all included, allowing the municipality to build consistent practices across the entire procurement cycle. This horizontal integration ensures that gender-responsive procurement is not confined to one department but becomes a collective responsibility. The action also strengthens vertical integration by involving managers and frontline staff, aligning daily procurement tasks with strategic municipal priorities on gender equality.

The training connects to other actions in the IAP, such as gender impact assessments, awareness campaigns, and the introduction of gender-sensitive criteria in tenders. By preparing staff to understand and apply these tools, capacity building becomes the foundation that enables the other actions to function effectively. It also creates opportunities for dialogue with external stakeholders, particularly suppliers and civil society organisations, fostering a shared understanding of expectations and promoting collaborative learning. This external component reinforces the integrated approach by extending knowledge and responsibility beyond the municipal institution.

This action supports long-term institutionalisation. By embedding training into standard procedures, creating internal expertise, and encouraging the emergence of “champions” who can guide colleagues, the municipality ensures that gender-responsive procurement will continue even after the initial project cycle. For these reasons, training and capacity building can be considered deeply integrated within the overall strategy, helping to align policies, people, and processes toward the common goal of promoting gender equality through public procurement.

### **Awareness campaign**

The awareness campaign is integrated because it brings together different actors, communication channels, and policy objectives to create a shared understanding of gender-responsive procurement across the community. Rather than functioning as a stand-alone communication activity, it supports and reinforces the broader goals of the Integrated Action Plan by ensuring that information about gender equality in procurement reaches all the groups that play a role in its success. Municipal staff, suppliers, civil society organisations, and residents are all considered part of the campaign’s audience, and the messages are designed to

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speak to their specific interests and responsibilities. In this way, the campaign becomes a bridge that links institutional priorities with public engagement.

Internally, the campaign strengthens cooperation between departments by promoting a common narrative and encouraging staff from different units to see gender procurement as a shared mission rather than a specialised topic. It supports other actions, such as training and gender impact assessments, by creating an environment in which staff feel informed, motivated, and aware of the reasons behind new procedures or criteria. Externally, it helps suppliers understand how gender considerations may influence procurement processes and how they can align their own practices with these expectations. This reduces uncertainty, encourages participation, and builds a more inclusive relationship between the municipality and the local economic ecosystem.

The campaign also contributes to vertical integration by aligning political communication, managerial decision-making, and frontline implementation. Leaders communicate the municipality's vision, technical staff explain practical aspects, and the wider public gains insight into why gender equality is relevant to public spending. This layered communication strengthens transparency and ensures that gender procurement is perceived not just as a technical requirement but as part of a broader social commitment.

Overall, the awareness campaign is integrated because it connects people, policies, and communication strategies in a coordinated effort to embed the values and objectives of gender-responsive procurement into the daily life of the municipality and its community.

### Gender Impact Assessments

The action on gender impact assessments is integrated because it connects analytical work, procurement practice, organisational learning, and stakeholder participation in a coherent and mutually reinforcing way. Rather than being treated as a technical step added at the margins of procurement, the assessment becomes a tool that guides decisions across the entire cycle, from early planning to contract management. This creates a continuous link between the municipality's strategic equality objectives and the practical choices made by staff when designing and implementing tenders.

The integrated nature of this action is evident in the way it brings together different municipal departments. Procurement officers, equality experts, sectoral units, and monitoring teams all contribute information and perspectives to the assessment process. Their collaboration allows the municipality to capture the full range of gendered implications associated with a service or supply, ensuring that no single department works in isolation. This internal cooperation strengthens institutional coherence and helps generate a shared understanding of how gender considerations can be addressed through procurement.

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Vertical integration is also present, as political leadership sets the vision for gender equality while technical staff translate that vision into operational guidelines and assessment tools. Managers, frontline officers, and monitoring personnel all participate at different stages, creating a chain of responsibility and ensuring that gender considerations are not lost between policy intentions and daily practice.

Externally, the action engages suppliers and civil society by outlining how gender impacts will be monitored and by encouraging dialogue on how to improve equality outcomes. This opens space for businesses to adapt their practices and for community organisations to contribute with their expertise. It also helps build trust, as the municipality demonstrates transparency in the way it analyses and justifies procurement decisions.

Finally, gender impact assessments contribute to the integration of the IAP as a whole by supporting and informing other actions, such as training, awareness activities, and the introduction of gender-responsive criteria. Through systematic analysis and documentation, the municipality develops a body of knowledge that can be used to improve future tenders and to maintain consistent practices across departments. For these reasons, this action is fully integrated into the broader governance, learning, and operational structure of Messina's IAP on gender procurement.

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### 9 Action Planning Details

Action Number	Action Name		
1	Inclusion of Gender Considerations in Public Procurement		
<b>Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this activity</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and revise existing public procurement policies to explicitly incorporate gender-sensitive criteria.</li> <li>Introduce mandatory gender equality clauses in all public procurement contracts to ensure vendors meet specific gender-related criteria, such as equal pay, work-life balance policies, and non-discrimination in the workplace</li> <li>Develop and adopt gender-sensitive evaluation criteria for public tenders, ensuring that proposals are assessed not only for their economic and technical viability but also for their potential impact on gender equality.</li> <li>Promote gender-responsive budgeting in public procurement, ensuring resources are allocated to support gender equality projects and initiatives.</li> </ul>			
<b>Link to strategic objective</b>	Promote Gender Equality in Public Procurement Processes		
<b>Related area of Intervention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Policy and Legislative Alignment</b></li> <li><b>Gender-Sensitive Procurement Criteria and Tools</b></li> </ul>		
<b>Responsibilities</b>			
<b>Lead</b>	<b>Why</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Role</b>
Municipality of Messina	It is the ULG partner that manages by far the highest number of public procurement procedures	Port Authority of Messina Metropolitan City of Messina University of Messina Local Health Authority	
<b>Costings</b> The cost of this action will be mostly covered by the ordinary work of employees of public institutions belonging to the ULG - The costs of specific training activities will be covered partly by the budget of the Municipality of Messina and the remaining part by participation in European programmes (CERV and ERDF) and by regional and national funding			
<b>Monitoring of delivery</b>			
<b>Output indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:?)</b>
Number of updated procurement policies, guidelines, and procedures that integrate gender equality principles.	Document Review: Regularly review updated procurement policies, guidelines, and procedures to ensure they reflect gender equality principles. Stakeholder Feedback: Gather feedback from procurement officers and other stakeholders on the ease of implementation and effectiveness of gender-responsive procurement guidelines.	01.09.2024	30.09.2026
<b>Result indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>

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Percentage of public procurement contracts awarded to women-led or gender-equal enterprises.	Procurement Data Analysis: Collect and analyze procurement data annually, focusing on the gender composition of the awarded contracts (e.g., percentage of contracts awarded to women-owned businesses). Supplier Surveys: Conduct surveys with suppliers to understand how gender-responsive procurement criteria influence their participation and engagement.	01.09.2023	30.09.2027
<b>Risk assessment</b>			

Implementation risk/challenges	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measures foreseen
Resistance from procurement staff to implement gender-responsive policies	Medium	High	Provide continuous training and awareness programs for all procurement officers, ensuring they understand the importance of gender equality and have the tools to integrate it into procurement processes.
Unclear or inconsistent implementation of gender equality criteria across different procurement departments	Medium	High	Identify and allocate adequate resources to support gender-responsive procurement initiatives.

Action Number	Action Name
<b>2</b>	Capacity Building and Awareness Campaign for Inclusive Public Procurement
<b>Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this activity</b>	
<p><b>Stakeholder Mapping and Needs Assessment</b> Identify all key procurement stakeholders (e.g., municipal procurement officers, suppliers, civil society, etc.). Conduct surveys or interviews to assess their current knowledge and training needs in inclusive procurement.</p> <p><b>Design and Delivery of Capacity-Building Workshops</b> Develop training modules focusing on: Legal frameworks and EU directives on equality in procurement. Best practices for gender-responsive and socially responsible procurement. Tools for evaluating tenders with equality criteria. Organize in-person and online workshops over a defined period. Include case studies and interactive exercises.</p>	
<b>Link to strategic objective</b>	Enhance Capacity and Awareness of Public Procurement Stakeholders
<b>Related area of Intervention</b>	Public Procurement Training & Awareness Raising This area focuses on equipping stakeholders (public officials, suppliers, NGOs, etc.) with the knowledge and tools to incorporate equal opportunities and gender equality into procurement processes.
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>

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Municipality of Messina		Port Authority of Messina Metropolitan City of Messina University of Messina Local Health Authority	
<b>Monitoring of delivery</b>			
<b>Output indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>
Number of stakeholders trained through workshops on inclusive public procurement.	Attendance sheets and registration forms at each training session. Post-training evaluation forms and feedback surveys.	01.10.2023	30.11.2027
<b>Result indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>
Percentage of public procurement processes that integrate equal opportunity or gender-sensitive criteria within 12 months of training delivery.	Interviews or surveys with procurement officers to verify changes in practice. Analysis of procurement reports or contract award documents.	01.10.2023	30.11.2027
<b>Risk assessment</b>			
<b>Implementation risk/challenges</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation measures foreseen</b>
Resistance to change: Stakeholders may view equality clauses as unnecessary or burdensome.	High	Medium	Include success stories and legal obligations in training; provide hands-on support to draft inclusive clauses.
Administrative delays Bureaucratic processes might delay training or implementation.	High	High	Secure early political buy-in; align the project with broader municipal or regional equality strategies. Political support will be primarily managed and ensured by the Councillor for Equal Opportunities of the Municipality of Messina who has had a strategic role in defining and implementing the project activities up to now.

