REPORT

on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2010
(2010/2138(INI))

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2010
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The European Parliament,

– having regard to Article 2 and Article 3(3), second subparagraph, of the Treaty on
European Union (TEU) and Article 157 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 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and
Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR),

– having regard to the Stockholm Programme¹,

principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin²,
December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women
in the access to and supply of goods and services⁴,

– having regard to the annual Commission reports on equality between women and men in
respectively),

– having regard to the Commission report of 18 December 2009 on equality between
women and men – 2010 (COM(2009)0694),

– having regard to Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of
5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal
treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast)⁵,

7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and
women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council
Directive 86/613/EEC⁶,

²OJ L 180, 19.7.2000, p. 22
³OJ L 303, 2.12.2000, p. 16
⁵OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23.
having regard to Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010, implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC (Text with EEA relevance)¹,

having regard to the Commission communication of 3 October 2008 entitled ‘A better work-life balance: stronger support for reconciling professional, private and family life’, (COM(2008)0635),

having regard to Directive 89/552/EEC on Television without Frontiers,


having regard to the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the UN Beijing Platform for Action,

having regard to the European Gender Equality Pact adopted by the European Council of 23 and 24 March 2006,

having regard to the European Commission’s Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and its opinion on the gender pay gap adopted on 22 March 2007,

having regard to the Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights’ Issue Paper on Human Rights and Gender Identity (2009),

having regard to the Fundamental Rights Agency’s report on homophobia, transphobia and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (2010),

having regard to its resolution of 6 May 2009 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market²,

having regard to its resolution of 10 February 2010 on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2009³,

having regard to its resolution of 17 June 2010 on gender aspects of the economic downturn and financial crisis⁴,

having regard to its resolution of 17 June 2010 on assessment of the results of the 2006-2010 Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men, and forward-looking

recommendations ¹,

- having regard to its resolution of 19 October 2010 on precarious women workers,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2007 on a Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men (2006-2010)²,
- having regard to its resolution of 3 September 2008 on ‘Equality between women and men – 2008’³,
- having regard to its resolution of 18 November 2008 with recommendations to the Commission on the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 December 2010 on the impact of advertising on consumer behaviour⁵,
- having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality and the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (A7-0029/2011),

A. whereas equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the EU, recognised in the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights; whereas many inequalities between women and men remain,

B. whereas the European Union has not been spared by the economic and financial crisis, which has had equally devastating consequences for female and male employment, in particular the economic position of women, and which could prove more damaging for female employment in the long term,

C. whereas equality between women and men has a positive impact on productivity and economic growth, and helps to increase female participation in the labour market, which in turn has many social and economic benefits,

D. whereas gender-disaggregated data are necessary in order to compare the effects of the crisis on women and men; whereas the European Institute for Gender Equality could make a valuable contribution to that end, and whereas data are necessary in order to assess the impact poverty has on women’s health, in particular that of elderly women, since it is important to guarantee protection of women’s health,

E. whereas female unemployment is often underestimated because of the high rates of women who are either economically inactive (two-thirds of the 63 million inactive people between 25 and 64) or part-time unemployed,

¹ P7_TA(2010)0232.
⁵ P7_TA(2010)0484.
F. whereas employment rates are lower in rural areas; whereas, moreover, a large number of women are not included in the official labour market and are therefore not registered as unemployed or included in unemployment statistics, which causes particular financial and legal problems in terms of maternity rights and sick leave, acquisition of pension rights and access to social security, as well as problems in the event of divorce; whereas rural areas are at a disadvantage due to the lack of high-quality job opportunities,

G. whereas women are at a disadvantage on the labour market on account of being more likely to be employed on part-time or involuntary short-term contracts and in particular at lower rates of pay than men; whereas this disparity is reflected in terms of pensions, putting women at a higher risk of poverty than men,

H. whereas disparities in the pay received by women and men still average 18% in the European Union, exceed 25% in some countries, and even 30% in one Member State, and whereas, despite the efforts and progress made, the pay gap is narrowing very slowly,

I. whereas motherhood should not hold women back in their careers, but statistics clearly show that women with children work shorter hours than those without, unlike fathers who work longer hours than childless men,

J. whereas, at the Barcelona European Council of March 2002, the Member States were asked to provide by 2010 childcare for at least 90% of children between three years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under three years old, but there are still not enough publicly funded childcare facilities in many countries, which has a particularly negative impact on disadvantaged families,

K. whereas there is a correlation between the rate of female employment and women’s family responsibilities; whereas over 20 million Europeans (two thirds of whom are women) care for adult dependent persons, which stops them from having a full-time job; whereas this fact could aggravate the effects of population ageing,

L. whereas access to childcare services and assistance with the elderly and other dependants is vital to ensuring equivalent participation of women and men in the labour market, education and training,

M. whereas the burden of responsibility for housework is much greater for women than it is for men and is not evaluated in monetary terms of in terms of a recognition of its value, and whereas work at home caring for children, sick or elderly people is difficult and unpaid work,

N. whereas there is a need to eliminate gender stereotypes in education, which often result in children being steered into school and university subjects traditionally seen as the preserve of either men or of women; whereas it is important to promote diversification of school and career choices,

