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Press release | 06.05.2009

Parental leave

Conservatives and Liberals play political hide-and-seek on maternity leave vote

Today a majority led by the conservative EPP-ED group (supported by ALDE) successfully postponed a vote on the Estrela report, which relates to maternity and paternity leave, as well as improved protection against workplace discrimination for working mothers. The report was previously adopted by Parliament's women's rights and gender equality committee.

Raül Romeva, Green MEP and Vice-President of the women's rights and gender equality committee, commented

"Conservatives and Liberals in the European Parliament apparently don't think it is a priority to support mothers and fathers and address their difficulties in reconciling work and family responsibilities.

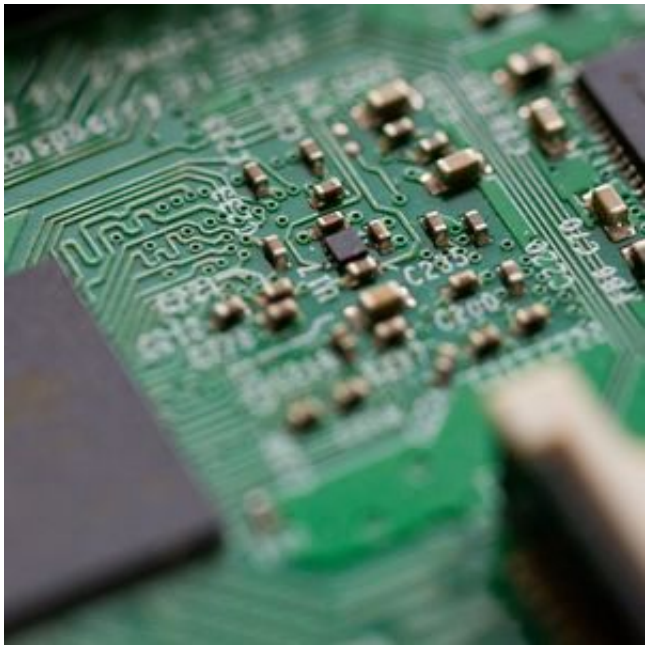
Given that Conservatives in particular like to preach family values, they were strangely reticent to vote today on health and safety measures for pregnant workers and for working mothers who have recently given birth. Perhaps their voting position would simply be too embarrassing in the spotlight of the current European election campaign.

Parliament has passed up an opportunity to ensure minimum maternity leave of 24 weeks, in line with recommendations by the ILO and WHO. I hope that voters will be aware of where the political groups truly stand on family issues when they go to the polls next month."

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