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DRAFT REPORT

on the implementation of the Joint Staff Working Document Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020
(2017/2012(INI))

Committee on Development
Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

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EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Sources and joint committee meetings before the consideration of draft report

Since their appointment, the co-rapporteurs have collected information and have relied on the following sources, among others:

- a workshop jointly organised by Parliament's Policy Departments (PolDep C of DG IPOL and DG EXPO PolDep) and held in the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality on 25 September 2017;
- a joint exchange of views on the future draft report, with the presence of Plan International (and two young girls supported by them) and of UN WOMEN, held in the Committee on Development on 10 October 2017.

MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the implementation of the Joint Staff Working Document : Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020 (SWD(2015) 182 of 21.9.2015) (2017/2012(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the United Nations Convention of 18 December 1979 on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW),
- having regard to the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action from the 4th World Conference,
- having regard to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development of July 2015,
- having regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in September 2015 and entered into force on 1 January 2016, and in particular to its Sustainable Development Goals 1, 5, 8 and 10,
- having regard to Articles 2 and 3(3) of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU),
- having regard to Articles 8 and 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to the EU Gender Action Plan 2010-2015 (GAPI),
- having regard to the Joint Communication by the European Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament and the Council, entitled “Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019), Keeping Human Rights at the Heart of the EU Agenda of 28 April 2015”,
- having regard of the Council conclusions on Gender in Development of 26 May 2015,
- having regard to the EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 (GAP II), adopted by the EU Council on 26 October 2015, and to the Annual Implementation report 2016 thereof, published on 29 August 2017 by the European Commission and the High Representative,
- having regard to the European Commission Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019 of 3 December 2015,
- having regard to the EU Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy of June 2016,

- having regard to the new European Consensus on Development,
 - having regard to its resolution of 8 October 2015 on the renewal of the EU Plan for Action on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Development,
 - having regard to its resolution of 14 February 2017 on the Revision of the European Consensus on Development,
 - having regard to the European Implementation Assessment of the EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020, published in October 2016 by the European Parliamentary Research Service,
 - having regard to Rule 52 and Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the joint report of the Committee on Development and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and the opinion of the Committee on Foreign Affairs
- A. whereas the principle of equality between women and men is enshrined in the EU Treaty and shall be promoted in all EU activities so as to deliver equality in practice;
 - B. whereas the original Gender Action Plan I (2010- 2015) brought some progress, it also contained a number of gaps : narrow scope, a weak understanding of the gender equality framework by the EU delegations, a lack of commitment among the EU leadership and a lack of institutional architecture and incentives to motivate staff;
 - C. whereas the European Parliament called in its resolution of 8 October 2015 for these gaps to be corrected and a number of other changes to be adopted including widening the scope of the GAP and increasing management level responsibility for gender equality;
 - D. whereas the new Gender Action Plan II 2016-2020 came out of these recommendations with a focus on shifting EU institutional culture at headquarters and delegation levels to create a systemic change in how the EU approaches gender;
 - E. whereas one year on from the adoption of GAP II it is too early to make full assessment of its impact; whereas the objective of this report is therefore not to debate the objectives of the GAP II but to consider how the stated objectives have been implemented in its first year and to recommend actions to improve implementation in future years;
1. Welcomes the release in August 2017 of the first annual implementation report for the year 2016, which demonstrates a clear momentum towards the implementation of the GAP II;
 2. Stresses that one year on since the adoption of the GAP II, it is still early days, but the general direction of travel is welcome and a number of positive trends have been noted;
 3. Notes that the GAP II provides a comprehensive agenda that spans across the entire EU

foreign policy agenda and welcomes in this regard the choice of four thematic pillars, including the horizontal one on shifting the Commission services' and the EEAS institutional culture;

4. Welcomes the strong monitoring and accountability framework established to measure progress in GAP II and acknowledges that its increased ambition provides a real opportunity for the EU to advance equality between women and men as well as the empowerment of girls and women in the field of external relations;

