

Question for written answer E-005870/2020
to the Commission
Rule 138
Evelyn Regner (S&D)

Subject: Renewal of fixed-term work contracts for pregnant, postpartum and lactating women

A growing number of fixed-term employment contracts for pregnant and post-partum women are failing to be renewed or extended. This would constitute discrimination towards women and a significant step backwards in closing the gender-pay, career and pension gaps, and in achieving gender equality overall. In addition, this issue poses serious threats to women's financial independence and to their own and their children's health.

According to the report on the progress of equality between women and men at the workplace, employment and professional training, the number of fixed-term contracts (for both genders) that had not been renewed increased by 17 % between 2018 and 2019 in Portugal. Given the exceptional circumstances due to the coronavirus pandemic, it can be expected that these figures will increase exponentially, and will affect women more.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem, which is not only prevalent in Portugal, but also in other Member States?
2. Does it believe, from a women's rights' perspective, that this issue may constitute a gap in the Maternity Leave Directive or the Fixed-term Work and Temporary Agency Work Directives that should, for the sake of women's rights and equality, be closed?
3. Would it consider collecting data and conducting research to map the state of play of this issue in the Member States in an effort to develop targeted policy recommendations?