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# REPORT

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

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

Rapporteur: Maria Noichl

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

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

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 2 and Article 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 the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR),
- having regard to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),
- having regard to the 1949 UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others,
- having regard to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women on 15 September 1995, to the subsequent outcome documents adopted at the United Nations Beijing+5 (2000), Beijing +10 (2005) and Beijing +15 (2010) special sessions and on the outcome document of the Beijing +20 review conference,
- having regard to European Parliament and Council Regulation 606/2013 of 12 June 2013 on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to European Parliament and Council Regulation 1567/2003 of 15 July 2003 on aid for policies and actions on reproductive and sexual health and rights in developing countries<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to European Parliament and Council Directive 2012/29/EU of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to European Parliament and Council Directive 2011/99/EU of 13

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 181, 29.6.2013, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 224, 6.9.2003, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 315, 14.11.2012, p. 57.

December 2011 on the European protection order<sup>1</sup>,

- having regard to European Parliament and Council Directive 2011/36/EU of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to European Parliament and Council Directive 2010/41/EU of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BusinessEurope, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC<sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast)<sup>5</sup>,
- having regard to Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (tenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC)<sup>6</sup>,
- having regard to Directive 2004/113/EC on implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services and the related judgment of 1 March 2011 of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the Test-Achats case (C-236/09)<sup>7</sup>,
- 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 European Council in March 2011<sup>8</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 5 March 2010 entitled ‘A Strengthened Commitment to Equality between Women and Men: A Women’s Charter’ (COM(2010)0078),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 21 September 2010 entitled ‘Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015’ (COM(2010)0491),

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 338, 21.12.2011, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 180, 15.7.2010, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 68, 18.03.10, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> OJ L 348, 28.11.1992, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> OJ C 130, 30.4.2011, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Annex to Council conclusions of 7 March 2011.

- having regard to the Commission communication of 3 March 2010 entitled ‘EU 2020: a European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ (COM(2010)2020),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 September 2011 entitled ‘Supporting growth and jobs – An agenda for the modernisation of Europe’s higher education systems’ (COM(2011)0567),
- having regard to the Commission Staff Working Document of 16 September 2013 entitled ‘Mid-term review of the Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015)’ (SWD(2013)0339),
- having regard to the Commission Staff Working Document of 8 March 2010 entitled ‘EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Development (2010-2015)’ (SWD(2010)0265),
- having regard to the conclusions of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council of 19-20 June 2014,
- having regard to the study by European Parliament Policy Department C entitled ‘Study on the Evaluation of the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015 as a contribution to achieve the goals of the Beijing Platform for Action’, published in 2014,
- having regard to the report of the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) entitled ‘Violence against women – an EU-wide survey. Main results’ published in March 2014,
- having regard to the report of the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) entitled ‘Discrimination against and living conditions of Roma women in 11 EU Member States’ published in October 2014,
- having regard to the report of the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) entitled ‘Being Trans in the EU - Comparative analysis of the EU LGBT survey data’ published in December 2014,
- having regard to its resolutions of 15 June 1995 on the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing: ‘Equality, Development and Peace’<sup>1</sup>, of 10 March 2005 on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women – Platform for Action, Beijing +10<sup>2</sup>, and of 25 February 2010 on Beijing +15 – UN Platform for Action for Gender Equality<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to its resolutions of 10 February 2010 on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2009<sup>4</sup>, of 8 February 2011 on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2010<sup>5</sup> and of 13 March 2012 on equality between

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 166, 3.7.1995, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 320 E, 15.12.2005, p. 247.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 348 E, 21.12.2010, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 341E, 16.12.2010, p. 35.

<sup>5</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0085.

women and men in the European Union – 2011<sup>1</sup>, and of 10 March 2015 on progress on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2013<sup>2</sup>,

- having regard to its resolution of 12 September 2013 on the application of the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work or work of equal value<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 12 March 2013 on eliminating gender stereotypes in the EU<sup>4</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolutions of 17 June 2010 on gender aspects of the economic downturn and financial crisis<sup>5</sup> and of 12 March 2013 on the impact of the economic crisis on gender equality and women’s rights<sup>6</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 6 February 2013 on the 57th session on UN CSW: Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls<sup>7</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 24 May 2012 with recommendations to the Commission on application of the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work or work of equal value<sup>8</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 20 November 2013 on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures<sup>9</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 25 February 2014 with recommendations to the Commission on combating Violence Against Women<sup>10</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 6 February 2014 on the European Semester for economic policy coordination: Annual Growth Survey 2014<sup>11</sup>,
  - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality and the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (A8-0163/2015),
- A. whereas the right to equal treatment is a defining fundamental right recognised in the Treaties of the European Union which is deeply rooted in European society and is essential for the further development of this society and should apply in legislation, in

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2012)0069.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2015)0050.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2013)0375.

<sup>4</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2013)0074.

<sup>5</sup> OJ C 236 E, 12.8.2011, p. 79.

<sup>6</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2013)0073.

<sup>7</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2013)0045.

<sup>8</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2012)0225.

<sup>9</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2013)0488.

<sup>10</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2014)0126.

<sup>11</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2014)0128.

practice, in case-law and in real life;

- B. whereas the EU has historically taken some important steps to strengthen women's rights and gender equality, but there has been a slowdown in political action and reform for gender equality during the last decade at EU level; whereas the previous Commission strategy was too weak and did not result in sufficient action being taken for gender equality; whereas a new strategy will need to give new impetus and deliver concrete action to strengthen women's rights and promote gender equality;
- C. whereas under the previous Commission strategy some of the goals that had been set were attained, but full gender equality was not achieved, while evidence for the interaction of various forms of discrimination, precise targets and effective evaluation measures was often lacking and gender mainstreaming continued to be applied only to a limited extent;
- D. whereas gender equality is a basic value of the EU recognised in the Treaties and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the EU has assumed the specific task of integrating it in all its activities; whereas gender equality is essential as a strategic objective to achieve the overall EU objectives, such as the employment rate target within the Europe 2020 strategy and a key economic asset to promote fair and inclusive economic growth; whereas reducing occupational inequality is not just a goal in terms of equal treatment, but also in terms of labour market efficiency and fluidity;
- E. whereas the gap in education, employment, health and discrimination between Roma and mainstream society remains wide, and the situation for Roma women in the EU is even worse as a result of multiple discrimination based on both ethnicity and sex;
- F. whereas the economic and political situation in Europe can only be improved and the consequences of demographic change averted if the talents and potential of all women and men are used;
- G. whereas we cannot remain tied to redundant and environmentally unsustainable economic models based on an outdated distribution of work along gender lines which has been superseded by the integration of women in the labour market; whereas we need a new, socially sustainable model based on knowledge and innovation that incorporates the full range of women's talents in the productive fabric, including by questioning some industrial norms and the factors that assign men and women to different occupations, that redresses the balance of responsibility between men and women in the public and private spheres and that harmonises the personal and working lives of workers of both genders;
- H. whereas providing access to affordable, high-quality childcare and support services for the elderly and other dependants is essential for ensuring the equal participation of men and women in the labour market, education and training;
- I. whereas this year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action and its goals and full implementation are now more relevant than ever;
- J. whereas violence against women, whether physical, sexual or psychological, is a prime

obstacle to equality between women and men and remains the most widespread violation of human rights affecting all levels of society, but one of the least reported crimes; whereas despite measures taken to counter it, according to the FRA survey carried out in March 2014, 55 % of women have experienced one or more forms of sexual harassment in the course of their lives and 33 % of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15; whereas a life free of violence is a prerequisite for full participation in society and strong measures must be introduced to combat violence against women;

