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Challenges ahead for women's rights: more than 25 years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

European Parliament resolution of 11 February 2021 on challenges ahead for women's rights in Europe: more than 25 years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (2021/2509(RSP))

(2021/C 465/17)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 15 September 1995 and the outcomes of its review conferences,
- having regard to Articles 21 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the European Pillar of Social Rights and, in particular, principles 2, 3, 9 and 15 thereof,
- having regard to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the principle of 'leaving no one behind' and, in particular, Goal 1 which seeks to end poverty, Goal 3 which seeks to ensure people can live healthy lives, Goal 5 which seeks to achieve gender equality and improve living conditions for women, Goal 8 which seeks to achieve sustainable and economic growth, and Goal 13 which seeks to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of 18 December 1979,
- having regard to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), which entered into force on 1 August 2014,
- having regard to the International Labour Organization (ILO) Equal Remuneration Convention (No 100) of 1951, to the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (No 190) of 2019 and to the ILO Domestic Workers Convention (No 189) of 2013,
- having regard to the 'Regional review of progress: regional synthesis' by the UN Economic Commission for Europe of 20 August 2019,
- having regard to the UN Women report entitled 'Gender Equality: Women's rights in review 25 years after Beijing', published on 5 March 2020,
- having regard to the report of the UN Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women, sixty-fourth session, entitled 'Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly' of 13 December 2019,
- having regard to the report of the UN Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women, sixty-fifth session, on 'Women's full and effective participation in decision making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls' of 21 December 2020,
- having regard to the policy brief by UN Secretary-General entitled 'The Impact of COVID-19 on Women', published on 9 April 2020,
- having regard to the UN Women report entitled 'From Insights to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19', published on 2 September 2020,

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- having regard to the report by EIGE entitled ‘Beijing + 25: the fifth review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States,’ published on 5 March 2020,
- having regard to the EPRS study on ‘Beijing Platform for Action, 25-year review and future priorities’ (European Parliamentary Research Service, European Parliament, 2020),
- having regard to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) report entitled ‘Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Planning and Ending Gender-based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage,’ published on 27 April 2020,
- having regard to the statement by the UNFPA entitled ‘Millions more cases of violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation, unintended pregnancy expected due to the COVID-19 pandemic,’ published on 28 April 2020,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 9-10 December 2019 on ‘Gender-Equal Economies in the EU: The Way Forward,’
- having regard to the joint communication of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 25 November 2020 on the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III),
- having regard to its resolution of 13 February 2020 on the EU priorities for the 64th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 21 January 2021 on the EU Strategy for Gender Equality ⁽²⁾ and to the European Commission’s Gender Equality Strategy for 2020-2025,
- having regard to its resolution of 21 January 2021 on the gender perspective in the COVID-19 crisis and post-crisis period ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 26 November 2020 on the de facto ban on the right to abortion in Poland ⁽⁴⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 30 January 2020 on the gender pay gap ⁽⁵⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 23 October 2020 on Gender Equality in EU’s foreign and security policy ⁽⁶⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 December 2020 on the need for a dedicated Council configuration on gender equality ⁽⁷⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 February 2019 on experiencing a backlash in women’s rights and gender equality in the EU ⁽⁸⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2012 on women in political decision-making — quality and equality ⁽⁹⁾,
- having regard to the EU multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027 and its gender mainstreaming horizontal priority,
- having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

⁽¹⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0039.

⁽²⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2021)0025.

⁽³⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2021)0024.

⁽⁴⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0336.

⁽⁵⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0025.

⁽⁶⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0286.

⁽⁷⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0379.

⁽⁸⁾ OJ C 449, 23.12.2020, p. 102.

⁽⁹⁾ OJ C 251 E, 31.8.2013, p. 11.

