



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL JUSTICE AND CONSUMERS

Directorate D: Equality and Union citizenship
Unit D.2: Gender equality

Brussels
JUST.D.2 [REDACTED]

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Goldman Sachs
[REDACTED]
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Dear [REDACTED],
Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letters to President Ursula von der Leyen and to Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis from 16 October 2020 attaching the report on 'Womenomics'. These letters testify for your strong commitment to gender equality and equality worldwide and for your understanding that workplaces are a crucial environment to advance and embrace gender equality and diversity. President von der Leyen and Vice President Dombrovskis have asked to reply on their behalf.

The results from your report are very similar to those found by the European Institute of Gender Equality, which has just produced its annual [Gender Equality Index](#). This equally report shows that while we have made progress, still a lot needs to be done to achieve gender equality.

Equality of treatment and opportunities between women and men and the principle of equal pay is a requirement of the EU Treaties and is also embedded in the European Pillar of Social Rights.

President von der Leyen has made gender equality one of the key priorities of the European Commission. In March, we adopted the [EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#) to deliver on the Commission's commitment to achieving a Union of Equality. The Strategy presents policy objectives and actions to make significant progress towards a gender-equal Europe. The goal is a Union where women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are free to pursue their chosen path in life, have equal opportunities to thrive, and can equally participate in and lead our European society.

The Gender Equality Strategy is complemented by further strategies dealing with specific elements related to equality, such as the LGBTI+ Equality Strategy adopted last week and the forthcoming Disability Strategy. As you know, gender equality is also an element of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#). A

comprehensive action plan to further implement the principles of the Pillar will be adopted in the coming months.

One of the Gender Equality Strategy's key actions is to improve pay transparency in European companies and organisations to reinforce the implementation of the principle of equal pay between women and men. We intend to present a proposal for binding legislative measures as well as flanking measures before the end of the year.

In order to include women and girls in all decision-making processes, an issue covered in the chapter 'lead' of the Gender Equality Strategy, we continue to strive towards the adoption of the Women on Corporate Boards proposal presented already 8 years ago.

We will furthermore launch an EU-wide campaign to tackle gender stereotypes in all spheres of life, including in occupational and sectoral segregation, in unequal sharing of the unpaid work done at home, and in vertical segregation. We will further gender mainstream all relevant policy initiatives of the European Commission.

Last but not least, the unexpected and unprecedented situation we are facing in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic will not push gender equality issues aside. On the contrary, the crisis' responses and recovery plan will be inclusive and mainstream equality issues. If anything, the pandemic has underlined the indispensable role of women in the labour market, as well as their overrepresentation in frontline, but low-paid jobs, jobs that are at providing the most basic and essential community services for our survival. This puts the need for equal opportunities and equal pay at the forefront of the equality issues emerging from the COVID-19 crisis.

It is more important than ever to ensure that gender equality is at the centre of our commitments as policymakers and social actors including business leaders. Thank you very much for your continued work to push for this important cause.

Yours faithfully,

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