

### NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2020

#### NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Readers,

The end of the year is approaching but not the end of our fight against gender-based violence, especially against women and girls. The 25th of November and the following 16 days remind us that this is still the biggest and widest spread human rights violation worldwide and also in the EU. The forms of violence are manifold and in our hearing at the end of November, we addressed one of them: cyber violence. Also trafficking in human beings, sexual abuse and harassment are issues of violence. A more subtle one is structural

hurdles - for example - to have access to good and timely health services for sexual and reproductive health in particular. This was debated also in view of our SRHR report.

In addition, we continued working on very important files, which will shape EU policies in the next years. Among others the impact of Covid-19 on gender and the Gender Equality Strategy for the next years presented by the European Commission at the beginning of the year. In addition, aspects of digitalisation were high up on our agenda this month: from education policy to combatting child abuse online.

In our many hearings, we had very interesting exchanges with experts on cyber violence and sexual harassment in EU institutions but also a highly anticipated exchange with two of the very strong women at the forefront of the opposition movement in Belarus. These powerful women have our full support in their fight for freedom. Thank you for following us via webstream.

#### LAST COMMITTEE MEETINGS

##### 9 November

##### Gender perspective in the Covid-19 crisis and post-crisis - Vote on report



On 9 November 2020, the FEMM Committee adopted its report on "The gender perspective in the Covid-19 crisis and post-crisis period". The report was adopted by 27 votes in favour to 3 votes against with 3 abstentions.

The draft report and the amendments look at the impact of COVID-19 on women and men, gender-based violence and the economic effects, vulnerable groups, and at the impact outside the EU. Special consideration is given to the recovery package and the measures to be taken. The vote on amendments took place on 28 October 2020.

Procedure: [2020/2121 \(INI\)](#)  
Rapporteur: [Frances Fitzgerald \(PPE\)](#)

##### The EU Strategy for Gender Equality - Vote on report



On 9 November 2020, the FEMM Committee adopted its report on "EU Strategy for Gender Equality". The report was adopted by 26 votes in favour to 6 votes against with 1 abstention.

The report welcomes the adoption of the Strategy, delivered timely within the first 100 days of the new Commission as 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. It underlines the importance of the chosen dual approach consisting of targeted measures and the consequent application of gender mainstreaming and intersectionality as crosscutting principles. The vote on amendments took place on 28 October 2020.

Procedure: [2019/2169 \(INI\)](#)  
Rapporteur: [Maria Noichl \(S&D\)](#)  
[EMPL Opinion](#)  
EMPL Rapporteur for Opinion: [Eugenia Rodríguez Palop \(GUE/NGL\)](#)  
[LIBE Opinion](#)  
LIBE Rapporteur for Opinion: [Evin Incir](#)

## **Situation of sexual and reproductive health and rights in the EU - Draft report**



On 9 November 2020, the FEMM Committee considered the draft report on “The situation of sexual and reproductive health

and rights in the EU, in the frame of women’s health”.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are one of the key issues in the discussion on human rights. These rights are inseparable from the realisation of the fundamental right to health, as well as the achievement of gender equality and the elimination of gender based violence.

The report comes at a crucial moment in the EU, when the backlash against women's rights is gaining momentum, contributes to the erosion of acquired rights and endangers women' health.

Procedure: [2020/2215\(INI\)](#)  
Rapporteur: [Predrag Fred Matic \(S&D\)](#)

## **Shaping digital education policy -Vote on amendments**

On 9 November 2020, the FEMM Committee adopted the FEMM position in the form of amendments to "Shaping digital education policy". 22 amendments were adopted.



The tabled amendments call on the Commission and Member States to address the digital gender gap when developing digital education policies and to ensure that such policies are inclusive, non-discriminatory and contribute to gender equality. The amendments also call for the promotion of digital competences among girls. Girls should be encouraged to invest in digital skills and to choose ICT and STEM career paths.

Members had tabled 72 amendments.14 compromise amendments had been prepared.

Procedure: [2020/2135\(INI\)](#)

Rapporteur: [Jadwiga Wisniewska \(ECR\)](#)

## **Public Hearing on “Sexual harassment in the EU institutions”**



The Committee on Gender Equality and Women’s Rights (FEMM) organized a hearing on “Sexual harassment in the EU

institutions: follow-up of the EP resolution” on 9 November 2020 from 14.30-15.45 remotely.

Sexual harassment is a form of violence against women and girls and is the most extreme yet persistent form of gender-based discrimination. The hearing discussed the European Parliament’s follow-up of its resolution on ‘Combating sexual harassment and abuse in the EU’, adopted on 26 October 2017. It aimed to identify any shortcomings and address recommendations for a workplace free of sexual harassment.

Further information: [Programme](#)

**12 November**

## **Closing the digital gender gap - Vote on report**



On 12 November 2020, the FEMM Committee voted on the final report on “Closing the digital gender gap: women’s participation in the digital economy”. The report was adopted by

28 votes in favour to 3 votes against with 2 abstentions.

