Recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the status of women

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The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality adopted an own-initiative report prepared jointly by Iszaskun BILBAO BARANDICA (ALDE, ES) and Ángela VALLINA (GUE/NGL ES) on a European Parliament recommendation to the Council on the EU priorities for the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

The 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women will focus in particular on the issues that need to be addressed in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in rural areas and on the participation in and access of women to media and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women.

The committee considers that the European Parliament should make the following recommendations to the Council:

General conditions for empowering women and girls: Members recalled that the **fifth UN Sustainable Development Goal** (SDG5) is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls throughout the world. Therefore, the **Union and its Member States must be at the forefront of the empowerment of women and girls**, and have a duty to work towards the achievement of full gender equality in the Union, and to promote this goal in all external relations.

The report recommended, *inter alia*:

- to put an end to all forms of **discrimination** against all women and girls everywhere and to combat all forms of violence;
- to fight gender **stereotypes** and invest in women’s and girls’ access to tailor-made education, lifelong learning and vocational training, especially in rural areas;
- to develop policies aimed at **eradicating poverty** and **eliminate the gender pay gap**;
- to call on the Member States to provide affordable, high-quality facilities and public and private services for everyday life, especially in rural areas and with particular regard for health, education and care;
- to ensure **gender mainstreaming** into all policies and programmes by means of adequate financial and human resources.

The empowerment of rural women: rural women are often the primary care providers in their families and communities. However, they encounter numerous difficulties in accessing childcare and elderly care for their families, which results in a disproportionate burden borne by women and hinders their integration into the labour market.

Moreover, rural women have limited mobility and a lack of access to transport or means of contacting transport. Access to sexual and reproductive health rights and education is more limited in rural areas.

Members recommended:

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- ensuring that rural women and girls have accessible, affordable and high-quality formal and informal **education**;
- providing good quality **public services** to enable women to reconcile work and private life;
- developing comprehensive health services that address the physical, mental and emotional well-being of rural women (including gender-based violence);
- recognising that women in rural areas work in a variety of fields and are often agents of change towards **sustainable** and ecologically sound agriculture, food security and the creation of green jobs;
- implementing **climate-resilient agricultural policies** which take due account of the specific threats faced by rural women as a result of natural or man-made disasters;
- facilitating **digital development**, as it can significantly contribute to creating new jobs;
- developing employment policies, services and programmes to address the **precarious situation** of rural women;
- stressing the importance of including **safeguards** in EU policies on the living and working conditions of women hired as seasonal agricultural workers.

Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies: given the crucial role played by the media, Members made recommendations to ensure that women, who represent at least 50% of society, participate fairly in the creation of media content and decision-making in the media organisations.