

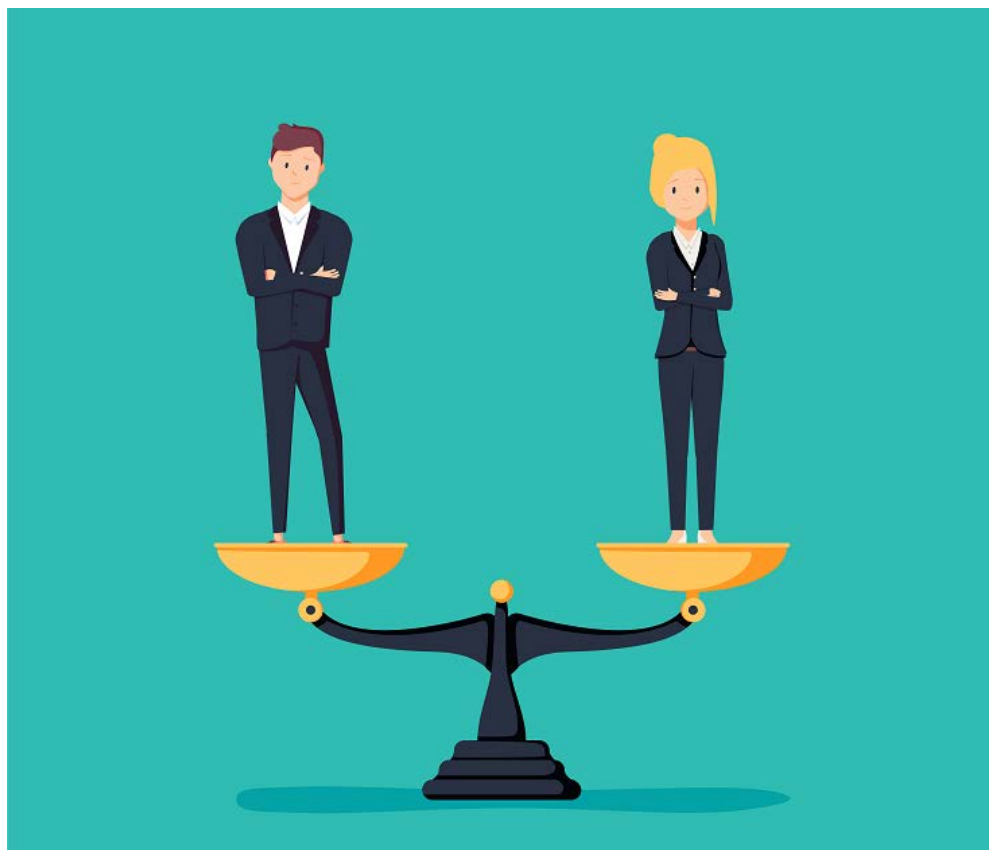
STUDY

Requested by the FEMM committee



# Updating of the Study on Gender Mainstreaming in Committees and Delegations of the European Parliament

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# Updating of the Study on Gender Mainstreaming in Committees and Delegations of the European Parliament

## STUDY

### **Abstract**

This study, commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the FEMM Committee, provides an update of a previous study published in 2014. It is meant to assess to what extent the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee (FEMM) of the European Parliament contributed to the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament activities between July 2017 and July 2018.

## **ABOUT THE PUBLICATION**

This research paper was requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and commissioned, overseen and published by the Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Aim of the study

This report is an update of a previous study published in 2014 and is meant to assess to what extent the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee (FEMM) of the European Parliament (EP) contributed to the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament activities between July 2017 and July 2018. Based on this assessment, the report indicates to what extent the recommendations put forward in the previous study are still applicable.

The study contains:

- a brief overview of the evolution of gender mainstreaming in recent years (Chapter 2), with a focus on the evolution of:
  - the role of the three gender mainstreaming bodies in the EP: the FEMM Committee, the Gender Mainstreaming Network and the High Level Group for Gender Equality and Diversity;
  - the main EP resolutions and action plans for gender mainstreaming adopted in recent years;
  - the evolution in the presence of women in the current Parliament.
- a comprehensive analysis of FEMM activities in supporting gender mainstreaming in the work of EP committees between July 2017 and July 2018 and their potential impact (Chapter 3);
- the main conclusions and recommendations, moving from those put forward in the previous study (Chapter 4).

As in the previous study, the analytical approach considers two relevant dimensions for the mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective within the policymaking process: institutional capacity and institutional learning.

Given the tight time and resource constraints, this update is based on a desk research. The planned interviews to members of FEMM and of the High Level Group for Gender Equality and Diversity were not possible in the time available.

The desk analysis considered:

- available documents on the recent evolution of the three EP main bodies in charge of supporting gender mainstreaming in the EP: the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), the High Level Group of Gender Equality and Diversity, and the Gender Mainstreaming Network of Chairs/Vice-chairs of the 20 standing committees of the EP;
- the legislative and non-legislative reports, own-initiative reports, opinions and positions in the form of amendments, carried out by FEMM in the period considered;
- available data on the gender composition of the Parliament, committees and delegations, based on data and reports available on the EP website.

## Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament: legal framework, main actors, procedures and factors affecting the success of FEMM activities

Three bodies – with occasionally overlapping roles – are in charge of implementing gender mainstreaming in parliamentary activities and structures: FEMM, the High Level Group for Gender Equality and Diversity, and the Gender Mainstreaming Network.

- **FEMM** is the main body in charge of promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in all the EP policy and legislative processes. It promotes gender mainstreaming in the EP's work through participation in legislative and non-legislative acts, influencing the work of the other committees, and it is involved in the preparation and follow-up of oral questions and plenary resolutions, the commissioning of studies, the organisation of public events such as International Women's Day, hearings and workshops, and press releases.
- The **Gender Mainstreaming Network (the Network)** made up of MEPs (one for each committee) is in charge of implementing gender mainstreaming in the work of their respective committees/delegations. It is supported by a network of gender mainstreaming administrators in the committee secretariats. Both networks are coordinated by FEMM. The Network has a potentially important role in mainstreaming gender issues into the work of their committees.
- The **High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity** promotes and implements gender mainstreaming within the EP structures and bodies, without having a direct role in the legislative process.

The successful inclusion of a gender equality perspective in the EP legislative or non-legislative procedures largely depends on the role attributed to **FEMM**, on the reputation and authority of the FEMM rapporteurs, and on the salience of the different gender aspects in the public debate and among MEPs.

The 'horizontal' nature of the FEMM committee, which has competence on gender equality in all policy fields, allows FEMM to intervene on every policy issue. From the gender mainstreaming perspective, this status enhances FEMM's capacity to integrate a perspective on women's rights and gender equality into a broad range of the work of the EP. However, FEMM is rarely in charge of the legislative procedure, as legislation directly focused on women's rights and gender equality is rather limited. In the considered period, FEMM has not been in charge of legislative reports. As legislative activities are regarded as the most important decision-making procedures in the EP, this could be a problematic aspect. The low number of legislative files for which FEMM is usually competent may also have a potentially negative influence on its reputation among the EP Members in general. As the previous report showed, this aspect is particularly relevant because of the importance of accreditation as a crucial social mechanism to be reinforced in order to support FEMM's role in implementing gender mainstreaming.

FEMM's role in supporting gender mainstreaming in the work of the EP can be enhanced by the working of the **Gender Mainstreaming Network**. As underlined in the recent 2018/2162(INI) Draft Report on Gender Mainstreaming in the European Parliament, the Gender Mainstreaming Network is an important tool for supporting the European Parliament committees in the adoption of their action plans on gender mainstreaming, and for the internalisation of a gender perspective in their activities.



The **High Level Group** has different and complementary roles with FEMM, as it is mainly charged with supporting equal gender representation at all administrative levels within the EP. Following a 2016 Parliament resolution on gender mainstreaming in the work of the European Parliament, adopted on 8 March 2016, the High Level Group prepared a road map indicating how to increase the representation of women in middle and senior management positions to 40 % by 2020. In January 2017, the Bureau adopted the HLG's report on *Gender Equality in the European Parliament Secretariat – state of play and the way forward 2017-2019* and its accompanying road map towards a better gender balance in the European Parliament's Secretariat over the period 2017-2019.

Turning to the presence of women in the European Parliament, the analysis shows that among MEPs the share of women has remained almost stable in the current eighth parliamentary term, compared to the seventh term. In 2018, of the 751 MEPs 36.1 % are women, only 0.3 percentage points more than the previous term. However, there are more women in decision-making positions: female vice presidents are now 5 out of 14 (there were 3 in the seventh term) and the number of women chairing a subcommittee has risen from 8 to 12 out of a total of 24. However, women are still poorly represented among the EP management positions and among experts invited to EP hearings as speakers. Out of 12 in a position of deputy secretary-general and director-general, only 16.7 % are women (two positions), compared to the goal for 2019 of 30 % set in 2017 by the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity.

### Gender mainstreaming in the work of FEMM between July 2017 and July 2018

In the 12 months between July 2017 and July 2018, the FEMM committee carried out nine own-initiative reports (INIs), one non-legislative report, thirteen opinions (including 259 suggestions). Furthermore, FEMM tabled 213 gender amendments to six reports of the other committees. No legislative reports were drafted instead.

The **own-initiative reports** are a very useful tool that FEMM can use to support the introduction of a gender perspective in fields where gender is less considered, thus contributing to increasing the accreditation of these fields in gender terms. In the period considered, FEMM INI reports covered two main issues: women's empowerment (with focus on economic empowerment), and violence against women, addressing these themes also in the framework of other fields (e.g. use of the media or climate change).

As for FEMM's **positions in the form of amendments**, 63 % were taken into consideration by the other committees. EMPL, LIBE and PETI have the highest rates of inclusion of FEMM's amendments, while ECON has the lowest level. The low rates of inclusion of FEMM's opinions and gender amendments in the committees dealing with financial issues shows a difficulty in integrating gender issues in the budgetary cycle.

**FEMM opinions** mostly tackled the issues present in the EU agenda for gender equality: gender equality on the labour market, preventing and fighting gender-based violence, gender in education, respect of human rights and, in particular for gender equality, in third countries and EU MSs. AFET and LIBE received the highest number of suggestions, while CONT received the lowest.

In the analysed period, the rate of inclusions of FEMM's suggestions in the work of the other committees reached 47.5 %. CONT, JURI, EMPL and AFET are the committees that paid particular

attention to FEMM's suggestions, considering over 50 % of them in their work. On the contrary, BUDG has the lowest inclusion rate. Most of FEMM's suggestions that were included (i.e. over 70 %) are integrated entirely in the work of the other committees, and in particular with AFET. Compared to the previous report (covering the period between July 2011 and February 2013) the share of suggestions partially or fully approved has increased for all the involved committees, although the ranking remain the same with CONT, JURI and EMPL showing the highest rate of inclusion and BUDG and LIBE showing the lowest.

Most of FEMM's opinions (8 out of 13) in the analysed period had a high gender impact, i.e. over half of the suggestions provided were included totally or partially in the final report. Compared to the previous report, the share of FEMM opinions with a high impact has greatly increased in all the involved committees.

The analysis shows that the inclusion of FEMM suggestions is not influenced by the gender of the two rapporteurs (from FEMM and the committee) or on their belonging to the same political group, but rather on the salience of the issue being dealt with. Indeed, most of the issues included in the work of the other committees refer to subjects that are high on the EU and national gender equality agendas. These are acknowledged as gender related in the public debate: i.e. gender equality on the labour market, preventing and fighting gender-based violence, gender in education, respect of human rights and, in particular for gender equality, in third countries and EU MSs.

It is thus important that FEMM focuses on increasing the salience of issues that are not on the top of the national/EU agendas, but that are equally relevant.

## Recommendations

The recommendations provided in the previous report are still valid, although some progress has been made especially in the role of the three gender mainstreaming bodies. The degree of inclusion of FEMM's opinions and suggestions in other committee reports has also improved.

Despite the presence of a well-developed legal and institutional framework, gender mainstreaming in the work of parliamentary committees remains highly variable, resulting in a strong focus on women's rights and gender equality in some areas and little or no apparent activity in others.

As also pointed out in the more recent EP gender mainstreaming reports, there is a need to strengthen the bodies in charge of gender mainstreaming further. Actors in the EP need to be provided with appropriate tools to gain a sound understanding of gender mainstreaming.

This could entail an impetus for organisational learning and help in breaking the repetitive behaviour of not considering a gender perspective in certain policy areas. In this respect, all the committees should avail of **in-house and external expertise** to raise their awareness of the extent to which gender equality and women's rights need to be improved in their area of competence. Such training could contribute to a greater ownership of the gender mainstreaming process of each committee by taking into account their **specific features**. This could also facilitate the active role of committees in the regular assessments carried out by FEMM.

In addition, **FEMM** might build on the political will expressed in the resolutions and take a **lead in implementing the various measures** proposed with the resolutions, and in particular, the policy

plans. This could further clarify the role and responsibilities in gender mainstreaming of each of the different actors within the EP, and lead to regular exchanges of good practices and improved networking for gender mainstreaming.

The gender mainstreaming reports also underline the relevant **role of political groups** in encouraging and providing support to women to take up leading positions in the decision-making process. Besides, they could contribute to the gender mainstreaming process by evaluating their programmes and activities from a gender perspective, and by adopting their own strategies to bring women into political decision-making, while also highlighting gender equality in their programmes.

Based on the analysis above, the following main recommendations can contribute to **improving the effectiveness of FEMM in supporting gender mainstreaming in the EP work**:

- The study shows that the successful inclusion of a gender equality perspective in a legislative or non-legislative procedure of the EP largely depends, on the one hand, on the role attributed to FEMM and, on the other hand, on the reputation and authority of the FEMM rapporteur. It is thus important for FEMM to use formal and informal tools to achieve inclusion of a gender perspective in all EP activities. In this respect, the **capacity of the FEMM President in supporting FEMM's role** in legislative proposals is particularly important. The FEMM Secretariat may also have an important role in this respect, because it prepares the files and supports the negotiations. A second crucial aspect **is identification of rapporteurs for reports and opinions**. The rapporteurs' success depends on their expertise, networking capacity (which is informal), political prestige and commitment to gender equality issues. Other relevant actors in this respect are the political group coordinators, the Secretariat and the policy advisors. **FEMM coordinators should also be selective in drafting opinions** and base this selection on the likelihood that the opinion will be positively received by the committee responsible. Several indications might be taken into consideration, including the availability of a FEMM rapporteur committed to the issue at stake.
- Another crucial issue for the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming is to enhance the **salience of the different aspects of gender equality at the cultural, social and political levels**. The following suggestions may improve the salience of gender issues on the agenda of the European Parliament:
  - To **stimulate public debate – inside and outside the EP** – on specific aspects of gender mainstreaming that are overlooked or underestimated. Public debate could be initiated with careful planning of own-initiative reports addressing issues that are either new or overlooked, or have the potential to have important consequences on the evolution of European legislation and its effectiveness. Furthermore, to raise awareness, a wide range of events should accompany the decision to produce these reports, and the issues should be well communicated both inside and outside the EP. The consultation with stakeholders during the drafting process should be made public, whenever possible, and the results and recommendations should be debated both in committees and/or in plenary.
  - To **involve other committees in drawing up joint reports** in order to enhance FEMM's 'impact' as well as its recognition within the EP. A strategic planning of associations with other committees also needs to be undertaken when producing

own-initiative reports. This might trigger a **precommitment mechanism**, by virtue of which it becomes very difficult for the other parliamentary committee to refuse cooperation with FEMM as an associated or joint committee in the future. Also regarding amendments, MEPs who are not members of FEMM should be involved in order to **increase the number of people interested in, and working on, gender issues**.

