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## TEXTS ADOPTED

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### **P8\_TA(2016)0042**

#### **New Strategy for gender equality and women's rights post-2015**

##### **European Parliament resolution of 3 February 2016 on the new Strategy for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Europe post-2015 (2016/2526(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 2 and Article 3(3), second subparagraph, of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women on 15 September 1995, and to the subsequent outcome documents adopted at the United Nations Beijing +5 (2000), Beijing +10 (2005), Beijing +15 (2010) and Beijing +20 (2015) special sessions,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 21 February 1996 entitled 'Incorporating equal opportunities for women and men into all Community policies and activities' (COM(1996)0067), in which it committed itself to 'promote equality between women and men in all its activities and policies at all levels', effectively establishing the principle of gender mainstreaming,
- having regard to the European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020), adopted by the Council of the European Union in March 2011,
- having regard to the Commission research report of 21 September 2010 entitled 'Evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015',
- having regard to the Commission communication of 5 March 2010 entitled 'A Strengthened Commitment to Equality between Women and Men: A Women's Charter' (COM(2010)0078),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 21 September 2010 entitled 'Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015' (COM(2010)0491),

- having regard to its resolution of 9 June 2015 on the EU Strategy for equality between women and men post-2015<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the analysis of the public consultation on ‘Equality between men and women in the EU’ published in October 2015,
  - having regard to the new ‘Roadmap: new start to address the challenges of work-life balance faced by working families’, a package with legislative and non-legislative proposals, published by the Commission in August 2015,
  - having regard to the outcome of the meeting of the European Commission Advisory Committee on equal opportunities for women and men of 26 November 2015,
  - having regard to the Commission staff working document of 3 December 2015 entitled ‘Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019’ (SWD(2015)0278),
  - having regard to the conclusions of the meeting of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) Council of 7 December 2015, in particular paragraph 35 thereof,
  - having regard to the EU Presidency Trio declaration on gender equality of 7 December 2015 by the Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta,
  - having regard to the question to the Commission on the new Strategy for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality in Europe post-2015 (O-000006/2016 – B8-0103/2016),
  - having regard to Rules 128(5) and 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas gender equality is a core value of the EU – as recognised in the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights – which the EU has committed to integrating into all its activities, and whereas gender equality is essential, as a strategic objective, to achieving the overall Europe 2020 objectives of growth, employment and social inclusion;
  - B. whereas the right to equal treatment is a defining fundamental right which is recognised in the Treaties of the European Union and is deeply rooted in European society, and whereas it is essential for the further development of this society and should apply in legislation, in practice, in case law and in daily life;
  - C. whereas the EU has historically taken some important steps to strengthen women’s rights and gender equality, but whereas political action and reform for gender equality at EU level have slowed down over the last decade; whereas the previous Commission strategy for equality between women and men for 2010-2015 was not comprehensive enough to contribute to gender equality at European and international level, and whereas its planned objectives have not been effectively met; whereas a new post-2015 strategy will need to provide new impetus and deliver concrete action to strengthen women’s rights and promote gender equality;
  - D. whereas the assessment of the 2010-2015 strategy, and of stakeholders’ positions, set out in the Commission research report entitled ‘Evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015’ underlines the need to further strengthen the strategic approach adopted in 2010;

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2015)0218.

- E. whereas in its resolution of 9 June 2015 Parliament clearly called for a new, separate post-2015 strategy for gender equality and women's rights; whereas the results of the public consultation showed that 90 % of respondents were in favour of a new strategy;
- F. whereas the EPSCO Council conclusions of 7 December 2015 (paragraph 35) call on the Commission to 'adopt, as a Communication, a new Strategy for gender equality after 2015'; whereas in its declaration of 7 December 2015 the EU Presidency Trio committed to delivering draft Council conclusions to the EPSCO Council on the EU Strategy for Gender Equality post-2015;
1. Recalls that the Commission is bound by Article 2 TEU and by the Charter of Fundamental Rights to take action in favour of gender equality;
  2. Notes that in the past the Commission has clearly endorsed a clear, transparent, legitimate and public Communication on a Strategy for Equality between Women and Men, endorsed by all the EU institutions, at the highest political level;
  3. Considers it regrettable that the 2016 Commission Work Programme, published in November 2015, made no specific mention of the EU Strategy for Gender Equality post-2015; deplores the fact that on 3 December 2015 the Commission published only a staff working document entitled 'Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019', thereby not only presenting a downgraded internal document but also restricting the duration of its action;
  4. Welcomes the fact that the Commission published its 'Roadmap: new start to address the challenges of work-life balance faced by working families', a package with legislative and non-legislative proposals, in August 2015;
  5. Invites the Member States to take full responsibility for improving the implementation of the principles of equal treatment and equal opportunities for men and women at national level;
  6. Deplores the fact that, on 7 December 2015, the EPSCO Council could not agree on an official position regarding several issues in favour of gender equality, including the 'Women on Boards' Directive, which has long been awaited by Parliament;
  7. Welcomes the Commission's approach as set out in its aforementioned staff working document on strategic engagement for gender equality, but deplores the lack of concrete benchmarks and of a dedicated budget, without which progress on targets and indicators is neither measurable nor achievable;
  8. Calls on the Commission to reconsider its decision and to adopt a communication on a new Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Rights 2016-2020 which addresses gender equality issues and which is in line with the international agenda, namely the Beijing +20 outcome document of 2015 and the new framework for 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations (2016-2020)';
  9. Calls on the Commission to cooperate with Parliament and the Council, and calls for an EU summit on gender equality and women's rights with a view to identifying the progress made, and to make renewed commitments within the framework of the forthcoming EPSCO Council in March 2016;

10. Recalls that the implementation of EU law and policy tools must comply with the principles of subsidiarity and 'added value', that uniform rules are not always necessary for the practical and competitive functioning of the internal market, and that the Commission must consider the administrative burden arising from its legislative proposals and the differing cultural contexts and practices in different Member States;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.