- K. whereas forced prostitution is violence that particularly affects the most vulnerable, is mostly related to organised crime networks and trafficking in human beings and is an obstacle to equality between women and men;
- L. whereas, owing to traditional structures and tax disincentives, women have had second-earner status imposed on them, in the form of both vertical and horizontal segregation in the labour market, an incomplete employment history and gender-specific wage inequality, and whereas in addition unpaid care, childcare, nursing of the elderly and other dependants and domestic work are performed much more frequently by women, who therefore have less time available to pursue paid work, which in turn results in a much lower pension, which is why the compatibility of work and family life, in particular to achieve the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, should continue to be supported by practical measures, a process in which men in particular need to become more involved;
- M. whereas the female employment rate is 63 %, or 53.5 % if employment is measured in full-time equivalents<sup>1</sup>; whereas the gender pay gap stands at 16.4 % and the gender pension gap is 39 % on average; whereas women's participation in the labour market does not always translate into influence, positions of power and decision-making being mostly occupied by men, which limits women in their ability to wield influence and represents a democratic deficit in decision-making, given that women make up half of the population; whereas the promotion of gender equality goes beyond the prohibition of discrimination based on gender and positive action in support of women has proven to be essential to their full integration in the labour market, political and economic decision-making and society in general; whereas the exclusion of women from positions of power and decision-making bodies has a detrimental effect on their ability to influence both their own development and emancipation and the development of society;
- N. whereas gender quotas and zipped lists in political decision-making have proven most effective tools in addressing discrimination and gender power imbalances and improving democratic representation on political decision-making bodies;
- O. whereas the failure to promote policies making for work-life balance, the insufficient promotion of flexible working hours, especially among men, and the low take-up rate of parental and paternity leave pose important obstacles for women's economic independence and the equal sharing of family and domestic responsibilities;

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<sup>1</sup> Commission report on progress on equality between women and men 2012 (SWD(2013)0171), p. 8.



- P. whereas the face of poverty in Europe is disproportionately female, and this includes particularly single mothers, women with disabilities, young women, old women, migrant women and ethnic minority women, all of whom are affected by poverty and social exclusion, a situation aggravated by the economic crisis and specific austerity measures, which should not justify doing less work for equality, as well as by job insecurity, part-time employment, low wages and pensions, the difficulty of accessing basic social and health services, and the fact that it is particularly public-sector jobs and services in the care sector that are being eliminated, which makes the gender equality perspective even more important;
- Q. whereas women in rural areas suffer more from multiple discrimination and gender stereotypes than women in urban areas and the employment rate of women in rural areas is much lower than that of women in cities; whereas rural areas are affected by the absence of high-quality employment opportunities; whereas, in addition, many women are never active in the official labour market and are therefore neither registered as unemployed nor included in unemployment statistics, which leads to particular financial and legal problems in relation to the right to maternity and sick leave, the acquisition of pension rights and access to social security, as well as problems in the event of divorce;
- R. whereas traditional gender roles and stereotypes still exert a great deal of influence over the division of labour in the home, in education, in careers, in the workplace and in society in general;
- S. whereas gender stereotypes and traditional structures have a negative impact on health and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and the associated rights, which are fundamental human rights and should therefore never be restricted; whereas the right to control one's own body and to self-determination is a fundamental prerequisite for universal equality;
- T. whereas one in six couples worldwide experience some form of infertility problem; whereas the Commission should put forward a new Comparative Analysis of Medically Assisted Reproduction in the EU, as the 2008 study (SANCO/2008/C6/051), which then showed significant inequality of access to fertility treatment, is out of date;
- U. whereas there are still educational institutions that practise gender segregation, and education materials often contain stereotypes that help to perpetuate the traditional separate roles assigned to girls and boys, which has a negative influence on their choices; whereas these role patterns are further reinforced especially by representations and the image of women transmitted by the media, material available on the internet and advertising;
- V. whereas Trans persons face frequent discrimination, harassment and violence across the EU today due to their gender identity or gender expression;
- W. whereas the EU has a responsibility and a role as a model for gender equality and women's rights, which should become a core concern in its external actions; whereas gender equality, the fight against gender-based violence and the empowerment of women are essential if the international development goals are to be attained and for successful EU foreign, development cooperation and international trade policies;

whereas women are not only more vulnerable to the effects of energy, environment and climate change, but also effective actors in relation to mitigation and adaptation strategies, as well as a driving force for an equitable and sustainable model of growth;

- X. whereas institutional mechanisms form a necessary basis for the achievement of gender equality; whereas gender equality must also be treated as an important, cross-cutting aspect of all policy areas in the EU and its Member States, together with the concepts of gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and gender impact assessment;
- Y. whereas the breakdown of data by gender is a vital tool for achieving genuine progress and efficiently evaluating results;
- Z. whereas in recent years anti-gender equality movements have gained public ground in a number of Member States, attempting to reinforce traditional gender roles and challenging existing achievements in the area of gender equality;
- Aa. whereas existing challenges and the experience acquired show that the lack of a coherent policy between the different areas has made it difficult to achieve gender equality in the past, and that a suitable proportion of funds and better coordination, dissemination and promotion of women's rights are needed, taking into account the varying situations;

## General Recommendations

1. Calls on the Commission to draw up and adopt a new separate strategy for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Europe aimed at creating equal opportunities and based on the priority areas of the previous strategy with a view to ending all forms of discrimination suffered by women in the labour market, with respect to wages, pensions, decision-making, access to goods and services, reconciliation of family and working life and all forms of violence against women and to removing discriminatory structures and practices related to gender; underlines that the new Women's Rights and Gender Equality Strategy must thoroughly take into account the multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination as referred to in Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which have common underlying factors but affect women differently, and develop specific actions to strengthen the rights of different groups of women, including women with disabilities, migrant and ethnic minority women, Roma women, older women, single mothers and LGBTI;
2. Calls on the Commission also to develop measures aimed at eliminating discrimination against all women in their diversity under a broader anti-discrimination strategy and a distinctive and separate LGBTI roadmap; to that effect, urges the Council to reach a common position as soon as possible on the proposal for a Council directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age, gender or sexual orientation, which has been blocked since its adoption by Parliament in April 2009;
3. Regrets that the strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 does not specifically address disability, despite the fact that women with disabilities are often in a less favourable situation than men with disabilities and are more exposed to the risks of poverty and social exclusion; therefore calls on the Commission to address the needs of women with disabilities in order to ensure their increased participation in the labour market; in that sense also regrets that the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 does not also include an integrated perspective on gender or a separate chapter dedicated to disability policies with a special focus on gender;
4. Calls on the Commission to involve civil society and the social partners in a structured way in the development and continuous evaluation of the strategy;
5. Calls on the Member States to strengthen and enforce the full exercise of collective bargaining in the private and public sectors, as an indispensable tool for regulating labour relations, fighting wage discrimination and promoting equality;
6. Calls on the Commission, in assessing the application of Directive 2004/113/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment of men and women in access to and supply of goods and services, to take into account instances of discrimination
7. Calls on the Commission to make clear the role that it wishes the EU to play in the world and in working with the Member States, including their competent authorities with regard to the promotion of gender equality, both within and outside the Union's borders, and to pursue these goals both through the concept of gender mainstreaming in all areas and through individual targeted and specific actions; stresses the need to

integrate the gender perspective and the fight against gender violence into EU foreign policy, development cooperation policy and international trade policy and to safeguard the necessary financial instruments and human resources;

8. Regrets once again the fact that the Europe 2020 Strategy did not satisfactorily include the gender perspective, and therefore calls on the Commission and Council to ensure that gender equality is incorporated in all the programmes, actions and initiatives launched under that strategy and to introduce a specific pillar for equality between women and men within the strategy, to consider the objectives of the future strategy as an aspect of the European Semester, and to insert a gender perspective in the country-specific recommendations and the Annual Growth Survey;
9. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to gather, analyse and publish reliable statistical data broken down by gender and gender equality indicators in all policy areas and at all levels of governance, building on the work of the European Institute for Gender Equality and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, so as to make it possible to analyse the design and application of gender equality strategies in the EU and the Member States, update those strategies and assess the application of the incorporation of gender issues in all appropriate national and Union policy areas, and, where possible, to further disaggregate such data on the basis of race or ethnic origin, religion or belief and disability, in order to make an intersectional analysis possible for all policy areas, thus documenting the multiple discrimination suffered by certain groups of women; encourages the Commission and the Member States to initiate gender impact assessments of Member States' policies, especially when proposing labour and pensions reforms;
10. Calls on the Commission to draft the strategy in the form of a practical action plan with clear identification of responsible stakeholders, ensuring that it takes into account in particular the specific suggestions set out below covering the areas of violence against women, work and time, women in power and decision-making, financial resources, health, knowledge, education and the media, the wider world and institutional mechanisms and gender mainstreaming; emphasises the need to introduce, where applicable and in full respect of the EU's competences, legislative inputs in order to strengthen the legal framework for gender equality;

