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P9_TA(2021)0025

The EU Strategy for Gender Equality

European Parliament resolution of 21 January 2021 on the EU Strategy for Gender Equality (2019/2169(INI))

(2021/C 456/19)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 2 and 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union, and Articles 6, 8, 10, 83, 153, 157 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to Articles 21 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) thereof, in particular goal 5 and its targets and indicators,
- 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 directives from 1975 onwards on various aspects of equal treatment for women and men (Directive 79/7/EEC ⁽¹⁾, Directive 86/613/EEC ⁽²⁾, Directive 92/85/EEC ⁽³⁾, Directive 2004/113/EC ⁽⁴⁾, Directive 2006/54/EC ⁽⁵⁾, Directive 2010/18/EU ⁽⁶⁾ and Directive 2010/41/EU ⁽⁷⁾),
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers and repealing Council Directive 2010/18/EU ⁽⁸⁾ ('Work-Life Balance Directive'),
- 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),
- having regard to the proposal for a Council decision of 4 March 2016 on the conclusion, by the European Union, of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (COM(2016)0109),
- having regard to the Commission Staff Working Document of 6 March 2019 entitled '2019 Report on equality between women and men in the EU' (SWD(2019)0101),

⁽¹⁾ Council Directive 79/7/EEC of 19 December 1978 on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security (OJ L 6, 10.1.1979, p. 24).

⁽²⁾ Council Directive 86/613/EEC of 11 December 1986 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity, and on the protection of self-employed women during pregnancy and motherhood (OJ L 359, 19.12.1986, p. 56).

⁽³⁾ Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 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 (OJ L 348, 28.11.1992, p. 1).

⁽⁴⁾ 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 (OJ L 373, 21.12.2004, p. 37).

⁽⁵⁾ 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 (OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23).

⁽⁶⁾ Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC (OJ L 68, 18.3.2010, p. 13).

⁽⁷⁾ Directive 2010/41/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC (OJ L 180, 15.7.2010, p. 1).

⁽⁸⁾ OJ L 188, 12.7.2019, p. 79.

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- 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 ⁽⁹⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 30 January 2020 on the gender pay gap ⁽¹⁰⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 February 2019 on experiencing a backlash in women's rights and gender equality in the EU ⁽¹¹⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 28 November 2019 on the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention and other measures to combat gender-based violence ⁽¹²⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 April 2018 on gender equality in the media sector in the EU ⁽¹³⁾,
- having regard to the Gender Equality Index 2019 from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), published on 15 October 2019,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 January 2019 on gender equality and taxation policies in the EU ⁽¹⁴⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2018 on gender equality in EU trade agreements ⁽¹⁵⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 3 October 2017 on women's economic empowerment in the private and public sectors in the EU ⁽¹⁶⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 June 2017 on the need for an EU strategy to end and prevent the gender pension gap ⁽¹⁷⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 March 2017 on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2014-2015 ⁽¹⁸⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 February 2017 on promoting gender equality in mental health and clinical research ⁽¹⁹⁾,
- having regard to International Labour Organization (ILO) Equal Remuneration Convention 100 of 1951, and to ILO Violence and Harassment Convention 190 of 2019,
- having regard to the Commission recommendation of 7 March 2014 on strengthening the principle of equal pay between men and women through transparency ⁽²⁰⁾,
- having regard to the Commission's Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019,
- having regard to the Commission's communication of 20 November 2017 entitled 'EU Action Plan 2017-2019: Tackling the gender pay gap' (COM(2017)0678),
- having regard to the Commission's 2019 report on equality between women and men in the EU,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 13 June 2019 on 'Closing the Gender Pay Gap: Key Policies and Measures',
- having regard to its resolution of 26 May 2016 on poverty: a gender perspective ⁽²¹⁾,

⁽⁹⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0039.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0025.

⁽¹¹⁾ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0111.

⁽¹²⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2019)0080.

⁽¹³⁾ OJ C 390, 18.11.2019, p. 19.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0014.

⁽¹⁵⁾ OJ C 162, 10.5.2019, p. 9.

⁽¹⁶⁾ OJ C 346, 27.9.2018, p. 6.

⁽¹⁷⁾ OJ C 331, 18.9.2018, p. 60.

⁽¹⁸⁾ OJ C 263, 25.7.2018, p. 49.

⁽¹⁹⁾ OJ C 252, 18.7.2018, p. 99.

⁽²⁰⁾ OJ L 69, 8.3.2014, p. 112.

⁽²¹⁾ OJ C 76, 28.2.2018, p. 93.

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- having regard to its resolution of 16 November 2017 on combating inequalities as a lever to boost job creation and growth ⁽²²⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 26 February 2014 on sexual exploitation and prostitution and its impact on gender equality ⁽²³⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 19 January 2016 on external factors that represent hurdles to European female entrepreneurship ⁽²⁴⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 4 April 2017 on women and their roles in rural areas ⁽²⁵⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 November 2018 on care services in the EU for improved gender equality ⁽²⁶⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 April 2020 on EU coordinated action to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences ⁽²⁷⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 16 January 2018 on women, gender equality and climate justice ⁽²⁸⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 28 April 2016 on gender equality and empowering women in the digital age ⁽²⁹⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 June 2015 on the EU Strategy for equality between women and men post 2015 ⁽³⁰⁾,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 10 December 2019 on Gender-Equal Economies in the EU: The Way Forward,
- having regard to the European Pillar of Social Rights and, in particular, its principles 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 11, 12 and 15,
- having regard to the EU Gender Action Plan II and to the Joint Staff Working Document entitled 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020' (SWD(2015)0182),
- having regard to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of its review conferences,
- having regard to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), its Programme of Action, and the outcomes of its review conferences,
- having regards to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement of 2016 and the Enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its Gender Action Plan of December 2019,
- having regard to the survey by the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) entitled 'Violence against women: an EU-wide survey', published in 2014,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 5 March 2020 entitled 'A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025' (COM(2020)0152),
- having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee of 7 May 2020 entitled 'Demographic challenges in the EU in light of economic and development inequalities',

⁽²²⁾ OJ C 356, 4.10.2018, p. 89.

⁽²³⁾ OJ C 285, 29.8.2017, p. 78.

⁽²⁴⁾ OJ C 11, 12.1.2018, p. 35.

⁽²⁵⁾ OJ C 298, 23.8.2018, p. 14.

⁽²⁶⁾ OJ C 363, 28.10.2020, p. 80.

⁽²⁷⁾ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0054.

⁽²⁸⁾ OJ C 458, 19.12.2018, p. 34.

⁽²⁹⁾ OJ C 66, 21.2.2018, p. 44.

⁽³⁰⁾ OJ C 407, 4.11.2016, p. 2.

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- having regard to the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life,
 - having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinions of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on Culture and Education and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (A9-0234/2020),
- A. whereas the right to equal treatment is a defining fundamental right recognised in the European Union Treaties and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and is essential for its further development;
- B. whereas the Member States scored on average 67,4 out of 100 in the EU Gender Equality Index 2019, a score which has improved by just 5,4 points since 2005;
- C. whereas harmful structures and stereotypes throughout the world perpetuate inequality, and whereas dismantling these structures and stereotypes will advance gender equality; whereas advancing gender equality and investing in women and girls not only benefits society as a whole, but is also a goal in itself; whereas it is important to examine the persistence and root causes of the leaky pipeline phenomenon; whereas a strong women's rights movement is needed to uphold democratic values, fundamental rights and women's rights in particular, and whereas threats to women's rights also represent threats to democracy;
- D. whereas discrimination on the basis of gender is often combined with discrimination based on identities such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and class and/or migration status triggering double and multiple discrimination; whereas a horizontal intersectional perspective is essential in any gender equality policy in order to recognise and address these multiple threats of discrimination; whereas EU policies have not deployed an intersectional approach thus far and have focused mostly on the individual dimension of discrimination, which does not address its institutional, structural and historical dimensions; whereas applying an intersectional analysis not only allows us to understand structural barriers, but also offers evidence to create benchmarks and set a path towards strategic and effective policies against systemic discrimination, exclusion and gender inequalities, and whereas such efforts must address all forms of discrimination to achieve gender equality for all women;
- E. whereas the EU has adopted important legislation and made crucial progress towards achieving gender equality; whereas, however, these efforts have slowed down in recent years, while movements opposing gender equality policies and women's rights have flourished, trying to re-establish traditional gender roles as the norm, questioning the status quo and blocking further progress; whereas these movements opposing gender equality policies, family diversity, same-sex marriage, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), as well as gender mainstreaming, try to influence national and European policy-making in order to roll back, in a worrying manner, already established fundamental rights, and whereas threats to women's rights always also mean threats to democracy and social and economic progress;
- F. whereas health rights, particularly sexual and reproductive health rights, are women's fundamental rights, should be enhanced and cannot be watered down in any way or removed;
- G. whereas there is a visible backlash in some Member States, including within the areas of economic empowerment of women, and there is a risk that gender equality could further slip down the agenda of Member States;
- H. whereas one in three women in the EU aged 15 or over has experienced some form of physical and/or sexual violence⁽³¹⁾, one in two has experienced sexual harassment and 1 in 10 has faced online harassment;

⁽³¹⁾ FRA survey 2014, the most comprehensive at EU level in the field, based on data from 28 Member States.

