Assessment of the results of the 2006-2010 Roadmap for Equality between women and men and forward looking recommendations

European Parliament 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 (2009/2242(INI))

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 EU Charter of Fundamental Rights,


– having regard to the UN legal instruments in the sphere of human rights and more especially women’s rights, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the other UN instruments relating to violence against women, such as the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights, and UN General Assembly resolutions 48/104 of 20 December 1993 on the elimination of violence against women, 58/147 of 19 February 2004 on the elimination of domestic violence against women, 57/179 of 30 January 2003 on working towards the elimination of crimes against women committed in the name of honour, and 52/86 of 2 February 1998 on crime prevention and criminal justice measures to eliminate violence against women,

– having regard to the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995, and to its resolutions of
18 May 2000 on ‘the follow-up to the Beijing Action Platform’\(^1\) and of 10 March 2005 on ‘the follow-up on the Fourth World Conference on Women – Platform for Action (Beijing + 10)’\(^2\),

- having regard to the UN Secretary-General’s in-depth study of 9 October 2006 on all forms of violence against women,

- having regard to the final report of the 49th session of the UN General Assembly’s Commission on the Status of Women, published in March 2005,

- having regard to the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, also known as the Maputo Protocol, which entered into force on 26 October 2005 and expressly stipulates that all forms of female genital mutilation must be prohibited,

- having regard to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women and peace and security, which calls for women to be involved more widely both in the prevention of armed conflict and in peace-building,

- having regard to the Council of Europe’s work in this area, particularly the revised European Social Charter,

- having regard to the Council of Europe Conference of Gender Equality Ministers resolution on ‘Bridging the gap between de jure and de facto equality to achieve real gender equality’ (2010),

- having regard to the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights’ ‘Gender Identity and Human Rights’ Issue Paper (2009); Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity; and Resolution 1728 (2010) and Recommendation 1915 (2010) of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly on discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity,

- having regard to Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast)\(^3\),


---

\(^1\) OJ C 59, 23.2.2001, p. 258.


\(^3\) OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23.

having regard to the May 2003 report by the Commission’s Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men on gender mainstreaming in national budgets,

having regard to the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities and its opinion on the gender pay gap, adopted on 22 March 2007,

having regard to its resolution of 17 January 2006 on strategies to prevent the trafficking of women and children who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation¹,

having regard to its resolution of 24 October 2006 on ‘women’s immigration: the role and place of immigrant women in the European Union’²,

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

having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2007 on ‘a roadmap for equality between women and men (2006-2010)’³,

having regard to its resolution of 17 January 2008 on the role of women in industry⁴,

having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2008 on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Development Cooperation⁵,

having regard to its resolution of 3 September 2008 on ‘Equality between women and men – 2008’⁶,

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 women⁷,

having regard to its resolutions of 24 February 1994⁸ and 13 October 2005⁹ on women and poverty in Europe, and its resolution of 3 February 2009 on non-discrimination based on sex and inter-generational solidarity¹⁰,

having regard to its resolution of 19 February 2009 on Social Economy¹¹,

having regard to its resolution of 26 November 2009 on the elimination of violence against women.

¹ OJ C 287 E, 24.11.2006, p. 75.
⁴ OJ C 41 E, 19.2.2009, p. 73.
⁸ OJ C 77, 14.3.1994, p. 43.
¹⁰ OJ C 67 E, 18.3.2010, p. 31.
¹¹ OJ C 76 E, 25.3.2010, p. 16.
having regard to its resolution of 10 February 2010 on preventing trafficking in human beings,

having regard to its resolution of 10 February 2010 on ‘equality between women and men in the European Union – 2009’,

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 (A7-0156/2010),

A. whereas, although equality between women and men is a necessary requirement for the full enjoyment of our universal human rights and a fundamental EU principle that has long been recognised in the Treaties, significant inequalities continue to make themselves felt in day-to-day politics and in women’s lives,

B. whereas gender equality policies constitute an instrument of economic development and social cohesion,

C. whereas gender equality must be a mark of European cultural and political identity,

D. whereas violence against women is a major obstacle to gender equality and is one of the most widespread human rights violations, knowing no geographical, financial or social barriers; whereas the number of women who are victims of violence is alarming,