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- A. whereas 189 governments across the world, including the European Union and its Member States, committed to working towards gender equality and empowering all women and girls at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing;
- B. whereas the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) adopted at the conference is the most comprehensive global agenda for promoting gender equality and is considered the international 'Bill of Rights' for women, defining women's rights as human rights and articulating a vision of equal rights, freedom and opportunities for all women in the world, and was reaffirmed in 2015 with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by setting goals and concrete measures across a range of issues affecting women and girls;
- C. whereas there have been advances for women and girls especially in Europe since the adoption of the Beijing Platform in 1995, but overall progress has been unacceptably slow and hard-fought gains are at risk of reversal;
- D. whereas, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Generation Equality Forum has been postponed until the first half of 2021;
- E. whereas 25 years have passed since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, where the ICPD Programme of Action was adopted by 179 governments, declaring a global commitment to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in line with the Beijing Platform for Action;
- F. whereas the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women came into effect just over 40 years ago and, although all EU Member States have ratified it, progress on equality between women and men is slow, as pointed out by EIGE;
- G. whereas the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Council of Europe Istanbul Convention), the most comprehensive instrument to counter violence against women in Europe, was opened for signature 10 years ago, but has not yet been ratified by all EU Member States nor acceded to by the EU;
- H. whereas 2021 marked the 10th anniversary of the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention;
- I. whereas it is necessary to dismantle harmful structures and stereotypes that perpetuate inequality in order to advance gender equality; whereas advancing gender equality benefits not only society as a whole, but is also a goal in itself;
- J. whereas gender inequalities cover all aspects of the labour market, including employment, pay, pension and care gaps, lack of access to social services and social protection, increasingly precarious jobs and higher poverty risks for women;
- K. whereas the financial crisis and its aftermath have been proven to be harmful to women, women's rights and gender equality and have long-term consequences; whereas economic measures in the post-COVID-19 crisis period must take into account the gender dimension and social equality;
- L. whereas the impact of the COVID-19 crisis is gendered with the COVID-19 crisis and its consequences having a clear gender perspective as they impacted women and men differently and have exacerbated existing inequalities; whereas women are disproportionately affected by the crisis, while the response to the COVID-19 crisis has been largely gender blind; whereas these impacts range from a worrying increase in gender-based violence and harassment to unpaid and unequal care and domestic responsibilities, as well as restricted access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and significant economic and work impacts for women, particularly healthcare workers and caregivers;
- M. whereas female-dominated sectors and occupations (e.g. healthcare, care and emergency services, social work, education, retail, cashiers, cleaners, etc.) and the informal economy were particularly impacted by the pandemic; whereas women working in the healthcare sector are potentially more at risk of infection than men because they make up 76 % of healthcare workers in the EU ⁽¹⁰⁾;

⁽¹⁰⁾ EIGE, Gender Statistics Database, <https://eige.europa.eu/covid-19-and-gender-equality/frontline-workers>

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- N. whereas women are not as equally involved as men when it comes to decision-making due to the existing glass ceiling; whereas equal power-sharing between men and women has not yet been achieved in the majority of EU Member States in government cabinets, parliaments, public administration, in COVID-19 task forces and on company boards;
- O. whereas women face intersecting inequalities and discrimination, *inter alia* linked to their race, ethnic or social origin, sexual orientation, gender identities and expression, religion or belief, residence status and disability, and efforts must address all forms of discrimination to achieve gender equality for all women; whereas EU policies have to reinforce their intersectional approach to address the institutional, structural and historical dimensions of discrimination; whereas applying an intersectional analysis not only allows us to understand structural barriers, but also provides evidence to create benchmarks and set a path towards strategic and effective policies against systemic discrimination, exclusion and social inequalities;
- P. whereas women are more likely to face unemployment and have insecure employment status (for example through their working contracts), creating job insecurity; whereas workers in the care sector are predominantly women (76 %) ⁽¹¹⁾ and they tend to experience precarious pay and working conditions; whereas women constitute the majority of users as well as providers of social sector services, so any lack of adequate provision of such services prevents women from fully participating in the workforce, therefore creating a gender blindness in planning, budgeting and providing for social sector services;
- Q. whereas the gender pay gap still amounts to 14 % in Europe ⁽¹²⁾ and 20 % globally ⁽¹³⁾ and the gender pension gap is as high as 40 % in some EU Member States; whereas the gender pay gap leads to a pension gap which itself increases the risk of poverty and exclusion, especially among older and single household women; whereas both wage disparities and precariousness have a direct impact on future pensions;
- R. whereas the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work seriously limits women's participation in the economy; whereas women's unpaid care work has been at the heart of sustaining societies during the COVID-19 crisis, yet care responsibilities keep 7.7 million women in Europe out of the labour market compared to 450 000 men ⁽¹⁴⁾; whereas the characteristics of women's employment resulting from unpaid care (i.e. part-time work) are a significant factor in the gender pay gap; whereas more women than men assume long-term informal care responsibilities at least several days a week or every day and, overall, women represent 62 % of all people providing long-term informal care in the EU ⁽¹⁵⁾;
- S. whereas, globally, 35 % of women have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, or sexual violence by a non-partner; whereas a dramatic rise in intimate partner violence has occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic in what the UN terms 'the shadow pandemic', with a 60 % increase in emergency calls from women subjected to violence by their intimate partner reported among World Health Organization Europe Member States ⁽¹⁶⁾;

