Basic information

2019/2168(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Closing the digital gender gap: women's participation in the digital economy **Subject** 3.30.06 Information and communication technologies, digital technologies 4.10.04 Gender equality	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	CARVALHO Maria da Graça (EPP)	18/12/2019
	Shadow rapporteur LEITÃO-MARQUES Maria-Manuel (S&D) MELCHIOR Karen (Renew) REINTKE Terry (Greens/EFA) MOŻDŻANOWSKA Andżelika Anna (ECR) ANDERSON Christine (ID) MODIG Silvia (GUE/NGL)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
19/12/2019	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
12/11/2020	Vote in committee		
24/11/2020	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0232/2020	Summary
21/01/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0026/2021	Summary
21/01/2021	Results of vote in Parliament		

21/01/2021	Debate in Parliament		
21/01/2021	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2019/2168(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/9/01542

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE655.712	10/09/2020	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE658.725	30/09/2020	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0232/2020	24/11/2020	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0026/2021	21/01/2021	Summary

Closing the digital gender gap: women’s participation in the digital economy

2019/2168(INI) - 24/11/2020 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality adopted an own-initiative report by Maria da Graça CARVALHO (EPP, PT) on closing the digital gender gap: women’s participation in the digital economy.

Strengthening women's participation in the digital economy

The digital transition opens up new opportunities, but also raises many challenges in terms of equal opportunities in the labour market, equal treatment in working life and the search for gender balance.

The Gender Equality Index 2019 reveals persistent gender inequalities in the digital sector. Eurostat data for 2018 show that around 1.3 million people in the EU are studying information and communication technologies (ICT), and that girls and women account for only 17% of all ICT students in the EU. Gender stereotypes strongly influence subject choices, and very few teenage girls in EU Member States (less than 3%) show an interest in working in ICT.

Against this background, Members called on the Commission to:

- address the wide gender gaps in the ICT sector as part of the Digital Agenda for Europe through concrete measures specifically aimed at increasing the participation of women and girls in this sector;

- provide adequate funding for programmes to encourage more girls and women to study and work in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and to set up entrepreneurship programmes that fund women and girls who start tech projects or new companies.

Reducing the digital divide

The report addressed a set of recommendations to the Commission, the Member States and society at large on how to reduce the digital gender gap in various fields, such as education, media, culture and audiovisual or women's civic, political and economic participation, for example:

- ensuring gender mainstreaming in the field of digital literacy at all levels;

- addressing in depth the problem of the low number of women studying or working in the ICT field;

- transpose and implement the Directive on work-life balance and put in place policies to improve the situation of self-employed workers, in particular women entrepreneurs in the ICT and digital sectors;

- promote gender equality in ICT and ICT-related businesses and in the digital economy and adopt horizontal olicies to reduce the gender gap in the digital economy through targeted measures;

- assess the causes and factors behind the high rate of women dropping out of digital careers;

- encourage the engagement of women in innovation and increase funding opportunities for young digital businesses run by women;

- encourage the audiovisual and media industries to show an increasing number of women in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and ICT professions;

- take into account gender equality when devising eGovernment initiatives;

- encourage young working women to enter the professions related to cybersecurity;

- stimulate digital accessibility and affordability as tools for achieving gender equality in development strategies.

Combating gender-based violence and cyber violence

In the face of increasing harassment and violence against women in the digital world, the report called for funds and campaigns to raise awareness and educate women on how to secure their accounts and communications to protect themselves online. These campaigns should combat gender-based violence and gender stereotypes, educate men on how to behave towards women online, and ensure women's freedom of expression and meaningful participation in public discourse.

Member States should facilitate reporting channels and support the development of training tools for the police, the justice system nd the digital sector to empower law enforcement authorities to effectively investigate and prosecute malicious attackers and to support victims of online harassment and violence.

Members called for new legally binding measures and a directive to prevent and combat gender-based violence, including cyber violence, which often targets women.

Data collection

The report called on the Commission and the Member States, as well as platforms and businesses, to collect comparable gender and age-disaggregated data on ICT use and to propose initiatives, including research, to better understand the root causes of the digital gender gap.

Closing the digital gender gap: women’s participation in the digital economy

2019/2168(INI) - 21/01/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 598 votes to 45, with 40 abstentions, a resolution on closing the digital gender gap: women’s participation in the digital economy.

Strengthening women's participation in the digital economy

The digital transition opens up new opportunities, but also raises many challenges in terms of equal opportunities in the labour market, equal treatment in working life and the search for gender balance.

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Against this background, Members called on the Commission to:

- address the wide gender gaps in the ICT sector as part of the Digital Agenda for Europe through concrete measures specifically aimed at increasing the participation of women and girls in this sector;

- provide adequate funding for programmes to encourage more girls and women to study and work in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and to set up entrepreneurship programmes that fund women and girls who start tech projects or new companies;

- take equal opportunities for women and men and the digital gender gap into due account while negotiating programmes within the next multiannual financial framework and funds and loans under the Recovery Plan.

Reducing the digital divide

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- ensuring gender mainstreaming in the field of digital literacy at all levels;

- addressing in depth the problem of the low number of women studying or working in the ICT field;

- transpose and implement the work-life balance directive and present binding measures on wage transparency by the end of 2020;

- promote gender equality in ICT and ICT-related businesses and in the digital economy and adopt horizontal olicies to reduce the gender gap in the digital economy through targeted measures;

- assess the causes and factors behind the high rate of women dropping out of digital careers;

- encourage the engagement of women in innovation and increase funding opportunities for young digital businesses run by women;

- encourage the audiovisual and media industries to show an increasing number of women in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and ICT professions;

- work closely with and involve women and women's civil society organisations in order to better address the concerns that exist in women's daily lives, and to promote women's economic and digital inclusion;

- encourage young working women to take up professions related to emerging areas such as cyber security;

- combat digital exclusion of all vulnerable groups (people with disabilities, women from different socio-economic backgrounds, older women and women in rural areas, refugee and migrant women).

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