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[Equality between women and men in the EU in 2014-2015](#)

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► **European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2017 on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2014-2015 (2016/2249(INI))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 2 and Article 3(3), second subparagraph, of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR),
- having regard to the United Nations Convention of 18 December 1979 on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),
- having regard to Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA^(u),
- having regard to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women on 15 September 1995 and to the subsequent outcome documents adopted at the United Nations Beijing+5 (2000), Beijing +10 (2005) and Beijing +15 (2010) special sessions,
- having regard to the 1949 UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others,
- having regard to Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA^(u),
- having regard to its position of 20 October 2010 on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 92/85/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (Maternity Leave Directive)^(u),
- having regard to Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation^(u),
- having regard to Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services^(u),
- having regard to Council Directive 2013/62/EU of 17 December 2013 amending Directive 2010/18/EU implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC, following the amendment of the status of Mayotte with regard to the European Union^(u),
- having regard to the EU directives from 1975 onwards on aspects of equal treatment for women and men (Directive 2010/41/EU^(u), Directive 2010/18/EU^(u), Directive 2006/54/EC, Directive 2004/113/EC, Directive 92/85/EEC^(u), Directive 86/613/EEC^(uu) and Directive 79/7/EEC^(uu)),
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 14 March 2012 for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock

exchanges and related measures (Women on boards directive) ([COM\(2012\)0614](#)),

– having regard to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), and its article 3 defining ‘gender’ as ‘the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men’,

– having regard to the Commission proposal of 4 March 2016 for a Council decision on the signing, on behalf of the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence ([COM\(2016\)0111](#)),

– having regard to the Council conclusions of 16 June 2016 on gender equality (00337/2016),

– having regard to the Council conclusions of 5-6 June 2014 on preventing and combating all forms of violence against women and girls, including female genital mutilation (09543/2014),

– having regard to the Council conclusions of 7 December 2015 on equality between women and men in the field of decision-making (14327/2015),

– having regard to the Trio Presidency Declaration of 7 December 2015 signed by the Netherlands, Slovakia and Malta,

– having regard to the Commission communication of 3 March 2010 entitled ‘EUROPE 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ ([COM\(2010\)2020](#)),

– having regard to the Commission staff working document of 3 March 2015 entitled ‘2014 Report on equality between women and men’ (SWD(2015)0049),

– having regard to the Commission staff working document of 4 March 2016 entitled ‘2015 Report on equality between women and men’ (SWD(2016)0054),

– having regard to the Commission staff working document of 3 December 2015 entitled ‘Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019’ (SWD(2015)0278),

– having regard to its resolutions of 10 February 2010 on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2009⁴², of 8 March 2011 on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2010⁴³, of 13 March 2012 on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2011⁴⁴ and of 10 March 2015 on progress on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2013⁴⁵,

– having regard to the Commission communication of 25 November 2013 entitled ‘Towards the elimination of female genital mutilation’ ([COM\(2013\)0833](#)) and to its resolution of 6 February 2014⁴⁶ on the elimination of female genital mutilation,

– having regard to the results of the European Union lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (EU LGBT) survey carried out by the Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and published in May 2013,

– having regard to the FRA report entitled ‘Violence against women – an EU-wide survey. Main results’, published in March 2014,

– having regard to the FRA report entitled ‘The fundamental rights situation of intersex people’, published in May 2015,

– having regard to the report of the European Network of Equality Bodies (EQUINET) entitled ‘The Persistence of Discrimination, Harassment and Inequality for Women. The Work of Equality Bodies informing a new

European Commission Strategy for Gender Equality’, published in 2015,

– having regard to the reports of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) entitled ‘The gender employment gap: challenges and solutions’ (2016), ‘Social partners and gender equality in Europe’ (2014), ‘Developments in working life in Europe: EurWORK annual review’ (2014 and 2015), and the Sixth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) (2016),

– having regard to its resolution of 3 February 2016 on the new Strategy for gender equality and women’s rights post-2015⁽¹⁷⁾ and to its resolution of 9 June 2015 on the EU Strategy for equality between women and men post 2015⁽¹⁸⁾,

– having regard to its resolution of 25 February 2014 on combating violence against women⁽¹⁹⁾,

– having regard to its resolution of 9 September 2015 on empowering girls through education in the EU⁽²⁰⁾,

– having regard to its resolution of 8 March 2016 on the situation of women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU⁽²¹⁾,

– having regard to its resolution of 28 April 2016 on women domestic workers and carers in the EU⁽²²⁾,

– having regard to its resolution of 26 May 2016 on poverty: a gender perspective⁽²³⁾,

– having regard to its resolution of 13 September 2016 on creating labour market conditions favourable for work-life balance⁽²⁴⁾,

– having regard to its resolution of 15 September 2016 on application of Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation (‘Employment Equality Directive’)⁽²⁵⁾,

– having regard to its resolution of 8 March 2016 on Gender Mainstreaming in the work of the European Parliament⁽²⁶⁾,

– having regard to its resolution of 12 May 2016 on implementation of Directive 2011/36/EU of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims from a gender perspective⁽²⁷⁾,

