



International Women's Day 2015

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[FEMM committee webpage](#)

[Committee meeting documents](#)



Note from the Chair



As each year, [International Women's Day](#) is the moment in year where we get together and celebrate progress made in terms of women's rights and gender equality, as well as looking forward to those challenges that remain. This year, my committee has decided to underline the importance of empowering women and girls through education. Whilst many countries have made significant progress towards gender equality in education, the picture is still mixed.

Education and training of women remains as a key area of concern within the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the agenda for women empowerment that will be reviewed again this year, 20 years after its adoption. With gender equality and women's rights at the heart of addressing unfinished commitments of the Millennium Development Goals and global development beyond 2015, it is important, and timely given the political momentum of reviewing these international instruments, to address education in this context. Despite a greater presence of girls in classrooms in developing countries, their attendance rates are poorer than that of boys and girls are less likely to achieve primary education or to progress to secondary education with challenges faced including poverty, violence against women, child marriage and teenage pregnancy and discriminatory social norms or traditions. Within the European Union, women continue to be underrepresented in fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, as well as in management, government and other decision-making posts. The FEMM Committee strongly believes education is a tool to challenge those gender stereotypes that continue to influence girls' academic choices, school curricula, their self-perception and expectations; all aspects that reinforce gender inequalities and gender segregation of labour markets.

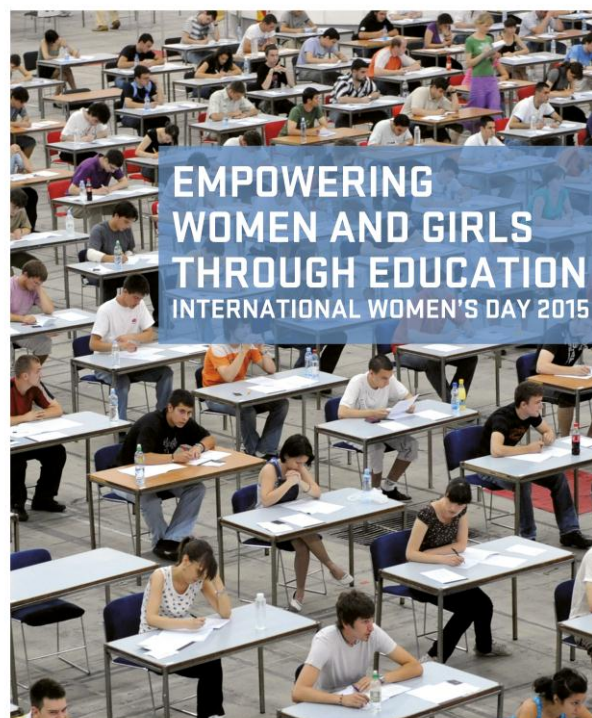
We look forward to welcoming you on the 5th of March to discuss experiences and best practices on how to strengthen the rights of women and girls through education. Our newsletter also offers a glimpse on some of the many other interesting events that will be organised around this year's edition of International Women's Day.

Iratxe GARCÍA PÉREZ

Empowering Women and Girls through Education Interparliamentary committee meeting

The main event organised by the FEMM Committee, in collaboration with the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments and the Directorate for Democracy Support, will be the **interparliamentary committee meeting organised on 5 March from 09.00 to 12.30**. In the presence of Members of the national parliaments of the EU Member States, the enlargement countries and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Members of the Committee will discuss the topic of "Empowering Women and Girls through Education."

The event will be divided into three discussion panels that are to analyse issues such as the importance of eliminating gender disparity in education and training, challenges for equal access to continuous and quality education and finally concrete actions to move towards the empowerment of women and girls through education within the European Union. The panels will include a large range of prominent guests such as: the European Commissioner for Justice, Consumer and Gender Equality, Věra Jourová, representatives of UNICEF, but also the European Digital Girl of the Year 2014, Manon Van Hoorebeke. Amongst others, Members have also invited experts from the ground, as Dulce Rebelo from Portugal (Movimento Democrático das Mulheres) and Stanimira Hadjimitova from Bulgaria (Gender Project for Bulgaria Foundation).

