

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2018

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Readers,

On 8 March FEMM hosted an Inter-parliamentary parliamentary Committee Meeting (ICM) on the occasion of the International Women's Day. The ICM focused on the situation of women and girls in media and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). You will see a more detailed explanation of the event in the next section of the Newsletter.

On 20 March we held a joint committee meeting with LIBE devoted to the analysis of the amendments tabled to the draft

implementation report on the Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime. This draft report, along with the draft report on the European Protection Order that was adopted by both committees in February, it's part of the so called Victim's package and shows the high level of co-operation achieved by both committees.

Finally, on 27 March, FEMM members had the opportunity to debate with Commissioner Jourová on the situation of gender equality in the EU in the framework of the structured dialogue with the Commission. It was a frank, open and productive debate that tackled, among other topics, the situation of the work-life balance package proposed by the Commission, the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the EU and the Member States that have not yet done it, and the best ways of tackling sexual harassment.

During this meeting the Committee also adopted its position in the form of amendments to the ENVI draft report on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and the opinion on the CULT draft report on the Modernisation of Education in the EU. We also considered two draft opinions: one on the Commission proposal for a Work-life balance for parents and carers and one on the situation in Hungary.

Thank you to all who came or followed us via [Webstream](#)!

LAST COMMITTEE MEETINGS

8 MARCH - INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



On 8 March 2018, the FEMM Committee held its annual inter-parliamentary committee meeting marking the International Women's Day. This year, the topic chosen by the committee was "Empowering women and girls in media and ICT: key for the future".

Members of the European Parliament had the opportunity to discuss with 27 national parliamentarians coming from 17 EU member states and Norway. Other participants included representatives of the European institutions, civil society, academia and think-tanks.

The first panel, "Women shaping media", discussed how media shapes public debate and ideas. Ms Gülsün Bilgehan, Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe insisted on the need to tackle the gender pay and pension gaps, the glass ceiling, as well as sexism and stereotypical gender portrayal in the media. The speakers pointed out the fact that women are still significantly under-represented in the media, especially at decision-making and leadership levels.

The second panel was called "Empowering women and girls through digital inclusion". Ms Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, presented priorities and actions in this field at the EU level. Mr Carlos Moedas, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, European Commission announced the finalists of the "EU Prize for Women Innovators". The speakers highlighted that Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have the potential to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. However, the digital gender divide, whereby women access and use ICTs less than men can, in turn, exacerbate gender inequalities.

The third panel focused on "Women's movements on the rise: advancing equality in the digital age". Dagmar Schumacher, Director of UN Women Brussels Office, presented some women's movements that have sprung up advancing gender equality in the new digitalised age. These movements include examples such as #metoo, #LeanIn or #WeAreSilent. The panel discussed how such movements have managed to shape policies and ideas and to advance important causes with the help of modern technology.

The meeting used technical features such as the sli.do application, a tool for events that allows for interaction with the audience, and 360° live streaming. In total, there were 153 active users who sent 518 votes in nine polls and asked 19 questions.

[FEMM IWD 2018 website](#)

[FEMM report on Gender Equality in the Media Sector in the EU](#), rapporteur Michaela ŠOJDROVÁ (EPP)

Policy Department's [Study on Gender Equality in the Media Sector](#)

EPRS' [Briefing on Gender equality in the EU's digital and media sectors](#)

Victims' Rights Directive Implementation Report - Consideration of amendments



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. FEMM co-rapporteur is Ms Angelika Mlinar (ALDE, Austria) and LIBE co-rapporteur is Ms Teresa Jiménez-Becerril (EPP, Spain). 248 amendments have been tabled to the draft report that will be voted on 26 April 2018.

[Link to Victim's procedure](#)

27 MARCH

Union Civil Protection Mechanism - Vote

The Commission has the intention to redeploy funding from the existing programmes including the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) programme in 2019 and 2020 to the benefit of the extension of the Civil Protection mechanism. The programmes on gender equality and violence against women (Daphne) come from the REC programme. In fact, last years' implementation rate of the REC is more than 99% and FEMM has repeatedly called for an increase in those funds. For all these reasons, the opinion, whose rapporteur is Ms Angelika Mlinar (ALDE, Austria), is strongly against the deployment at expense of REC programme. It also introduces amendments to mainstream gender in the Civil Protection Mechanism. 15 amendments were adopted.



[Link to the Procedure](#)

Modernisation of Education in the EU - Vote



The opinion to the CULT draft report, whose rapporteur is Ms Michaela Sojdrová (EPP, Czech Republic), focuses on the gender aspect of the education reform, pointing out the gap between female graduates of sciences and technologies and their presence in the labour market. It also points to the importance of the balanced representation of women and men on boards of schools, universities and research institutes. The draft CULT report responds to the Commission initiatives addressing schools, higher education and graduate tracking, which are part of the "New Skills Agenda for Europe" (see links below).

The opinion was adopted by 24 votes in favour to 2 votes against with 3 abstentions.