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- I. whereas violence against women in all its forms (physical, sexual, psychological, economic or cyber violence) is a violation of human rights and one of the biggest obstacles to achieving gender equality; whereas a life free from violence is a prerequisite for equality; whereas gender-based violence in health such as, for example, obstetric and gynaecological violence, are forms of violence that have only come to light in recent years and whereas violence against older women still remains largely under-recognised; whereas disinformation campaigns to undermine gender equality also block progress on the issue of eliminating violence against women, as has been seen in relation to the Istanbul Convention, leading to public opposition and harmful political decisions in some Member States;
- J. whereas trafficking in human beings represents one of the most flagrant violations of fundamental rights and human dignity; whereas women and girls make up 80 % of the registered victims of trafficking and 95 % of the registered victims of trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation; whereas trafficking in human beings is a growing branch of organised crime, a form of slavery and a human rights violation, and concerns mostly women and children, especially for the purpose of sexual exploitation; whereas the prostitution market fuels the trafficking of women and children, and exacerbates violence against them; whereas Member States need to design their social and economic policies in such a way as to help vulnerable women and girls to leave prostitution, including by introducing specific social and economic policies designed to help them;
- K. whereas poverty and social exclusion have structural causes that need to be eradicated and reversed, in particular, through policies on employment, housing, mobility and access to public services; whereas prostitution, trafficking in persons, particularly women and children, for sexual exploitation is a form of slavery and incompatible with human dignity, particularly in countries where the sex industry has been legalised; whereas, as a result of the increase in organised crime and its profitability, human trafficking is on the rise around the world; whereas the prostitution market fuels the trafficking of women and children and exacerbates violence against them, particularly in countries where the sex industry has been legalised;
- L. whereas psychological or sexual harassment at the workplace or harassment with important consequences for personal and professional aspirations is, according to the UN, experienced by almost 35 % of women worldwide and harms women's self-esteem, as well as their negotiating position for fairer remuneration; whereas fair remuneration and economic independence are an essential prerequisite for enabling women to leave an abusive and violent relationship;
- M. whereas equality between men and women can only be achieved by ensuring their equality before the law, as well as equal opportunities in access to education, training and employment;
- N. whereas traditional gender roles and stereotypes still influence the division of labour at home, in education, at the workplace and in society; whereas unpaid care and domestic work is mostly carried out by women, impacting employment and career progression and contributing to the gender pay and pension gap; whereas work-life balance measures, such as the Work-Life Balance Directive, are important first steps, which need, first and foremost, to be properly transposed by the Member States, fully implemented on time and also complemented by further measures in order to involve more men in unpaid care work, stressing its equal importance when compared to professional work, care duties and to foster the equal earner — equal carer model; whereas traditional structures, unpaid care work and disincentives in national taxation policies contribute to pushing or keeping women in second earner status, which has negative consequences for women and their economic independence, as well as for society as a whole;
- O. whereas estimates show that 80 % of all care across the EU is provided by informal carers who are mostly women (75 %), indicating the existence of a gender care gap strongly influencing the gender pension gap; whereas more than 50 % of carers under the age of 65 combine care with employment, resulting in difficulties for work-life balance; whereas carers may often be employed in low-skilled and low-paid jobs, which can be adapted to their caregiving schedule, as well as be obliged to reduce their working hours or leave paid work; whereas between 7 % and 21 % of

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informal carers reduce their working hours, and between 3 % and 18 % withdraw from the labour market; whereas the provision of quality care in the EU varies greatly both within and between the Member States, between private and public settings, urban and rural areas and different age groups; whereas data on the provision of care in the EU are rather fragmented and a holistic approach is missing, which would address the demographic challenges the EU is facing with the resultant pressure on public expenditure;

- P. whereas shortcomings exist in matching childcare systems in the various Member States to the needs of parents, including single parents (mainly single mothers), and difficulties persist in reconciling family, private and professional life, especially for women; whereas women over the age of 45 are often perceived as under-employed and are employed under far worse conditions than men, especially when they return to work after maternity or parental leave or when they are forced to reconcile work with caring for dependants;
- Q. whereas, in order to promote work-life balance, a well-thought-out system of care-related leave with high-quality, easily accessible and affordable care facilities should be provided, and expenditure on these facilities should be considered part of infrastructure investments; whereas these services are a precondition for women's participation in the labour market and in leading positions in science and research;
- R. whereas maternity protection is a right that must be upheld in full, and whereas an increase in maternity leave periods with full rights and pay at 100 % should be a reality;
- S. whereas the right to equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, even if enshrined in law, is not always guaranteed; whereas collective bargaining is an important asset in reversing and overcoming inequalities between men and women in the labour market; whereas the EU gender gap in hourly pay is 16 %, although this varies significantly between Member States; whereas the gender pay gap rises to 40 % when employment rates and overall labour market participation are considered; whereas the ramifications of the gender pay gap include a 37 % gender gap in pension income; whereas with regard to labour market participation, 8 % of men in the EU are working part-time compared to 31 % of women, revealing persistent inequalities, the root causes of which need to be tackled;
- T. whereas, although the participation of women in the labour market has grown, there are persistent gender gaps which can put women in vulnerable or precarious situations; whereas the gender employment gap in the EU stands at 11,6 % ⁽³²⁾; whereas women are under-represented in well-paid sectors and decision-making positions, and work more frequently in jobs that they are overqualified for, with one in five women workers in the EU belonging to the lowest wage group, compared to 1 in 10 of men; whereas the ramifications of the gender pay gap include a 37 % ⁽³³⁾ gender gap in pension income, a situation that will persist for decades to come, and an unequal level of economic independence between women and men; whereas ambitious efforts are needed to close all these gender gaps;
- U. whereas the under-representation of women in the labour market also results in their unequal participation in decision-making or wages, and therefore limits women's potential to change economic, political, social and cultural structures; whereas vertical and horizontal segregation in occupation and discriminatory practices in recruitment and promotion are one of the main causes of the gender pay gap; whereas gender quotas, zipper list systems and subsequent sanctions in cases of non-compliance or non-functioning procedures have proven to be efficient measures to secure parity and to work against unequal power relations;

⁽³²⁾ Commission communication entitled 'A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025' (COM(2020)0152).

⁽³³⁾ European Parliament resolution of 30 January 2020 on the gender pay gap (Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0025).

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- V. whereas there is an economic argument in women's full participation in the economy, as gender employment gap costs Europe EUR 370 billion per year ⁽³⁴⁾;
- W. whereas access to comprehensive and age-appropriate information, and to sexuality and relationship education, as well as access to sexual and reproductive healthcare and rights, including family planning, contraceptive methods and safe and legal abortion, are essential to achieving gender equality and eliminating gender-based violence; whereas violations of women's SRHR, including the denial of safe and legal abortion care, are a form of violence against women; whereas comprehensive sexuality and relationship education, and girls' and women's autonomy and ability to free and independent decisions about their bodies and lives, are preconditions for their economic independence and thus for gender equality and the elimination of gender-based violence;
- X. whereas women have been at the forefront of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, and whereas the present crisis is having a disproportionate impact on women, girls and gender equality; whereas these impacts range from a worrying increase in gender-based violence and harassment, unpaid and unequal care and domestic responsibilities, through restricted access to SRHR, to massive economic and work impacts for women, particularly healthcare workers, caregivers and workers in other feminised and precarious sectors; whereas specific measures to counterbalance this are needed; whereas recovery programmes or transition funds should be allocated in a gender-balanced manner; whereas austerity measures have been proven harmful to women, women's rights and gender equality in the past;
- Y. whereas respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights, including gender equality, is a prerequisite for the creation and distribution of diverse cultural and educational expressions, as all cultural and creative sectors have a considerable influence on our beliefs, values and perception of gender issues;
- Z. whereas women and girls face a number of obstacles in the field of sports and are not only subject to violence, but also face discrimination in pay, prize money and working conditions, and are widely under-represented on the boards of sports organisations and media;
- AA. whereas women constitute only 34,4 % of the self-employed in the EU and 30 % of start-up entrepreneurs;
- AB. whereas poverty and social exclusion in Europe disproportionately affect women, in particular single mothers, women with disabilities, elderly women, women from rural and remote areas, and migrant and ethnic minority women; whereas 15 % of households with children at EU level are single-parent households; whereas, on average, 85 % of these households are run by single mothers, while 47 % of single-parent households were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2017; whereas homelessness among women is a growing problem; whereas the Anti-Discrimination Directive, which would provide greater protection through a horizontal approach still remains blocked in the Council;
- AC. whereas gender equality and the inclusion of women in decision-making is a prerequisite for sustainable development and the efficient management of climate challenges in order to achieve a fair and just transition that leaves no one behind; whereas the climate crisis is exacerbating gender inequalities and makes it harder to achieve gender justice; whereas the impact of climate change is experienced differently by women, as they are more vulnerable and face higher risks and burdens for various reasons, ranging from unequal access to resources, education, job opportunities and land rights to social and cultural norms, stereotypes and their diverse intersectional experiences; whereas all climate action must include a gender and an intersectional perspective; whereas women's rights must be strengthened to dampen the effects of climate change on women, and opportunities must be created to facilitate women playing stronger roles in the climate change discussions and decisions as leaders, professionals and technical agents for change;