O. whereas the number of women and girls going into science – especially mathematics and the IT sector – is still very low, leading to severe gender segregation by sector,

P. whereas the crisis may exacerbate the sectoral and professional segregation of women and
men, which not only has not decreased, but is increasing, in some countries,

Q. whereas the EU-2020 Strategy put an emphasis on ecological transformation, renewable sectors, and science and technology-intensive green jobs for a new sustainable economy; whereas the active inclusion and reintegration of women in the labour market is crucial to reaching the employment target of 75% for women and men,

R. whereas there are generally more women than men graduating from universities (58.9% of degrees are awarded to women) but whereas women’s pay is still on average 18% lower than men’s pay, and women are under-represented in corporate, administrative and political positions of responsibility,

S. whereas the Network of Women in Decision-Making in Politics and the Economy, set up in June 2008, can help improve the gender balance in decision-making positions,

T. whereas greater representation of women at European, national, regional and local level is necessary for effective gender equality in our societies; whereas, in some Member States, the proportion of women in the national parliament is below 15%,

U. whereas positive action for women has proven to be vital to ensuring their full integration in the labour market and society in general,

V. whereas women are at greater risk of poverty than men as a result of their truncated careers and lower salaries and pensions; whereas, in the context of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, not enough attention has been paid to the underlying causes of female poverty,

W. whereas 2011 will be the European Year of Volunteering, and it is important to stress the potential benefits of promoting the principle of gender equality in volunteer programmes,

X. whereas minority women, especially Roma women, regularly face multiple and intersectional discrimination and are disadvantaged not only in comparison with majority women, but also in comparison with ethnic minority men, and are at particular risk of social exclusion,

Y. whereas violence against women is a violation of their fundamental rights, knows no geographic, economic, cultural or social bounds, and represents a fundamental obstacle to equality; whereas it is estimated that 20-25% of women suffer physical violence in the course of their lives; whereas psychological violence can be just as devastating as physical violence,

Z. whereas the European Parliament has on numerous occasions called for the creation of a European Year to fight violence against women,

AA. whereas women face multiple forms of discrimination and are more vulnerable to social exclusion, poverty and extreme human rights violations, such as trafficking in human beings, especially if they do not belong to mainstream society,

1. Points out that male-dominated sectors, such as construction and manufacturing, were the
first to be hit by the crisis but that the crisis has since spread to more gender-mixed sectors, thus leading to greater female unemployment; stresses that pay has declined most in female-dominated service sectors and in sectors funded by State budgets where most employees are women, and, consequently, women receive smaller pensions, which results in a higher level of poverty among elderly women;

2. Notes that in countries where equal treatment of men and women in the employment market has been achieved, it has had positive repercussions for economic and social development, and that equality policies should not therefore be abandoned in times of crisis, and that, despite the stated intention of the Member States and the Commission, consistently equal conditions have not yet been achieved; stresses that the recession has worsened what has been a constant trend over the last decade, namely the reduction of women to poverty, unemployment or insecure employment in far greater numbers than men, thus intensifying the feminisation of poverty in the EU;

3. Stresses that the Lisbon Strategy aims to integrate 60% of women able to work into the labour market, while efforts at the demographic level should strive to promote a rise in the birth rate with a view to meeting the challenges of the future;

4. Stresses that the presence of women on the labour market is positive from the point of view of economic growth; notes that, according to OECD statistics, the female component contributed to a quarter of annual growth between 1995 and 2008;

5. Stresses that, in the event of loss of employment, the risk of not being re-employed is higher for women;

6. Calls for targets to be set for women to be included in activities or sectors, or at levels, from which they have previously been excluded and in which they are still under-represented, by means of measures to inform and motivate employers to recruit and promote women, especially in the sectors and categories mentioned;

7. Stresses that it is necessary to pay much more attention to the adequacy of women’s pensions, since working women interrupt their careers more often than men in order to care for children and sick or elderly family members, and as a result of their family commitments are more inclined than men to work part-time or undertake precarious work;

8. Calls for the impact of the crisis on women to be quantified by the drawing up of precise statistics with gender-disaggregated indicators, which are regularly updated and reassessed; adds that such statistics should make possible a more targeted response to cyclical and structural employment problems with a view to overcoming the crisis and fostering the spread of good practices;

9. Criticises the fact that economic recovery plans are focused on male-dominated labour sectors; highlights the fact that preferential support for the working future of men over that of women is increasing rather than reducing gender inequality; stresses the need to integrate gender equality policies in the national, European and international economic recovery plans to tackle the crisis;

10. Points out that employment rates for both men and women are lower in rural areas and
that this places those living in the countryside at a disadvantage in terms of the lack of availability of quality jobs; in addition, many women are not part of the official labour market and therefore do not count as registered unemployed, and are thus faced with financial and legal problems in terms of maternity rights, sick leave and acquisition of pension rights;

11. Stresses that the present economic crisis has had an adverse impact on workers; notes that, although the level of education among women has increased considerably in recent years, and women now outnumber men among university graduates, many women are still compelled to take on secondary roles which are less well paid;