### **Violence against Women and gender-based violence**

11. Reiterates its call on the Commission made in its resolution of 25 February 2014, which contained recommendations to combat violence against women, to submit a legal act providing both a consistent system for collecting statistical data as well as a strengthened approach by Member States to the prevention and suppression of all forms of violence against women and girls and of gender-based violence and making low-threshold access to justice possible;
12. Calls on the Commission to include a definition of gender-based violence in line with the provisions of Directive 2012/29/EU in the future strategy and to present a comprehensive strategy on violence against women and girls and gender-based violence

that contains a binding legislative act as soon as possible; calls on the Council to activate the passerelle clause by adopting a unanimous decision adding gender-based violence to the areas of crime listed in Article 83(1) TFEU;

13. Calls on the Commission to assess the possibility of the EU acceding to the Istanbul Convention and to initiate that procedure as soon as possible, as well as to promote the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the Member States through the new strategy and to work actively to combat violence against women and girls; calls on the Member States to sign and ratify the Istanbul Convention as soon as possible;
14. Reiterates its appeal to the Commission to designate 2016 as the European Year for combating violence against women and girls, during which priority should be given to promoting far-reaching and effective strategies for significantly reducing violence against women and girls;
15. Calls for the EU to support the Member States in the development of campaigns and strategies against the daily harassment of women in public and in the process to pass on best practices to the Member States;
16. Considers it urgently necessary to further monitor the transposition and implementation of the directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, the regulation on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters and the directive on the European Protection Order up to 2015 and beyond;
17. Calls on the Commission to enshrine 'zero tolerance' campaigns in the strategy and to support the Member States in making society more aware of the problem of violence against women and in promoting annual awareness campaigns on the origins of violence and abuse and as regards prevention, access to justice, and support to victims; emphasises the importance of including the whole of society, and in particular men and boys more specifically, in the fight against violence against women; also calls on the Commission to follow up on its initiatives in the fight against female genital mutilation;
18. Stresses that in order to effectively combat violence against women and impunity, a change of attitude towards women and girls is necessary in society, where women are too often represented in subordinate roles and violence against them is too often tolerated or not given importance; calls on the Commission to support the Member States in action to prevent and combat violence in its many forms and root causes and in protecting abused women, and to adopt specific measures for the different aspects, including increased support to women's shelters and organisations working to support women who are victims of gender-based violence and preventive steps such as combating gender stereotypes and discriminatory socio-cultural attitudes from an early age onwards, as well as punishing the offenders;
19. Notes that the feminisation of poverty might lead to an increase in female trafficking, sexual exploitation and forced prostitution, reducing women to greater financial dependence; calls on the Commission and the Member States to explore the reasons why women resort to prostitution and ways to discourage demand; underlines the importance of programmes for exiting from prostitution;

20. Points to the importance of systematic training for qualified personnel caring for female victims of physical, sexual, or psychological violence; considers such training to be essential for providers of first- and second-line care, including emergency social services, medical and civil protection and police services;
21. Calls on the Member States to fully implement Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and on the Commission to evaluate and monitor the implementation and to identify best practices for Member States to share with a view to the adoption of a new strategy to combat human trafficking after the current strategy expires in 2016, which should incorporate a gender perspective and give priority to the rights of victims of trafficking, with a specific pillar on trafficking for sexual exploitation and with particular focus on new methods of trafficking that are developing as other more established methods are being closed down, as well as to ensure that all Member States' policies, budgets and outcomes within the development of the strategy are transparent and accessible;
22. Calls on the Commission to assist Member States by ensuring that victims of stalking can benefit from the protection afforded by existing measures such as the European Protection Order, the regulation on mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters, and the EU victims' directive when moving from one EU Member State to another, and to consider further measures to improve the protection of victims of stalking, considering that figures show that 18 % of women in the EU have experienced stalking since the age of 15, and one in five victims of stalking said that the abusive behaviour had continued for two years or longer<sup>1</sup>;
23. Calls on the Commission to assist Member States' competent authorities in drawing up their action programmes for gender equality, and to pay special attention to new forms of violence against women and girls such as cyberharassment, cyberstalking<sup>2</sup> and cyberbullying, and to carry out ongoing evaluations; also stresses in this connection the importance of close cooperation with civil society in order to recognise problem areas at an earlier stage and address them more effectively;
24. Calls on the Commission to ensure that Member States enable the full legal recognition of a person's preferred gender, including change of first name, social security number and other gender indicators on identity documents;
25. Calls on the Commission, once again, to establish as soon as possible a European Observatory on Violence against Women, on the premises of the European Institute for Gender Equality and directed by a EU Coordinator on violence against women and girls;

### **Work and time**

26. Calls on the Commission to pay special attention in the new strategy to the various ways of reconciling family life and work; regrets, in this connection, the faltering of the negotiations on the adoption of the Maternity Leave Directive, and reiterates

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<sup>1</sup> Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results - report by FRA, pp. 83-84 and 92-93.

<sup>2</sup> Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results - report by FRA, p. 87

Parliament's unrestricted willingness to cooperate; in the meantime, calls on the Member States to safeguard their maternity entitlements, to take measures to prevent the unfair dismissal of employees during pregnancy, and to protect women and men with care responsibilities from unfair dismissal;

27. Draws attention to the fact that, despite the EU funding available, some Member States have made budget cuts that are affecting the availability, quality and costs of childcare services, with the subsequent negative impact on reconciling family and working life, which particularly affects women; calls on the Commission to monitor the attainment of the Barcelona objectives and to continue to support Member States in creating high-quality and affordable childcare with reasonable hours of attendance and to successively develop new targets in the field of childcare structures; emphasises in this connection the importance of increasing the availability, quality and accessibility of affordable nursing and care services for children, the elderly and persons requiring special care, including assistance to dependants and ensuring that the availability of such services is compatible with full-time working hours for both women and men; notes that more comprehensive day care and nursery facilities depend not only on the necessary public policies, but also on incentives to employers to offer such solutions;
28. Stresses the importance of flexible forms of work in allowing women and men to reconcile work and family life, provided the worker is free to make the choice, and instructs the Commission to coordinate and promote exchanges of best practices; stresses in this connection the need for awareness campaigns for the equal division of domestic work and care and nursing, better investment in care infrastructure, and encouragement of men's participation and the introduction of paternity leave of at least 10 days and parental leave available to both parents but with strong incentives for fathers, such as non-transferable parental leave; stresses that equal parental leave benefits all family members and can act as an incentive for reducing the discrimination associated with parental leave;
29. Calls for the adoption of the necessary measures to promote higher employment rates among women, such as affordable care and childcare, adequate maternity, paternity and parental leave schemes, and flexibility in working hours and places of work; stresses the importance of good, secure working conditions allowing both women and men to reconcile work and private life, and calls on the Commission to coordinate and promote the strengthening of labour rights for increased gender equality; emphasises that improving the balance between family, personal and working life is an important element for economic recovery, sustainable demography and personal and social wellbeing and notes that equal participation of men and women in the labour market could significantly increase the economic potential of the EU, while confirming its fair and inclusive nature; points out that, according to OECD projections, total convergence in participation rates would result in a 12.4 % increase in per capita GDP by 2030; points out that although part-time work, which is performed for the most part by women, can make it easier to reconcile family and working life, it is no less true that it also involves fewer career opportunities, lower pay and pensions, underutilisation of human capital and, consequently, lower economic growth and prosperity;
30. Stresses the importance of asking the EIGE to gather comprehensive , gender-specific

data relating to the allocation of time to care, nursing and domestic work and leisure, with the aim of making a regular assessment;

