

Women are empowered to lead free and safe lives within and outside the EU. The EU works to ensure they don't continue to suffer from unequal access to rights, coercion and violence.

Make gender equality a reality:
Sexual and reproductive rights are key aspects of health and well-being for all people.

These rights are under threat in Europe, where regressive forces are trying to take away people's reproductive freedom and impose a harmful worldview about gender roles in families and public lives. Members of the European Parliament must defend reproductive freedom and resist the coercive measures that illiberal movements seek to impose.

The value of gender equality is close to the hearts of European citizens - according to a 2017 Eurobarometer survey, 91% of Europeans believe that promoting it is important to ensuring a fair and democratic society. The principle of equality between men and women is enshrined in the European Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. Today, inside the EU, its institutions work on promoting equal economic independence for women and men, closing the gender pay gap, advancing gender balance in decision-making, ending gender-based violence; the EU is further promoting gender equality outside of its borders.

GENDER EQUALITY IS A CORE VALUE OF THE EU



SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR) ARE A PREREQUISITE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) underpin the health and well-being of all Europeans, from access to contraceptives and abortion care, sexual health services, relationships and sexuality education, to being protected from violence and coercion, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation. The ability to access these services is a key prerequisite to achieving gender equality. However, access to SRHR varies greatly within and between EU Member States, which is particularly harmful to those in the most vulnerable situations. At the same time, persisting gender inequalities are a key cause of the non-fulfilment of women's sexual and reproductive rights and must be addressed to eliminate dangerous and discriminatory healthcare practices and reproductive coercion.

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM AND GENDER EQUALITY ARE UNDER ATTACK

Recent years have seen a rise of coercive movements both within and outside of the EU, with gender equality, women's rights and reproductive freedom increasingly under attack. These movements seek to deny women their sexual and reproductive health and rights, and the human rights of LGBTI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex) people amongst others. These coercive movements are linked with far right or illiberal movements and parties in Europe which threaten European values, fundamental rights and liberal democracy in general. Their funding and genuine goals often lack transparency. They seek to overturn existing laws on basic human rights related to sexuality and reproduction, such as the right to divorce; contraception care; fertility treatment; abortion care; equality for LGBTIQ persons.



IN ORDER TO COUNTER FUTURE ATTEMPTS TO RESTRICT REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM AND GENDER EQUALITY, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO:

- Safeguard the right of all people to live free and safe reproductive lives without discrimination.
- Work towards the eradication of gender inequality and violence against women and ensure that standards needed to achieve this are put in place.
- Firmly denounce regressive discourse and prevent the enactment of laws and policies that undermine gender equality and women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, reiterating that those retrograde measures have no place in a democratic XXI century Europe.
- Invest EU resources and make a political priority out of delivering far-reaching initiatives to change harmful social norms, to defend women's rights and gender equality.
- Provide political and financial support to women's rights groups and human rights defenders, particularly those working in challenging contexts, including in EU Member States.