⁽¹¹⁾ EIGE Frontline workers <https://eige.europa.eu/covid-19-and-gender-equality/frontline-workers>

⁽¹²⁾ EIGE Beijing Review http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=sdg_05_20&lang=en

⁽¹³⁾ ILO Understanding the gender pay gap https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-ed_dialogue/-act_emp/documents/publication/wcms_735949.pdf

⁽¹⁴⁾ EIGE study 'Gender inequalities in care and consequences for the labour market'

⁽¹⁵⁾ EIGE Gender Equality Index 2019 <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-index-2019-report/informal-care-older-people-people-disabilities-and-long-term-care-services>

⁽¹⁶⁾ British Medical Journal, 'Covid-19: EU states report 60 % rise in emergency calls about domestic violence', 11 May 2020, available at: <https://www.bmj.com/content/369/bmj.m1872>. UN Report of the Secretary General July 2020 'Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls': <https://undocs.org/en/A/75/274>

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- T. whereas women are more vulnerable to the consequences of climate change ⁽¹⁷⁾; whereas, while women seem to show more concern for the climate in their behaviour than men, women remain underrepresented in decision-making positions concerned with tackling the climate crisis and represent globally only 32 % of the renewable energy workforce ⁽¹⁸⁾;
- U. whereas a gender gap exists across all digital technology domains, especially in innovative technologies, such as the AI and cybersecurity domains; whereas gender stereotyping, cultural discouragement and a lack of awareness and of promotion of female role models hinders girls' and women's opportunities in STEM studies and careers;
- V. whereas there is a visible backlash in some Member States and there is a risk that gender equality could further slip down the agenda of Member States;
1. Regrets that at the high-level meeting on '*Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls*' held on 1 October 2020 during the UN General Assembly to commemorate the Beijing Convention, world leaders from 100 countries acknowledged that the overall progress in women's rights is far below what they committed to at the Beijing Convention in 1995;
2. Highlights that the UN Women report entitled '*Gender equality: Women's rights in review 25 years after Beijing*' ⁽¹⁹⁾ depicted how progress towards gender equality is actually faltering and hard-won advances are being reversed globally;
3. Notes with concern that the fifth review of the BPfA published by EIGE in 2020 highlighted that no European Member States completed the targets set at the Beijing Convention in 1995; regrets that EIGE's 2020 Gender Equality Index demonstrated that progress had stalled in achieving equality between women and men, and that despite efforts to improve gender equality yielding some results, persistent inequalities and gender gaps remain in the EU across all the areas covered in the BPfA;
4. Highlights that the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 are disproportionately affecting women and girls, exacerbating pre-existing gender inequalities and threatening to reverse the progress made until now; highlights, in this regard, that, according to UN Women estimates ⁽²⁰⁾, the pandemic will push 47 million more women and girls below the poverty line at global level, bringing the total to 435 million, while it has exponentially increased gender-based violence and women are losing their jobs and livelihoods faster as they are more exposed to hard-hit economic sectors;
5. Recognises that more women are being elected and appointed into decision-making positions, but regrets that progress is slow and that parity has only been achieved in a few EU Member States;
6. Recalls its position of 17 December 2020 and calls on the Council to establish a dedicated configuration on gender equality in order to deliver common and concrete measures to address the challenges in the field of women's rights and gender equality and ensure that gender equality issues are discussed at the highest political level;

⁽¹⁷⁾ EIGE, Area K — Women and the environment: climate change is gendered, 05 March 2020, available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/beijing-25-policy-brief-area-k-women-and-environment>

⁽¹⁸⁾ EPRS briefing, 'Beijing Platform for Action, 25 year review and future priorities', 27 February 2020, available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI\(2020\)646194](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EPRS_BRI(2020)646194)

⁽¹⁹⁾ UN Women report Gender equality: Women's rights in review 25 years after Beijing <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/03/womens-rights-in-review>

⁽²⁰⁾ UN Women Report 'Gender equality in the wake of COVID-19' <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/09/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-covid-19>

