Resolution on MeToo and harassment – the consequences for the EU institutions

2021/2986(RSP) - 16/12/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 516 votes to 86, with 75 abstentions, a resolution on MeToo and harassment - the consequences for the EU institutions.

According to estimates, one in three women have experienced physical or sexual violence during their adult lives. Up to 55 % of women have been sexually harassed in the EU with 32 % of all victims saying the perpetrator was a superior, colleague or customer. The progress in addressing the issue of sexual harassment after three years of the MeToo movement is not sufficient and there is still a lot to be done, within the EU institutions and beyond.

The victims of sexual harassment are often staff in the most vulnerable positions at Parliament, including young professionals, trainees, accredited parliamentary assistants (APAs) and contract agents. The resolution noted that the COVID-19 pandemic and the new working methods of the European Parliament implemented during the pandemic might have made physical harassment less likely yet have also made it difficult for victims of harassment to report their complaints and turn to a counsellor for guidance and support. The resolution highlighted that the MeToo movement has pushed the EU institutions to plan and start to adapt their internal rules and procedures to better identify, counter and sanction harassment.

While strongly condemning all forms of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, and all forms of harassment, notably sexual harassment, Parliament stressed that there is still a need to promote and further enhance gender equality and the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the EU, including in management positions in the institutions.

The resolution called for the following measures:

- to make anti-harassment training available in all official languages or with interpretation and to target outreach activities at individual delegations and political groups;

- to create a public list of Members who have participated in these anti-harassment training sessions to be published on the website of the European Parliament as a good example for other Members;

- to improve awareness-raising and the introduction of compulsory training on Parliament’s zero-harassment policy for all people working in its premises;

- to aim to provide protection against victimisation of or retaliation against complainants, victims, witnesses and whistle-blowers;

- to set up a task force of independent experts be set up with a mandate to examine the situation of sexual harassment and abuse in Parliament;

- to exchange best practices with other institutions in tackling harassment, including anti-harassment policies, guidelines or any new provisions on how to deal with it.