E. whereas we cannot continue to be tied to worn-out, environmentally unsustainable economic models based on an outdated sexual division of labour that has been superseded by women’s absorption into the labour market; whereas we need a new and socially sustainable model based on knowledge and innovation, which incorporates the full range of women’s skills into the economy, restores the balance of responsibilities between men and women in public and in private and provides a good work-life balance,

F. whereas, although the 2006-2010 Roadmap for Equality has highlighted gaps in the achievement of full gender equality and, in some cases, driven the gender equality agenda forward, overall progress has been insufficient,

G. whereas efforts to mainstream the gender perspective into public policy need to be stepped up,

H. whereas, although it is still difficult to assess the full impact of the financial crisis, it is clear that the current economic and social crisis is having particularly serious consequences for women and for the long-term advancement of policies aimed at achieving equality between women and men, thereby exacerbating inequalities and discrimination,

I. whereas gender equality has a positive impact on economic productivity and growth, and women's participation in the labour market has a host of social and economic benefits,

1 Texts adopted, P7_TA(2009)0098.
J. whereas in our ageing society women will be indispensable to the labour market, while at the same time demand for care for the elderly will rise, most likely leading to the risk of a double burden for women,

K. whereas those living in poverty – more than 85 million in all – are for the most part women, a situation brought about by unemployment, casual labour, low wages, pensions below the minimum subsistence level, and the widespread difficulty of obtaining access to good public services; whereas, moreover, in the past 10 years the number of women in poverty has risen disproportionately compared with the number of men,

L. whereas in terms of average wages there is a gender pay gap of more than 17% leading to a pension gap and the feminisation of poverty in old age, and whereas indirect forms of discrimination tend to increase when unemployment is rising, thereby affecting women and girls,

M. whereas there is a persistent gender care gap, with women providing double to more than triple the number of hours of unpaid care for children and other dependants compared with men,

N. whereas women are often exposed to multiple discrimination because of their sex, age (especially in the case of older women), disability, ethnic/racial background, religion, national origin, migration status, socio-economic status, including women in single-person households, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and whereas compound discrimination creates multiple barriers to women’s empowerment and social advancement,

O. whereas it is essential to guarantee equal access to resources, rights and power, implying a need to bring about social and cultural change, eliminate stereotypes and promote equality,

P. whereas the stereotypes which still exist with regard to the educational and occupational options available to women help to preserve inequalities,

Q. whereas sectoral and occupational segregation by gender is not diminishing, but actually rising in some countries,

R. whereas family law (notably marriage and divorce law) often puts women in a weaker legal and financial position, and whereas courts sometimes add to the inequalities between men and women by applying family law on the basis of traditional role models instead of equal rights,

S. whereas the right to conscientious objection is often abused by (religious) groups in order to reduce women’s rights in areas such as health care and family law,

T. whereas women’s participation in decision-making is a decisive indicator of gender equality, whereas there are still not many women in management posts in businesses and universities and whereas the number of female politicians and researchers is rising only very slowly,

U. whereas existing challenges and the experience acquired suggest that the lack of policy coherence between different areas has hampered the achievement of equality between women and men in the past and that women’s rights need to be adequately resourced, coordinated more closely, publicised more widely and promoted more effectively, allowing
for individual circumstances,

V. whereas affirmative action in favour of women has proven essential for their full incorporation into the labour market and society in general,

W. whereas, notwithstanding the decisions prompted by the 15th anniversary, there is still more work to do to translate the Beijing Platform for Action into reality,

X. whereas gender-disaggregated data are an essential tool for achieving real progress and evaluating outcomes effectively,

Y. whereas 2010 is the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, a fact which has to be reflected in policies and concerted action that genuinely help to improve the present situation,

Z. whereas it is 100 years since 8 March was declared International Women’s Day, and this anniversary has been commemorated; whereas it is important for women and the organisations representing them to be involved in promoting equality and fighting discrimination and inequalities,