The report includes recommendations intended to address the digital gender gap in various areas such as Education, Employment, Media, Culture and Audiovisual Sector, Civic, political and economic participation, Development Policies.

Members had tabled 202 amendments. The rapporteur had proposed 30 compromise amendments.

The vote on amendments took place on 9 November 2020.

Procedure: [2019/2168\(INI\)](#)  
Rapporteur: [Maria da Graça Carvalho \(PPE\)](#)

### **Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2019-Vote on opinion**



On 12 November 2020, the FEMM Committee voted on the draft opinion on “Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2019 and the European Union’s policy on the matter - annual report 2019”. The opinion was adopted by 25 votes in favour to 6 votes against with 2 abstentions.

Members had tabled 100 amendments. 15 compromise amendments had been prepared. The vote on amendments took place on 9 November 2020.

Procedure: [2020/2208\(INI\)](#)  
Rapporteur: [Christine Anderson \(ID\)](#)

### **Women in Belarus - Exchange of views**



FEMM, in association with the Delegation for relations with Belarus (D-BY), organized an exchange of views on

“Women in Belarus” on 12 November 2020 from 17.00-17.45 remotely.

The FEMM Committee considers it essential that the European Union supports the Belarusian women in their fight for democracy and an equal society. Thousands of strong women are peacefully taking to the streets of Belarus and they are the forefront of the protests and a strong force for change. The Committee held an exchange of views with women who became the face of the protests opposing the rule of Alyaksandr Lukashenka. They have been protesting against the rigged elections, beating up and torturing citizens, kidnapping opposition leaders. Therefore, it is essential that the European Parliament shows its full support to these women.

Further information : [Programme](#)

### **Council Directive 2000/78/EC in light of the UNCRPD - Vote on amendments**



On 30 November 2020, the FEMM Committee voted on the amendments to the opinion on “Implementation of Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation in light of the UNCRPD”.

Women and girls with disabilities face multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination based on both gender and disability, including direct and indirect discrimination, discrimination by association, denial of reasonable accommodation and structural or systematic discrimination

70 amendments had been tabled and 13 compromise amendments had been proposed.

Procedure: [2020/2086\(INI\)](#)  
Rapporteur: [Rosa Estaràs Ferragut \(PPE\)](#)

### **Combatting child sexual abuse online - Vote on amendments**



On 30 November 2020, the FEMM Committee voted on the amendments to the opinion on "Temporary derogation from

certain provisions of Directive 2002/58/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the use of technologies by number-independent interpersonal communications service providers for the processing of personal and other data for the purpose of combatting child sexual abuse online".

Converging data shows that more than 80% of the children depicted in pornographic material are girls under the age of 13, who also represent more than 90 % of the victims of sexual abuse online.

29 amendments had been tabled and 1 compromise amendment had been proposed.

Procedure: [2020/0259\(COD\)](#)  
Rapporteur: [Christine Anderson \(ID\)](#)

### **LIBE - FEMM Joint Hearing: Combating Gender based Violence: Cyber Violence**



On 30 November 2020, the LIBE and FEMM Committees held a joint hearing on "Combating Gender based Violence: Cyber

Violence". The objective of the hearing was to obtain input from relevant experts for the joint LIBE-FEMM legislative initiative draft report, which will focus on combating cyber violence as an expression of gender based violence,

with specific attention to violence against women.

The organisation of such a hearing was of particular relevance in light of the current crisis, which has led to the confinement of millions of individuals in the EU with, as a consequence, an increased use of the Internet, and an increased risk of cyber violence, especially against women and girls. The hearing took place in the UN's 16 days of activism against gender-based violence (November 25 to December 10).

Further information: [Programme](#)  
FEMM Rapporteur: [Elissavet Vozemberg-Vrionidi \(PPE\)](#)  
LIBE Rapporteur: [Sylwia Spurek \(Greens/EFA\)](#)

## NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The FEMM Committee will meet again on 7 December 2020. We will deal with the following topics:

- Public Hearing on Women's Rights Defenders
- Implementation of Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims (Consideration of amendments)

## BULLETIN

## EIGE

### **New handbook from EIGE: How can we stop sexism at work?**



EIGE has published a handbook to stop sexism in the workplace. From recruitment to performance evaluation, EIGE's handbook shows how organisations can ensure all

employees feel safe, respected and fulfilled. The content has been tailored to the needs of the EU institutions and agencies.

The handbook explains what sexism is, provides a checklist to assess the situation, and offers advice on how to deal with sexist behaviour and workplace practices. [Read more](#) or [download the handbook](#).

[EIGE's website](#)

Twitter [@eurogender](#)

[EIGE's newsletter](#)

## POLICY DEPARTMENT

At the request of the FEMM Committee, the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs has commissioned the following studies and in-depth analyses:

[The Situation of Single Parents in the EU](#)

[Tackling violence against women and domestic violence in Europe](#)

Further information:

Full list of Policy Department [Supporting Analyses](#)

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