– having regard to the Commission progress report of 3 June 2013 on the Barcelona objectives entitled ‘The development of childcare facilities for young children in Europe with a view to sustainable and inclusive growth’⁽²⁸⁾,

– having regard to the Commission Recommendation of 20 February 2013 on ‘Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage’⁽²⁹⁾,

– having regard to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)’s 2015 Gender Equality Index, and the ‘Beijing +20: 4th Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States’ and other reports by EIGE,

– having regard to the study of the European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination entitled ‘A comparative analysis of gender equality law in Europe 2015’ of January 2016,

– having regard to the agreed conclusions on ‘the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality’ by the 48th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CWS) in March 2004⁽³⁰⁾,

– having regard to the document entitled ‘Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development', adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, and the goals and targets on gender equality, women's rights and the empowerment of women included in that document,

– having regard to the Commission statistical report of April 2014 entitled 'Single parents and employment in Europe'⁽¹⁰⁾,

– having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality ([A8-0046/2017](#)),

A. whereas the EIGE 2015 Gender Equality Index shows only marginal improvements: the EU remains only halfway towards achieving gender equality, with the overall score since 2005 having risen from 51,3 to 52,9 out of 100; whereas faster progress is needed if the EU is to meet the targets of Europe 2020;

B. whereas in recent years some Member States have seen a substantial increase in civic and political movements to the detriment of equal rights for women and men, and which even challenge the overall need for gender equality policies; whereas this backlash against gender equality aims at reinforcing traditional gender roles and at challenging existing and future achievements in the area of gender equality, women's rights and the rights of LGBTI people;

C. whereas equality between women and men is a fundamental right enshrined in the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights; whereas the European Union's objective in this field is likewise to ensure equal opportunities and treatment for men and women and to combat all discrimination based on gender;

D. whereas in 2015 the employment rate for women reached an all-time high of 64,5 %, but remained well below that for men, which stood at 75,6 %; whereas, deplorably, women are four times more likely than men to engage in and remain in part-time work, often involuntarily; whereas many young people remain poor despite working, especially in Greece, Spain, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Portugal and Slovakia;

E. whereas the female unemployment rate is underestimated, since many women are not registered as unemployed, particularly those who live in rural or remote areas, those who help out in family businesses and many of those who devote themselves exclusively to household tasks and childcare; whereas this situation also creates a disparity in terms of access to public services (benefits, pensions, maternity leave, sick leave, access to social security, etc.);

F. whereas Eurofound's report on the gender employment gap estimates that the gender employment gap is costing the EU around EUR 370 billion per year, or 2,8 % of EU GDP⁽¹¹⁾;

G. whereas, in those countries affected by the economic crisis and budget cuts, women have been disproportionately affected, particularly young women, elderly women, single mothers and women suffering from multiple discrimination, and whereas this has led them into poverty and social marginalisation by increasingly excluding them from the labour market; whereas cutbacks in public care and health services leads to a transfer of the responsibility for care from society back to households, mostly affecting women;

H. whereas the feminisation of poverty persists in the EU, and whereas the very high proportions of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion among women are closely linked to budget cuts to public services, such as healthcare, education, social services and welfare benefits; whereas these policies lead to greater job instability, particularly because of the increase in involuntary part-time work and temporary contracts;

I. whereas in 2015 three quarters of household chores and two thirds of parental care tasks were performed by working women, who therefore overwhelmingly bore a double burden of responsibilities; whereas women in general take overwhelmingly greater responsibility for parental care tasks and household chores; whereas traditional gender roles and stereotypes continue to have a strong influence on role distribution between women and men in the home, in the workplace and in society in general; whereas such a traditional division of

responsibilities tends to perpetuate the status quo, limiting the employment opportunities and personal development of women and leaving them with little time for social and community inclusion or economic participation; whereas an equal sharing of ‘unpaid work’, such as care provision and domestic responsibilities between women and men, is a precondition for women’s economic independence in the long term;

J. whereas certain family-related types of leave still continue to be grounds for discrimination and stigmatisation for both women and men, despite the existing policy framework and legislation at EU and national level, and whereas this particularly affects women as the main carers using family-related leave;

K. whereas close to a quarter of EU Member States have no statutory provisions for paternity leave, and whereas a number of those that do have such provisions allow men to take leave for only one, two or several days; whereas in eight Member States parental leave is not accompanied by any pay, while the average take-up of parental leave by fathers is poor, with only 10 % of fathers taking at least one day of leave and 97 % of women using the parental leave that is available for both parents; whereas the promotion of a greater uptake of parental leave and paternity leave is essential to achieving gender equality; whereas the Eurofound study⁽³³⁾ illustrated aspects that influence fathers’ take-up rate of parental leave, namely: the level of compensation, the flexibility of the leave system, the availability of information, the availability and flexibility of childcare facilities and the fear of exclusion from the labour market due to taking leave;

L. whereas one precondition for women’s active inclusion in the labour market is the availability of quality accessible and affordable care facilities and services for children, elderly relatives and other dependent family members; whereas the Barcelona objectives are an excellent tool for achieving real gender equality, and whereas all Member States must set out to achieve them as soon as possible; whereas as a result of a lack of high-quality childcare facilities and services at affordable prices, mothers are increasingly forced to choose between working part-time and giving up their jobs to take care of their children, with repercussions on the family income and pension savings;

