Press release | 20.10.2010

Maternity rules

Greens welcome EP vote to raise EU standards minimum maternity and paternity leave

The European Parliament today voted on a legislative proposal to revise EU rules on the health and safety of pregnant workers, including provisions for minimum maternity and paternity leave (Estrela report). Green MEPs welcomed the vote, which would strengthen EU rules on minimum maternity leave, providing for a minimum of 20 weeks maternity leave. After the vote, Dutch Green MEP **Marije Cornelissen** said:

"We welcome today's vote, which would strengthen EU rules on minimum maternity leave significantly. By supporting ambitious rules MEPs have voted in favour of dismantling the continuing barriers to having children and working.

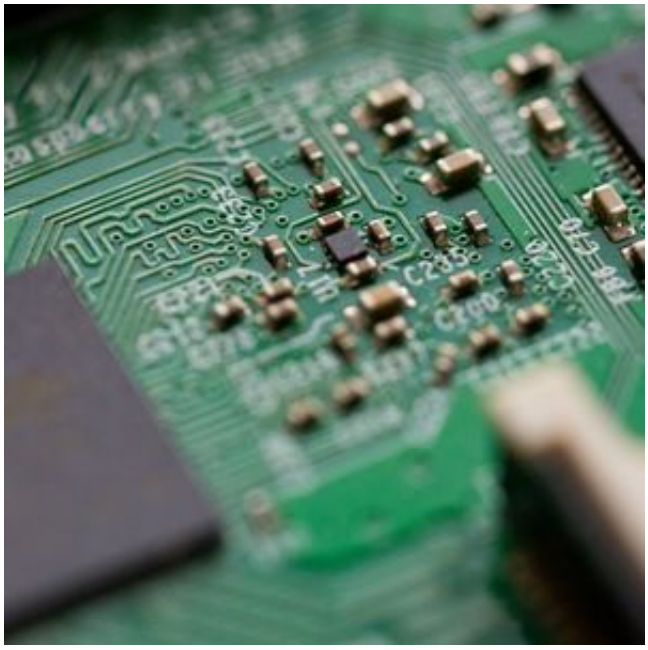
"The EP has voted in favour of a minimum of 20 weeks maternity leave for European mothers at full pay. While the Greens were in favour of a longer period, today's vote would clearly represent a major improvement on the current situation at EU-level. MEPs also endorsed our call for 2 weeks paternity leave, which would be a major step forward for gender equality and labour market participation.

"The ball is now in the court of European governments. We urge the Council to heed this clear call from the European Parliament for better protection of pregnant women. In that way, women will have proper maternity and paternity leave regardless of the EU country they work in."

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