

## NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2018

### NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Readers,

October has been a busy month for our Committee. We have had a daylong Committee meeting and an extraordinary meeting. We have also had three joint events with our colleagues of DEVE, ECON and LIBE. Due to the amount of topics addressed during these meetings, I cannot expand upon all the items in this brief note but I will highlight some especially important points.

The daylong meeting of 10 October started with an exchange of views with Commissioner Gabriel and a hearing on the Women's role on preventing radicalization in the world. Members adopted an oral question and a resolution on "The situation and rights of women with disabilities" and a key

opinion on the "Interim report on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027". The meeting included an exchange of views of the Parliament Gender Mainstreaming Network. During this meeting, we also adopted a FEMM position in the form of amendments on the common provisions of certain EU funds.

In the extraordinary meeting of 22 October, in Strasbourg, members adopted the "Annual report on human rights and democracy in the world 2017 and the European Union's policy on the matter" and considered the opinions on two programmes that are part of the MFF package: the Programme Establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument and the Justice Programme.

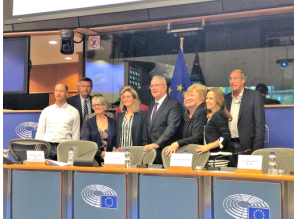
As mentioned at the beginning of this note, we held several joint meetings in October: with ECON on the consideration of amendments to the draft report on Gender equality and taxation policies in the EU and with LIBE on Gender-specific Measures in Anti-trafficking Actions. However, I would like to highlight the joint exchange of views that we hosted with DEVE on the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative. The presentation of the project of Ms Alketa Mripa supporting the victims of sexual violence during the war in Kosovo was full of passion and it truly moved the audience.

Thank you to all who came or followed us via [webstream](#).

## LAST COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### 9 OCTOBER - DEVE/FEMM COMMITTEE MEETING

#### EU-UN Spotlight Initiative - Exchange of views



We are all well aware of the magnitude of violence against women in Europe and in the world. In the EU alone, one-third of all women have experienced physical or sexual acts of violence at least once during their adult life. Worldwide, 35% of women are estimated to have experienced at some point in their lives either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner. The EU-UN Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year programme focused on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls.

The joint exchange of views, with Commissioner Mimica, allowed Members of both committees to see what is the status of the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative and which are the lessons learned after its first year of life.

During the exchange of views, we also counted with the participation of Ms Alketa Mripa, a conceptual artist and activist. She was the initiator of the art installation 'Thinking of You' for sexually abused victims during the 1998-99 Kosovo war. Ms Mripa shared with us the importance of supporting and accompanying victims of sexual violence in conflict-affected situations.

### 10 OCTOBER

#### Visit of Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society - Exchange of views

This visit gave FEMM Members the opportunity to discuss with the Commissioner the main topics related to women's rights under the Commissioner's portfolio.

The Digital Gender Gap was one of the main subjects of the exchange of views but there were other topics addressed during the event, such as the women's digital entrepreneurship and start-ups, the importance of early coding education and its promotion among girls, women role models and ambassadors in the digital field or the importance of STEM education. The work-life balance package, in those topics that are affected by the Commissioner's portfolio, was also tackled during the exchange of views.



#### The Situation and Rights of Women with disabilities - Vote



The oral question inquires primarily the means by which the European Commission intends to ensure that the adoption of a European Disability Strategy 2020-2030, which covers all the provisions of the CRPD, is integrated into the follow up to the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and the European Pillar of Social Rights, paying due regard to the situation of women and girls with disabilities of all identities and social contexts around Europe. The resolution in particular urges the EU and its Member States to develop positive actions targeting women with disabilities aiming at promoting training, job placements, access to employment, job retention, equal career paths, adaptation in the work place and work-life balance. Ms Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (EPP, Spain) is the rapporteur for these initiatives. The motion for a resolution was adopted by 19 votes in favour to 3 votes against with 2 abstentions.

## Care services in the EU for improved gender equality - Vote

The rapporteur for this strategic report, Ms Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP, Finland), looks at the care services within the context of the Commission's work-life balance proposal and emphasizes the importance of the availability of diverse, quality, accessible and affordable childcare and care for other dependants either at home or in home-like situations. The rapporteur further analyses the types and the quality of services noting that regardless of the differences between the users to which they cater, care services should be developed in a comprehensive fashion. The draft report discusses the targets for development of different services and includes recommendations to the Member States related to the funding of care infrastructure and services. The draft report was adopted by 17 votes in favour to 1 vote against with 8 abstentions.