12. Stresses that women are overrepresented in precarious work, in involuntary part-time work and among people experiencing poverty, and therefore calls on Member States to ensure that policies to achieve the EU-2020 target with regard to poverty and social inclusion are aimed at women in proportion to the share of people experiencing poverty that they represent;

13. Points out that gender inequalities remain despite the increasing participation of women in the labour market; stresses that the economic and financial crisis should be seen as a chance to put forward new and innovative proposals on employment, remuneration, working hours and the filling of positions of responsibility;

14. Stresses the positive effect that equality between women and men has on economic growth; points out that several studies have calculated that, if women’s employment, part-time employment and productivity rates were similar to men’s, GDP would increase by 30%;

15. Points out that the emergence of new sectors with a strong potential for job creation, such as ecology, the environment and new technologies, needs to be taken into consideration when employment policies are being formulated; stresses in this connection that women have an important role to play in these sectors; calls on the Member States to encourage girls not to neglect these types of sector; encourages the Commission to issue regular communications on these new perspectives;

16. Calls on the Member States, with the assistance of the Commission, to encourage women – by stepping up existing measures – to participate in vocational training in the context of lifelong learning, in response to the switch towards a sustainable economy, with the emphasis on SMEs, thereby enhancing the employability of female workers;

17. Calls for promotion of women’s access to wider opportunities in education, vocational training and employment in non-traditional sectors and at higher levels of responsibility;

18. Calls on the Commission to encourage dialogue with the social partners on issues such as transparency of pay, part-time and fixed-term contract conditions for women, and encouraging women’s participation in ‘green’ and innovative sectors;

19. Points out that organisations active in the social economy (foundations, mutual associations and cooperatives) can play a key role in economic recovery and that their
employees are chiefly women; calls on the Member States to consider such organisations seriously when drawing up economic recovery policies;

20. Stresses the importance of developing the legal concept of shared ownership to ensure full recognition of women’s rights in the agricultural sector, appropriate protection in terms of social security and recognition of their work, and also the need to amend the Regulation on the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) so that, as with the European Social Fund (ESF), positive action can be taken for women in the future programming period 2014-2020, which was possible in previous periods but not in the current period, as these measures will be very beneficial in terms of female employment in the rural environment;

21. Stresses that eliminating the pay gap is a priority, and therefore regrets the fact that the Commission has not done enough to relaunch this debate at European level, particularly by revising the existing legislation applying the principle of equal pay for men and women, as Parliament requested in its resolution of 18 November 2009;

22. Calls on the Member States to increase their efforts to prevent segregation of job markets by gender and to counter the trend for many women to work in worse-paid occupations, by interesting boys and girls at school in the whole spectrum of possible occupations, and broadening training opportunities for women so as to enable them to adapt to changes in the labour market during their careers; is deeply concerned at the unfair situation whereby, after more than half a century in which the Community treaties have included the principle of equal pay for equal work, a female citizen in the EU has on average to work 418 calendar days to earn what a man earns in a calendar year;

23. Insists on the need for urgent action to fight wage discrimination, by measures such as revising the existing directive, drawing up phased sectoral plans with specific objectives, which could include reducing the pay gap to 0.5% by 2020, the aim being to put an end to direct and indirect discrimination, or encouraging collective bargaining, training of equality counsellors, action on the issue of gender inequality in unpaid work, and the introduction of equality plans in companies and other workplaces; believes that transparency in wage determination should become the rule, so as to strengthen the bargaining position of women workers;

24. Calls on the European Commission and the Member States to introduce measures aimed at solving the current paradox in which women, despite being better educated, are still less well paid than men; stresses that, for optimum economic growth and genuinely sustainable development, women’s career potential needs to be fully exploited;

25. Stresses that separate income and high-quality paid employment for women form the key to their economic independence and to greater equality between women and men in society as a whole;

26. Calls on the Member States to apply the principle of gender equality to national pension systems as concerns both age and pay;

27. Calls on the EU Member States to implement legislation on equal pay for equal work properly, and calls on the Commission for the application of sanctions for non-compliant
Member States;

28. Stresses that realising the potential of the female workforce is also consistent with the objective of the EU-2020 strategy to reduce poverty, and that access to employment is a key factor in efforts to combat poverty;

29. Stresses that gender equality is not only a question of diversity and social justice: it is also a precondition for meeting the objectives of sustainable growth, employment, competitiveness and social cohesion set forth in the EU-2020 strategy; calls therefore upon the Commission to strengthen the gender dimension in all parts of the EU-2020 strategy, taking particular account of gender specificities, and devise specific measures and targets for gender equality in all measures to improve the European Employment Strategy;

30. Calls on the Council and Commission to improve observance of the principle of gender equality in its EU-2020 strategy and ensure that it is applied effectively in the various parts of the strategy;

31. Calls on the Commission, the Council and Member States to favour binding proposals instead of non-binding strategies and policy documents in the field of gender equality;

32. Believes that the Commission and the Member States should develop training and implementation tools so that all stakeholders take due account, in their respective fields of competence, of the perspective based on equal opportunities for women and men, including assessing the specific impact of policies on women and men;

