Basic information

2015/2094(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Women domestic workers and carers in the EU **Subject** 4.10.09 Women condition and rights	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	KUNEVA Kostadinka (GUE/NGL)	02/12/2014
	Shadow rapporteur ESTARÀS FERRAGUT Rosa (PPE) BLINKEVIČIŪTĖ Vilija (S&D) GERICKE Arne (ECR) MLINAR Angelika (ALDE) URTASUN Ernest (Verts/ALE) AIUTO Daniela (EFDD)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs (Associated committee)	GONZÁLEZ PEÑAS Tania (GUE/NGL)	02/03/2015

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	THYSSEN Marianne

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
30/04/2015	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
30/04/2015	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
18/02/2016	Vote in committee		

05/04/2016	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0053/2016	Summary
27/04/2016	Debate in Parliament		
28/04/2016	Decision by Parliament	T8-0203/2016	Summary
28/04/2016	Results of vote in Parliament		
28/04/2016	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2015/2094(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	FEMM/8/03341

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE569.470	09/10/2015	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE571.611	11/11/2015	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE565.002	07/12/2015	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0053/2016	05/04/2016	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0203/2016	28/04/2016	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2016)485	22/09/2016	

Women domestic workers and carers in the EU

2015/2094(INI) - 28/04/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 279 votes to 105 with 204 abstentions a resolution on women domestic workers and carers in the EU.

Members recalled that the domestic work sector employed over **52 million people around the world in 2010**, according to ILO figures, and a further 7.4 million domestic workers under the age of 15, accounting for between 5% and 9% of all employment in industrialised countries. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the majority of workers employed in this sector are women, accounting for 83% of the global domestic workforce in 2010 and translating into 2.5 million in the EU, **88% of them being women**.

The terms **'domestic workers'** and **'care workers'** include diverse groups of workers including, but not limited to, live-in workers, external workers, hourly workers in several households, family workers, daily or night care workers, babysitters, au pairs and gardeners, whose reality and conditions may vary significantly.

Common recognition of the profession: Parliament believed that there is a need for a common EU recognition of the profession and the value of domestic work and care as real work. It therefore called on the EU and the Member States to lay down **common rules** on domestic work and care.

The Commission should come forward with **a set of policy instruments**, on domestic work and care, establishing **quality guidelines** for both sectors. Such initiatives should focus on the following aspects:

- the introduction of a **general framework for the professionalisation of domestic work and care**, leading to the recognition and standardisation of the relevant professions and skills and career building, including rights accumulated in accordance with the Member States' specificities;
- **urgently proposing** a Carers' Leave Directive and a framework for recognition of the status of non-professional carers, which offers them remuneration and minimum standards of social protection, and support in terms of training and specific actions to help them improve their living and working conditions.

The Commission was asked to encourage Member States to establish systems for **professionalisation, training, continuous skills development and recognition** of women domestic and care workers' qualifications, including literacy. For their part, Member States should:

- take decisive action in the sectors of domestic work and care by recognising this work as an occupation in its own right and by ensuring that domestic workers and carers have genuine **workers' rights and social protection** through labour legislation or collective agreements;
- ratify ILO Convention No 189 concerning **decent work** for domestic workers,
- ensure an appropriate level of **health and safety at work**, for example maternity protection, and take action to prevent work-related accidents;
- include domestic workers and carers in **all national labour, healthcare, social care, insurance and anti-discrimination laws**, recognising their contribution to the economy and society. To this end, the Commission should consider revising any EU directives which exclude these workers from rights that other categories of workers enjoy.

Combating undeclared work: Parliament considered it essential to combat precarious and undeclared work, given that this phenomenon severely affects domestic workers, including particularly migrant women workers, thus worsening their already vulnerable position. Practices such as child labour should be eradicated and the perpetrators prosecuted.

Members lent their support to the efforts made by the European Platform against Undeclared Work and called on the Member States to **invest in more ways** of preventing, detecting and combating the considerable amount of undeclared employment in the domestic work and care sector, especially with regard to cases of labour abuse and services involving companies using bogus self-employment.

As regards **legal migration**, Members stressed the need for the Member States to establish bilateral agreements with those states that statistics show to be the sending countries of domestic workers and carers, in order to regularise the sending and receiving flow.

Human trafficking: the Commission and Member States should promote the investigation of cases of trafficking for human exploitation, and more specifically for domestic work, to **improve the mechanism of identification and protection of these victims** and to involve NGOs, trade unions, public authorities and all citizens in the process. The instruments and mechanisms established to address trafficking, such as referral mechanisms or temporary residence permits, should be expanded.

Protection of domestic workers: Parliament called on Member States to establish accessible complaint mechanisms and measures for labour inspection, enforcement and penalties with due regard for the special characteristics of domestic work, in accordance with national laws and regulations. It demanded resolute action to be taken against undertakings in any sector whose business model relies on exploiting illegal workers.