⁽³⁴⁾ <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/news/news-articles/gender-employment-gap-costs-europe-eu370-billion-per-year>

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- AD. whereas women in rural areas face numerous challenges, including lower living standards, more limited employment opportunities, relative isolation from markets, limited access to infrastructure, including rural infrastructure, public services and healthcare, access to education (including sexuality education) and information on educational opportunities, and are under-represented in decision-making forums; whereas they may perform invisible work on farms owing to the lack of a formal status for assisting spouses, resulting in problems in their work being recognised by national systems;
- AE. whereas 46 million women and girls with disabilities live in the European Union; whereas this figure represents nearly 60 % of the overall population of persons with disabilities; whereas most disabilities are acquired with age;
- AF. whereas more than half of women of working age with disabilities are economically inactive; whereas in all Member States the severe material deprivation rate of women with disabilities is higher than that of women without disabilities;
- AG. whereas the Gender Equality Index for 2019 reveals persistent inequalities between men and women in the digital sector and highlights the need for a gender perspective in and gender impact assessment of all policies addressing the digital transformation; whereas closing the digital gender gap with better access to technology and the internet for girls and women is of paramount importance; whereas women are an untapped resource in emerging fields, such as digital, AI and ICT, with women accounting for just 16 % of the almost eight million people working in ICT in Europe; whereas the proportion of men working in the digital sector is three times greater than the proportion of women; whereas boosting the employment of more women in the digital sector and other sectors of the future is vitally important to fight the gender pay and pension gaps and guarantee their economic independence, as well as to create new opportunities for employment, including for groups normally excluded from the labour market; whereas in this regard it is essential that women's participation in digital entrepreneurship, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and ITC education and employment is encouraged; whereas by integrating more women into the digital jobs market, there is potential for an EUR 16 billion GDP boost to the European economy; whereas gender inequalities and discrimination have been reproduced through the design, input and use of artificial intelligence (AI); whereas incomplete data sets and incorrect bias can distort an AI system's reasoning and jeopardise gender equality in society;
- AH. whereas collecting gender-disaggregated data is essential to making inequalities visible and creating targeted policies, and is of the utmost importance for a gender-focused approach to all issues at stake, such as, among others, gender-based violence, disabilities, cancer and rare or chronic diseases, the impact of climate change, digital skills and STEM; whereas gender-sensitive data is still lacking in different areas of the EU's and Member States' policies;
- AI. whereas women are disproportionately under-represented in the news and information media; whereas the unequal portrayal of women and men in the media perpetuate stereotypes affecting the image of women and men;
- AJ. whereas gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and gender impact assessments are essential tools for achieving gender equality in all EU policy areas; whereas gender equality is addressed in EU policies through various funds and instruments, and whereas enabling optimal synergies between them is a very important tool; whereas this is especially important for the socio-economic measures taken in the aftermath of the COVID-19 health crisis, including the EU Recovery Plan;
- AK. whereas the gender equality strategy 2020-2025 and the strengthening of gender-sensitive policies at EU level are essential to ensure that the impact of the COVID-19 crisis does not widen gender inequality and that the responses to it contribute to reducing discrimination against women;
- AL. whereas the COVID-19 crisis has also impacted sex workers, increasing their risk of loss of income and poverty, and is characterised by the continued lack of a framework and enforcement of their human rights;

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AM. whereas united action is essential to upwardly converge and harmonise women's rights in Europe through a strong pact between Member States by sharing and committing to the most ambitious legislation and best practices currently in force in the EU;

AN. whereas, while there is a Commissioner exclusively responsible for Equality and the European Parliament has a committee dedicated to Women's Rights and Gender Equality, there is no specific Council configuration on Gender Equality and ministers and secretaries of state in charge of gender equality have no dedicated forum for discussion;

General remarks

1. Welcomes the adoption of the Commission communication entitled 'A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025', delivered on time within the first 100 days of the new Commission, as a strong sign for political engagement with European gender equality policies and as a decisive, clear and ambitious policy framework to further realise women's rights and gender equality, and counter attacks against them; supports the Commission's goal of a European Union without discrimination and structural inequalities, for all people in all their diversity; underlines the importance of the chosen dual approach, consisting of targeted measures and the commitment to consistently implement gender mainstreaming and intersectionality as cross-cutting principles, and welcomes the strong link between the areas of work and the elimination of stereotypes, gender biases and discrimination, and calls for strong monitoring mechanisms in order to regularly measure and evaluate the success of the strategy and its measures;

2. Stresses, however, the need for an opportunities-based approach within the gender equality strategy; asks the Commission to take 'equal opportunities for women' as the starting point to further roll out the strategy;

3. Welcomes the priority given to gender equality by the new Commission and its President, as well as the nomination of a dedicated Commissioner for Equality, and awaits the annual report on equality as a useful evaluation tool to assess progress and to spot the existing gaps and the needs for gender mainstreaming in the policy framework;

4. Welcomes the announcement of several complementary EU initiatives, such as a European disability strategy with binding measures post-2020, the LGBTI+ strategy and the Post-2020 EU Framework on Roma Equality and Inclusion Strategies, and calls for a strategic framework to connect them, and for an intersectional approach to be adopted in all of them; stresses the importance of monitoring the situations being addressed and of flexibly adapting the gender equality and other relevant strategies to results, as well as to the upcoming challenges, using current policies or suggesting new tools, as the recent COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated; reiterates the need to step up specific measures for non-discrimination, and the equality and protection of women subject to structural gender inequalities, and reminds the Commission that further efforts in this direction are needed;

5. Regrets the fact that the strategy remains vague on the issue of timelines for several, highly welcomed, measures and that it sets neither concrete gender equality targets to be achieved by 2025 nor clear monitoring tools; calls, therefore, on the Commission to establish a concrete roadmap with timeframes, objectives, a yearly review and monitoring mechanism, clear and measurable indicators of success and additional targeted actions; calls in addition for guidelines to be put forward, as well as a roadmap on how to implement the intersectional and gender mainstreaming approaches, including gender budgeting, effectively in EU policy making, and for specific tools (such as indicators, targets and monitoring tools) to be developed, as well as for adequate human and financial resources to be allocated, allowing their application in all EU policies; calls for clear timeframes with regard to the development of the announced framework for the cooperation of internet platforms, the EU strategy on the eradication of trafficking in human beings, the gender equality strategy in the audiovisual industry (as part of the MEDIA sub-programme) and the EU-wide communication campaign on combating gender stereotypes;

6. Calls on the Commission to respect the commitments of the 2020 Work Programme in any revision and to deliver a proposal for binding pay transparency measures, an EU strategy on victims' rights and a new EU strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings regrets that the proposal for binding pay transparency measures was not introduced in 2020 as planned;

7. 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;

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8. Recalls the need to combat multi-layered discrimination, especially against vulnerable groups, including women with disabilities, black women, migrant, ethnic minority and Roma women, older women, single mothers, LGBTIQ+ people and homeless women, and stresses the importance of ensuring that they benefit from the objectives and actions of the EU strategy for gender equality 2020-2025; calls on the Commission to lay down explicit guidelines on the implementation of the intersectional framework, which should prioritise the participation of the groups affected by the intersecting forms of discrimination in order to assess the differential impact of policies and actions so as to tailor responses in each area that are grounded in the principle of non-discrimination;
9. Calls on the Commission and the Member States, in line with the aims of the strategy, to systematically incorporate a gender perspective at all stages of the response to the COVID-19 crisis and promote women's involvement at all levels of the decision-making process; underlines that it would be a wrong signal to postpone some elements of the new strategy and urges the Commission therefore to stay on track with the new strategy; calls on the Commission and the Member States to take due account of women's needs while designing and distributing funds agreed within the 'NextGenerationEU' recovery plan for Europe;
10. Stresses the need to ensure the reliable and adequate collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data to act as the basis for decision-making by securing and expanding the funding, and capacities of the EIGE;
11. Calls on the Member States to regularly exchange best practices and commit to an upward convergence and harmonisation of women's rights in Europe by introducing the most ambitious national measures and practices currently in force in the EU Member States into their respective legislation;
12. Calls, furthermore, for the Gender Equality Index by the EIGE to be incorporated within the Commission's monitoring process, and for the development of a gender pension gap indicator, following Parliament's recommendations in its resolution of 14 June 2017 on the need for an EU strategy to end and prevent the gender pension gap ⁽³⁵⁾, to be monitored within the gender equality strategy as the only strategy which gathers together all of the inequalities women experience throughout their lives; calls further for other indicators on gender pay and care gaps, the gender digital divide, etc. to be considered;
13. Calls on the Council to establish a configuration on Gender Equality gathering ministers and secretaries of state in charge of gender equality in a single dedicated forum in order to deliver common and concrete measures to address the challenges in the field of women's rights and gender equality, and to ensure that gender equality issues are discussed at the highest political level;
14. Calls on the Member States to create a formal Council configuration on Gender Equality, in order to provide the Ministers and Secretaries of State in charge of gender equality with a dedicated forum for discussion, and to better facilitate gender mainstreaming across all EU policies, including employment and social policy;
15. Regrets the lack of reference in the gender equality strategy 2020-2025 to the protection of women and girls at risk of social exclusion, poverty and homelessness; calls on the Commission to address these issues in the forthcoming action plan on integration and inclusion, in order to prevent these women from being excluded from social and economic policies, thus further deepening the poverty cycle;
16. Calls on the Council to adopt Council conclusions to approve the gender equality strategy and identify concrete actions to implement it;

Eliminating violence against women and gender-based violence

17. Supports the Commission's commitment to combating gender-based violence, supporting and protecting the victims of these crimes, and ensuring that those responsible are held accountable for their crimes; supports the Commission's plan to continue pushing for the EU-wide ratification of the Istanbul Convention; underlines, in this context, the need for specific measures to address the existing disparities in laws, policies and services between Member States and the increase in domestic and gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic; draws attention, however, to the fact that several attempts to convince reluctant Member States have failed and that Hungary's Government recently decided not to ratify the Convention at all; warmly welcomes, therefore, the Commission's intention to propose measures in 2021 to

⁽³⁵⁾ OJ C 331, 18.9.2018, p. 60.