- For a better understanding of the main issues at stake in the different committees, as well as fostering a more effective coordination of efforts towards gender mainstreaming, FEMM should strengthen coordination with the **Gender Mainstreaming Network**. It should also support the Network's full involvement in the regular monitoring of the state of play of gender mainstreaming across policy areas, as also indicated in the 2016 FEMM Resolution on gender mainstreaming. In addition, the functioning of the Gender Mainstreaming Network could be improved by setting minimum common objectives and topics, by providing specialised training and by exploring policy issues other than those that are normally considered in a gender perspective.
- Special attention should be paid to **GIAs** and **other policy tools** such as specific studies and analysis on gender equality and women's rights issues carried out by EP's Policy Departments and impact assessment units, which are **valuable tools for increasing FEMM's influence** within the institution. To this end, specific **gender training** on how to include a gender perspective within EP's work (especially for the assistants, the network of GM administrators and/or the FEMM Secretariat) as well as promoting studies and analysis on women's rights and gender equality will contribute to improving knowledge and raising awareness of gender mainstreaming.

## 1. INTRODUCTION: AIMS AND CONTENT OF THE STUDY

### KEY POINTS

- The report is an update of a previous study published in 2014. Its aim is to assess to what extent FEMM contributed to the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament's activities in the period between July 2017 and July 2018.
- As in the previous study, the analytical approach considers two relevant dimensions for the mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective within the policymaking process: institutional capacity and institutional learning.
- The study is based on a desk analysis of the legislative and non-legislative reports, own-initiative reports, opinions and positions in the form of amendments, carried out by FEMM in the period considered.

This report is an update of a previous study published in 2014<sup>1</sup> and assesses to what extent the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee (FEMM) of the European Parliament (EP) contributed to the effective **implementation of gender mainstreaming** in the European Parliament activities between July 2017 and July 2018.

The study contains:

- a brief overview of the evolution of gender mainstreaming in the considered period (Chapter 2), with a focus on the evolution of i) the role of the three gender mainstreaming bodies in the European Parliament: the FEMM Committee, the Gender Mainstreaming Network and the High Level Group for Gender Equality and Diversity, ii) the evolution of the main EP resolutions and action plans for gender mainstreaming in recent years, iii) the presence of women in the Parliament;
- a comprehensive analysis of FEMM activities in supporting gender mainstreaming in the work of EP committees in the considered period and their potential impact (Chapter 3);
- the main conclusions and recommendations, moving from those put forward in the previous study (Chapter 4).

As in the previous study, the analytical approach considers two relevant dimensions for the mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective within the policymaking process: institutional capacity and institutional learning. Four *institutional capacity* dimensions are relevant for an effective mainstreaming of the gender equality perspective in the policy process: the quality of civil servants and organisational characteristics; inter-departmental relations (organisational processes); the style of interaction between institutions and their social and economic environment; and evidence-based policies. Another important aspect in analysing if and to what extent the consideration of gender differences is internalised within EP's Parliamentary Committee work concerns *institutional learning*. The issue is how to extract useful knowledge from gender mainstreaming interventions ('what works?'), in order to obtain similar results in different contexts. This leads to the social mechanisms theoretical framework, which is used for effectively identifying the **success factors** that ensured

<sup>1</sup> IRS Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale (2014), *Study on gender mainstreaming in committees and delegations of the European Parliament*, Study for the FEMM Committee, IP/C/FEMM/FWC/2011-002/Lot 2, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/493051/IPOL-FEMM\\_ET\(2014\)493051\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2014/493051/IPOL-FEMM_ET(2014)493051_EN.pdf)

effective implementation of different policies/programmes/projects (in this case, gender mainstreaming the research activities involved both desk analysis and field work).

Given the very tight time and resource constraints, this update is based on desk research. The planned interviews to members of FEMM and the High Level Group for Gender Equality and Diversity were not possible in the period available<sup>2</sup>. The desk analysis considered:

- **available documents on the recent evolution of the three EP main bodies** in charge of supporting gender mainstreaming in the EP: the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), the High Level Group of Gender Equality and Diversity, and the Gender Mainstreaming Network of Chairs/Vice-chairs of the 20 standing committees of the EP;
- the **legislative and non-legislative reports, own-initiative reports, opinions and positions in the form of amendments**, carried out by FEMM in the considered period;
- an analysis of available **data** on the **gender composition** of the Parliament, committees and delegations, based on data and reports available on the EP website.

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<sup>2</sup> A survey was sent out on 25 October to the members of the High Level Group of Gender Equality and Diversity, but unfortunately it was filled in only by one respondent. The arrangement of an interview with Angelika Mlinar, standing rapporteur for gender mainstreaming, was not feasible.

## 2. EVOLUTION OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

### KEY FINDINGS

- Three bodies are in charge of implementing gender mainstreaming in parliamentary activities and structures: FEMM, the High Level Group for Gender Equality and Diversity, and the Gender Mainstreaming Network of Chairs/Vice-chairs of the 20 standing committees of the EP.
- The different structures established to enhance gender mainstreaming can be seen as contributing to mechanisms for increased commitment to women's rights and gender equality, increased respect of the gender experts' role and reputation and, finally, better and smoother networking within the EP for gender mainstreaming.
- In recent years, a set of activities and initiatives were implemented to intensify gender mainstreaming in the EP. However, despite the structures put in place, gender mainstreaming in the work of parliamentary committees is still highly variable, resulting in a strong focus on women's rights and gender equality in some areas and little or no apparent activity in others.
- The successful inclusion of a gender equality perspective in an EP legislative or non-legislative procedure largely depends, on the one hand, on the role attributed to FEMM and, on the other hand, on the reputation and authority of the FEMM rapporteur. It also depends crucially on the prominence of the different aspects of gender mainstreaming at the cultural, social and political levels. The effectiveness of FEMM depends strictly on the fact that the MEPs consider gender issues as a fundamental aspect of the type of society that the Union is trying to build.
- The proportion of women among EP MEPs has remained almost stable in the current eighth parliamentary term, compared to the seventh term. In 2018, of the 751 MEPs 36.1 % are women – only 0.3 percentage points more than the previous term. However, there are more women in decision-making positions: female vice presidents are now 5 out of 14 (they were 3 in the seventh term) and the number of women chairing a subcommittee has risen from 8 to 12 out of a total of 24.
- Women are still poorly represented among the EP management positions and among experts invited to EP hearings as speakers. Out of 12 deputy secretary-general and director-general positions, only 16.7 % are women (two positions), compared to the goal for 2019 of 30 % set in 2017 by the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity.

### 2.1. Recent evolution of roles and activities of main bodies in charge of supporting gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament

Three main bodies are in charge of supporting gender mainstreaming in the EP: the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), the High Level Group of Gender Equality and Diversity, and the Gender Mainstreaming Network of Chairs/Vice-chairs of the 20 standing committees of the EP.

### 2.1.1. The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM)

FEMM was set up in 1984 with the aim to promote gender equality within the work of the EP and in all policy areas. Since the introduction of the concept in 1995, the activities of FEMM have also included gender mainstreaming.

Within the EP, FEMM is in charge of the<sup>3</sup>

- definition, promotion and protection of women's rights in the Union and related Community measures;
- promotion of women's rights in third countries;
- equal opportunities policy, including equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work;
- removal of all forms of gender-based discrimination;
- implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming in all policy sectors;
- follow-up and implementation of international agreements and conventions involving the rights of women;
- encouragement of awareness of women's rights.

#### Overview of FEMM's gender mainstreaming tools

FEMM promotes gender mainstreaming through the following activities and tools<sup>4</sup>:

- **legislative, non-legislative or budgetary opinions and reports**, oral questions and motions for resolutions;
- providing **resources** for the Gender Mainstreaming Network to which each committee has appointed a chair or vice-chair responsible for implementing gender mainstreaming in the work of the committee;
- organisation of at least one annual **inter-parliamentary meeting** on the occasion of International Women's Day, involving members of parliaments of the 28 EU Member States, candidate countries, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;
- **assessing gender mainstreaming** in the work of parliamentary committees and delegations, including assessment of failures to incorporate the gender dimension, to be submitted bi-annually to the plenary in form of a non-legislative, own-initiative report.

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<sup>3</sup> Rules of Procedure Annex V: Powers and Responsibilities of Standing Committees. The updated final version of the Rules of Procedures is available on EP website: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getLastRules.do?language=en&reference=RULE-198>  
In accordance with Parliament's decisions on the use of gender-neutral language in its documents, the Rules of Procedure have been adapted to take account of the guidelines on that subject approved by the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity on 11 April 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Information on the FEMM Committee can be found at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/FEMM/home.html>.



## Legislative activities

Decision-making on proposals for new EU legislation is **the most essential work of the EP**. On an equal footing with the Council, the EP also legislates in the area of women's rights and gender equality.

FEMM is the EP committee having competence for this area, which is laid down and set out more in detail in Annex V of EP's Rules of Procedure<sup>5</sup>. This means that FEMM will be called upon by the President of the EP as the committee responsible for drafting Parliament's opinion on new Commission proposals for legislation in the field of gender equality and women's rights.

The **decision-making procedure** to establish Parliament's opinion is regulated for all fields of legislation in the same way, i.e. it is the same for all committees<sup>6</sup>. The design of this procedure is influenced by the provisions of the TFEU on the procedure to be applied in the policy area in question, and the different roles assigned to Commission, Council and Parliament in the respective legislative process. The most common legislative procedure is the ordinary legislative procedure<sup>7</sup> but there are also special legislative procedures. Under the ordinary legislative procedure, the EP participates on an equal footing with the Council in the decision-making process on new legislation. The rather general provisions of the TFEU on the design of the decision-making procedures are complemented by a number of other rules such as the inter-institutional agreements<sup>8</sup> or the EP Rules of Procedure.

### *Legislative procedures with FEMM as the competent committee*

The mandate of FEMM comprising women's rights and gender equality in general, and in particular for women on the labour market, can be characterised as horizontal. In most other policy areas, be it transport, judicial cooperation in criminal matters or sustainable development, there is a gender or women's rights perspective. While this means that FEMM can theoretically deal with nearly all legislative initiatives sent to the EP, it is rarely the competent committee in the legislative procedure, as legislation directly focused on women's rights and gender equality is rather infrequent. During this legislature, FEMM has acted as the sole competent committee with no legislative reports. Moreover, FEMM has not been responsible for a legislative proposal of the Commission jointly with another committee. According to the survey respondent, the phase in which the specific committee in charge of drafting a proposal/act is identified is particularly crucial and should be thus better considered from a gender perspective.

Legislative activities are regarded as the most important decision-making procedures in the EP and are for FEMM the main tool to implement their mandate, and to realise gender equality and women's rights for European citizens. Therefore, this could be a problematic aspect. However, it has to be

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getLastRules.do?language=en&reference=RULE-198>

<sup>6</sup> In short, Parliament's opinion starts with the selection of a rapporteur in the committee concerned, who drafts a report. This report can propose acceptance of the Commission proposal as such, or to amend or reject it. Within a timeframe set for each procedure, other Members have the opportunity to table amendments seeking to delete, amend or complete (parts of) the proposal. Other committees, for which the legislative proposal is also of relevance, have the opportunity to prepare opinions on the report. All amendments, those of the rapporteur, those of other members and other committees are consequently put to the vote in the committee concerned. The vote could be facilitated by compromise amendments. The final report established through the vote is regarded as the recommendation of the committee to the plenary, i.e. the assembly of all 750 members of the EP. The final report is put to vote in plenary with the possibility for political groups and groups of members to table amendments. While informal or technical meetings could take place before the first reading is finalised, depending on the procedure foreseen in the Treaty, after adoption in plenary the EP will enter into formal negotiations with the Council on the final text of the legislation.

<sup>7</sup> Before the Lisbon Treaty, this procedure was called the co-decision procedure.

<sup>8</sup> See Section 3 of the EP's Rules of Procedure.

considered that the number of legislative initiatives coming from the Commission in this area is somewhat low and so there are relatively few legislative activities where FEMM can act as the lead committee.

These circumstances are largely to be attributed to the provisions of the Treaty and the sole competences of the Member States in many of the areas particularly important for the advancement of women and gender equality, such as education, health and active labour market measures. It could also be interesting to reflect whether there could be room for more new legislative initiatives in this field.

**In any case, it can be concluded that the low number of legislative files for which FEMM is usually competent may have a potentially negative influence on its reputation among the EP members in general.** Unfortunately, this update is only based on desk research<sup>9</sup> and these aspects have not been discussed with key stakeholders. However, the previous report showed how this aspect is particularly relevant because of the importance of 'accreditation' as a crucial social mechanism to be reinforced in order to support FEMM's role in implementing gender mainstreaming.

### **FEMM's role as an opinion-giving committee for the gender mainstreaming of the work of other committees**

FEMM can contribute to the legislative and non-legislative files falling under the remit of other committees by drafting opinions<sup>10</sup>. Because of the horizontal nature of its competence, FEMM is quite often asked to provide an opinion, or could decide to provide one on its own-initiative. Preparing opinions therefore accounts for a large amount of FEMM's workload.

Not least to reduce this workload and enhance efficiency, in addition to drafting opinions, FEMM has developed a particular intervention strategy in recent years<sup>11</sup> called '**gender mainstreaming amendments**' (GMAs) and/or '**position in the form of amendments**'.

FEMM coordinators decide whether an opinion or a position in the form of amendments should be tabled. The decision can depend on different circumstances, for example time constraints, or, more importantly, whether a reference text is already available.

#### *Consequences for FEMM's role in implementing gender mainstreaming*

The status of FEMM as a committee with **fewer opportunities** to take the lead in the decision-making process regarding EU legislation has consequences for its intervention capacity, as explained above. When FEMM is not in charge of the procedure, it has to encourage the other committees to accept its intervention, which reduces its decision-making power regarding a particular file in any case. There are some indications that this could also more generally affect the mechanisms that increase and/or diminish the actors' role and reputation, such as actor certification.

**However, from the gender mainstreaming perspective, it could be argued that this status enhances FEMM's capacity to integrate a perspective on women's rights and gender equality**

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<sup>9</sup> A survey to the members of the High Level Group of Gender Equality and Diversity was sent 25 October, but unfortunately only one respondent filled it in. It was not feasible to arrange an interview with Angelika Mlinar, standing rapporteur for gender mainstreaming.

<sup>10</sup> Rule 53 of the EP Rules of Procedure.

<sup>11</sup> Used since the beginning of the seventh legislature in 2009. See also FEMM coordinators' decision of 16 February 2011.

