Gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament

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The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality adopted the own-initiative report by Angelika MLINAR (ADLE, AT) on gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament.

The composition of the European Parliament reflects a severe female under-representation as only **36.1 % of Members are female.** This gap is further emphasised by the composition of Parliament's Bureau, which is made up of 7 women and 13 men. **Only 11 % of Parliament's senior management appointments** (Directors-General and Directors) **were women** in 2016 and 33 % were women in 2017.

The report presents the state of play regarding the promotion and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament, both within its administration and through its policies. It presents a critical assessment of the progress made over the past two years and makes concrete recommendations for further progress.

General remarks: reaffirming its strong commitment to gender equality, Members called for the **new multiannual financial framework** (MFF), like the last MFF, to be accompanied by a joint declaration by Parliament, the Commission and the Council, committing them to ensure that the annual budgetary procedures applied for the MFF integrate, as appropriate, gender-responsive element.

The Commission was asked to present a genuine **European Equality Strategy** in the form of a communication that contains clear and, as far as possible, quantifiable objectives and to have this translated into all official EU languages. On its part, Parliament should foster a culture of diversity and inclusion and a safe working environment for everyone, together with **targeted measures** to achieve gender-balanced representation both at administrative and political level.

Members recalled the importance of representing and promoting gender equality in communication materials in all policy sectors, and stressed that in order to comprehensively assess the state of play of gender mainstreaming in Parliament, not only policy content, but also **gender representation** in the administration and in decision-making should be taken into account.

They regretted the **lack of coherence and coordination** between the various bodies working on gender equality and diversity in Parliament, and reiterated their call to improve internal coordination in order to achieve a higher degree of gender mainstreaming.

Gender mainstreaming tools: the report called for effective measures to ensure genuine equality between men and women in the European Parliament. It emphasised measures to counteract sexual harassment are of paramount importance, and highlighted the need for awareness raising and training measures. It welcomed the new measures, as called for in Parliament's resolution of 26 October 2017, against harassment, which entered into force on 1 September 2018.

Members demanded, however, that full and undivided attention be given by Parliament's President and administration to the **full implementation** of all requested measures, in particular by means of the 2017-2019 roadmap on 'preventive and early support measures to deal with conflict and harassment between Members and APAs, trainees or other staff', which should be revised as soon as possible to adequately include at least the following demands:

- mandatory training for Members and staff;
- a task force of independent, external experts to be convened with a mandate to examine the situation of sexual harassment in the European Parliament and the functioning of its two harassment committees;
- strengthening the anti-harassment committees by merging them into one sole committee with a variable composition depending on the case under examination and including experts such as lawyers and doctors as standing members of the committee.

The report called for **closer cooperation among the parliamentary committees** aimed at bringing a real gender dimension to their reports and stresses the importance for all parliamentary committees of showing respect for the competences of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, by accepting the gender mainstreaming amendments tabled by the Committee.

At the political level, Members commended the appointment in 2016 of the standing rapporteur on gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament and recommended that Parliament maintain this position for the 2019-2024 parliamentary term.

Pointing to the importance of increasing the presence of the under-represented gender, often women, on electoral lists, Members called on **Parliament's political groups** for the 2019-2024 parliamentary term to ensure a gender-balanced composition of the bodies governing the European Parliament. They encouraged political groups to adopt a gender mainstreaming strategy.

Whilst condemning in the strongest possible terms **the misogynistic language** used on several occasions in the plenary chamber, Members called for an additional clause in the Rules of Procedure requiring Members in parliamentary debates to refrain from adopting language that incites hatred or discriminates on grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or social origin, genetic characteristics, language, religion or belief, political or other opinions, membership of a national minority, disability, age or sexual orientation, and to impose **exemplary sanctions in the event of non-compliance** with this clause.

At the administrative level, the report welcomed the report by Dimitrios Papadimoulis on gender equality in the European Parliament secretariat for 2017-2019' and the roadmap for implementing the report. It urged the High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity to perform a two-yearly structural, point-by-point assessment of the implementation of the roadmap on gender equality based on a presentation by DG PERS.