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<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action Name EmpowerHer Procurement: Promoting Women's Participation in Public Tenders</b>		
<b>3</b>	EmpowerHer Procurement: Promoting Women's Participation in Public Tenders		
<b>Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this activity</b>			
<p><b>Market Mapping of Women-led and Gender-Equal Enterprises</b> Identify and create a registry of women-led SMEs, cooperatives, and gender-equal enterprises active in Messina and the surrounding region. Collaborate with chambers of commerce, women's business networks, and social economy actors.</p> <p><b>Awareness and Outreach Campaign</b> Launch an outreach campaign targeting women entrepreneurs, informing them about public procurement opportunities and the benefits of participating. Use accessible formats and channels (social media, flyers, local events, workshops).</p> <p><b>Simplification and Adaptation of Tender Procedures</b> Review procurement documentation and processes to identify structural barriers for small or women-led businesses. Introduce gender-responsive procurement practices such as: Reserved contracts (where legally permitted). Lots division to make tenders more accessible to small businesses. Inclusion of award criteria recognizing gender-equality practices.</p>			
<b>Link to strategic objective</b>	Increase the Participation of Women and Gender-Equal Enterprises in Public Procurement		
<b>Related area of Intervention</b>	Inclusive Market Access and Supplier Diversity This area focuses on reducing entry barriers and promoting the inclusion of under represented groups—specifically women-led and gender-equal enterprises—in public procurement opportunities.		
<b>Responsibilities</b>			
<b>Lead</b>		<b>Partners</b>	
Municipality of Messina		Port Authority of Messina Metropolitan City of Messina University of Messina Local Health Authority	
<b>Monitoring of delivery</b>			
<b>Output indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>
Number of women-led and gender-equal enterprises engaged in public procurement processes (either through training, mentoring, or actual bidding).	Training Attendance: Keep track of the number of women entrepreneurs participating in the training and mentoring sessions (using registration forms and attendance sheets). Tender Participation Logs: Monitor the number of women-led businesses that submit bids in public procurement processes (via procurement documentation and tender submission records).	01.10.2025	30.10.2026
<b>Result indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>
Increase in the number of	Procurement Reports:	01.10.2025	30.10.2026

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<p>awarded contracts to women-led and gender-equal enterprises in comparison to baseline data.</p>	<p>Analyze procurement award reports to check the number and value of contracts awarded to women-led businesses.</p> <p>Follow-up Surveys: Conduct surveys among women-led enterprises to determine their success rate in bidding after training and mentoring.</p>		
Risk assessment			
Implementation risk/challenges	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measures foreseen
<p>Limited Awareness Women entrepreneurs may not be aware of the opportunities or processes involved in public procurement.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Use targeted outreach (workshops, info days, social media) and provide clear, accessible guidance on tender processes.</p>
<p>Insufficient Support Infrastructure There may be limited ongoing support systems to help women-led businesses navigate complex procurement systems.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Secure early political buy-in; align the project with broader municipal or regional equality strategies.</p>

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<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action Name EmpowerHer Procurement: Promoting Women's Participation in Public Tenders</b>		
<b>4</b>	Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in Public Procurement		
<b>Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this activity</b>			
<p><b>Conduct Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) Training for Key Stakeholders</b> Organize training sessions for municipal procurement officers, budget officers, and other relevant stakeholders on the principles and methodologies of gender-responsive budgeting.</p> <p><b>Review and Revise Procurement Guidelines to Integrate Gender Considerations</b>  Audit current procurement policies and revise them to include gender-responsive budgeting criteria. This includes ensuring that procurement decisions reflect gender equality objectives.</p> <p><b>Develop Gender-Responsive Budgeting Framework for Procurement</b>  Create a clear framework or checklist for integrating gender-responsive budgeting into procurement decisions. This should include: Gender-sensitive evaluation criteria for bids. Gender equality indicators in the procurement process. Guidelines for evaluating the impact of public procurement on gender equality.</p> <p><b>Monitor, Evaluate, and Report Gender-Responsive Procurement</b>  Set up a monitoring and evaluation system to track gender-related impacts of procurement decisions. Regularly report on how gender-responsive budgeting is being integrated into procurement.</p> <p><b>Engage External Experts and Stakeholders for Peer Learning and Support</b>  Collaborate with experts in gender-responsive budgeting from other cities or organizations. Participate in knowledge-sharing initiatives to ensure best practices are adopted.</p>			
<b>Link to strategic objective</b>	Integrate Gender-Responsive Budgeting in Procurement Decisions		
<b>Related area of Intervention</b>	Gender-Responsive Public Procurement and Budgeting This area focuses on incorporating gender equality principles into procurement and budgeting decisions, ensuring that the allocation of public funds and procurement processes contribute to gender equality objectives.		
<b>Responsibilities</b>			
<b>Lead</b>			
Municipality of Messina			
<b>Monitoring of delivery</b>			
<b>Output indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>
Number of procurement officers and stakeholders trained on Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB)	Training Attendance and Certification: Track the number of participants in each GRB training session, using attendance logs and certification distribution. Estimated number of participants on average: 100	01.04.2025	31.12.2027

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	Survey Results: Conduct surveys at the end of each training session to measure the effectiveness and satisfaction of the participants.		
<b>Result indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:?)</b>
Percentage of procurement decisions that reflect gender-responsive budgeting principles (gender-sensitive criteria, equal opportunity allocations, etc.) in the selected pilot projects within the first year of implementation.	Impact Evaluation: Conduct evaluations to assess the gender-related outcomes (e.g., increase in women-owned business participation, gender-equitable distribution of contracts).	01.04.2025	31.12.2027
<b>Risk assessment</b>			
<b>Implementation risk/challenges</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation measures foreseen</b>
Limited understanding of GRB principles	Medium	High	Stakeholder Engagement: Early and continuous engagement with key stakeholders (procurement officers, budget officers, political leaders) to build support for the integration of GRB in procurement processes. Political Advocacy: Strengthen the case for GRB by aligning the project with broader national and EU gender equality objectives and showcasing the long-term economic and social benefits.
Resistance to change	Medium	Medium	Clear Communication: Develop easy-to-understand tools (guides, workshops, case studies) to explain the practical steps involved in applying gender-responsive budgeting.
Insufficient political will or institutional support	Low	High	Ongoing Monitoring: Ensure that gender-responsive budgeting becomes a part of regular procurement audits to ensure its consistent application and allow for course correction

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<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action Name EmpowerHer Procurement: Promoting Women's Participation in Public Tenders</b>		
<b>5</b>	Gender Impact Monitoring and Evaluation in Public Procurement		
<b>Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this activity</b>			
<p><b>Develop a Gender Impact Monitoring Framework</b> Create a comprehensive gender impact monitoring and evaluation framework specifically for public procurement. This framework will include: Gender equality indicators (e.g., gender balance of suppliers, gender-specific outcomes of procurement projects). Data collection methods (e.g., tracking women-led businesses awarded contracts, analyzing the socio-economic impact on gender).</p> <p><b>Integrate Gender Impact Indicators in Procurement Performance Reviews</b> Modify existing procurement performance review processes to incorporate gender equality indicators. For example: Percentage of contracts awarded to women-owned businesses. Gender-sensitive criteria in tender evaluations. Gendered socio-economic outcomes of public procurement projects (e.g., creation of jobs for women).</p>			
<b>Link to strategic objective</b>	Monitor and Evaluate the Gender Impact of Public Procurement		
<b>Related area of Intervention</b>	Gender-Responsive Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) in Public Procurement This area focuses on developing systems and tools to measure and assess the gender impact of public procurement decisions, ensuring that procurement processes are contributing to gender equality goals and identifying areas for improvement.		
<b>Responsibilities</b>			
<b>Lead</b>			
Municipality of Messina			
<b>Monitoring of delivery</b>			
<b>Output indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>
Number of gender impact assessments conducted on procurement projects	Tracking Reports: Maintain a log of completed gender impact assessments, specifying the projects reviewed and their results. Assessment Documentation: Ensure that all gender impact assessments are documented and available for review. This could include both internal audits and external evaluations. Feedback from Stakeholders: Collect feedback from procurement officers, businesses, and other stakeholders involved in the procurement process to assess the quality and comprehensiveness of	01.01.2024	30.11.2027

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	gender assessments.		
<b>Result indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:?)</b>
Percentage increase in gender-responsive procurement outcomes (e.g., increased number of contracts awarded to women-led businesses, improved gender equality in procurement processes) .	Procurement Data Analysis: Regular analysis of procurement data to track the percentage of contracts awarded to women-led businesses and the inclusion of gender-responsive criteria. Survey/Interviews: Conduct interviews with procurement officers and suppliers to evaluate their awareness and the effectiveness of gender impact assessments in the procurement process.	01.01.2024	30.11.2025
<b>Risk assessment</b>			
<b>Implementation risk/challenges</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation measures foreseen</b>
Limited data availability	Medium	High	Work with procurement officers to establish clear data collection practices, including gender markers in procurement forms. Develop partnerships with local research organizations or external experts to assist in data collection.
Inadequate capacity for gender impact evaluation	Medium	High	Invest in capacity-building for staff through gender-focused training and hire or consult with gender equality experts. Consider partnerships with gender-focused organizations for expertise.
Insufficient political or institutional support	Low	High	Secure political support by aligning the project with national gender equality goals and EU funding opportunities. Present data on the economic and social benefits of gender-responsive procurement.

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<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action Name EmpowerHer Procurement: Promoting Women's Participation in Public Tenders</b>		
<b>6</b>	Gender Mainstreaming in Public Procurement Practices		
<b>Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this activity</b>			
<p><b>Conduct a Gender Analysis of Existing Procurement Policies and Processes</b> Review and assess existing procurement policies and practices to identify gender biases or gaps. This includes analyzing: Tendering procedures - Supplier diversity and inclusion criteria - Awarding criteria and contract specifications</p> <p><b>Revise Procurement Guidelines to Integrate Gender Mainstreaming</b> Revise municipal procurement guidelines to include gender-sensitive criteria. This could include: Gender-neutral language in tender documents. - Criteria that prioritize or incentivize gender-equal enterprises and women-owned businesses. - Gender-sensitive impact assessments for projects funded through public procurement.</p>			
<b>Link to strategic objective</b>	Ensure Gender Mainstreaming Across all Sectors and Services in Public Procurement		
<b>Related area of Intervention</b>	Gender-Responsive Public Procurement and Policy Integration This area focuses on ensuring that gender equality principles are consistently applied across all phases of public procurement—from planning and tendering to contract execution and evaluation. It involves integrating gender-sensitive criteria into procurement policies, decision-making, and monitoring processes.		
<b>Responsibilities</b>			
<b>Lead</b>			
Municipality of Messina			
<b>Monitoring of delivery</b>			
<b>Output indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>
Number of revised procurement guidelines incorporating gender-sensitive criteria.	<p>Document Review: Maintain a record of all revised procurement documents and guidelines.</p> <p>Ensure that the new gender-sensitive criteria are incorporated into all tender notices, contracts, and procurement frameworks.</p> <p>Internal Audits: Conduct periodic audits to ensure that gender-sensitive procurement guidelines are being followed consistently in the procurement process.</p>	01.09.2025	30.11.2027
<b>Result indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>
Percentage increase in the number of gender-responsive contracts awarded (i.e., contracts awarded to women-owned businesses or those with	Procurement Data Analysis: Regular analysis of procurement data to track the percentage of contracts awarded to women-led businesses and	01.09.2025	30.11.2027

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gender equality objectives) compared to baseline data.	the inclusion of gender-responsive criteria. Survey/Interviews: Conduct interviews with procurement officers and suppliers to evaluate their awareness and the effectiveness of gender impact assessments in the procurement process.		
<b>Risk assessment</b>			
<b>Implementation risk/challenges</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation measures foreseen</b>
Resistance to gender mainstreaming - Resistance from procurement officers or suppliers to adopt gender-sensitive criteria	Medium	High	Conduct awareness campaigns and training sessions to build understanding of the benefits of gender mainstreaming in procurement. Engage key stakeholders early to foster buy-in: Trade unions (CGIL) and CIRS (Comitato Italiano per il Reinserimento Sociale) Messina
Lack of political or institutional commitment - Political or institutional resistance to fully implementing gender mainstreaming	low	High	Secure strong political support by highlighting the alignment of gender mainstreaming with broader regional or national gender equality objectives. Provide evidence of the long-term economic and social benefits.

