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Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

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DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Culture and Education

on artificial intelligence in education, culture and the audiovisual sector (2020/2017(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Maria da Graça Carvalho

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality calls on the Committee on Culture and Education, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

A. whereas gender equality is a core principle of the European Union enshrined in the Treaties, and should be reflected in all EU policies, not least in education, culture and the audiovisual;

B. whereas gender inequalities and discrimination have been reproduced through the design, input and use of artificial intelligence (AI) systems; whereas incomplete datasets and incorrect bias can distort the reasoning of an AI system, and jeopardise gender equality in society;

C. whereas gender inequalities are also created and replicated through the language and images disseminated by the media and AI-powered applications; whereas education, culture programmes and audiovisual contents are a fundamental tool for combatting gender stereotypes;

D. whereas women are significantly underrepresented in the AI sectors, either as creators or consumers; whereas the full potential of women’s skills, knowledge and qualifications in the digital, AI and ICT (information, communication and technology) fields can contribute to boosting the European economy; whereas globally only 22 % of AI professionals are female; whereas the lack of women in AI development not only increases the risk of bias, but also deprives the EU of talent, vision and resources, and is therefore an obstacle to innovation;

1. Considers that AI has great potential to promote gender equality provided that conscious and unconscious bias are eliminated; stresses the need for AI to respect the principles and values of equality and non-discrimination between women and men; stresses, further, the importance of a risk-based approach and of continuous monitoring of existing and new algorithms;

2. Calls for policies targeted at increasing the participation of women in the fields related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and AI, and the adoption of a multi-level approach to address the gender gap in all levels of education and employment in the digital sector;

3. Calls on the Commission and Member States to take into account AI from a gender perspective when developing policy and legislation, and, if necessary, adapt current legislation, including EU programmes;

4. Calls on the Commission and Member States to devise policy measures that fully incorporate the gender dimension, such as awareness-raising campaigns, training and curricula, which should provide information to citizens on how algorithms operate, and their impact on citizens’ daily lives;

5. Highlights the importance of the development and deployment of AI applications in the

educational, cultural and audiovisual sectors in collecting more accurate and sex-disaggregated data, and applying modern machine learning de-biasing techniques, if needed, to correct stereotype gender bias, which may have negative impacts;

6. Stresses the need for diverse teams of developers and engineers working alongside the main actors in the educational, cultural and audiovisual sector in order to prevent gender and cultural bias being inadvertently included in AI algorithms, systems and applications.