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achieve the objectives of the Istanbul Convention if the EU's accession remains blocked; calls for preparatory actions to be started now in order to launch additional legally binding measures and an EU framework directive to prevent and combat all forms of gender-based violence, addressing among other issues, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced abortion, sterilisation and marriages, and for it to include sexual exploitation, trafficking, cyber violence, the publication of revenge porn and online hate speech against women with a strong intersectional approach; welcomes the initiative extending the areas of crime to encompass specific forms of gender-based violence in accordance with Article 83(1) TFEU; recalls that these new legislative measures should be complementary to the ratification of the Istanbul Convention;

18. Welcomes the plan to table an additional recommendation, as well as possible legislation, on the prevention of harmful practices, and to launch an EU network on the prevention of both gender-based and domestic violence; requests that the definitions and goals of the Istanbul Convention be applied and that women's rights and civil society organisations (CSOs) be involved on a continuous basis; urges that appropriate follow-up measures be put forward, all respecting the principle of non-discrimination; highlights the importance of the engagement — when appropriate according to a given Member State's structure — of local and regional governments in this process; underlines the role of education, including boys' and men's education, and calls for the countering of gender stereotypes in this regard; calls for the proper protection of women victims of domestic violence to be ensured, increasing states' means and effective responses;

19. Underlines the need to collect disaggregated data on all forms of gender-based violence; welcomes the announcement of a new EU-wide survey on the prevalence and dynamics of all forms of violence against women; stresses the need for comprehensive and comparable gender-disaggregated data at EU level and for the harmonisation of data collection systems among Member States;

20. Stresses the need to protect women who are minors, who belong to minorities or have a health problem or disability as potential victims and targets of different forms of violence; supports the Commission's plan to present and finance measures to combat possible abuse, exploitation and violence against these particularly vulnerable groups;

21. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to safeguard inclusive equality for women and girls with disabilities in all areas of life, to ensure their sexual and reproductive rights, to provide them with protection from domestic violence and violence by care and support service providers, and to launch sensitisation and capacity-building programmes to this end for professionals in the fields of healthcare, social and care services, education, training and employment services, law enforcement and the judiciary;

22. Stresses the scope and impact of violence and harassment in the workplace and the need for concrete measures at EU level to address these issues and to fight against psychological and sexual harassment; points out that informal carers, domestic workers and farm workers, among others, in particular lack protection and visibility, and calls on the Member States to adopt ILO Convention 189, in order to strengthen the rights of workers, especially women, in the informal economy and to ensure that complaint mechanisms are independent, confidential and accessible to all women without discrimination, and that specific measures are provided to protect complainants from employer retaliation and repeated victimisation; welcomes the Commission's commitment to adopt, as an employer, a new comprehensive legal framework with a set of preventive and reactive measures against harassment in the workplace;

23. Regrets the lack of reference to the gender dimension of trafficking for purposes of labour exploitation, especially in the case of domestic workers, due to the limitations inherent to the family home as a workplace with respect to the possibilities of carrying out inspections and monitoring work activity; recalls its resolution of 28 April 2016 on women domestic workers and carers in the EU, and asks the Commission and the Member States to promote investigations in this area, in order to improve the mechanisms for the identification and protection of the victims, and to involve NGOs, trade unions, public authorities and all citizens in the detection process;

24. Is deeply worried about the nature, extent and gravity of violence and harassment in the world of work, and the impact of all forms of violence against women and girls in work situations; welcomes in this regard the recently adopted ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment at work and calls on the Member States to ratify and implement it without delay; calls also on the Commission and the Member States to introduce effective and binding measures to define and prohibit violence and harassment in the world of work, including effective access to gender-responsive, safe and

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effective complaint and dispute resolution mechanisms, training and awareness-raising campaigns, support services and remedies;

25. Believes that women workers suffering gender-based violence should be entitled to a reduction in or reorganisation of their working hours and to a change of workplace; considers that gender-based violence should be included in workplace risk assessments;

26. Condemns the campaign against the Istanbul Convention that targets violence against women and the deliberate campaign to discredit it; is worried about the rejection of the zero-tolerance norm for violence against women and gender-based violence, which is based on a strong international consensus; points out that this questions the essence of human rights, such as equality, autonomy and dignity; stresses the key role played by CSOs in combating gender-based violence and supporting victims, and urges the Commission, therefore, to provide adequate funding for associations pursuing these aims; welcomes the commitment within the new victims' rights strategy to address the specific needs of women and girls who are victims of violence, especially with a view to ensuring victims' rights, protection and compensation; calls on the Council to urgently conclude the EU's ratification and full implementation of the Istanbul Convention and to advocate its ratification by all Member States;

27. Emphasises the need to recognise and combat all types of violence and harassment in the educational system, schools, universities, traineeships, programmes for professional development and all other programmes, across the whole sector;

28. Welcomes the proposed specific measures to tackle cyber violence which disproportionately affects women and girls (including online harassment, cyberbullying and sexist hate speech), in particular activists, women politicians and other public figures visible in public discourse; welcomes, in this context, the announcement that this phenomenon will be tackled in the Digital Services Act and that it envisages working with the tech platforms and the ICT sector in a new framework of cooperation, in order for the latter to address the issue through adequate technical measures such as prevention techniques and response mechanisms to harmful content; urges the Member States and the EU to adopt further measures, including binding legislative measures, to combat these forms of violence in the framework of a Directive on preventing and combating all forms of violence against women, and for Member States to be given support in the development of training tools for the services involved at all stages, from prevention and protection to prosecution, such as the police force and the justice system, together with the information and communication sector, while also safeguarding fundamental rights online;

29. Is concerned about the lack of an explicit prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of a person's gender identity and gender expression in EU law; notes the persistence of discrimination, harassment and exclusion from the labour market of LGBTIQ+ people; recalls its resolutions of 14 February 2019 on the future of the LGBTI List of Actions⁽³⁶⁾ and of 18 December 2019 on public discrimination and hate speech against LGBTI people⁽³⁷⁾; welcomes the adoption of the first ever LGBTIQ+ strategy, and calls on the Commission to follow up on its LGBTI List of Actions 2016-2019 with specific measures to tackle discrimination at work on grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics;

30. Welcomes the recently adopted, first ever EU Strategy on victims' rights (2020-2025) which will address the specific needs of victims of gender-based violence, in particular a specific approach for psychological violence against women and the impact on their mental health on the long run; stresses the need to address the current gaps in the EU legislation and asks the Commission to put forward, without delay, a proposal for a review of the Victims' Rights Directive with regard to international standards on violence against women, such as the Istanbul Convention, with a view to enhancing the legislation on victims' rights and the protection and compensation of victims; stresses the need for all victims to have effective access to justice through the implementation of the Victims' Rights Directive, which is still lacking in some Member States; asks for the continued promotion of victims' rights also through existing instruments such as the European Protection Order;

31. Draws the attention of the Commission and the Member States to the extremely dramatic situation of children orphaned by gender-based violence or forced to live in an environment of domestic violence, and urges them to take these situations into account when tackling the problem of domestic violence;

⁽³⁶⁾ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0129.

⁽³⁷⁾ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0101.

