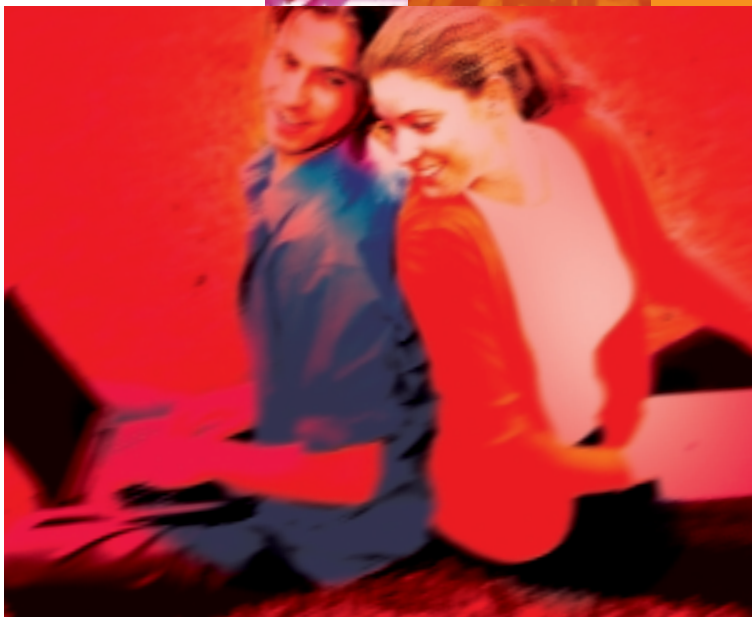


Gender Equality



PARLIAMENTARY GROUP
OF THE PARTY
OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS



Equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of democracy. However, sex-based discrimination continues to exist. That is, women are more likely to be unemployed than men, they are more likely to hold temporary jobs and make up the bulk of part-time workers.





European Union



Equality a Basic Principle

The European Union (EU) was a driving force behind the adoption of the final declaration at the biggest conference on equal opportunities held in Beijing in 1995. The conclusions of the conference focused on the rights of women, the concept of rights with regard to sexuality, the importance of economic independence for women, balanced participation by women and men in decision-making and the integration of gender equality in all policies.

Basic principles of EU law are:

- Equal pay for female and male workers, enshrining the principle of 'equal pay for equal work'.
- Equal treatment with regard to: access to employment; vocational training; promotion and working conditions, with the aim of eliminating direct and indirect discrimination.
- Equal treatment for women and men who are self-employed.
- Improving the health and safety of workers who are pregnant or have recently given birth.
- Reconciling family and working life (parental leave).



European Socialists



Equal Opportunities means Equality!

All citizens of the EU, whether men or women, have equal rights. This was written into the Treaty of Amsterdam, which also included a number of instruments to create a European policy of equality between women and men.

Every woman should, in the view of European Socialists, be able to fully participate in professional work and should have access to all types of jobs and to all types of training. European Socialists support the integration of equal opportunity for women and men in all employment policies.

Every woman in the EU involved in political and social decision-making structures must have access to all levels of responsibility: local, regional, national or European. Equal participation of women is a guarantee for the proper functioning of democracy. Parity representation of women in politics is not only a right but also a means for social progress.

Within political parties, the European Socialists call for a balance on electoral lists, the integration of 'gender mainstreaming' in the programmes of political parties and re-balancing the number of women and men within the institutions of the EU.





Future Benefits

↓

Equality Between Women and Men in a wider Europe

Applying EU legislation concerning equality between women and men is an imperative condition for membership. It is an integral part of the human rights question and a necessary part of institutional development.

As part of the enlargement process, the European Parliament called for future Member States to receive financial support to help them fully align their statistical procedures and methodologies with EU standards. The aim is to develop and disseminate gender-disaggregated statistics compatible with those used in the EU as a means of raising awareness about prevailing problems, facilitate comparison and monitor the gender equality situation.



To find out more about what European Socialists are doing in the area of gender equality, please consult the websites below:



PES Group:

<http://www.socialistgroup.org>

PES:

<http://www.pes.org>

Contacts

Parliamentary Group
of the Party of European Socialists,
European Parliament, Rue Wiertz, B-1047 Brussels.
Tel.: +32 2 284 14 40
E-mail : peswbprogramme@europarl.eu.int