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A8-0163/1

Amendment 1

Constance Le Grip, Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz

on behalf of the PPE Group

Report

A8-0163/2015

Maria Noichl

The EU Strategy for equality between women and men post 2015
2014/2152(INI)

Motion for a resolution (Rule 170(4) of the Rules of Procedure) replacing non-legislative motion for a resolution A8-0163/2015

European Parliament resolution on the EU Strategy for equality between women and men post 2015

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 2 and 3(3), second subparagraph, of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
 - having regard to Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
 - having regard to Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA¹,
 - having regard to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention),
 - having regard to the European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020), adopted by the Council in March 2011²,
 - having regard to the Commission communication of 21 September 2010 entitled ‘Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015’ (COM(2010)0491),
- A. whereas equality between women and men is a fundamental right enshrined in the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; whereas the EU’s objectives in this field are to ensure equal opportunities and treatment for men and women and, in addition, to combat all discrimination based on sex;
- B. whereas equality between women and men is a key economic asset for promoting fair

¹ OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1.

² Annex to Council conclusions of 7 March 2011.

- and inclusive economic growth; whereas reducing occupational inequality is a goal in terms of not only equal treatment but also labour market efficiency;
- C. whereas women entering working life are playing a leading role in the return to growth, as they make it possible for family income to increase, which leads to an increase in consumption, social security contributions and the volume of taxes collected, as well as revitalising the economy;
 - D. whereas women and men should be able to benefit in an equal manner from freedom of choice when deciding how they want to pursue their careers and to combine work and family life;
 - E. whereas according to projections by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, total convergence in participation rates would result in a 12.4 % increase in per capita GDP by 2030;
 - F. whereas traditional stereotypes depicting women continue to have a strong influence on the division of tasks between women and men at home, in the workplace and in society at large;
 - G. whereas women in rural and remote areas suffer more from multiple discrimination and gender stereotypes than women in urban areas; whereas they should be given better access to health, education and employment (including self-employment opportunities), especially in the farming sector, in order to encourage them not to leave;
 - H. whereas the employment rate is a major indicator for measuring inequality between men and women; whereas the quality and conditions of employment are equally important parameters for measuring this inequality; whereas in 2013, according to Eurostat, the overall employment rate for women in the EU aged between 15 and 64 was 58.8 %, compared with 69.4 % for men;
 - I. whereas women account for 60 % of new graduates but are underrepresented in, for example, the science, ICT and research sectors;
 - J. whereas a lot of women are never active or registered on the official labour market, which leads to particular financial and legal problems in relation to social rights and security;
 - K. whereas women constitute only one third of the self-employed and of all business starters in the EU;
 - L. whereas women are underrepresented in certain fields of education and in certain sectors which have a higher-than-average level of growth;
 - M. whereas access to services providing care for children, the elderly and dependent people is essential for achieving equal participation of women and men in the labour market and in education and training, in addition to tackling stereotypes;
 - N. whereas helping women to return to the labour market after giving birth requires

multidimensional policy solutions incorporating lifelong learning and action to combat precarious work;

- O. whereas women's income is still lower than that of men doing the same work and possessing the same skills; whereas in 2013 wage inequality was around 16.4 % on average in the EU;
- P. whereas lower wages for women inevitably lead to lower pension contributions, and therefore translate into lower pensions; whereas the gender pay gap and consequently the gender pension gap, at around 39 %, is still one of the main reasons women find themselves below the poverty line at a later stage in their lives;
- Q. whereas violence against women, whether physical, sexual or psychological, is a prime obstacle to equality between women and men and is a violation of women's fundamental rights;
- R. whereas studies on gender-based violence estimate that one fifth to one quarter of all women in Europe have experienced physical acts of violence at least once during their adult lives, more than one tenth have suffered sexual violence involving the use of force, and 12-15 % are victims of domestic violence, from which seven women die every day in the EU;
- S. whereas there are still not many women in management posts in public institutions, while improved female representation in top political positions is an essential requirement for the functioning of a democratic society;
- T. whereas it has been acknowledged that having more women in top economic positions results in strong organisational and financial performance of companies and better-quality decision-making;
- U. whereas the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action gives a definition of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR);
- V. whereas SRHR fall within the competence of the Member States; whereas the EU can nevertheless contribute to the promotion of best practices among the Member States;
- W. whereas it is necessary to guarantee women equal access to health care, including in respect of sexual and reproductive health, regardless of their economic and geographical situation;
- X. whereas the EU and its Member States can contribute through their external actions to empowering women outside the EU;
- Y. whereas in many third countries national laws do not grant women and men the same rights;
- Z. whereas every year 14 million girls are forced into marriage and 3 million are victims of female genital mutilation (FGM);