[Link to the Procedure](#)

## The Women's role in preventing radicalisation in the world - Hearing



With the right information and tools, prevention is the best weapon against radicalisation, in which women are so fundamental. This, however, is often missed by legislators. The hearing discussed how with proper collaboration, information and experience sharing, women can become agents of change and a centrepiece of the prevention strategy.

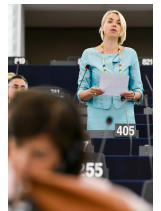
The quality of our speakers allowed us to analyse the phenomenon of violent radicalisation and the role that women can play in preventing it from several perspectives. We had the opportunity to get a first-hand input from two speakers who have had direct contact with radicals and with their mothers. The academic perspective brought us data in order to enrich our understanding of violent radicalisation. Finally, the link with the external dimension of the EU showed us how the different EU policies, internal and external, combine in order to combat extremism in the world.

[Link to the site of the event](#)

## Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament - Consideration of draft report

The rapporteur, Ms Angelika Mlinar (ALDE, Austria), takes stock in the draft report of the state of play inside the Parliament on promoting and achieving gender mainstreaming, both in its administration and at the political level.

Gender mainstreaming is used as one of the means to advance gender equality in the Parliament. The rapporteur critically assesses progress made over the last two years (since the previous report on gender mainstreaming was adopted), welcomes all the achievements and underlines the shortcomings. The draft report gives concrete recommendations on how to further improve the situation, including some recommendations for the 2019-2024 parliamentary term.



The rapporteur stresses that gender equality is not just a women's issue, calls on men to take a greater responsibility and urges the Parliament to continue its work on gender mainstreaming until all remaining obstacles are removed and the gender perspective is fully integrated into all the administrative and policy-making levels of the institution.

[Link to the procedure](#)

## Gender Mainstreaming Network - Exchange of views



The Network of Members in charge of Gender Mainstreaming attended the presentations of Action plans on gender equality adopted by three committees – Committee on Budget, Committee on Foreign Affairs and Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety. The representatives from those committees presented the actions they are implementing in order to ensure gender equality in the organisation of their work or with regards to policy work. They were referring to equal representation of Members in missions and delegation, to equal distribution of reports and opinions, to gender balance in the selection of external speakers at exchanges of views, public hearings, workshops or other events, to trainings on gender mainstreaming and other measures.

The Network also welcomed Vice President of the European Parliament and Chair of the High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity, Mr Dimitrios Papadimoulis and held an exchange of views with him on updated guidelines on Gender-Neutral language in the European Parliament. Mr Papadimoulis reported that the European Parliament was one of the first international organisations to adopt multilingual guidelines on gender-neutral language, which provide practical advice in all official languages on the use of gender-fair and inclusive language. The Members of the Network welcomed these guidelines and stressed that they are very important for all the committees, as well as for services of our institution, such as translations, interpretations or parliamentary publications and communications.

[Link to the EP Guidelines on gender-neutral language](#)

## Interim report on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 – Parliament's position with a view to an agreement - Adoption of draft opinion

The rapporteur, Ms Iratxe García Pérez (S&D, Spain), and the shadow rapporteurs proposed amendments which seek to introduce the gender budgeting first into the BUDG interim report on MFF and secondly into the MFF negotiations on the regulation itself and on the intra-institutional agreement. The rapporteur and the shadows deplore the lack of gender dimension in the current MFF evaluations as well as in the Commission's proposals on the individual future programmes and call for specific mechanisms to be established which would ensure that the future EU budget is gender-sensitive. 29 amendments have been adopted and will be tabled to the BUDG's interim report.



[Link to the Procedure](#)

## Common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum and Migration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Border Management and Visa Instrument - Adoption of draft position in the form of amendments



The draft position in the form of amendments, whose rapporteur is Ms Julie Girling (EPP, UK), will set out, in the context of the MFF 2021-2027, common provisions for seven shared management funds indicated in its title. The main objectives of the proposal are to substantially reduce unnecessary administrative burden for beneficiaries and managing bodies while maintaining a high level of assurance of legality and regularity, to increase flexibility to adjust programme objectives and resources in the light of changing circumstances and also in terms of voluntary contributions to EU-level directly managed

instruments, as well as to align the programmes more closely with EU priorities and increase their effectiveness. 54 amendments were adopted.