**into a broad range of the work of the EP.** This integration could be supported by the fact that the EP already has other structures in place to facilitate gender mainstreaming throughout their legislative – and non-legislative – activities<sup>12</sup>. Besides, FEMM members are also members of the other standing committees (see Table 1), which could enable them to build up and use mechanisms that compensate for the possible negative effect created by the small number of legislative files in the remit of FEMM.

**Table 1: FEMM Members in Other Standing Committees**

Committees	Total
AFET – Foreign Affairs	0
DROI – Human Rights	0
SEDE – Security and Defence	0
DEVE – Development	3
INTA – International Trade	1
BUDG – Budgets	2
CONT – Budgetary Control	1
ECON – Economic and Monetary Affairs	1
EMPL – Employment and Social Affairs	6
ENVI – Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	2
ITRE – Industry, Research and Energy	3
IMCO – Internal Market and Consumer Protection	0
TRAN – Transport and Tourism	1
REGI – Regional Development	4
AGRI – Agriculture and Rural Development	3
PECH – Fisheries	1
CULT – Culture and Education	1
JURI – Legal Affairs	1
LIBE – Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	4
AFCO – Constitutional Affairs	0
PETI – Petitions	1

**Source:** IRS elaboration on data from European Parliament's website  
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/full-list.html>

<sup>12</sup> Which can be related to mechanisms that develop better/smooth networking.

### *Follow-up of FEMM opinions to the reports of other committees*

While the role of FEMM formally ends with the adoption of an opinion in the committee, it could be useful that the rapporteur follows up on the inclusion of the opinion into the final version of the report<sup>13</sup>. Indeed, the rapporteur of FEMM that submitted the opinion will not take part in the final drafting phase of the proposal. However, it would be extremely important for the procedure to allow the FEMM rapporteur to be involved in the final draft of the proposal, to explain the basis of the suggestions/amendments proposed within the opinion. Whether this happens depends on the reputation of the rapporteur who drafted the opinion, their personal and political contacts, and on their capacity for negotiation.

The **rapporteur's capacity** to engage in networking with the members of the committee responsible and other political groups can therefore be considered relevant for the inclusion of the FEMM opinion's suggestions/amendments. The interaction at this stage is not formally regulated, although political groups may have their own internal rules on how to discuss positions to be taken on reports pending adoption in plenary. Again, the relational and negotiation skills of the rapporteur can make the important difference for the adoption of FEMM reports or for a gender perspective in the report of another committee.

Summing up, **the successful inclusion of a gender perspective in the legislative and non-legislative decision-making processes of the EP largely depends on the role of FEMM (competent committee or opinion-giving committee) and on the reputation and authority of the FEMM rapporteurs.**

Therefore, **the institutional capacity** as far as policymaking of the EP is concerned for men and women alike **could be further enhanced through measures:**

- **generating engagement** (creation of focusing events or opening windows of opportunity);
- **enhancing the capacities of the rapporteurs** (training, administrative support);
- **increasing the attention to and capacity for networking** across parties and nationalities at both formal and informal levels.

#### 2.1.2. [The High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity](#)

On 25 February 2004, the Bureau of the EP adopted a decision establishing a High Level Group on Gender Equality with the aim of promoting and implementing gender mainstreaming within EP activities, structures and bodies. Since 2007, its mandate has also included diversity.

The High Level Group, chaired by the vice-president holding the equality and diversity portfolio, sets the main priorities, which are then implemented by the EP Secretariat and by DG Personnel in particular.

The High Level Group has different and complementary roles with FEMM. While the former is mainly charged with supporting equal gender representation at all administrative levels within the EP, FEMM

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<sup>13</sup> The opinions are attached to the reports. Committees can, however, decide to include parts of opinions in their report. Where such parts fall under the responsibility of the competent committee, they have to be put to the vote.

concentrates on the preparation of EP's decision-making regarding legislation and other political and budgetary activities in the fields of its competences.

Ten years after the Bureau adopted the Kaufmann report on 'Equal opportunities in the European Parliament Secretariat – state of play and the way forward', the High Level Group has decided to look at the progress achieved since then and to propose new targets, and adequate and updated measures to achieve them.

This initiative also follows the recommendations contained in **Parliament's Resolution on gender mainstreaming in the work of the European Parliament, adopted on 8 March 2016**, for which Ms Angelika MLINAR was rapporteur. This resolution recalls that female representation in Parliament's key decision-making positions at the political and administrative level remains low and that, in order to improve the quality of decisions made, the **Parliament needs to ensure that the allocation of decision-making positions is evenly spread between genders.**

Moreover, this resolution deplores the fact that the targets for gender balance at senior and middle management level, adopted by the Bureau in 2006 (KAUFMANN report) were not reached by the 2009 deadline, nor have they been achieved to date. The plenary therefore **urged for effective, corrective and far-reaching measures to be taken, to reach these gender equality targets within the shortest possible timeframe.**

Additionally, this resolution **calls on the High Level Group to submit a comprehensive road map indicating how to increase the representation of women in middle and senior management positions to 40 % by 2020.** Such a road map can be prepared as a follow-up of the present report, in order to define how to implement the concrete actions proposed below and within what timeframe.

In **January 2017, the Bureau adopted the HLG's report on 'Gender equality in the European Parliament Secretariat – state of play and the way forward 2017-2019'<sup>14</sup> and its accompanying road map**, drawn up to implement the report's recommendations. This road map, a development of the HLG's current action plan, tackles the question of gender balance in the European Parliament's Secretariat over the period 2017-2019.

### 2.1.3. The Gender Mainstreaming Network

Following the 2003 EP resolution on gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament (2002/2025(INI)), the Network of Members on Gender Mainstreaming was set up as one of the bodies to further support gender mainstreaming in the work of the parliamentary committees.

It is composed of a chair or vice-chair of each of EP's 20 standing committees and meets at the invitation of the FEMM Secretariat.

The network may have a strong role in supporting gender mainstreaming in the work of the EP. According to the respondent questionnaire, **the functioning of the Gender Mainstreaming Network could be improved by increasing the possibility of setting minimum common**

<sup>14</sup> Women in the European Parliament, 8 March 2018

**objectives and topics, receiving more specialised training and exploring different policy issues other than those that are normally considered in a gender perspective.**

## 2.2. Evolution of the main European Parliament resolutions and action plans for gender mainstreaming

The specific bodies charged with supporting gender mainstreaming in parliamentary activities and within EP's General Secretariat mentioned above were established subsequent to the resolution of 2003 based on a FEMM own-initiative report (2002/2025(INI)). This resolution is part of a whole series of activities implemented over the last 10 years to support and intensify gender mainstreaming in the EP. Table 2 below summarises the milestones of EP gender mainstreaming activities since 2003.

**Table 2: Main institutional steps in the promotion of gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament**

Year	Action
2003	Plenary resolution on Gender Mainstreaming in the European Parliament (2002/2025 (INI))
2003	Set-up of the Gender Mainstreaming Networks for Members on the one hand and, on the other hand, of the network of administrative staff supporting gender mainstreaming in the committee secretariats, as suggested by the plenary resolution (2002/2025(INI)) <sup>15</sup>
2004	The High Level Group on Gender Equality was established following plenary resolution (2002/2025(INI)) <sup>16</sup>
2007	Change of mandate and title of the High Level Group into High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity <sup>17</sup>
2007	Plenary resolution on equality between men and women in the committees' work: gender mainstreaming in the EP (2005/2149(INI)) <sup>18</sup>
2009	Plenary resolution on Gender Mainstreaming in the work of committees and delegations (2008/2245(INI)) <sup>19</sup>
2009	Adoption of the Action Plan for the promotion of gender equality and diversity within the European Parliament Secretariat (2009-2013) drafted by the High Level Group <sup>20</sup>
2011	Plenary resolution on gender mainstreaming in the work of the European Parliament (2011/2151 (INI)) (2013/C 153 E/19, Official Journal of the European Union) <sup>21</sup>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/comparl/femm/ccec/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/comparl/femm/ccec/default_en.htm).

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/printficheglobal.pdf?id=21891&l=en>.

<sup>17</sup> European Parliament, Women in the European Parliament, 2011, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/publications/2011/0001/P7\\_PUB\(2011\)0001\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/publications/2011/0001/P7_PUB(2011)0001_EN.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?id=526208>.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?id=568292>.

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/femm/dv/mandate\\_high-level\\_group\\_/mandate\\_high-level\\_group\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/femm/dv/mandate_high-level_group_/mandate_high-level_group_en.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2011/2151\(INI\)](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2011/2151(INI)).

Year	Action
2016	Plenary resolution of 8 March 2016 on Gender Mainstreaming in the work of the European Parliament (2015/2230(INI))
2016	Appointment of the standing rapporteur on gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament
2017	Guidelines on gender neutral language in the European Parliament
2017	Report of Dimitrios Papadimoulis, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Chair of the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity, to the Bureau of the European Parliament entitled 'Gender Equality in the European Parliament Secretariat – state of play and the way forward 2017-2019'

### 2.2.1. Gender mainstreaming reports

The **resolution of 2003** based on the FEMM report by Lissy Gröner launched gender mainstreaming activities in the EP not only by publicly committing FEMM to gender mainstreaming, but also by showing how a policy plan for gender mainstreaming could be implemented. The resolution also strengthened the role of FEMM in this process.

The resolution suggested the adoption of a **policy plan for gender mainstreaming** with the overall objective of promoting equality between men and women. This should be achieved by means of genuine and effective incorporation of a gender perspective in policies and activities through GIAs and evaluations, which would also be applicable to decision-making procedures and the administration.

The resolution also proposed various additional measures including, most significantly:

- (i) the creation of a High Level Group on Gender Equality;
- (ii) mainstreaming gender in the work of the parliamentary committees and delegations;
- (iii) charging FEMM to draft an annual report on gender mainstreaming in the work of EP committees and delegations;
- (iv) prioritising policy issues or policy areas where gender mainstreaming could be relevant.

Given this mandate, FEMM introduced new administrative procedures enabling the drafting of **the Annual Report on Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming in the work of EP committees and delegations**.

Chairs and vice-chairs responsible for gender mainstreaming within each committee were invited by FEMM to network meetings to exchange views. Moreover, all parliamentary committees were called upon to contribute to writing the report. To this end, FEMM prepared a questionnaire for each committee requesting information on:

- (i) the aims of the committee;
- (ii) the gender equality strategy, and short- and long-term objectives to be achieved;

- (iii) implementation of the equality principle in the context of the committees' work;
- (iv) expert assessment of equality between men and women.

Also included was consultation and cooperation between the committee and other departments, within and outside the EP, to enhance gender mainstreaming.

Furthermore, FEMM prepared the 'Working Document on the Integrated Approach to Equality Between Men and Women in the Work of the Committees' (September 2006), which was the first EP assessment of the implementation of the integrated approach to equality between men and women in the political work of Parliament's committees. It was developed subsequently into the report by Anna Záborská<sup>22</sup> leading to the resolution on '**Equality between men and women in the committees' work: Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament**', adopted in plenary in January 2007<sup>23</sup>.

In February 2008, the FEMM Chair and rapporteur, Anna Záborská, again convened the chairs and the vice-chairs of the Gender Mainstreaming Network to start preparation of what was to be the next report on gender mainstreaming. The resolution on **Gender Mainstreaming in the work of Committees and Delegations** (2008/2245(INI)) was adopted before the parliamentary elections in 2009. This resolution underlined that the majority of parliamentary committees generally attach importance to gender mainstreaming, while a minority of committees rarely, if ever, take an interest in the matter. Furthermore, the resolution draws attention to the fact that, despite an increase in women's representation in the EP (from 16.6 % in 1979 to 35.8 % in May 2013), there was still only a small proportion of female members in top EP positions. Further actions were therefore envisaged to enhance women's participation in high-level decision-making, and support the EP's role in promoting gender mainstreaming.

To this end, the 2008 resolution called for the following:

- deeper implementation of the gender mainstreaming approach within the EP;
- effective and coordinated cooperation between the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity, the Gender Mainstreaming Network of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees and inter-parliamentary delegations, and FEMM;
- committees and delegations to play an active role in the regular assessments carried out under the auspices of FEMM;
- the provision of training for MEPs and EP staff on gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

The **third resolution on gender mainstreaming adopted in plenary in 2011** was based on the report drafted originally by Eva-Britt Svensson, and finalised under the auspices of the new FEMM Chair Mikael Gustafsson (2011/2151(INI)). It included a **proposal for a 2011-2013 Policy Plan for Gender Mainstreaming** in the Parliament, which reflected FEMM's awareness of the relevance of institutional mechanisms for implementation of the gender mainstreaming principle. Among the measures proposed were:

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<sup>22</sup> Report on gender mainstreaming in the work of the committees (2005/2149(INI)) dated 22 December 2006 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&mode=XML&reference=A6-2006-478&language=EN>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+TA+P6-TA-2007-0010+0+DOC+PDF+V0//IT>.



- continued commitment at the level of Parliament's Bureau, through the work of the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity;
- a dual approach – mainstreaming gender in Parliament's activities through, on the one hand, effective work by the committee responsible, and on the other, integration of the gender perspective into the work of the other committees and delegations;
- awareness of the need for gender balance in decision-making processes, to be achieved by increasing the representation of women on Parliament's governing bodies, on the bureaus of political groups, on the bureau of committees and delegations, in the composition of delegations and in other missions, such as election observation, and indeed by increasing the representation of men in areas where they are under-represented;
- incorporation of gender analysis into all stages of the budgetary process to ensure that equal consideration is given to women's and men's needs and priorities, and that the impact of the provision of EU resources on women and men is duly assessed;
- an effective press and information policy which systematically takes gender equality into account and avoids gender stereotypes;
- continued submission of regular reports to plenary on the progress achieved in gender mainstreaming in the work of Parliament's committees and delegations;
- focus on the need for adequate financial and human resources, so that parliamentary bodies are provided with the necessary tools, including gender analysis and assessment tools, with appropriate gender expertise (research and documentation, trained staff, experts) and with gender-specific data and statistics – the plan calls on the Secretariat to arrange regular exchanges of best practices and networking as well as gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting training for Parliament staff;
- continued development of Parliament's Gender Mainstreaming Network, to which each committee has appointed a member responsible for implementing gender mainstreaming in its work;
- attention to the importance of employing specific terminology and definitions which comply with international standards when terms are used in relation to gender mainstreaming;
- methodological and analytical support from the EIGE.

The **fourth resolution of 8 March 2016 on Gender Mainstreaming** in the work of the European Parliament (2015/2230(INI)) provides a general assessment of the existing institutional framework for supporting gender mainstreaming. It points out that gender mainstreaming processes need to be continuously promoted with the overall objective of promoting gender equality through effective incorporation of the gender perspective in policies and activities, including decision-making structures and the administration. Gender mainstreaming tools are emphasised even if the resolution underlines that there is still room for their effective implementation. In particular, it calls for the ongoing development of the Gender Mainstreaming Network, representing committees but also inter-parliamentary delegations, and its full involvement in the regular monitoring of the state of play of gender mainstreaming across policy areas.