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<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action Name EmpowerHer Procurement: Promoting Women's Participation in Public Tenders</b>		
<b>7</b>	Building Collaborative Partnerships for Gender Equality in Public Procurement		
<b>Description of specific tasks necessary to complete this activity</b>			
<p><b>Establish Partnerships with Key Stakeholders in Public Procurement</b> Identify and establish formal partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, including: Local women's business associations - Women entrepreneurs and women-led businesses - Civil society organizations (CSOs) working on gender equality</p> <p><b>Organize Stakeholder Forums and Workshops</b> Host regular forums, roundtables, and workshops where stakeholders can discuss challenges, share best practices, and collaborate on solutions for improving gender equality in procurement. These forums will focus on: Identifying and overcoming barriers to women's participation in procurement. - Sharing successful strategies for gender-responsive procurement. - Discussing policy and regulatory changes needed to improve gender equality.</p> <p><b>Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships to Promote Gender Equality</b> Develop public-private partnerships (PPPs) that focus specifically on increasing the participation of women-led businesses in public procurement. Partnering with the private sector to share resources and expertise in implementing gender-responsive procurement policies.</p>			
<b>Link to strategic objective</b>	Foster Collaboration and Partnerships for Gender Equality in Procurement		
<b>Related area of Intervention</b>	<p>Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Building for Gender-Responsive Procurement</p> <p>This area focuses on creating networks and alliances that promote gender equality in public procurement by facilitating dialogue, exchanging knowledge, and collectively working toward shared objectives. The action seeks to leverage the expertise and resources of different actors to strengthen gender equality policies in procurement.</p>		
<b>Responsibilities</b>			
<b>Lead</b>			
Municipality of Messina			
<b>Monitoring of delivery</b>			
<b>Output indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:)</b>
Number of formal partnerships and collaborations established with stakeholders for gender equality in procurement.	Partnership Tracking System: Keep a register of all partnerships, detailing the type of partner (e.g., women's business association, government agency), the objectives of the collaboration, and the specific roles of each partner. Meeting Minutes and Reports: Maintain documentation from stakeholder forums, workshops, and other collaborative activities, tracking the number of meetings held, the stakeholders involved, and	01.09.2025	31.12.2028

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	the actions taken. Stakeholder Feedback Surveys: Collect regular feedback from partners to assess the value and impact of the collaborations.		
<b>Result indicator</b>	<b>Mechanism of monitoring</b>	<b>Baseline (Date: )</b>	<b>Target (Date:?)</b>
Percentage increase in the participation of women-led businesses in public procurement processes (as a direct result of collaborative efforts and partnerships).	Procurement Data Analysis: Track and analyze procurement data to monitor the increase in contracts awarded to women-led businesses, disaggregated by gender. Partnership Impact Assessment: Assess the impact of partnerships by conducting surveys and interviews with key stakeholders (e.g., businesses, procurement officers, partners) to measure their perception of progress and impact.	01.09.2025	31.12.2028
<b>Risk assessment</b>			
<b>Implementation risk/challenges</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation measures foreseen</b>
Challenges in aligning diverse stakeholders' goals and expectations	Medium	Medium	Establish clear and transparent goals from the beginning, with input from all partners. Ensure regular communication and review meetings to keep all parties aligned.
Limited funding for cross-sector collaborations	Medium	High	Seek further external funding opportunities. eg.:CERV and ERDF

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## 10. Implementation Framework

### 10.1 Details of the governance mechanisms and processes for implementing the IAP.

The implementation of the Integrated Action Plan on gender procurement in the Municipality of Messina is organised around a coordinated, multi-level governance structure designed to ensure political oversight, administrative integration, and sustained stakeholder participation. The framework brings together political leadership, technical and administrative capacities, and a broad ecosystem of local actors, enabling the IAP to function as a coherent, institutionally embedded process rather than a stand-alone project. Governance is therefore understood not only as a distribution of responsibilities, but also as a set of continuous processes through which decisions are prepared, taken, reviewed, and adapted.

At the apex of the governance structure is the Political Steering Level, led by the assessor holding responsibility for Equal Opportunities. This level provides the strategic vision underpinning the IAP's objectives and guarantees that gender-responsive procurement remains a political priority within the wider municipal agenda. Political leaders validate major decisions, endorse implementation plans, and ensure that gender procurement activities receive adequate institutional visibility and support. Their role is not operational; instead, they act as champions who maintain accountability and receive regular reports from the administrative bodies responsible for delivering the plan.

Beneath this political direction lies the administrative coordination unit, the operational engine of the IAP's implementation. This unit situated within the Municipality's European Policies Service Strategic Planning and Programming, which is the office that coordinated the activities of the GenProcure project in all its phases, but includes representatives from several cross-cutting units, such as the Equal Opportunities Office, Social Policies, Human Resources, and, where necessary, legal and financial departments. This composition reflects URBACT's integrated approach, ensuring that gender considerations are not confined to a single office but become embedded across the municipal administration. This unit meets regularly to review progress, coordinate forthcoming actions, manage the incorporation of gender criteria in upcoming tenders, and ensure that all administrative steps comply with national and European procurement regulations. The unit also prepares semi-annual reports for political leadership, thus linking administrative operations with political oversight.

A central component of the governance model is the URBACT Local Group (ULG), which serves as the participatory platform through which external stakeholders engage with and influence the implementation process. As already reported, the ULG of Messina brings together a varied and complex world of local public institutions, civil society organisations, university of Messina, social

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partners such as trade unions, and relevant equality bodies. Within this space, members discuss emerging needs, identify barriers within procurement markets, contribute knowledge and perspectives, and review proposed actions before they are finalised. The group ensures that gender procurement is informed by lived experience, market realities, and community expertise.

Technical Expert Support complements these governance bodies by providing specialised knowledge on gender-responsive procurement, gender equality indicators, impact assessment techniques, and procurement law. Experts are internal to the municipal administration. However, it is not excluded that in the future, depending on the needs, experts may be recruited externally by the Municipality of Messina. Their involvement ensures that all elements of the IAP—training for procurement officers, drafting of gender criteria, design of evaluation mechanisms—are aligned with European best practices and URBACT’s methodological recommendations.

Decision-making within this governance framework follows a structured sequence designed to promote transparency, coherence, and iterative learning. The process begins with the proposal stage, during which the administrative coordination unit identifies measures to be included in the forthcoming implementation cycle. These may involve the selection of specific pilot tenders where gender criteria will be applied, plans for capacity-building activities, or initiatives aimed at strengthening supplier engagement. These proposals are discussed with the ULG, allowing stakeholders to review the feasibility, potential impact, and relevance of each action. Their input helps refine priorities before the proposals move to the political validation stage.

Once proposals have been reviewed and adjusted, they are submitted to the Political Steering Level, which formally approves the implementation priorities. This stage ensures alignment between technical planning and political commitment, including confirmation of the necessary resources and compliance with relevant legislation. Following approval, the operationalisation phase begins. During this phase, the administrative coordination unit collaborates closely with individual municipal departments to adapt tender documents, integrate gender-responsive criteria into procurement processes, organise training for procurement officers, and coordinate any planned activities with suppliers or the general public. Technical experts support these processes by drafting templates, advising on evaluation methods, and providing thematic guidance.

Monitoring and adjustment form the final component of the decision-making cycle. As implementation progresses, the administrative coordination unit systematically collects data on predefined indicators, such as the number of tenders incorporating gender criteria, the responses of suppliers, the gender-related commitments included in bids, and any measurable impact generated through contracted services. The administrative coordination unit compiles these results into periodic internal updates and more comprehensive reports shared with political leadership and the ULG. These

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monitoring processes ensure that the IAP remains dynamic and adaptable, allowing for the identification of obstacles, unexpected outcomes, or emerging opportunities. Through this continuous feedback, the governance system supports a culture of learning and improvement, which is central to the URBACT approach.

Stakeholder engagement plays an essential role throughout the IAP's implementation. The ULG provides a formal participatory structure, but engagement extends further through market dialogues, supplier information sessions, and awareness-raising events. These activities help ensure that local suppliers understand gender-responsive procurement requirements and are prepared to implement the practices needed to meet them. Internally, the Municipality supports its staff through regular training, the development of practical toolkits, and peer-learning sessions inspired by experiences of other municipalities within the GenProcure network. This combination of internal and external engagement strengthens the enabling environment for gender-responsive procurement and helps overcome resistance or capacity gaps.

Risk management is an integral part of this governance system. Potential challenges such as limited internal administrative capacity, reluctance or lack of preparedness among suppliers, or the perceived complexity of gender criteria are addressed through a combination of targeted training, proactive supplier engagement, legal review of tender documents, and clear internal communication channels. The iterative nature of the governance framework allows for early detection of risks and rapid adjustment of strategies.

The governance mechanisms of the IAP are firmly aligned with the principles and methodologies of the URBACT programme. These include the integrated approach across sectors, participatory governance through the ULG, transnational learning within the GenProcure network, and a strong focus on results, communication, and long-term sustainability. The result is a governance framework that is both robust and flexible, capable of supporting the Municipality of Messina in embedding gender-responsive procurement practices across its administrative functions and local community.

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### **10.2 Details of how wider stakeholders that are not directly involved in the governance mechanism for implementation, but which have been involved in the ULG can remain engaged.**

In the context of the GenProcure project, the continued engagement of wider stakeholders who are not directly part of the governance mechanism, yet have contributed to the Urban Local Group (ULG), can be ensured through a deliberate and structured approach that treats participation as an ongoing relationship rather than a one-off consultative exercise. Their involvement can be nurtured by maintaining an open communication channel between the Municipality of Messina and the broader stakeholder community, ensuring that information about the implementation phase, the evolution of the Integrated Action Plan, and opportunities for collaboration continue to circulate in a transparent and accessible manner. This communication should not be limited to formal updates, but should include interpretative materials that explain how their earlier contributions are being used, how procurement practices are evolving, and what implications these changes have for gender equality within local governance.

To sustain their engagement, the municipality will create periodic opportunities for interaction that extend beyond the decision-making core of the governance structure. This will take the form of thematic workshops, reflective sessions, or open dialogues where stakeholders can offer feedback, bring forward concerns, and explore new ideas related to gender-responsive procurement. Such settings allow participants to reposition themselves as active contributors to the cultural and procedural changes the municipality intends to embed, even if they no longer hold a formal role in implementation. These encounters help reinforce the sense of shared ownership that was developed during the ULG phase, while also ensuring that the technical team responsible for implementation remains connected with the lived experience, sectoral expertise and social perspectives that stakeholders bring.