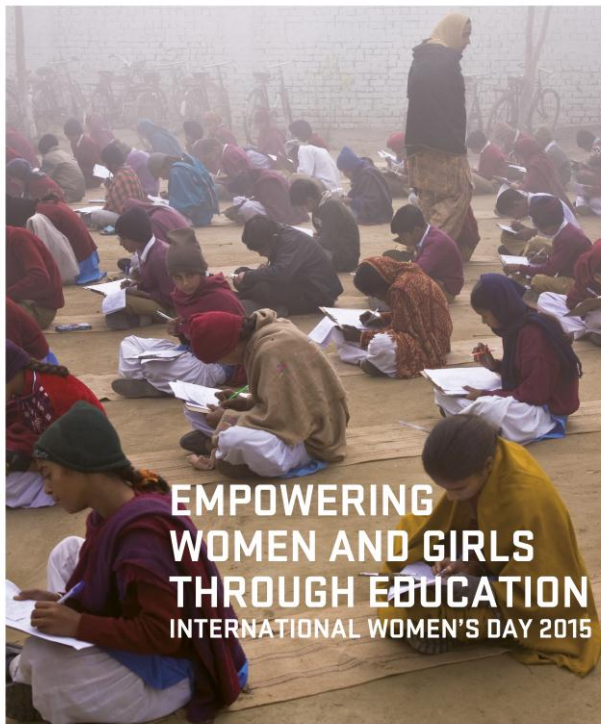


THURSDAY, 5 MARCH, 9:00 - 12:30
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT HEMICYCLE, BRUSSELS

Chair: Iratxe García Pérez, Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
Co-Chair: Silvia Costa, Chair of the Committee on Culture and Education
Interparliamentary committee meeting with the support of the Directorate for Relations with National Parliaments and of the Directorate for Democracy Support
Please register by Friday 27 February at noon: femm-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu



On the basis of three debates, representatives will have the opportunity to discuss experiences at a Member State level as well as strategic actions and ideas for the way forward on a European level. The interparliamentary committee meeting will also be the opportunity for FEMM's Rapporteur, as well as the shadow Rapporteurs, to present and discuss their initial ideas on the own-initiative report, "Empowering girls through education in the EU".



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FEMM IWD CELEBRATION

The interparliamentary committee meeting will take place on 5 March from 09.00 to 12.30 in the Hemicycle, European Parliament, Brussels.

Registration is possible before 27 February noon, please click [here](#).

The programme of the event can be found [here](#).

Live Web streaming of the meeting [here](#).

Political Participation of Women in the Western Balkans and Turkey

Conference organised by the Directorate for Democracy Support

An interparliamentary conference on the "Political participation of women in the Western Balkans and Turkey" will take place in the European Parliament on **4 March from 14.45 to 18.45**. Members of the European Parliament, Members of Parliament from the Western Balkans and Turkey and relevant NGO representatives have been invited to attend.

This conference is the DG EXPO contribution to the annual European Parliament celebrations of the International Women's Day and is organised in the framework of the European Parliament Support Programme for the Parliaments of the Western Balkans and Turkey. The main objective of the programme is to strengthen democracy and facilitate these countries' European integration process in line with the European Parliament priorities.

DG EXPO IWD CELEBRATION

The interparliamentary conference will take place on 4 March from 14.45 to 18.45 in room ASP 5 G-2, European Parliament, Brussels

Registration is possible before 20 February noon, please click [here](#).

The programme of the event can be found [here](#).

Empowering Women and Girls Through Education

Annual seminar for journalists at the occasion of IWD

Prior to the meeting, the European Parliament press services organise a networking conference for journalists on "Empowering women and girls through education".

The event will take place on **4 March from 10.00 to 17.30** and will enable MEPs, experts and journalists to discuss women's and girls' right to education and measures on a European level. It is open to accredited journalists and will also focus on the gaps between education and job opportunities for women as well as the next steps in the development of the Strategy for equality between women and men, post-2015.