
Gender equality: report from EU Commission, “COVID-19 rolled back on hard-won achievements of past years

“The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities between women and men in almost all areas of life, both in Europe and beyond, rolling back on the hard-won achievements of past years” despite the fact that “gender equality has never been so high up on the EU’s political agenda, and the Commission has made significant efforts to implement the Gender Equality Strategy, adopted one year ago”. This is according to the first report on gender equality released by the European Commission today, one year after the Strategy was introduced. The 64-page document shows “the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women”, pointing to an increase in domestic violence, an unprecedented rise in workload, health risks, challenges to work-life balance for women working in healthcare (three-quarters of healthcare workers are women), and job losses caused by the crisis in sectors such as retail, hospitality, care and domestic work. The Commission also highlights “a striking lack of women in COVID-19 decision-making bodies”. Indeed, of 115 national COVID-19 task forces in 87 countries, including 17 EU Member States, 85.2% were made up mainly of men, 11.4% comprised mainly women, and only 3.5% had gender parity. At the political level, only 30% of health ministers in the EU are women. To better monitor and track progress in gender equality in each of the 27 Member States, the Commission is today launching a monitoring [portal](#).

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