Another way to keep wider stakeholders engaged is to involve them in monitoring and learning activities that accompany the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan. Their participation can offer valuable external insights and help validate whether the intended outcomes of gender-sensitive procurement are being realised in practice. By inviting them to comment on progress reports, participate in evaluation interviews, or contribute to case studies, the municipality can frame monitoring not only as a bureaucratic requirement but as a collaborative learning process that benefits from diverse viewpoints. This approach also fosters accountability, as the larger community continues to observe and influence the trajectory of policy implementation.

Stakeholders will also remain connected through participation in networks or working groups that focus on themes linked to gender equality, social innovation, sustainable procurement or inclusion.

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Even if such networks operate outside the formal governance of GenProcure, they can act as complementary spaces where stakeholders stay informed about relevant policies, share experiences with peers, and circulate practices that may in turn feed back into the municipality's work. By encouraging and occasionally hosting such exchanges, the Municipality of Messina positions itself as a facilitator of ongoing dialogue and collaborative knowledge production across its territory.

Sustained engagement is strengthened when stakeholders can see tangible ways in which their perspectives continue to influence public action. By publicly acknowledging their contributions, integrating their insights into communication materials, and inviting them to speak or present during events linked to the project's progress, the municipality sends a clear signal that participation remains a valued resource rather than a procedural step that ends with the drafting of the Integrated Action Plan. This recognition fosters trust and long-term commitment, ensuring that even those who do not hold a formal governance role stay connected to the transformative agenda that GenProcure seeks to advance.

Through continuous dialogue, purposeful opportunities for interaction, involvement in monitoring and learning, engagement in wider thematic networks, and recognition of their ongoing relevance, the Municipality of Messina can ensure that the broader stakeholder community remains an active force in supporting gender-responsive procurement throughout the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan.

### **10.3 Details of the overall costs and funding approach for the implementation of the IAP.**

The overall costs and funding approach for the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan of the Municipality of Messina can be framed as a combination of resource mobilisation, strategic prioritisation, and multi-level financial alignment designed to ensure that gender-responsive procurement becomes both operationally feasible and structurally embedded within local governance. Rather than relying on a single funding source, the municipality adopts a layered financial strategy that integrates internal municipal resources, national and regional opportunities, and European-level instruments in a coherent and complementary manner. This approach recognises that the introduction of gender-sensitive procurement practices requires not only initial investments in capacity building, data systems, and new operational procedures, but also long-term financial commitment to maintain the cultural and organisational changes that the Integrated Action Plan seeks to achieve.

At the municipal level, a portion of the costs is covered through the ordinary budget of the Municipality of Messina, which allows core activities—such as staff training, coordination of the governance mechanism, and integration of gender criteria into internal procurement procedures—to be

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financed directly by existing administrative structures. This internal allocation ensures continuity, as the municipality can embed the principles of gender procurement within regular planning cycles and financial frameworks without depending solely on external funding. The municipality can also allocate flexible funds for pilot activities, testing procurement models that incorporate gender criteria, and updating its digital systems to allow for gender-disaggregated monitoring of procurement outcomes.

Beyond municipal resources, the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan relies on the mobilisation of regional and national funding streams that support public-sector innovation, gender equality, social inclusion, and sustainable procurement. These sources can finance specialised technical assistance, legal and methodological expertise, and advanced training programmes for procurement officers and local suppliers. By aligning the objectives of the Integrated Action Plan with broader policy priorities at national and regional levels, Messina positions itself to access complementary financial instruments without creating duplication or administrative inefficiencies.

European funding represents another substantial pillar of the overall financing strategy. Although the URBACT programme does not fund implementation activities, the experience and partnerships developed through GenProcure strengthen the municipality's ability to apply for European opportunities such as CERV, ERDF, and other thematic programmes that support gender mainstreaming, capacity building, and public-sector transformation. These funds can be used to scale up actions initially piloted within the IAP, extend training and capacity-building programmes to a wider set of public officials and economic operators, develop digital tools to track gender impacts in procurement, and create communication and awareness-raising campaigns aimed at transforming the local supply chain.

The funding approach for the IAP also anticipates potential contributions from private and civil-society actors, particularly in terms of co-financing training initiatives, participating in joint research or data-collection efforts, or supporting events and awareness-raising campaigns. While these contributions may not represent a large portion of the total financial needs, they strengthen the overall sustainability of the plan by diversifying funding sources and reinforcing the shared responsibility for promoting gender-responsive procurement across the territory.

The municipality's funding strategy is characterised by its emphasis on long-term sustainability rather than one-off project financing. By integrating gender procurement into standard operational budgets, adopting cost-effective digital tools, and creating partnerships that leverage both financial and non-financial resources, Messina ensures that the costs associated with the IAP gradually become part of the routine functioning of local governance. The combined effect of municipal allocations, regional and national funding opportunities, European financial instruments, and targeted stakeholder contributions creates a balanced and resilient financial framework, capable of supporting the full

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implementation of the Integrated Action Plan and maintaining its impact well beyond the lifespan of the GenProcure project.

### 10.4 Details of the overall timeline for the implementation of the IAP.

The overall timeline for the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan of the Municipality of Messina unfolds as a structured and progressive pathway that transforms the strategic vision developed during the GenProcure partnership into a set of concrete and sustainable practices within the municipal procurement system. Rather than being conceived as a rigid sequence of tasks, the timeline is designed as an evolving framework in which preparatory work, capacity-building, operational transformation, and long-term consolidation reinforce one another over several years. This temporal structure reflects the understanding that gender-responsive procurement requires both technical adjustments to procedures and deeper cultural change across municipal departments, economic operators, and local stakeholders.

The initial phase is dedicated to groundwork and institutional preparation, and it begins immediately after the formal adoption of the Integrated Action Plan. During this period, which spans the first months of implementation, Messina focuses on establishing the internal governance mechanism responsible for overseeing the plan, assigning roles and responsibilities, and ensuring that the legal and administrative prerequisites for the introduction of gender criteria in procurement are clearly mapped. This phase also includes the refinement of baselines, the identification of available data, and the creation of monitoring indicators that will guide the entire implementation process.

Following the preparatory stage, the implementation enters a more intensive phase focused on capacity-building and organisational transformation. This period, which typically covers the first year of implementation, is dedicated to training procurement officers, technical staff, and decision-makers on gender-sensitive procurement principles, methodologies, and tools. It also involves strengthening awareness among potential suppliers and local businesses so that they understand the evolving requirements and opportunities. During this phase, pilot actions are introduced within selected procurement procedures to test and refine gender criteria. These pilots serve as practical experimentation grounds through which the municipality can verify the feasibility of new approaches, adjust methodologies, and document early lessons learned.

As the municipality advances into the second year, the timeline shifts toward mainstreaming and scaling. At this stage, the successful practices tested in pilot procedures begin to be incorporated into a broader range of procurement operations. The municipality works on expanding the application of gender criteria across different departments, ensuring that the organisational learning accumulated

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during the early stages is translated into stable procedural templates and internal guidelines. Digital tools for tracking procurement data and gender impacts are developed or adapted, enabling the administration to monitor progress more systematically. This period is also characterised by continuous engagement with stakeholders, who contribute feedback based on their experiences with the new procedures.

The latter part of the implementation timeline focuses on consolidation, evaluation, and long-term sustainability. In the final phase, the municipality conducts a comprehensive assessment of the effects of the Integrated Action Plan, analysing both qualitative and quantitative outcomes. This evaluation allows Messina to measure improvements, identify persistent challenges, and understand how gender procurement has influenced organisational culture, supplier behaviour, and broader gender-equality objectives. Results are translated into policy recommendations, refined operational guidelines, and long-term governance arrangements that ensure the continuity of gender-responsive procurement beyond the life of the GenProcure project. The timeline concludes with the formal integration of the revised procedures, monitoring tools, and governance mechanisms into the municipality's routine administrative processes, ensuring that gender considerations remain an enduring element of public procurement rather than a temporary project-driven initiative.

Through these interconnected phases—preparation, capacity building, scaling, and consolidation—the timeline provides a coherent and realistic structure that guides the Municipality of Messina in the gradual but decisive transformation of its procurement practices, ensuring that the ambitions of the Integrated Action Plan are fully realised and sustained over time.

### **10.5 Details of the overall approach to monitoring the implementation of the IAP and recording performance against specific indicators.**

The overall approach to monitoring the implementation of the Integrated Action Plan of the Municipality of Messina is conceived as a continuous, structured, and learning-oriented process that allows the administration to follow the evolution of gender-responsive procurement in a systematic manner while making adjustments whenever necessary. Monitoring is not treated as a separate administrative obligation, but rather as a central mechanism for ensuring that the actions, reforms, and cultural shifts envisioned in the Integrated Action Plan translate into measurable and traceable outcomes. From the outset, the municipality establishes a coherent monitoring framework that clearly defines responsibilities, data sources, reporting procedures, and the methods through which progress is assessed against specific indicators.

At the core of this framework is the governance mechanism created for the implementation of the IAP, which coordinates the monitoring process, validates the data collected, and ensures the consistency of

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reporting. This structure functions as the institutional anchor for all monitoring activities, guaranteeing that information flows seamlessly between departments, that the interpretation of indicators remains coherent, and that the monitoring process is connected to ongoing decision-making. The governance body undertakes regular internal reviews to assess the pace of implementation, highlight emerging challenges, and make recommendations for corrective actions. These reviews are supported by qualitative inputs from staff, stakeholders, and suppliers, allowing the monitoring process to capture not only numerical progress but also organisational learning and behavioural change.

The approach to monitoring is grounded in a clear set of performance indicators, which were identified during the drafting of the Integrated Action Plan and refined during its early implementation phase. These indicators cover both process-related dimensions, such as the number of staff trained, the integration of gender criteria into procurement documents, or the establishment of new procedures, and outcome-oriented elements, including the visibility of gender considerations in awarded contracts, the participation of women-led enterprises, and the extent to which procurement decisions contribute to reducing gender inequalities. Data collection relies on municipal administrative systems, procurement records, training logs, and targeted surveys or interviews when qualitative insights are required. Where gaps in existing data systems are identified, the municipality works to adapt digital tools or introduce new templates to ensure that gender-disaggregated information becomes a routine part of procurement monitoring.

Throughout the implementation timeline, the monitoring process follows a rhythm of periodic reporting, which ensures that progress is assessed regularly and that the municipality remains capable of responding to new opportunities or difficulties. Reports synthesise quantitative indicators with narrative explanations, demonstrating not only whether targets are being met but also why certain results have been achieved, what challenges have emerged, and how implementation is evolving in relation to expectations. These reports are shared among internal departments and with the broader stakeholder community involved in the Urban Local Group, maintaining transparency and reinforcing collective responsibility for the advancement of gender-responsive procurement.

The monitoring approach is further strengthened by its emphasis on reflective learning. Rather than limiting itself to compliance or measurement, the Municipality of Messina uses the monitoring process to identify best practices, troubleshoot obstacles, and adjust implementation strategies. This dynamic approach ensures that monitoring becomes a tool for improving institutional performance rather than merely documenting it. The municipality also integrates evaluation moments at key phases of implementation, assessing the overall impact of the IAP and determining whether the chosen indicators adequately reflect the transformation sought in procurement practices and gender-equality outcomes.