[Link to the procedure](#)

## Establishing the Rights and Values programme - Consideration of draft opinion

Within the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2021-2027, the Commission decided to create a Justice, Rights and Values Fund with two underlying funding programmes: the Justice programme and the Rights and Values programme. It has been decided that FEMM will be associated committee to the LIBE's report on the Rights and Values programme, which contains the strand Daphne, envisaged to fund actions against violence against women. The rapporteur, Ms Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP, Finland), introduces amendments which strengthen the provisions of the proposal in view of gender equality. In particular, she adds the promotion and implementation of the Istanbul Convention as an additional focus of the Daphne strand. The shadow rapporteurs discussed the specific amendments which should be tabled to the draft opinion.



[Link to the Procedure](#)

## Policy challenges and strategies against women's cancers and related comorbidities - Consideration of question for oral answer/Consideration of motion for a resolution



Eurostat data shows that around 1,3 million people die yearly because of cancer in the EU. Out of that, approximately 600 thousand are women. However, one-third of cancer cases could be cured if detected on time and adequately treated, so, much more must be done in order to save women's lives. Therefore, the rapporteur Ms Daniela Aiuto (EFDD, Italy) calls for the development of effective and comprehensive European strategies, which take into account broader aspects of women's cancers and include access to accurate information, prevention, screening, diagnosis, monitoring, treatment and post-therapy.

The rapporteur also notes that the situation is fragmented and diverse across the EU and that not every woman has equal access to screening, treatment, as well as affordable and high-quality post therapy. There are many significant disparities among Member States with vastly different health systems and varying standards. Therefore, the rapporteur wants to ask the

Commission whether there are any plans to prepare common standards for all Member States for cancer screening programmes in the EU. She also asks Member States to create high quality and affordable prevention and care centres, easily accessible to all patients.

Finally, the rapporteur considers that an active approach to women is needed in order to step up the efforts of the fight against cancer and asks whether the Commission is planning an awareness campaign on how to prevent cancer with a call to women to take part in cancer screening programmes for breast or cervical cancers.



## 18 OCTOBER LIBE / FEMM COMMITTEE MEETING

### Gender-specific Measures in Anti-trafficking Actions - Hearing

The LIBE and FEMM Committees jointly presented the new report of the European Institute for Gender Equality on "Gender-specific measures in anti-trafficking actions". The report includes guidance on the implementation of the anti-trafficking directive in a gender specific manner. Guest speakers were Dr Myria Vassiliadou, EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and Ms Virginia Langbakk, Director of the Europe Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).



[Link to the site of the event](#)

## 18 OCTOBER ECON / FEMM COMMITTEE MEETING

### Gender equality and Taxation policies in the EU - Consideration of amendments



The draft report, whose rapporteurs are Mr Ernest Urtasun (Greens/EFA, Spain) on behalf of FEMM and Ms Marisa Matías (GUE/NGL, Portugal) on behalf of ECON, stresses that taxation policies can have explicit or implicit gender biases. According to the text, the lack of a gender perspective in EU and national taxation policies reinforces current gender gaps, creates disincentives for women to enter and remain in the labour market and reproduces traditional gender roles and stereotypes.

The draft report calls on the Commission to support gender equality in all taxation policies and to issue specific guidelines and recommendations to Member States. It also urges Member States to shift from joint taxation to individual taxation, to eliminate tax-related disincentives to female employment and to provide for VAT exemptions, reduced rates and zero-rates for products and services with positive social, health and/or environmental effects. 189 amendments have been tabled to the draft report.

[Link to the Procedure](#)

## 22 OCTOBER

### Annual report on human rights and democracy in the world 2017 and the European Union's policy on the matter - Adoption of draft opinion

The opinion to the DROI report, whose rapporteur is Mr José Inácio Faria (EPP, Portugal) quotes the UN Secretary-General António Guterres who affirmed that "there is overwhelming evidence that investing in women is the most effective way to lift communities, companies, and countries and women's participation makes peace agreements stronger, societies and more resilient and economies more vigorous". It urges, in particular, Member States to reinforce the implementation of policies that empower girls and women, combat poverty and social exclusion and focus on providing women and girls with equal access to higher education and training, decent work and equal pay, equal access to financial services and representation in economic and political decision-making processes. The opinion also emphasizes that gender equality should be a key priority in all working relations, policies and external actions of the EU and the gender perspective shall be integrated in the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy activities. The opinion was adopted by 18 votes in favour to 5 votes against, with 1 abstention.