31. Recommends that, as the composition and definition of families change over time, family and work legislation be made more comprehensive with regard to single-parent families and LGBT parenting;
32. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote the voice of women in social dialogue and the representation of women in trade unions across all sectors;
33. Calls on the Commission, as part of the strategy, to encourage Member States to ratify Convention 189 of the International Labour Organisation in order to strengthen the rights of European domestic and care workers;
34. Calls on the Commission to support Member States' competent authorities in creating incentives for employers to convert unofficial work into official employment; stresses the high levels of undeclared work that can be observed especially in female-dominated sectors, such as work in private households ; calls on the Member States to combat the precarious work and undeclared employment of women, which contribute to the total deregulation of women's pay structures, causing increased poverty among women, especially in later life, and negatively impacts both women's social security and the EU's GDP levels, and to ensure that workers enjoy appropriate social protection; calls for the swift establishment of the European Platform to better prevent and deter undeclared work;
35. Stresses that the feminisation of poverty is the result of several factors, including women's career breaks, the gender pay gap (16.4 %), the pension gap (39 %), gender inequalities in career progression, the fact that women are often employed on non-standard contracts (such as involuntary part-time, interim or zero-hours contracts), the absence of social security status for partners assisting self-employed workers, and poverty in households headed by single mothers; underlines that the reduction of poverty by 20 million people by 2020 can be achieved by anti-poverty and anti-discrimination policies that are grounded in gender mainstreaming, by action programmes that devote particular attention to disadvantaged women and are supported by actions targeting female poverty, and by the improvement of working conditions in low-income sectors in which women are over-represented; underlines that the multiple discrimination faced by women on the grounds of disability, racial and ethnic background, socio-economic status, gender identity and other factors contributes to the feminisation of poverty; stresses the importance of monitoring the gender effects of taxation and working time models on women and families;
36. Expects the Commission to take all measures at its disposal to enforce all aspects of the EU directives on equal treatment for men and women, including by the social partners who negotiate collective agreements, and to encourage dialogue with social partners to look into issues such as transparency of payment and part-time and fixed-term contract conditions for women, also encouraging women's participation in 'green' and innovative sectors; stresses that pensions are an important determinant of their beneficiaries' economic independence and that pensions gaps reflect the cumulated disadvantages of a career spent in a gender-biased labour market; calls on the



Commission and the Member States to take appropriate measures to reduce the gender pension gap, which is a direct consequence of the gender pay gap, and to assess the impact of pension systems on women, paying special attention to part-time and atypical contracts;

37. Stresses the importance of raising awareness of the concept of shared ownership at EU level in order to ensure full recognition of women's rights in the agricultural sector; urges the Commission and the Member States to contribute to the promotion of a strategy that would lead to job creation for women in rural areas and, implicitly, to ensuring decent pensions for retired women in the EU who live in precarious conditions, and requests support for political efforts to strengthen women's role in agriculture and for their appropriate representation in all the political, economic and social forums of the agricultural sector;
38. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take into account the socio-economic obstacles encountered by women in specific circumstances such as in rural areas, in male-dominated sectors, in older age, and by women with disabilities; emphasises that women continue to experience greater job insecurity than men and that job insecurity has increased as a result of the crisis, and expresses concern over the number and proportion of women who suffer in-work poverty; takes the view that helping women return to the labour market requires multidimensional policy solutions incorporating lifelong learning and action to combat precarious work and promote work with rights and differentiated work organisation practices; asks the Commission and the Member States to reinforce a gender perspective in all job creation programmes, creating high-quality jobs in line with the ILO's Decent Work agenda;
39. Stresses that economic growth and competitiveness in the EU are dependent on closing the gap between women's educational attainment (60 % of university graduates in Europe are women) and their participation and position in the labour market; highlights the need to fight all aspects of vertical and horizontal segregation, as such segregation limits the employment of women to certain sectors and excludes them from higher levels within the corporate hierarchy; stresses that existing legislation containing positive action, in particular in the public sectors of some Member States, has improved gender equality at entry level, but that this needs to be extended to all career levels;

#### **Participation in decision-making and female entrepreneurship**

40. Points out that the biggest increase by far in the proportion of women on corporate boards has occurred in countries that have already adopted legislation on compulsory quotas, and that in Member States where no compulsory measures have been implemented companies are still a long way from achieving an acceptable gender balance; highlights the need to support transparent procedures for the appointment of women as non-executive members on company boards listed on stock exchanges; encourages the public and private sectors to envisage voluntary schemes to promote women in managerial positions; calls on the Commission to include specific measures to promote the equal representation of women and men in leadership positions in the strategy, and to support the Council in the negotiations for the adoption of the directive for a balanced representation of men and women on non-executive boards; asks the

Council to reach a common position as soon as possible on this draft directive;

41. Calls on the Commission to create incentives for Member States to create a more balanced representation of women and men in municipal councils, regional and national parliaments and the European Parliament, and emphasises in this connection the importance of gender-balanced electoral lists headed alternately by a man and a woman; highlights the importance of quotas for increasing the presence of women in political decision-making; calls for all EU institutions to take internal measures to increase equality within their own decision-making bodies, by proposing both a female and a male candidate for high-level EU positions; believes that equality should be a requirement for the Commission and that the appointment of a Commission on the basis of equality is an important indicator for future equality work;
42. Draws attention to the imbalance existing in the participation of men and women in decision-making in politics, government and economics, and to the fact that the obstacles to women's participation can be attributed to a combination of gender-based discrimination and stereotyped behaviours that still tend to persist in business, politics and society; points out that women account for 60 % of new graduates but are underrepresented in, for example, the science and research sector; calls on the Commission and the Member States to raise women's awareness of training opportunities in that field and ensure that they have the same chances as men to enter the corresponding professions and make a career in them; notes that women in general have careers without significant progression; calls on the Member States to offer their encouragement and support to women so that they can have successful careers, including through positive actions such as networking and mentoring programmes, as well as creating adequate conditions and ensuring equal opportunities with men at all ages for training, advancement, reskilling and retraining; stresses the importance of policies aimed at equality between women and men in employment acknowledging the potential vulnerabilities of women in top professions; stresses that in particular the Commission should promote policies against harassment in the workplace<sup>1</sup>;
43. Stresses the fact that women constitute 52 % of the total European population, but only one-third of the self-employed or of all business starters in the EU; stresses the importance of support programmes for women entrepreneurs and for women in science and academia, and urges the EU to support such programmes in a more tangible manner; calls on the Commission to analyse and develop proposals for ways to interest women in the establishment of undertakings; underlines that potential women entrepreneurs, scientists and academics should be made aware of support programmes and funding opportunities; encourages Member States to promote measures and actions to assist and advice women who decide to become entrepreneurs and to encourage women entrepreneurship, facilitate and simplify access to finance and other support, and cut red tape and other obstacles to women's start-ups;

## **Financial Resources**

44. Draws attention once again to the fact there is still a gender pay gap that has hardly been

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<sup>1</sup> Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results - report by FRA, p. 96.

reduced in recent years; stresses that the gender pay gap arises from insufficient participation of women in the labour market, vertical and horizontal segregation, and the fact that sectors where women are over-represented often have lower wages; calls on the Commission to monitor the implementation of Directive 2006/54/EU and to present specific measures which take into account structural wage differences, both legislative and non-legislative, so as to ensure wage transparency and apply sanctions, thereby reducing the gender pay gap, and to submit an annual progress report on this matter; encourages the Member States to recognise the potential of the latest public procurement directive as a tool to promote and enhance gender mainstreaming policy by considering setting requirements based on the existing national legislation on equal treatment and gender equality as prerequisites for public procurement contracts where applicable; calls on the Commission and the Member States to examine whether social clauses in public procurement might be used as a potential tool to enhance social inclusion policies; acknowledges that EU legislation on competition must be complied with in developing this idea;

45. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take account of demographic developments and changes in the size and composition of households when designing their fiscal policies, social security arrangements and public services;
46. Calls on the Commission to support the Member States in fighting poverty, which particularly affects single mothers and has been further increased by the crisis, leading to increased social exclusion;
47. Calls on the Commission to support Member States in the increasing use of the Structural Funds for investment in public childcare and care for the elderly, as a core strategy to increase women's participation in the labour market;
48. Reiterates that Directive 2006/54/EC, in its current form, is not sufficiently effective to tackle the gender pay gap and achieve the objective of gender equality in employment and occupation; urges the Commission to revise this directive without delay;
49. Considers that policies and instruments aimed at tackling youth unemployment, such as the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Employment Initiative, should meet the specific needs of young men and women in order to enable them to access the labour market; notes that the proportion of young women not in employment, education or training (NEETs) is higher than that of young men; also calls for the collection of gender-disaggregated data in the area of youth unemployment in order that tailored, evidence-based policies may be developed;
50. Calls on the Commission to tailor both the investment package adopted in 2014 and the Youth Guarantee more closely to the specific situation and needs of girls and women;
51. Stresses the importance of exchanging best practice examples and initiatives in order to counteract the tendency towards deskilling of women, develop their skills, or provide them with training that will enable them to rejoin the labour market after time dedicated exclusively to caring for their children or other dependants; also emphasises the importance of improving and facilitating the recognition of diplomas and qualifications, so as to prevent the skills of well-qualified women being underused, which is often the

case with women migrants;

## **Health**

52. Calls on the Commission to assist Member States in ensuring high-quality, geographically appropriate and readily accessible services in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and rights and safe and legal abortion and contraception, as well as general healthcare;
53. Urges the Commission to include sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHRs) in its next EU Health Strategy, in order to ensure equality between women and men and complement national SRHR policies;
54. Calls on the Member States to focus on the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and prevention methods, as well as on prevention and research in order to improve early detection of diseases such as female cancers (cancers of the breast, cervix, and ovaries) by means of regular gynaecological controls and check-ups;
55. Reiterates its call on the Commission and the World Health Organisation to withdraw gender identity disorders from the list of mental and behavioural disorders, and to ensure a non-pathologising reclassification in the negotiations on the 11th version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11), and to ensure that gender diversity in childhood is not pathologised;
56. Recognising the importance of sexual and reproductive rights, calls on the Commission to create best practice models of sex and relationship education for young people across Europe;
57. Stresses that the Commission needs to carry out a gender audit in order to ensure that EU health policies and EU-funded research increasingly address women's health status and diagnosis;
58. Stresses the importance of awareness-raising campaigns for gender-specific symptoms of disease, as well as gender roles and stereotypes having an impact on health, and calls on the Commission to provide financial support for gender-sensitive research programmes;
59. Calls on the Commission to encourage Member States to promote (medical) fertility support and to end discrimination in access to fertility treatment and assisted reproduction; also notes in this connection the importance of support for adoption and the right of all children to know their parents;
60. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to act to implement sex education programmes in schools and ensure counselling and access to contraception for young people;

## **Knowledge, Education and the Media**

61. Calls on the Commission to create incentives for competent training in the critical use of

the media in the Member States to encourage the questioning of stereotypes and structures and to share best practice examples so as to review the ways in which roles have been stereotyped in the educational material used to date; calls on the Commission, in this connection, to support programmes to raise awareness of stereotypes, sexism and traditional gender roles in the education and media sector as well as to carry out campaigns for positive female and male role models; emphasises in this regard that combating bullying and prejudice against LGBTI persons in schools, whether of students, parents or teachers, should be part of the EU's efforts to combat gender stereotypes; emphasises in this connection the importance of gender-equitable teaching methods for teachers, so that they can clearly explain the benefits of gender equality and a diverse society;

62. Calls on the Member States, and especially media regulators, to consider the place accorded – in both quantitative and qualitative terms – to women and to promote a balanced, non-stereotyped image of women, in a way that is respectful of women's dignity, their diverse roles and their identity, and to ensure that commercial audiovisual media do not contain any sex discrimination or humiliating depictions of women, with particular reference to internet-based media which is often targeted on women and girls; stresses that Member States should also improve women's access to job opportunities in the media and, in particular, to decision-making positions; calls on the Commission to sensitise the Member States to the need for public and legal media to act as a role model in the presentation of diversity; calls on the Commission and the Member States to commit themselves more firmly to ending the sexist stereotypes conveyed by the media, and draws attention to important measures included in Parliament's report on the elimination of gender stereotypes, which was adopted in 2013;
63. Points to the decisive role that education and empowerment play in combating gender stereotypes and ending gender-based discrimination, and to the positive impact for women as well as for society and the economy in general; underlines that it is extremely important to inculcate these values from an early age, and to carry out awareness campaigns in workplaces and the media, highlighting men's role in promoting equality, the equal distribution of family responsibilities and the achievement of work-life balance;
64. Stresses that compliance with gender equality should be considered a criterion for all EU-funded culture, education, and research programmes, and asks the Commission to include a specific area of gender research within the Horizon 2020 programme;
65. Instructs the Commission to conduct a study of the everyday impact of gender portrayal in public life, the media and educational institutions, focusing in particular on bullying at school, hate speech and gender-based violence;
66. Calls on the Commission to support campaigns and initiatives to promote the active participation of citizens in society, especially for women and women migrants;
67. Calls on the Commission to assist Member States in the establishment of university chairs in gender studies and feminist research;

## **The wider world**

68. Asks the Commission to ensure that European development cooperation follows an approach that is based on human rights, particularly stressing gender equality, training for women, combating all forms of violence against women, and eradicating child labour; underscores that universal access to health, in particular sexual and reproductive health and the associated rights, is a fundamental human right, and emphasises the right to voluntarily access family planning services, including safe and legal abortion-related care, and information and education for reducing maternal and infant mortality and eliminating all forms of gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation, child, early and forced marriage, gendercide, forced sterilisation and marital rape;
69. Underscores that it is absolutely necessary to integrate the gender perspective in all elements of food safety programming, because women are responsible for 80 % of agriculture in Africa;
70. Calls on the Commission, in the Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy and in the fields of development cooperation, trade and diplomatic relations, to work for the introduction of a standard that defines women's rights as a human right and makes respect for this right mandatory and part of structured dialogues in all EU partnerships and bilateral negotiations; emphasises the importance of participatory collaboration with all stakeholders, especially with women's rights organisations and civil society organisations and local and regional government associations in the context of development cooperation; urges the Commission to recognise that placing girls at the forefront of global development delivers a framework for ensuring that girls' human rights are respected, promoted and fulfilled, and calls for the inclusion of the 'Girl Declaration' and its aims at the heart of the post-2015 gender equality strategy; stresses the importance of conducting information and awareness campaigns in communities where gender-based human rights violations are practised;
71. Calls on the Commission to promote the establishment of an action plan based on UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security, by the Member States; reminds the international community of the necessary safeguards for women and girls, notably protection against rape used as a weapon of war and forced prostitution; strongly condemns the continued use of sexual violence against women as a weapon of war; stresses that more needs to be done to ensure respect for international law, protection of victims, and access to medical and psychological support for women and girls abused in conflicts;
72. Urges that the provision of humanitarian aid by the EU and the Member States should not be subject to restrictions imposed by other partner donors regarding necessary medical treatment, including access to safe abortion for women and girls who are victims of rape in armed conflicts;
73. Stresses the importance of a gender-sensitive asylum and migration policy, the recognition of the threat of genital mutilation as a reason for asylum, and the development of appropriate guidelines and coordination of best practice examples; emphasises in this connection the indispensability of an individual right to stay, as otherwise there is an imbalance of power, with particular reference to migrant women in

cases of domestic violence; calls on the Commission to assess and identify specific actions that can ensure that women asylum-seekers' rights are strengthened and fully respected throughout the asylum procedure;

