



Empowering women and girls through education

Seminar for journalists

Wednesday 4 March 2015
Room 04B001, Paul Henri Spaak building
European Parliament, Brussels

Programme

Wednesday 4 March 2014

10:00 Arrival and registration

11:00 Opening

Iratxe García Perez (S&D, Spain), Chair of EP Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Rights

11:15 What is the European Parliament doing for gender equality in-house?

Dimitrios Papadimoulis (GUE/NGL, Greece), EP Vice President and Chair of the High-Level Working Group on Gender Equality and Diversity

11:30 Empowering women and girls through education

Liliana Rodrigues (S&D, Portugal), Rapporteur "Empowering girls through education in the EU", EP Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Rights

Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, (ALDE, Spain), Member of EP Committee on Development

Ernest Maragall (Greens/EFA, Spain), Rapporteur for Opinion "Empowering girls through education", EP Committee on Culture and Education

Dagmar Schumacher, Director of UN Women Brussels, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Mona Sewilam, Egyptian Television

Moderator: Cheryl D. Miller, Founder, Digital Leadership Institute, and CEO, Zen Digital Europe

13:00 Networking lunch

15:00 Education and job opportunities in the European Union

Round table discussion

Marc Tarabella (S&D, Belgium), Rapporteur "Progress on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2013", EP Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Rights

Beatrix Von Storch (ECR, Germany), Shadow Rapporteur "Progress on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2013"

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE, Spain), Shadow Rapporteur "Progress on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2013"

Ángela Vallina,(GUE/NGL,Spain), Shadow Rapporteur "Progress on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2013"

Linnéa Engström (Greens/EFA, Sweden), Shadow Rapporteur "Progress on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2013"

Moderator: Cheryl D. Miller, Founder, Digital Leadership Institute, and CEO, Zen Digital Europe

16:15 Strategy for equality between women and men in the European Union: next steps

Round table discussion

Maria Noichl (S&D, Germany), Rapporteur "EU strategy for equality between women and men post 2015", EP Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Rights

Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz (EPP, Poland), Rapporteur for Opinion "EU strategy for equality between women and men post 2015", EP Committee on Employment

Dr. Ing. Birgit Glasmacher, Professor for Multiphase Processes & Spokesman of the Center for Biomedical Engineering, Leibniz Universität Hannover, Germany, President of EAMBES

Éric Charbonnier, Analyst in the Innovation and Measuring Progress Division, Directorate for Education and Skills, OECD (*Education at a Glance* Interim Report)

Johanna Nyman, President of European Youth Forum

Moderator: Cheryl D. Miller, Founder, Digital Leadership Institute, and CEO, Zen Digital Europe

17:30 Closing remarks

End of day one

Thursday 5 March 2014

9:00 Interparliamentary Committee Meeting "Empowering women and girls through education"

Co-organised by EP Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Rights and National Parliaments

Plenary Chamber, Paul Henri Spaak building, European Parliament, Brussels

12:30 Press conference with EP FEMM Chair Iratxe Garcia Perez and Commissioner Vra Jourová, responsible for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality

End of programme

Background

The European Parliament press service is organising a networking conference for journalists on "Empowering women and girls through education". The aim of this event is to enable MEPs, invited experts and journalists to discuss women's right to education and measures that might be taken at European level.



Access to education is crucial to equality. While many developing countries have made considerable strides towards gender equality in education, the picture remains mixed and the problems faced by the developing world differ widely from those faced by the EU. Girls are less likely to achieve primary education or to progress to secondary education. The challenges faced by these girls include poverty, sexual violence, child marriage, genital mutilation, and discriminatory social norms and traditions. The need for gender balanced representation in governments to tackle all these problems is another issue to be confronted.

In the EU, women may be very well educated, yet there is a wide gap between their education level and professional development. This discrepancy is further deepened by employment contracts which make it difficult for women to reconcile family and work obligations that still, for the most part, remain their responsibility. Then there is the pay gap, pension rights and the impact of the economic and financial crisis: the lower the level of education, the wider the divide between women and men.

In the absence of female role models girls are already at an early age driven towards stereotypical choices that often do not include science, engineering or maths. How important are curricula and how do they influence girls' self-perception?

Legislation

What does the European Parliament do to promote gender equality policies in the European Union? Is there a need for further legislation? The European Parliament has successfully called for legislation on equality between women and men in areas such as business (quotas) and violence against women (European protection order). In the past decade it has continuously asked the Commission for action in the field of gender equality and will keep doing so.

A new strategy for equality between women and men 2015-2020 is currently being drafted with the aim of putting forward concrete proposals in line with the Beijing Action Plan in areas such as violence, decision-making, business, education, crisis, health and development.

Raising awareness

In 2013, the European Parliament awarded its Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to Malala Yousafzai, who later received the Nobel Peace Prize, in acknowledgement of her brave fight for fair education for all children.

In 2014, Dr Denis Mukwege, gynaecologist and founder of Panzi hospital in Bukavu/Democratic Republic of Congo, received the Sakharov Prize for standing up for women's rights and helping victims of sexual violence in a country where rape is used as a weapon of war.

The European Parliament supports gender equality.

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