

FEMM

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2021

NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Readers,

We are starting into a very active year and FEMM committee's agenda is already full of interesting events and topics to be discussed.

As with every new Presidency of the Council, we invited a representative for an exchange of views. Minister of State Ms Mariana Vieira da Silva shared with us the current situation of FEMM related files in the Council and the Portuguese Presidency's aims with these. We were very happy to hear that gender equality and women's rights will play an important role in the coming months' agendas thanks to the Portuguese Presidency and we are looking forward to a fruitful exchange.

Our hearing on gender aspects of precious work provided us with more expertise and data on the gender dimension of poverty, precarious work and minimum wages. Especially the latter will be interesting in our upcoming work on the Commission's proposal for a Directive on adequate minimum wages which would positively impact the gender pay gap and minimum wage earners who are 60% female.

We also continued our work on sexual and reproductive health and rights with an exchange on the report, which will be even more important after recent restrictions in Poland, and voted on the joint LIBE-FEMM file on combatting the trafficking in human beings. And in the coming weeks we will continue at a similar pace with many more topics on the horizon.

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LAST COMMITTEE MEETINGS

25 January

Public Hearing on "Gender aspects of precarious work"



On 25 January 2021, FEMM organized a hearing on "Gender aspects of precarious work".

The hearing discussed the gender dimension in relation to precarious work, poverty, the gender pay gap

and minimum wages.

The deliberations will contribute to the work of the FEMM Committee on the Commission's proposal for a Directive on adequate minimum wages in the European Union.

Further information: [Programme](#)

26 January

Council Presidency - Presentation of the priorities



On 26 January 2021, FEMM Members held an exchange of views with Ms Mariana Vieira da Silva, Portuguese Minister of State, representing the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU.

The Portuguese Presidency will promote a reflection on the impact of COVID-19 on gender equality, in particular on labour market participation, incomes, and reconciliation of work, personal and family life. It will also mark the tenth anniversary of the Istanbul Convention with a conference, to be held in Lisbon in April. The importance of combating violence against women and domestic violence, both recognised as human rights violations and forms of discrimination, will be emphasised.

Gender equality and combatting violence against women and domestic violence will be put high on the agenda, as well as non-discrimination and diversity.

Further information: [Portuguese Presidency](#)

Situation of sexual and reproductive health and rights - Amendments



On 26 January 2021, the FEMM Committee considered the amendments to 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's health.

503 amendments have been tabled.

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

Promoting gender equality in (STEM) education and careers - draft report



On 26 January 2021, FEMM members discussed the draft report on "Promoting gender equality in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education and careers", prepared by the rapporteur Susana Solís Pérez

(Renew).

The draft report focuses on an unparalleled shortage of women in STEM careers and education, on reasons why women are less likely than their male counterparts to enter STEM education and occupations or remain in them, as well as on the consequences of this shortage.

Procedure: [2019/2164 \(INI\)](#)
Rapporteur: [Susana Solís Pérez \(Renew\)](#)

2019 discharge (European Commission & EIGE) - draft opinions



On 26 January 2021, FEMM members discussed two draft opinions on the 2019 discharge: for the general budget (European Commission) and for the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), respectively.

The draft opinion on the 2019 discharge for the general budget (European Commission) focuses on the need for an implementation of gender budgeting at all stages of the budgetary process and therefore supports ECA's decision in favour of the gender mainstreaming in the Union budget.

The draft opinion on the 2019 discharge for the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) focuses on the high level of budget execution of this institute and a decrease in its carry-over operating expenditure to 28,01 % in 2019. The rapporteur proposes to grant the discharge to the Director of the EIGE.

Procedure European Commission: [2020/2140\(DEC\)](#)
Procedure EIGE: [2020/2173\(DEC\)](#)
Rapporteur: [Robert Biedroń \(S&D\)](#)

27 January

Trafficking in human beings - vote



On 27 January 2021, the LIBE and FEMM Committees voted on the joint report on the "Implementation of Directive (2011/36/EU) on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims". The report was adopted by 80 votes in favour, with 10 votes against and 10 abstentions.

The report proposes to update the provisions of the directive, including on prevention and prosecution of trafficking for sexual exploitation, addresses the use of online technologies in both the proliferation and the prevention of trafficking, makes suggestions for the improvement of the prevention and early identification of victims. It also recommends to strengthen the gender approach across all forms of trafficking and that Member States criminalise the use of services that involve exploitation.

Procedure: [2020/2029 \(INI\)](#)
LIBE Rapporteur: [Juan Fernando López Aguilar \(S&D\)](#)
FEMM Rapporteur: [María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos \(Renew\)](#)

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The FEMM Committee will meet again on 1, 4, 24, 22 (tbc), 25 February 2021.

In February, we will deal with the following topics, amongst others:

- Draft Opinion on "Shaping the digital future of Europe"
- Vote (Consent procedure) on "Agency for Fundamental Rights"
- Vote (Opinion to Interim report) on "Agency for Fundamental Rights"
- Vote on the draft opinions on the 2019 discharge: for the general budget (European Commission) and for the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).

LATEST BRIEFINGS



Ahead of the January 2021 Plenary, the EPRS services produced the following publication:

["Achieving gender equality in the face of the pandemic and existing challenges" - At a glance.](#)

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