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32. Urges the Commission to present the long-awaited EU strategy on the eradication of trafficking in human beings and underlines the need for a clear recognition of the gendered nature of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, where women and girls are the most affected; acknowledges that sexual exploitation for surrogacy and reproductive purposes or purposes such as forced marriages, prostitution and pornography is unacceptable and a violation of human dignity and human rights; requests, therefore, that the strategy look closely at the situation of women in prostitution, with a special focus on the link between prostitution and the trafficking of women and minors, in the EU and worldwide, and the emerging use of the internet for purposes of exploitation; highlights the important role and work of the EU-Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and urges the Commission to appoint the new Coordinator without further delay, to closely monitor the implementation of the Anti-Trafficking Directive by the Member States; insists on the importance of including measures and strategies to reduce demand;

33. Calls for stronger measures concerning legislation on sexual offences and underlines that sex must always be voluntary; calls on the Commission to include recommendations to all Member States to amend the definition of rape in their national legislation so that it is based on the absence of consent;

34. Welcomes the EU-wide communication campaign on combating gender stereotypes, as well as violence-prevention measures focusing on men, boys and masculinities; calls for clearer measures to target destructive masculinity norms, as gender stereotypes are a root cause of gender inequality and affect all areas of society;

35. Calls for more attention and support to orphanages and foster homes for the victims of violence, which have been closed or whose shelter capacity has been heavily limited during the COVID-19 pandemic, obliging women or young girls and children to face the prospect of quarantine in their abuser's home;

36. Underlines the fact that violence against women is often the main reason why women experience homelessness; urges the Commission, therefore, to take the necessary measures to prevent violence against women leading to or prolonging homelessness;

37. Welcomes the announcement of a recommendation on the prevention of harmful practices, alongside possible legislation, to combat FGM, forced sterilisation, early and forced marriage and so-called honour-related violence, which specifically injures children and young girls;

Women and the economy

38. Reiterates its calls on the Commission and the Member States to further develop and improve the collection of gender-disaggregated data ⁽³⁸⁾, statistics, research and analysis, as well as support for and measures to improve institutional and CSO capacity-building as regards data collection and analysis, in particular regarding the participation of women in the labour market and in areas such as informal employment, entrepreneurship, access to financing and to healthcare services, unpaid work, poverty and the impact of social protection systems; also urges the EIGE and all other relevant EU institutions and agencies to work on and incorporate new indicators, such as in-work poverty, time-poverty, gaps in time use, the value of care work (paid and/or unpaid), and the take-up rates of women and men, including in relation to the Work-Life Balance Directive; calls on the Commission to use these data to effectively implement gender impact assessments of its policies and programmes, and those of other EU agencies and institutions;

39. Supports the revision of the Barcelona targets and the call on Member States to ensure adequate investments in care services and long-term care services, including from available EU funding, as well as to ensure affordable, accessible and high-quality childcare, including early childhood education, giving, in particular, young mothers the opportunity to work and/or study, and recalls in this context principle 11 of the European Pillar of Social Rights; calls for financial support for and the sharing of best practices among Member States which have not yet achieved the targets; welcomes, furthermore, the development of guidance for Member States on tackling financial disincentives in relation to social, economic and taxation policies; underlines the goal of equal carers and equal earners, which needs to be at the heart of these efforts and welcomes, in this context, the Work-Life Balance Directive as a first step;

⁽³⁸⁾ See Parliament's resolution of 30 January 2020 on the gender pay gap.

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40. Calls on the Commission to put forward a Care Deal for Europe, taking a comprehensive approach towards all care needs and services, and setting minimum standards and quality guidelines for care throughout the life cycle, including for children, elderly persons and persons with long-term needs; invites the Commission and the Member States to collect disaggregated data on the provision of care services; urges the Member States to swiftly and fully transpose and implement the Work-Life Balance Directive so as to ensure a fair division of work and family life, and invites them to go beyond the Directive's minimum standards by introducing measures such as fully paid leave, the promotion of men's equal role as carers, thereby tackling gender stereotypes in take-up of paternity and/or maternity leave, the recognition of the role of informal carers by ensuring their access to social security and their right to pension entitlements, support for services adapted to the specific challenges and needs of parents and/or family members taking care of persons with disabilities or long-term illnesses or of the elderly, and flexible working arrangements that are not to the detriment or at the expense of the worker's wages, access to social and labour rights and allowances, and that respect workers' right to disconnect; urges the Commission to monitor annually, closely and systemically the implementation by the Member States of the Work-Life Balance Directive;

41. Calls for affordable and good quality childcare and long-term care services that enable a return to employment, particularly for women, and facilitate a good work-life balance;

42. Stresses the need to create a crèche and pre-school education network; points out that this is a broad social responsibility and should be a universal service that is actually accessible to all children and families who wish to use this network;

43. Encourages Member States, on the basis of a pooling of best practices, to introduce, for the benefit of both women and men, 'care credits' to offset breaks from employment taken in order to provide informal care to family members and periods of formal care leave, such as maternity, paternity and parental leave, and to count these credits towards pension entitlements fairly; considers that such credits should be awarded for a short set period in order not to further entrench stereotypes and inequalities;

44. Urges the Member States to take specific measures to combat the risk of poverty in old age and retirement, increasing pensions and boosting social benefits; takes the view that income inequalities between men and women in retirement must be overcome and that this calls for pensions to be increased, and for public, universal and solidarity-based social security systems to be maintained and enhanced, ensuring that they are redistributive and provide a fair and decent income after a lifetime of work, safeguarding the sustainability of public social security systems by creating jobs with rights and improving wages;

45. Calls for the Commission, the Parliament and the Council to closely examine women's needs and participation in the labour market, as well as horizontal and vertical labour market segregation, while designing programmes within the next multiannual financial framework (MFF), as well as the recovery plan NextGenerationEU;

46. Considers it a priority to take action to support the family, including in terms of providing adequate and affordable childcare facilities, which will make a positive contribution to women's participation in the labour market and their retirement prospects;

47. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to monitoring the correct transposition of the Work-Life Balance Directive into national legislation by 2022 as required and to ensuring its full implementation;

48. Calls on the Commission to collect data on the provision of different types of care (childcare, care for older people and persons with disabilities or persons requiring long-term care), feeding into a study examining the care gap to act as the basis of an initiative for a European care strategy; notes that the strategy in question has to respect the competences of the Member States as laid down in the Treaties, but would aim to improve cooperation and the coordination of all measures which could be beneficial for informal carers in the EU and the people they are taking care of; stresses that cooperation at European level, together with the efficient use of EU funds, can contribute to the development of quality, accessibility and affordability care services;

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49. Welcomes the Council's decision to activate the 'general escape clause', and calls on the Member States to invest in public services, including free childcare and healthcare, in order to create new, quality jobs and to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the crisis; considers that austerity measures have long-term detrimental consequences, particularly on women, and must not be enforced in the post-COVID-19 crisis;

50. Welcomes the instrument for temporary support to mitigate unemployment risks in an emergency (SURE); calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that SURE addresses losses in income for women;

51. Stresses the need to boost investment in services significantly, particularly healthcare, education and transport services, with a view to addressing populations' needs and contributing to the independence, equality and emancipation of women;

52. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to table binding measures on pay transparency which can be a useful tool to detect gaps and discrimination within the same sector and bridge the gender pay gap; regrets nonetheless the delay in publishing this proposal and asks the Commission to put forward the proposal as soon as possible; stresses in this regard the importance of the full cooperation and involvement of the social partners and all stakeholders in line with national practices and traditions; points out, however, that the issue of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women across different occupational sectors still needs to be addressed to cover differences in pay for work of equal value in the gender-segregated labour market, with lower wages in some sectors, which mostly employ women, such as nursing, care, retail, sales and the education sector, compared to, for example, the manufacturing sector or technical professions which employ more men; strongly recommends the inclusion of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value between women and men, which could be defined as follows: 'Work shall be deemed of equal value if, based on a comparison of two groups of workers which have not been formed in an arbitrary manner, the work performed is comparable, taking into account factors such as the working conditions, the degree of responsibility conferred on the workers, and the physical or mental requirements of the work'; points out that gender-neutral job evaluation tools and classification criteria need to be developed for this purpose;

53. Welcomes the Commission's evaluation of the existing framework on equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, the launching of a consultation process on how to improve gender equality in the world of work, the forthcoming Pension Adequacy Report, and the consideration of the provision of pension credits for care-related career breaks in occupational pension schemes;

54. Calls on the Commission to present, within the next year, a revision of Directive 2006/54/EC in line with the recent evaluation of the functioning and implementation of the EU's equal pay laws, and in accordance with the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union; considers that such a revision should include a definition of 'work of equal value' across all occupational sectors, which incorporates the gender perspective, as well as a reference to multiple forms of discrimination and additional measures to ensure the enforceability of the Directive;

55. Recalls its resolution of 30 January 2020 on the gender pay gap; calls for an immediate revision of the action plan and for an ambitious new gender pay gap action plan by the end of 2020, which should set clear targets for the Member States to reduce the gender pay gap over the next five years and ensure that such targets are taken account of in the country-specific recommendations; highlights, in particular, the need to include an intersectional perspective in the new action plan; calls on the Commission and the Member States to involve the social partners and CSOs in developing the new policies to close the gender pay gap and to improve and further develop statistics, research and analysis in order to better measure and monitor progress in closing the gender pay gap, paying particular attention to groups experiencing multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination; calls on the Commission to pay attention to the factors leading to the pension gap and to support Member States in their measures to reduce it by establishing a gender pension gap indicator to assess the accumulated inequalities experienced by women throughout their lives;

56. Notes that tax policies have varying impacts on different types of households; stresses that individual taxation can be instrumental in terms of achieving tax fairness for women; underlines the negative impacts of certain forms of taxation on women's employment rates and their economic independence, and notes that tax policies should be optimised to strengthen incentives for the labour market participation of women; draws attention to the potential negative consequences of joint taxation on the gender pension gap; stresses that tax systems should move away from the assumption that