AA. whereas the reconciliation of work, family and private life remains an unresolved issue for both women and men,

AB. whereas access to childcare and services for the care of the elderly and other dependants is essential if men and women are to be able to participate in the labour market, education and training on an equal footing,

AC. whereas, in most of the Member States, social security regimes do not take sufficient account of the specific circumstances of women who live in poverty; whereas the danger of being reduced to poverty is much greater for women; whereas the sharing of family and domestic duties between men and women, not least by developing the equal use of parental leave by both parents, along with paternity leave, is a precondition for promoting and achieving gender equality; and whereas not counting periods of maternity and parental leave towards aggregate working times is discriminatory and places women in a worse position on the labour market,

Assessment of the 2006-2010 Roadmap

1. Notes that, in the field of equal economic independence for women and men, the employment rate among women has reached almost 60%, as set by the Lisbon employment targets; regrets, however, the lack of binding measures addressing the persistent gender pay gap, and points out the need for urgent measures to improve the situation of women in precarious working conditions, in particular migrant and ethnic minority women, who are becoming even more vulnerable in the context of the economic and social crisis; calls, furthermore, for a reduction in gender inequalities in the public health system, to which equal access must be ensured;

2. Welcomes the Commission’s legislative proposals aimed at enhancing the reconciliation of work and private and family life; notes, however, that paternity, adoption and filial leave have not been addressed, and regrets that only a minority of Member States have achieved the Barcelona objectives of providing access to affordable and quality childcare; therefore
calls on the Member States to make a renewed commitment to this objective;

3. Regrets that women are still under-represented in political and economic decision-making positions in the majority of Member States; calls on the Commission to continue with further concrete measures to promote equal participation of women and men in decision-making;

4. Notes the actions the DAPHNE III programme to prevent and combat violence against women; reiterates, however, the need for legislative measures at European level to eradicate gender-based violence;

5. Welcomes the integration of gender equality as a priority into Community education and training programmes, with the aim of reducing stereotypes in society; regrets, however, that persistent gender stereotypes still serve as a basis for many inequalities; therefore calls on the Commission and the Member States to launch awareness-raising campaigns to break down stereotypes and traditional gender roles, in particular campaigns targeting men which highlight the need to share family responsibilities;

6. Welcomes the Commission’s commitment to the principles of the Millennium Development Declaration and the Beijing Platform for Action with regard to promoting gender equality outside the EU; calls for the strengthening of gender mainstreaming in the EU’s development, external and external trade policies to be continued;

At institutional level

7. Proposes that the EU’s new gender equality strategy constitute an agenda for action and a political commitment based on the Beijing Platform for Action and its achievements, bearing in mind that the human rights of women and girls form an inalienable, indivisible and integral part of universal human rights;

8. Points out that it is still essential to pursue the current roadmap’s six priority areas of action, and calls on the Commission to introduce further concrete measures in order to ensure that the strengths of the existing roadmap can be further developed and thus visibly influence national and regional level instruments for achieving equality and women’s empowerment;

9. Proposes that European funding should be granted for the new strategy for equality between women and men in order to facilitate its execution at European level;

10. Maintains that the Council, after consulting Parliament, has to adopt the Commission’s proposed new gender equality strategy so as to give it greater political weight and provide fresh impetus for gender equality policy;

11. Deplores the unsatisfactory way in which the gender perspective has been handled in the Commission’s EU 2020 strategy proposals, and therefore calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that the gender equality dimension is systematically presented in the EU 2020 strategy, including a specific gender chapter, mechanisms for gender mainstreaming and targets for female employment coupled with indicators of economic independence, and taking into account both the effects of the current social and economic crisis on women and the role of women in an ageing society;

12. Proposes that the Council, the Commission, and Parliament hold an annual tripartite
meeting to review progress on the EU gender equality strategy;

13. Maintains that a conference on gender equality, attended by women’s organisations, other organisations working for gender equality such as LGBT organisations, trade unions from the Member States, Members of the European Parliament, the Commission, the Council and the national parliaments, should be held annually, focusing on a predetermined theme each year;

