



Madrid Declaration

High-Level Meeting of Women Heads of Supreme Audit Institutions of the European Union and Ukraine

The women Heads of the European Union and Ukraine Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs), meeting at the High-Level Event in Madrid on 12 and 13 January 2026,

Considering that equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the European Union and that, in accordance with Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Union is committed to eliminating inequalities and actively promoting such equality in all its actions;

Recognising the essential role played by external audit institutions in defending the public interest and strengthening public confidence in the proper and effective implementation of public finances;

Affirming that gender equality and the balanced participation of women and men in decision-making are indispensable conditions for modern, inclusive and effective governance;

Acknowledging the increasing complexity of public governance, the growing expectations of accountability and transparency, and the need for resilient democratic institutions capable of responding to these challenges;

Emphasising the importance of strengthening cooperation networks and knowledge sharing among SAIs, specially the ones led by women, in order to foster conscious leadership, promote mutual learning, innovation and institutional development;



Reiterating their commitment to the values of independence, integrity, transparency and accountability that underpin the work of SAIs;

Convinced that female leadership brings diverse perspectives, drives new approaches and strengthens the democratic legitimacy of public institutions;

declare the following:

1. **They reaffirm** their commitment to promoting substantive gender equality at all levels of the SAIs, as well as to promoting policies that favour women's equal access to leadership positions, with a view to achieving sustainable and measurable progress over time.
2. **They agree to foster** the inclusion of issues relating to equality between women and men in the agendas of international organizations of SAIs, promoting cooperation, the exchange of good practices, and the identification of common challenges, including through the establishment and use of networks and platforms within INTOSAI, EUROSAI and the Contact Committee, while ensuring the continuity and visibility of gender equality issues within the field of SAIs.
3. **They will promote** inclusive, transparent and merit-based institutional environments that guarantee equal opportunities, value diverse leadership styles and foster professional excellence.
4. **They will promote** the integration of the gender perspective into the strategies, audits and frameworks for action of the SAIs, thus contributing to greater institutional effectiveness, equity and sensitivity.
5. **They agree** to maintain continuous cooperation between the participating SAIs and with other European and international institutions, with a view to strengthening female



leadership and representation in the field of public audit and institutional governance and contributing to higher standards of public sector accountability and trust.

With this Declaration, the women Heads of the SAIs of the European Union and Ukraine renew their determination to work together to build fairer, more transparent and more representative and independent institutions that reflect the values of non-discrimination, gender equality, integrity and public service for the benefit of citizens.

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