Recently, FEMM has drafted (with Angelika Mlinar as rapporteur) the **2018/2162(INI) Draft Report on Gender Mainstreaming in the European Parliament**<sup>24</sup> which is now awaiting the committee decision. The draft report recognises the work of the Gender Mainstreaming Network and its further development and support provided to European Parliament committees for the adoption of their action plans on gender mainstreaming. However, it also stresses the need to provide regular and detailed qualitative and quantitative research continuously, on the progress of gender mainstreaming in Parliament.

### 2.2.2. Assessment from an institutional learning point of view

The gender mainstreaming reports emphasise the main aspects of the internal functioning and decision-making processes of the EP, which need to be strengthened in order to achieve effective gender mainstreaming within the legislative and non-legislative activities of the EP. In this respect, the different structures established to enhance gender mainstreaming on the basis of the above-mentioned resolutions can be seen as contributing to mechanisms for increased commitment to women's rights and gender equality, increased respect of the gender experts' role and reputation and, finally, better and smoother networking within the EP for gender mainstreaming.

However, despite the structures put in place, gender mainstreaming in the work of parliamentary committees is still highly variable and essentially voluntary, resulting in a strong focus on women's rights and gender equality in some areas and little or no apparent activity in others. There is thus a need to provide the actors in the EP with appropriate tools to gain a **sound understanding** of gender mainstreaming. This could entail an impetus for organisational learning and help in breaking the repetitive behaviour of refusing gender mainstreaming in certain policy areas. In this respect, all the committees should avail themselves of **in-house and external expertise** to raise their awareness of the extent to which gender equality and women's rights need to be improved in their area of competence. Such training could contribute to a greater ownership of the gender mainstreaming process of each committee by taking into account their **specific features**. This could also facilitate the active role of committees in the regular assessments carried out by FEMM.

In addition, FEMM might wish to build on the political will expressed in the resolutions and take a lead in implementing the various measures proposed with the resolutions and in particular, the policy plans. This could further clarify the role and **responsibilities** in gender mainstreaming of each of the different actors within the EP and lead to **regular exchanges of best practices** and improved networking for gender mainstreaming.

The gender mainstreaming reports also emphasise the relevant **role of political groups** in encouraging and providing support to women to take up leading positions in the decision-making process. Besides, they could contribute to the gender mainstreaming process by evaluating their programmes and activities from a gender perspective and by adopting their own strategies to bring women into political decision-making, while also highlighting gender equality in their programmes.

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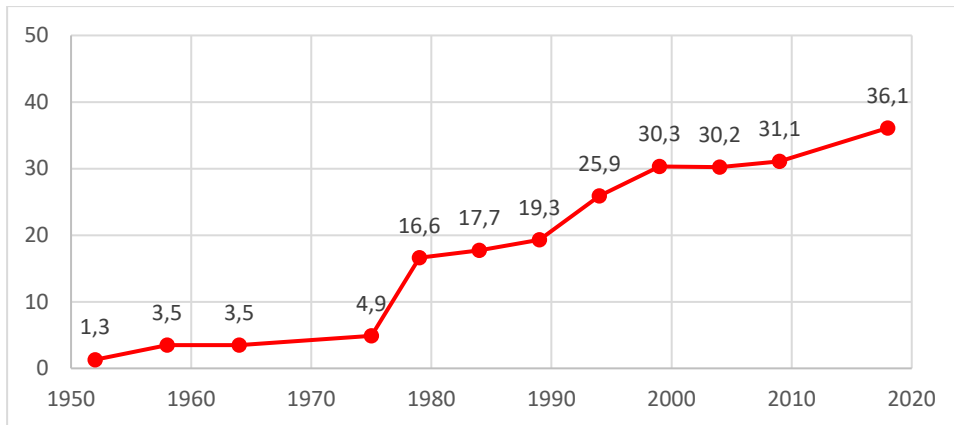
<sup>24</sup> [https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=&reference=2018/2162\(INI\)](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=&reference=2018/2162(INI))

### 2.3. The presence of women in the European Parliament

To complete this chapter on the framework within which FEMM activities take place, this section briefly illustrates the incidence and role of women among EP MEPs and in committees in the current, eighth parliamentary term.

The proportion of women among EP MEPs has remained almost stable in the eighth parliamentary term, compared to the seventh term. In 2018, of the 751 MEPs, 36.1 % are women (Figure 1), only 0.3 percentage points more than the previous term. However, there are more women in decision-making posts: female vice presidents are now 5 out of 14 (they were 3 in the seventh term) and the number of women chairing a subcommittee has risen from 8 to 12 out of a total of 24.

**Figure 1: Share of women in the EP members 1952-2018**



**Source:** IRS: Elaboration on data from 'Women in the European Parliament' (March 2018)

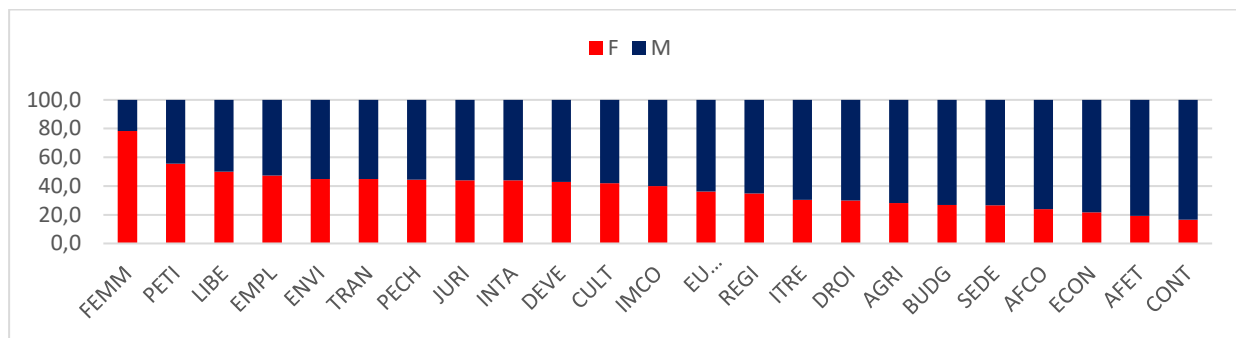
Out of the eight political groups in the EP, only two have a woman in a leading position (chair or co-chair), and less than half of the members of each political group are women, with the only exception of the Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left.

The share of women in EP MEPs in 2018 is higher than in Member States' national parliaments, with the exception of seven MSs (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal) and higher than the world average for national parliaments.

Focusing on **EP committees** (20 standing committees and two subcommittees), the **gender composition is highly differentiated**, as shown in Figure 2. The FEMM Committee shows the highest share of women (78.4 % of members), while the budgetary control committee shows the lowest one (16.7 % of CONT members)<sup>25</sup>. Half of the committees have a female chair (11 committees out of 22: SEDE, DEVE, CONT, ENVI, IMCO, REGI, CULT, AFCO, FEMM and PETI), but only FEMM, PETI and LIBE committees have 50 % or more of women among its members.

<sup>25</sup> Own elaborations on information available in the EP website.

**Figure 2: Share of women in the EP committees**



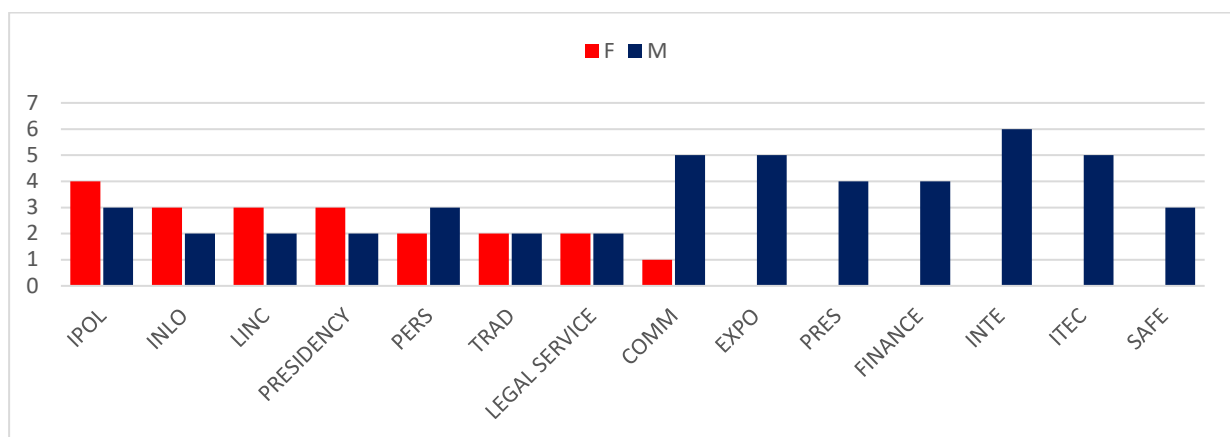
Source: IRS elaboration on data from European Parliament's website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/full-list.html>

**Women are still poorly represented among the EP management positions.** Out of 12 deputy secretary-general and director-general positions, only 16.7 % are women (two positions), compared to the goal for 2019 of 30 % set in 2017 by the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity.

Overall, in October 2018 the share of women among directorates-general is 28 %, but data show a high variability as shown in Figure 3 below. Half (7 out of 14) of the directorates-general are composed by males only, while the other 7 show an average of 50 % female representation, with four of them showing more women than men. The situation has not improved from 2013, when the average share of women among directorates-general was 33 %.

The share of women is slightly higher among heads of units (35.6 % compared to the goal for 2019 of 40 %).

**Figure 3: Number of women and men among directorates-general (October 2018)**

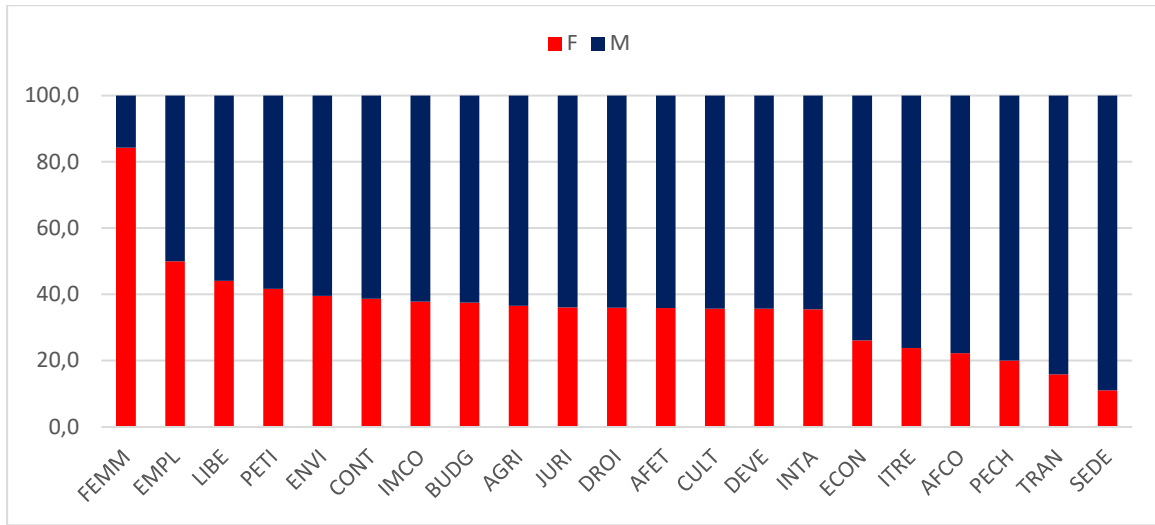


Source: IRS elaboration on data from European Parliament's website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/the-secretary-general/en/organisation.html>

Finally, the proportion of **women experts invited to EP hearings as speakers** in the period considered was on average 35.4 %, with the highest share in FEMM, as may be expected (43 women and 8 men)<sup>26</sup>. The proportion of women experts invited to EP hearings over the period considered was below average in ECON, ITRE, AFCO, PECH, TRAN and SEDE – only 11 % of female speakers (Figure 4).

<sup>26</sup> The figures are own elaborations on the information available on EP's website

Figure 4: Share of women experts invited in hearings as speakers: October 2017-October 2018



Source: IRS elaboration on data from European Parliament's website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/the-secretary-general/en/organisation.html>

### 3. FEMM ACTIVITIES BETWEEN JULY 2017 AND JULY 2018 AND THEIR POTENTIAL IMPACT

#### KEY FINDINGS

- In the period under examination, the FEMM Committee carried out nine own-initiative reports (INIs), one non-legislative report, thirteen opinions, while no legislative reports were drafted. Furthermore, FEMM tabled 213 gender amendments to six reports of the other committees.
- The own-initiative reports are a very useful tool that FEMM can use to prepare for the introduction of a gender perspective in fields in which gender is less considered, thus contributing to increasing the accreditation of these fields in gender terms. In the period of reference, FEMM INI reports covered two main issues: women's empowerment, especially economic empowerment, and violence against women, addressing these themes also in the framework of other fields (e.g. use of the media or climate change).
- The FEMM opinions mostly tackled issues on the EU agenda of gender equality: gender equality on the labour market, preventing and fighting gender-based violence, gender in education, respect of human rights and, in particular for gender equality in third countries and EU MSs.
- Almost half (47.5 %) of the suggestions provided by FEMM were included in the final reports of the committees to which they were provided. CONT, JURI, EMPL and AFET are the committees with the highest percentage (i.e. over 50 %) of acceptance of FEMM's suggestions. On the contrary, LIBE and BUDG are those with the lowest level (i.e. less than 50 %).
- Most of FEMM's opinions (8 out of 13) in the analysed period had a high gender impact, i.e. over half of the suggestions provided were included totally or partially in the final report. FEMM's work registered the highest level of gender impact in AFET, CONT, CULT, EMPL and JURI committees and the lowest in BUDG.
- The inclusion of FEMM's suggestions in the other committee's reports does not seem to depend on the number of female rapporteurs in the respective committee or the political affiliation of the rapporteurs of FEMM's and the other committees. However, it seems to be influenced by the importance of the issues tackled by the suggestions of FEMM.
- Over half (i.e. 63 %) of FEMM's gender amendments included in the positions in form of amendments were taken into consideration by the other committees. EMPL, LIBE and PETI showed the highest rates of inclusion of FEMM's gender amendments, while ECON has the lowest level.
- The low rates of inclusion of FEMM's opinions and gender amendments in the committees dealing with financial issues show a difficulty integrating gender issues in the budgetary cycle.

The main aim of this chapter is to present and analyse the main activities carried out by FEMM in the period between July 2017 and July 2018.

The chapter starts with the analysis of FEMM non-legislative and own-initiative reports drafted in the period under examination. No legislative reports were drafted by FEMM in this period, not even under the joint committee procedure<sup>27</sup>.

It then considers the opinions produced by FEMM to the reports of other EP committees, and the positions produced in the form of amendments (previously called gender mainstreaming amendments – GMAs) tabled by FEMM directly to the reports of other committees.

### 3.1. FEMM's non-legislative and own-initiative reports (INIs)

Within the reference period, FEMM drafted nine own-initiative reports and one non-legislative report. Of these, five were drafted according to the joint committee and are analysed in the next paragraph.

FEMM – like other EP committees – can draft reports on issues within its competence. These reports are called 'own-initiative reports' (INIs) and are used to put an issue on the political agenda and provide for an EP opinion on this issue through a motion for a resolution adopted in plenary<sup>28</sup>.

