



Human Rights in Practice:  
Equality in Tourism  
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# Equality in Tourism

## Purpose:

Policy change and accountability on gender equality and improvement in the working lives and livelihoods of women and their communities, through

- Empowerment of women
- Leadership in thought, research and practice
- Working with all sectors of the industry
- Transfer and exchange of knowledge, skills and expertise among tourism and development stakeholders

# 'Women's Rights are Human Rights'

- *'Human rights of women and of the girl child as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;'* (Beijing Declaration, 1995)
- Importance of interpretation of human rights through gender lens;
- UNECE: *'Gender equality is crucial to sustainable development.'* BUT:
- *....high level of 'de jure' equality between women and men, the persistence of discriminatory social norms and practices lead to 'de facto' gender inequalities.* (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 2019, [www.unece.org](http://www.unece.org))

# What topics are important for Human Rights for Women in Tourism?

## **In Destination Communities**

- Objectification in marketing and promotion
- Zoofication
- Land and water rights
- Water and food sovereignty
- Sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Gender-based violence
- Social and cultural constraints

## **In the Workplace**

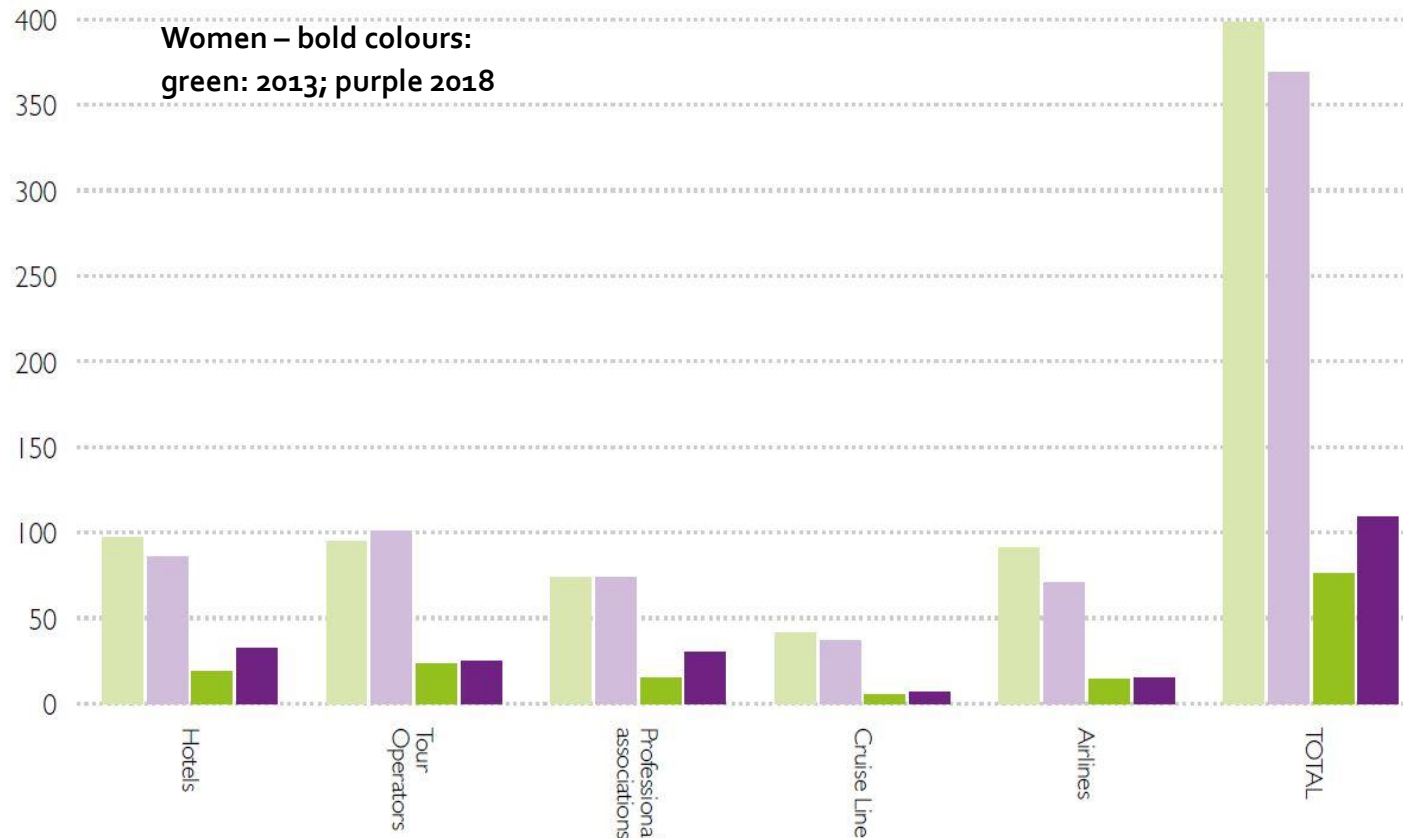
- Labour rights
- Pay Gap
- Preconceptions and unconscious bias
- Dominant masculine culture; Lack of commitment at top level
- Lack of 'Work-Life' balance
- Lack of role models
- Lack of power and influence
- Sexual Harassment

