Press release | 23.10.2012

Boardroom quotas for women

Further delay on tackling major outstanding barrier to gender equality regrettable

The European Commission today postponed a highly anticipated proposal aimed at introducing a binding EU quota for a 40% representation of women on executive boards. The Greens expressed regret at this latest delay, with Green equality spokesperson **Marije Cornelissen** said:

"It is deeply regrettable that the resistance of some Commissioners has led to the postponement of the proposal for a boardroom quota. Internal infighting has meant we are being left to wait again for this key measure for redressing one of the major outstanding barriers to gender equality in Europe.

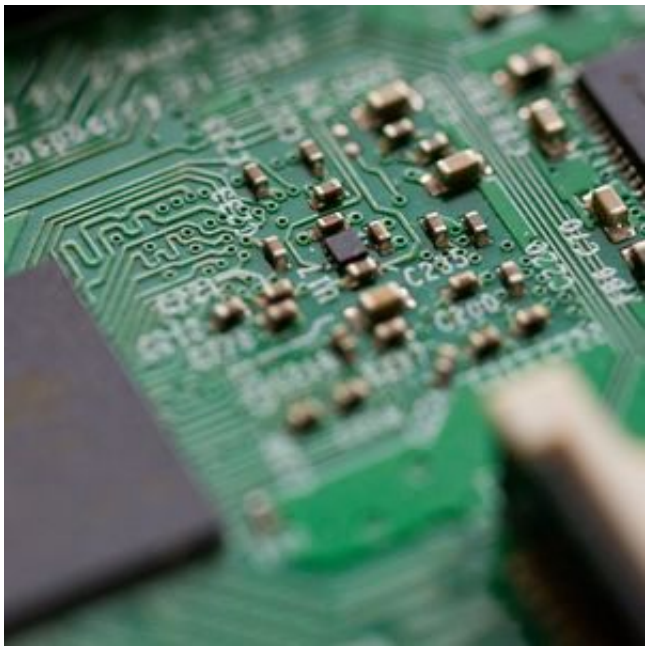
"It is 2012 but the gender representation in senior business management dates back to a bygone era. In spite of all the lip service, women are still grossly under-represented on the boards of large European companies, with the share of women in the highest decision-making bodies of the largest publically-listed companies at a mere 14%. This is not because of a shortage of qualified women, with 60% of university graduates in the EU being women, but because the voluntary approach has unfortunately failed.

"Binding quotas have already proven successful in addressing this equality gap in European countries and it is time we built on this success by introducing an EU-level quota. We hope today's postponement is a temporary blip and that the Commission presents a boardroom quota in the coming weeks. The Greens applaud Commissioner Reding's strong statement that she will not give up. The European Parliament has previously voted in favour of a quota and we will work to ensure it becomes reality once the legislation is proposed."

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