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Protection of fundamental rights in the EU

European Parliament calls for more ambition

Today the European Parliament has concluded that **the EU can do more to improve its fundamental rights' record by tackling all rights' violations**, including in areas it does not legislate on. The 'Report on the Situation of Fundamental Rights in the EU in 2016', led by the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), covers migration and integration issues, the rule of law, the fight against hate speech and discrimination, women's and LGBTI rights, and it examines the EU's tools for dealing with rights' violations by Member States.

The Greens/EFA group have fought hard to improve the report's sections on asylum, migration, economic and social rights, non-discrimination, the fight against terrorism, hate speech, gender-based violence, minority and linguistic rights, and Roma and LGBTI rights. These were either largely ignored or absent from the original text and several amendments on these issues were tabled by our group.

LGBTI rights proved particularly contentious, but work by the Greens/EFA group helped to ensure that there are provisions on trans and intersex rights. Another Greens/EFA amendment condemning LGBTI conversion therapies was approved, and it is the first time the European Parliament has taken a stance against such practices.

On the **rule of law**, the report's main conclusions are that national sovereignty and the principle of subsidiarity cannot justify or legitimise the systematic refusal of a Member State to respect the fundamental values of the EU. It calls for the suspension of a Member State's voting rights (under Article 7 of the Treaty on the European Union) to be used if all else has failed. Corruption's negative effects on the rule of law, human rights, the economy and the equal treatment of citizens is highlighted, and calls are made for the EU institutions to regularly monitor the way EU and national public funds are used.

On **migration and integration**, the report calls on Member States to respect and implement in full the common European asylum package and the common migration legislation. Asylum seekers should be protected against violence, discrimination and re-traumatisation during the asylum process. The needs of migrants in terms of healthcare, living conditions, family reunification, education and language learning are also stressed.

The report condemns all forms of **discrimination.** It calls on the EU and Member States to urgently

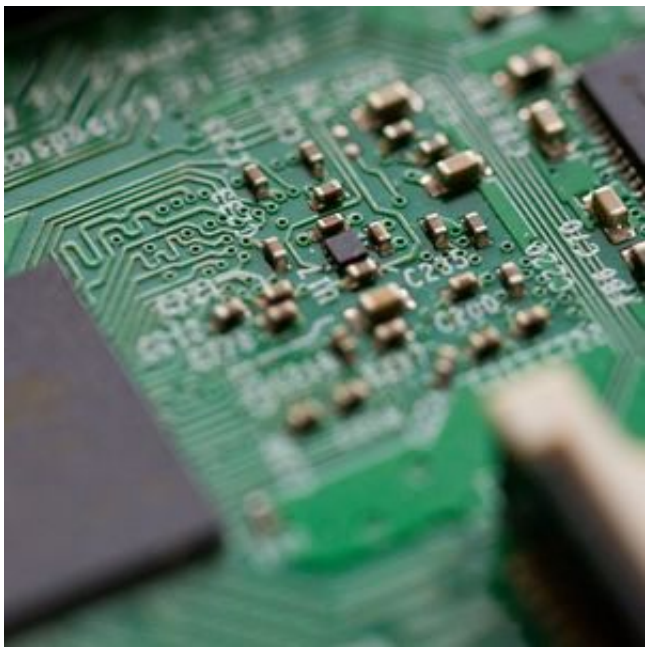
combat violence and discrimination against women and to prosecute the perpetrators. Equally urgent calls are made for further cooperation between EU institutions and Member States to protect children's rights online.

The report recognises the importance of securalism and State neutrality in fighting discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief. Member States are encouraged to adopt laws and policies that combat homophobia and transphobia, and the European Commission is encouraged to appoint EU coordinators on Afrophobia and anti-Romanyism. The need to end discrimination against people with disabilities by granting them equal social and political rights is also highlighted. Finally, the report calls on the Council of the European Union to adopt a position on the proposed 2008 Equal Treatment Directive, which is still pending.

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