Press release | 21.11.2012

Gender equality

New coalition aims to ensure gender equality in EU decision-making bodies

A cross-political declaration calling on EU governments, European political parties and EU institutions to take action to achieve gender balance in European decision-making bodies was launched today (1). Over 50 MEPs from five political groups and from all over the EU are signatories to the 50/50 declaration. Commenting at the launch of the initiative, Green MEP **Franziska Branter** stated:

"It is no longer acceptable for more than half the European population to be continually excluded from decision-making on issues that affect their daily lives. This declaration aims to put pressure on EU governments, political parties and institutions to ensure this unacceptable situation is finally redressed.

"Equality between women and men has been enshrined in the EU's treaties since 1957 but it remains unfulfilled. The recent vacancy on the board of the European Central Bank, and the failure to consider a female candidate, demonstrated how difficult it still is to break open male-dominated structures. The 50/50 coalition will increase the pressure on institutions and governments in the run-up to the 2014 European elections and will hopefully get the support of all members of this house."

(1) The declaration calls for the nomination of one female and one male per member state as candidates for the European Commission in 2014, as well as for all top positions in the EU institutions. It also calls for parties to ensure gender parity among their candidates for the 2014 European elections, as well as for political groups in the European Parliament to ensure gender parity in the nomination of chairpersons for the EP committees and Bureau.

The declaration is now open for all MEPs and members of national parliaments to sign and will be handed over to the European Commission and national governments at the beginning of next year.

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