33. Stresses the importance of developing quantitative and qualitative indicators and gender-based statistics that are reliable, comparable and available when needed, which must be used to monitor the mainstreaming of gender equality in all policies;

34. Believes that one priority should be the fight to eradicate poverty, by revising the macroeconomic, monetary, social and labour policies that are at its root, in order to ensure economic and social justice for women; believes that the methods used to determine poverty rates should be re-examined and that strategies should be developed to promote a fair distribution of income, guarantee minimum income, pay and decent pensions, create more high-quality jobs with rights for women, ensure access to high-quality public services for all women and young girls, and improve social welfare and respective local services, particularly crèches, nurseries, day centres, community and leisure centres, and family support services;

35. Welcomes the Commission’s launch of an EU-wide campaign to help tackle the gender pay gap; notes, however, that the pay gap between men and women remains, and therefore calls for a Europe-wide debate to combat stereotypes linked to the respective roles of men and women; stresses, therefore, the importance of organising awareness-raising campaigns in schools, workplaces and the media to combat persistent gender stereotypes and degrading images in particular; points out that campaigns should stress the role of men in ensuring a fair distribution of family responsibilities and a good work-life balance;
36. Takes the view that demographic change makes it necessary to realise the potential of women, and to increase their employment in order to reach the target employment rate of 75% for women and men aged between 20 and 64, as stated in the EU-2020 strategy; believes at the same time that people should have a free choice to have children and that a fair work-life balance is a key condition to boost women's participation in the labour market;

37. Asks for concrete proposals with a view to achieving a better work-life balance, particularly with regard to help with care of dependent persons and child care;

38. Emphasises that the Commission and the Member States need to promote, support and reinforce the role of women in the social economy, in the light of the high level of female employment in that sector and the importance of the services it offers for the promotion of a fair work-life balance;

39. Asks the Commission to ensure that the various European rules on work-life balance are correctly transposed by the Member States by adapting working conditions between men and women;

40. Observes that part-time employment can have an adverse impact on the individual concerned, for example by placing obstacles in the way of careers and leading to poverty in old age, or alternatively that they may, on account of smaller incomes, require supplementary State assistance for purposes of subsistence or in the event of illness or unemployment;

41. Stresses the importance of communication campaigns to ensure the gender neutrality of traditionally male or female trades or activities; in the same respect, calls on the Member States to start a debate on the role of language in the persistence of stereotypes, particularly due to the feminisation or masculinisation of certain trade names;

42. Calls on public and private establishments to introduce equality plans in their internal rules and regulations, together with strict short-, medium- and long-term objectives, and to evaluate annually the achievement of these objectives;

43. Asks for concrete proposals with a view to achieving a better balance between work, family and private life, by fostering greater sharing of occupational, family and social responsibilities between men and women, particularly with regard to help with care for dependent persons and child care;

44. Calls on the Member States to support employment for the disadvantaged category of 'pregnant women or mothers performing domestic tasks on their own', encouraging the provision of jobs for this group that are decent, stable and compatible with a proper work-life balance;

45. Believes that in order to better combine working and caring; it is necessary to improve child-related leave, calls therefore on the Council for speedy adoption of a common position on the Parliament’s legislative resolution of 20 October 2010 on the revision of Council Directive 92/85/EEC;
47. Calls on the Member States to encourage the setting up or improvement of childcare facilities such as crèches and nurseries, and facilities for the elderly and other dependants with a view to providing good-quality, affordable services at times compatible with full-time working hours for as many people as possible; believes that these facilities offer huge support to parents and would make it easier for them to enter the workforce;

48. Emphasises that the family is a cornerstone of our society and is inherently associated with the transmission of values and with cooperation in a spirit of solidarity; underlines that introducing flexible working hours and providing teleworking opportunities, as well as extending child care and professionalising home help for the elderly, represent an important step towards making it possible to combine work and family life and to enhance equal participation of women and men in the labour market and in education and training; regrets the fact that the lack of adequate leave schemes, parental leave schemes and flexible working arrangements for both parents often prevents women from participating actively in the labour market or from working full time; considers that this also requires a change in corporate cultures with regard to the appointment and employment of women; calls therefore on the Council, the Commission and the Member States to prevent cuts in benefits or social services in the field of childcare, care of the elderly and vulnerable people as a result of the economic and financial crisis;

49. Reminds the Commission and the Member States of the need to adopt positive measures for both women and men, notably in order to facilitate returning to work after a period devoted to the family (bringing up children and/or caring for a sick or disabled relative), to promote policies for (re)integration in the labour market and, hence, recovery of financial independence;

50. Stresses that education plays a key role in inculcating in children the importance of gender equality as early as possible and in the acceptance of different cultures and an understanding of the impact of discrimination and prejudice; calls on the Member States to establish education programmes, as well as information and awareness-raising programmes on the values of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, particularly Article 23 thereof, for pupils throughout their school career;

51. Stresses the need for young people to be free to make their own career choices; points out, therefore, that teachers should not automatically guide pupils towards specific sectors for purposes of conforming to sexist stereotypes and that the full range of job opportunities should be highlighted;