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households pool and share their funds equally; underlines the impact of period poverty on many European women resulting from expensive menstrual hygiene products and the high levels of taxation of these products in many Member States and thus urges the Member States to take action against this form of indirect tax discrimination and against period poverty;

57. Recalls that funding and taxation policies have a strong gender component; welcomes the Commission's commitment to gender mainstreaming throughout the MFF, in particular with regard to the European Social Fund Plus (ESF +), in order to promote women's participation in the labour market, work-life balance and female entrepreneurship, but regrets the lack of gender budgeting in the new MFF and Structural Funds; calls on the Commission to further promote and improve the use of gender budgeting, and on the Member States to integrate the gender perspective in taxation policies, including gender audits of fiscal policies, in order to eliminate tax-related gender biases;

58. Recalls once again the need to put a stronger focus on gender equality within the different phases of the European Semester process and calls for the introduction of a gender equality pillar and an overarching gender equality objective in the successor to the Europe 2020 strategy; urges that clear gender equality indicators be incorporated and that statistical methods and analysis be developed for monitoring progress on gender equality, with an intersectional perspective, in the country-specific challenges identified in the social scoreboard;

59. Highlights that 70 % of the global health and social workforce are women, often only paid the minimum wage and whose working conditions are precarious, and calls for the levelling up of wages and working conditions in strongly female-dominated sectors such as care, health and retail sales, as well as for the eradication of the gender pay and pension gaps, and labour market segregation;

60. Calls on the Commission and the Member States, in consultation with the social partners, to develop gender-sensitive workplace health and safety guidelines specifically targeted to frontline professions, in order to protect workers in these professions in the event of future outbreaks; underlines that changes in labour conditions such as teleworking, while offering opportunities for improving flexible working arrangements and work-life balance, can also 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; calls, therefore, on the Commission to come forward with a gender-sensitive legislative proposal on the right to disconnect, as well as a directive on mental well-being in the workplace aimed at recognising anxiety, depression and burnout as occupational diseases, and to establish mechanisms for prevention and for the reintegration of affected employees into the workforce;

61. Calls on the Commission to revise Directive 92/85/EEC, with a view to ensuring that women throughout Europe can benefit on an equal footing with men from the free movement of workers ⁽³⁹⁾;

62. Stresses the need for Member States to present evidence-based, well-designed labour market policies and reforms that de facto improve women's working conditions and increase quality employment;

63. Calls on the Commission to present a European strategy on social protection to address the free movement of workers and, in particular, the feminisation of poverty, with a special focus on lone-parent households headed by women;

64. Underlines that equal opportunities and higher levels of labour market participation among women can increase jobs, economic prosperity and competitiveness in Europe; calls on the Commission and Member States to set goals to reduce precarious jobs and involuntary part-time work in order to improve the situation for women in the labour market;

65. Calls on the Commission to have a specific approach for single mothers, as single mothers are particularly economically vulnerable since they often earn less than men and are more likely to leave the labour market when they become a parent; calls on the Commission to enhance, in this context, the enforcement of existing legal tools on the cross-border collection of alimony, with public awareness-raising about their availability; urges the Commission to work closely with the Member States to identify practical problems linked with alimony collection in cross-border situations and to develop tools to effectively enforce payment obligations;

⁽³⁹⁾ Directive 2014/54/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers (OJ L 128, 30.4.2014, p. 8).

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66. Notes that female labour market participation is lower than that of men; underlines the importance of lowering income tax to encourage labour market participation;

67. Urges the Member States to take further action in combating discrimination against women in the labour market;

68. Recalls that the world of work remains unequal as regards income, career perspectives, feminised sectors, access to social protection, and education and training; recalls that all these dimensions have to be addressed to achieve gender equality;

69. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure equal participation and opportunities in the labour market for men and women, and 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 such as hospitality, tourism, cleaning services and the care sector; points out the importance of addressing the cultural undervaluation of jobs dominated by women, the need to combat such stereotypes and the over-representation of women in atypical forms of work; calls on the Member States to ensure equal treatment for migrant women (also through a revision of the system of recognition of professional qualifications), as well as for other particularly vulnerable groups of women; calls on the Commission and the Member States to strengthen collective bargaining coverage at sectoral level and the involvement of the social partners in policymaking, in order to foster stable and quality employment; stresses the need for strategies to encourage and support women's entrepreneurial initiatives;

70. Notes that the growing gig economy has implications for workers who are less unionised and at risk of job precariousness due to factors such as unstable working hours and income, their lack of coverage by employment rights, uncertainty surrounding social security and pensions, or lack of access to career development and retraining; is concerned that the associated insecurity and precariousness, aggravated by the confinement imposed by the current crisis, has a particularly negative impact on women, who still carry the burden of care in a highly gendered labour market, especially those who experience intersecting forms of discrimination; calls on the Member States to implement targeted social protection measures for women freelancers and women employed in the gig economy; calls on the Commission to closely monitor the implementation of Directive 2010/41/EU;

71. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to adopting an action plan to implement 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;

72. Stresses that the gender pay gap in the media sector is high and female journalists are more likely than men to face harassment, violence, sexism and discrimination; recalls the second chapter of the European Pillar of Social Rights on fair working conditions; calls, therefore, on Member States to safeguard the right to fair and safe working conditions of all workers in the media sector;

73. Calls on the Member States to take measures to ensure access for migrant and refugee women to healthcare, employment, food and information services, and to mitigate protection risks, particularly violence between men and women and the trafficking of women;

74. Encourages the Member States to take firm measures to sanction businesses that fail to comply with labour legislation and discriminate between men and women; takes the view, furthermore, that conditionality should be applied in the allocation of EU funds to companies that have high working standards and do not discriminate against women;

75. Urges the Commission to campaign for more women in economic decision-making positions by highlighting the economic and societal advantages thereof, and sharing best practices such as public indices on companies' equality performance; urges the Commission to continue working with the Member States, as well as the current and incoming EU presidencies, to urgently break the deadlock in the Council and adopt the proposed Directive on 'Women on Boards' and to develop a strategy with Member States for meaningful representation of all women from diverse backgrounds in decision-making roles, including in all EU institutions;

76. Recalls that the under-representation of women in public and political life undermines the proper functioning of democratic institutions and processes; calls, therefore, on the Member States to encourage and support measures to facilitate the balanced participation of men and women in decision-making at national, regional and local levels;

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77. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to adopt measures to combat the phenomenon of the glass ceiling, such as extensive parental leave, access to high-quality, affordable childcare, and the elimination of all forms of direct and indirect discrimination linked to promotions in the labour market;

78. Welcomes the support for gender parity in elected bodies such as the European Parliament; calls for the introduction of binding measures such as quotas, and stresses that it must serve as a role model in this regard; welcomes, furthermore, the Commission's announcement that it intends to lead by example with regard to management positions and calls for strategies to guarantee a meaningful representation of women from diverse backgrounds in decision-making roles in the Commission; notes the efforts which have already been made to do so in the composition of the current Commission and stresses the same ambition is needed for Parliament; calls on the Member States to introduce binding quotas in their electoral systems to ensure the equal representation of women and men in both the European and the national parliaments;

79. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to promote the participation of women as voters and candidates in the 2024 European Parliament elections; in this regard, stresses the need for a revision of the Electoral Act in order to provide for the possibility of the temporary replacement of Members of the European Parliament who are availing themselves of their right to maternity, paternity or parental leave; calls on the Commission to revise the Electoral Act accordingly and on the Council to endorse this revision;

80. Calls for women also to be able to fulfil their life plans in rural and peripheral areas; points out that the requisite infrastructure for this must be available, new areas of business developed, the return to work facilitated and the participation of a whole range of cooperation partners encouraged in order to support, encourage, facilitate and promote access to the labour market for such women, to ensure equal opportunities and improve social cohesion in villages;

81. Emphasises the active and crucial role of women in the economy of rural areas, and regrets the fact that significant gender differences persist within agricultural employment and regarding access to social security, training, maternity leave and retirement pensions; calls on the Commission, the Member States and regional and local authorities to support projects addressed to women in particular, on creating innovative agricultural activities in rural and depopulated areas in order to strengthen their position in the agricultural market, which can be a source of new jobs; calls, furthermore, on the Commission to identify funding opportunities under the second pillar of the common agricultural policy (CAP) in order to increase women's access to land and to address their working conditions in rural areas, especially those of seasonal workers;

82. Calls on the Commission to step up its efforts in putting forward concrete measures and specific funds to combat the feminisation of poverty and of precarious work, with a particular focus on women facing multiple forms of discrimination;

83. Reiterates its call on the Commission and the Member States regarding its resolution of 28 April 2016 on women domestic workers and carers in the EU; urges the Commission to introduce a framework for the professionalisation of domestic work and care, leading to the recognition and standardisation of the relevant professions and skills and to the possibility of career building, and to encourage the Member States to establish systems for professionalisation, training, continuous skills development and recognition of women domestic and care workers' qualifications, as well as to create public employment agencies to strengthen professionalisation;