14. Stresses the need for structured dialogue with civil society in order to ensure the principle of equality between women and men;

15. Suggests that institutional cooperation in this area not be limited to women’s associations, but that collaboration with associations representing men and women and working towards gender equality be actively sought;

16. Calls for the European Institute for Gender Equality to become fully operational without delay and for all the necessary gender indicators to be devised so that equality issues can be kept under review whenever they arise; insists that these indicators be regularly updated so that the objectives set can be brought into line with the results actually obtained;

17. Takes the view that, where the social impact of Commission and Council policy proposals has to be assessed, such assessment should cover gender equality;

18. Insists that the Commission should start practising the ‘gender mainstreaming’ method in the preparation of all its proposals;

19. Calls on the Commission to improve and update regularly its gender equality webpage, and on the Equal Opportunities Group to devote at least one of its meetings each year entirely to gender equality and to set up an information service for women;

20. Maintains that the Commission’s directorates-general need to incorporate strengthened coordination machinery into their internal operation in order to provide continuous follow-up to gender equality and equal opportunities policies spanning many different areas; calls for the Annual Report on Equality to include one chapter by each directorate-general in which it reports on equality in its area of competence;

21. Calls on the High Representative to ensure gender balance in the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and to draw up an action plan with a view to pursuing gender balance in the EU delegations, including at the highest level; calls on the Council and the Commission to open a post for a European women’s envoy, as already demanded by the European Parliament in March 2008, in order to focus specifically on the position of women in the context of the EU’s external policies, and calls for gender mainstreaming to be structurally embedded in the EEAS; calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States actively to promote and support the empowerment of women to participate in their bilateral and multilateral relations with states and organisations outside the Union;

22. Calls on the High Representative to ensure that a gender perspective is incorporated into all development cooperation policies, programmes and projects, and stresses the importance of implementing UNSCR 1325 in the context of the EU’s external action;
23. Maintains that gender equality policies in different fields of activity, including the economic, financial, commercial and social spheres, should be based on an integrated approach, and that budgets should be analysed from a gender equality perspective; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote the dissemination and exchange of good practice in order to encourage its being taken into consideration when policies are developed;

24. Considers that the Commission and the Member States need to develop training and implementation tools to allow all stakeholders to take on board – in their respective areas of competence – a perspective based on equal opportunities for men and women, including assessments of the specific impact of policies on men and women;

25. Stresses the importance, in the context of the strategies and plans for economic recovery, of adopting sectoral measures of a trend-setting nature to support education and training courses aimed at integrating women, including young women, into the labour market in sectors that are strategic for development and on the basis of positions and skills related to cutting-edge technology and science;

26. Stresses the importance of devising quantity and quality indicators and gender-based statistics which are reliable, comparable and available when needed, to be used in monitoring the implementation of gender mainstreaming in all policies;

27. Asks Eurostat to develop indicators to measure women’s and men’s involvement in voluntary activities in order to show what men and women contribute to social cohesion;

28. Emphasises that better coordination is essential in order to develop equality policy objectives in all EU and Member State institutions, and that uniform tangible integration methods – such as gender budgets or incorporating gender analysis into the design, planning, implementation and monitoring of public policy – are needed;

29. Points out to the Commission and the Member States that a dual strategy needs to be employed, applying an integrated approach to gender equality while continuing to take specific action, including legislative measures, as regards budget headings and allocations, follow-up and oversight, the aim being to produce practical effects; points out that an agenda for action should include short- and long-term qualitative and quantitative targets at both European and national level;

30. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to take the necessary steps to mainstream the gender perspective into all Community policies and to review existing legislation so as to ensure that gender equality is correctly applied and that positive discrimination measures can be applied where necessary;

31. Welcomes the Commission’s commitment to the principles of the Beijing Platform for Action with regard to promoting gender-sensitive budgets; calls EU and the Member States to make efforts systematically to review how women benefit from public-sector expenditure, and to adjust budgets to ensure equality of access to public-sector expenditure, for both enhancing productive capacity and meeting social needs; calls also for the allocation of sufficient resources, including resources for undertaking gender-impact analysis;