M. whereas access to training and the fundamental human right to education of girls and women are important European values and essential elements for the empowerment of girls and women on the social, cultural and professional levels, as well as for the full enjoyment of all other social, economic, cultural and political rights and subsequently the prevention of violence against women and girls; whereas free, compulsory universal education is a *sine qua non* for guaranteeing equal opportunities for all, as it should be available to all children, without any discrimination and regardless of their residence status; whereas the fight against gender inequality starts at pre-school age and requires the constant pedagogical supervision of curricula, development aims and learning outcomes;

N. whereas gender equality is the responsibility of all individuals in society and requires the active contribution of both women and men; whereas authorities should commit to the development of education campaigns directed at men and younger generations, with the aim of involving men and boys as partners, gradually preventing and eliminating all forms of gender-based violence and promoting or empowering women;

O. whereas, despite the fact that women attain on average a higher level of education than men, the EU-average gender pay gap remained at 16,1 % in 2014, though there are significant differences between the Member States;

P. whereas horizontal and vertical gender segregation in employment is still a prevalent phenomenon, caused among other aspect by the fact that less value is attributed to jobs considered ‘feminine’ than to those considered ‘masculine’, by the persistent glass ceilings, which prevent women from reaching the highest and best-paid positions and by the over-representation of women in part-time work, which is less well paid than full-time work; whereas, although women match or even outnumber men at graduate levels, the impact of gender stereotypes on education, training and decisions made by students at school can influence choices throughout their lives and subsequently has significant implications for the labour market; whereas stereotypes widely conveyed by society relating to the incompatibility of women having children and full-time employment leave women in a disadvantaged position and may deter young women from proceeding with higher education or making career investments;

Q. whereas Eurofound’s Working Condition Survey composite indicator of paid and unpaid working time shows

that, overall, women's working hours are longer when the paid and unpaid working hours are computed⁽⁴⁴⁾;

R. whereas in sectors relating to, but not limited to, goods, services or agriculture, there is uneven access to economic and financial resources such as assets, capital, productive resources and credit between men and women;

S. whereas the pension gap still persists in the EU and stood at an overwhelming 40,2 % in 2014; whereas it is the result of disadvantages accrued by women over time, such as lack of access to the many financial resources, such as benefits and pension systems, that come with full-time employment, and for which many women are ineligible as they tend to stay in part-time employment or face job discontinuity due to care responsibilities;

T. whereas some Member States in the EU maintain the practice of non-individualisation of tax and social security systems; whereas this situation may make women dependent on their spouses, as they may have been granted only derived rights through their relationship to men;

U. whereas in the past decade the overall proportion of women in national/federal parliaments has increased by only around 6 %, reaching 29 % in 2015;

V. whereas in 2015 only 6,5 % of presidents and 4,3 % of CEOs in the largest publicly listed companies on the stock exchange were women;

W. whereas, despite the EU's commitment to gender equality in decision-making, the management boards of EU agencies are seriously lacking in gender balance, and show persisting patterns of gender segregation, whereby on average 71 % of management-board members are men, and only one in three management boards are chaired by a woman, and out of 42 Executive Directors in EU Agencies, only 6 are women;

X. whereas more than half of female murder victims are killed by an intimate partner, relative or family member⁽⁴⁵⁾; whereas 33 % of women in the EU have experienced physical and or sexual violence and 55 % have been sexually harassed, 32 % in the workplace; whereas women are particularly vulnerable to sexual, physical and online violence, cyber bullying and stalking;

Y. whereas violence against women is one of the world's most widespread human rights violations, affecting all levels of society, regardless of age, education, income, social position and country of origin or residence, and representing a major hindrance to equality between women and men; whereas the phenomenon of femicide is not decreasing in Member States;

Z. whereas population surveys on attitudes to violence against women show a worrying prevalence of the tendency to blame the victim, which might be one of the effects of patriarchy; whereas strong condemnation of such behaviour by public authorities and other institutions is often missing;

AA. whereas digital modes of communication have contributed to the prevalence of hate speech and threats against women, with 18 % of women in Europe having suffered some form of online harassment since adolescence and nine million victims of online violence in Europe; whereas there is a lack of responsiveness by the justice system towards violence against women online; whereas abusers and haters are very rarely reported, investigated, prosecuted and sentenced;

AB. whereas 23 % of lesbian women and 35 % of transgender persons had been physically/sexually attacked or threatened with violence at home or elsewhere (in the street, on public transport, at the workplace, etc.) at least once in the last five years;

AC. whereas the EU LGBT survey found that lesbian, bisexual and transgender women face a huge risk of discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity; whereas gender-based discrimination intersects with other discrimination on grounds of race and ethnicity, religion, disability, health, gender identity,

sexual orientation and/or socio-economic conditions;

AD. whereas conditions are worsening for certain groups of women who frequently face an accumulation of multiple difficulties and risks and high levels of discrimination;

