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Greens/EFA and Ministers welcome Historic EU Directive proposal to stop gender-based violence

Joint Statement

Last week (8 March 2022), the European Commission published their proposal for the long-awaited Gender Based Violence Directive.

After reiterated calls by the European Parliament and Greens/EFA Group, the European Commission finally moves to concrete actions in ending gender-based violence across the EU.

We welcome the proposal as a unique opportunity to pave the way to a feminist Europe by committing the Member States to take ambitious and binding actions towards ending gender-based violence in Europe.

The proposal criminalises some forms of sexual violence, such as rape, female genital mutilation (FGM) or cyber violence. We especially applaud the Commission of the ambition **to criminalise rape on the basis of lack of consent**, which the Greens/EFA Group has long advocated for.

We celebrate the **intersectional approach** included in some of the provisions**,** which considers the diversity and specific needs of different groups. We also deem that the proposed measures on **protection, prevention and support of victims** are comprehensive and aligned with the Istanbul Convention.

However, we underline the following areas as priorities for action:

- We regret the lack of **a coherent approach in terms of gender, including recognition of the gender-based violence against LGBTIQ+ people** on the grounds of gender, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics.
- For other types of gender-based violence, the proposal relies on the definitions under national criminal law, which may result in lack of coherence in the approach.
- We are equally concerned about **the lack of gender perspective in most of the forms of cyberviolence** criminalised in this proposal.
- With the text on the table, it is clear that the next step should be **adding gender-based violence on the list of European crimes**, in order to cover all forms of gender-based violence, something the Greens/EFA have been repeatedly calling for.

For years, side by side with feminist civil society across the Member States, we have campaigned for a Directive to prevent and combat gender-based violence.

With this proposal comes a historic opportunity to make European history.

We need to seize this moment, and make sure the adopted Directive is ambitious, inclusive and fit for the digital age.

Signed by:

Sarah Schlitz
Secretary of State for Gender Equality, Equal Opportunities and Diversity,
Belgium

Roderic O' Gorman
Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
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Ska Keller

Member



Philippe Lamberts

Member

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