Table 3 below shows the list of the INIs drafted by FEMM between July 2017 and July 2018.

These reports deal with issues not always easily associated with gender equality (for example climate change, green jobs, justice system). They can be deemed as a very useful tool that FEMM can use to prepare for the introduction of a gender perspective also in other than 'usual' fields, thus contributing to an increase in the accreditation in gender terms of these fields.

As shown by the table, the FEMM Committee devoted great attention to two main issues: women's empowerment (especially economic empowerment) and violence against women; its own-initiative reports are focused on these topics. Some reports are directly addressed to these specific issues, while others are addressed to other themes (e.g. the role of the media, climate change and EU priorities for the sixty-second session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women) but their specific contents are articulated, especially with reference to both these topics.

**Women's economic empowerment** is a very relevant topic especially if we consider the Europe 2020 strategy goal that establishes to close the gender gap in employment and achieve 75 % of men and women in employment by 2020. Moreover, women's economic rights and empowerment is one of four areas for action of the Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 released by the Commission, while 'reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women' is one of the priorities defined by the Commission's document *Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019*.

All these objectives are reaffirmed in many of the FEMM own-initiative reports analysed, including the *Report on women's economic empowerment in the private and public sectors in the EU (2017/2008(INI))*. This report reiterates that women's economic participation and empowerment are key concepts for strengthening their fundamental rights, enabling them to have control over their lives and to exert influence in society. In particular, women's equal participation in the labour market and in economic decision-making are considered preconditions for women's empowerment and the consequences of it. Moreover, women's economic empowerment is also instrumental for the EU's economic growth.

<sup>27</sup> Rule 55 of EP's Rules of Procedure.

<sup>28</sup> See EP's Rules of Procedure, Rule 52.

The report points out that women are disproportionately and often involuntarily concentrated in precarious work. An effective work-life balance could lead to a more 'equal earner/equal carer' model in the division of roles between women and men. Furthermore, it underlines the importance of education in combating gender stereotypes that hamper women from reaching economic empowerment.

Linked to women's economic empowerment is the issue of **mobbing and sexual harassment at the workplace**, in public spaces and political life on which the FEMM Committee focused its attention in a specific own-initiative report<sup>29</sup>. In the report, Member States are invited to introduce policies and measures to prevent and contrast these phenomena, including measures to ensure equal pay between women and men, as means to avoid the abuse of power. The report stresses that companies should have a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment, and that they must ensure that all employees are aware of reporting procedures and of their rights and responsibilities in relation to sexual harassment in the workplace. As this report demonstrates, there is an urgent need for increased knowledge, for example through the collection of relevant disaggregated comparable data, and an understanding of the risks and consequences of violence and harassment at work, in public spaces and in political life in order to find possible ways and methods to address them.

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<sup>29</sup> See: Report on measures to prevent and combat mobbing and sexual harassment at workplace, in public spaces, and political life in the EU (2018/2055(INI))



**Table 3 : Overview of FEMM non-legislative reports and own-initiative reports (INIs)**

Procedure Reference and date	Title of the FEMM report	Rapporteur (name and political party)	Gender policy topics
19.7.2017	<b>INTERIM REPORT</b> on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion, by the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (COM(2016)0109 – 2016/0062(NLE))	LIBE: <b>Christine Revault D’Allonnes Bonnefoy</b> (S&D) FEMM + substitute member LIBE: <b>Anna Maria Corazza Bildt</b> (EPP)	<b>Violence against women</b> and domestic violence
13.9.2017	<b>REPORT</b> on women’s economic empowerment in the private and public sectors in the EU (2017/2008(INI))	FEMM: <b>Anna Hedh</b> (S&D)	Gender equality in economic fields ( <b>women’s empowerment</b> )
18.12.2017	<b>REPORT</b> on women, gender equality and climate justice (2017/2086(INI))	FEMM: <b>Linnéa Engström</b>	Gender equality with attention to <b>women’s empowerment</b> also in relation to climate change
5.2.2018	<b>REPORT</b> on a European Parliament recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (2017/2194(INI))	FEMM: <b>Izaskun Bilbao Barandica</b> and <b>Ángela Vallina</b>	Gender equality with reference to <b>women’s empowerment</b> (with specific attention to rural women) as well as women’s access to the media and media contents’ impact on the empowerment of women
6.2.2018	<b>REPORT</b> on gender equality in EU trade agreements (2017/2015(INI))	FEMM: <b>Malin Björk</b> (GUE/NGL) INTA: <b>Eleonora Forenza</b> (GUE/NGL)	Gender equality in economic topics ( <b>women’s empowerment</b> )
23.2.2018	<b>REPORT</b> on gender equality in the media sector in the EU (2017/2210(INI))	FEMM: <b>Michaela Šojdrová</b> (PPE)	Gender equality in communication activities. Attention to stereotypes and model roles sent by the media with reference to negative effects both in terms of <b>women’s empowerment and gender violence</b>

Procedure Reference and date	Title of the FEMM report	Rapporteur (name and political party)	Gender policy topics
14.3.2018	<b>REPORT</b> on the implementation of Directive 2011/99/EU on the European Protection Order (2016/2329(INI))	LIBE: <b>Soraya Post</b> (S&D)  FEMM + substitute member LIBE: <b>Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio</b> (S&D)	Gender equality with reference to justice systems ( <b>violence against women</b> )
7.5.2018	<b>REPORT</b> on the implementation of the Joint Staff Working Document SWD(2015)0182 – Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020 (2017/2012(INI))	DEVE: <b>Linda McAvan</b> (S&D)  FEMM: <b>Dubravka Šuica</b> (PPE)	Gender equality with specific reference to role of women in development and mainstreaming of a gender perspective in EU external relations ( <b>women's empowerment</b> )
14.5.2018	<b>REPORT</b> on the implementation of Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime (2016/2328(INI))	FEMM + substitute member LIBE: <b>Angelika Mlinar</b> (ALDE)  LIBE: <b>Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio</b> (S&D)	Gender equality with reference to the justice system and victim's rights ( <b>violence against women</b> )
18.7.2018	<b>REPORT</b> on measures to prevent and combat mobbing and sexual harassment at workplace, in public spaces, and political life in the EU (2018/2055(INI))	FEMM: <b>Pina Picierno</b> (S&D)	Sexual harassment and mobbing are two widespread forms of gender-based discrimination that have its roots in gender stereotyping and sexism ( <b>violence against women</b> )

Beyond the mobbing and sexual harassment, the issue of **violence against women** is widely dealt with by the FEMM reports in the period under examination, especially under the joint committee procedure, with other committees. Gender-based violence, both physical and psychological, is in fact widespread in Europe and is considered as an extreme form of discrimination and a violation of human rights affecting women at all levels of society. Gender-based violence is both a cause and a consequence of inequalities between women and men. Only a mix of policies combining legislative and non-legislative measures (such as infrastructural, legal, judicial, cultural, educational, social and health actions, and measures to facilitate victims' access to housing and employment), as well as equal participation of women in all areas of society, can significantly reduce this phenomenon and its consequences. Finally, this topic is also particularly relevant due to modern forms of slavery and human trafficking, which mainly affect women and are still persistent in Europe. For these reasons, FEMM reports promote the development of an integrated policy in the fight against all forms of violence against women, especially regarding the monitoring, interpretation and implementation of EU laws, programmes and funds relevant in this field.

The FEMM Committee pays particular attention to equality between men and **women in the media sector**. This issue is addressed in two reports. The *Report on gender equality in the media sector in the EU* (2017/2210(INI)) focuses on the situation of women working in the media as reporters or commentators, but also draws attention to the lack of women in decision-making positions in this field. Beyond the women's presence in the media, particular attention is also devoted to media contents in a gender perspective. The role of the media as an agent of social change and its influence in the shaping of public opinion is stressed. Member States are called to promote content on gender equality in public media since violent and sexist media content is negatively affecting women and their participation in society. For this purpose, the report shows various examples of good practice that can be observed in all Member States. These include: media campaigns, specific legislation, awards or anti-awards for stereotypical and sexist advertising, databases of women experts, training courses for industry professionals, and media organisations' equality plans, codes of conduct and equal opportunity and diversity policies, and the minimum thresholds set for representation of the sexes in the governing bodies of media regulators. Also, the *Report on a European Parliament recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the sixty-second session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women* (2017/2194(INI)) deals with the crucial role for society played by the media with particular reference to its use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women.

Finally, gender equality is also considered as a prerequisite for **sustainable development and the efficient management of climate change**<sup>30</sup>. The possibilities for integration of climate change mitigation goals and women's economic empowerment objectives are recognised by the FEMM, particularly in developing countries. Women are not only victims, but they can also be powerful agents of change and formulate efficient climate strategies. Women's labour participation in rural areas, for example, can lead to a sustainable and ecologically sound agriculture through the creation of green jobs.

### 3.1.1. FEMM's reports under the joint committee procedure (Article 55)

As underlined in the previous report, the possibility of drafting reports jointly, especially legislative reports, is very important for FEMM activities. For this particular procedure, FEMM is recognised as

<sup>30</sup> See: Report on women, gender equality and climate justice (2017/2086(INI))

being on an equal footing with the other competent committees. Inevitably, this provides for a stronger role than when drafting opinions, even under the associated committee procedure<sup>31</sup>.

Unlike in the period considered in the previous 2014 study, in the last 12 months the FEMM Committee did not draft any legislative reports under the joint committee procedure<sup>32</sup>. However, it drafted five reports under the joint committee procedure with other committees: four own-initiative reports and one non-legislative report.

Three of these documents concern the gender violence issue and they are carried out with the LIBE Committee. In particular, two of these reports concern the assessment of the effective application of two legislative proposals of the Commission that were previously drawn up and jointly negotiated by the FEMM and LIBE Committees:

- the directive on rights, support and protection of victims of crime: minimum standards<sup>33</sup>
- the European Protection Order<sup>34</sup>

As underlined in the previous study, this cooperation was a good practice not only in terms of inclusion of gender issues, but also for the cooperation between LIBE and FEMM, considering that the process leading to the attribution of the joint committee procedure was quite long, and problematic at the outset. The cooperation produced very good results for both committees involved, which had/have the opportunity to integrate their own specific competences.

With reference to the drafting of the directive, the intervention of FEMM in the *Report on the implementation of Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime (2016/2328(INI))* resulted in improvements in the analysis from the gender mainstreaming point of view.

LIBE and FEMM committees worked together to draft the report, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure (Article 55). The report aims at assessing the implementation of Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime in EU Member States. In particular, it focuses on its coherence, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. In doing so, it covers various aspects of the application of the directive: the legal transposition measures at the Member States level, the practical implementation of the directive on the ground, the benefits it has provided to victims, as well as the challenges encountered.

More precisely, a broad non-discrimination principle is considered in all its aspects. In particular, shortcomings in the implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive have been reported from a gender perspective, among which are:

- ensuring specialist support services for victims of gender-based violence owing to their particular vulnerability to secondary and repeat victimisation (lack of women's shelters may constitute a risk to life);
- guaranteeing rapid, efficient and victim-sensitive procedures in criminal court cases that take account of the specific needs of the most vulnerable groups.

<sup>31</sup> Rule 54 of EP's Rules of Procedure.

<sup>32</sup> Rule 55 of EP's Rules of Procedure.

<sup>33</sup> Jiménez-Becerril Barrio/Parvanova, procedure 2011/0129(COD); [Directive 2012/29OJ L 315 14.11.2012, p.0057.](#)

<sup>34</sup> Jiménez-Becerril Barrio/Romero López, procedure 2010/0802(COD); [Directive 2011/99OJ L 338 21.12.2011, p.0002.](#)

The gender-related specifications and recommendations to the Commission and to the Member States for the further implementation of the directive in the future regard five specific areas:

- individual assessment,
- victim support services,
- training,
- cross-border dimension,
- procedural rights.

In particular, the FEMM Committee underlines that all **individual assessments should be gender sensitive**, given that women victims of gender-based violence require special attention and protection owing to a high risk of repeated victimisation, and that specialist support should therefore be ensured. In addition, victim support services should be improved (**women's shelters and women's centres**) to meet the needs of differently-abled women and migrant women. In the report, the Commission and the Member States are called on to provide **gender-sensitive training programmes and guidelines for all professionals** involved in dealing with the victims of crime, especially healthcare professionals, because they are key actors in recognising the victims of domestic violence. The report also recommends that Member States pay attention to procedural rights in a gender perspective. Member States are called on to set up confidential and anonymous procedures for reporting crimes, particularly in cases of sexual abuse and the abuse of disabled people and minors, as well as setting up campaigns to encourage women to report any kind of gender-based violence. Moreover, incidents of domestic violence have to be taken into account when determining custody and visitation rights. The report also highlights the importance of collecting relevant disaggregated comparable data on all crimes, particularly when it comes to violence against women and human trafficking, in order to ensure a better understanding of the problem and improve Member States' action to support victims.

Some details on the main gender references included in the report are provided in the following box.

**Box 1: An example of the joint committee procedure: REPORT on the implementation of Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime (2016/2328(INI))**

Below are some of the main references to gender equality issues included in the report:

(p. 5) Highlights the vital importance of conducting the first contact with the victim properly, especially in the case of victims of gender-based violence (...).

Among the recommendations *on individual assessment*:

(p. 16) Recalls that all individual assessments should be gender sensitive, given that women (...) require special attention and protection owing to a high risk of repeated victimisation and that specific measures and specialist support should therefore be ensured.

Among recommendations *on the victim support services*:

(p. 17) Calls on the Member States to provide, increase the number and improve the accessibility of women's shelters and women's centres, (...) and to ensure that women survivors of violence are never refused a place; insists that services need to be expanded to more adequately meet the needs of differently-abled women and migrant women, including undocumented migrant women; stresses that such services should also include non-residential specialist support, such as information and advice, court accompaniment and outreach services; (...) considers that women's

shelters should be available 24 hours a day and free of charge for women and their children, so that women can feel safe and able to report gender-based violence.

Among recommendations *on training*:

(p. 21) Calls on the Commission and the Member States to provide gender-sensitive training programmes and guidelines for all professionals involved in dealing with the victims of crime, such as lawyers, police officers, prosecutors, judges, health professionals, social workers (...);

(p. 24) Underlines the fact that healthcare professionals are key to recognising the victims of domestic violence, since violence against women in close relationships affects both physical and mental health in the long term; calls on the Member States to ensure that information about victim support services and victims' rights is accessible to health professionals, and to provide targeted training for a wide range of healthcare professionals (...), with a view to enabling health professionals to identify cases of potential abuse (...).

Among recommendation *on cross-border dimension*:

(p. 26). Calls on the Member States to make the procedures more flexible and speed up the process of forwarding the judgements for gender-based violence handed down in a country, particularly in the case of international couples, so that the authorities in the countries which the spouses come from can act accordingly as soon as possible and prevent custody of their children being given to a father accused of gender-based violence in another country.