Achievements of GAP II

5. Welcomes the expansion of the gender action plan to all EU external services and to the member states and notes the important progress in shifting EU institutional culture at headquarters and delegation levels; reiterates however the need for continued improvements in coherence and coordination among EU institutions and member states while using the existing structures and budget;
6. Welcomes the fact that the Commission services and EEAS as well as 81% of EU delegations and 22 member states submitted gender reports for 2016; while there might be justified circumstances for delegations not reporting, the European Parliament expects to see continued progress year on year towards all reports by EU delegations and member states being submitted;
7. Positively notes the practical steps towards culture change: placing the overall responsibility for reporting on the GAP lying with the head of delegation, an increased number of high level staff involved in the implementation of the GAP II and the appointment of an increasing number of gender champions and gender focal points in EU delegations; calls for more management level time to be dedicated to gender and for the remaining delegations to appoint their gender focal points. All gender focal points should be given sufficient time and capacity to carry out their tasks;
8. Welcomes the increased number of actions with a gender dimension (G1 & G2 markers), and the requirement for delegations to justify projects with no gender dimension; underscores that overall increases in such projects should not come at the expense of specific gender targeted projects (G2 marker), recommends therefore a specific target for G2 projects;

Key Recommendations for the Commission/EEAS

9. Calls on the Commission to take further steps to facilitate exchange of best practice in gender mainstreaming between delegations and units such as establishing and promoting a network of gender focal points and sharing more positive examples of successful practice;
10. Calls for strengthening human resource capacity dedicated to gender mainstreaming within the Commission services through tailored training and rearrangement of the existing structures; suggests that increased staff training as well as a gender focal point per unit and a gender coordination group across units in DG DEVCO, DG NEAR and the EEAS would better help to mainstream gender across the external policy units;

11. Notes that the link between trade and gender is not sufficiently addressed in the GAP II; recalls in this respect that negotiation of trade agreements could be used as an effective tool for advancing equality between women and men and calls for all EU trade agreements to include references to women's rights and gender equality;
12. Strongly encourages the institutions to substantially improve the ratio of women Heads of Delegations, which is now 28 women out of 138 EU delegations;
13. Stresses that the success of the GAP II will ultimately depend on long term and consistent engagement of high level political and senior leadership across all EU actors; welcomes in this regard the positive engagement from the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development and encourages more commitment from other Commissioners; notes the special responsibility of the High Representative to coordinate and strengthen this engagement in the coming years;

Key Recommendations for EU Delegations

14. Welcomes the flexibility the GAP II gives delegations to choose priorities according to their country context; recommends nonetheless that delegations should be encouraged to have shown progress on at least one priority per thematic pillar by the end of the GAP II to ensure a more even coverage of the different thematic areas;
15. Recalls the importance of using gender mainstreaming in political dialogues and across sectorial policy dialogues;
16. Underlines the importance of conducting systematic gender analysis, using sex-disaggregated data, with the participation of local CSOs and women's groups; welcomes that 42 country gender analyses have been completed and encourages rapid completion for all other countries; encourages the EU to explore possibilities for sharing and managing gender analysis in a more systematic manner to help improve coordination;
17. Recalls that women's rights are human rights and encourages further work to be undertaken with regards to addressing social norms and gender stereotypes in societies through greater cooperation with civil society, grass roots organisations advocating women's rights, creating new or developing existing networks, and involvement of the private sector, if possible; notes that girls and women are agents of change and that inclusion of boys and men is necessary to ensure real equality between women and men;

Key Recommendations for the European Parliament

18. Encourages European Parliament delegations in their work with their partner countries to enquire systematically about gender programming and work on promoting gender equality as well as women's empowerment;
19. Recommends that the European Parliament should examine future GAP II implementation reports periodically and possibly every two years;

Key recommendations for future reporting

20. Underlines the need for a simplified method of reporting which keeps bureaucracy to a minimum; calls for the development of online reporting, clear templates and the issuing of a guidebook to facilitate the work of the delegations;
21. Welcomes the reference to the SDG indicators in the GAP II and calls for further work to be done to fully align the GAP II indicators with the SDG framework to facilitate synergy and complementarity;

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22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.