74. Calls on the Commission to gather gender-specific data with a view to conducting an impact assessment for women in the areas of climate, environment and energy policy;
75. Points out that although there are gender advisers in both the military and the civil crisis management missions in which the EU takes part, the number of women involved in operations and missions at all levels of decision-making and in the negotiations for peace and reconstruction processes still needs to be increased; insists that there should be a dedicated girls' and women's rights and gender equality strategy for each mission; further considers that a specific gender equality chapter needs to be rooted in the next EEAS Human Rights Action Plan; stresses in this connection the importance of continuous and intensive cooperation between the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and the EEAS;

### **Institutional mechanisms and gender mainstreaming**

76. Calls on the Commission to promote the use of gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and gender impact assessment in all areas and for each legislative proposal at all levels of governance, and thus ensure specific gender equality targets; asks the Court of Auditors also to incorporate the gender perspective when assessing the execution of the Union budget; asks Member States similarly to introduce the gender dimension in their budgets in order to analyse government programmes and policies, their impact on the allocation of resources and their contribution to equality between men and women;
77. Calls on the Commission also to encourage cooperation between Member States, women's rights organisations and the social partners;
78. Stresses the importance of adequate funding for national gender equality and anti-discrimination bodies; calls on the Commission to monitor closely the effectiveness of national complaint bodies and procedures in the implementation of gender equality directives; calls in this connection also on the Commission to support the implementation of the European Charter for equality of women and men in local life and the continuity of NGOs, in particular women's rights organisations and other organisations working on gender equality issues, through adequate and predictable financial assistance; calls in this connection also for continued financial support for the Daphne programme and for its profile to be maintained in order to continue to allow, in particular, women's rights organisations on the ground in the Member States to combat violence against women;
79. Stresses the importance of the partnership between the Commission and Parliament, and therefore proposes that the Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality submit an annual progress report in oral and written form to the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality - from the perspective both of the Commission and of Member States and adopting a country-specific approach in reporting with specific information on each Member State - on the objectives set out in the strategy;

80. Calls on the Commission to collaborate with the Parliament and the Council and to call an annual EU summit for gender equality and women's rights, to identify progress made, and to make renewed commitments;
81. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.



## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

From a European and a global point of view, this report comes at a key juncture, that is to say in 2015. This year, to mark the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the objectives set out in the Beijing Platform and the cut-off date for the UN Millennium Development Goals, assessments of various kinds will be carried out all over the world in order to determine how much progress has been made towards achieving the aim of gender equality. These assessments will once again show very clearly that true gender equality, extending to every sphere of life, is progressing only by inches. That point is underlined by the Gender Equality Index, drawn up by the European Institute for Gender Equality, in which the EU scores an average of 54 points out of a possible 100. Be it the right to protection from injury and to live a decent life, a better division of nursing and caring tasks, or making the most of talents and skills: not every goal has been achieved, and hence, even within the EU, real gender equality has yet to be brought about.

The main aim of European gender equality policy over the next five years should be to produce effective, coherent strategies to do away with all forms of discrimination against women and men. Women and men alike must be sure that they will not be discriminated against on account of their ethnicity, their sexual orientation, their gender identity, a disability, their religious beliefs, their class, their nationality, or their age. Attention also needs to focus on multiple discrimination.

The aims of equality, which have been repeatedly affirmed for decades, are being watered down by the continuing financial crisis and fiscal consolidation measures in Member States. One way to forestall that process would be by targeting funds sensibly and effectively and applying gender mainstreaming to programming and continuous assessment. Women would not then be so inordinately hard hit.

The rapporteur is of the opinion that the EU's economic, social, and employment aims cannot be achieved unless gender equality is fully realised. Equality must therefore be understood as a strategically significant universal goal. Given the crisis and the ever-present danger of backward steps, the Commission's new strategy needs to be adopted in order to reaffirm that approach.

### **Violence against women**

Violence against women and girls is a serious violation of human rights. It is also an expression of gender inequality, which in turn has implications for actual equality. Only those who are safe from violence can play a full part in society and achieve something in their lives. Violence against women in its varied forms, ranging from domestic violence and rape through harassment at work to sexual exploitation, forced prostitution, forced participation in pornography, and forced sterilisation, is occurring in the midst of our society every day.

- One in three women in the EU has, after turning 15, suffered physical and/or sexual violence at least once in her life<sup>1</sup>.

The rapporteur is therefore calling for the EU to take determined action and points once again to the importance of ratifying the Istanbul Convention and establishing a single legal framework to prevent and combat violence against girls and women. Boys and men must in future be given a greater role in combating violence against women.

The proposed legislative package providing for cross-border protection of victims of crime within the EU can already be considered a great success from the point of view of combating violence. This is another case in which implementation by the Member States must continue to be monitored.

### **Work and time**

In recent years the gender gaps in terms of employment, unemployment, pay, and poverty have narrowed. This, however, is due mainly to the general deterioration in the situation caused by the crisis. The fact that the 75% employment rate called for by the EU 2020 strategy applies to the entire potential workforce in the EU also serves to disguise gender-specific disparities.

- According to Commission figures, 74.2% of men, but only 62.5% of women, currently have a job.

Genuine equality on the labour market has thus still not been achieved. Women are, in addition, employed more frequently in insecure jobs, with fixed-term contracts and low pay. Entrenched practices and stereotypes continue to make for sharply gender-specific horizontal and vertical labour market segregation, and the gender pay gap (currently 16.4%) becomes a 39% gender pension gap in old age. Women often work part time, even though they would like a full-time job. They also still do most of the housework and bear the brunt of caring for others. That leaves them less time to carry on another (gainful) occupation and they also find it very difficult, in many cases, to return to work after parenting leave. Many work-life balance strategies seek to counter this problem by outsourcing housework and caring, which in turn can lead to the exploitation of women (in particular) on the unofficial labour market and to the ethnicisation of care-related work.

The rapporteur is calling on the Commission to consider whether it should lay down specific targets and penalties with a view to reducing the gender pay gap. Furthermore, if a better work-life balance is to be achieved, men will have to devote more time to housework and caring.

### **Women in power and decision-making**

The fact that women are largely excluded from decision-making processes – because of the glass ceiling – greatly restricts their ability to wield influence and bring about change in society.

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<sup>1</sup> Violence against women: an EU-wide survey, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, March 2014.

- According to Commission figures, only 5% of chief executive officers are women.

The EU should endeavour to ensure that the role to be given to women in political, social, religious, cultural, media-related, scientific, and civil-society decision-making is commensurate with the proportion of the population for which they account. Given that the EU institutions are frequently seen as role models, the rapporteur is calling on the Commission to advocate equal gender representation in every institution.

Taking the EU average, women make up only 18.6% of the membership of company supervisory boards: that being the case, it is essential to press ahead with the negotiations on the directive on women in management positions (COM(2012)0614, 2012/0299(COD)) and then take the next step by applying it at board level.

### **Financial resources**

Although female poverty in Europe is now increasingly being discussed, it is, unfortunately, still tolerated in society. Because of misdirected tax incentives, the fact that women tend to be secondary wage earners, segregation, wage inequality, and career breaks, economic poverty in working life turns into poverty in old age, as reflected in the gender pension gap. Single parents are particularly at risk from that point of view, since they also have greater difficulty in obtaining credit and other financial services. The situation has, in addition, been further exacerbated by the crisis. Government austerity policies, wage freezes and cuts and recruitment freezes and redundancies in the public sector, pension reforms, cuts in, and restrictions on, care- and family-related benefits, and higher charges for publicly subsidised services such as crèches are hitting young women in particular harder than men. Women's economic independence – a precondition for actual equality – and their participation in public life are thus being placed in extreme jeopardy.