Among recommendation *on procedural rights*:

(p. 29). Calls, in particular, for Member States to set up confidential and anonymous procedures for reporting crimes, particularly in cases of sexual abuse and the abuse of disabled people and minors, with a view to monitoring and evaluating the number of reports and ensuring that undocumented victims can lodge complaints without the risk of immigration-related consequences;

(p. 30). Calls on the Member States to step up legal measures in criminal procedures guaranteeing the protection of child victims, including the specific needs of the child victims of gender-based violence, particularly in cases where the child's mother is murdered by their partner, throughout the entirety of criminal proceedings, and to ensure that they receive assistance and social and psychological support, in order to prevent the secondary victimisation;

(p. 31). Calls on the Member States to take into account significant incidents of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, when determining custody and visitation rights (...);

(p. 35). Calls on the Member States to actively engage in campaigns to prevent gender-based violence and re-victimisation in the justice system and in the media, and to promote a cultural change in public opinion in order to prevent victim-blaming attitudes or behaviours, which may result in additional trauma for the victims (...);

(p. 41). Highlights the importance of relevant disaggregated comparable data, particularly when it comes to violence against women and human trafficking, in order to ensure a better understanding of the problem, and to raise awareness, assess and improve Member States' action;

(p. 42). (...) calls on all Member States and the EU to ratify and fully enforce the CoE Istanbul Convention to prevent and combat violence against women and girls (...);

(p. 47). (...) calls on the seven Member States that have not yet done so to legislate to make stalking a criminal offence, as called for by Article 34 of the Istanbul Convention. This should be done on the basis of the relevant provisions in the Victims' Rights Directive on the right to protection of privacy,

the right to protection and, in particular, the right to avoid contact with the offender or with other potential perpetrators or accomplices;

(p. 52). (...) insists that the Member States make sure to increase funding for NGOs working in the area of women's rights and victim's rights (...);

(p. 58). Calls on the Member States to ensure stronger protection for the victims of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, as a means to improve access to justice and the efficiency of criminal proceedings;

(p. 61). Calls on the Member States to establish adequate quality control mechanisms for assessing whether they have met the requirements for gender-sensitive and women/child-friendly standards as regards provisions made by victim support services to encourage the reporting of crimes and protect victims effectively;

(p. 78). Reiterates its call on the Commission to present, as soon as possible, a European strategy for preventing and combating all forms of gender-based violence, including a legal act to support the Member States in the prevention and suppression of all forms of violence against women and girls and of gender-based violence; reiterates its call on the Council to activate the passerelle clause by adopting a unanimous decision to identify violence against women and girls (and other forms of gender-based violence) as a criminal offence under Article 83(1) TFEU;

(p. 81) Calls on the Commission to include the priority of safeguarding personal security and the protection of all individuals from gender-based and interpersonal violence in the European Agenda on Security.

The second initiative report concerns the *Implementation of Directive 2011/99/EU on the European Protection Order* (2016/2329(INI)). Although protection orders could be applied to anyone in need of protection, in practice such measures are mostly applied to protect women in cases related to intimate or domestic violence, harassment, stalking or sexual assault. For this reason, this matter is highly relevant in a gender perspective.

Protection orders, in fact, are meant to protect a person against an act that may endanger their life, physical or psychological integrity. The aim is to avoid contacts between an offender and an individual/victim at risk of being assaulted or reassaulted. The provision of the European Protection Order enforces the protection because it allows those who already benefit from a protection order in criminal matters issued in one Member State to have it recognised and enforced in another Member State; it is an instrument based on the principle of mutual recognition.

This report represented an opportunity for the rapporteurs of both LIBE and FEMM committees to assess how the mechanism set up by such directive was applied in the Member States. The report, in particular, underlined the very limited use of this instrument to date and that this fact is striking given the number of victims who are benefiting from protection measures in criminal matters at the level of Member States. Furthermore, the report stresses that the directive has not led to a convergence of the diversity of national measures: the different national systems for the protection of victims are maintained and the internal legislation on the protection of victims has not been substantially modified.

The third is a non-legislative act and it relates to the *Proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion, by the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence* (COM (2016)0109 – 2016/0062(NLE)).

The Istanbul Convention is in fact a mixed agreement, which allows for accession by the EU in parallel to accession by its Member States. The European Parliament considers that by acceding to the convention, the EU will become a more efficient global actor in the field of women's rights. It regrets, however, the limitation of the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention to only two areas, i.e. matters related to judicial cooperation in criminal matters, and asylum and non-refoulement. According to the report, this contributes to raising legal uncertainties as to the scope of the EU's accession, as well as concerns regarding the implementation of the convention.

The EU accession to the convention also constituted the opportunity for the Parliament to ask the Member States to speed up negotiations on the ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention and to enforce the convention by allocating adequate financial and human resources to prevent and combat violence against women as well as to empower women and girls. Also particularly relevant is the recommendation addressed to the Commission to draw up a holistic EU strategy on combating violence against women and gender-based violence that includes a comprehensive plan to combat all forms of gender inequalities, integrating all EU efforts to eradicate violence against women.

Finally, two other reports were carried out under the joint committee procedure, as they deal with issues of interest to both FEMM and other two committees: the Committee on Development and the Committee on International Trade.

The *Report on the implementation of the Joint Staff Working Document: SWD (2015)0182 – Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020* (2017/2012(INI)). This was drafted with the Committee on Development, and intends to promote the EU's commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment through the Union's external relations. It also stresses the need to ensure coherence among all existing EU external instruments and policies in their relation to gender mainstreaming. In particular, it takes into account the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) II 2016-2020 (GAP II), adopted by the EU Council on 26 October 2015, which is the framework for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the EU's external relations. It underlines that the three thematic pillars of the GAP II<sup>35</sup> are intended to tackle the main factors involved in discrimination and marginalisation as well as the horizontal pillar aimed at shifting the institutional culture of the Commission's services and the EEAS. This is in order to deliver on the EU's commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment more effectively through the Union's external relations. The report also notes that adequate funding for gender equality in external relations will be necessary to sustain political commitment to this goal, and it encourages Parliament's delegations, in their work with their partner countries, to enquire systematically about gender programming and women's empowerment, as well as to include meetings with women's organisations in their mission programmes. In addition, it calls on Parliament to ensure a better gender balance in the membership of its delegations.

The *Report on gender equality in EU trade agreements* (2017/2015(INI)) carried out with the Committee on International Trade. The report is particularly interesting in a gender perspective because it is based on the concept that trade is not gender neutral and trade policies have gender-specific effects. In the trade policy area, however, matters pertaining to gender equality are not dealt with in a systematic manner. Moreover, women and men are employed in different sectors of the economy. The majority of women work in sectors such as agriculture, the informal and unpaid care sector, or as seasonal workers, and despite being essential contributors to the global economy, women remain invisible in trade policies. The objective of the report has thus been to present concrete recommendations on what

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<sup>35</sup> 1. Ensuring girls' and women's physical and psychological integrity; 2. Promoting the economic and social rights and the empowerment of girls and women; 3. Strengthening girls' and women's voice and participation.



the EU could do to incorporate a gender mainstreaming approach into trade policy, including remedying the lack of gender perspectives and expertise in the negotiation of trade agreements and in impact assessments.

### 3.2. FEMM opinions

The main aim here is to assess the 'impact'<sup>36</sup> of suggestions included in FEMM opinions by analysing if, and to what extent, FEMM contributions have been integrated in the reports adopted by the respective committees.

The analysis started from FEMM's opinion to identify the main suggestions provided by FEMM and the gender issues tackled by these. The next step included an analysis of the final report of the committee assess to which extent it took into consideration the suggestions tabled by FEMM in the proposal presented in the plenary.

The analysis was carried out through a desk analysis of FEMM's opinions and the respective committee's final report in the period July 2017-July 2018.

For each opinion, a grid was created. The grid included the following issues:

- details on the procedure and the actors involved: e.g. type of procedure, committee and political group responsible for the act, rapporteur of FEMM and of the respective committee, number of votes;
- the main issues covered in the FEMM opinion regarding women's rights and gender equality;
- the gender suggestions included in the committee's final report, i.e. fully or partially;
- other gender issues included in the committee's final report independently of those proposed by FEMM;
- synthetic analysis of the gender impact of FEMM's suggestions in the final report of the respective committee: i.e. low (less than 10 % of the suggestions tabled by FEMM included in the final report); medium (less than 50 % of suggestions tabled by FEMM included in the report); high (more than 50 % of FEMM's suggestions included in the committee's report).

#### 3.2.1. FEMM's opinions and integration in the proposals

The analysis includes **13 opinions** that FEMM drafted in the **period July 2017-July 2018**.

The opinions drafted by FEMM in this period focused mainly on the following issues:

- gender equality on the labour market;
- fighting gender stereotypes and discrimination, in particular educational settings and through educational programmes;
- gender budgeting;
- gender mainstreaming in EU funds in all policy areas;
- ensuring adequate financial resources to EU institutions and programmes promoting gender equality;

<sup>36</sup> In this paragraph, the word impact is used in quotation marks as a synonym for effect with no relation to any counterfactual analysis.

- gender violence, including in social media, against indigenous people and early and forced marriages;
- fighting sex tourism, sexual exploitation and human trafficking in particular of girls and women;
- gender dimension of migration and asylum policies;
- promoting the respect of human rights and, in particular for gender equality, in third countries and EU MSs (e.g. Hungary).

In some cases, suggestions provided by FEMM tackle gender equality in an indirect way. This is mostly the case of some of the suggestions regarding employment, in particular of young people, human rights and violence:

*Suggestion 3. Stresses that setting and ensuring minimum standards on the quality of employment offered within the framework of the YEI is of the utmost importance, should be safeguarded for all young people (re-) entering the labour market and should not only take account of their professional/occupational profile and labour market demand, but should also include: contract-based employment, decent working and living conditions, decent salaries, social security and pension rights, access to childcare facilities, periods of leave, holidays and permanent employment. (Report on the implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative in the Member States – 2017/2039.)*

*Suggestion 13. Calls on the Member States to continue implementing the YEI, while remedying its weaknesses, and to ensure the continuation of financing YEI during the period of the next multiannual financial framework (MFF). (Report on the implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative in the Member States – 2017/2039.)*

*Suggestion 12. Invites the Commission to invest in continuous transnational child victim identification programmes by assisting the Member States in their forensic capacities and cooperating in this area, including in the development of specialised human resources and equipment. (Opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality for the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs on the implementation of Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, 2015/2129 INI.)*

*Suggestion 13. Calls on the Member States when identifying potential victims to devote closer attention to vulnerable groups of children, such as Roma children, children with mental disabilities and refugee children, especially unaccompanied minors and child asylum seekers in detention who are at risk of sexual abuse and exploitation in institutions, refugee camps or asylum centres; emphasises the importance, therefore, of measures such as performing background checks on staff, social workers and volunteers who are in contact with children, establishing reporting systems and providing assistance to victims; reiterates, in this regard, that support measures for victims are important not only during the investigation of sexual abuse or exploitation, but also at a later stage, in order to help them overcome post-traumatic stress and receive appropriate medical and psychological advice and legal aid; calls on the Member States to improve the communication capability of judges, public prosecutors and police officers when investigating the sexual abuse or exploitation of children, with a focus on communication with children with special needs, and to promote other measures focused on the prevention of secondary victimisation. (Opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality for the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs on the implementation of Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, 2015/2129 INI.)*

The 13 opinions produced by FEMM in the analysed period were drafted for seven committees: AFET, BUDG, CONT, CULT, EMPL, JURI and LIBE. In this period, most of the opinions were drafted for AFET (three opinions) and BUDG (three opinions).

When looking at the number of suggestions tabled (Table 4), it can be seen that AFET and LIBE received 60 % of the 259 suggestions tabled by FEMM in this period. This is due to the relevance of gender issues in the EU external cooperation and in the pursuit of human rights. BUDG followed with 13 % of the suggestions tabled in the analysed period. CONT received 6 % of the suggestions tabled by FEMM, EMPL and JURI 7 %, and CULT 8 %.

**Table 4 : FEMM suggestions by committee for which the opinions were drafted and by level of inclusion (fully or partially)**

Committee	No of Opinions	No of Suggestions	Fully Approved	Partially Approved	% Fully+ Partially Approved	% Women in the Committee
AFET	3	87	39	12	58.6 %	20.5 %
BUDG	3	33	1	4	15.2 %	26.9 %
CONT	2	16	13	-	81.3 %	16.7 %
CULT	1	20	8	3	55.0 %	41.9 %
EMPL	1	19	12	1	68.4 %	49.1 %
JURI	1	18	1	12	72.2 %	40.0 %
LIBE	2	66	14	3	25.8 %	50.0 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>47.5 %</b>	

As shown in Table 4, almost half (47.5 %) of the suggestions tabled by FEMM were taken into account by the respective committees. **CONT, JURI, EMPL and AFET** took into account over **half of the suggestions** provided by FEMM. On the contrary, **LIBE and BUDG** integrated **less than half of the suggestions** provided by FEMM. **BUDG** is the committee with the **lowest percentage of inclusion** of FEMM's suggestions (15 %). Compared to the period considered in the previous report (between July 2011 and February 2013), the share of suggestions partially or fully approved has increased in all the Committees involved, although the ranking remains the same with CONT, JURI and EMPL showing the highest rate of inclusion, and BUDG and LIBE the lowest.

**Most of FEMM's suggestions** integrated in the committee's final report (72 %) were **taken into account integrally**, while the rest were considered only partially. AFET is the committee with the highest level of full integration of FEMM's suggestions, while BUDG and JURI are those with the lowest level of full inclusion.

### 3.2.2. Assessment of the opinion's gender impact

The 13 opinions were analysed and assessed according to the level of impact in the final version of the acts for which they were drafted. The impact was measured according to the number<sup>37</sup> of suggestions/amendments originally proposed by FEMM that were accepted by the respective committee to whom they were addressed (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Gender impact of FEMM opinions on reports of other committee**

Committee	No of Opinions	Absent	Low	Medium	High
AFET	3	-	-	-	3
BUDG	3	1	-	2	-
CONT	2	-	-	-	2
CULT	1	-	-	-	1
EMPL	1	-	-	-	1
JURI	1	-	-	-	1
LIBE	2	-	-	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>

Most of the opinions provided by FEMM in this period had a high impact, i.e. over half of the suggestions tabled by it were included in the reports of AFET, CONT, CULT, EMPL and JURI. Compared to the period considered in the previous report, the share of FEMM opinions with a high impact has strongly increased in all the committees involved.

The table below presents the main gender issues tackled by the suggestions integrated in the report of these committees.

**Table 6 : Gender issues proposed by FEMM and considered in the reports AFET, CONT, CULT, EMPL, JURI**

Committee	Gender issues tackled by FEMM's suggestions integrated in the reports of the Committee
AFET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect of human rights of indigenous people and in particular of women and girls;</li> <li>• gender mainstreaming in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies;</li> <li>• gender dimension of climate migration;</li> <li>• fight against gender violence: i.e. fighting violence against indigenous women and girls, fighting child, early and forced marriage, fighting sexual abuse and female genital mutilation;</li> </ul>

<sup>37</sup> A high 'impact' was assumed when more than 50 % of FEMM's suggestions were included, medium impact for less than 50 % of suggestions included, and low impact had to be assumed when less than 10 % of the suggestions tabled by FEMM were taken into account.

