Resolution on the renewal of the EU plan of action on gender equality and women's empowerment in development

2015/2754(RSP) - 08/10/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European parliament adopted by 524 votes to 55 with 83 abstentions, a resolution on the renewal of the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development.

Members recalled that the EU was committed to promoting gender equality and ensuring gender mainstreaming in all of its actions.

In this context, they believed that **the conclusions of the evaluation of first action plan for gender equality (GAP1)** showed the clear need for a step change in EU action on gender equality and women's empowerment and that a renewed political commitment by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission was required to improve performance.

They stressed the importance of implementing the main recommendations of the evaluation in the successor to the GAP1.

Welcoming the publication of the 2nd Action Plan on gender equality (GAP2), Parliament urged the Commission and EEAS to begin implementation of the new plan as soon as possible, and to involve Parliament in consultation throughout that process.

Content of the 2nd Action Plan: Parliament considered that GAP2 should focus on all aspects of EU external policy – development cooperation, humanitarian aid, trade, human rights and foreign affairs, migration and asylum – in line with the policy coherence for development principle, and should apply to **developing, neighbourhood and enlargement countries alike.**

Recalling that progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment should be core business for EU institutions, Parliament wanted this issue to be integrated into all Union policies.

With particular regard to development policy, Parliament called on all EU delegations to submit an annual GAP report and for EU delegations to present a summary of progress towards gender equality and women' s empowerment. At the same time, Parliament felt that the review of EDF country programming provided an opportunity to ensure that full implementation of GAP2 was on track.

Data collection and targets: Members insisted on the use of gender-sensitive quantitative and qualitative indicators and systematic and timely collection of **gender disaggregated data with regard to the beneficiaries and participants** across all actions as part of the monitoring and evaluation process. They underlined the need to invest in national statistics and calls on all the Member States to establish gender-sensitive monitoring systems. Parliament invited EU delegations and the Member States' embassies to prioritise high-quality gender analysis as the basis for country-level strategy and programming. The EU should revise national indicative plans from the point of view of the new GAP.

Members stressed the need for clear targets and indicators, measured and disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other factors and improved tracking of budgetary allocations.

Key aspects for the new GAP: Parliament believed that the GAP must address a comprehensive approach for the full implementation of the EU guidelines on **violence against women and girls** with increased efforts and resources to eliminate all discriminatory practices against women. There must be efforts to combat:

- trafficking in human beings,
- female genital mutilation,
- forced sterilisation,
- forced pregnancy,
- gendercide,
- domestic violence and marital rape,
- child, early and forced marriage and
- gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Parliament called for the development of specific EU actions to strengthen the rights of different groups of women, with special attention being given to young people, migrants, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons.

Members highlighted the fact that the use of rape as a weapon of war and oppression must be eliminated. They underlined the vulnerability of women migrants, refugee and asylum seekers. They called for further efforts to increase women's access to health and health education and family planning.

In general, Parliament believed that businesses had an important role to play in advancing gender equality through actions that contribute to women's economic empowerment. It highlighted the positive role that micro-finance, social entrepreneurship, and alternative business models continued to have in the field of women's economic empowerment and inclusion. It also emphasised the need for women's inclusion and representation in emerging economic fields. The GAP2 must address the situation of LGBTI persons in third countries, and the importance of strengthening women's legal rights and access to justice.

Promote increased participation of women in peacekeeping: Members called on the EU to promote increased participation of women in peacekeeping, peace building processes and EU military and civil crisis management missions. They reiterated, their call on the EU for the incorporation of gender perspectives and women's rights in all peace and security initiatives.

Parliament underlined the importance of measures strengthening leadership and participation of women and women's rights organisations in the public as well as private spheres.

Lastly, it underlined the need to **involve men and boys** and promote their active engagement and responsibility in addressing discriminatory social norms and combating gender stereotypes and violence against women and girls.