

## Committee on Foreign Affairs

### Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming, the act of incorporating women's rights perspective in EU policies. It is deduced based on Article 8 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union: *"In all its activities, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women"*.

Around the world, various examples could be found proving certain progress in terms of gender equality, like the increased proportion of women in parliaments or the greater number of girls going to school. On the other hand, much more needs to be done seen the commitments from the World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and the persistence of violence against women and girls.

Understanding and taking into account that the gender dimension in foreign policy will contribute to better policy-making and ensure that both sexes can benefit from different foreign affairs policies.

In order to implement the principle of gender mainstreaming in all its activities, the European Parliament decided, in its resolution of 13 March 2003, that the gender perspective should be integrated in the work of its committees and delegations and set the premises for the Gender Mainstreaming Network to be established. AFET has appointed Ms Isabel Santos to take part in the network, with Mr Ernest Urtasun as a substitute. Based on the work of the Gender Mainstreaming Network and recommendations incorporated in the European Parliament resolution of 8 March 2016 on gender mainstreaming, the Committee on Foreign Affairs draws up the following principles and actions to be implemented in its work.

#### With regards to policy work:

- In preparing reports and opinions, a gender focus should be taken into account in the formulation of the policy, whenever possible; and taking into account the position of the FEMM committee, if available, given that due attention is given to studies and analysis on equality between women and men as well as gender mainstreaming in relevant policy fields and to the extent possible, the available relevant data should be mentioned in the text; in the absence of such a study or analyses, the committee could request it from the Policy Department or the EPRS, if necessary;
- the committee checks whether the gender aspect has been analysed in *ex-ante* and *ex-post* impact assessments of legislative proposals and in sustainability impact assessments of international agreements within the AFET sphere ; in case this is deemed lacking or insufficient, the committee calls on the Commission to redress the situation;

- the committee requests the Commission to respect the gender balance in international negotiating teams by ensuring a fair balance between women and men in their composition; and, if deemed lacking, invites the Commission to redress the situation;
- the committee advocates for the better collection of data disaggregated by sex as its lack hampers informed policy making;
- the committee ensures that its working groups discuss the impact of specific policy options on gender equality and invites women's organisations to present their views, if appropriate;
- the AFET committee aims to interact more effectively with the in-house bodies in charge of the implementation and promotion of gender mainstreaming in parliamentary activities, notably the FEMM Committee, the Gender Mainstreaming Network and The High-level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity as well as outside actors such as the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and the European Institute for Gender Equality;
- the AFET Member(s) responsible for gender mainstreaming will report back to the committee on the work of Gender Mainstreaming Network.

**With regards to the practices of the work of members and staff:**

- Gender neutral language (EP Guidelines "Gender neutral language in the European Parliament") is used in all documents related to the work of the committee; attention is paid especially in the committee's reports and opinions as well as studies commissioned by the committee;
- gender balance of paid experts and invited speakers is taken into account to the maximum extent possible when organising hearings and workshops;
- meetings with women organisations (women business organisations, women in NGOs, and organisations defending human and women rights) should be included in AFET missions programmes, if relevant;
- the AFET Secretariat should coordinate with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), the High-Level Group of Gender Equality and Diversity, the FEMM committee and the gender mainstreaming network in order to ensure that information on gender issues and best practices in gender mainstreaming in international affairs are circulated in the committee;
- gender aspect will be included in the terms of reference of studies commissioned by the committee;

- the committee holds an exchange of views on gender mainstreaming in its policy at a minimum once every two years, to coincide with and feed into the drafting of the EP gender mainstreaming report;
- the selection procedure in the AFET secretariat should take into account the recommendations of the High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity;
- the Committee invites the Secretariat and political groups to ensure the work-life balance of the staff by implementing the recommendations contained in the report from Mr Papadimoulis titled “Gender Equality in the European Parliament - state of play and the way forward 2017-2019”.

#### **Monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming**

- This plan will be closely monitored by the member(s) responsible for gender mainstreaming in the committee and will be supported by the Secretariat.