

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2018

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Readers,

On 11 January we had a joint committee meeting with our colleagues of LIBE. Then on 24 January we had our first FEMM Committee meeting of the year. It was a jam-packed schedule with many different highlights. During the first half of the meeting, we voted on six items including the report on the Recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the report on Gender Equality in EU Trade Agreements, two opinions on the discharges for the European Institute of Gender Equality and the Commission, an oral question and a motion for a resolution on Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and an oral question on Empowering women and girls through the digital sector.

During the second half of the meeting, we met with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of Bulgaria who presented us with the priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency of the

Council of the EU in the field of women's rights and gender equality. We also had an exchange of views with the amazing Barbara Hendricks, Goodwill Ambassador for the UNHCR, who told us about the role of the UNCHR and her own personal experience in supporting female refugees. Towards the end of the Committee meeting we discussed the report on Gender Equality in the Media Sector in the EU, which was accompanied by a study presentation on this topic by Opcit Research. Last but not least, we had an important exchange of views in-camera on the follow-up of the European Parliament Resolution on combating sexual harassment and abuse in the EU. Thank you to all who came or followed us via webstream.

Our next Committee meetings will take place on 19 and 20 February.

Stay with us and follow our meetings via the [Webstream!](#)

LAST COMMITTEE MEETINGS

11 JANUARY

Victim's Rights - Joint hearing with LIBE



The Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime ensures that persons who have fallen victim of crime are recognised, treated with respect and receive proper support and access to justice. The Directive takes into account the gender perspective and the specific needs of specific groups of victims. LIBE and FEMM committees are working on a draft report that will assess the implementation of the Directive in order to analyse to which extent it brings real change for victims and to propose recommendations for a more effective support of victims. The joint hearing, which counted with the participation of victims,

researchers, academics, and organisations supporting victims, brought valuable input to the draft report whose FEMM co-rapporteur is Ms Angelika Mlinar (ALDE, Austria).

[Link to the procedure](#)

[Link to the web site of the Event](#)

Presentation of the Bulgarian Council Presidency's programme



Mr Biser PETKOV, Minister of Labour and Social policy of Bulgaria presented the priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU in the field of women's rights and gender equality. The priorities include efforts to step up the future of Europe and young people focusing on economic growth and social cohesion, achieving a European Perspective and Connectivity of the Western Balkans, and the digital economy.

Gender Equality in EU Trade Agreements - Vote



Research has shown that trade and investment agreements have different effects on men and women, and countless studies have clearly demonstrated that trade is not a "gender neutral" policy area. The aim of the co-rapporteurs, Ms Malin Björk (GUE/NGL, Sweden) on behalf of FEMM and Ms Eleonora Forenza (GUE/NGL, Italy) on behalf of INTA, is to present concrete recommendations on what the EU could do to ensure that trade policies reflect gender equality objectives. The document is structured into three pillars dealing with general considerations and objectives; sector specific considerations and objectives; and actions needed at EU level. The draft report was adopted by 45 votes in favour to 4 votes against, with 5 abstentions.

[Link to the procedure](#)

EU priorities for the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women - Vote of the draft recommendation



The 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will take place in March 2018. Its priority theme will be linked to "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls".

The document prepared by co-rapporteurs Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE, Spain) and Ángela Vallina (GUE/NGL, Spain) formulates a series of recommendations for the Council to take into consideration as regards the EU priorities for the UN session. The draft recommendation focuses on areas such as access to education, healthcare, land ownership and inheritance, decision-making, access to services and infrastructure and the access of women to the media. The draft recommendation was adopted by 27 votes in favour to 1 vote against, with 3 abstentions.

[Link to the procedure](#)

2016 discharge: European Institute for Gender Equality + EU general budget - Commission - Adoption of draft opinions



Every year, the Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT) prepares the discharge procedures for the European Commission, all other institutions and Union bodies (agencies and joint undertakings) in receipt of funds from the EU General Budget. The FEMM Committee usually submits two opinions: one to the discharge for EIGE and one to the discharge for the European Commission. The Rapporteur for both opinions is Ms. Barbara Matera (EPP, Italy).

The opinion on the discharge of the EU general budget address a series of requests to the Commission, such as: explicitly mentioning gender equality in heading 3, 'Security and citizenship'; keeping a separate budget line for the Daphne specific objective, with increased resources; including gender-specific indicators in the common set of result indicators for the implementation of the Union budget. The committee also calls for a renewed commitment by Parliament, the Council and the Commission to gender equality in the next Multiannual Financial Framework. The opinion was adopted by 26 votes in favour to 1 against, with 4 abstentions.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) was established in order to contribute to and strengthen the promotion of gender equality including gender mainstreaming in all relevant Union policies and the resulting national policies. In its discharge opinion, FEMM considered that, on the basis of the data available, the discharge can be granted to the Director of EIGE in respect of the implementation of its budget. The opinion was adopted by 29 votes in favour to 1 against with 1 abstention.

Link to the procedure: [EIGE](#), [Commission](#)

Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation - Oral question and resolution



Linked to the resolution on zero tolerance for female genital mutilation (FGM), the FEMM Committee Chair tabled an oral question for the Commission, to be debated on the International Day against Female Genital Mutilation during the next plenary session. Although noting certain progress has been made, the FEMM Committee is concerned that not enough has currently been done to mainstream FGM prevention in all policy and legislative frameworks. The Commission must integrate its and the Member States' efforts to combat FGM under the wider framework of the Istanbul Convention and in different sectors such as health including sexual and reproductive health, social work, asylum, education including sex education, law enforcement, justice, child protection, media and communication. Female Genital Mutilation has affected 140 million women and girls worldwide with victims in at least 13 EU countries. The following resolution will shed more light on this issue and the current efforts undertaken to fight FGM.

