

Strengthening the commitment to equality between women and men: a women's charter

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The Commission has adopted a Women's Charter to improve the promotion of equality between women and men, in Europe and throughout the world. Gender inequalities have direct consequences on economic and social cohesion, on sustainable growth and competitiveness, as well as on demographic changes.

ACT

Communication from the Commission of 5 March 2010 – A Strengthened Commitment to Equality between Women and Men – A Women's Charter: Declaration by the European Commission on the occasion of the 2010 International Women's Day in commemoration of the 15th anniversary of the adoption of a Declaration and Platform for Action at the Beijing UN World Conference on Women and of the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women [[COM\(2010\) 78 final](#) - Not published in the Official Journal].

SUMMARY

This political declaration reiterates the Commission's commitment to equality between women and men in the European Union (EU) and throughout the world.

The Commission highlights the necessity to take gender equality into account in all of its policies. The Charter thus proposes five specific fields of action.

Fields of action for equality between women and men

Economic independence, which should be achieved in particular by combating discrimination, educational stereotypes, labour market segregation, precarious employment conditions, involuntary part-time work and the unbalanced sharing of care responsibilities with men. The Commission commits to ensure the full realisation of women's potential and the full use of their skills. Its action should facilitate a better gender distribution on the labour market and allow the number of quality jobs for women to be increased.

Equal pay for women and men (for equal work or work of equal value), which is not effective in the EU. The Commission commits to fight against pay gaps by mobilising all available instruments, including legislative instruments.

The representation of women in decision-making and positions of power, positions where they are still under-represented in comparison to men, in the public and private sectors. The Commission undertakes to act for fairer representation of women, in particular by adopting incentives at EU level.

Respect for women's dignity and integrity, but also an end to gender-based violence,

including harmful customary or traditional practices. The Charter reiterates the Commission's commitment to fundamental rights. The Commission's action is specifically aimed at eliminating inequality in access to healthcare and eradicating all forms of gender-based violence. It may have recourse to the provisions of criminal law, within the limits of its powers.

External action of the EU as regards equality between women and men should enable the development of sustainable and democratic societies to be supported. The Commission undertakes to defend equality between women and men in its relations with third countries. It is to carry out awareness-raising actions, cooperation with competent international and regional organisations, and will support State and Non-State actors.

Context

The Charter was adopted on the occasion of the 2010 International Women's Day and the 15th anniversary of the World Conference on Women.

In September 2010, the Commission adopted a 2010-2015 strategy for equality between women and men. This strategy should form a framework for the coordination of action in all areas of EU activities.

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