84. Calls on the Member States to promote and develop policies within the performing arts sector, which respect the value of equal opportunities, as well as gender equality in all activities, with an emphasis on mitigating the negative effects of long-lasting disparities and inequalities such as the gender divide across the music sector where the ratio of men to women is roughly 70 % to 30 % respectively across all regions and in Europe, with women representing 20 % or less of registered composers and songwriters, and earning on average 30 % less than men working within the sector, with women composing only 2,3 % of the classical works performed at concerts and owning only 15 % of record labels;

85. Is concerned about the limited social mobility that hinders labour mobility among women; stresses the need to improve opportunities for labour mobility within the EU;

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Digital policies for gender equality

86. Regrets the under-representation of women in the digital economy, AI, ICT and STEM sectors in terms of education, training and employment, and points out the risk of this reinforcing and reproducing stereotypes and gender bias through the programming of AI and other programs; highlights the possible benefits and opportunities, but also the potential challenges of digitalisation for women and girls, and urges the Commission to ensure the adoption of concrete gender mainstreaming measures in the implementation of the single market strategy and the digital agenda preventing, in good time and in advance, any negative impact of digitalisation on women and girls, and ensuring a clear link between commitments on ending stereotypes and comprehensive actions to ensure women's independence in the formation of the digital labour market; calls on the Commission to propose concrete measures for technologies and AI to be transformed into tools in the fight to eradicate gender stereotypes and to empower girls and women to enter STEM and ICT fields of study and to stay on these career paths;

87. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to address horizontal and vertical segregation in employment and discriminatory practices in decisions concerning recruitment and promotion, including policies that promote the integration of women from marginalised groups into the labour market;

88. Calls for the structure of traditional gender norms and the gender-specific attribution of jobs and activities to be further broken down with the aim of overcoming persisting prejudices and gender stereotypes; stresses the importance of sensitising all those involved in the process of selecting study courses and careers in this regard;

89. Underlines the importance of access to and the development of digital skills for older women, women in rural areas and women and girls in disadvantaged positions with limited access to new technologies, in order to remain connected to active life and to facilitate their keeping in contact with friends and relatives;

90. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to use Horizon Europe to provide insights and solutions on addressing potential gender biases in AI; asks, however, that all possible funding be used to support projects which encourage girls and women to improve their digital skills, and which make them familiar with STEM;

91. Notes that, in times of events such as the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the role of and opportunities for teleworking and distance working increase; calls on the Commission to include the role of teleworking and distance working in the strategy as an important factor in achieving work-life balance;

Gender mainstreaming in all EU policies and funding of gender equality policies

92. Stresses that gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting are essential tools to assess and target the effects of different policy actions and budgetary use on men and women and should be used throughout the policymaking process and budgetary actions;

93. Reiterates the importance of gender mainstreaming as a systematic approach to achieving gender equality; welcomes, therefore, the Commission's newly established task force on equality and calls for this task force to be adequately trained and resourced and to periodically report to the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality about its work; underlines the importance of transparency and the involvement of women's rights organisations and CSOs from diverse backgrounds; urges the Commission to incorporate provisions making the consideration of inputs from the task force compulsory for Directorates-General and develop training courses for all staff, as well as processes to monitor and assess mainstreaming in accordance with its mission;

94. Calls for the Commission, Parliament and the Council to create a thematic sub-programme for women in rural areas through the Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plans financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD); stresses that this sub-programme should seek to encourage women's employment and female entrepreneurship, using opportunities linked to agro-tourism and the development of digital villages, improving female farmers' access to land, credit and financial instruments, skills and performance through education, training and advisory services, increased participation in local action groups and the development of local partnerships under the Leader programme; calls in this regard for the earmarking of EU funds for better living and working conditions in rural areas, including better access to services and the development of infrastructure, with a particular focus on access to broadband internet, as well as supporting entrepreneurial initiatives and

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access to credit, thereby empowering women in rural areas; calls on the Member States to exchange best practices on professional status for assisting spouses in the agricultural sector, thereby addressing women's social security rights, including maternity leave or pension entitlements, and requests that the Commission prepare guidance in this regard;

95. Calls on the Commission to advance female entrepreneurship and access to loans and equity finance through EU programmes and funds, and welcomes its intention to introduce new measures to promote women-led start-ups and innovative small and medium-sized enterprises in 2020, and to strengthen gender equality under Horizon Europe; stresses that the requirement for gender equality plans from applicants is a crucial tool for advancement in this area; stresses the need for awareness-raising regarding existing and future EU funding possibilities for women and girl entrepreneurs, and to increase the visibility of women leaders to establish stronger role models and break existing stereotypes;

96. Stresses that the response to the COVID-19 epidemic should be used to establish additional budget resources that the Member States could mobilise to support victims of violence;

97. Is deeply concerned about the fact that the European Green Deal and related initiatives include neither a gender perspective nor any reference to gender equality; urges that gender mainstreaming be incorporated into EU environmental and climate policies, such as the Green Deal, and stresses that these policies must be informed by gender impact assessments to ensure that they address existing gender inequalities and other forms of social exclusion; calls on the Commission to step up financial and institutional support to promote gender-just climate action and establish strong policy measures to encourage the equal participation of women in decision-making bodies and national- and local-level climate policy, which is vital for achieving long-term climate justice, and that recognition and support be given to women and girls as agents for change;

98. Calls on the Commission to design a roadmap to deliver on the commitments of the renewed Gender Action Plan agreed at COP25 and to create a permanent EU gender and climate change focal point, with sufficient budget resources, to implement and monitor gender-responsible climate action in the EU and globally;

99. Stresses the need to increase the resources available to the EU programmes dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and women's rights; calls on the Commission to step up its efforts to implement gender budgeting as an integral part of the budgetary procedure at all stages and in all its budget lines, and include independent budget lines for targeted actions; underlines that every new measure, mechanism or strategy should undergo a gender impact assessment; calls on the Commission and the Council, in this context, to invest in the care economy and to adopt a Care Deal for Europe, to complement the European Green Deal; welcomes the fact that, for the first time ever, gender mainstreaming will be a horizontal priority in the MFF and will be accompanied by a thorough gender impact assessment and monitoring of the programmes;

100. Calls on the Commission to take gender equality and a life cycle perspective into account in shaping the latest European policies and strategies, which will contribute to increasing women's economic independence and reducing inequalities in this area in the long term;

101. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take action in order to ensure that women can benefit from the opportunities created by the green transition; underlines that gender should be mainstreamed in the employment policies related to sustainability and just transition in order to deliver policies that allow for proper work-life balance and ensure equal pay, a decent income, personal development and adequate social protection; urges that projects financed under environmental programmes and access to investments for climate action should incorporate a gender perspective;

102. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to increase gender equality and women's empowerment in sport at large, given the powerful and undeniable role sport can play in helping women and girls break down gender stereotypes, in building confidence and in strengthening their leadership skills; calls on the Member States and the Commission to provide effective platforms to promote female role models and leaders with international, national and local reach; calls on the Member States to promote and develop policies to combat the gender-based remuneration gap and disparities in prize monies, any kind of violence against women and girls in sports and to ensure more coverage of women in the sports media and in decision-making positions; calls on the Commission to include sport in the planned campaign against stereotypes;

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103. Calls for the EU to adopt an intersectional and gender equality perspective to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and to allocate substantial funding from the Recovery and Resilience Instrument to gender equality measures, in particular in highly feminised sectors, and for the advancement of women's rights; calls for the funding to be based on a measurable gender mainstreaming principle through which a fair, adequate and coherent distribution of funding can be guaranteed; calls, furthermore, for a dedicated gender equality coronavirus fund to support the fight against existing inequalities;

104. Reaffirms the need to further incorporate the gender perspective in the upcoming disability equality strategy 2021, with due attention to improved access to the labour market through targeted measures and actions;

105. Recalls its resolution of 29 November 2018 on the situation of women with disabilities ⁽⁴⁰⁾; urges the Commission to put forward a consolidated proposal in the framework of the post-2020 European disability strategy that includes the development of positive actions targeting women with disabilities to ensure their full and effective participation in the labour market and to eliminate the discrimination and prejudices they face, including measures to promote employment, training, job placements, equal career paths, equal pay, accessibility of and reasonable accommodation in the workplace and further learning, paying attention to their digital inclusion and the need to safeguard work-life balance; also requests that measures regarding the gender pay, pension and care gaps explicitly address the needs of parents and carers of children with disabilities, especially women and single-parent households; takes note of the need for a Disability Rights Guarantee with specific measures that address the needs of women with disabilities, as well as for a reinforcement of the Youth Guarantee;

106. Asks the Commission to reach the most vulnerable women in particular; calls, therefore, for the Commission to make sure that all relevant actions of the strategy leave no woman behind;

107. Draws attention to the lack of a gender perspective in the field of health and safety at work; stresses that gender mainstreaming should be an integral part of the development of occupational safety and health (OSH) policies and prevention strategies across all sectors, including in the upcoming Commission review of the strategic framework for health and safety at work post-2020; urges the Commission, the Member States and the social partners to consider as occupational diseases and work-related illnesses those that have not yet been recognised as such, which are particularly prevalent in feminised jobs, as well as diseases affecting women specifically, to mainstream gender equality in health and safety in professions dominated by men, where there are still many gaps, including in relation to sanitary installations, work equipment or personal protective equipment, to ensure maternity protection and safety at the workplace and return-to-work measures after maternity leave, and to evaluate labour risks in feminised sectors, including the home, when dealing with domestic work and care;