52. Calls on the Member States to ensure, through awareness programmes within the education sector, that girls are not steered automatically in the direction of traditionally feminised sectors and careers;

53. Stresses the need to step up efforts at European level to increase women’s representation in politics; advocates, therefore, greater participation for women in all European institutions, particularly in positions of responsibility; stresses that further efforts must be made at national, regional and municipal level; calls for binding targets to ensure equal representation of women and men; notes in this regard the positive effects of the use of quotas on representation of women; points out, therefore, that the use of electoral quotas has positive effects on women’s representation;
54. Points out that only 3% of major companies are chaired by a woman; stresses, therefore, the example of Norway, which since 2003 has successfully applied a quota policy to ensure parity on the management boards of companies, with this example now being followed by Spain and France; calls on the Member States to take effective measures, such as quotas, to ensure greater representation for women in major listed companies and on the management boards of companies in general, especially those with public participation;

55. Stresses that equality plans for businesses or sectors should be established, on a statutory basis, to combat gender injustice in employment in the Member States, which should be initiated and their implementation monitored by the two sides of industry;

56. Stresses the need for the Member States to take steps, particularly through legislation, to set binding targets to guarantee parity between men and women in positions of responsibility in companies, public administrations and political bodies;

57. Calls on the Member States to identify companies which promote gender equality and a good balance between work, family and private life and to spread good practices extensively, in particular via chambers of commerce;

58. Welcomes the general debate on increasing the proportion of women in management positions in industry and suggests introducing a voluntary quota for this in businesses, which should be based on the gender ratio within the work force;

59. Calls for action to be taken at national and European level to promote entrepreneurship among women by creating training and professional and legal advice structures and by facilitating access to public and private finance;

60. Encourages a regular exchange of information and experiences between stakeholders promoting gender equality, with a view to implementing good practices throughout society, at European, national, regional and local level and in both the private and the public sectors;

61. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to pay particular attention to vulnerable groups of women: disabled, elderly, immigrant, lesbian, bisexual and transgender, and minority women and women who have little or no training and are responsible for dependants, all of these being specific groups in need of measures tailored to their circumstances; calls on the Commission to broaden the scope of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 to include promotion of gender equality;

62. Calls on the Commission to support the Member States in increasing the employment prospects of disadvantaged women, such as female immigrants, women from ethnic minorities, women with disabilities, and single mothers, thus increasing their chance of leading an economically independent life, by improving their access to education and vocational training; draws attention to the multiple discrimination affecting immigrant women on grounds of their gender, ethnic or racial origin and, in many cases, age;

63. Calls on national, regional and local bodies responsible for equality to adopt integrated approaches improving their response to and handling of cases of multiple discrimination;
also stresses that these bodies should offer training to judges, juries and general staff so that they can identify, anticipate and handle situations of multiple discrimination;

64. Points out that women with disabilities are often discriminated against in social, cultural, political and professional life; calls on the Commission and the Member States to make concrete proposals with a view to improving their situation;

65. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to pay particular attention to Roma women in the implementation of the EU strategy on Roma inclusion;

66. Notes that transgender people remain a highly marginalised and victimised group facing a high degree of stigmatisation, exclusion and violence, as reported by the Fundamental Rights Agency; strongly encourages the Commission and the Member States to follow the Agency’s recommendations for stronger and clearer protection against discrimination on grounds of gender identity;

67. Advocates access for women and men to adequate information and support on reproductive health, and stresses that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men to avail themselves of services in this area; stresses that women must have control over their sexual and reproductive rights, particularly through easy access to contraception and abortion; calls on the Member States and the Commission to adopt measures and actions raising awareness among men about their responsibilities in sexual and reproductive matters;

68. Points out that violence against women is a major hindrance to gender equality; calls on the Commission to start drawing up a proposal for a comprehensive directive on preventing and combating all forms of violence against women – whether physical, sexual or psychological –, including trafficking;

69. Welcomes efforts made at EU and national level to combat violence against women, but stresses that this remains a serious, unresolved problem and urges the Member States to take measures to ensure access to support services aimed at preventing gender-based violence and protecting women from such violence regardless of their legal status, race, age, sexual orientation, ethnic origin or religion; welcomes the resumption of debate on this form of violence, notably via the establishment of a European protection order and the Directive on Human Trafficking; calls on present and future EU presidencies to make further progress; stresses the need for the Council and Commission to accept the agreement reached in the European Parliament on the European protection order so that the Directive can enter into force as soon as possible;

70. Calls again on the Commission to create, within the next four years, a European Year to combat violence against women; points out in this regard that this will raise awareness among European citizens and mobilise governments to fight violence against women;

71. Stresses the need to conduct a wide-ranging survey covering all the EU countries and using a common methodology to determine the real scope of the problem; points to the important work to be carried out in this area by the European Observatory on Gender Violence, which will provide high-quality statistics to support political measures combating this social scourge;
72. Calls on the Member States to ensure better training for, and cooperation between, staff in the health sector, social services, the police and the judiciary, and to set up structures capable of dealing with all forms of violence against women, including rare forms of serious physical and psychological violence such as acid attacks;

