

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Gender equality on the agenda within the work of the EP as a whole



The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality is responsible for a range of key EU legislative and non-legislative files. But another, sometimes overlooked endeavour of the committee is the efforts made to try to integrate a gender perspective in the work of the European Parliament

as a whole and in the various committees. On 23 March FEMM committee invited all committee Chairs/Vice-Chairs responsible for gender mainstreaming for a first meeting – looking at strategic actions and synergies that would reinforce the gender equality perspective across the board. The level of energy and the creativity among the participants, covering everything from the Transport committee to the Legal affairs committee, was remarkable. Proposals for overarching strategies as well as committee-specific actions were voiced and shared. I want to thank already now my colleagues for their clearly demonstrated commitment to strengthen the gender equality perspective in their respective committees. However, our work has only started and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality is keen to be a resource and bridge between committees in this important work ahead.

Eva-Britt Svensson

7 APRIL – MEETING AGENDA IN BRIEF

- ⌚ Social integration of women belonging to ethnic minority groups – public hearing
- ⌚ Equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity – consideration of draft recommendation for second reading
- ⌚ Assessment of the results of the 2006-2010 Roadmap for Equality and forward looking recommendations – further consideration of draft report
- ⌚ Towards 2014: What are the links between women and the EU? – presentation and exchange of views
- ⌚ Gender aspects of the economic downturn and financial crisis – consideration of amendments

Date: Wednesday, 7 April, 9.00-12.30 and 16.30-20.00, **Venue:** JAN 4Q1 Meeting room

Live web streaming of the meeting [here](#).

SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF WOMEN BELONGING TO ETHNIC MINORITY GROUPS

Public Hearing



The aim of the hearing is to discuss the issues, to identify possible solutions and to exchange existing good practices between the Member States. It is crucial to focus not only on historically established minorities, but also on newly established minorities (e.g. immigrants).

The career opportunities of women belonging to minority groups will also be discussed, with special attention to women's effective access to education and to the labour market. Further points to be examined will be access to health care, and violence against women belonging to ethnic minority groups, who are even more vulnerable due to various reasons, such as social and cultural isolation.

For the draft programme and registrations, please click [here](#).

Rapporteur: Antonia Parvanova (ALDE)

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality is responsible for:

- Definition, promotion and protection of women's rights in the Union and related Community measures;
- The promotion of women's rights in third countries;
- Equal opportunities policy, including equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work;
- The removal of all forms of discrimination based on sex;
- The implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming in all policy sectors;
- The follow-up and implementation of international agreements and conventions involving the rights of women;
- Information policy on women.

EQUAL TREATMENT BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN ENGAGED IN AN ACTIVITY IN A SELF-EMPLOYED CAPACITY

Consideration of the draft recommendation for second reading

The position of the Parliament in first reading was adopted on 6 May 2009. This first reading position called for an amended directive which would be more binding on Member States and would include compulsory registration of assisting spouses and compulsory participation to the social security schemes, maternity protection for self-employed women and assisting spouses, adapted to their specific needs, and recognition of the work of assisting spouses. The Council position in first reading was adopted on 8 March and was forwarded to Parliament on 24 March. The Council position takes partially into account the position of the Parliament, but presents differences especially on the registration of assisting spouses and the participation to the social security schemes, as the Council considers that it is up to the Member States to determine whether they want to establish a mandatory or a voluntary based system. Members will now discuss the draft recommendation for second reading.

Rapporteur: Astrid Lulling (EPP)

GENDER ASPECTS OF THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN AND FINANCIAL CRISIS

Consideration of amendments



After the consideration of the draft report on 15 March, Members will now discuss the 144 amendments tabled to the text. The numerous amendments reflect that Members find these issues

of utmost importance. The aim of the own-initiative report is to examine the economic crisis from a gender aspect. The draft report points out that gender equality should be integrated in any policy response to the crisis, including the [employment](#) and macro-economic guidelines and the EU 2020 Strategy. The increase in job losses, with more women on the labour market could result in a bigger direct and indirect impact on women themselves, as well as family households, compared to previous recessions. Women's employment is especially affected in the fields of retailing, service and tourism, and the public sector, such as education, health and social services. Furthermore female employment in part-time and precarious jobs is disproportionately high; therefore an economic downturn carries additional risk for them.

Rapporteur: Raül Romeva i Rueda (Greens/EFA)

ASSESSMENT OF THE RESULTS OF THE 2006-2010 ROADMAP FOR EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN AND FORWARD LOOKING RECOMMENDATIONS

Further consideration of draft report



The draft report assessing the results of the Roadmap and giving recommendations for the future takes into consideration the results of the successful public hearing organised on the new EU gender strategy at the end of January. The original deadline for amendments has been extended and the Rapporteur decided to table 6 amendments to her draft report to put more emphasis on the assessment of the 6 priorities of the current Roadmap. Concerning the future recommendations the draft report proposes developments in the institutional cooperation such as holding regular meetings between the Council, the Commission and the Parliament on the progress in gender equality, as well as other regular meetings on specific issues with the participation of women's organisations, national parliaments in addition to the representatives of the European institutions. The second aspect of the proposals focuses on different policy aims, such as women's economic situation, reconciliation, gender violence and gender aspect of external development policies.

Rapporteur: Ilda Figueiredo (GUE/NGL)

TOWARDS 2014: WHAT ARE THE LINKS BETWEEN WOMEN AND THE EU?

Presentation by Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou followed by an exchange of views



The Parliament needs to connect more with women voters as research shows them to be trapped in a vicious circle, being under-represented in the EP and EU politics in general and, therefore, less interested and less involved than men. On Tuesday 2 March a panel of MEPs and experts analysed the links between women and the EU concluding that greater female participation in politics is essential, especially in view of the 2014 EP elections, but will not be easy to achieve. The colloquium centred around three topics: the nature of the relationship between women and the EU, media behaviour towards female candidates and the best means of communication for building better links between women and the EU. The event was chaired by Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Vice-President responsible for communication policy, who will present the findings to the Members of the committee.

Details of the next meeting

Monday, 3 May, 2010 (15.00-18.30) and Tuesday, 4 May, 2010 (9.00-12.30)

For more information, please contact

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FEMM website: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/homeCom.do?language=EN&body=FEMM>

Link to committee meeting documents:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/organes/femm/femm_7leg_meetinglist.htm