

Gender Equality



EUROPEAN WOMEN'S
LOBBY
EUROPEEN DES FEMMES

Posted by: **European Women's Lobby**



2014 Manifesto: "Act now for her future, commit to gender equality!"


Women and girls are half of Europe's population, and are entitled to the same rights as men and boys. Achieving substantive equality between women and men, promoting women's rights and empowering women should be a priority of the European Union (EU) and its Member States. Gender equality is an essential part of democracy, social justice, human rights and dignity. The European Parliament (EP) has the power and responsibility to create meaningful change towards equality for all, now and in the future.


67 MEPs or candidates to the EP signed up to the manifesto, including three 'Top Candidates': Ska Keller, Guy Verhofstadt and Martin Schultz. Of the signatories 40% were from S&D, 27% from the Greens, 16% from ALDE, 9% from GUE, 4% from EPP and 3% Non-attached. 33 of the signatories were elected to the EP.


Vote on the EU Strategy for equality between


women and men post 2015

Vote Breakdown

 341
For

 281
Against

 81
Abstain

 46
Absent

312 votes required to pass.

The vote on the report on the EU Strategy for equality between women and men post 2015, by rapporteur Maria Noichl (S&D, GE), took place on 9 June 2015.

Pledge 1: A comprehensive framework to achieve gender equality

Strengthen and implement the EU legal framework on gender equality

The EU at large has during the current mandate had a very limited taste for legal frameworks in the field of gender equality. The Women on Boards directive has stalled in the Council, and the Maternity Leave directive has been replaced with a yet seemingly vague work-life balance framework.

That said, the European Parliament has emphasized the need to introduce legislative inputs in order to strengthen the legal framework for gender equality in its **resolution** on the EU Strategy for equality between women and men post 2015.

In several resolutions initiated by the EP Committee for Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), demands for a stronger EU legal framework on gender equality were made.

Additionally, the possible forthcoming ratification of the Istanbul Convention on Violence against Women can be seen as a concrete step in strengthening the EU legal framework on gender equality.

Adopt and implement the EU Strategy for Equality between women

and men 2015-2020

As mentioned above, the European Parliament did adopt a **resolution** on the EU Strategy for equality between women and men post 2015 calling for a comprehensive strategy.

Despite active advocacy from the EP, despite a mobilisation of 22 EU Ministers, and despite **repeated calls** from the European Women's Lobby, the Commission adopted a "strategic engagement" in the form of an internal working document, instead of a communication which would have been validated by the whole College of Commissioners.

Strengthen the EP Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

The EWL has the impression that the FEMM Committee is taking its responsibility seriously and that the committee is being respected within the parliament. An example of this is the strong demand the EP made on the Commission for the Gender Equality strategy.

Other indicators of this are that Commissioner Jourova met with FEMM on a number of occasions, that a series of joint hearings with LIBE have been held, and that EP President Schultz spoke at an important event organized by FEMM.

Ensure gender mainstreaming throughout the work of the EP

The European Parliament passes an annual resolution on gender mainstreaming at the occasion of International Women's Day on March 8. The Parliament has "gradually developed a gender mainstreaming structure. However, analysis shows that the system is fragmented and not particularly efficient. It is time for corrective measures, as well as an efficient feedback and evaluation mechanism, if we want to prevent this resolution from remaining a dead letter." according to Angelika Mlinar (ALDE, Austria), the rapporteur for the 2016 resolution.

Each committee in the EP has a member responsible for gender

mainstreaming. EWL has held one breakfast meeting specifically on gender mainstreaming with these MEPs, as well as two breakfast meetings on gender equality for MEPs.

Appoint an EU Coordinator on women's rights and gender equality, who reports to the European Commission's President

With the appointment of Vera Jourova as the first ever Commissioner to have gender equality in her title, this demand has been achieved with great margin.

Pledge 2: Sustainable funding for gender equality

Introduce an EU budget which is gender-sensitive, environmentally sustainable and promotes social cohesion

The European Parliament passes an annual resolution on gender mainstreaming at the occasion of International Womens' Day on March 8. The Parliament has "gradually developed a gender mainstreaming structure. However, analysis shows that the system is fragmented and not particularly efficient.

In a draft FEMM committee report by Clare Moody on EU funds for gender equality, the "sporadic implementation of gender mainstreaming in EU budget allocations and spending decisions" is pointed out. The report issues specific recommendations including requiring all EU budget titles to pursue equally strong gender targets and gender mainstreaming standards, increasing the level of funds allocated to achieving the objectives of gender-strategic engagement in the next MFF, and regular training programmes and technical support on gender mainstreaming tools for all staff involved in policy making and budgetary procedures.

In another draft opinion on the discharge of the EU general budget, FEMM stresses that equality between women and men must be integrated in all policy areas, including gender budgeting at all stages of the budgetary process and in the MFF. It also calls on the Court of Auditors

to include an analysis of achieving gender-related targets in their annual reports and reiterates its previous calls on the Commission to ensure the full implementation and fair allocation of the funds allocated to the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme.

Urge Member States to allocate budgets for women's rights and gender equality at all levels

A call for Member States to allocate budgets for women's rights and gender equality at all levels is often included in FEMM reports. However, monitoring of this is lacking.