### **Health**

The current retrograde trends in European society are also having an impact on the health and the related rights of women and men. If women are to have responsible and safe sex lives, however, they must be guaranteed access to information and care, safe, effective, and affordable contraception, safe, legal abortion and sterilisation, and support in connection with adoption.

It is also important to shed light on the reasons why women and men have different life expectancies. Gender-specific research could help to reveal the influence that gender roles have on health and hence to change the pattern.

### **Knowledge, education, and media**

- Looking at news coverage within the EU, only 24% of the people featured in news reports are female.

Roles conveyed through teaching materials and syllabuses in schools and other education establishments not only affect performance proper, but also influence our choice of career after leaving. These stereotypes are, moreover, further reinforced by the stereotypical, not to say sexualised, depiction of women in the media. It is only when traditional gender roles and

structures start to be challenged in the classroom that girls and boys will both have the same chances of living fulfilled lives according to their own free will.

Not only must girls and women be encouraged in all their decisions and chosen paths, but, as has also been noted in Horizon 2000, the high number of male school drop-outs must be lowered further.

### **The wider world**

The strategy to promote equality must not, however, be exclusively inward looking. The EU has a duty to keep emphasising this right in its relations with other countries and to foster its continuing development. A study by UN Women shows that non-sustainable development serves to widen disparities between the sexes, because girls and women are harder hit by the consequences of economic, social, and environmental crises. These specific effects on women accordingly need to be examined in greater depth.

Efforts to outlaw and punish sexual violence in crisis and war situations, ranging from genital mutilation to child and forced marriages, must be intensified. Many women in the world are still being denied access to property, natural resources, and inherited wealth; and access to education cannot yet be taken for granted. The rapporteur believes that equality could be promoted if the EU were to establish a standard to observe in neighbourhood policy and development cooperation and in trading and diplomatic relations. Such a standard must ensure respect for women's rights. The EU must also help women to move towards equal participation in peace negotiations and democratisation processes.

### **Institutional machinery and gender mainstreaming**

Despite the efforts of the Commission and the Member States, gender mainstreaming is not always applied, nor is it being employed across the board. If EU and Member States' policy measures and budgets were to be framed along gender-specific lines, using gender budgeting and gender impact assessment, EU policies could be made fairer, socially more just, and more effective. Binding assessments, in the form of annual progress reports, could help the EU institutions and the Member States to adapt and improve the measures in question.

## **MINORITY OPINION**

pursuant to Rule 52(3) of the Rules of Procedure  
Beatrix von Storch

I reject the report on ‘the EU Strategy for equality between women and men post 2015’. One of the calls made in the report is for abortion to be recognised as a human right. Apart from the fact that, under current German criminal law, abortion constitutes a criminal offence which goes unpunished (only) in strictly defined exceptional cases, it is not a matter that the EU is competent to deal with. I am totally opposed to the women’s quotas that the report wishes to be laid down for company supervisory and executive boards and for parliaments (!). I also consider it wrong that the EU should make development aid subject to the implementation of measures to promote abortion in developing countries. Parliament has no power to ask Member States to introduce sex education programmes in schools. As regards the substance I object to sexualisation programmes of this sort, and, legally, education policy lies within the responsibilities of the Member States. These are just a few of the reasons why I reject this report. There are many more ...

20.4.2015

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

for the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

on the EU strategy for equality between women and men post 2015  
(2014/2152(INI))

Rapporteur: Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz

### **SUGGESTIONS**

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Notes that justice and social cohesion are the primary drivers for the action still to be taken to eliminate the various forms of gender inequality; draws attention to the fact that further inclusion in the labour market of women, who represent 60 % of graduates, would make it possible to respond to the economic and demographic challenges faced by the European Union;
2. Emphasises that in the last decade the global economy has missed out on 27 % of GDP growth per capita owing to the gender gap in the labour market, and stresses that GDP would grow between 15 % and 45 % in the EU Member States if gender gaps in employment were eliminated;
3. Takes the view that gender equality, by increasing social and economic well-being, benefits not only women but society as a whole; recalls that effectively challenging gender stereotypes is crucial to increasing women's participation in all segments of the labour market; calls on the EU to be a champion in challenging gender stereotypes, especially in the area of education, work and further training; stresses that the new gender equality strategy should, in accordance with the Treaties, aim at reducing inequalities further;
4. Stresses that a post-2015 Gender Equality Strategy should propose action to: (a) decrease the gender pay gap; (b) increase the economic independence of women; (c) improve women's labour market accessibility and career progression; (d) fundamentally increase equality in decision-making; and (e) remove discriminatory structures and practices related to gender;

5. Takes note that, in the meantime, one fourth of all women remain in the category of unpaid contributing family workers, meaning they receive no direct pay for their efforts, and there is a clear segregation of women in sectors that are generally characterised by low pay, long hours and often informal working arrangements, factors which, taken together, lead to fewer monetary, social and structural gains for women than are offered the typical working male; remarks that there are still distinctive barriers to women's labour market participation and that, on average, women in the EU earn around 16.4 % less than men; points out, in light of these discriminatory structures and practices against women, that gender equality must be ensured in all areas, including in access to employment, career progression, reconciliation of work and private life, and promotion of equal pay for work of equal value;
- 6 Calls on the Member States to strengthen and enforce the full exercise of collective bargaining in the private and the public sectors, an indispensable tool for regulating labour relations, fighting wage discrimination and promoting equality;
- 7 Stresses that ending violence against women is a matter of upholding human rights, and that both the direct and indirect costs of violence against women, and of domestic violence, have negative impacts on the labour market and the economy; takes the view that violence against women constitutes an obstacle for women to participate in society and fully realise their potential in the labour market, and may adversely influence their performance at the workplace and have a negative effect on their quality of life; calls on the Commission and the Member States to recognise the economic as well as other effects of violence against women by gathering relevant gender-disaggregated data, and stresses the need for effective measures to combat violence against women; considers that ending violence against women should be a priority within the post-2015 strategy;
- 8 Stresses that while gender equality is a fundamental right enshrined in the Treaties, it is far from being achieved in the EU, and takes the view that gender equality on the labour market, combined with quality jobs, is a necessary condition for meeting the Europe 2020 strategy's 75 % employment rate target, and is crucial for maintaining sustainable pension systems; calls, therefore, for inclusion in the Europe 2020 strategy of employment targets for both men and women that are equally ambitious and that should be taken into account in all aspects of the European semester;
9. Underlines the fact that affordable, accessible and quality childcare is an important prerequisite for gender equality and for women's participation in the labour market; calls on the Commission and the Member States to make the fulfilment of the Barcelona targets for childcare a priority ambition in the new strategy for gender equality; highlights that the targets were originally set for the year 2010 and that the targets have still not been met by a majority of the Member States;
10. Highlights the fact that while differences in employment and pay rates for men and women may have fallen slightly in recent years, this is not the result of an improvement in the position of women, but of the fact that men's employment rates and levels of pay have fallen during the economic crisis;
11. Highlights in particular the fact that the impact of cutbacks in public services for childcare and care for the elderly is most likely to be borne by women;