Committee	Gender issues tackled by FEMM's suggestions integrated in the reports of the Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prevention of gender-based violence through, for example, education, empowerment of women and girls, women's enhanced participation in decision-making processes and awareness raising campaigns;</li> <li>• respect of reproductive health rights and access to reproductive and other health services for women and girls;</li> <li>• support of international initiatives such as the Istanbul Convention and SheDecides;</li> <li>• increase in the role of EU in promoting human rights, including gender equality, at national, European and international level, making use of all instruments available to the European Commission and to the European External Action Service.</li> </ul>
CONT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implementation of gender budgeting at all stages of the budgetary process of the EU, including in its implementation and assessment of implementation;</li> <li>• increase in the resources allocated to the Daphne programme;</li> <li>• mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the European Fund for Strategic Investments that currently does not consider any gender aspects;</li> <li>• gender-specific indicators for monitoring the results of the EU budget;</li> <li>• gender budgeting in the next EU MFF;</li> <li>• EIGE annual budget;</li> <li>• further integration between the legislative and non-legislative priorities of EIGE and FEMM.</li> </ul>
CULT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gender equality in education curricula, programmes and systems;</li> <li>• inclusive education;</li> <li>• fight against gender stereotypes and all forms of discrimination and harassment in education;</li> <li>• benefits of sexual and relationship education for achieving gender equality;</li> <li>• promotion of gender equality in STEM;</li> <li>• promoting entrepreneurship education for increasing women's employment level;</li> <li>• promotion of gender equality into both initial and continuing teacher training, as well as in teaching practices;</li> <li>• gender mainstreaming in lifelong learning policies and in particular in the upskilling ones;</li> <li>• promotion of a European/national award centring on the issue of gender equality in educational institutions.</li> </ul>
EMPL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gender mainstreaming in the Youth Employment Initiative: e.g. gender equality for self-employed people within the YEI, gender equality in access to qualitative jobs, gender disaggregated data;</li> <li>• gender equality in access to employment, career progression and payment;</li> <li>• reconciliation of work and private life;</li> <li>• provision of childcare and adult care;</li> </ul>

Committee	Gender issues tackled by FEMM's suggestions integrated in the reports of the Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase budget of YEI and YG;</li> <li>• develop systemic solutions to address the high levels of youth unemployment that go beyond the YEI and YG.</li> </ul>
JURI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring EU law implementation and enforcement in order to foster equality between men and women (as a core principle of the European Union);</li> <li>• guaranteeing gender equality in practice: equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation, equal access to goods and services (e.g. education), equal pay for equal work, narrowing the gender pay gap;</li> <li>• increased attention to alternative instruments that would enable the wider implementation of EU law, especially the provisions concerning equality in terms of payment;</li> <li>• addressing rise in trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation, and in trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation;</li> <li>• collection of gender disaggregated data for evaluating the progress made in advancing women's rights.</li> </ul>

The work of FEMM had a medium impact in the case of LIBE, where less than half of the suggestions tabled by FEMM were taken into account in the report. Most of FEMM's suggestions included in its reports refer to preventing and fighting child work, early and forced marriages and to ensuring gender equality in Hungary.

FEMM's work had a lower impact in the case of BUDG. In this committee, one of the FEMM's opinions was not at all considered and in the other only 4 out of 33 suggestions provided by FEMM were considered. In these four, the issues taken into account refer to:

- i) the introduction of gender budgeting in the budgetary procedure in all budget lines, and not only in programmes where the gender impact is most obvious;
- ii) funding measures promoting and supporting good-quality education, employability, entrepreneurship and job creation for women and young people within ESIF and EAFRD;
- iii) taking into account the gender dimension in AMIF and migration policies, and the efficient use of AMIF funds for the integration of refugees, their families and asylum seekers;
- iv) filling in the financial gap left by the US in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

This shows a certain difficulty in considering gender aspects in the planning of the EU budget.

Overall, most of the FEMM's **suggestions taken into consideration** refer to **gender equality** in all aspects of **labour market policies**, **gender equality in education**, **gender equality in migration policies**, **preventing and fighting all forms of gender-based violence**, especially in the external context, and **gender budgeting**.

### 3.2.3. Assumptions on the reasons for inclusion or exclusion of suggestions/amendments of FEMM opinions in reports of other committees

The 2014 report *Study on gender mainstreaming in committees and delegations of the European Parliament* identified three main hypotheses for the inclusion of FEMM's suggestions in the work of other committees:

1. The inclusion of suggestions arising from FEMM opinions is related to the presence of female MEPs in the committee receiving the opinions<sup>38</sup>.
2. The inclusion of opinions and suggestions is related to political party concordance between the FEMM rapporteur and the rapporteur of the committee receiving the opinions<sup>39</sup>.
3. The inclusion of opinions and suggestions is related to the specific topics/issues they cover<sup>40</sup>.

The report concluded that there seemed to be no relation between the presence of women in the committee to which FEMM tabled opinions and to the political discordance/concordance and the number of FEMM's suggestions included in the work of the committee. However, according to the 2014 study the number of FEMM's suggestions included in the committee seemed to be influenced by the importance of the issues tackled by the FEMM opinion.

The present analysis seems to confirm this conclusion.

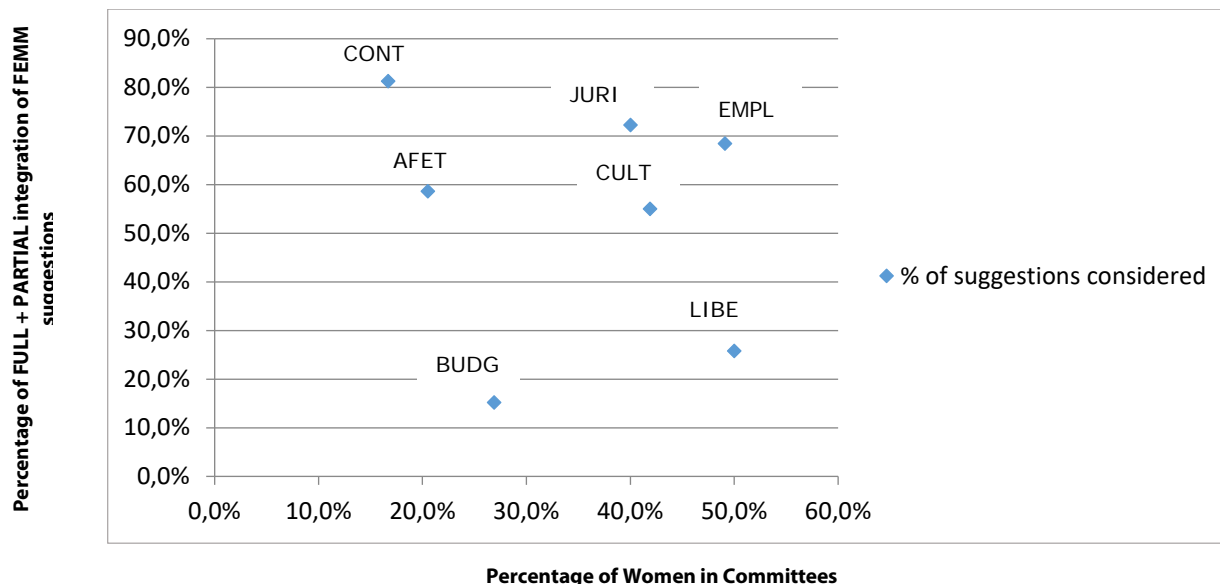
Concerning the first hypothesis, as shown in the figure below, there seems to be no relation between the share of women present in the committee and the inclusion of FEMM's suggestions. LIBE has the highest percentage of women, but among the lowest percentage of FEMM suggestions included. On the contrary, CONT has the lowest percentage of women, but the highest percentage of suggestions considered in the report.

<sup>38</sup> 'Among institutional mechanisms, it is assumed that "the success of a practice resides in the number of participants adhering to it" (Table 1.1.). The hypothesis is linked to the assumption that women are more in favour of women's rights and gender equality than men. The fact that the members of FEMM are almost all women could support this impression.' (European Parliament, 2014, Study on gender mainstreaming in committees and delegations of the European Parliament, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL-FEMM\\_ET\(2014\)493051](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL-FEMM_ET(2014)493051))

<sup>39</sup> 'This hypothesis refers to the social mechanism of "framing", which "entails the creation and maintenance of a shared view". Members who are part of the same political group could be perceived as more easily sharing the same view as the political group creates an environment of communication and cooperation as well as a certain "bandwagon" effect.' (European Parliament, 2014, Study on gender mainstreaming in committees and delegations of the European Parliament, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL-FEMM\\_ET\(2014\)493051](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL-FEMM_ET(2014)493051))

<sup>40</sup> According to the 2014 report, this hypothesis relates to the fact that 'issues high on the political agenda prompt more amendments as Members are keen to leave their mark in the outcome of a piece of legislation or a parliamentary statement on an issue which receives also public attention or at least attention in their constituency' (European Parliament, 2014, Study on gender mainstreaming in committees and delegations of the European Parliament, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL-FEMM\\_ET\(2014\)493051](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=IPOL-FEMM_ET(2014)493051)).

**Figure 5 <sup>41</sup> : Share of women in Committees and percentage of suggestions included in the reports**



Regarding the second hypothesis, the table below shows **that there is no correlation between the concordance/discordance of the political party of FEMM’s and the respective committees’ rapporteurs**. A party discordance can be noticed when both less than 50 % and more than 50 % of FEMM’s suggestions were considered in the respective committee’s report.

**Table 7 : Percentage of inclusion of FEMM opinion suggestions when rapporteurs are of the same political group and when not**

Committee	Percentage of suggestions included	Party concordance (%)	Party discordance (%)
AFET	58.6 %		100 %
BUDG	15.2 %	67 %	33 %
CONT	81.3 %	50 %	50 %
CULT	55.0 %	100 %	
EMPL	68.4 %		100 %
JURI	72.2 %		100 %
LIBE	25.8 %		100 %

Regarding the third hypothesis, as underlined in the previous chapter the main issues tackled by the suggestions considered in the analysed committee’s work refer to:

- gender equality on the labour market (e.g. gender equality in employment, equal pay, equal access to qualitative jobs, gender pay gap, female entrepreneurship, etc.), both in EU MSs and across the world;

<sup>41</sup> Each dot refers to a committee and shows the combination of two variables: the x-axis reflects the percentage of women in the committee; the y-axis reflects the percentage (full plus partial) of inclusion of opinions suggestions/amendments.



- preventing and fighting gender-based violence (e.g. fighting early and forced marriages, fighting human trafficking, fighting sexual violence against children and in particular girls, including on social media), in particular across the world;
- gender in education (e.g. fighting gender stereotypes in educational systems, gender equality in curricula, gender equality in lifelong learning);
- gender equality in access to services in the health area, with a particular focus on the reproductive services, in particular across the world;
- gender mainstreaming in migration policies;
- respect of gender equality as a principle enshrined in the EU law both in EU MSs (e.g. Hungary) and across the world;
- gender tools (e.g. gender budgeting, sex-disaggregated statistics, gender impact assessments).

**Most of these issues are high on the EU agenda on gender equality.** Indeed, most of them refer to the five priority areas identified in the Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019. (i.e. 'increasing female labour market participation and economic independence of women and men; reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women; promoting equality between women and men in decision-making; combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims; promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world<sup>42</sup>'). Furthermore, gender equality in employment and education is among the priorities of the EU 2020 Strategy agenda.

### 3.3. FEMM positions in form of amendments (GMAs)

In the period in question, FEMM MEPs tabled 213 GMAs to six reports. The table below presents an overview of the reports to which gender amendments were tabled.

**Table 8 : Overview of finalised reports to which GMAs were tabled**

Committee	Report Title	Rapporteur
Committee on Petitions	Report on the EU Citizenship Report 2017: Strengthening Citizens' Rights in a Union of Democratic Change	Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea
Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	Report on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism	Elisabetta Gardini
Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs	Report on the European Semester for economic policy coordination: Annual Growth Survey 2018	Hugues Bayet
Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	Report on fundamental rights aspects in Roma integration in the EU: fighting anti- Gypsyism	Soraya Post

<sup>42</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en)

Committee	Report Title	Rapporteur
Committee on Employment and Social Affairs	Report on implementation of the European Disability Strategy	Helga Stevens
	Report on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU	David Casa

Looking at these reports, 63 % of them have been accepted. The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on Petitions and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs have accepted over 50 % of the amendments tabled by FEMM. On the contrary, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs has the lowest percentage of inclusion of FEMM amendments.

Most of the amendments included in the committee's reports have been taken into account integrally.

**Table 9 : Overview of FEMM Gender Mainstreaming Amendments**

Committee	Number of amendments	Percentage of amendments approved (fully + partially)	Percentage of amendments fully approved	Percentage of amendments partially approved
Committee on Petitions	28	68 %	74 %	26 %
Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	15	27 %	100 %	-
Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs	12	8 %		100 %
Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	36	64 %	48 %	52 %
Committee on Employment and Social Affairs	122	71 %	78 %	22 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>63 %</b>	<b>72 %</b>	<b>28 %</b>

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### KEY FINDINGS

- Several social mechanisms can be identified in the EP decision-making process, relevant to successful implementation of gender mainstreaming in the work of all parliamentary committees. These are: those that generate engagement (creation of focusing events, framing, creating opportunity), those that enhance the actors' role and reputation (actors' certification, authority/reputation), and those related to increased networking capacity (at both the formal and informal level).
- Successful inclusion of a gender equality perspective in an EP legislative or non-legislative procedure largely depends, on the one hand, on the role attributed to FEMM and, on the other hand, on the reputation and authority of the FEMM rapporteur. This can be enhanced by public debate as it helps recognition of a gender perspective in a certain policy area.
- It also depends crucially on the importance of the different aspects of gender mainstreaming at the cultural, social and political levels. The effectiveness of FEMM strictly depends on the fact that the vast majority of MEPs consider gender issues as a fundamental aspect of the type of society that the Union is trying to build.
- The main tool that FEMM can use in this respect is careful planning of its own-initiative reports addressing issues that are either new or overlooked. In order to improve the potential of this instrument in raising awareness and stimulating debate, it seems necessary to focus specific attention on communication – again, inside and outside the EP – and to involve other related committees in drawing up the reports.
- The opportunity to plan own-initiative joint reports with other committees as well as the interaction during its preparation and communication could activate a precommitment mechanism, whereby it becomes very difficult for the second parliamentary committee involved to refuse close cooperation with FEMM in the joint or associated procedure at a later point.
- In order to increase their effectiveness, FEMM opinions could be more selective in choosing which should be proposed. Indeed, GMAs included in the positions in form of amendments seem to have greater chances of success than suggestions/amendments made in opinions, possibly also because very often, they are rather simple and in any case very precise.

Overall, the analysis of how and to what extent FEMM contributed to the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming in the EP's activities in the considered period confirms the results of the previous report.

The analysis yields evidence of a well-developed legal and institutional framework for gender mainstreaming. However, there is room for improvement in its internal procedures and networking among different bodies.

## 4.1. Main findings

### 4.1.1. Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament: legal framework, main actors, procedures and mechanisms affecting the success of FEMM activities

The study shows that several social mechanisms can be identified in the EP decision-making process, relevant to the successful implementation of gender mainstreaming in the work of all parliamentary committees.