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By combining structured data collection, regular reporting, participatory reflection, and an adaptive governance framework, the Municipality of Messina establishes a robust monitoring system that guarantees accountability, supports continuous improvement, and demonstrates the real progress made toward embedding gender-responsive procurement within local administrative practice. This comprehensive approach ensures that the Integrated Action Plan remains on track, that its achievements are visible and measurable, and that its long-term objectives are sustained well beyond the formal duration of the GenProcure project.

### 10.6 Details of overall approach to risk management.

The Municipality of Messina's approach to risk management for the Integrated Action Plan is founded on the principle that risk management is continuous, proportionate and embedded within everyday decision-making rather than an occasional compliance exercise. From the outset, risk management is framed as an integral part of implementation planning, with the objective of enabling timely delivery of gender-responsive procurement measures while protecting the municipality's financial, legal and reputational interests and safeguarding the intended gender-equality outcomes. This principle underpins a systemic method that moves from early identification through to active mitigation, ongoing monitoring, and transparent escalation when necessary.

Risk identification begins with a comprehensive mapping exercise that draws on the Urban Local Group's knowledge, internal municipal units, procurement specialists and external stakeholders to surface the full spectrum of risks that could affect the IAP. This mapping explicitly captures traditional project risks such as funding shortfalls, schedule slippage, and capacity gaps, as well as risks specific to gender procurement, including tokenistic application of gender criteria, unintended exclusion of micro and women-led suppliers, poor quality of gender data, and stakeholder disengagement. The mapping also includes contextual risks—political change, regulatory shifts, market volatility and public health or economic shocks—that could alter assumptions underpinning procurement strategies. Identification is not a one-off activity; it is repeated at each major phase of implementation and whenever pilots or new procurement formats are introduced, ensuring that emergent or cascading risks are captured early.

Once identified, risks are assessed through a consistent prioritisation framework that combines the likelihood of occurrence with the magnitude of potential impact on objectives relevant to the IAP, such as the achievement of gender-related outcomes, compliance with procurement law, and continuity of services. This assessment uses both quantitative and qualitative evidence: where available, historical procurement data and budget forecasts inform probability estimates and impact sizing; where data are limited, structured expert judgement is used. Risks are thus triaged into categories that guide management attention and resource allocation, with high-likelihood, high-impact

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risks receiving immediate mitigation planning and closer monitoring, and lower-priority risks scheduled for periodic review.

Mitigation planning is outcome-oriented and tailored to the nature of each risk. For operational and capacity-related risks, mitigation takes the form of targeted training, mentorship for procurement officers, creation of clear gender criteria templates, and staged pilot procurements that reduce exposure while permitting iterative refinement. For financial and funding risks, the municipality secures a layered financing approach that includes re-prioritising municipal budgets, seeking complementary regional or national grants, and establishing a contingency reserve to ensure core activities continue if external funding is delayed. Legal and compliance risks are mitigated through early legal reviews of amended procurement documents, regular liaison with central purchasing authorities and legal counsel, and the incorporation of compliance checklists into procurement workflows. Market risks, such as insufficient supplier capacity or anti-competitive effects, are addressed by proactive market engagement and capacity-building for local suppliers, adapting tender packaging to allow smaller lots where appropriate, and using pre-market consultations to signal new gender criteria in advance. To reduce the risk of tokenistic application of gender measures, mitigation emphasises measurable criteria, outcome-focused contract clauses, and post-award monitoring tied to contractual milestones.

Governance for risk management is formalised. Specific responsibilities are assigned across the governance chain: an internal risk lead within the implementation governance mechanism maintains the risk register and coordinates mitigation actions; department heads remain accountable for operational risks in their areas; the ULG is invited to provide periodic external scrutiny and local intelligence; and senior municipal leadership provides strategic oversight and authority to escalate decisions when risks threaten major deliverables. This governance model ensures that responsibility and authority are aligned, enabling rapid decision-making when a risk materialises and clear lines of accountability when corrective actions are required.

Monitoring and control arrangements are designed to ensure risk visibility and to verify that mitigation actions are both implemented and effective. A living risk register is maintained and updated at established intervals and following key events; it contains risk descriptions, owners, mitigation measures, residual risk ratings, and review dates. Monitoring is linked to the IAP's performance indicators so that early warning signs—declining participation of women-led enterprises, repeated contract award protests, persistent training gaps—are detectable through routine performance reports. Where feasible, data collection systems are adapted to capture gender-disaggregated procurement metrics that feed the risk dashboard, enabling the municipality to detect trends rather than relying solely on isolated incidents.

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Communication forms a central part of the risk strategy. Transparent internal reporting keeps elected officials and operational managers informed of emerging risks and mitigation progress, while carefully framed external communication maintains stakeholder confidence and reduces reputational harm if an issue arises. The municipality adopts clear public-facing protocols for incidents that have reputational impact: timely acknowledgement, explanation of remedial steps, and an outline of corrective measures and timelines. Consistent, honest communication with suppliers and civil society helps manage expectations and preserves constructive relationships that are essential for market adaptation to gender-responsive procurement practices.

Financial resilience is secured through explicit contingency planning and prioritisation rules. A modest contingency budget is ring-fenced within the IAP financing plan to cover unexpected costs related to delays, legal advice, or additional capacity-building needs. Financial controls include staged disbursement tied to milestones, periodic budget re-forecasts that incorporate risk-adjusted expectations, and a review mechanism to reallocate funds promptly if high-priority risks require additional investment. Procurement-specific financial safeguards include careful design of contract clauses to mitigate payment disputes and the use of safeguards against dependency on a single supplier for critical services.

Legal, ethical and data-protection risks are managed proactively. All procurement documentation and gender-related data collection comply with applicable national and EU procurement law, anti-discrimination legislation and data-protection regulations. Where the IAP requires new data or surveys, the municipality implements privacy impact assessments and clear consent procedures, minimising legal exposure while preserving the integrity of gender monitoring. Ethical considerations, such as avoiding unintended negative impacts on vulnerable groups, are embedded in impact assessments that precede major procurement reforms.

Risk management recognises that supplier behaviour and wider market dynamics are both a source of risk and a lever for mitigation. To manage supply-side risks, the municipality invests in supplier engagement activities that communicate expectations, provide guidance on how to qualify as a women-led or gender-responsive enterprise, and open channels for feedback. When supplier capacity gaps are significant, the municipality considers phased or consortium-based procurement models, technical assistance packages within tenders, and networking initiatives that pair larger contractors with smaller local firms. These measures reduce the likelihood of contract underperformance while creating market incentives for suppliers to invest in gender-sensitive practices.

Capacity building and organisational change management are treated as strategic mitigations for many categories of risk. The municipality anticipates resistance to change and addresses it through tailored learning programmes for procurement staff, peer learning with other URBACT partners, and visible

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leadership support that legitimises new approaches. Change readiness assessments inform the sequencing of reforms so that the organisation is not overwhelmed and so that staff experience early, manageable successes that build confidence and reduce the risk of rollback.

Escalation pathways are clearly articulated so that when residual risks breach agreed thresholds—whether financial thresholds, time slippage beyond defined limits, or evidence of systemic non-compliance—matters are escalated rapidly to the appropriate decision-making level, which may include senior municipal management or the municipal council for politically sensitive issues. The escalation protocol includes authority matrices and pre-agreed contingency actions that can be triggered without protracted debate, enabling the municipality to stabilise situations quickly.

Learning and adaptation are built into the risk management cycle. The municipality organises periodic risk review workshops where lessons from near-misses, successful mitigations and pilot procurements are captured and used to refine both the risk register and standard operating procedures. External audits or independent reviews are used selectively to validate risk assessments and provide credibility to corrective actions. Findings from these reviews feed back into training curricula, procurement templates and monitoring indicators so that the risk management system evolves as the implementation context changes.

The risk management approach is explicitly integrated with monitoring and evaluation. Risk indicators are linked to the IAP's performance framework so that risks are not only catalogued but are actively measured against outcomes and milestones. This integration ensures that risk management contributes to performance transparency and enables a single source of truth for decision-making. By combining thorough identification, proportionate assessment, targeted mitigation, robust governance, ongoing monitoring, transparent communication and a strong learning orientation, the Municipality of Messina positions the Integrated Action Plan to manage uncertainty effectively while protecting the integrity of its gender-responsive procurement ambitions.

## 11. Conclusion

### 11.1 The plans for communicating and disseminating the IAP locally.

The Municipality of Messina's plans for communicating and disseminating the Integrated Action Plan are designed to ensure that the principles of gender-responsive procurement, the objectives of the IAP, and the progress achieved throughout implementation are made visible, accessible, and actionable for a wide range of local audiences. The approach combines strategic messaging, targeted engagement,

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and multi-channel dissemination to foster awareness, build capacity among key stakeholders, and embed gender considerations into the local public procurement ecosystem. Communication is therefore understood not merely as information sharing, but as an instrument for cultural change, transparency, and stakeholder empowerment.

At the outset, the municipality prioritises the development of clear and coherent messaging that translates the technical aspects of gender procurement into language that is understandable and relevant to diverse local actors, including municipal staff, local suppliers, civil society organisations, business associations, and citizens. This involves preparing explanatory materials that outline the goals of the IAP, the rationale for integrating gender criteria into procurement, the expected benefits for the community, and the specific steps that stakeholders can take to engage with the process. By framing the IAP as both a strategic municipal initiative and a shared civic responsibility, communication efforts establish the foundation for participation, ownership, and collaboration.

A central component of the communication strategy is the active engagement of stakeholders who were part of the Urban Local Group and those who, while not formally involved in governance, have an interest in procurement, gender equality, and social innovation. The municipality intends to organise periodic workshops, seminars, and public briefings that present implementation milestones, illustrate successful pilot procurements, and provide guidance for suppliers on adapting to new gender-sensitive requirements. These events are designed to be interactive, allowing stakeholders to ask questions, share experiences, and contribute to the continuous refinement of procurement practices. Such engagement reinforces the sense that the IAP is a living initiative, responsive to local realities and informed by the perspectives of a broad network of actors.

Beyond in-person engagement, the municipality leverages digital communication channels to enhance reach, accessibility, and transparency. This includes dedicated sections on the municipal website that present the IAP, its objectives, and its progress; downloadable resources such as guidelines, templates, and case studies; and regular updates through social media channels to highlight achievements, announce events, and encourage dialogue with the wider community. The use of digital platforms also allows the municipality to disseminate gender-disaggregated procurement data, monitor engagement metrics, and adjust communication strategies based on stakeholder response and feedback. This dual approach—combining physical and digital outreach—ensures that information reaches both traditional and emerging audiences, from local businesses to civil society advocates.