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7. Regrets that gender mainstreaming is not applied systematically across all EU policy areas and funding programmes; welcomes the introduction of gender mainstreaming as a horizontal priority in the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027; calls on the Commission to ensure the implementation of systematic gender mainstreaming as a key strategy to support the realisation of gender equality, and to implement gender-responsive budgeting, practices and roadmaps in consultation with gender budgeting experts to ensure women and men benefit equally from public spending in all levels of budgeting and that women's perspectives are mainstreamed across all areas, with specific funds to address factors of inequalities such as violence against women and girls, including in the distribution of the Citizens, Rights and Values programme which is earmarked for the promotion of gender equality;

8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop and implement concrete plans and a set of actions, matched with adequate earmarked funding, on the basis of the twelve areas of concern set out by the BPfA, especially on women and poverty, women and the economy, power and decision-making, women and violence, women and the environment, and women and health, in order to advance women's rights and the gender equality agenda, with a view to the upcoming Generation Equality Forum;

9. Regrets that the retrogressive tendencies being expressed in some countries as regards the questioning of the Istanbul Convention, the backlash against women's SRHR, and challenges to bodily autonomy and control of fertility have been exacerbated in recent years; strongly condemns the adoption of the Constitutional Tribunal's ruling implementing a de facto ban on abortion and the subsequent setback to women's SRHR in Poland and the unjustified excessive restrictions on access to abortion;

10. Recalls that women's rights are human rights, and they are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights, as stated at the Fourth World Conference on Women;

11. Urges the Commission and the Member States to monitor and improve the collection of comparable age, racial and ethnic origin and gender-disaggregated data in order to improve quantitative analysis and to design and implement EU policies that would better integrate a gender intersectional perspective; underlines the importance of EIGE as the provider of reliable and adequate sex-disaggregated data for the basis of legislative analysis and decision-making, and underlines the importance of securing and expanding the funding and capacities of EIGE; also urges EIGE and all other relevant EU institutions and agencies to work on and incorporate new indicators, such as on work poverty, time poverty or the value of care work;

12. Recalls that 46 million women and girls with disabilities live in the European Union and that half of all women of working age with disabilities are economically inactive; stresses the specific problems faced by women with disabilities and recalls that the material deprivation rate of women with disabilities is severe in all Member States; reaffirms therefore the need to further incorporate the gender perspective in the upcoming disability equality strategy 2021;

13. Calls on the Council and urges the Member States to approve and implement the Anti-Discrimination Directive and guarantee that multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination are eradicated in all EU Member States;

Women and poverty

14. Highlights that gender remains a significant factor in patterns of poverty in the EU and that, although exclusion rates and gender poverty gaps vary considerably between countries, 23.3 % of women compared with 21.6 % of men are at risk of poverty ⁽²¹⁾; highlights that such risk increases significantly with age, intersecting with household composition, race or ethnic origin, disability and employment status; highlights that the gender pay, pension and care gaps are significant factors in the feminisation of poverty;

15. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to address the feminisation of poverty in all its forms, including poverty in old age, particularly by factoring gender into the availability of and access to adequate pension entitlements in order to eliminate the gender pension gap, and by improving working conditions in feminised sectors and professions;

⁽²¹⁾ In 2014, over 122 million people in the EU lived in households that were considered poor, i.e. they were at risk of poverty or social exclusion (ARPE). Of these 122 million, 53 % are women and 47 % are men. EIGE Report 'Poverty, gender and intersecting inequalities in the EU', 2016 <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/poverty-gender-and-intersecting-inequalities-in-the-eu>

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points out the importance of addressing the societal, economic and cultural undervaluation of jobs dominated by women, the need to combat such stereotypes and the over-representation of women in atypical forms of work;

16. Stresses that, while overcoming pension inequalities and safeguarding and increasing pensions in general, it is imperative that social security systems continue to exist in the public sphere, integrating the principles of solidarity and redistribution, and that the most strenuous efforts are made to combat precarious and unregulated work;

17. Calls on the Commission to present an anti-poverty strategy to fight against the feminisation of poverty, with a special focus on single-parent households headed by women; calls also on the Member States to implement specific social measures to combat the risk of social exclusion and poverty with regard to access to affordable housing, transport and energy;

18. Urges the Member States to take specific measures to combat the risk of poverty in old age and the Commission to include the gender dimension of poverty in its economic growth and social policy frameworks; welcomes the sex-disaggregated indicators in the mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights; underlines the need to mainstream the gender perspective using an intersectional approach in line with principles 2 and 3 of the Pillar and calls for better coordination between the European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Semester; calls on the Commission to develop and include a Gender Equality Index in the European Semester to monitor the gender effects of macroeconomic policies, as well as of the green and digital transitions;