32. Calls on the Commission to monitor Member States’ compliance with the non-
discrimination directives and gender-related measures, and to take active steps, including infringement procedures, in the event of non-compliance;

33. Calls for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) Regulation to be amended to enable, as happens with the European Social Fund (ESF), proactive measures to be taken in support of women in the 2014-2020 programming period, which was feasible in previous periods but not in the current one, and which will have very beneficial effects on female employment in rural areas;

34. Points to the need for the committees and parliamentary delegations within Parliament too to assign particular importance to equality issues and to ensure that women are adequately represented in positions of responsibility within these committees and delegations, and draws attention to the important work being done by Parliament’s High-Level Group on Equality;

35. Welcomes, in this regard, the ongoing activities of Members of the European Parliament responsible for gender mainstreaming, who are working to ensure that the gender perspective is taken into account in the formulation and development of all policy within their individual committees;

36. Calls on the Bureau of the European Parliament and on the Commission to step up efforts to increase the number of women in higher positions within their staff; calls on the Commission to devise a mechanism to ensure parity within the college of commissioners in the next legislature;

37. Stresses the need to prevent the current financial and economic crisis, and future economic issues, from endangering what has been achieved so far in the field of gender equality, and to avoid the recession being used, as is already the case in some Member States, as an argument for scaling back gender equality measures, as in the long term this would hinder growth in employment figures, economic growth in the EU, higher tax revenue, rising birth rates and the promotion of gender equality;

38. Calls on the Commission, in collaboration with the Member States and the social partners, to undertake a review of policies on work-life balance with a view to ensuring that the cost of parenthood is not borne by the employer, but by the community, so as to eradicate discriminatory behaviour in businesses and contribute to our demographic future;

39. Reminds the Commission and the Member States that it is necessary to adopt affirmative measures for the benefit of women and men in order to facilitate their return to employment after a period of carrying out family duties (bringing up children and/or caring for a sick or handicapped parent), by promoting policies of (re)integration into the employment market with a view to enabling them to regain financial independence;

40. Calls on the Commission to continue with initiatives aimed at recognising the informal economy and quantifying the ‘economics of life’, using gender-specific approaches in accordance with the ‘Beyond GDP’ project launched by the Commission;

41. Calls on the Member States to provide appropriate social benefits for women and men who take care of elderly, sick or disabled relatives, and for elderly women, who receive particularly small pensions;
Policy areas – aims

42. Points to the importance of building on the analysis of the Beijing Platform (Beijing + 15) undertaken by the Swedish Presidency, not just with a view to developing appropriate indicators, but also with a view to defining goals and adopting the necessary policies in the 12 areas covered;

43. Invites the Commission to publish an impact analysis of the consequences, including the budgetary consequences, of the introduction of the ‘gender mainstreaming’ system, with a view to evaluating its relevance, effectiveness, durability and usefulness in terms of cost-effectiveness/added value, as is the regular practice in the case of all other European policies;

44. Points to the need to improve the arrangements by which women’s organisations and civil society in general collaborate with and take part in gender perspective integration processes;

45. Takes the view that one priority should be to fight poverty by reforming the macroeconomic, monetary, social and labour market policies that are its root causes, with a view to guaranteeing economic and social justice for women, by reconsidering the methods used to determine the poverty rate and by pursuing strategies to promote fair distribution of income, guarantee a minimum income and decent wages and pensions, create more high-quality jobs coupled with rights for women, enable women and girls to benefit from public services of a high standard, and improve welfare provision and neighbourhood services, including crèches, nursery schools, kindergartens, day centres, community leisure and family support centres and ‘intergenerational centres’, making these accessible to women, men, children and older people as a whole, with a particular focus on assistance for older women living alone;

46. Stresses that the poorest women should be the leading partners in formulating, implementing and assessing equal opportunities policies; invites the Union, therefore, to pay particular attention to the planning and implementation of the European Year against Poverty, the European Year of Volunteering, and the Europe 2020 Strategy in general from this perspective;