[Link to the procedure](#)

Empowering women and girls through the digital sector - Oral question



The oral question, whose rapporteur on behalf of FEMM is Ms Agnieszka Kozowska-Rajewicz (EPP, Poland), deals with the gender gap in digital skills and access to digital tools and services and how the Commission can promote and disseminate e-skills and digital literacy among girls and enhance the attractiveness and value of skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The oral question was adopted by consensus. In our next committee meeting a motion for a resolution will be discussed as a follow up of the adopted oral question.

Visit of Barbara Hendricks, honorary lifetime Goodwill Ambassador of the UNHCR - Exchange of views



The exchange of views with Ms Barbara Hendricks was focused on better understanding the UNHCR role providing support to female refugees. Ms Hendricks, a world renowned classical singer, was appointed to the role of Goodwill Ambassador in 1987 and is UNHCR's longest-serving Ambassador. She supports UNHCR awareness-raising work and advocates for refugees' rights at national and international levels. During almost 3 decades, Ms Hendricks has visited refugees and policy makers all over the world. In 2017 she delivered a speech in the European Parliament on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, calling on the

EU to address the challenges of the refugee crisis.

Gender Equality in the Media Sector in the EU - Consideration of Amendments and presentation of a Study



The study on Gender Equality in the Media Sector in the EU was presented by Opcit Research's senior researchers Ana FitzSimons, PhD and Sarah Priest, PhD. It examines key elements of the European policy agenda pertaining to gender equality in the media sector. It reviews existing research on women's representation within media content and the media workforce. The study provides analyses of actions to promote gender equality in the media at both the EU and Member State levels. Finally, it presents case studies of gender equality in the media in four Member States: Austria, Malta, Sweden, and the UK. The other authors of the study are: Katie McCracken, Director, Opcit Research, Sylvia Girstmair, Researcher and Professor

Brenda Murphy, Professor of Gender Studies, University of Malta.

[Link to the Study on Gender Equality in Media Sector](#)

[Link to the Procedure](#)

Combating sexual harassment and abuse in the EU - Exchange of views (In-Camera)



On 26 October 2017 a resolution on combating sexual harassment and abuse in the EU was adopted by the European Parliament. The resolution put forward several recommendations some of which are addressed to the President of the Parliament and to Parliament's administration. The in-camera exchange of views was focused on taking stock of the measures that have already been taken by the European institutions on combating sexual harassment and on reflecting about further actions that could be envisaged in this field. The exchange of views included the participation of Ms Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Quaestor, Chair of the Advisory Committee dealing with harassment complaints between Accredited Parliamentary Assistants and Members of the European Parliament; Mr Vladimír Maska, Quaestor, Member of the Advisory Committee; Mr Olivier Plumondon, APA Committee representative, Member of the Advisory Committee; Mr Poul Runge Nielsen, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Harassment and its prevention at the workplace (for staff); Ms Erika Landi, Director, Directorate for HR Support and Social Services, European Parliament; Ms Cesira D'Aniello, Director, Directorate for Human Resources and Personnel Administration, Council of the European Union; and Ms Karen Williams, Director, Directorate-General IDOC Investigation and Disciplinary Office, European Commission.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The next meetings will be held on 19 February from 15:00 - 18:30 and 20 February from 9:00 - 12:30. Then we will discuss, among others, the following topics:

- Women as Agents of Change in the Southern Partnership States - Hearing
- Work-life balance for parents and carers - Presentation by the Commission and the EESC (tbc)
- Violation of the rights of indigenous peoples in the world, including land grabbing - Consideration of draft opinion
- Towards an EU external strategy against early and forced marriages - Consideration of draft opinion
- Jointly with the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE)
- Report on the implementation of Directive 2011/99/EU on the European Protection Order - Consideration of amendments (jointly with LIBE)
- Report on the implementation of Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime - Consideration of draft report (jointly with LIBE)
- Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020 - Vote on the joint draft report with DEVE
- Gender Equality in the Media Sector in the EU Starting at 9:30 - Vote on the draft report
- Empowering women and girls through the digital sector - Vote on a motion for a resolution
- Modernisation of Education in the EU - Consideration of draft opinion

BULLETIN

EIGE's report 'Study and work in the EU: set apart by gender' forms the basis of conclusions approved by the European Council for Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO)



The EU's economy has a major weakness: the uneven concentration of women and men in areas of studies and at work. This makes the labour market less competitive and companies struggle to find qualified professionals in growing sectors, such as information and communications technology (ICT) and health or personal care. Gender segregation poses challenges for these industries and leads to a reduced talent pool, untapped potential and unfulfilled career aspirations.

These are some of the findings from EIGE's upcoming report 'Study and work in the EU: set apart by gender' (forthcoming 2018). The results form the basis of conclusions approved yesterday by the EPSCO Council. The report was prepared at the request of the Estonian Presidency and explores the progress in overcoming

educational and occupational gender segregation in the EU and looks at ways to address it.

[Link to the EIGE Press release](#)

Council of Europe's new publication on the CoE's contribution to Goal 5 of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda

The new factsheet highlights the links between sustainable development and the protection of human rights, including gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The work of the Council of Europe towards achieving real equality between women and men, summarised in this publication, directly contributes to implementing the global Agenda 2030 in Europe.

[Link to the publication](#)



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