To strengthen the legitimacy and visibility of the IAP, the municipality also plans to integrate communication and dissemination activities with broader local initiatives on gender equality, social inclusion, and sustainable public administration. By linking the IAP to established networks, conferences, and thematic campaigns, Messina situates gender-responsive procurement within a wider

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policy context, increasing awareness of its relevance and encouraging cross-sectoral collaboration. Strategic partnerships with local media, professional associations, and academic institutions are also anticipated, which will enable the municipality to amplify the reach of its messages, highlight innovative procurement practices, and share lessons learned with both local and regional audiences.

The municipality recognises that communication is most effective when it is continuous, responsive, and reflective of tangible results. To this end, the dissemination strategy incorporates feedback loops that allow stakeholders to respond to updates, offer insights, and suggest improvements. Public reporting of progress against key performance indicators, combined with storytelling that illustrates real-life impacts of gender-responsive procurement, ensures that the IAP is not perceived as a static document but as a dynamic initiative that delivers measurable benefits. Through this comprehensive communication approach, the Municipality of Messina seeks not only to inform but to actively mobilise local actors, foster a shared commitment to gender equality in procurement, and embed the practices promoted by the Integrated Action Plan into the everyday functioning of the municipality and its wider ecosystem.

### **11.2 Immediate next steps in the coming six months (November 2025 to April 2026) for implementing the IAP.**

In the immediate six months from November 2025 to April 2026, the Municipality of Messina is set to focus on laying the critical foundations for the operationalisation of the Integrated Action Plan and ensuring that gender-responsive procurement practices are embedded across municipal procedures. The first priority will be to finalise the internal governance arrangements for implementation. This involves confirming the responsibilities of key staff within procurement, legal, finance, and monitoring units, ensuring that each department understands its role in advancing gender-responsive procurement, and establishing clear lines of coordination between the governance team and external stakeholders, including the Urban Local Group members. During this period, internal procedures will be reviewed and adapted to integrate gender criteria into procurement documentation and workflow processes, creating the procedural infrastructure necessary for upcoming pilot activities.

Concurrent with institutional preparation, the municipality will initiate targeted capacity-building and awareness-raising activities. These activities aim to equip municipal staff, procurement officers, and decision-makers with a detailed understanding of gender-sensitive procurement principles, relevant legislation, and practical tools for application. Training modules will be complemented by workshops that allow staff to engage with real-life case studies, discuss challenges, and collectively explore solutions, thereby fostering a culture of learning and ownership. Special attention will be given to engaging staff who were less involved during the ULG phase, ensuring that knowledge is

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disseminated across the organisation and not confined to a small group of specialists. At the same time, initial communications and outreach to local suppliers will begin, informing them of upcoming changes, explaining the new gender criteria, and encouraging participation in forthcoming pilot procurements.

During this period, the municipality will also focus on operational piloting of gender-responsive procurement practices. Selected procurement processes will be adapted to incorporate gender criteria on a trial basis, enabling the governance team to test methodologies, refine templates, and identify potential operational or technical barriers before full-scale roll-out. These pilot activities will be closely monitored using the IAP's performance indicators, allowing the municipality to gather early data on effectiveness, compliance, and supplier response. Feedback from these pilots will inform adjustments to procedures, training content, and monitoring systems, ensuring that lessons learned are rapidly translated into improvements.

Monitoring and data infrastructure development will also be a key focus over the next six months. The municipality will finalise the design of monitoring templates, reporting mechanisms, and data collection systems, ensuring that gender-disaggregated information on procurement decisions, contract awards, and supplier participation can be accurately captured and analysed. Procedures for regular review of indicators will be established, and responsibility for data entry, validation, and reporting will be allocated, ensuring that early-stage implementation is both measurable and transparent. This groundwork is essential for establishing a robust monitoring system that can track progress, identify emerging risks, and support evidence-based decision-making in subsequent phases.

Communication and stakeholder engagement will be intensified during this period to maintain momentum and visibility. The municipality will organise initial information sessions, workshops, and briefings aimed at suppliers, local associations, and civil society partners to reinforce the shared ownership of the IAP. Digital platforms, including the municipal website and social media channels, will be updated to provide clear information on the objectives, benefits, and early milestones of gender-responsive procurement. By combining internal readiness, capacity-building, operational piloting, monitoring preparation, and proactive communication, the Municipality of Messina will ensure that the first six months of implementation lay a solid foundation for a structured, sustainable, and impactful integration of gender criteria into public procurement processes.

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## Attachment n. 1

**Data Analysis of the Survey on Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities**  
(By Dr. Daniela Catanoso, Sociologist, Municipality of Messina)

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The survey, developed as part of the URBACT "GENPROCURE" program, was conceived as a tool to gather useful information on the perceptions and experiences of Messina residents regarding gender equality, with the aim of identifying potential areas for improvement.

In collaboration with the RTD, Technological Innovation, and Statistics Department, a link was created to access the questionnaire anonymously. The initiative was promoted through a press release issued by the Councilor for Equal Opportunities and published on the homepage of the Municipality's institutional website, which also included the link to participate in the survey. The news was further shared on the Municipal Administration's social media channels to reach an even wider audience.

The questionnaire, designed to be simple and quick to complete, contained 20 questions, mostly closed-ended (see Appendix 2). A total of 261 citizens participated.

### Who participated in the survey?

68% of the respondents who completed the questionnaire were female, while only one identified as non-binary. Half of the sample was between 55 and 64 years of age, followed by the 35-44 age group, which represented 17% of the total. Only one participant was under 18, and one was between 18 and 24. The distribution of marital status is consistent with the demographic composition of the sample: 60% of respondents were married or cohabiting, while 18% were separated or divorced (see Appendix 1, Graph 1).

## Messina

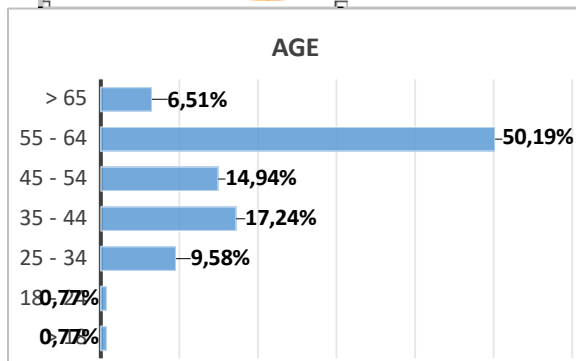
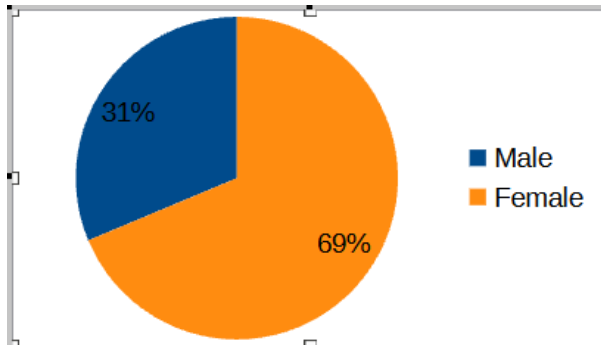
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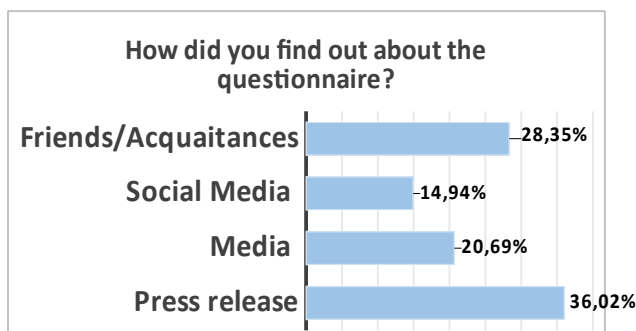
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Regarding educational qualifications, nearly three-quarters of participants had a bachelor's degree (see Appendix, Table 1), and 23% of them also had a postgraduate degree. Regarding employment status, the absolute majority of the sample (81.6%) were employed workers, followed by freelancers (7%), and retirees (4%). (See Appendix, Table 1).

Regarding the survey's distribution methods, 36% of participants stated they learned about it through a press release, while 28% learned about it through word of mouth. Given the sample's demographics—largely represented in the 55-64 age group—only 15% completed the questionnaire following information disseminated through social media.



In summary, the survey involved a predominantly adult and female population, with a medium-high level of education and stable employment, representing a significant segment of the population in terms of experience and civic awareness.

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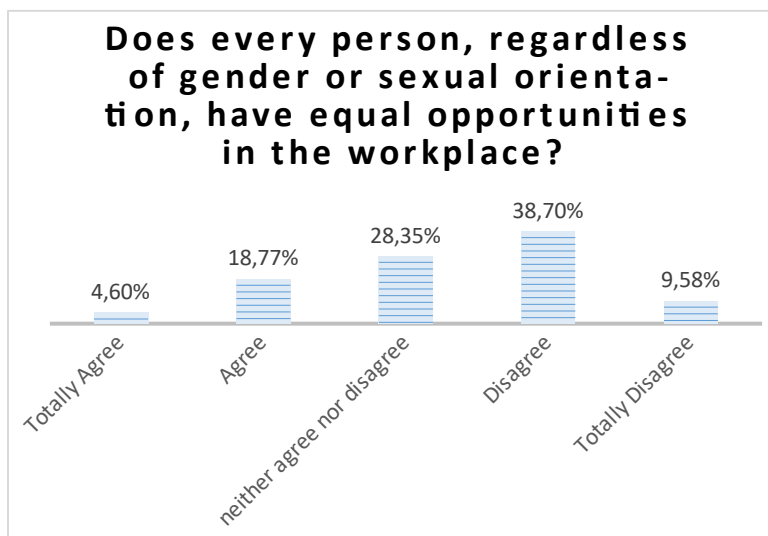
### What is the interest in equal opportunity issues and how is gender equality perceived?

The questionnaire was structured into three additional sections, each of which included a series of homogeneous thematic questions.

The responses revealed that the majority of participants (62.5%) considered themselves sufficiently informed on gender equality issues, while only a small portion, 7%, stated they felt completely unprepared (see Appendix Table 3).

Regarding the gender equality situation in Messina, 61% believed it to be only partially achieved (see Appendix Chart 2). If we take into account the affirmative and negative answers, we notice a slight prevalence of those who think that there is no real equality in the city (22%) compared to those who believe that there is (17%).

Nearly half of the sample (48%) disagreed with the statement that, in Messina, all people—regardless of gender or sexual orientation—have equal opportunities in the workplace. Specifically, 10% said they "totally disagree," compared to 5% who said they "totally agree."



To address gender inequality in the workplace, participants were asked to identify potential strategies to mitigate gender inequality in the workplace. Participants were given the opportunity to select multiple options.