73. Stresses the importance of the Member States and regional and local authorities taking action to aid reintegration into the labour market for women who have suffered gender violence, using instruments such as the ESF or the PROGRESS programme;

74. Points out that schemes helping women’s organisations and civil society in general to collaborate with and participate in processes to integrate the gender perspective must be improved;

75. Stresses the need to integrate the gender perspective and the fight against gender violence in the external and development cooperation policy of the European Union;

76. Calls on the European Commission to encourage the Member States to promote, in the media in general and in advertising and promotional material in particular, a representation of the female image that is respectful of the dignity, role diversity and identity of women;

77. Calls on the Commission and the budgetary authority to comply with gender budgeting criteria when drawing up budgets and their new EU multiannual financial framework; encourages Member States to follow this example when drawing up national public budgets;

78. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, and to the governments of the Member States.
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The current economic, financial and social crisis is having disastrous repercussions for employment, living conditions and our societies at large. Women have been severely affected by the crisis, particularly in terms of their working conditions, their access to employment, their place in society as a whole and gender equality. The Commission rightly listed, in its 2010 annual report, the remaining challenges we have to address regarding gender equality as we emerge from the crisis.

Your rapporteur stresses the need for a targeted response addressing the real effects of the crisis on women, which concerned, first and foremost, female employment. As a whole, women’s employment was affected later than men’s because women make up the majority of the workforce in sectors that were initially more resistant to the crisis (health, education, social welfare, etc.). The effects on these sectors, however, could well prove longer lasting, thus making women’s employment less secure than men’s. Women have therefore been hard hit in terms of their working or recruitment conditions and access to employment and could see their circumstances get worse if specific measures are not implemented quickly. Indeed, women remain relegated to part-time work on fixed-term contracts with often insufficient pay and are, for the most part, at a disadvantage on the labour market. Gender equality in employment needs to become an established reality, rather than merely a trend. It is therefore important that the governments of the Member States and the Commission continue to implement gender equality policies and refrain from reducing the budgets earmarked for them.

However, the crisis should not been seen from a wholly negative perspective. It should be seen as a chance for governments to ask the right questions and look at their policies in a new light. The crisis must be the catalyst for us to reconsider the respective roles of men and women in our societies, a process that would entail, among other things, fully incorporating gender equality into all policies. This ideal of equality should be achieved by means of concrete, lasting measures notably concerning education. Children must be familiarised with the principle of gender equality from a very early age so as to banish sexist stereotypes. Whether in the form of ongoing information programmes, awareness-raising campaigns or guiding boys and girls away from sectors traditionally reserved either for men or for women, education and training for young people is the key to equality.

Your rapporteur would also like to stress the importance of the role of women in decision-making positions, which are traditionally the preserve of men. Whether on the boards of publicly listed companies or in the world of politics, women must be able to attain posts in line with their skills. Although often better qualified than men, women are sometimes denied access to positions of responsibility, leading to a mismatch between their levels of training and their status.

There is also a need to strengthen the gender dimension in the fight against poverty. As 2010 is the European Year for Combating Poverty, particular attention should be paid to the most vulnerable groups of women. Specific measures should be taken to stop women vulnerable on account of a disability or their status as immigrants or minorities falling into precarious
situations, and to facilitate their integration into society. Your rapporteur therefore advises the Commission that a significant part of the EU strategy on Roma inclusion should concern the integration of Roma women.

The promotion of equality also involves combating violence against women. All forms of physical, sexual or psychological violence, however serious, must be combated and condemned. Combating gender-based violence entails launching awareness-raising campaigns and teaching children and young people about the horrors of this violence. Condemning gender-based violence entails defining it in the eyes of the law and ensuring that the punishment fits the crime. For example, acid attacks are a form of violence that is still regrettably prevalent in certain Member States. Taboos continue to be associated with certain forms of violence in our societies. Information on these forms of violence is scarce and there is, therefore, little awareness of their psychological or physical consequences which are, however, considerable.
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

for the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

on equality between women and men in the European Union - 2010
(2010/2138(INI))

Rapporteur: Nadja Hirsch

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that in countries where equal treatment of men and women in the employment market has been achieved, it has had positive repercussions on economic and social development, and therefore equality policies should not be abandoned in times of crisis, and that despite the stated intention of the Member States and the Commission, consistently equal conditions have not yet been achieved; stresses that the recession has worsened what has been a constant trend over the last decade, namely the reduction of women to poverty, unemployment or insecure employment, in far greater numbers than men, thus intensifying the feminisation of poverty in the EU;

2. Calls on the Commission to update equality indicators, extend them to include the dimension of family status and use them to assess gender inequalities regularly;

3. Stresses that the new forms of organisation of work need to be grounded in a detailed analysis of forms and rhythms of work and leisure, ensuring the sharing of family and work responsibilities among family members;

4. Stresses that the Lisbon Strategy aims to integrate 60% of women able to work into the labour market, while efforts at the demographic level should strive to promote a rise in the birth rate with a view to meeting the challenges of the future;
5. Welcomes the Commission’s adoption on 21 September 2010 of the Communication ‘Strategy for equality 2010-2015’;

