



## GUE/NGL members of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the European Parliament



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The GUE/NGL group in the European Parliament is made up of 34 MEPs from 12 EU countries working for peace, solidarity, social justice, equality, democracy and human rights in Europe and beyond.

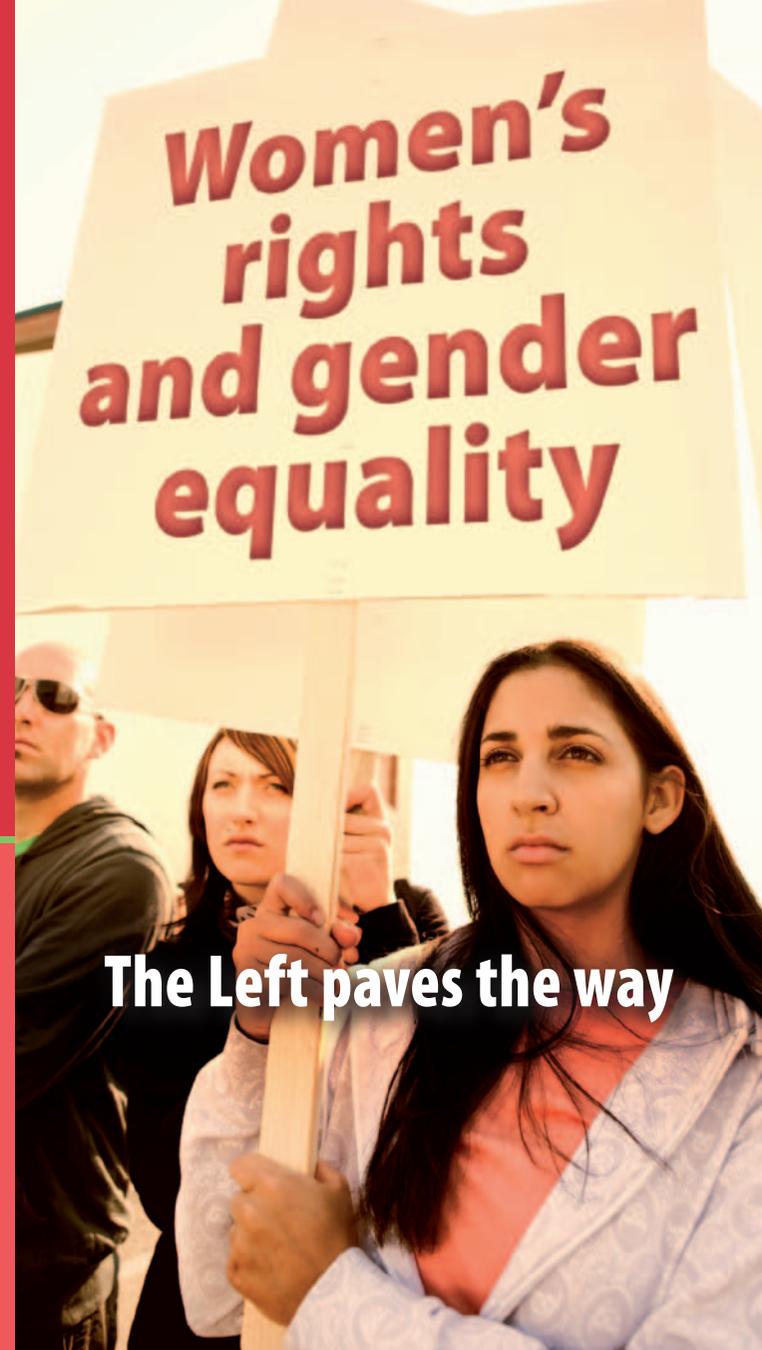
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# The Left paves the way

## 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 debates and seminars.

### 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 pro-feminist men.

### Coalition building

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



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## Equality, Solidarity, Action

The struggle for women's rights and gender equality in all areas of life is central to political movements seeking to combat social injustices, generate change, and build inclusive societies based on solidarity. This is why the Left has always played a leading role when it comes to integrating feminist struggles, combating inequalities between women and men, and aiming to achieve social progress and equality for all.

Members of the **European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL)** act with determination at national, European, and international levels for women's rights, including the promotion of sexual and reproductive rights, the fight against violence against women, the strengthening of women's economic rights and independence, women's social rights, and ensuring equality **in employment, in education, in social security**, and in participation and representation.



## The challenges

Today's dominant neo-liberal economic doctrines, deepened by austerity measures and by the actions of the "Troika" (European Central Bank, 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, 17% in the European Union.

**Men's violence against women** kills more than one thousand women in Europe every year. This violence is both a consequence of inequality and an obstacle to equality.

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

Women continue to do most of the unpaid care work. The **lack of accessible 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**.

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**. Women represent an average of only 23% of national parliamentarians (2009).

**Discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) 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 and gender equality

- **Solidarity, not austerity** – The GUE/NGL defends women's rights through proposing alternative economic policy and governance. We say **NO** to the current EU austerity measures, which increase economic and social gender inequality – 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 respects for workers' rights, combating unemployment and various forms 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 have access to legal 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, participation of civil society, resources, energy, green jobs and mobility/transport must be seen from a gender perspective;
- Guaranteed gender balance in decision-making;
- Migration and integration policies that strengthen the rights of migrant and ethnic minority women;
- The placing of gender equality at the centre of EU foreign policies, including trade, development, and security policies.