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## **DRAFT REPORT**

on the European Parliament recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (2017/2194(INI))

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

Rapporteurs: Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Ángela Vallina

**CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RECOMMENDATION .....	3

## DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RECOMMENDATION

### to the Council on the EU priorities for the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (2017/2194(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the draft European Parliament recommendation to the Council, presented by Izaskun Bilbao Barandica on behalf of the ALDE Group and Ángela Vallina on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group, on the EU priorities for the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (B8-0000/2018),
- having regard to the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, its priority theme of ‘Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls’ and its review theme of ‘Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women’,
- having regard to the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, the Declaration and Platform for Action for the empowerment of women adopted in Beijing and the subsequent outcome documents of the United Nations Beijing +5, +10, +15, +20 Special Sessions on new actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted on 9 June 2000, 11 March 2005, 2 March 2010 and 9 March 2015 respectively,
- having regard to Article 157(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to its resolution of 4 April 2017 on women and their roles in rural areas<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the United Nations resolution on ‘Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’, adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015 in New York,
- having regard to Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 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<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),
- having regard to General recommendation No. 34 (2016) of the Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women on the rights of rural women,
- having regard to Rule 113 of its Rules of Procedure,

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2017)0099.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 180, 15.7.2010, p. 1.

- having regard to the report of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (A8-0000/2018),
- A. whereas equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of the Union, recognised in the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights;
- B. whereas the fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG5) is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls throughout the world, and whereas SDG5 should be fully integrated into the 2030 Agenda to achieve progress in all the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets; whereas the SDGs include a goal to ‘double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women’;
- C. whereas the Union and its Member States must be at the forefront of the empowerment of women and girls, and whereas they have a duty to decisively promote gender equality in the Union, as well as in all external relations;
- D. whereas the lack of reaction against gender inequality strengthens traditional gender roles and puts at risk current and future achievements in this field;
- E. whereas the discrimination suffered by women also affects rural women, and whereas the majority of women in the world live in rural areas and are therefore more exposed to multiple forms of discrimination;
- F. whereas rural women’s work is often hidden and is not reflected in the number of women who are farm owners, yet whereas they are key actors in achieving the transformational economic, environmental and social changes necessary for sustainable development;
- G. whereas rural women encounter numerous difficulties in accessing adequate public or affordable health services owing to limited mobility and a lack of access to transport or means of contacting transport (for example, a mobile phone); whereas there is a need for comprehensive health services which address the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of rural women (for example, to respond to gender-based violence);
- H. whereas young women continue to suffer inequality, and whereas measures are needed to promote effective equality between men and women so that they have more work opportunities which allow them to remain in rural environments and ensure generational renewal, thus ensuring the survival of the sector;
- I. whereas rural women need to be able to participate in decision-making bodies in the public sphere is necessary, and whereas balanced representation is essential to achieving equality;
- J. whereas, with regard to risk prevention in the workplace, men and women are exposed to different factors; whereas, for example, calculations to evaluate the harmful effects of chemicals are often based on the physique of men – who generally have greater muscle mass – and even disregard specific recommendations for pregnant or breastfeeding women; whereas, therefore, different factors need to be taken into account for adopting measures to ensure women’s health in agriculture;

1. Addresses the following recommendations to the Council:

### **General conditions for empowering women and girls**

- (a) reconfirm its unwavering commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action;
- (b) put an end to all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere in order to combat all forms of violence, such as serious violations of their fundamental rights which are a direct consequence thereof;
- (c) involve all governments and require them to draw up programmes aimed at eliminating all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation;
- (d) call on the Member States to invest in women's and girls' access to education and vocational training and also to ensure accessibility and availability in rural areas, with particular focus on science, technology, engineering, maths and innovation, as these areas are important tools for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (e) develop policies aimed at eradicating poverty and ensuring an adequate standard of living for women and girls, especially through social protection systems;
- (f) eliminate the gender pay gap, the lifetime remuneration (earnings) gap and the pensions gap;
- (g) call on the Member States and regional and local authorities to guarantee universal access to adequate healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health services;
- (h) ensure gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes by means of adequate financial and human resources;
- (i) mobilise all necessary resources to achieve equality by mainstreaming gender in all policies and actions, including through gender budgeting;
- (j) ensure the full involvement of Parliament and its Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the decision-making process regarding the EU's position at the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women;

### **Empowerment of rural women**

- (k) recall that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women introduces the obligation to eliminate direct and indirect discrimination against women through legal, political and programmatic measures in all areas of life and that Article 14 is the only international obligation that addresses the specific needs of women in rural areas;
- (l) ensure that rural girls and women have accessible, affordable and high-quality formal and informal education, including training designed to develop their

financial, economic and business skills and agricultural training;

- (m) safeguard the right to a healthcare which takes into account factors which are different to those concerning men and is adapted to the needs of rural women and girls, particularly with regard to sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- (n) improve the effectiveness, transparency and democratic nature of international, national, regional and local institutions which support and strengthen the roles of rural women, ensuring their presence through equal participation;
- (o) facilitate the transition of rural women from the informal to the formal economy, and recognise that women in rural areas work in a variety of fields and are often drivers of change towards sustainable agriculture, food security and the creation of green jobs;
- (p) plan and implement climate-resilient agricultural policies which take due account of the specific threats faced by rural women as a result of natural or man-made disasters;
- (q) guarantee the protection and safety of rural women and girls in all stages of disasters and other crises, from early warning to relief, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction;
- (r) take all necessary measures to ensure that rural women enjoy a safe, clean and healthy environment;
- (s) invest in the development and maintenance of infrastructure and public services accessible to rural women;
- (t) support the establishment of local community groups to meet periodically to discuss development-related issues and challenges and to take constructive action;
- (u) call on the Member States, the social partners and civil society to support and promote the participation of women in decision-making and in the governing bodies of professional, business and trade union associations and organisations in the area of agriculture, as well as in the management and representation bodies through an equal presence;
- (v) recognise the active role of women in rural areas and their contribution to the economy as entrepreneurs, heads of family businesses and promoters of sustainable development;
- (w) facilitate rural women's access to ownership of farm holdings and inheritance of land, which is an important tool for their economic empowerment;
- (x) facilitate rural women's access to markets, marketing facilities and financial services; promote local and regional markets – including food markets – which are places where women generally have more opportunity to sell their products directly, leading to greater economic empowerment;

- (y) develop employment policies, services and programmes to address the precarious situation of rural women, who can face many forms of discrimination based on age, ethnicity, race or disability;
  - (z) establish programmes to help women's membership of various social protection systems which could have an impact on their future retirement situation and thus reduce the pensions gap;
  - (aa) develop statistics on the values, situations, conditions and needs of rural women to allow adequate policies to be drawn up;
  - (ab) urge the ratification and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including Article 6 thereof on 'Women with disabilities'; ensure the accessibility of goods, infrastructure and services;
2. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council and, for information, to the Commission.