AE. whereas in 2015 the EU experienced an unprecedented increase in the number of refugees and asylum seekers on its territory; whereas, according to the UNHCR, women and children represented more than the half of these refugees and asylum seekers, and whereas instances of violence and abuse, including sexual violence, against refugee women and children, have been reported throughout their journey, including in overcrowded reception centres in the EU;

AF. whereas women and girls make up 80 % of registered victims of trafficking in human beings⁽³⁶⁾; whereas identifying victims remains a challenge, and whereas victim support and protection needs to be reinforced and all counter-trafficking efforts must contain a gender-sensitive aspect;

AG. whereas one of the main aims of human trafficking is sexual exploitation, and whereas the women who fall victim to it are forced to live a life of imprisonment and tyranny through daily violence, both physical and psychological in nature;

AH. whereas sexual and reproductive health and rights are fundamental human rights and an essential element of gender equality and self-determination, and whereas they should be included in the EU Health Strategy;

AI. whereas women's health should never be put at risk because of conscientious objection or personal beliefs;

AJ. whereas application of EU gender equality law in the Member States has been found to carry specific problems related to the transposition and application of the relevant directives, such as substantive deficiencies in legislation and its inconsistent application by national courts, but importantly also a general lack of awareness about equality principles and law⁽³⁷⁾;

AK. whereas EU gender equality directives in particular are not properly implemented in a number of Member States which do not protect transgender people against discrimination in the areas of access to employment and access to goods and services;

AL. whereas institutional mechanisms for gender equality are often marginalised in national governmental structures, split into different policy areas, hampered by complex and expanding mandates, lacking adequate staff, training, data and sufficient resources, and experience insufficient support from political leadership⁽³⁸⁾;

AM. whereas the persistent problem of a lack of comprehensive, reliable, gender-disaggregated data creates ambiguities and distorts the picture of the situation of gender equality, in particular in terms of violence against women and gender-based violence; whereas collecting such data would not only provide a clear picture of the situation, but would also draw attention to issues of immediate concern;

AN. whereas social partners have a key role to play in achieving equality targets because of their critical role in shaping labour market and social conditions through their involvement in policymaking and collective bargaining at various levels, although it is clear that the specific role they play in different countries and industrial relations systems depends strongly on national traditions and organisational strength⁽³⁹⁾;

AO. whereas, as the 2016 Eurobarometer suggests, 55 % of Europeans would like the EU to intervene more in the area of equal treatment between men and women; whereas the Commission's obligation to achieve gender equality in accordance with the Treaties is independent of polls;

I. Is deeply concerned that the EU remains only halfway towards achieving gender equality, according to the 2015 EIGE Gender Equality Index; strongly regrets the fact that the status and profile of gender equality and the combating of gender discrimination shows signs of decreasing in importance, being marginalised as a political

goal and undermined as a policy area, in particular in the context of a backlash across Europe against the rights of women, LGBTI persons and sexual and reproductive health rights and deems it necessary to consider the reasons behind this trend and to review the current strategies, tools and approaches promoted in the area of gender equality;

2. Points out that the EU is obliged to combat social exclusion and discrimination under the TEU and that the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) enshrines the EU's commitment to eliminating inequality and promoting equality between men and women; stresses that the principle of gender equality does not preclude the maintenance or adoption of measures which provide concrete benefits for the under-represented gender, as laid down in Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights;

3. Calls on the Commission to mainstream gender equality into budgets and policy-making, and into the implementation of EU measures and programmes, and to carry out gender impact assessments when setting up any new policy to help ensure a more coherent and evidence-based EU policy response to gender equality challenges; calls on the Member States to undertake corresponding measures at the national level;

4. Asks the Commission for a greater assessment of and measures to address and take steps to stop the impact of those public spending cuts which are having negative effects on women's rights and gender equality in the Member States;

5. Regrets the absence of gender mainstreaming in the Europe 2020 strategy, and calls for the inclusion of overall and stronger gender mainstreaming therein, addressing the structural causes of female poverty, in particular in the framework of formulating the country-specific recommendations in the context of the European semester, and for specific policy guidance on reducing gender inequalities to be included in the annual growth survey;

6. Notes the intersectionality between gender and other grounds for discrimination and the disproportionate impact of multiple discrimination on women; maintains that poverty among women, in particular among older women, single mothers, women victims of gender-based violence, women with disabilities, migrant women, women refugees and asylum seekers, and women from minorities, needs to be tackled as a matter of urgency; encourages the Member States to work with regional and local authorities, law enforcement bodies, national equality bodies and civil society organisations to increase monitoring of the intersectionality between gender and different grounds for discrimination, and to implement more effective inclusion strategies by making efficient use of social policy resources, not least the European Social Fund and the Structural Funds;

7. Supports the Council's call for a new Commission initiative setting out a strategy for gender equality 2016-2020, inclusive of transgender and intersex people, and for the status of its strategic engagement on gender equality to be enhanced, which should be closely linked to the Europe 2020 strategy and take into account the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to strengthen policies and increase investment supporting female employment in quality jobs across all sectors and to take steps to combat precarious forms of work;

9. Encourages the Member States to promote initiatives, measures and actions to assist and advise women who decide to become entrepreneurs;

10. Calls on the Commission to bring together a gender perspective with macro-economic policy and to impose innovative measures in order to improve equal work opportunities and care responsibilities for both genders;

