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**Monthly Highlights**

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**Empowering women and girls through education**

**Purpose**

On the occasion of International Women’s Day, the European Parliament’s Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality is organising an inter-parliamentary committee meeting on empowering women and girls through education.

MEPs and representatives of national parliaments of the EU Member States and the enlargement countries will have the possibility to discuss challenges, opportunities, and potential steps ahead at the European level. The debates will focus more specifically on the importance of eliminating gender disparity in education and training, on challenges for equal access to continuous and quality education, and on the steps ahead towards the empowerment of women and girls through education in the European Union.

**Inside**

This leaflet provides extracts from supporting analyses documents prepared by the European Parliament’s policy departments on Structural and Cohesion Policies, on Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs, and on External Policies, relevant to the topics of discussion of this meeting. Scan the QR code or click on the title of the publication to access it directly.

**Facts and Figures**

- **Women:** European women still face economic, social, and political challenges. Women’s participation in the labour market is lower than men’s, and women earn less than men, resulting in a gender pay gap.
- **Girls:** Girls often have less access to education and face discrimination in their education.
- **Education:** Education is a key factor in empowering women and girls. Quality education, including gender-sensitive curricula and resources, can help women and girls achieve their full potential.

**Publications**

Empowering women and girls through education - Available soon

This study explores challenges and opportunities for the empowerment of women through education. Based on an analysis of existing research, the study shows how various factors such as poverty, gender stereotypes and institutional cultures impact upon educational outcomes. Consequently, a more equitable distribution of educational resources, gender sensitive institutional cultures and practices, and challenging social norms and expectations of men and women are needed. Greater access to the labour market, better earnings, and personal empowerment will be the return. The challenge for policy makers is finding the right policy mix and the political will to address the complex factors that affect women’s and girls’ empowerment through education.

(Available in EN)

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The European year for development: education - February 2015
Access to quality education is essential for development. Global poverty could drop by 12% if children in low income countries could read. Education contributes to economic growth and to more stable and accountable societies. It is related to children’s health, gender equality, human rights, peace and employment. This briefing looks at the Education for All goals, progress in primary education enrolment, EU aid for education, and Parliament’s position on equal access to education. (Available in EN)

The study evaluates the Strategy for Equality between women and men 2010-2015 as a contribution towards achieving the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) goals and provides indications on the future post 2015 multiannual policy framework. It assesses the extent to which the Strategy has contributed specifically to the BPfA implementation and to gender equality in general. It also provides practical and specific recommendations on possible improvements that the Strategy has contributed specifically to the BPfA implementation and to gender equality in general. (Available in EN)

A new strategy for gender equality post 2015: workshop - August 2014
This compilation of in-depth analyses was made in preparation for a workshop providing recommendations for actions at European level in: gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and monitoring; economic independence and the position of women on the labour market; maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave, and unpaid care work; women in political and economic decision-making; dignity, integrity and violence against women; gender aspects of foreign affairs and development cooperation. (Available in EN)

Dual education: a bridge over troubled waters? - June 2014
This study examines the strengths and weaknesses of dual education/apprenticeships and explores policy developments in the EU in relation to apprenticeship schemes. It identifies the characteristics of four main forms of vocational education and training in relation to the role of work-based learning. Suggestions for promoting apprenticeships within the Member States’ educational, social and economic frameworks and for improving the vocational and training offer across Europe are also made. (Available in FR, EN, DE and PT; executive summary in EN and IT)

Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls from an EU perspective - March 2014
This study was prepared ahead of the 58th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which was focusing on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls. It reveals that women’s rights and gender equality are largely recognised as a goal of development policy and as an important tool for sustainable development. Most stakeholders therefore advocate the two-track approach of a stand-alone goal and of mainstreaming in all areas of the post 2015 framework. (Available in FR and EN)

The advantages of a gender-sensitive approach to tackle youth unemployment: workshop - April 2013
This compilation of briefing notes was prepared in view of a workshop on using a gender-sensitive approach to tackle youth unemployment. The notes deal with: the conditions of unemployed youth in the EU; the effects of educational attainment; the effects of childcare and care for other dependents on career choices; gender differences in the willingness to compete; the youth employment package; and the advantages of an integrated and gender-sensitive approach to youth unemployment. (Available in EN)

Women’s rights during democratic transitions - November 2012
This study analyses the gender dimension in the context of democratic transition processes, with special focus on socio-political changes taking place in the MENA region at the time of writing. It analyses policy initiatives and assesses the possibilities for entry points for further EU action to support universal standards for promoting women’s rights. A list of pragmatic recommendations to the EU as an external promoter of democracy and gender equality is also provided. (Available in EN)

Reducing early school leaving in the EU - June 2011
Early school leaving is a fundamental contributing factor to social exclusion at a later stage. This study reviews the scale and nature of early school leaving by examining how countries are trying to tackle this problem. It identifies characteristics of effective policies leading to a range of recommendations for actors at European and national level. The study is based on in-depth country research in nine Member States and on an analysis of international and national literature. (Available in FR, EN, DE and PT; executive summary in 21 linguistic versions)

Every Woman and Girl Has the Right to Education. No Matter Where She Lives.

Supporting analyses
Access all Studies, In-depth analyses, Briefings and At a glance notes produced by the policy departments.
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The study evaluates the Strategy for Equality between women and men 2010-2015 as an indication of the post 2015 Strategy's implementation and to gender equality in general. It also provides practical and specific recommendations on possible improvements which the Strategy has contributed specifically to the BPfA implementation and to gender equality. The study provides a contribution towards achieving the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) goals and provides recommendations for actions at European level in: gender mainstreaming, gender equality is also provided.

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**Contact**

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5 March 2015, Brussels

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**DG IPOL and DG EXPO Policy Departments**

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