

President of the European Council, Charles Michel
President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen
European Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli

25th of May 2020

Dear President Michel,
Dear President von der Leyen,
Dear Commissioner Dalli,

The current health crisis has revealed a long-running but often hidden pandemic: domestic abuse and violence. Women and children, but sometimes also men, are confronted with a violent reality in what is supposed to be the safe haven of their home. During this period of confinement that has been necessary to tackle the COVID-19 virus, we have seen a stark and dramatic increase in domestic violence across the European Union. The consequence is that many women are confronted on a daily basis not only with the present health challenge, an uncertain economic situation, and immediate and relentless family care needs, but the terrifying reality of a violent home.

We, as members of the EPP Group in the European Parliament and the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee, urge you to take action and commit to eradicating domestic violence and violence against women, once and for all. We urge all Member States, as well as the European Union, to ratify the Istanbul Convention without delay, and to use the best practice innovations and initiatives from the past number of weeks to ensure that a comprehensive structure is put in place to avoid a similar circumstance in the future.

Violence against women is a crime: we must have zero tolerance for it. We call on the European Commission to use all available tools and policies, including proposing a Directive to tackle gender based violence and coordinating the aforementioned best practice sharing between Member States, as well as advancing accurate data collection, support to key services and to safeguard sufficient funding of related programmes.

Your commitment to tackling violence in all its forms is well-known. However now is the time for concrete action to ensure that every European is protected, whether from the COVID-19 virus or from violence within the home.

Yours sincerely,

Manfred Weber
Chairman of the EPP Group

Esteban González Pons
Vice Chairman of the EPP Group

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