11. Notes that equal participation by women and men in the labour market and better and fairer wages for women would not only increase the economic independence of women, but also significantly increase the economic potential of the EU, while consolidating its fair and inclusive nature; points out that, according to OECD projections, total convergence in participation rates would result in a 12,4 % increase in per capita GDP by 2030;

12. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to monitor and take action against violations of the rights of workers, especially female workers, who increasingly work in low-paid jobs and are the victims of

discrimination, as well as to adopt policies and take measures to identify, protect against, provide information about and tackle the phenomenon of mobbing in the workplace, including the harassment of pregnant employees or any disadvantage experienced after returning from maternity leave or when applying for jobs; calls on the Commission and the Member States to provide both gender and parenthood disaggregated data regarding pay and pension gaps;

13. Emphasises that education is an important tool for enabling women to participate fully in social and economic development; stresses that lifelong learning measures are key to providing women with skills that can enable them to return to employment or improve their employment, income and working conditions; calls on the Commission to promote initiatives offering support in implementing professional education programmes for women, encouraging them to attend higher education in the fields of science, technology and IT, developing training programmes on gender equality for education professionals, and preventing stereotypes from being passed on through curricula and pedagogical material; calls on universities and research institutions to adopt gender equality policies, by following the guidelines developed by EIGE, in cooperation with the Commission ('GEAR tool – Gender Equality in Academia and Research');

14. Calls on all Member States to tackle the gender equality issue, sexism and gender stereotypes in their education systems at all levels and to ensure that the goals of their education systems include education in the respect for fundamental rights and freedoms and in equal rights and opportunities for women and men, and that their quality principles include elimination of the obstacles to genuine equality between women and men and the promotion of full equality between them;

15. Calls on the Commission, in close coordination with the Member States, to put forward, an ambitious, comprehensive package of legislative and non-legislative measures regarding work-life balance as part of the Commission Work Programme 2017, taking into account the announced European pillar of social rights, and including the revision of existing Maternity Leave Directive 92/85/EEC and Parental Leave Directive 2010/18/EU as well as the proposals for directives on paternity leave and carer's leave, encouraging the equal take-up of leave arrangements by men and women across all categories of workers;

16. Notes with appreciation that in 2014-2015 a number of Member States changed their policy and/or legislation on parental leave, introducing the non-transferability of the right to take the leave, the mandatory nature of paternity leave, longer paternity leave and/or bonuses if leave is shared between parents or equally shared between parents, which strengthens their rights as parents, ensures a greater degree of equality between women and men and a more appropriate distribution of care and domestic responsibilities, and enhances women's opportunities for participating fully in the labour market; calls on the Commission and the Member States to take measures to encourage men to share equally in domestic responsibilities and in caring for children and other dependants;

17. Invites Eurofound to develop further its activities in monitoring employment quality and working life through its European Working Conditions Survey, based on its concept of job quality as comprising earning, prospects, working-time quality, skills use and discretion, social environment, physical risk and work intensity; invites Eurofound furthermore to develop its research on those policies, social partner agreements and companies' practices which are supportive of a better work-life balance, as well as to develop its research on how dual worker households manage their working time arrangements and how best to support them;

18. Calls on the Member States that have not yet done so to move towards the individualisation of rights in social equity policy, particularly in tax systems, in order to eliminate financial incentives for the spouse earning less to withdraw from the labour market or to work part-time;

19. Congratulates the Member States which have achieved both Barcelona objectives; encourages Portugal, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Finland, Italy, Malta and Estonia to achieve the other target, and calls on Poland, Croatia and Romania, where both targets remain far from being achieved, to step up their efforts in providing formal child care in order to contribute to striking a better balance between the private and professional lives of workers; points out that current findings strongly indicate that investing in care for children and the elderly will improve the participation of women in the full-time workforce and allow them to enjoy greater local and social

inclusion;

20. Reasserts its call on the Commission and the Member States to strive towards establishing a Child Guarantee, which would ensure that every European child at risk of poverty has access to free healthcare, free education, free childcare, decent housing and adequate nutrition; emphasises that such a policy must address the situation of women and girls, particularly in vulnerable and marginalised communities; notes that the Youth Guarantee Initiative must include a gender perspective;

21. Regrets the persistence of the gender pay gap and gender pension gap, and urges the Commission, the Member States and social partners to take urgent action to close the gap;

22. Observes that the first step in combating the gender pay gap is the establishment of transparency on pay levels and notes with enthusiasm that a number of companies have instituted the practice of analysing and publishing the difference in pay between their male and female employees; invites all employers and trade union movements to draft and implement operative, specific job evaluation tools to help determine equal pay for equal work and work of equal value; invites the Member States furthermore to carry out salary- and wage-mapping on a regular basis, to publish the data and to ask companies to introduce internal mechanisms for the detection of pay gaps;

23. Welcomes the fact that the Commission considers ‘equal pay for equal work or work of equal value’ to be one of the key areas for action; and calls in this context for the recast of the 2006 Equal Treatment Directive;