19. Urges the Commission and the Member States to put women at the heart of pandemic recovery in order to counter the erosion of progress made in closing gender poverty gaps caused by the COVID-19 crisis;

Women and the environment

20. Welcomes the acknowledgment of the gender dimension of climate change in both the Gender Action Plan III and the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025; emphasises that gender equality is essential for the management of the climate crisis;

21. Highlights that women are powerful agents of change; calls on the EU and Member States to address the gender gap in decision-making positions related to climate action at every level of society;

22. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop and promote gender sensitive goals, targets and indicators, as well as to collect gender-disaggregated data when planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating climate change policies, programmes and projects, and to establish focal points on gender and climate change across government institutions;

Women and the economy, women and power and decision making

23. Underlines the importance of the full integration of women on an equal footing with men in all areas of society and the economy and actively promoting gender-balanced representation at all levels of decision-making; in this regard, calls on the Commission to unblock the Women on Boards Directive in the European Council;

24. Calls for the EU to establish targets, action plans, timelines and temporary special measures to achieve gender parity and move towards a balanced representation for all executive, legislative and administrative positions;

25. Underlines that the full inclusion of women in the labour market and the promotion of female entrepreneurship are crucial factors to achieve long-term inclusive economic growth, combatting inequalities and encouraging women's economic independence;

26. Calls for the EU to strengthen efforts to close the gender pay gap and enforce the equal pay principle by adopting legislation to increase pay transparency, including mandatory measures for all companies; regrets that the proposal by the Commission for binding pay transparency measures has not yet been introduced as planned;

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27. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to monitoring the transposition of the Work-Life Balance Directive into national legislations by 2022 and to ensuring its full implementation by Member States in consultation with women's rights' organisations and civil society organisations; also invites the Member States to go beyond the Directive's minimum standards; notes the expansion of parental provisions to include long-term care for family members with disabilities and older people as a good starting point, and asks the Commission to consider expanding it further to prevent the loss of workforce, especially female;

28. Underlines that changes in labour conditions such as teleworking can impact on the ability to disconnect and increase the workload, with women being affected far more than men owing to their predominant or traditional role as home and family caretakers;

29. Calls on the Commission to put forward a proposal that would take a holistic and life-long approach to care, taking into account the needs of both carers and those who receive care and setting minimum standards and quality guidelines for care throughout the life cycle, including for children, elderly persons and persons with long-term needs;

30. Calls on the Commission to examine women's participation in the labour market and ensure the meaningful participation of women in key decision-making bodies and in the design of gender-sensitive recovery and economic stimulus packages within the MFF and the Next Generation EU recovery plan; notes that the COVID-19 crisis is particularly affecting women in the labour markets, given the increase in unemployment rates among women; calls in this regard on the Commission to take specific measures to address the women's employment gap via targeted distribution under the Recovery and Resilience Facility, and in which EU Member States demonstrate concrete actions to address women's unemployment, women's poverty and increased cases of violence against women and girls as obstacles preventing women's full participation in all areas of life, including employment;

31. Highlights the need to ensure the rights of women domestic workers to decent working conditions and equal social protection, by ensuring the ratification and implementation of the ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers;

32. Notes with concern that women form only 18 %⁽²²⁾ of the 8 million ICT specialists in the EU and that they risk further exclusion from the EU's digital agenda; urges the Commission to strengthen policies promoting the greater participation of women in STEM careers and studies, and emphasises the need for women's inclusion and representation in emerging economic fields that are important for sustainable development, including the ICT, digital and artificial intelligence sectors;

33. Calls on the European institutions to introduce binding measures such as quotas to ensure gender parity in elected bodies and calls on the Member States to ensure a balanced representation of women and men at both the European and national parliaments; calls also for strategies to guarantee a meaningful representation of women from diverse backgrounds in decision-making roles in the European institutions;

Women and violence: eradicating gender-based violence

34. Welcomes the Commission's commitment in the Gender Equality Strategy to fighting gender-based violence, and reiterates the call to conclude the EU's ratification of the Istanbul Convention on the basis of a broad accession, and to advocate its ratification and implementation by all the Member States; calls on the Member States to take into account the recommendations by GREVIO and to improve legislation to bring it more into line with the Istanbul Convention's provisions in order to ensure proper implementation and enforcement;

35. Welcomes the initiative on extending the areas of crime to encompass specific forms of gender-based violence in accordance with Article 83(1) TFEU, and calls on the Commission to then come up with a proposal for a holistic, victim-centred EU Directive to prevent and combat all forms of gender-based violence; recalls that such new legislative measures should in any case be complementary to the ratification of the Istanbul Convention;

36. Calls for the EU to urgently address the increase in gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic; calls, in this regard, on the Commission to develop a European Union Protocol on gender-based violence in times of crisis and to

⁽²²⁾ Commission's 2020 Women in Digital (WiD) Scoreboard.