[Link to the procedure](#)

## Justice programme - Consideration of draft opinion



The draft opinion, whose rapporteur is Ms Angelika Mlinar (ALDE, Austria), aims at introducing the gender perspective in the proposed MFF Justice Programme. The rapporteur considers that the EU's justice system does not deliver adequate justice and protection to women and girls and consequently, victims of gender-based violence do not receive the necessary support. In order to tackle this situation, the text calls for a gender-sensitive access to justice for all as a principle of the functioning of a European area of Justice. The draft opinion also calls to support and promote judicial training, with a view to fostering a common legal, judicial and rule of law culture taking into consideration the gender perspective and supporting the rights of victims of crime, particularly women and children.

The rapporteur highlights the importance of supporting the work of civil society organisations and calls for providing an adequate level of funding opportunities for them, especially for small and medium size organisations.

Finally, the rapporteur underlines the need for gender and age disaggregated data and indicators to report on the progress of the Programme.

[Link to the procedure](#)

## Establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Consideration of draft opinion

The rapporteur, Ms Eleonora Forenza (GUE/NGL, Italy), finds that the gender perspective in the Commission's proposal is very weak, therefore she proposes a number of amendments which would strengthen the regulation from this aspect. She highlights the need for this Regulation to address the rise of a backlash against women's rights and gender equality globally and assist the organizations which are working on sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as fighting against different forms of gender-based violence. The rapporteur includes references to the Sustainable Development Goal 5 and its crosscutting nature, the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence ("the Istanbul Convention"). Furthermore, the rapporteur is critical about the part of the proposal referring to the migration that focuses on returns, readmissions and reintegration. In her view, the programmes to be financed under this instrument should focus more on human rights and gender-sensitive approach to migration.



Most importantly, the rapporteur proposes that in line with existing commitments in the EU Gender Action Plan II, at least 85% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) funded programmes should have gender equality as a principal or significant objective, and 20% should have gender equality as a principal objective. She suggests introducing gender equality and women and girls' empowerment as new thematic programme with a budget of EUR 1700 million (to be transferred from the priorities cushion).

When it comes to the indicators and evaluations, the rapporteur proposes the collection and use of gender disaggregated data and the incorporation of gender screening for action plans and measures as well as a chapter on gender impact of expenditure within reporting and evaluation.

[Link to the procedure](#)

## NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Our next Committee meetings will take place on 8, 21 and 27 November. These are some of the topics that will be dealt with:

- European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) - Adoption of draft opinion
- Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament - Consideration of amendments and adoption
- Gender studies in Hungary - Exchange of views
- Gender equality and taxation policies in the EU - Adoption of draft joint report
- Establishing the Rights and Values programme - Adoption of draft opinion
- The implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union in the EU institutional framework - Adoption of draft position in the form of amendments
- Children victims or witnesses of gender-based violence within families - Hearing
- Experiencing Backlash in Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the EU - Adoption of question for oral answer and a motion for a resolution
- Justice programme - Adoption of draft opinion
- Establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Adoption of draft opinion
- European Semester for economic policy coordination: Annual Growth Survey 2019 - Adoption of draft position in the form of amendments
- Policy challenges and strategies against women's cancers and related comorbidities - Adoption of question for oral answer and a motion for a resolution
- Post-Arab Spring: Way Forward for the MENA region - Consideration of draft opinion
- Women's rights in Western Balkans - Consideration of question for oral answer and a motion for a resolution
- Discharge 2017: General budget of the EU - European Commission - Consideration of draft opinion
- Discharge 2017: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) - Consideration of draft opinion

## BULLETIN

### EIGE



EIGE's Gender Mainstreaming Platform is designed to help policymakers integrate a gender-sensitive approach into each phase of the policy cycle. It gives a gender-focused insight to all European Union policy areas – from environment to education, agriculture to the digital agenda.

EIGE's Gender Mainstreaming Platform is packed full of information to aid policymakers, including:

- Data on existing gender inequalities in different policy areas and current objectives at EU and international level.
- Good practices showing practical examples that have been proven to enhance gender equality.
- Methods and tools that give practical advice on how to incorporate a gender perspective into each phase of the policy cycle - from gender budgeting to gender auditing.
- Five toolkits, including a gender-sensitive parliament tool.

[Visit EIGE's gender mainstreaming site](#)



**Contact the editor:**

FEMM secretariat: [femm-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:femm-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu)

FEMM website : [www.europarl.europa.eu/femm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/femm)