6. Emphasises that the family is a cornerstone of our society and is inherently associated with the transmission of values and with cooperation in a spirit of solidarity; underlines that introducing flexible working hours and providing telework opportunities as well as extending child care and professionalising home help for the elderly represent an important step towards making it possible to combine work and family life and to enhance equal participation of women and men in the labour market and in education and training; regrets that the lack of adequate leave schemes, parental leave schemes and flexible working arrangements for both parents often hinders women from participating actively in the labour market or from working full time; considers that this also requires a change in corporate cultures with regard to the appointment and employment of women; calls therefore on the Council, the Commission and the Member States to prevent cuts in benefits or social services in the field of childcare, care of the elderly and vulnerable people due to the economic and financial crisis;

7. Emphasises that the Commission and the Member States need to promote, support and reinforce the role of women in the social economy, in the light of the high level of female employment in that sector and the importance of the services it offers for the promotion of a fair work-life balance;

8. Stresses that the presence of women on the labour market is positive from the point of view of economic growth; notes that, according to OECD statistics, the female component contributed to a quarter of annual growth between 1995 and 2008;

9. Stresses that, in the event of becoming unemployed, the risk of not being re-employed is higher for women;

10. Considers that demographic change makes it necessary to realise the potential of women, and to increase their employment in order to reach the target employment rate of 75 % for women and men aged between 20 and 64 years old as stated in the EU-2020 strategy; believes at the same time that people should have a free choice to have children and that a fair work-life balance is a key condition to boost women's participation in the labour market;

11. Points out that employment rates for both men and women are lower in rural areas and that this places those living in the countryside at a disadvantage in terms of lack of availability of quality jobs; in addition, many women are not part of the official labour market and therefore do not count as registered unemployed, and are thus faced with financial and legal problems regarding maternity rights, sick leave and acquisition of pension rights;

12. Stresses that the present economic crisis has had an adverse impact on workers; notes that, although the level of education among women has increased considerably in recent years, and women now outnumber men among university graduates, many women are still compelled to take on secondary roles which are less well paid;

13. Welcomes the fact that, in many cases, women are obtaining better final results at
school and in higher and vocational education than men; regrets, however, that this is not improving their situation on the labour market, particularly as regards reducing precarious employment, eliminating wage disparities and reaching management posts, the result of which is a higher risk of unemployment and poverty; draws attention to the fact that women in the EU still earn on average 15% less than men (or up to 25% less in the private sector);

14. Stresses that realising the potential of the female workforce is also consistent with the objective of the EU-2020 strategy to reduce poverty, and that access to employment is a key factor in efforts to combat poverty;

15. Regrets the absence of binding measures to combat the persisting pay gap between men and women; stresses the need for urgent action to improve the situation of women employed in insecure conditions, especially migrant women and members of ethnic minorities, who are even more vulnerable at a time of economic and social crisis; insists on the need for further action to reduce gender inequalities in public health systems and that equal access to those systems must prevail;

16. Stresses that women are more likely than men to occupy a disadvantaged position on the labour market: women suffer a higher incidence of precarious contracts, involuntary part-time working and a persistent unfavourable large pay gap;

17. Observes that part-time employment can have an adverse impact on the individual concerned, for example placing obstacles in the way of careers and leading to poverty in old age or alternatively, on account of smaller incomes, may require supplementary State assistance for purposes of subsistence or in the event of illness or unemployment;

18. Calls on the Member States to increase their efforts to prevent segregation of job markets by gender and counter the trend for women often to work in worse-paid occupations by interesting boys and girls at school in the whole spectrum of possible occupations, and enlarging training opportunities for women so as to enable them to adapt to changes in the labour markets during their careers; is deeply concerned at the unfair situation where, after more than half a century in which the Community treaties have included the principle of equal pay for equal work, a citizen of the female gender in the EU has on average to work 418 calendar days to earn what a man earns in a calendar year;

19. Calls on the Member States, with the assistance of the Commission, to encourage women - by stepping up existing measures - to participate in vocational training in the context of lifelong learning, in response to the switch towards a sustainable economy, with the emphasis on SMEs, thereby enhancing the employability of female workers;

20. Stresses that women are overrepresented in precarious work, involuntary part-time work and among people experiencing poverty, and therefore calls on Member States to ensure that policies to achieve the EU-2020 target with regard to poverty and social inclusion are targeted at women in proportion to their share in people experiencing poverty;

21. Calls on the Member States to support employment for the disadvantaged category of 'pregnant women or mothers performing domestic tasks on their own', encouraging the
provision of jobs for this group that are decent, stable and compatible with a proper work-life balance;

22. Reminds the Commission and the Member States of the need to adopt positive measures for both women and men, notably in order to facilitate returning to work after a period devoted to the family (bringing up children and/or caring for a sick or disabled relative), promoting policies for (re)integration in the labour market and, therefore, recovery of financial independence;

23. Calls on the Commission to support the Member States in increasing the employment prospects of disadvantaged women, such as female immigrants, women from ethnic minorities, women with disabilities and single mothers, and thus increasing their chance of leading an economically independent life, by improving their access to education and vocational training; draws attention to the multiple discrimination affecting immigrant women on grounds of their gender, ethnic or racial origin and, in many cases, age;