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include protection services for victims, such as helplines, safe accommodation and health services as 'essential services' in the Member States, in order to prevent gender-based violence and support victims of domestic violence during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic; notes with concern the lack of data available on violence against women and girls that could capture the increase in cases during the COVID-19 pandemic;

37. Underlines the role of education, and calls for the countering of gender stereotypes that pave the way to gender-based violence; calls for the EU to ensure that all EU public institutions have in place, and comply with, codes of conduct that establish zero tolerance for violence, discrimination and abuse, and internal reporting and complaints mechanisms;

38. Underlines the need to gather and organise gender- and age-disaggregated data on all forms of gender-based violence among Member States; welcomes the announcement of a new EU-wide survey by the FRA on the prevalence and dynamics of all forms of violence against women;

39. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to adopt specific measures to eradicate cyber violence, including online harassment, cyberbullying and misogynistic hate speech, which disproportionately affects women and girls, and to specifically address the increase in these forms of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic; calls on the Commission to put forward relevant regulation and any other possible actions to eradicate hate speech and online harassment;

40. Calls on the Member States to ratify and implement without delay the recently adopted ILO Convention 190 on eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work;

41. Calls on the Member States to implement effectively Directive 2011/36/EU⁽²³⁾ on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings (THB) and protecting its victims, and to adopt specific measures to address violence against women and gender inequality as root causes of trafficking; calls on the Commission to revise the directive, after a thorough impact assessment, in order to improve measures for the prevention and prosecution of all forms of trafficking, especially for sexual exploitation as the most prevalent and reported area of THB impacting 92 % of trafficked women and girls in Europe; calls, furthermore, on the Commission to amend the directive with a view to ensuring that Member States explicitly criminalise the knowing use of all services provided by victims of trafficking;

Women and health

42. Recalls that universal access to healthcare is a human right which can only be guaranteed through a system which is universal and accessible to all regardless of social and economic background; calls for the EU and its Member States to ensure the adequate provision of healthcare and guarantee equal access;

43. Urges the Member States to invest in robust and resilient public health systems and to ensure that the staff of healthcare services, the majority of whom are usually female and occupy lower-paid functions, are fairly compensated and have decent working conditions;

44. Calls for universal respect for, and access to, SRHR, as agreed in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the BPfA;

45. Emphasises that access to family planning, maternal health services and safe and legal abortion services are important elements for guaranteeing women's rights and saving lives;

46. Calls on the Member States to provide comprehensive sexuality and relationship education to young people and access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, including contraception, family planning and safe and legal abortion;

47. Notes the importance of taking the gender perspective better into account when making medical diagnoses and planning treatment to ensure proper quality treatment for all people; emphasises that women's diseases and underlying conditions remain underdiagnosed, undertreated and understudied;

⁽²³⁾ 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 (OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1).

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Towards the Generation Equality Forum

48. Urges the Commission and the Member States to step up efforts to implement Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG3 and SDG5, to ensure that no woman or girl is subject to discrimination, violence or exclusion, and has access to health, food, education and employment;

49. Reiterates the importance of the EU's commitment to the BPfA and the review conferences, and calls on the Commission and the Member States to respect their overarching commitments towards gender equality and women's empowerment;

50. Welcomes the participation and co-leadership of Member States and the Commission in the Action Coalitions;

51. Underlines the importance of an ambitious outcome at the future Generation Equality Forum, including through the adoption of a set of forward-looking ambitious commitments and actions, matched with earmarked funding, by the Commission and the Member States, also as part of the Action Coalitions;

52. Calls on all Member States and the Commission to complete annual tracking and national reporting as part of the Action Coalition Progress Report;

53. Urges the EU to ensure the full involvement of Parliament and its Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the decision-making process regarding the EU's position at the Generation Equality Forum;

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