Question for oral answer O-000074/2021
to the Commission
Rule 136
Evelyn Regner
on behalf of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality

Subject: MeToo and harassment – the consequences for the EU institutions

On 26 October 2017, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on combating sexual harassment and abuse in the EU. The resolution called on the President of Parliament and Parliament’s administration ‘to ensure the implementation of a strong and effective action plan against sexual harassment in the interest of prevention and support and mandatory training for all staff and Members on respect and dignity at work so as to ensure that a zero-tolerance approach becomes the norm’. As a consequence of this, specific induction training for MEPs on harassment prevention has been available since the beginning of this parliamentary term; however, the training is not mandatory and the majority of MEPs have not yet taken it.

At the same time, the resolution called for exchanges of best practice to be organised at all levels, including with other EU institutions, and called on the Commission ‘to assess, exchange and compare the existing best practices of combating sexual harassment in the workplace and to disseminate the results of this assessment’.

The EU institutions must take a strong public stance against all forms of harassment and sexual harassment and create structures and mechanisms that prevent and deal with harassment cases in a confidential and independent manner and create a working environment free of any kind of discrimination, harassment, or divisive and inappropriate behaviour. The procedures could be both formal and informal. Informal procedures would include confidential counsellors and mediators. Formal complaint procedures should be open to all categories of staff, including trainees and external contractors. The Commission is currently reviewing its anti-harassment policy, with a greater focus on preventive measures.

In the light of the above and in the interest of sharing best practices and information between institutions:

1. What are the main elements of the anti-harassment strategies of the Commission and other EU institutions and agencies?

2. Are there any best practices on preventing conflict and harassment in the workplace and on good office management that could be applied throughout all institutions?

3. Is training on the prevention of sexual harassment mandatory at the Commission and other EU institutions and agencies?

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Lapses: 17.2.2022