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Press release | 14.03.2017

Stalled progress shows need for greater effort at EU level

Gender equality

MEPs have today backed a report from Greens/EFA rapporteur Ernest Urtasun on equality between women and men in the EU. The report forms the European Parliament's response to the European Commission's report on progress on gender equality in the EU for 2014-15. For the first time, the report includes a statistical annexe, which shows that progress on many measures has stalled in recent years.

Commenting after the vote, Greens/EFA member of the Women's Rights and Gender Equality committee **Ernest Urtasun** said:

"Equal pay between women and men in the EU was enshrined in the Treaty of Rome but 60 years on it is still not a reality. On many measures, including pay, pensions and employment opportunities, progress towards equality in the EU has either stalled or gone into reverse. There is a clear need for gender equality to be moved up the political agenda and given the priority status it needs.

"We need better coordination of the tools and mechanisms already available at EU level to help ensure a more coherent and evidence based EU policy response to gender equality challenges. With austerity economics hitting women the hardest, we also need a change of political direction, and fresh ideas at EU level.

"It is completely unacceptable that all new gender equality directives are currently blocked by either the European Council or the Commission and that the EU has not had a strategy for gender equality since 2015. We need urgent action to ensure EU policy will deliver gender equality. We are calling for a work life balance package with new directives on paternity and care leave, an end to the blockade of the directive to get more women on boards, and a new strategy with legislation for combating gender based violence."

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Responsible MEPs



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