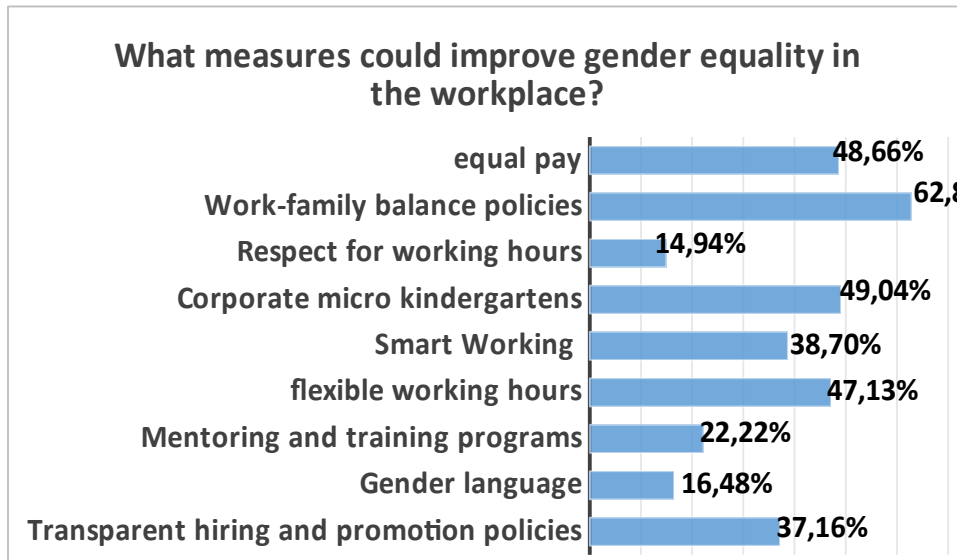
The results reveal that work-life balance policies (63%), the implementation of company-based micro-nurseries (49%), and ensuring fair pay are considered the most effective measures to promote gender equality. Flexible work arrangements (47%) and smart working (39%) were also significantly cited.

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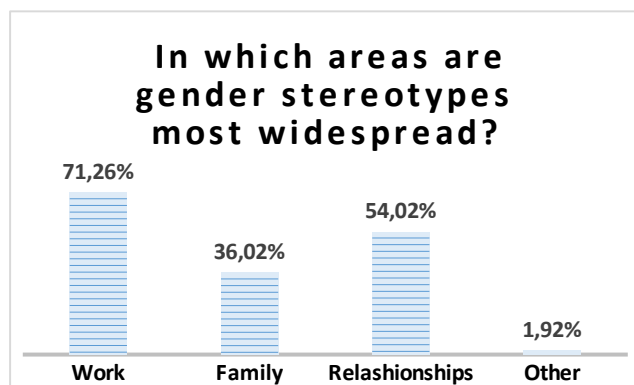
When asked whether women are adequately represented in leadership positions in Messina, survey participants were roughly evenly distributed between those who agreed and those who disagreed, 31% and 33% respectively (see Appendix Chart 3).

The position regarding gender pay parity in the private sector is different, with 54% of the sample stating that it is not guaranteed in the city (see Appendix Chart 4).

### **What are the perceived gender prejudices and stereotypes in the city?**

The vast majority (82%) of survey participants believe that gender stereotypes still influence people's choices and opportunities.

The most frequently identified area is work (71%), followed by relationships (54%) and family (36%).



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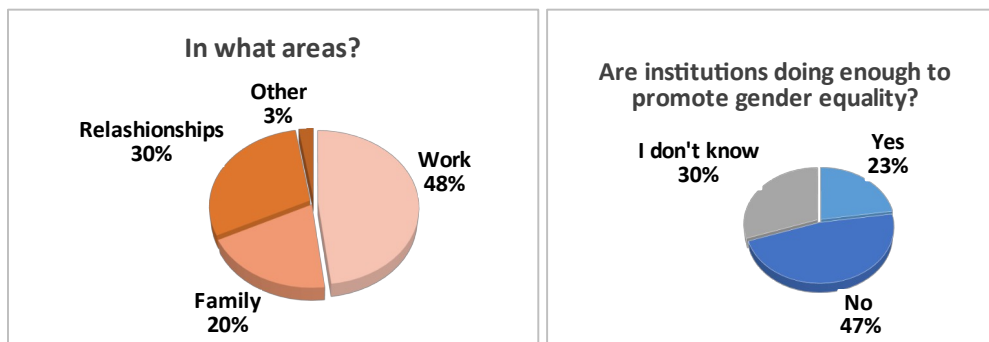
To identify the main causes of gender prejudice and stereotypes in the city of Messina, participants were given the opportunity to select multiple response options.

The results highlight the widespread persistence of gender stereotypes reported in the Messina area. The majority of respondents (67%) believe that a "traditional culture" is still rooted, defining women's roles primarily in terms of family and domestic life.

A large percentage (44%) also believe that men are more suited to positions of power, while 35% maintain that they are less likely to take care of household chores and that, for women, a professional career is less important (35%). The belief that it is the man's responsibility to provide for the family's economic needs also remains significant (23%) (see Appendix Table 4).

Data analysis shows that just over half of participants (52%) reported having witnessed or experienced incidents of gender discrimination (see chart 5). These incidents are predominantly concentrated in the workplace (48%), followed by relationships (30%) and, to a lesser extent, family (20%). These data indicate that the professional context remains a critical space where gender inequalities and stereotypes are evident.

Regarding the perception of the role of institutions, 47% of respondents believe that the policies and actions adopted are still insufficient to promote true gender equality.



Over half of the sample (55%) had never participated in events dedicated to this topic. Finally, the importance attributed to gender equality education in schools clearly emerges: 81% of respondents recognized its high relevance, while only a marginal share (4%) considered it of little significance. These results confirm the broad social consensus regarding the role of education as a privileged and fundamental tool for spreading a culture of equality and preventing discriminatory attitudes at an early stage.

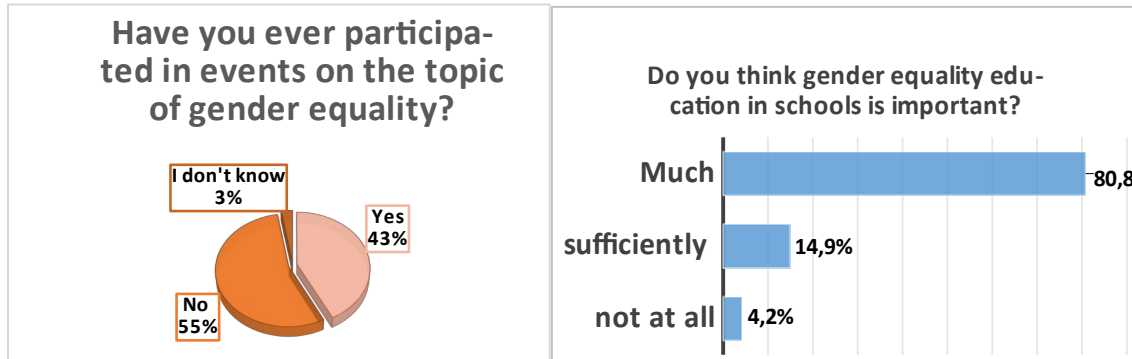
## Messina

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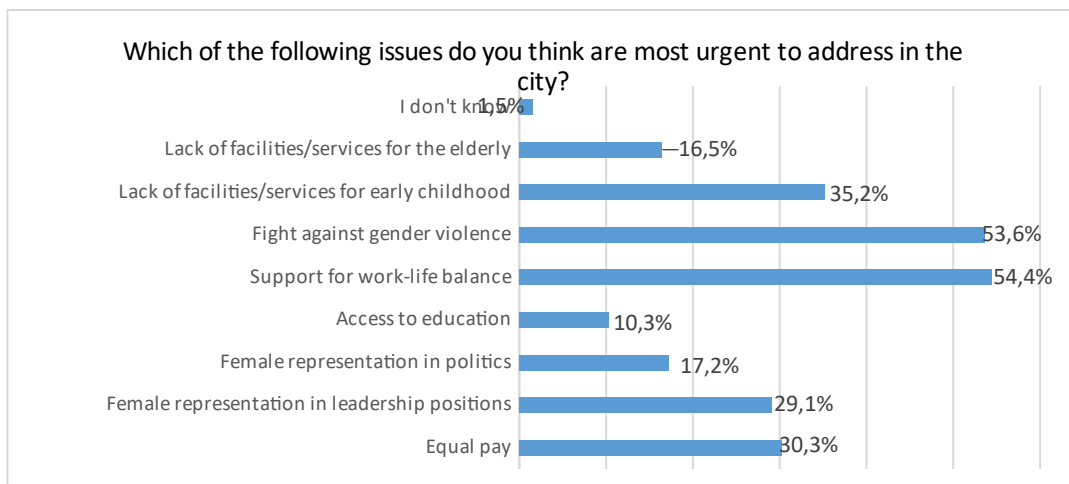
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The final question in the questionnaire invited participants to identify priority areas for action to enhance gender equality in the city of Messina, offering them the option to express up to three preferences.

An analysis of the responses shows that 54% of respondents identified support for work-life balance policies and combating gender-based violence as the most urgent areas for action. The next most frequently cited areas were critical issues related to the lack of social infrastructure and early childhood services. Other areas highlighted included equal pay (30%) and the promotion of greater female representation in leadership positions.



Overall, these findings reflect the persistence in the Messina area of a socio-institutional model in which gender inequality continues to manifest itself through both structural and cultural mechanisms. The responses also highlight a growing awareness of the need for integrated gender policies, capable of combining welfare measures, empowerment strategies, and interventions aimed at redefining power asymmetries and the roles socially attributed to women in the public and private spheres, thus triggering lasting change in gender relations and the distribution of opportunities between men and women.