47. Emphasises the positive effect of gender equality on economic growth; points out in this respect that some studies estimate that, if the employment, part-time employment and productivity rates for women were similar to those for men, GDP would increase by 30%;

48. Calls on the Member States to analyse the effects of measures to combat the crisis and future exit strategies from the point of view of gender equality;

49. Calls on the Commission to eliminate gaps in the areas covered in order to ensure the same level of legal protection against gender-based discrimination as against discrimination on the basis of race, and to improve legal protection and access to legal remedies for victims of multiple discrimination;

50. Maintains that measures need to be taken as a matter of urgency to combat wage discrimination, whether by revising the existing directive, by drawing up phased industry-wide plans with clear-cut goals – such as narrowing the pay gap to 0-5% by 2020 – aimed at doing away with direct and indirect forms of discrimination, or by encouraging collective bargaining and the training of equality advisers, addressing the unequal share of unpaid
work between women and men and laying down equality plans for factories and other workplaces; takes the view that transparent wage composition should be standard practice with a view to strengthening the negotiating position of women workers;

51. Welcomes the fact that female employment in the EU is close to the target of 60% by 2010, but is adamant that a more ambitious figure of 75% by 2020 now needs to be set;

52. Demands that specific measures be taken by the Council, the Commission and the EU Member States to improve the position of especially vulnerable groups, such as an independent status for migrant women faced with domestic violence, individualised entitlements to pensions and other benefits for women with no or little labour market participation and a campaign to raise awareness of discrimination against transgender people and improve their access to legal remedies;

53. Stresses the importance of negotiations and collective bargaining in fighting discrimination against women, especially as regards access to employment, wages, working conditions, career progress and training;

54. Calls on public and private bodies to incorporate these equality plans into their internal rules, to accompany them with precise short-, medium- and long-term objectives, and to carry out an annual assessment of the implementation of those objectives in practice;

55. Deplores the fact that women are under-represented in decision-making in both the business world and democratic processes, and insists that more ambitious measures are needed to boost the number of women sitting on boards of directors of companies and in local, regional, national and European public institutions;

56. Calls for greater action, awareness-raising and supervision in the workplace so as to create better working conditions for women by taking into account working hours, compliance with maternity and paternity rights, and work-life balance, and calling for wider uptake of maternity leave, the establishment of parental leave, the establishment of paid paternity leave, the establishment of paid family leave, inter alia for the purpose of caring for dependent relatives, measures to combat sexist stereotyping in the division of labour and care, and remedies in the event that the above rights are challenged;

57. Stresses, in this regard, the need to measure, certify and reward the practice of corporate social responsibility on the basis that the requirements must absolutely include gender equality; maintains that this should be achieved through the adoption of flexible organisational models based on target-oriented work and not linked to physical presence, and enabling all workers, whether men or women, to develop themselves professionally and evolve in career and salary terms, in line with their abilities and skills and taking account of the social imperatives arising from the need to care for children and relatives, in a context of family-friendly services and work organisation;

58. Insists on the need to balance personal and family life and work by putting into practice measures, aimed equally at men and women, which promote the sharing of tasks on an equal footing and take into account the fact that until now men have been less inclined to take advantage of parental leave or incentives;

59. Stresses the need to encourage incentives for the development and implementation at enterprise level of affirmative action programmes and human resource policies aimed at
promoting gender equality, with the emphasis on awareness-raising and training activities for the promotion, transfer and incorporation of successful practices in organisations and businesses;

60. Believes it is important to look more closely into the issue of developing a methodology for the analysis of functions that can guarantee women’s right to equal pay, develop the full potential of individuals and occupations, and, simultaneously, enhance the dignity of work as a structuring element, with a view to increasing the productivity, competitiveness and quality of enterprises and improving the living conditions of both men and women workers;

61. Insists on the need for improvements in the availability, quality and accessibility of childcare and care services for dependent persons, ensuring that the availability of these services is compatible with the full-time working hours of men and women;

62. Points out that care services for children and other dependants are potentially a major source of employment for older women, who currently have one of the lowest employment rates;

63. Believes it is necessary to ensure that affordable quality care services are available for at least 50% of children under three years of age, and to make education available to all children between the age of three and the mandatory school age;