12. Stresses that economic growth and competitiveness in the EU are dependent on closing the gap between women's educational attainment (60 % of university graduates in Europe are women) and their participation and position in the labour market; highlights the need to fight all aspects of vertical and horizontal segregation, as such segregation limits the employment of women to certain sectors and excludes them from higher levels within the corporate hierarchy; stresses that existing legislation containing positive action, in particular in the public sector of some Member States, has improved gender equality at entry level, but that this needs to be extended to all career levels;
13. Stresses that discrimination in the labour market is one of the main causes of gender inequality and that equal opportunities in working life and women's economic independence are crucial; highlights the unequal and vulnerable position of women of minority and immigrant origin as regards their access to education and the labour market; calls on the Commission to propose in its new gender equality strategy clear measures against discrimination in the labour market based on gender and gender identity, as regards e.g. recruitment, equal pay and pensions, and to combat sexual harassment at the workplace more efficiently; notes that despite EU laws in place protecting individuals from discrimination in employment based on sex, 30 % of trans job seekers experienced discrimination according to a 2012 study from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)<sup>1</sup>; points out that this is a violation of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights; calls, therefore, on the Commission closely to monitor the effectiveness of national complaint bodies and procedures in the implementation of gender equality directives;
14. Emphasises that the unequal division of family responsibilities is one of the main causes of the unequal position of women in the labour market; draws attention to the fact that many women do not return to work after giving birth; stresses that reconciliation of work and home duties are a key condition for gender equality, which should be promoted through:
  - a) investment in public services that support the inclusion of women in the labour market, in particular affordable, accessible and high-quality care infrastructure for children (to facilitate the achievement of the targets adopted by the Member States and formulated in the Barcelona objectives) and for people with disabilities, dependent adults, elderly and sick, as women are primary carers and their employment is negatively affected by these unpaid duties;
  - b) measures encouraging men's participation in domestic labour by means of reinforced legislation on parental leave, available to both parents but with strong incentives for fathers, such as non-transferable parental leave, as well as legislation on paternity leave for both biological and adoptive parents; calls on the Commission and the Member States to give priority to both of these legislative measures, as well as to other measures enabling men, and fathers in particular, to exercise their right to reconcile their private and working lives;
  - c) the promotion of flexible working time arrangements, teleworking opportunities for both men and women and support for mothers to renew their job skills through

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<sup>1</sup> <http://fra.europa.eu/en/survey/2012/eu-lgbt-survey>.



training and courses after a career break;

- d) the promotion of positive models of work-life balance arrangements for both women and men in educational materials in schools at all levels;

highlights that making progress towards a fair and equal division of these responsibilities requires a change of mentality; calls on the Commission to address these issues in the new gender equality strategy;

15. Takes the view that there is urgent need for a common position within the Council on the revision of the proposal for a directive on the implementation of measures to promote improvements in the health and safety at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (COM(2008)0637), to ensure against unfair dismissal of employees during pregnancy;
16. Stresses that the feminisation of poverty is the result of several factors, including women's career breaks, the gender pay gap (16.4 %), the pension gap (39 %), gender inequalities in career progression, the fact that women are often employed on non-standard contracts (such as involuntary part-time, interim or zero hours contracts), the absence of social security status for partners assisting self-employed workers, and poverty in households headed by single mothers; underlines that the reduction of poverty levels by 20 million people by 2020 can be achieved by anti-poverty and anti-discrimination policies that are grounded in gender mainstreaming, by action programmes that devote particular attention to disadvantaged women and that are supported by action targeting female poverty, and by the improvement of the working conditions in low-income sectors in which women are over-represented; underlines that the multiple discrimination that women face on the grounds of disability, racial and ethnic background, socio-economic status, gender identity and other factors contributes to the feminisation of poverty; stresses the importance of monitoring the gender effects of taxation and working time models on women and families;
17. Stresses that the gender pay gap arises from insufficient participation of women in the labour market, from vertical and horizontal segregation, and from the fact that sectors in which women are over-represented often have lower salaries; stresses the need to monitor the gender pay gap in both the public and the private sector and the need for transparency in acknowledging the gender pay gap in workplaces;
18. Draws attention to the fact that only 8.9 % of corporate executive board members, and only 15 % of non-executive board members, are women, and stresses the need for transparency and greater gender balance, based on identical and objective criteria in recruitment and promotion to decision-making positions in all spheres, in order to combat the 'glass ceiling' that can be identified in almost all Member States; considers that the EU strategy for equality between women and men post 2015 should include an action plan in this regard;
19. Takes the view that initiatives and measures must be taken – principally in the field of education and training, including higher education – to combat stereotyped perceptions of women's employment; stresses the need to promote and support female entrepreneurship, especially mothers' entrepreneurship, and career opportunities for women in science and

in the ICT sector; underlines the importance of encouraging women to pursue studies in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, as well as of the involvement of women in high-growth industry sectors, particularly in R&D, which would significantly boost Europe's economic growth and competitiveness;

20. Highlights the need to support transparent procedures for the appointment of women as non-executive members in company boards listed on stock exchanges; encourages the public and private sectors to envisage voluntary schemes to promote women in managerial positions, and calls on the European Council to finally adopt a common position after Parliament's first reading of the Women on Boards Directive;
21. Highlights the fact that the high levels of undeclared work, and bogus self-employment, that affect a large proportion of women, particularly those in domestic employment, have a negative impact on women's income and social security, undermine established social standards of health and safety at work, and reduce the EU's GDP levels; calls for the creation of encouragement and facilitation mechanisms to improve the transition from the informal to the formal economy; notes that the establishment of a European platform to strengthen cooperation for the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work represents a key lever in this respect;
22. Calls on the Member States to step up their efforts to combat undeclared employment and precarious work, including 'mini jobs' and false part-time jobs, and to ensure that all workers enjoy appropriate social protection; deplures, furthermore, the abuse of non-standard employment contracts to avoid compliance with employment and social protection obligations;
23. Recommends that, as the composition and definition of families change over time, family and work legislation be made more comprehensive with regard to single-parent families and LGBT parenting;
24. Considers that policies and instruments aimed at tackling youth unemployment, such as the Youth Guarantee and the Youth Employment Initiative, should meet the specific needs of young men and women in order to enable them to access the labour market; notes that the proportion of young women not in employment, education or training (NEET) is higher than that of young men; calls as well for the collection of gender-disaggregated data in the area of youth unemployment in order that tailored, evidence-based policies may be developed;
25. Encourages the Member States to recognise the potential of the latest public Procurement Directive as a tool for promoting and enhancing gender mainstreaming policy, and to consider setting requirements based on the existing legislation of Member States on equal treatment and gender equality as prerequisites for public procurement contracts where applicable; acknowledges that EU legislation on competition must be complied with in developing this idea.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	16.4.2015
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 38 -: 6 0: 9
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Laura Agea, Tiziana Beghin, Brando Benifei, Mara Bizzotto, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, David Casa, Ole Christensen, Martina Dlabajová, Elena Gentile, Arne Gericke, Danuta Jazłowiecka, Rina Ronja Kari, Jan Keller, Ádám Kósa, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Jean Lambert, Jérôme Lavrilleux, Patrick Le Hyaric, Jeroen Lenaers, Verónica Lope Fontagné, Javi López, Thomas Mann, Anthea McIntyre, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Georgi Pirinski, Terry Reintke, Maria João Rodrigues, Claude Rolin, Anne Sander, Sven Schulze, Siôn Simon, Jutta Steinruck, Romana Tomc, Ulrike Trebesius, Ulla Tørnæs, Renate Weber, Tatjana Ždanoka, Jana Žitňanská, Inês Cristina Zuber
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Georges Bach, Elmar Brok, Lampros Fountoulis, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Eva Kaili, Dominique Martin, Joëlle Mélin, Neoklis Sylikiotis, Ivo Vajgl
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Amjad Bashir, Enrique Calvet Chambon, Tania González Peñas, Maria Grapini, Ivan Jakovčić

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	6.5.2015
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+:               20 -:               12 0:                3
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Daniela Aiuto, Maria Arena, Catherine Bearder, Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Malin Björk, Viliija Blinkevičiūtė, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Viorica Dăncilă, Iratxe García Pérez, Anna Hedh, Mary Honeyball, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Elisabeth Köstinger, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Angelika Mlinar, Angelika Niebler, Maria Noichl, Marijana Petir, Terry Reintke, Liliana Rodrigues, Jordi Sebastià, Michaela Šojdrová, Ernest Urtasun, Ángela Vallina, Beatrix von Storch, Anna Záborská, Jana Žitňanská, Inês Cristina Zuber
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz, Constance Le Grip, Georg Mayer, Branislav Škripek, Monika Vana, Julie Ward
<b>Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote</b>	Isabella Adinolfi