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International Women's Day

EU must take new measures to improve gender equality in face of economic crisis

Today, 8 March, is International Women's Day. Green MEPs took the opportunity to react to the Women's Charter presented by European Commission last Friday.

Marije Cornelissen (NL), Greens/EFA Coordinator in the EU Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, commented:

"The European Commission's Women's Charter represents a beautifully-expressed and well-intentioned statement in favour of gender equality in Europe. However, only the Commission's actions in the coming months and years will show proof of its commitment to these values. I regret the Commission did not consult with the European Parliament and civil society in creating the Charter. The Commission will need to work closely with these partners in future to deliver the reinforced legislation and binding gender equality targets that Europe needs."

Green MEP **Räul Romeva** (ES), member of the EU Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, commented:

"Europe is running the risk of going backwards in terms of gender equality. The economic crisis has disproportionately affected women and the gender pay gap has actually widened in recent years, despite the presence of EU legislation against it. It is unacceptable that in 2010 women are on average paid 18% less than men to do the same job. There is also worrying evidence that domestic violence increases at time of economic difficulty. The Commission's Women's Charter succeeds in recognising the challenges ahead and the instruments we already have in place. I hope the Commission will now follow these words with the action that is sorely needed."

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