Resolution on maternity leave

2015/2655(RSP) - 20/05/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 419 votes to 97 with 161 abstentions, a resolution on maternity leave.

The resolution recalled the principle of equal treatment of women and men which implies that there must be no discrimination whatsoever, be it direct or indirect, including on account of motherhood, fatherhood. It noted that there are more women than men living in poverty and exclusion, especially older women. It is more common for them to work part-time or on fixed-term or temporary contracts. It also took note of the falling birth rate in the EU. It deplored that a quarter of Member States do not offer paternity leave.

Furthermore, Parliament deplored in particular:

- **the deadlock in the Council regarding the Maternity Leave Directive**;
- the interinstitutional instability resulting from the Council's failure to act, given that Parliament has concluded its first reading, yet the discussions in the Council have been halted, thereby compromising the whole legislative procedure;
- the fact that the proposed revision of the directive may be withdrawn by the Commission as part of the REFIT exercise, and, if this ultimately proves to be the case, asks for a legislative initiative aimed at revising Council Directive 92/85/EEC as an immediate alternative, to be started under the Luxembourg presidency of the Council, in order to improve the health and safety of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding.

Members reiterated their willingness to draft a **separate directive** establishing paid paternity leave of at least 10 working days and encouraging measures, legislative and otherwise, which enable men, and fathers in particular, to exercise their right to achieve work-life balance. In the meantime, they await the final assessment of Council Directive 2010/18/EU on parental leave and called for a revision of that directive.