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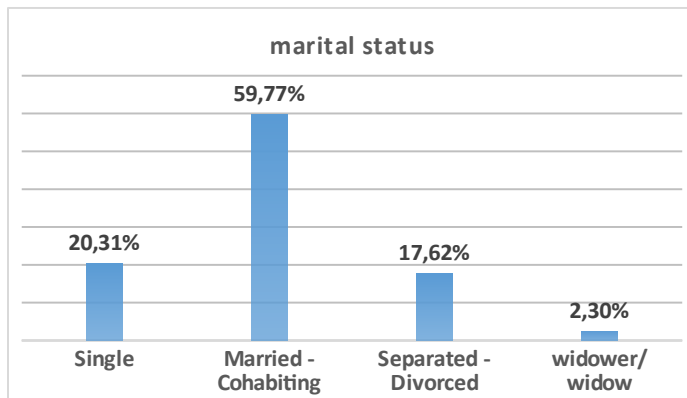
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### Appendix 1

#### Charts and Tables

##### Chart 1



##### Table No. 1

Education level	%
	Percentage
Elementary school	0,38%
Middle school	0,38%
High school	27,20%
Three-hear degreee	11,49%
Master's degree	36,40%
Post graduation	22,99%
I prefer not to answer	1,15%

##### Table n. 2

Occupation	%
Student	1,15%
worker	81,61%
Freelance	7,28%

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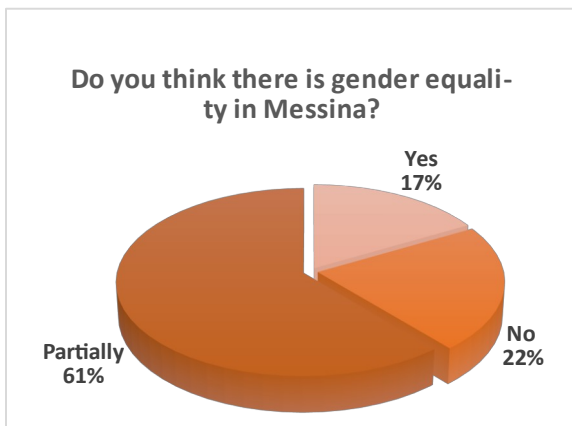


Unemployed	1,92%
housewife	1,92%
retired	4,21%
I prefer not to answer	1,92%

**Table n. 3**

How informed are you about gender equality issues?	Absolut value	%
Not at all	18	6,90%
Sufficiently	163	62,45%
Much	80	30,65%

**Chart. 2**



**Chart. 3**

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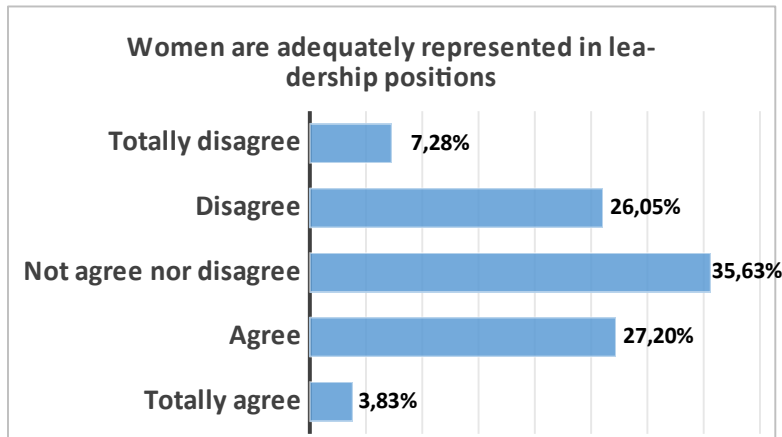


Chart. 4

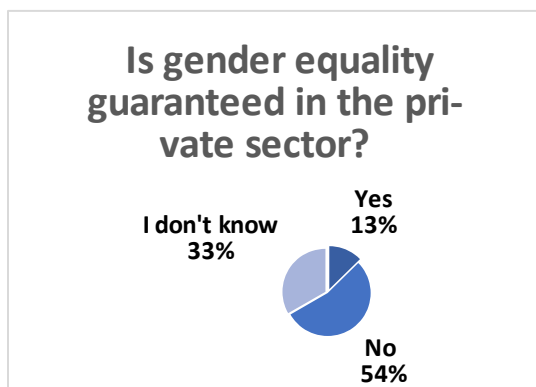


Table n. 4

What do you think are the main causes of gender bias and stereotypes in your community?	%
Reticence to use gendered language	14,56%
Persistence of the “traditional culture” of the role of women (mother, housewife, etc.)	67,05%
Belief that men are less suited to take care of household chores	35,25%
Belief that it is less important for women to have a professional career	34,48%
Belief that it is the man's duty to provide for the family's economic needs	22,99%
Belief that women are bad at math	1,53%

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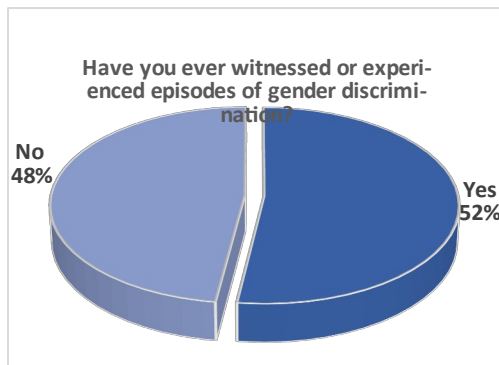
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Belief that men are more suited to positions of power	43,68%
Belief that women are more emotional	14,18%

Chart n. 5



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## Attachment n. 2

### Questionnaire on Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities

This questionnaire is designed to gather useful information on how Messina residents perceive and experience gender equality and to identify areas for improvement. The purpose of this questionnaire is to understand citizens' perceptions of gender equality and equal opportunities.

We therefore ask you to complete the following questionnaire. There are no right or wrong answers, and your anonymity will be guaranteed in compliance with the Privacy Law ("Regulation 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council" of 27 April 2016, as well as Legislative Decree 196/03 "Personal Data Protection Code").

The data collected will be anonymized and analyzed for research purposes only. They will not be disclosed to third parties.

The data controller is:

DPO of the Municipality of Messina

Lawyer Fabrizio Grosso

Email: [f.grosso@comune.messina.it](mailto:f.grosso@comune.messina.it) [dpo@comune.messina.it](mailto:dpo@comune.messina.it)

The average time to complete the questionnaire is approximately 5 minutes.

#### Section 1: Demographic Information

##### 1. **Age:**

- < 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- > 65

##### 2. **Genre:**

- Male
- Female
- Non-Binary
- I prefer not to answer

##### 3. **Marital status:**

- Single
- Married - Cohabiting
- Separated - Divorced
- Widowed

##### 4. **Occupation:**

- Student
- Employee

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- Self-employed
- Unemployed
- Housewife
- Retired
- I prefer not to answer

### 5. **\*\*Level of education:\*\***

- Elementary school
- Middle school
- High school
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Postgraduate degree
- I prefer not to answer

### 6. **\*\*How did you find out about the questionnaire?\*\*\***

- Press release
- Media
- Social media
- Acquaintances/friends

## Section 2: Interest in Equal Opportunity Issues

### 7. **\*\*How informed are you about gender equality issues?\*\*\***

- Not at all
- Sufficiently
- Very much

### 8. **\*\*Do you think gender equality exists in the city of Messina?\*\*\***

- Yes
- No
- Partially

## Section 3: Perception of Gender Equality

### 9. **\*\*How much do you agree with the following statement: "In my city, everyone, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, has equal opportunities in the workplace"\*\*\***

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

### 10. **\*\*What measures do you think could improve gender equality in the workplace in your city? (You can select multiple options)\*\*\***

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- Transparent hiring and promotion policies;
- Gender-sensitive language
- Mentoring and training programs
- Flexible working hours
- Smart working
- Company-based micro-nurseries
- Respect for working hours
- Work-life balance policies
- Equal pay

11. **\*\*How much do you agree with the following statement: "In Messina, women are adequately represented in leadership positions"?**\*\*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

12. **\*\*Do you believe that gender pay equality is guaranteed in your city, even in the private sector?**\*\*

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

#### Section 4: Gender Prejudices and Stereotypes

13. **\*\*Do you think gender stereotypes still influence people's choices and opportunities today?**\*\*

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

14. **\*\*In which area do you think gender stereotypes are most widespread?**\*\* (You can indicate more than one area. (answer)

- Work
- Family
- Relationships
- Other

15. **\*\*What do you think are the main causes of gender prejudice and stereotypes in your community?**  
**\*\* (You can select up to 3 options)**

- Reluctance to use gendered language
- Persistence of the "traditional culture" of women's roles (mother, housewife, etc.)
- Belief that men are less suited to household chores
- Belief that it is less important for women to have a professional career
- Belief that it is men's responsibility to provide for the family's economic needs

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- Belief that women are bad at math
- Belief that men are more suited to positions of power
- Belief that women are more emotional

16. **\*\*Have you ever witnessed or experienced episodes of gender discrimination?\***

-  Yes

-  No

16.1 **\*\*If yes, in which areas? (You can indicate more than one answer)\*\***

- Work
- Family
- Relationships
- Other

17. **\*\*Do you think local institutions do enough to promote gender equality?\***

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

18. **\*\*Have you ever participated in demonstrations and/or events on the topic of gender equality?\***

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

19. **\*\*Do you think gender equality education in schools is important?\***

- Not at all
- Sufficiently
- Very important

20. **\*\* Which of the following issues do you think are the most urgent to address in our city?\*** (You can select up to 3 options)

- Equal pay
- Female representation in leadership positions
- Female representation in politics
- Access to education
- Support for work-life balance
- Combating gender-based violence
- Lack of early childhood facilities/services
- Lack of facilities/services for the elderly
- I don't know

Suggestions:

---

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your answers will be invaluable in improving policies and initiatives to promote gender equality in our community.



## Pari opportunità, responsabilità sociale ed inclusione lavorativa nel Codice dei Contratti Pubblici (D.Lgs. 36/2023).

Le clausole sociali dopo l'entrata in vigore del c.d. "Correttivo Codice Appalti" (d.lgs. n. 209/2024). Applicazione pratica e criticità operative.

Workshop operativo per RUP, Dirigenti e Funzionari coinvolti nelle procedure di gara.

**20 NOVEMBRE 2025**  
ore 9.15 - 17.00

**Salone delle Bandiere**  
**Palazzo Zanca, Messina**

### PROGRAMMA

#### 9:15 Saluti Istituzionali

Federico Basile, *Sindaco del Comune di Messina*  
Rossana Carrubba, *Segretario Generale*  
Liana Cannata, *Assessora Pari Opportunità e Politiche Giovanili*

#### 9:45 Inizio dei lavori

##### **Le clausole sociali nel codice degli appalti**

Introduce e presiede  
Prof. Fabrizio Tigano - *Università degli Studi di Messina*

##### **L'importanza delle clausole sociali nel diritto del lavoro**

Prof. Gianni Toscano - *Università degli Studi di Messina*

##### **Clausole sociali e pari opportunità: strumenti per un appalto pubblico inclusivo**

Prof. Francesco Martines - *Università degli Studi di Messina*  
Prof.ssa Valentina Prudente - *Università degli Studi di Messina*

#### 11:30 Coffee break

#### 11:45 Ripresa dei lavori

##### **Profili operativi delle clausole sociali di equo trattamento e di stabilità occupazionale nei contratti pubblici**

Prof. Edoardo Caruso - *Università degli Studi di Ferrara*

##### **Casi pratici di applicazione della clausola sociale**

Ing. Franco Trifirò - *A.O.U. "G. Martino" di Messina*  
Avv. Veronica Nicosia - *A.O.U. "G. Martino" di Messina*

#### 13:15 Pausa pranzo

#### 14:15 Clausole sociali e società in house

Prof. Letterio Donato - *Università degli Studi di Messina*

##### **Clausole sociali e soccorso istruttorio**

Dott.ssa Laura Pergolizzi - *Università degli Studi di Messina*

##### **Le clausole sociali nella giurisprudenza**

Avv. Rocco Todero - *Commissione paritetica per le norme di attuazione della Regione Siciliana*

##### **Interventi, dibattito e conclusioni**

#### 17:00 Chiusura lavori