- AA. whereas the collection of statistical data on inequality between women and men is a priority with a view to a coherent strategy to combat the factors that prevent equality between women and men being achieved in the EU;
1. Calls on the Commission to draft a strategy on equality between women and men in the European Union between 2015 and 2020 ('the Strategy'), aimed at improving the position of all women regardless of their social, geographical and economic situation;

Education, training and access to the labour market

2. Recalls the need to remove gender-based discrimination and obstacles to labour market access, in particular through better access to education and training, and recommends that the following actions be included in the Strategy:
 - (i) encourage women and girls to be more interested in sectors which present greater economic added value and in which women are underrepresented, in particular ICT, scientific and technical sectors, help them enter such sectors and enable them to break existing glass ceilings by providing them with further educational opportunities and mentoring programmes throughout their working lives;
 - (ii) encourage female entrepreneurship in both urban and rural areas, promote measures and actions to assist, advise and train women who decide to become entrepreneurs, facilitate access to credit, cut red tape and reduce other obstacles to start-ups and family businesses run by women;
 - (iii) adopt measures to promote higher employment rates among women, such as affordable care and childcare, and flexibility in working hours and places of work, through public policies but also through incentives to businesses to offer such solutions;
 - (iv) take actions in favour of modernising and improving the protection of pregnant women and mothers at work, helping women to return to the labour market after giving birth, and reconciling work and family life;

Remuneration

3. Recognises the need to guarantee equality in remuneration and benefits as a major step towards equality between women and men, and recommends that the following actions be included in the Strategy:
 - (i) ensure that the fundamental principle of 'equal pay for equal work or work of equal value' is observed for women and men alike, and support Member States and social partners in reducing the gender pay gap through public policies and the exchange of best practices;
 - (ii) take appropriate measures to reduce the gender pension gap, which is a direct consequence of the gender pay gap, and assess the impact of pension systems on women, paying special attention to part-time and atypical contracts;

Violence against women

4. Recalls the devastating effects of violence against women, which is the most widespread form of violation of human rights within the EU, and recommends that the following actions be included in the Strategy:
 - (i) encourage the ratification of the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention on violence against women, while respecting national constitutional provisions, and launch the procedure for the EU's accession to the Convention;
 - (ii) increase the provision of systematic training for qualified personnel who look after female victims of physical, sexual or psychological violence;
 - (iii) establish 2017 as the year for ending violence against women, reinforcing measures to promote and support actions in the field of prevention of violence against women (including through assessment of the implementation of the 'Victims Package'), awareness-raising actions, data collection and funding for NGOs;

Decision-making process

5. Underlines the unacceptable imbalance in the decision-making process in both public and private spheres and recommends that the following actions be included in the Strategy:
 - (i) promote actions to combat the persistence of stereotypes through awareness campaigns and the image of women depicted in the media;
 - (ii) promote actions which contribute to greater representation of women in the top positions of public institutions, whether at national or local level, both in political spheres and in universities and higher education;
 - (iii) promote actions in favour of incorporating more women into top positions in companies;

Health

6. Recognises health as a determinant aspect of women's personal development and recommends that the following actions be included in the Strategy:
 - (i) increase the focus on the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and prevention methods, as well as on research to improve early detection of diseases specific to women, such as certain cancers (of the ovaries, cervix and breast);
 - (ii) increase access to general health care for women, especially in remote areas;

External action

7. Calls on the EU and its Member States to integrate equality between women and men into all their external policies and recommends that the following actions be included in

the Strategy:

- (i) continue the EU's commitment to empowering women through development and humanitarian aid in third countries;
- (ii) encourage partner countries to promote equality between women and men through all aspects of partnership agreements;
- (iii) include a specific chapter on women's rights in the European External Action Service Human Rights Action Plan, focusing in particular on FGM and early forced marriages;

General recommendations

- 8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to implement the Strategy in accordance with their respective spheres of competence, emphasising the importance of exchanges of best practices, in particular where the Member States have exclusive competence;
- 9. Calls on the European Institute for Gender Equality to continue its work on putting together gender-specific data and scoreboards in all policy areas;
- 10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.

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