

IMPLEMENTING THE SIMONE VEIL PACT AT SUBNATIONAL LEVEL

Introduction

In January 2022, the Renew Europe Group in the European Parliament approved the [Simone Veil Pact](#), named in honour of the first female president of the European Parliament, and recognising that not only is equality between men and women still far from being a reality in Europe today, but in some situations existing women's rights are being threatened, or worse, violated.

The purpose of the Simone Veil Pact is to preserve, promote and strengthen the rights of all women at all levels, European, national and local, in all areas, public and private, for all generations, in all the Member States of the European Union, under the aegis of the European institutions.

The Renew Europe Group in the European Committee of the Regions therefore has the opportunity and a special responsibility to help implement this Pact at the subnational level, with the following commitments according to the 5 principles outlined in the Pact:

Principle 1. Sexual and reproductive rights: Guarantee women's access to contraception and abortion, as well as to information and education.

Renew Europe CoR Commitment:

- Re-affirm the commitment of regional and local leaders of the Renew Europe family to this principle, in particular the provision of information through local channels of communication;
- Promote local information campaigns involving both women and men.

Principle 2. Family life: Respect a minimum duration for maternity and paternity leave, regardless of the status of the person concerned, and develop early childhood services. Ensuring a balance between family and working life is a priority.

Renew Europe CoR Commitment:

- Ensure that regional and local authorities of the Renew Europe family create and maintain a counselling service for citizens and local businesses, especially start-up companies, to advise on work-life balance, including provision of childcare support;
- Promote the creation of regional/local awards for companies that innovate and excel in the provision of work-life balance.

Principle 3. *Combating violence against women: prevent, combat and criminalise all forms of gender-based violence and harassment, at home, online and on the streets, including training of police and judicial authorities, the provision of an emergency number and victims' support. Any violence is too much violence.*

Renew Europe CoR Commitment:

- Propose an own-initiative CoR opinion on *Preventing and Combating Gender-based Violence and Harassment in Local Communities*;
- Survey our members and subnational networks for examples of best practice;
- Facilitate a study visit for representatives of the Renew Europe family to a municipality/region with examples of good practice.

Principle 4. *Equality at work: Ensure parity in all positions of responsibility in the civil service at European and national level, facilitate it in companies and their boards, and ensure equal pay for equal work. No woman should be deprived of a job or be paid less because she is a woman.*

Renew Europe CoR Commitment:

- Promote gender parity in all positions of responsibility in regional and local administrations, by raising awareness of this Pact through our subnational network;
- Raise awareness through our networks and through the CoR's policy work of the need for gender parity in the boards of regional and local companies of the private sector;

- Ensure that CoR opinions promote equal pay for equal work throughout the regional and local economy.

Principle 5. *Political representation: Ensure parity in the European institutions, and encourage it at all levels of political life, both within political parties and institutions. Exemplarity is an indispensable requirement for trust.*

Renew Europe CoR Commitments:

- Support measures in the CoR that ensure a minimum of 40% female representation in its composition starting from the 2025 mandate and beyond;
- Continue promoting gender balance in positions of responsibility within the CoR;
- Promote the Simone Veil Pact within its subnational networks to encourage regional and local leaders to promote and facilitate gender balance in their executive teams, as well as electoral lists or electoral candidacy teams.

Agreed at the Group Meeting held in Brussels on 30 November 2022