

The Future of Europe: Lessons to be learned from the Corona crisis



- Acknowledging that Europe since March 2020 has been hit by the biggest public health crisis in a century, having unprecedented consequences for our societies and economies;
- being concerned that the impacts of COVID-19 will cause a backlash in the equality of women and men, given the surge of gender-based violence, economic contraction, heightened risks of poverty and over-dependence on women's paid and unpaid care work;

The EPP calls on the following top priorities to be addressed:

1. Health

- A. Whereas the pandemic has taught us how fragile our societies are and that health is a precondition for our societies and economies to function;
 - B. Taking into account that the workforce in the health and care sectors is predominantly female and that this gender divide put women at the frontline of fighting the pandemic;
 - C. Whereas as a consequence of the pandemic a delay or barriers arose in access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, and whereas critical needs for women were postponed, including access to maternity care and safe delivery, availability of contraception, legal abortion and IVF services, and provisions for clinical management in the case of rape;
 - D. Whereas with regards to Covid-19 clinical trials, reports found that sex-disaggregated data were lacking;
 - E. Whereas healthcare systems differ across EU Member States and these differences can disproportionately affect vulnerable individuals, linked to gender, age and educational or socioeconomic status;
1. Welcomes the initiative of European Commissioner Stella Kyriakides towards a European Health Union, resulting in a more secure, better-prepared and more resilient EU in the area of health;
 2. Calls upon all Member States to realize that access to health without discrimination is a fundamental human right, implementing a.o. that all citizens, regardless of age or sex, have equal access to vaccination and that access to sexual and reproductive health is preserved;
 3. Calls upon the European Commission to guarantee that health research includes innovators of all genders and that investigators and the pharmaceutical industry report disaggregated data at all levels;
 4. Urges equal representation of women in all decision-making bodies and subsidy committees related to the COVID-19 crisis and recovery instruments.

2. Domestic and gender based violence

- F. Whereas reports from several Member States during and following the confinement period revealed a worrying increase in domestic and gender-based violence and whereas violence is not a private issue but a societal concern;
 - G. Whereas gender-based violence against women, children as well as men cannot be tolerated and must be addressed in all its forms of abuse;
5. Urges the European Council and the European Parliament to uphold their commitments from 2019 to combat all forms of violence, in particular gender-based violence, promoting its prevention and protecting and supporting victims;
 6. Urges the Member States to ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention, equipping the police with the necessary skills and strengthening the judiciary system to add sexual violence to the list of EU crimes defined in the Treaty of Lisbon and to establish an EU-network to fight sexual violence.

3. Recovery of our society and economy

- H. Whereas the European Commission has allocated €750 billion to a Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF) to tackle the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and drive the EU towards a green and digital future;
 - I. Whereas the pandemic has convincingly demonstrated the importance of digital communication, and its tremendous effect on the economy, the public sphere and also on our personal lives and our relations with other people;
 - J. Whereas women's access to the ICT sector is essential for the recovery of the European economy and its innovative development to a green and digital future;
7. Calls upon the European Commission to ensure a gender perspective across all RRF funding areas and adopt a gender budgeting lens across all programmes, including targeted objectives, indicators, benchmarks and budgets;
 8. Calls upon the EU and its Member States to ensure the active and consistent consultation with women's civil society organisations, to make sure that the reforms included in the Recovery and Resilience Plans correspond to women's experiences on the ground;
 9. Reiterates the top priorities to be addressed in 2019-2024 of the Emergency Resolution 'Female Visions for a better Europe' adopted at the EPP Congress in Zagreb in 2019;

4. Towards a gender inclusive economy

- K. Whereas a majority of workers delivering essential services in the COVID-19 crisis are women, e.g. in healthcare, child care and teaching;
 - L. Whereas wages in many essential and significantly female-dominated sectors can be low and whereas vertical and horizontal labour market segregation in the EU is still significant;
 - M. Whereas families are the cornerstone of our society which requires that there is a balance between employment life and private life;
10. Calls upon the EU and its Member States that the Recovery and Resilience Plans sufficiently need to address those sectors where women are overrepresented;
 11. Urges the Member States to effectively address gender pay and pension gaps, as economic indicators suggest that these gaps are further widening as a consequence of the pandemic;
 12. Gives its full support to the EPP Group Policy Proposals for an EU Carer's Strategy;
 13. Calls upon the European Commission to closely monitor the implementation of the EU Directive on Work-life Balance for parents and carers in the Member States;
 14. Urges the European Commission to develop a follow-up to the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Urges the EPP member parties to advocate within their national governments and parliamentary groups for the realization of the above listed top priorities considering gender-related consequences of the pandemic and its aftermath to be addressed.

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**If you have any question
you would like to ask
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