



Warsaw, June 12th, 2015

Iratxe Garcia Perez

Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
European Parliament

Dear Madam,

On behalf of ASTRA regional network of NGOs I would like to congratulate You and the FEMM Committee on the successful adoption of the "EU Strategy for equality between women and men post 2015" report and also applaud MEP Maria Noichl for her excellent work.

At ASTRA we believe that this report is a right step in the direction that will end neglecting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, especially after the rejection of the Estrela report in December 2013. The equality between man and women will not be achieved if women are denied basic rights including the right to reproductive health. ASTRA Network expresses great satisfaction that you decided to address SRHR in this report, especially the access to reproductive health services such as safe and legal abortion and contraception which remain a problematic issue within the Central and Eastern Europe region. For a number of years ASTRA Network has worked and supported relevant activities of the European Parliament and supported right and access to abortion and contraception within the framework of promoting women's human rights. We are glad to see these becoming part of the EU agenda.

ASTRA hopes that these changes will be reflected at the national level especially in Central and Eastern European countries. We would like to draw your attention to the still existing inequalities within the health sector within the EU Member States. Last week ASTRA held a public hearing hosted by MEP Sophie in 't Veld and MEP Heidi Hautala to discuss this issue in the context of women's access to reproductive health services and supplies. For your interest the press release from that event can be accessed online [here](#).

On behalf of ASTRA Network,

Yours sincerely,

Marta Szostak

ASTRA Network Coordinator

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