24. Considers that women as a population group are vulnerable to poverty, thanks to unemployment, failure to share family responsibilities, insecure and ill-paid employment, wage discrimination and lower pensions;

25. Stresses that gender equality is not only a question of diversity and social justice: it is also a precondition for meeting the objectives of sustainable growth, employment, competitiveness and social cohesion set forth in the EU-2020 strategy; calls therefore upon the Commission to strengthen the gender dimension in all parts of the EU-2020 strategy, taking particular account of gender specificities, and devise specific measures and targets for gender equality in all measures to improve the European Employment Strategy;

26. Believes that women are at greater risk than men of falling into extreme poverty;

27. Believes that priority must be given to the eradication of poverty by reviewing the macroeconomic, monetary, social and employment policies that underlie it with a view to ensuring economic and social fairness for women; considers it necessary to re-examine the methods used to calculate the poverty rate and develop strategies to promote equitable income distribution, guarantee a minimum income and decent wage and pension levels, create more quality jobs with rights for women, ensure access to quality public services for women and girls, improve social protection and the associated neighbourhood services, especially crèches, nurseries, kindergartens, day care centres and community centres offering leisure facilities and support services for families;

28. Insists on the need for urgent action to fight wage discrimination, by measures such as revising the existing directive, drawing up phased sectoral plans with specific objectives, which could include reducing the pay gap to 0.5% by 2020, the aim being to put an end to direct and indirect discrimination, or encouraging collective bargaining, training of equality counsellors, action on the issue of gender inequality in unpaid work, and the introduction of equality plans in companies and other workplaces; believes that transparency in wage determination should become the rule, so as to strengthen the bargaining position of women workers;
29. Is convinced that a sense of identification, participation on an equal footing and responsibility are prerequisites for successful integration and that integration can work only where immigrants are prepared to adapt and locals are receptive; consequently opposes all forms of forced marriage;

30. Calls on the Commission to encourage dialogue with social partners to look into issues such as transparency of pay, part-time and fixed-term contract conditions for women, and encouraging women’s participation in ‘green’ and innovative sectors;

31. Calls on the Member States to review the taxation of employment in order to establish the extent to which tax incentives discourage women from taking full-time employment, so that the traditional model of the family continues to disadvantage women;

32. Stresses that equality plans for businesses or sectors should be established, on a statutory basis, to combat gender injustice in employment in the Member States, which should be initiated and their implementation monitored by the two sides of industry; supports the introduction of gender quotas for managerial posts and in the supervisory bodies of businesses;

33. Stresses the role of collective negotiation and bargaining in combating discrimination against women, especially regarding access to employment, pay, conditions of work, career development and training;

34. Regrets the low representation of women at decision-making level, both in the business world and in the democratic process; insists on the need for more ambitious measures to promote women's membership of company boards and representation in the administrations of public bodies at local, regional, national and European level;

35. Welcomes the general debate on increasing the proportion of women in management positions in industry and suggests introducing a voluntary quota for this in businesses, which should be based on the gender ratio within the work force;

36. Calls on the Commission and the budgetary authority to comply with gender budgeting criteria when drawing up budgets and their new EU multiannual financial framework; encourages Member States to follow this example when drawing up national public budgets.
## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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<td>Regina Bastos, Edit Bauer, Jean-Luc Bennahmias, Pervenche Berès, Philippe Boulland, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Marije Cornelissen, Tadeusz Cymański, Frédéric Daerden, Karima Delli, Proinsias De Rossa, Frank Engel, Sari Essayah, Richard Falbr, Ilda Figueiredo, Nadja Hirsch, Stephen Hughes, Danuta Jazłowiecka, Martin Kastler, Ádám Kósa, Jean Lambert, Veronica Lope Fontagné, Olle Ludvigsson, Elizabeth Lynne, Thomas Mann, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Csaba Öry, Siiri Oviir, Rovana Plumb, Konstantinos Poupakis, Licia Ronzulli, Elisabeth Schroedter, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzypek, Jutta Steinruck, Traian Ungureanu</td>
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<td>Raffaele Baldassarre, Kinga Göncz, Richard Howitt, Jan Kozłowski, Gesine Meissner, Cecilia Wikström</td>
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<td><strong>Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote</strong></td>
<td>Claudio Morganti</td>
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RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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| Result of final vote | ±: 22    
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| Members present for the final vote | Regina Bastos, Edit Bauer, Emine Bozkurt, Andrea Češková, Marije Cornelissen, Edite Estrela, Ilda Figueiredo, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Nicole Kiil-Nielsen, Rodi Kratsa-Tsarapoulo, Siiri Oviir, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzypewska, Marc Tarabella, Britta Thomsen, Marina Yannakoudakis |
| Substitute(s) present for the final vote | Anne Delvaux, Christa Klaś, Mariya Nedelcheva, Norica Nicolai, Antigoni Papadopoulou, Rovana Plumb, Joanna Senyszyn |
| Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote | Stanimir Ilchev |