As explained below, they call for FEMM interventions in several phases of the decision-making process with a view to influencing legislative or non-legislative procedures, so that a gender perspective can be successfully integrated. Generally speaking, for the inclusion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, mechanisms across the board can be strategically applied, i.e. those that generate engagement (creation of focusing events, framing, creating opportunity), those that enhance the actors' role and reputation (actors' certification, authority/reputation), and those related to increased networking capacity (at both the formal and informal level).

The analysis set out in Chapter 2 shows that the legal and institutional framework supporting gender mainstreaming in the EP is formally well developed. Dedicated bodies have been created and internal procedures have been introduced to incorporate a gender perspective into the legislative and non-legislative processes across all policy fields and the internal structures and bodies of the EP.

Three specific bodies are currently supporting gender mainstreaming in parliamentary activities: on the one hand, the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity (HLG), and the Gender Mainstreaming Networks of Members (GM network), and on the other hand, officials in committee secretariats. The three bodies have different roles.

- FEMM is the main body in charge of promoting women's rights and gender equality, including gender mainstreaming, in EP legislative and non-legislative processes. Like the other standing committees, it may act as the lead committee drafting reports, in exceptional cases on the same footing with another committee in the joint committee procedure. Besides, FEMM can draft opinions, on some occasions as a more influential associated committee, and table gender amendments to the reports of other committees.
- The High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity (HLG) has the responsibility of promoting and implementing gender mainstreaming within EP internal activities, structures and bodies.
- The Gender Mainstreaming Network of Members (GM network) is composed of chairs or vice-chairs (one for each committee) who have been appointed as responsible for implementing gender mainstreaming in the work of their committee. They are assisted by gender mainstreaming administrators. Both networks are coordinated by FEMM.

With regard to parliamentary procedures, the particular status of FEMM as a 'horizontal' committee with competence for women's rights and gender equality in all policy fields and with particular emphasis on women on the labour market merits particular attention. This status has significant consequences for its intervention capacity.

- FEMM is rarely in charge of the legislative procedure<sup>43</sup> and a major part of its activities concentrate on influencing the work of other committees so that gender aspects are integrated in all policy fields. While this entails extensive intervention capacity, it makes also FEMM dependent on the willingness of the other committees to accept its intervention provided through an opinion or tabling amendments.
- Like other MEPs, FEMM members are also members of several committees and delegations, which means a large network but also a very heavy workload. Personal commitment to women's rights and gender equality issues is therefore a precondition for motivated and continuous participation in FEMM activities.
- In addition, the small number of legislative procedures has the potential to lower the standing of FEMM among MEPs with a possibly negative effect on the commitment of its members. Analysis of FEMM activities and the interviews has however brought out the strong commitment of FEMM members to improve the inclusion of a gender perspective in European politics in all fields. This commitment is also reflected, according to members, in a good level of cooperation across political groups, compared to other committees.

Unfortunately, this update is only based on desk research<sup>44</sup> and these aspects have not been discussed with key stakeholders. However, the previous report showed how these aspects are particularly relevant because of the importance of 'accreditation' as a crucial social mechanism to be reinforced in order to support FEMM's role in implementing gender mainstreaming.

The status of FEMM as a committee with **fewer opportunities** to take the lead in the decision-making process regarding EU legislation has consequences for its intervention capacity, as explained above.

However, it could be argued that this status enhances FEMM's capacity to integrate a perspective on women's rights and gender equality into a broad range of the work of the EP. It could also do this through specific structures in place to facilitate gender mainstreaming throughout the legislative – and non-legislative – activities of the EP<sup>45</sup>. Besides, as underlined in Chapter 2, FEMM members are also members of the other standing committees, which could enable them to build up and use mechanisms that compensate for the possible negative effect created by the small number of legislative files in the remit of FEMM.

Given this backdrop, it is important for FEMM to use formal and informal tools to achieve inclusion of a gender perspective in all EP activities. In this respect, the study stresses the importance for FEMM of the initial phase of a parliamentary procedure, when the EP Presidency and the Conference of Presidents (CoP) select the responsible (lead) committee and the opinion-giving committee(s) and, occasionally, attribute joint or associated committee status. In this framework, the capacity of the FEMM President in supporting FEMM's request for the recognition of FEMM's role is particularly important. The FEMM Secretariat may also have an important role in this initial phase, because it prepares the files and supports the negotiations.

A second crucial phase is identification of rapporteurs for reports (lead committee) and opinions (opinion-giving committee). According to literature, the selection of a successful rapporteur is based on the activation of specific social mechanisms that heighten the actors' role and reputation (actors'

<sup>43</sup> In the period under examination FEMM committee has not been involved in the legislative procedures

<sup>44</sup> A survey to the members of the High Level Group of Gender Equality and Diversity was launched on 25 October, but unfortunately it was filled in only by one respondent. The arrangement of an interview with Angelika Mlinar, standing rapporteur for gender mainstreaming was not feasible in the short time frame available for this update.

<sup>45</sup> This can be related to mechanisms that develop better/smoothen networking.

certification, authority/reputation, etc.). Indeed, the rapporteur's success depends on their expertise, networking capacity (which is completely informal), political prestige and commitment to gender equality issues. Other relevant actors in this phase are the political group coordinators, the Secretariat and the policy advisors. Political group coordinators decide how reports and opinions should be distributed among their members according to a previously established points system, while the Secretariat and policy advisors provide technical assistance to the organisational aspects of the selection of the rapporteur, and support the interactions between the two committees.

To summarise, successful inclusion of a gender equality perspective in a legislative or non-legislative procedure of the EP largely depends, on the one hand, on the role attributed to FEMM and, on the other hand, on the reputation and authority of the FEMM rapporteur.

#### 4.1.2. Evolution of the presence of women in the European Parliament

Turning to the presence of women in the European Parliament, the analysis shows that among EP MEPs the share of women has remained almost stable in the current eighth parliamentary term, compared to the seventh term. In 2018, of the 751 MEPs, 36.1 % are women, only 0.3 percentage points more than the previous term. However, there are more women in decision-making positions: female vice presidents are now 5 out of 14 (they were 3 in the seventh term) and the number of women chairing a subcommittee has risen from 8 to 12 out of a total of 24.

Women are also still poorly represented among the EP management positions and among experts invited to EP hearings as speakers. Out of 12 deputy secretary-general and director-general positions, only 16.7 % are held by women (two positions), compared to the goal for 2019 of 30 % set in 2017 by the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity.

#### 4.1.3. Gender mainstreaming in the work of FEMM between July 2017 and July 2018

The analysis presented in Chapter 3 takes into consideration nine own-initiative reports and one non-legislative report (no legislative reports were drafted by FEMM in the period under examination, not even under the joint committee procedure).

The own-initiative reports (INIs) are used to put an issue on the political agenda and provide for an EP opinion on this issue through a motion for a resolution adopted in plenary. In these reports, FEMM devoted great attention to two main issues: women's empowerment (especially economic empowerment) and violence against women. Some reports are directly addressed to these specific issues, while others are addressed to other themes (e.g. the role of the media, climate change, EU priorities for the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women) but their specific contents are articulated especially with reference to these topics.

The analysis also focused on thirteen **opinions** for seven committees (AFET, BUDG, CONT, CULT, EMPL, JURI, LIBE), including 259 suggestions on different issues.

Overall most of the FEMM's **suggestions taken into consideration** refer to **gender equality** in all aspects of **labour market policies**, **gender equality in education**, **gender equality in migration policies**, **preventing and fighting all forms of gender-based violence**, especially in the external context, and **gender budgeting**.

Of these suggestions, 47 % were fully (88) or partially (35) integrated into the report of the lead committee. AFET and LIBE received the highest number of suggestions, while CONT received the lowest.

In the analysed period the rate of inclusions of FEMM's suggestions in the work of the other Committees amounted to 47.5 %, a higher share compared to the period considered in the previous report (between July 2011 and February 2013). CONT, JURI, EMPL and AFET are the committees that paid particular attention to FEMM's suggestions, integrating over 50 % of them in their work. On the contrary, BUDG has the lowest inclusion rate.

Most of FEMM's included suggestions (i.e. over 70 %) were integrated entirely in the work of the other committees, in AFET in particular.

The opinions of FEMM analysed in the period had a rather high gender impact: i.e. in 8 out of 13 opinions, more than 50 % of the suggestions provided by FEMM were considered entirely or partially in the final reports of the other committees. FEMM's work registered the highest level of gender impact in AFET, CONT, CULT, EMPL and JURI committees and the lowest in BUDG. Compared to the period considered in the previous report, the share of FEMM work with high impact increased in all the committees involved.

The analysis shows that this inclusion does not depend on the gender of the two rapporteurs (FEMM's and the one from the other committee) or on their belonging to the same political group, but rather on the salience of the issue dealt with. Indeed, most of the issues included in the work of the other committees refer to subjects that are high on the EU and national gender equality agenda: gender equality on the labour market, preventing and fighting gender-based violence, gender in education, respect of human rights and, in particular for gender equality, in third countries and EU MSs.

It is thus important that FEMM focuses on increasing the salience of issues that are not on the top of the national/EU agenda, but that are equally relevant.

As for the positions in form of amendments, over half (i.e. 63 %) of FEMM's gender amendments were taken into consideration by the other committees. EMPL, LIBE and PETI committees have the highest rates of inclusion of FEMM's gender amendments, while ECON has the lowest level. The low rates of inclusion of FEMM's opinions and gender amendments in the committees dealing with financial issues final shows a difficulty to integrate gender issues in the budgetary cycle.

## 4.2. Suggestions and recommendations

This section draws some suggestions and recommendations from the evidence collected in the present work. The recommendations provided in the previous report are still applicable, although some progress has been made especially in the role of the three gender mainstreaming bodies and in the degree of inclusion of FEMM's opinions and suggestions in other committees' reports.

A crucial issue for the effectiveness of FEMM gender mainstreaming remains the capacity to enhance the **salience of the different aspects of gender equality at the cultural, social and political levels**. In order to improve the salience of gender issues on the agenda of the European Parliament, FEMM could **stimulate debate** – inside and outside the EP – on specific aspects of gender mainstreaming that are overlooked or underestimated. The main tool that FEMM can use in this respect is **careful planning of its own-initiative reports addressing issues that are either new or overlooked**, or again are potentially able to generate important consequences for the evolution of European legislation and its

effectiveness. In order to improve the potential of this instrument in raising awareness and stimulating debate, it seems necessary to **focus specific attention on communication – again, inside and outside the EP** – by organising events at which decisions to produce reports should be announced, consultation with stakeholders made public whenever possible, and the results and recommendations debated. Developing its external activities like hearings, workshops, the International Women's Day event and other events attracting attention to women's rights and gender equality issues could be very relevant also from an institutional learning point of view. While each procedure can be regarded as a potential window of opportunity for the inclusion of a gender perspective, effectiveness could be increased by greater use of the tool of a **yearly work programme** to identify not only the focusing events but also to plan FEMM interventions strategically.

The study also confirms that the successful inclusion of a gender equality perspective in a legislative or non-legislative procedure of the EP depends, on the one hand, on **the role attributed to FEMM** and, on the other hand, on the **reputation and authority of the FEMM rapporteur**.

As indicated in the previous report, it is thus important for FEMM to use formal and informal tools to achieve inclusion of a gender perspective in all EP activities. In this respect, the capacity of the FEMM President in supporting FEMM's role in legislative proposals is particularly important. The FEMM Secretariat may also have an important role in this respect, because it prepares the files and supports the negotiations. A second aspect is the identification of successful rapporteurs. The rapporteurs' success depends on their expertise, networking capacity (which is informal), political prestige and commitment to gender equality issues. Other relevant actors in this respect are the political group coordinators, the Secretariat and the policy advisors. FEMM coordinators should also be selective in drafting opinions and base this selection on the likelihood that the opinion will be positively received by the committee responsible.

**Involving other related committees in jointly drawing up reports** remains a way to improve FEMM's possibility to be recognised as joint committee for a specific piece of legislation, and to increase its ability to influence the final outcome. This possibility is not frequent (in the period under examination FEMM has not been involved in joint legislative procedures), and therefore it is the task of the FEMM President to understand when to fight for such recognition and when FEMM should resort to different tools.

The opportunity to plan **own-initiative reports**, which foresees close cooperation with other committees, could pave the way to the increased recognition of FEMM as an associated committee. The decision to start such an own-initiative report, as well as the interaction during its preparation and communication, could in fact activate a **precommitment mechanism** whereby it becomes very difficult for the second parliamentary committee involved to refuse the association of FEMM with one of their reports at a later point.

As far as the **opinions** are concerned, the suggestion to **be more selective** in choosing what should be proposed remains applicable. Selection should be based, on the one hand, on the likelihood of the opinion being positively received by the relevant committee, and on the other, on the availability of rapporteurs who have both the interest and the time to work on it. Regarding the **GMA's included in the positions in the form of amendments**, the chances of success are greater than for suggestions/amendments made in opinions, possibly also because, very often, they are rather simple and in any case very precise.



Despite the structures put in place, gender mainstreaming in the work of parliamentary committees is still highly variable and essentially voluntary, resulting in a strong focus on women's rights and gender equality in some areas and little or no apparent activity in others. The need to provide the actors in the EP with appropriate tools to gain a **sound understanding** of gender mainstreaming remains valid. This could also help in supporting attention to gender mainstreaming in policy areas that are still avoiding it. The recommendation of the previous report remains valid that the committees should avail themselves of **in-house and external expertise** to raise their awareness of the extent to which gender equality and women's rights need to be improved in their area of competence. Such training could contribute to a greater ownership of the gender mainstreaming process of each committee by taking into account their **specific features**. This could also facilitate the active role of committees in the regular assessments carried out by FEMM.

**The functioning of the Gender Mainstreaming Network could be further improved by increasing the possibility of setting minimum common objectives and topics, of receiving more specialised training and of exploring different policy issues other than those that are normally considered in a gender perspective.** A way of exploiting its potential would be to streamline its composition ensuring as far as possible that all (or at least the vast majority) of the gender mainstreaming representatives are also members of FEMM. This could be a crucial step towards a better understanding of the main preoccupations of the different committees, as well as fostering more effective coordination of the efforts put into gender mainstreaming.

Also, the **role of political groups is highly relevant** in encouraging and providing support to women to take up leading positions in the decision-making process. Besides, they could contribute to the gender mainstreaming process by evaluating their programmes and activities from a gender perspective and by adopting their own strategies to bring women into political decision-making, while also highlighting gender equality in their programmes.

Finally, concerning the **Secretariat**, the following are the recommendations are still applicable:

- support **training** for the permanent staff on the general philosophy and technicalities of impact assessment and on gender equality;
- promote specific **studies** (for example, in relation to own-initiative reports) on the issues of **gender impact assessment (GIA)** and **gender budgeting** in order to build the necessary analytical tools and raise awareness (again inside and outside the EP) of the promise of such instruments, including evidence of situations in which they have worked particularly well in improving gender mainstreaming;
- request the **provision of gender studies by the EP Policy Department** in order to improve awareness and recognise expertise on gender.

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