# Sun, Sand and Ceilings 2018

- Snapshot view of gender equality on boards at a point in time, recording long-term trend
- Need more contextual data
- Small sample, from publicly available data from 53 companies
- Focus on board representation as a visible key indicator for a company's strategic commitment to gender equality in key decision-making and leadership roles.

# Total Number of Women and Men on Boards per sector in 2013 and 2018

FIGURE 3: TOTAL NUMBER OF MEN AND WOMEN ON BOARDS PER SECTOR IN 2013 AND 2018



# Data Trends (2013-2018)

## 2013

- Overall 15% women on boards
- Cruise Lines lowest % of women, 11%
- Tour Operators highest %, 19%;
- UK Government review: Davies (2011); target of 25% representation of women on boards

## 2018

- Overall increase to 23% women on boards;
- Cruise Lines still lowest, 16%;
- Professional Assoc. highest, 30%; hotels, TOs increased to only 20%;
- Alexander-Hampton Review (2017); 33% target mostly met and even exceeded in different sectors of industry;
- Pay Gap reporting introduced by UK government in 2017;
- May increase pressure on companies generally;
- But: volatility of industry, frequent take overs, mergers etc. change the picture (see Radisson Grp and Kuoni for ex.).

# Analysis: Gender Equality in Tourism

- Human Rights issues for women in tourism are integral to the goal of responsible/sustainable tourism
- Some improvements but still vast difference between valiant statements and practice
- In some cases active resistance
- Recent research by EiT found only 9/40 tour operators had any kind of equality or diversity policy
- Gender Parity generally slowing down (WEF, 2017), will take 170 years, at this rate
- Slowest progress in SMEs , 99% of European tourism businesses
- Need for more research on intersectionalities (differential impacts) in tourism and hospitality in human rights and gender equality.
- Need for research and analysis of barriers for women, and development of realistic, actionable solutions specific to tourism and hospitality.



# Gender Equality Emergency? How to proceed?

- Urgency to speed up process; positive regulatory environment can help
- Focus on links between sustainable/responsible tourism and gender equality (see SDGs)
- Bring into line policies at workplace and along the supply chains/contract compliance
- Action research (and funding) needed on understanding and overcoming the challenges and resistance to gender mainstreaming practices in tourism and hospitality, including SMEs

# ‘Equality in Tourism Pledge’

## Gender Equality Policy

To put in place a company policy to mainstream gender equality throughout the organisation.

This policy will be an integral part of an overall diversity policy, developed with a dedicated budget and specialist staff and, if necessary, external support. To include:

1. Continuous Professional Development
2. Recruitment, progression, promotion and pay
3. Work/Life Balance
4. Harassment
5. Continuous improvement

# EiT proposal

We are seeking partnerships and funding to develop this work by:

- Creating a dedicated section for our website, as a resource for businesses
- Good practice case studies from industry, based on our research
- Practical solutions for implementing gender mainstreaming
- Working with businesses on implementation



*Thank you for your  
attention!*

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