

# **GENDER EQUALITY SOLIDARITY ACTION**

**GUE/NGL's work in the European  
Parliament's Committee on  
Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

European United Left • Nordic Green Left

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

**GUE/NGL**  
[www.guengl.eu](http://www.guengl.eu)





## The challenges

Today's dominant neo-liberal economic doctrines, deepened by austerity measures and policies imposed by the members of the 'Troika' (the European Central Bank, the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund), have particularly severe consequences for women, causing a huge setback in equality. Defending women's rights and gender equality at the EU level in the current economic and political context therefore also requires resistance to the neoliberal economic governance being designed at EU level and imposed on member states, and proposing alternatives for a sustainable and green economy based on equality and social justice.

The majority of people living in poverty are women, and **women's working conditions are increasingly precarious**. The gender pay gap is still, on average, a difference of 16% per hour in the European Union. Migrant women in particular face worsening working conditions with lower salaries, and limited or no labour and social rights.

**Men's violence against women** kills more than one thousand women in Europe every year. 33% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence, and 43% have experienced psychological violence. This violence is a consequence of inequalities in all areas of life and an obstacle to gender equality.

In several EU countries, women are denied the right to **decide freely about their bodies and their sexualities**, and have no, or severely restricted, access to affordable public services for sexual and reproductive health, including abortion.

Women continue to do most of the unpaid care and domestic work. **The lack of accessible, quality and affordable care services** is a Europe-wide reality.

Migrant women face particularly difficult working conditions, discrimination, and are often unable to **gain their own independent legal status**. Undocumented migrant women are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and violence, and they have limited possibilities to report harassment or assault without putting themselves at risk of deportation.

War, conflict and **increasing militarisation continue to devastate the lives of women and girls worldwide**.

EU and national decision-making structures remain extremely gender imbalanced. In 2014 women represented an average of only 27.7% of national parliamentarians.

**Discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) people**, largely based on gender stereotypes and patriarchal notions of sex and gender, remains persistent throughout Europe.



## **GUE/NGL priorities to promote women's rights & gender equality**

- Solidarity, not austerity – The GUE/NGL defends women's rights through proposing an alternative economic policy and governance. We say NO to the current EU austerity measures which increase gender inequalities. We say YES to a fairer redistribution of wealth, enabling greater investment in public services, including care services, health and education;
- Strengthening women's employment with full respect for workers' rights, combating unemployment and addressing the issue of precarious work;
- Defending the rights of both women and men to combine work and parenthood, without discrimination in the labour market and in social security systems;
- The right for women to decide freely about their bodies, and to have access to legal and free abortion and high quality public sexual and reproductive health services;
- Ending all forms of violence against women;
- Towards a more environmentally and socially sustainable economy: key issues such as sustainable growth, consumption, power, civil society participation, resources, energy, green jobs and mobility/transport must be seen from a gender perspective;
- Promoting a basic income, from a gender perspective, as a tool for self-determination and as a form of restitution for all the unpaid and/or unrecognised work of women, which would also enable women to escape from domestic violence;
- Guaranteed gender balance in decision-making;

- Migration, refugee and integration policies that strengthen the rights of migrant and ethnically marginalised women and their families, especially their children;
- The placing of gender equality at the centre of EU foreign policies, including trade, development and security policies;
- Promoting gender mainstreaming into the work of the other parliamentary committees.

## **Our work in the European Parliament**

### **Parliamentary work**

GUE/NGL is a crucial force in ensuring that the European Parliament places women's rights and gender equality high on its agenda. We draft parliamentary reports and questions, intervene during committee meetings and plenary sessions, and organise hearings, debates and seminars, with the aim to develop an ongoing open dialogue between our group and society.

### **Making women's struggles visible**

Working for gender equality is also about empowering women, giving women of all ages and backgrounds a voice and giving visibility to the alternatives created by women - together with all feminists.

### **Coalition building**

In order to change our societies, we need to join forces and mobilise together. GUE/NGL favours close collaboration with women's rights organisations, trade unions and wider social movements.

## GUE/NGL Members of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament (FEMM)



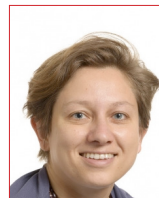
**Malin Björk** (Sweden), GUE/NGL Coordinator FEMM



**Kostadinka Kuneva** (Greece),  
Substitute Member FEMM



**João Calado Pimenta Lopes** (Portugal),  
Vice-Chair FEMM



**Eleonora Forenza** (Italy),  
Substitute Member FEMM



**Ángela Vallina** (Spain),  
Member FEMM



**Stefan Eck** (Germany),  
Substitute Member FEMM

The European United Left/Nordic Green Left presents a vision of a European integration process based on solidarity, workers' rights, peace, gender equality, civil liberties, democracy and environmental responsibility. We are a group of 52 Members from 22 different political delegations. We are the only political group in the European Parliament that has an even gender balance among our members.

Layout & design: Charli Aron  
GUE/NGL Communications Unit ©2016

European United Left • Nordic Green Left

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY GROUP



**GUE/NGL**  
[www.guengl.eu](http://www.guengl.eu)