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Press release | 21.01.2021

Gender Equality Strategy must respond to the needs of all women in Europe

Today, Members of the European Parliament will vote on a report on the Gender Equality Strategy, released by the Commission last March. The report welcomes the Commission's strategy, which lays out strategic objectives on how to strengthen women's rights and gender equality in the EU for the coming five years. However, it addresses several shortcomings of the strategy and the fact that it remains vague in terms of concrete measures, and concrete gender equality targets.

Alice Bah Kuhnke MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur for the report and coordinator in the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee, comments:

"We need concrete actions proposed for women and girls who are particularly vulnerable to multiple threats of discrimination and the most marginalised women in society. This report comes at a critical time and sends a strong signal from the Parliament, that the Commission needs to take account of and respond to the needs of all women in Europe.

"The Greens/EFA group have been calling for a stronger connection between climate change and gender for a long time. We know that women and girls are particularly vulnerable to climate change and its dreadful effects. That's why this report calls on the Commission to deliver on the commitment of the renewed Gender Action Plan agreed at COP25, and to introduce an EU gender and climate change focus.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has put women on the forefront and further deepened existing inequalities, in particular for the most marginalised women in society. It's backwards and abhorrent that certain member states, such as Hungary and Poland, have used this crisis as an opportunity to introduce new measures to limit access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, attacking on transgender and intersex peoples' rights and to roll back on work to combat gender based violence."

Background

- The debate can be followed live from shortly after 09:00 here.
- The Greens/EFA have pushed to include intersectionality as a horizontal principle and the need to recognise multiple threats of discrimination, stressing the Commission to establish explicit guidelines on the implementation of such a framework.
- The report highlights gender mainstreaming as a tool to eliminate inequalities, promote equality and combat discrimination and calls on the Commission to include gender mainstreamning in all stages of policy design in all EU policies with an intersectional approach.

- It welcomes the initiative extending the areas of crime to encompass specific forms of gender-based violence in accordance with Article 83(1) of the TFEU but recalls that these new legislative measures should be complementary to the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.
- Emphasises the need to address the backlash against gender equality and women's rights within the EU. Recognises that denial of SRHR services, including legal and safe abortion, is a form of gender based violence.

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Responsible MEPs



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