24. Condemns the fact that in more than half of the Member States the gender pension gap has increased; encourages Cyprus, Germany and the Netherlands to reduce the difference between male and female pensions, which is almost 50 %; calls on Malta, Spain, Belgium, Ireland, Greece, Italy and Austria to close the gender gap in pension coverage, as between 11 % and 36 % of women in those countries have no access to a pension;

25. Congratulates the Government of Sweden on achieving parity in representation in terms of gender, and Slovenia and France on achieving virtual parity, and encourages Hungary, Slovakia and Greece, which have formed governments without any women,⁽⁴⁹⁾ to ensure that women are sufficiently represented at all levels of political and economic decision-making; calls on the Member States to guarantee gender parity in high-level positions in their governments, public institutions and bodies, and on electoral lists, in order to ensure that there is equal representation in local councils and in regional and national parliaments, as well as in the European Parliament; stresses that various studies have shown that appropriate legislative measures could result in rapid changes to the gender balance in the political sphere; shares the Commission’s opinion that, if they are to be effective, quotas should be accompanied by legislation concerning the order of candidate lists and appropriate sanctions in the event of violation;

26. Emphasises that the clear under-representation of women in elected and nominated political positions at EU and Member State level is a democratic deficit that undermines the legitimacy of decision-making at both EU and national level;

27. Calls for the EU institutions to do everything in their power to guarantee gender equality in the College of Commissioners and in high-level positions in all EU institutions, agencies, institutes and bodies;

28. Observes with concern that in 2015 the majority of countries remained below the EU average as regards the level of female representation on boards of large listed companies in comparison with 2010; appreciates, however, the overall trend of progress, in particular in France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Belgium and Denmark;

29. Reiterates its call on the Council for a swift adoption of the directive on gender balance among non-executive directors of listed companies (women on boards directive), as an important first step towards equal representation in the public and private sectors; notes that progress is most tangible (from 11,9 % in 2010 to 22,7 % in 2015) in Member States in which binding legislation on quotas for boards has been adopted⁽⁴⁹⁾;

30. Deplores the fact that only one Member State has achieved gender parity in top higher education establishment posts, while welcoming the fact that female representation in said positions has generally improved;

31. Urges the Member States to prevent and respond to all types of violence against women and gender-based violence and to put in place further prevention strategies, to make specialised support and protection services widely available so that all victims can access them, and to focus special attention on gender-specific aspects of victims' rights, including when related to a victim's gender identity and gender expression, when reporting on the implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive in 2017; calls on the Council to activate the 'passerelle clause' by adopting a unanimous decision adding gender-based violence to the areas of crime listed in Article 83(1) TFEU; calls on the Commission to launch a European register of European protection orders to complement EU legislation on victim protection;

32. Strongly reiterates that gender-based forms of violence and discrimination, including, but not limited to, rape and sexual violence, sexual harassment, female genital mutilation, arranged marriages, and domestic violence, grossly undermine human dignity; calls on the Commission and the Member States to introduce zero-tolerance policies in relation to all forms of violence, including domestic violence, where victims are reluctant to report violence because it is inflicted by partners or members of their own family; urges Member States to give visibility to the situation of women with disabilities as victims of domestic violence, who often cannot escape from the abusive relationship;

33. Welcomes the progress of the Member States in signing the Istanbul Convention, the first legally binding instrument on preventing and combating violence against women at international level; and urges those 14 Member States that have not yet ratified it to do so without delay; welcomes the Commission's proposal from March 2016 on the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention; calls on the Council and the Commission to speed up negotiations on signing and concluding the Istanbul Convention and supports its accession without reservation and on a broad basis; calls, in addition, on the Commission to include a definition of gender-based violence in line with the provisions of Directive 2012/29/EU and to present as soon as possible, a comprehensive European strategy for preventing and combating gender-based violence, which should contain a binding legislative act;

34. Commends the practice of Eurostat and national judicial authorities and police in cooperating in data exchanges in order to shed light on the deplorable practice of gender-based violence in the EU, and invites them to make this a continuous practice by monitoring, in cooperation with EIGE, the occurrence of crime committed against women on an annual basis;

35. Underlines the close links between stereotypes and the markedly growing number of harassment cases against women and sexism on the internet and on social media, which also bring about new forms of violence against women and girls, such as cyber-bullying, cyber-harassment, the use of degrading images online and the distribution on social media of private photos and videos without the consent of the people involved; highlights the need to fight these from an early age; underlines that such situations may emerge from a lack of protection from public authorities and other institutions, which are supposed to create a gender-neutral environment and denounce sexism;

36. Urges the Commission and the Member States to put in place all legal and juridical measures to fight against the phenomenon of violence against women online; in particular calls for the EU and the Member States to combine forces through a comprehensive European strategy for preventing and combating gender-based violence with a view to creating a framework recognising the new forms of online violence as a criminal offence, and putting in place psychological support for women and girls who are the victims of violence online; calls for a gender impact assessment of the EU Cybersecurity Strategy and the European Cybercrime Centre (Europol) in order for these issues to be included and for a gender perspective to be adopted in their work;

37. Calls, once again, on the Commission to set up a European monitoring centre on gender violence (along the lines of the current European Institute for Gender Equality), to be led by a European coordinator for the prevention of violence against women and girls;

38. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to include measures to protect women and LGBTI people

against harassment in the workplace; calls on the Commission to revise the current EU Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law⁽⁴²⁾, in order to include sexism, bias crime and incitement to hatred on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics;

39. Condemns the fact that genital ‘normalisation’ surgery still takes place on intersex infants in most EU countries, despite not being medically necessary; urges the Member States to avoid such medical treatments without the free and informed consent of the person concerned;

40. Notes that in Malta and Greece intersex people are protected against discrimination on the grounds of sex characteristics; calls on Member States to include the grounds of gender identity and sex characteristics within their gender equality legislation when implementing EU gender equality directives;

41. Highlights that gendered forms of violence and discrimination, including, but not limited to, rape and sexual violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, domestic violence, so-called honour crimes and state-sanctioned gender discrimination, constitute persecution and should be considered as valid reasons for seeking asylum in the EU; supports the creation of safe and legal entry channels to the EU; recalls that women and girls are particularly vulnerable to exploitation by smugglers;

42. Repeats its calls on the Member States to put an immediate end to the detention of children, pregnant and nursing women and survivors of rape, sexual violence and trafficking, and for appropriate psychological and health support to be made available, provided by gender-appropriate professionals such as psychologists, social workers, nurses and doctors who have been suitably trained for such emergencies; recalls that timely support for refugee victims of violence based on gender or (perceived) sexual orientation or gender identity should be provided at all stages of the migration process, including immediate relocation in case their safety cannot be guaranteed, quality mental health support and immediate gender identity recognition for the duration of asylum procedures as a violence-prevention measure;

43. Reiterates that the gender dimension of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, which is now one of the most profitable activities of organised crime, must be consistently monitored in the implementation of EU anti-trafficking legislation, and repeats its call on the Commission to continue to monitor this in its assessment of Member States’ compliance with and implementation of the directive, while ensuring that the reporting obligations and timetable as outlined in the directive are met;

44. Calls on the Commission to offer both financial and logistical support to Member States involved in combating human trafficking, in particular Italy and Greece, which, in the wake of the current migrant crisis, have found themselves on the front line in tackling this emergency;

45. Calls for efforts at national and EU level to combat the persistence of stereotypes and gender-based discrimination to be stepped up, through awareness-raising campaigns which focus on the non-stereotypical portrayal of women and girls and men and boys and are targeted at all levels of society; calls on the Member States to take positive initiatives such as strategies to encourage women to choose careers and professions in which women are under-represented and men to take on a fair share of family and domestic tasks or increasing understanding among men about how violence, including trafficking for the purposes of commercialised sexual exploitation, forced marriages and forced labour, harms women, men and children and undermines gender equality, as well as taking measures to reduce the demand for trafficked women and children through information campaigns;

46. Reiterates that women must have control over their sexual and reproductive health and rights; calls on all the Member States to guarantee ready access for women to voluntary family planning and the full range of reproductive and sexual health services, including contraception and safe and legal abortion; calls on the Member States and the Commission to undertake public awareness actions with the objective of making men and women fully aware of their rights and responsibilities when it comes to sexual and reproductive matters;

47. Highlights the rising trend of the excessive use of conscientious objection clauses, resulting in hindered

access to sexual and reproductive health services; calls on the Member States to ensure that conscientious objection clauses do not prevent patients from accessing lawful medical healthcare;

48. Considers that the denial of life-saving sexual and reproductive health services, including safe abortion, amounts to a grave breach of fundamental human rights;

49. Stresses the importance of active prevention, education and information policies for teenagers, young people and adults to ensure that EU citizens benefit from good sexual and reproductive health and avoid sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies;

50. Encourages the competent authorities in the Member States to promote gender equality in their comprehensive sex and relationship education programmes, including teaching girls and boys about relationships based on consent, respect and reciprocity, as well as in sport and leisure activities, where stereotypes and expectations based on gender can affect the self-image, health, acquisition of skills, intellectual development, social integration and identity formation of girls and boys;

51. Underlines the importance of encouraging men to participate fully in all actions towards achieving gender equality and of identifying all contexts in which a large number of men can be reached, particularly in male-dominated institutions, industries and associations, of sensitising men to their roles and responsibilities in the promotion of gender equality and of supporting the principle of shared power and responsibility between women and men in the workplace, in communities, in the private sphere and in the wider national and international communities;

52. Calls on the Member States to monitor those instances where the media and advertising industry promote the sexualisation and commodification of women and frequently portray female stereotypes of youth, beauty and sexual allure as a model of social success; calls on the Commission to take legal action in cases of violation of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive by a Member State and to promote good practices in public and private media enterprises through incentives; urges the media and the advertising industry to respect the dignity of women and to ensure that their portrayal is free from stereotypes and discrimination and in line with existing female diversity; calls, furthermore, on the media and the advertising industry to devote attention to healthy lifestyles, different family models and styles of living;

53. Recalls the commitments agreed by the EU in the EU-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) 2013 and 2015 Action Plans regarding the eradication of violence against women, and expresses its concern about the lack of implementation of chapter 7 thereof on the promotion of gender equality; calls on the Member States and the European External Action Service to cooperate and allocate economic and institutional resources to assure the fulfilment of the recommendations on the promotion of gender equality agreed in the action plans, especially regarding the eradication of all forms of violence, in accordance with the Belem de Pará Convention, the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW Convention;