64. Advocates policies and measures aimed at eradicating violence against women in every walk of life by promoting the human rights of women, combating gender stereotypes and all forms of discrimination in society and the family, not least in education, training, the media and politics; maintains that specific policies should be developed which promote gender equality, empower women, better educate individuals – including through awareness-raising campaigns – and promote lifelong learning strategies and specific measures for women;

65. Supports the conclusions of the Employment and Social Affairs Council on the eradication of violence against women, and highlights the importance of the Commission’s ongoing commitment to pursuing a more active policy to prevent violence against women; calls on the Commission to initiate consultation on a directive to combat violence against women that will outline, among other things, the efforts the Member States are obliged to make to combat violence against women;

66. Emphasises the need for a wide-ranging survey to be conducted, taking in all the EU countries and using a common methodology, to establish the real extent of the problem; draws attention to the important work that will be carried out in this field by the European Monitoring Centre on Gender-based Violence, which will provide high-quality statistics in support of political measures to fight this scab on society;

67. Maintains that every attention should be brought to bear on the situation of women working with their spouses in agriculture, craft industries, commerce or fisheries, and of small family businesses, in which women are in a more vulnerable position than men, with a view to taking new measures to protect mothers, eliminate indirect discrimination and safeguard welfare provision, social security and other entitlements accorded to women, including those working in a self-employed capacity; points in this regard to the importance of developing the legal construct of shared ownership with the aim of ensuring that women’s rights in the agricultural sector are fully recognised, that they receive appropriate social security protection and that their work is recognised;
68. Emphasises the importance of combating stereotypes in all walks and at all stages of life, since these are one of the most persistent causes of inequality between men and women, affecting their choices in the field of education, training and employment, the distribution of domestic and family responsibilities, participation in public life and participation and representation in decision-making positions, and their choices regarding the labour market;

69. Calls on the European institutions and the Member States to put greater emphasis on combating multiple discrimination, poverty and social exclusion and health inequalities;

70. Takes the view that the taxation and social protection systems need to be reviewed in order to individualise rights, guarantee equal pension rights and remove incentives that adversely affect women’s labour market and social participation, such as joint taxation and grants for caring for dependants that are linked to women being inactive on the job market;

71. Recalls its resolution of 10 February 2010 and stresses the importance for women of having control over their sexual and reproductive rights;

72. Lays stress on the importance of preventive measures to ensure women’s sexual and reproductive health;

73. Stresses the need to make gender reassignment procedures accessible for transgender persons, and to ensure that they are reimbursed by public health insurance schemes;

74. Stresses the need to pay particular attention to the situation of women belonging to ethnic minorities, including female migrants, and to introduce appropriate measures to support them in the context of gender equality;

75. Insists that the Commission should consult Parliament, including its Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality, on the drafting of the future European Charter of Women’s Rights;

76. Takes the view that particular attention should be focused on development, peace and solidarity with women in all parts of the world, especially those who are victims of injustice, discrimination, hunger, poverty, trafficking and violence of every kind; maintains that ongoing consultation with women’s organisations, and more broadly with civil society, and collaboration with non-governmental organisations on matters relating to policies which have a direct or indirect impact on gender equality are guarantees of a broader social consensus;

77. Insists that the gender perspective and the fight against gender-based violence must be incorporated into the EU’s external and development cooperation policy;

78. Emphasises that the new EU gender equality strategy and accompanying institutional mechanisms must be closely connected to the global agenda for women’s rights; notes that this includes linking up with and supporting the new UN gender equality entity, which should combine policy and operational activities, and calls on the EU to ensure that the new entity is provided with substantial financial and human resources enabling it to deliver on the ground, and led by a UN Under-Secretary-General with responsibility for gender equality;

79. Adds that the new EU gender equality strategy and accompanying institutional mechanisms
should explicitly cover gender identity and address combating discrimination arising from gender reassignment;

80. Calls for compliance with its recent resolutions of 10 February 2010 on preventing trafficking in human beings and on equality between women and men in the EU;

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