[Link to the Procedure](#)

[Link to the Proposal for a Council Recommendation on tracking graduates](#)

[Link to the Communication on a renewed EU agenda for higher education](#)

[Link to the Communication on School development and excellent teaching for a great start in life](#)

Work-life balance for parents and carers - Consideration of draft opinion



The rapporteur, Ms Agnieszka Kozowska-Rajewicz (EPP, Poland) focuses on the objective of the Directive to increase women's employment and to well reflect its legal basis. Two crucial pillars of the proposal which the rapporteur considers fundamental for achieving these objectives are: non-transferability of parental leave and sick pay level of compensation during leaves. The rapporteur introduces several modifications with the intention of making the proposal responsive to the demands of the EU economies. Several amendments aim to reflect the concern for the functioning of micro, small and medium-sized companies. Better clarity and the need for clear notice periods as well as qualifying periods for the leaves and for flexible working arrangements are requested by the rapporteur.

[Link to the Procedure](#)

The situation in Hungary (pursuant to the European Parliament resolution of 17 May 2017) - Consideration of draft opinion

Based on, among other, findings of the FEMM mission to Hungary (12-14 February), the rapporteur Ms Maria Noichl (S&D, Germany) points out several concerns: about the narrowing of gender equality policies, the sexual and reproductive rights, the ill-treatment and discrimination of Roma women in their access to healthcare, the future functioning of NGOs, which include many women's rights organizations and of the higher education, specifically the gender studies, which have become the target of defamation campaigns. Moreover, the rapporteur calls on the Hungarian government to ratify the Istanbul Convention as soon as possible and encourages it to contribute to the swift adoption of the work-life balance directive in the Council.



Visit of Commissioner Vra Jourová- Exchange of views



FEMM hosted an exchange of views with Commissioner Jourová. The event brought FEMM MEPs the opportunity to discuss with the Commissioner on Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality about the main topics related to women's rights under the Commissioner's portfolio.

The New Action Plan on Tackling the Gender Pay Gap was one of the main subjects of the exchange of views as well as the situation of the Work-Life Balance Package. Both topics, along with the elimination of violence against women (especially the state of play of the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention) and the promotion of women in decision-making roles, are the cornerstones of a comprehensive women's empowerment agenda.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Our next Committee meetings will take place on 12 and 25 April. We will also celebrate a joint meeting with DEVE on 24 April and two joint meetings with LIBE, on 25 and 26 April. In these meetings, we will discuss, among others, the following topics:

- Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020 - Adoption of the draft report (jointly with DEVE)
- Towards an EU external strategy against early and forced marriages - next steps - Adoption of draft opinion;
- Monitoring the application of EU law 2016 - Adoption of draft opinion;
- Violation of the rights of indigenous peoples in the world, including land grabbing - Adoption of draft opinion;
- The EU accession to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence - Presentation of an opinion of the Legal Service (jointly with LIBE);
- Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions in budget 2019 - Exchange of views and adoption;
- General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2019 - all sections - Exchange of views with Daniele Viotti, BUDG rapporteur;
- Measures to prevent and combat mobbing and sexual harassment at workplace, in public spaces, and political life in the EU - Presentation of a study;
- Victims' Rights Directive Implementation Report - Adoption of draft report (jointly with LIBE);
- Trafficking of women and children in the context of migration. The new slavery of our times - Hearing (jointly with LIBE).

MISSION TO THE 62nd COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN



A delegation of eight Members of the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee attended the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) in New York on March 19-21. The theme of this year's session was "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls".

On Monday, delegation members kicked off their series of meetings with the Ambassador of the EU to the UN, João Vale de Almeida. Gender Equality MEPs also met the organisers of Women's March, as well as representatives from the Centre for Reproductive Rights

and from the World Food Programme.

On Tuesday, the delegation was briefed by EU delegation experts on the state of play of the CSW negotiations, before meeting the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for an exchange of views.

Later that day, the delegation members held a side event in the UN Headquarters dedicated to "Rural women as change makers", during which they presented the European Parliament's priorities and initiatives for the empowerment of rural women and girls. Members also had the opportunity to discuss and exchange good practices with other participants from all around the world. After this side event, they met Ambassador Byrne Nator, Chair of the CSW Bureau, and Mr Yannick Glemarec, Deputy Executive Director of UN Women.

On Wednesday, before concluding their visit to New York, Members met representatives from the Food and Agriculture Organization and from a number of NGOs.

The members of the delegation were:

Ms Villija BLINKEVIITE (S&D, LT), Head of delegation
Ms Dubravka SUIČA (EPP, HR)
Ms Rosa ESTARÀS FERRAGUT (EPP, ES)
Ms Julie WARD (S&D, UK)
Ms Izaskun BILBAO (ALDE, ES)
Ms Monika VANA (Greens/EFA, AT)
Ms Ángela VALLINA (GUE/NGL, ES)
Mr Marco ZULLO (EFDD, IT)

BULLETIN

EIGE



EU agencies take a stand against harassment

The Directors of EU Agencies have stepped up their commitment for zero tolerance towards sexual harassment. In a joint statement released on International women's day, they promise to provide their staff with a safe and trusted place to work. They will make sure that every staff member knows that harassment in the workplace is never acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Cases of sexual harassment and bullying will be dealt with effectively and in accordance with existing laws.

[Link to the Statement](#)



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