Member States were asked to:

- to make the necessary efforts to **step up inspections**, and to find innovative inspection methods which respect privacy;
- organise **campaigns among the general public bodies** to improve visibility and enhance understanding of the benefits of regularised domestic work and care;
- launch **campaigns to raise awareness of the rights and duties of domestic and care workers** and employers and the risks and impact of exploitation in the domestic work sector;
- put in place, in collaboration with social partners, information channels on the rights of domestic workers and carers (helplines and websites providing assistance);
- consider incentives for employers to encourage the use of declared domestic workers and carers.

Lastly, Parliament called for **good representation of social partners** at European and at national levels, and in particular trade unions, to intensify sectorial collective bargaining in line with national practices in order to effectively advance and enforce decent working conditions in these sectors.

Women domestic workers and carers in the EU

2015/2094(INI) - 05/04/2016 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality adopted an own-initiative report by Kostadinka KUNEVA (GUE/NGL, EL) on women domestic workers and carers in the EU.

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, exercising the prerogative of an associated committee in line with Article 54 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, was also consulted to give an opinion on the report.

Members recalled that the domestic work sector employed over **52 million people around the world in 2010**, according to ILO figures, and a further 7.4 million domestic workers under the age of 15, accounting for between 5% and 9% of all employment in industrialised countries. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the majority of workers employed in this sector are women, accounting for 83% of the global domestic workforce in 2010 and translating into 2.5 million in the EU, **88% of them being women**.

The terms **'domestic workers'** and **'care workers'** include diverse groups of workers including, but not limited to, live-in workers, external workers, hourly workers in several households, family workers, daily or night care workers, babysitters, au pairs and gardeners, whose reality and conditions may vary significantly.

Common recognition of the profession: Members believed that there is a need for a common EU recognition of the profession and the value of domestic work and care as real work. They therefore called on the EU and the Member States to lay down **common rules** on domestic work and care.

The Commission should come forward with **a set of policy instruments**, both legislative and non-legislative, on domestic work and care, establishing **quality guidelines** for both sectors. Such initiatives should focus on the following aspects:

- the introduction of a **general framework for the professionalisation of domestic work and care**, leading to the recognition and standardisation of the relevant professions and skills and career building, including rights accumulated in accordance with the Member States' specificities;
- **urgently proposing** a Carers' Leave Directive and a framework for recognition of the status of non-professional carers, which offers them remuneration and minimum standards of social protection, and support in terms of training and specific actions to help them improve their living and working conditions.

The Member States should include domestic workers and carers in **all national labour, healthcare, social care, insurance and anti-discrimination laws**, recognising their contribution to the economy and society. To this end, the Committee urged the Commission accordingly to consider revising any EU directives which exclude domestic workers and carers from rights that other categories of workers enjoy.

Combating undeclared work: Members considered it essential to combat precarious and undeclared work, given that this phenomenon severely affects domestic workers, including particularly migrant women workers, thus worsening their already vulnerable position. Practices such as child labour should be eradicated and the perpetrators prosecuted.

Members hope that European Platform against Undeclared Work will prevent and discourage undeclared works and call on the Member States to **invest in more ways** of preventing, detecting and combating the considerable amount of undeclared employment in the domestic work and care sector, especially with regard to cases of human trafficking and labour abuse and those involving companies providing domestic and care services using undeclared and bogus self-employment.

As regards **legal migration**, Members stressed the need for the Member States to establish bilateral agreements with those states that statistics show to be the sending countries of domestic workers and carers, in order to regularise the sending and receiving flow.

Human trafficking: the Commission and the Member States should promote the investigation of cases of trafficking for human exploitation, and more specifically for domestic work, to **improve the mechanism of identification and protection of these victims** and to involve NGOs, trade unions, public authorities and all citizens in the detection process of the trafficking and severe exploitation phenomena.

Protection of domestic workers: the report called on Member States to establish effective and accessible complaint mechanisms and means of ensuring compliance with national laws and regulations for the protection of domestic workers. They demanded resolute action to be taken against undertakings in any sector whose business model relies on exploiting illegal workers.

Member States were asked to:

- to make the necessary efforts to **step up inspections**, and to find innovative inspection methods which respect privacy;
- States to organise **campaigns among the general public bodies** to improve visibility and enhance understanding of the benefits of regularised domestic work and care;
- to launch **campaigns to raise awareness of the rights and duties of domestic and care workers** and employers and the risks and impact of exploitation in the domestic work sector;
- to consider incentives for employers to encourage the use of declared domestic workers and carers.

Lastly, the report recommended that a **consensual contract** be drawn up for domestic and care work in each Member State, following a social dialogue between social workers, employers and female workers.