108. Asks the Commission, in the light of the proven benefits of human milk for newborns, to promote breastfeeding, especially for pre-term infants; calls on the Commission to support policies which enhance the uptake of human milk, including both breastfeeding and donated milk, for pre-term infants, and to promote the cross-border use of milk banks to ensure that women in border regions can avail themselves of this support when necessary;

109. Urges that disability be included as an aspect in all general gender equality initiatives promoted in the European Union; urges that disabled victims of gender violence who are wards of court or in any other limited legal capacity scheme are guaranteed protection, urging for this purpose effective access to justice for this group of persons and training and capacity-building for professionals in the special services that act in these proceedings (such as criminal justice or health professionals); urges the establishment of an accessible education system free of stereotypes that allows girls and women with disabilities to choose the fields they study and work in in light of their own wishes and talents, without being restricted by inaccessibility, prejudice and stereotypes; supports the involvement of women with disabilities as models for change in gender equality and women's rights movements; urges the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities, including those in institutions, in all breast and cervix cancer prevention plans in the Member States, as well as the inclusion of this group in all anti-HIV/Aids programmes and other programmes to eradicate sexually transmitted diseases; urges that all indicators and data collected on gender equality issues be broken down by age, disability and gender;

⁽⁴⁰⁾ OJ C 363, 28.10.2020, p. 164.

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Countering backlashes against gender equality

110. Reiterates the need for a regular exchange of best practices between Member States, the Commission and key stakeholders (such as healthcare professionals, regulators and CSOs) on gender aspects in health, including guidelines for comprehensive sexuality and relationship education, SRHR and gender-sensitive responses to epidemics; calls on the Commission for further measures and support to guarantee SRHR during the implementation of the current gender equality strategy and to include SRHR in its next EU health strategy; calls on the Commission to support Member States in strengthening their health systems and providing high-quality and universal access to all healthcare services, and to reduce disparities in access to healthcare services, including SRHR services, between and within Member States; calls in this regard on Member States to guarantee safe, timely and full access to SRHR and the necessary healthcare services;

111. Asks the Commission to address health inequalities within the forthcoming EU health strategy which should focus on access to preventive healthcare at all stages of life, the health and safety of women in the workplace, and a specific gender focus in the Europe's beating cancer plan; underlines once more the importance of gender-specific medicine and research, and stresses, therefore, that investment in the differences between women and men in relation to their health should be supported through Horizon Europe in order to enable healthcare systems to be more responsive to the different needs of women and men;

112. Calls on the Commission to support research into non-hormonal contraception for women, providing them with more alternatives, as well as to support research on contraceptives for men, aiming to provide for equality in access to and the use of contraceptives, as well as shared responsibility;

113. Demands support for women's rights defenders and women's rights organisations in the EU and worldwide, including organisations working on SRHR and LGBTI+, through increased and earmarked financial support in the next MFF; underlines in addition their financial difficulties resulting from the current crisis and calls for increased funding in order to sufficiently fund their continued work; is deeply concerned about the backlash against established women's rights and gender equality in some Member States and, in particular, about the attempts to further criminalise abortion care and undermine young people's access to comprehensive sexual education in Poland, and about the adopted reform that attacks transgender and intersex rights in Hungary; calls for continuous monitoring of the state of play in relation to women's rights and gender equality, including disinformation and regressive initiatives in all Member States, and for an alarm system to highlight regression; calls on the Commission to support studies analysing the link between anti-democratic movements and attacks and disinformation campaigns on women's rights and gender equality, as well as on democracy, and calls on the Commission to analyse their root causes and strengthen its efforts to counter them, developing fact checks, counter-narratives and awareness-raising campaigns;

114. Calls on the Commission to carry out a global campaign against the increasing attacks they are suffering and to secure the release of human rights defenders, focusing special attention on women's rights defenders; calls for the immediate introduction in the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders of an annex aiming to recognise and develop additional strategies and tools to better and more effectively respond to and prevent the specific situation, threats and risk factors faced by women's human rights defenders;

115. Urges the Commission and Member States to protect women who are particularly vulnerable to multiple discrimination, recognising the intersectional forms of discrimination that women experience based on gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, disability, social status, sexual orientation and gender identity, and migration status, and to ensure that the actions implemented take account of and respond to the specific needs of these groups;

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116. Recalls its resolution of 12 February 2019 on the need for a strengthened post-2020 Strategic EU Framework for National Roma Inclusion Strategies⁽⁴¹⁾, which states that in most Member States no improvement has been observed in access to employment, that there are serious concerns relating to housing and little progress regarding poverty, and that there is a need for a strong gender dimension in the EU framework; is concerned about hate speech against Roma in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the additional restrictions introduced by some Member States to put Roma communities in quarantine, and fears the negative consequences for the most vulnerable groups among Roma, such as girls, young women, older women, persons with disabilities or LGBTIQ+; welcomes the adoption of the EU strategic framework on Roma equality and inclusion, making it possible to analyse the impact that the coronavirus is having on Roma communities and to adopt measures to avoid a backlash against them;

117. Urges the Commission to establish a concrete framework for the rights and protection of sex workers during and after a crisis; further insists on the importance of including measures and strategies that tackle the discrimination faced by sex workers in access to funding, housing, healthcare, education and other services;

118. Highlights that the audiovisual and print media is one of the sectors with considerable cultural, social and economic weight, both reflecting and shaping society and culture; regrets the fact that women are severely under-represented in key creative positions in this sector, including in the film industry across Europe and worldwide; calls on the Commission to address gender stereotypes in the media and promote gender-equal content; stresses the importance of fostering media literacy and providing all relevant stakeholders with gender-sensitive media education initiatives; calls on the Member States to adopt legislation prohibiting sexist advertising in the media and promoting training and practical courses on countering gender stereotypes in schools of journalism, communication, media and advertising; calls on the Commission to help with the sharing of best practices in the field of fighting sexist advertisements; calls on the Member States to develop and implement policies to eradicate persisting inequalities within the whole audiovisual sector in order to provide and improve opportunities for women and girls;

Gender equality through external relations

119. In line with Article 8 TFEU stating that the EU should, in all its activities, aim to eliminate inequalities and promote equality between men and women, calls for coherence between and the mutual reinforcement of the EU's internal and external policies on the principles of multiple discrimination, gender mainstreaming and gender equality, countering gender stereotypes and norms, as well as harmful practices and discriminatory laws, and promoting women's equal enjoyment of the full range of human rights through external relations; highlights in particular, in this context, the EU's trade policies, development cooperation and human rights policies; stresses the primary role of women's empowerment in order to effectively implement development policies; recalls the importance of education for women's and girls' empowerment in both the EU and partner countries; underlines that education is not only a right, but also a crucial tool to fight against early and forced marriages and teenage pregnancies; insists on the need for EU external policy to help keep girls in schools and continue their education in partner countries as a matter of priority; welcomes the renewed commitment to women's and girls' rights and the reference to the SDGs and, in particular, to SDG 5 as a key framework for the gender equality strategy;

120. Calls on the Commission, in partnership with the Member States, to monitor and work towards the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the ICPD Programme for Action and the outcomes of their review conferences, and of all the SDG targets, including targets 3.7 and 5.6, both within and outside the EU, using indicators in line with the UN global indicator framework for the SDGs;

121. Welcomes the new Gender Action Plan III (GAPIII) as a key instrument for promoting gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in external relations; stresses that this document needs to be accompanied by clear, measurable and time-bound indicators, including an allocation of roles and responsibilities to the different actors; welcomes the fact that the new action plan maintains the 85 % target for all new programmes to contribute to gender equality; regrets that the new 20 % target for the programmes to have gender equality as a principal objective was not established; demands that the new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument prioritise gender equality and women's rights

⁽⁴¹⁾ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2019)0075.

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across geographic and thematic programmes along these lines; welcomes the shift in the institutional culture of the Commission's services and the European External Action Service in order to more effectively deliver on the EU's commitments regarding women's rights and gender equality;

122. Calls on the Commission to further strengthen the role of the EU as a catalyst for gender equality worldwide;

123. Calls on the Commission to foster a deeper understanding of the particular needs of migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls in accessing health and education support and financial security to prevent the risk of their being exploited and to ensure that their rights are respected;

124. Notes that the Commission must address the particular situation of women's protection against gender-based violence in migration and asylum reception facilities, and calls for adapted infrastructure for women and girls, and adequate training for staff at these facilities where needed;

125. Welcomes a values-based EU trade policy with a high level of protection of labour and environmental rights, as well as respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights, including gender equality; recalls that all EU trade and investment agreements must be gender mainstreamed and include an ambitious and enforceable chapter on trade and sustainable development; welcomes the Commission's commitment to ensuring, for the first time, the inclusion of a specific chapter on trade and gender equality in the modernised Association Agreement with Chile, building on existing international examples;

126. Reiterates its continuous support for the work of the Commission in this field;

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127. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.
