

Progress on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2013

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The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality adopted the own-initiative report by Marc TARABELLA (S&D, BE) on progress on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2013.

The report called upon EU institutions and Member States to:

- mainstream the issues of gender, women's rights and equal opportunities **in their policy making, and budget procedures** especially in connection with stimulus packages, by carrying out gender impact analyses on a case-by-case basis;
- integrate a gender pillar into the **Europe 2020 strategy** to measure progress on reducing the gender gap in employment
- develop a general **plan for investment into social infrastructure**, as it has been estimated that with a gendered investment plan, European gross domestic product (GDP) would increase more than without such an investment plan.

The report made certain recommendations, inter alia :

- **fight against poverty among** women, and older women and single mothers in particular, but also women who are victims of gender-based violence, women with disabilities, migrant women and women from minorities, mainly through the European Social Fund and the Structural Funds;
- **allow for changes in the family unit** when drawing up their taxation and compensation policies, in particular by providing support to one-parent families and older people in the form of tax credits or health care assistance;
- **reduce gender gaps in pay and pension** also by addressing the persistent concentration of women in part-time, low-pay and precarious work and by securing **care facilities of a sufficient quality for children**. Give full effect to the rights provided for under Directive 2006/54/EC, including the principle of equal pay and pay transparency;
- **implement proactive policies** to promote good jobs for women in order to meet the Europe 2020 targets by combating stereotypes and vertical and horizontal occupational segregation;
- **set specific employment targets** in the framework of their national reform programmes to ensure that women have the same opportunities as men to access and stay in the labour market;
- **establish affordable, flexible, high-quality and easily accessible services** for the care of people who are unable to cope with everyday tasks by themselves due to fact that they do not possess the functional autonomy they need to strike a balance between their personal, family and working lives.

Deploing the **deadlock in the Council regarding the maternity leave directive**, the report urged Member States to resume the negotiations thereon and Members reiterated their willingness to cooperate.

They also called on the Commission to take decisive policy action to **fight gender stereotypes** and suggested to the Member States that they raise awareness of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women in their educational systems.

On the issue of **violence against women**, Members renewed their call on the Commission to submit a proposal for a legislative act establishing measures to promote and support the action of Member States in the field of preventing violence against women and girls, by supporting a **comprehensive and effective policy framework** on gender-based violence. Member States must work systematically on empowering women in reporting violence to authorities.

The Commission and the Member States were asked to make 2016 the European year against violence against women.

The committee maintained that women must have control over their sexual and reproductive health and rights, not least by having ready access to contraception and abortion.

Lastly, it considered it unfortunate that the **annual report** now ranked only as a working document annexed to the report on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and urged the Commission to restore the full political legitimacy of the annual report by having it officially adopted in its own right.