

### NEWSLETTER - MAY 2020

#### NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Readers,

The last weeks were challenging for all of us and I hope that you and your families are fine.

As Chair of the FEMM Committee I once more would like to draw attention to the Coronavirus outbreak's devastating impact on women and, more generally, on gender equality. On the one hand, we see the rise of gender based violence, the strain of unpaid care and domestic work for women heightening even more and reduced access to reproductive health and maternal services. On the other hand, we are witnessing the bravery of healthcare workers and carers, who continue taking care of the sick, the elderly and those in need. We see the important job done by cleaners and disinfectors, by cashiers and shop assistants in supermarkets, by postal workers and others. The large majority of those workers are women who are making critical contributions despite perils and despite being underpaid.

Therefore, I am convinced that it is our duty as FEMM Committee to mitigate the effects of this crisis on women. Coordinators have already agreed on working on an initiative report on *The gender perspective in the Covid-19 crisis and the post-crisis period*. Additionally, I believe that it is high time and only fair to equally distribute the investments within the Recovery Fund. Finally, the crisis has shown us that equal pay for equal work is now more important than ever. I am looking forward to working together with Commissioner Dalli and the FEMM Committee on the Pay Transparency Directive, which the Commission will put forward by the end of this year, as indicated in the revised work programme.

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#### LAST COMMITTEE MEETING

25 MAY

#### **The EU Strategy for Gender Equality - Exchange of views**



The FEMM Committee held an exchange of views on the EU Strategy for Gender Equality. The draft report, prepared by Maria Noichl (S&D, Germany), welcomes the adoption of the Commission Communication "A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025". The Communication is considered to be a strong sign for political engagement for European gender equality policies and a decisive, clear and ambitious policy framework to counter attacks on women's rights and gender equality.

The draft report underlines the importance of the chosen dual approach consisting of targeted measures and the consequent application of gender mainstreaming and intersectionality as crosscutting principles.

Procedure: 2019/2169(INI)

Rapporteur: Maria NOICHL

Deadline for amendments: 4 June 2020

Vote in FEMM: September 2020 (tbc)

#### **The gender perspective in the Covid-19 crisis and post-crisis period: Exchange of views**



The committee has decided to draft and give priority to an own-initiative report on "Gender perspective in the Covid-19 crisis and post-crisis period". The

report is to deal with all facets of gender issues related to the crisis and gender mainstreaming of all Covid-related measures.

The report will include an analysis of factors affecting contracting and recovery from the virus, of the situation of single mothers and long-term economic effects on women. It will also examine the increase of domestic violence, restricted access to sexual and reproductive health, and unpaid work in providing home care.

The first exchange of views in the committee examined the priorities of the political groups, which will serve as a basis for the draft report.

Procedure: FEMM/9/02857

Rapporteur: Frances Fitzgerald (EPP)

### **Exchange of views with Helena Dalli, Commissioner for Equality**



FEMM Members held an exchange of views with Commissioner for Equality, Ms Helena Dalli, for the first time after her election. The meeting

was organised following the structural dialogue (that this year took exceptionally place in written form), aiming to boost the inter-institutional cooperation on files related to gender equality. Among the wide range of topics and proposals discussed, Ms Dalli presented to Members the EU Strategy on Gender Equality, issued on 5 March 2020 and EU measures taken against the Covid crisis and their gender aspects.

The exchange was also an opportunity to debate pending files stuck in the Council, like the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention or the Women on Boards directive, and also upcoming legislative initiatives namely in the frame of the 2020 and 2021 Commission Work Programme.

### **Adoption of a Coordinators' recommendation**

FEMM Members voted on the Coordinators' recommendation on allocating the Opinion: "Determination of a clear risk of a serious breach by the Republic of Poland of the rule of law" to the Chair. The Coordinators' recommendation was adopted by 26 votes in favour to 7 votes against with 1 abstention.

## NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

The FEMM Committee will meet again remotely on 25 June (to be confirmed).

## BULLETIN

## EIGE

### **EIGE's special webpage on Covid-19 and gender equality**



This special EIGE webpage aims to raise awareness about some of the gendered impacts that Covid-19 is having on our society. The information draws on EIGE's existing research and gender statistics to highlight the

different realities that women and men could be facing in light of this pandemic.

It also puts forward ideas for policymakers to ensure that the gender perspective is not forgotten when it comes to making important decisions during and after the pandemic that will affect the lives of every citizen.

More information using this [link](#)

[EIGE's website](#)

Twitter [@eurogender](#)

[EIGE's newsletter](#)

## LAST BRIEFINGS

Policy Department study: [Education and employment of women in science, technology and the digital economy, including AI and its influence on gender equality](#)

Policy Department study: ["Violence against Women: Psychological violence and coercive control"](#)

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