Procedure file

Basic information

INI - Own-initiative procedure	2022/2138(INI)	Procedure completed
Sexual harassment in the EU and MeToo evaluation Subject 4.10.09 Women condition and rights 4.15.12 Workers protection and rights, labour law 4.15.15 Health and safety at work, occupational medicine		

Key players

European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	FEMM Women?s Rights and Gender Equality		05/08/2022
		renew europe. ŠIMEČKA Michal	
		Shadow rapporteur	
		epp KOPACZ Ewa	
		S&D OHLSSON Carina	
		SPUREK Sylwia	
		ECR NISSINEN Johan	
		RODRÍGUEZ PALOP Eugenia	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Key events

15/09/2022	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
25/04/2023	Vote in committee		
04/05/2023	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0178/2023	
31/05/2023	Debate in Parliament		
	Results of vote in Parliament		

01/06/2023			
01/06/2023	Decision by Parliament	T9-0217/2023	Summary

Technical information

Procedure reference	2022/2138(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	FEMM/9/09649

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE739.683	09/01/2023	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE742.396	03/02/2023	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0178/2023	04/05/2023	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0217/2023	01/06/2023	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2023)474	15/11/2023	EC	

Sexual harassment in the EU and MeToo evaluation

The European Parliament adopted with 468 votes to 17, with 125 abstentions, a resolution on sexual harassment in the European Union and MeToo evaluation.

Gender-based violence in all its forms, including sexual harassment, is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality, discrimination and the violation of human rights. It is a serious obstacle to the participation of women, girls and other victims in all areas of private and public life, preventing them from fully enjoying their rights and fundamental freedoms. In the European Union, one woman in two (55%) has been a victim of sexual harassment at least once since the age of 15.

Strongly condemning all forms of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, and all forms of harassment, in particular sexual harassment, Parliament once again called on the Commission to submit, under Article 83(1) TFEU, a proposal for a Council decision identifying gender-based violence as a new area of crime. It also called for swift ratification by the EU and all Member States of the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women. Sexual harassment must be included as an offence in the field of employment, in accordance with the EU's existing anti-discrimination directives.

Members also stressed the importance of combating cyber-violence in the workplace and paying particular attention to women and girls fleeing war, especially those from Ukraine.

Sexual harassment and the MeToo movement in Member States

Members strongly support the international MeToo movement. Since 2017, the MeToo movement has taken hold in some Member States and that, subsequently, changes have been made by governments and organisations to tackle sexual violence, help victims and address the negative consequences for society. Members noted, however, that in some Member States, there has been little or no progress in this regard and called on Member States to pro-actively design and implement legislation and policies that tackle sexual violence and harassment in our society.

The Commission and the Member States are invited, inter alia, to:

- establish a comprehensive set of minimum rules which tackle the persistent problem of sexual harassment and psychological harassment in a holistic manner;

- put in place effective systems and procedures for reporting cases of violence and harassment in the workplace, and develop measures to ensure protection against retaliation or reprisals against complainants, victims, witnesses and whistleblowers;

- make available the necessary resources to encourage the creation and maintenance of safe spaces in the workplace, both online and offline, where women, in all their intersectional diversity, can go to exchange information and get help from their peers;

- ensure that laws against sexual harassment in the workplace are updated to protect women working remotely from online abuse;

- take into account womens and girls needs for safety and security when commuting to and from work by ensuring a safe public transport

service as well as adequate and sustainable street lighting;

- ensure evidence-based research on practices and the systematic collection of relevant, anonymised, sex- and age-disaggregated and comparable data on cases of sexual harassment. Members recall that EU law requires Member States and EU institutions and agencies to ensure the existence of an equal treatment body, which provides independent assistance to victims of harassment.

With regard to harassment in the workplace, Parliament recommended that external counselling services providing advice on the proper handling of harassment in the workplace should be consulted by employers in order to ensure a safe working environment, to inform them about the remedies available to them, including disciplinary measures, and about the possibility of early conciliation, and to offer legal support and assistance to victims. All workers should be provided with information on anti-harassment procedures and policies at the beginning of their contract.

As sexual harassment affects people of all genders, Members stressed the central role of men and boys in ending all forms of harassment and sexual harassment. Men and boys should make a positive contribution to ending all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment, and should be involved in awareness-raising and prevention campaigns.

Member States, in consultation with the social partners, should ensure that employers take action to provide a safe working environment and support for victims, as well as to prevent and deal with cases of sexual harassment, cyber-violence and third-party violence at work.

Harassment in EU institutions

Parliament is convinced that the European institutions should behave as exemplary employers, establishing zero-tolerance standards towards any type of harassment, working actively on harassment prevention, adequate victim protection and holistic supporting mechanism, countering all forms of discrimination, implementing its rules strictly and enforcing effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions.

Members noted that cases of sexual and psychological harassment are still under-reported in Parliament. They called for the existing formal and informal structures within the European Parliament for dealing with harassment to be more visible and professional to ensure that all victims can report in confidence and security.

The resolution recalled that all European institutions have an obligation to put in place all necessary policies and standardised gender sensitive action protocols to prevent and address all forms of harassment and violence. It urged them to ensure that all of the rules in place guarantee a zero-tolerance approach to any forms of misconduct and full support and protection for all victims. Members stressed that improvements can be made in all institutions to better protect and assist victims and punish perpetrators.

Parliament welcomed the fact that the current parliamentary term is the first in which Members have had to sign a declaration confirming their commitment to comply with the code of appropriate behaviour, some points of which specifically address harassment. It welcomed the measures implemented under the updated roadmap for the adaptation of preventive and early support measures to deal with conflict and harassment between Members and accredited parliamentary assistants (APAs), trainees and other staff.

While welcoming the harassment prevention training offered to Members, managers in Parliaments Secretariat and staff, Members called for the introduction of mandatory harassment prevention training for all Members at the very beginning of each mandate and for all staff. They also called for all staff working on Parliament's premises to receive regular training on the zero harassment policy, so as to give them the means to recognise and report all forms of harassment.

Transparency

OHLSSON Carina	Shadow rapporteur	FEMM	30/01/2023	PEAB
SPUREK Sylwia	Shadow rapporteur	FEMM	20/01/2023	The European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
SPUREK Sylwia	Shadow rapporteur	FEMM	18/01/2023	European Women's Lobby
OHLSSON Carina	Shadow rapporteur	FEMM	18/01/2023	TCO
OHLSSON Carina	Shadow rapporteur	FEMM	18/01/2023	Sveriges kvinnoorganisationer
OHLSSON Carina	Shadow rapporteur	FEMM	17/01/2023	European Women's Lobby
OHLSSON Carina	Shadow rapporteur	FEMM	11/01/2023	Svenskt Näringsliv
OHLSSON Carina	Shadow rapporteur	FEMM	11/01/2023	LO