Resolution on the need for a dedicated Council configuration on gender equality

2020/2896(RSP) - 17/12/2020 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 505 votes to 146, with 37 abstentions, a resolution on the need for a dedicated Council configuration on gender equality.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups.

Parliament recalled that gender equality is a fundamental value and a key objective of the European Union and that an intersectional horizontal perspective is essential in order to recognise and address the multiple threats of discrimination based on gender and gender identity.

According to the Gender Equality Index 2020 of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), no EU country has yet fully achieved equality between women and men. EU progress on gender equality is still slow, with the index score improving by an average of one point every two years. At this rate, it will take more than 60 years for the EU to achieve gender equality.

Members consider that there is still room for improvement, given the current climate of strong hostility towards gender equality and women's rights, including in the area of reproductive and sexual health and rights.

For the first time, gender mainstreaming will be a horizontal priority of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, which means that every legislative or policy proposal will have to be accompanied by a gender impact assessment and that programmes will be monitored and evaluated from a gender perspective.

In this context, Parliament has requested that the Ministers and Secretaries of State responsible for gender equality be able to meet in a specific official forum to take joint and concrete measures to address the challenges in the field of women's rights and gender equality and to ensure that gender equality issues are discussed at the highest political level.

A specific Council configuration on gender equality would strengthen the integration of gender equality issues into EU legislation as well as dialogue and cooperation between Member States and the exchange of good practice, including legislation. It would help to reduce the gaps between Member States and harmonise the protection of women's rights and gender equality in Europe.

Parliament therefore called on the Council and the European Council to establish a Council configuration on gender equality to facilitate the integration of gender equality issues into all EU policies and legislation.