54. Underlines that, according to research, the impact of climate change has been shown to be greater for women than men, with women more likely to bear the greater burden in situations of poverty; believes that women must actively participate in climate policy and action;

55. Calls on the Commission to come forward with a proposal for an overarching Sustainable Development Strategy encompassing all relevant internal and external policy areas and to develop effective monitoring, review and accountability mechanisms for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including for its targets and indicators on gender equality, women's rights and the empowerment of women;

56. Calls on the Commission to monitor the implementation of existing EU gender equality legislation in the Member States more effectively, while highlighting the necessity of initiating infringement procedures in cases of failure to implement the relevant legislation;

57. Regrets that, despite the interinstitutional declaration on ensuring gender mainstreaming annexed to the multiannual financial framework (MFF), no measures concerning gender budgeting have so far been taken;

underlines, in this connection, the need to monitor closely how the principles of the joint declaration have been implemented as regards annual budgetary procedures, and calls for the committee responsible to be given a formal role in the MFF revision process;

58. Calls on the Member State governments to ensure the existence and permanence of and appropriate resources for the bodies tasked with designing, coordinating and implementing policies for gender equality, as a major indicator of the governments' commitment to promoting gender equality;

59. Calls for the EU institutions to introduce specific indicators on gender equality, including the EIGE Gender Equality Index, in the monitoring system of the future EU mechanism on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights;

60. Calls on the Commission to develop a broader equality strategy, including a horizontal directive to tackle discrimination, with a view to eliminating gender-based discrimination in all its forms; urges the Council, to that effect, to reach a common position as soon as possible on the proposal for a Council directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age, gender or sexual orientation ([COM\(2008\)0426](#)), which has been blocked since Parliament adopted its position thereon on 2 April 2009⁴⁹; calls on the Council, once again, to include gender as a factor of discrimination;

61. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States.

(1) OJ L 315, 14.11.2012, p. 57.

(2) OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1.

(3) OJ C 70 E, 8.3.2012, p. 162.

(4) OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23.

(5) OJ L 373, 21.12.2004, p. 37.

(6) OJ L 353, 28.12.2013, p. 7.

(7) OJ L 180, 15.7.2010, p. 1.

(8) OJ L 68, 18.3.2010, p. 13.

(9) OJ L 348, 28.11.1992, p. 1.

(10) OJ L 359, 19.12.1986, p. 56.

(11) OJ L 6, 10.1.1979, p. 24.

(12) OJ C 341 E, 16.12.2010, p. 35.

(13) OJ C 199 E, 7.7.2012, p. 65.

(14) OJ C 251 E, 31.8.2013, p. 1.

(15) OJ C 316, 30.8.2016, p. 2.

(16) Texts adopted, [P7_TA\(2014\)0105](#).

(17) Texts adopted, [P8_TA\(2016\)0042](#).

(18) OJ C 407, 4.11.2016, p. 2.

(19) Texts adopted, [P7_TA\(2014\)0126](#).

- (20) Texts adopted, [P8_TA\(2015\)0312](#).
- (21) Texts adopted, [P8_TA\(2016\)0073](#).
- (22) Texts adopted, [P8_TA\(2016\)0203](#).
- (23) Texts adopted, [P8_TA\(2016\)0235](#).
- (24) Texts adopted, [P8_TA\(2016\)0338](#).
- (25) Texts adopted, [P8_TA\(2016\)0360](#).
- (26) Texts adopted, [P8_TA\(2016\)0072](#).
- (27) Texts adopted, [P8_TA\(2016\)0227](#).
- (28) ISBN 978-92-79-29898-1.
- (29) OJ L 59, 2.3.2013, p. 5.
- (30) <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw48/ac-men-auv.pdf>
- (31) ISBN 978-92-79-36171-5.
- (32) Eurofound report (2016): ‘The gender employment gap: challenges and solutions’.
- (33) Eurofound report (2015): ‘Promoting uptake of parental and paternity leave among fathers in the European Union’.
- (34) Eurofound (2015): ‘First findings: Sixth European Working Conditions Survey’.
- (35) <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/crime/database>
- (36) Eurostat report, ‘Trafficking in human beings’, 2015 edition.
- (37) The European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination: ‘A comparative analysis of gender equality law in Europe 2015’.
- (38) EIGE (2014): ‘Effectiveness of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of gender equality. Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States’.
- (39) Eurofound report (2014): ‘Social partners and gender equality in Europe’.
- (40) Developments taking place in 2014 and 2015.
- (41) European Commission Factsheet ‘Gender balance on corporate boards – Europe is cracking the glass ceiling’, October 2015; European Commission, DG JUST, ‘Women in economic decision-making in the EU: Progress report: A Europe 2020 initiative’, 2012; Aagoth Storvik and Mari Teigen, ‘Women on Board: The Norwegian Experience’, June 2010.
- (42) OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, p. 55.
- (43) OJ C 137 E, 27.5.2010, p. 68.