



**Ursula von der Leyen**  
President European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
1049 Brussels  
Copy : Helena Dalli,  
EU Commissioner for Equality;  
Didier Reynders, EU Commissioner  
for Justice

**Charles Michel**  
President European Council  
Rue de Loi 175  
1048 Brussels

3 November 2020

Dear President of the European Commission, dear Ms von der Leyen,  
Dear President of the European Council, dear Mr Charles Michel,

As members and associates of the Party of European Socialist (PES) Women across the EU, we strongly condemn the Polish Constitutional Tribunal's ruling of 22 October to invalidate women's access to abortion on the ground of severe and irreversible foetal defect. Women will be forced to give birth even in the absence of any chance of survival of a deformed, severely ill foetus.

The court ruling puts the health and lives of women in Poland at great risk and violates their human rights. Even though it is well known that banning abortion does not prevent them from happening, it only forces women to seek unsafe illegal abortions. As soon as this verdict becomes applicable, anyone who performs an abortion with the woman's consent will be subject to punishment by up to 3 years' imprisonment.

We are deeply concerned by the Polish government's never-ending and systematic violation of women's human rights. This must be stopped. The untenable situation in Poland is also well recognized by the many Polish citizens taking the streets protesting against the ruling, which is a result of the right-wing government's close ties to the Catholic Church in Poland. The ruling is symptomatic of the fact that the PiS-led government is using the country's judiciary system as a weapon to deprive women of their fundamental rights to health care and human dignity.

Polish women must be given legal and accessible reproductive health care and rights. We call on European leaders, on both EU and national level and on European institutions to urgently, and strongly, condemn Poland's violation of women's rights and to take the necessary measures towards Poland's systematic violations of the rule of law and fundamental rights. In order to comply with EU values, Poland must revert legislations that set women's lives in danger and curtail women's ability to choose over their own lives and bodies.

We support and stand in solidarity with Polish women and all democratic forces in the fight for women's human rights and urge you to support them by doing everything in your power to resolve the situation.

With our best regards,

**Zita Gurmai**, PES Women President, President of MSZP Women (Hungary)

**Zefi Dimadama**, PES Women Vice-President, Spokesperson of PASOK (Greece)

**Vera Claes**, General Secretary of Zij-Kant, the progressive women's movement (Belgium)

**Tytti Tuppurainen**, Minister for European Affairs and Ownership Steering, Leader of the Social Democratic Women (Finland)



**Sylvie Jansa**, President of Socialist Women LSAP in Bettembourg (Luxembourg)  
**Sarah Novile**, Vice-Chair of Labour Youth (Ireland)  
**Roulla Mavronikola**, PES Women Executive, President of the socialist women's movement of EDEK (Cyprus)  
**Riina Sikkut**, President of Naiskogu Kadri, the Association of Social Democratic Women (Estonia)  
**Pia Locatelli**, International Secretary of Partito Socialista Italiano (Italy)  
**Naima Ajouaau**, Leader of the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA) Women's network 'Rooie Vrouwen' (Netherlands)  
**Martine Docourt** and **Tamara Funciello**, Co-Presidents of the Social Democratic Women (Switzerland)  
**Martina Vuk**, President Women's Forum of Social Democrats (Slovenia)  
**Marja Bijl**, PES Women Vice-President PvdA (Netherlands)  
**Marianne Mikko**, PES Women Executive, Naiskogu Kadri, the Association of Social Democratic Women (Estonia)  
**Maria Noichi**, S&D Coordinator of FEMM Committee in the European Parliament, Chair of ASF, the social democratic women of the SPD (Germany),  
**Katrine Skov**, PES Women Vice-President, Helga Network (Denmark)  
**Jackie Jones**, UK Labour (United Kingdom)  
**Iratxe García Pérez**, President of the S&D Group in the European Parliament (Spain)  
**Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek**, Chairwoman of the SPÖ-Women (Austria)  
**Elza Maria Henriques Deus Pais**, PES Women Executive, National President of Mulheres Socialistas-Igualdade e Direitos (Portugal)  
**Ellen O'Sullivan**, Chair of the Labour Party Women's Network (Ireland)  
**Eider Gardiazábal Rubial**, Member of European Parliament, PSOE (Spain)  
**Dasa Sasic Silovic**, Chair, International Board, CEE Network for Gender Issues  
**Christophe Rouillon**, President of the PES Group in the European Committee of the Regions  
**Christie Morreale**, Regional Minister for Labour, Social Affairs, Equal Opportunity, Women's rights and Health, Wallonia, PS Belge (Belgium)  
**Cecilia D'Elia**, spokesperson of the Conference of Democratic Women - Democratic Party (Italy)  
**Carina Ohlsson**, President Social Democratic Women (Sweden)  
**Camila Garfias**, President of Rainbow Rose  
**Baroness Joyce Quinn**, UK Labour (United Kingdom)  
**Anette Trettebergstuen**, Leader of the Labour Party Women's Network (Norway)  
**Anna-Maria Żukowska**, Member of Sejm, Spokesperson of the Parliamentary Club of Lewica (Poland)  
**Alicia Homs**, Member of European Parliament and President of Young European Socialists