

## Franziska "Ska" Keller



# A Champion of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment!

From a very young age **Ska Keller** was involved in politics in a variety of different ways. However, focusing on **gender equality and women's empowerment**, have remained as central features of her interests in helping others. She says, *"Progress on gender equality has been slow and minimal throughout the EU. Gender pay gaps are still huge; women are underrepresented in politics and in leading positions and in many countries, women have no right to decide over their own bodies."*

In her activities both in Grüne Jugend (German Young Greens) as well as Spokesperson of the Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG), Ska has influenced the positioning of both the organisations on these two critical issues, by organising seminars and workshops around related debates such as **gender equality in migration, or, in the political sphere**. Ska says, *"It is important not to see women primarily or only as mothers, as it is often done."*

Ska has shown us that you can combine being a young woman with making political space for your own voice, thus presenting your strengths and setting your targets high – by combining political work on the local, regional, national and European levels. Having become an MEP before the age of 30, she has assembled a team of other talented young women who actively support each other in their daily work as well as in their future careers, clearly showing that female solidarity is no myth!

Ska has, in her time as a 'youth politician', managed several campaigns on gender equality and to support **young women going into politics**, in order to level the political playing field for men and women. She has always promoted greater equality between women and men, but has also always pointed out that gender equality actually means much more. Ska believes that, *"gender equality has to be achieved by both education and law. Simply asking for volunteering and good will has not produced any results yet."*

This proactive perspective is really exemplified via her fight for full rights for all genders including homo-, bi- and transsexual and -gender people. For her, gender equality means struggling for a society in which the sex or gender of a person has as little influence as possible, on a person's opportunities in life. The ultimate of course, would be **overcoming gender categorisations** altogether. However, Ska reminds us that one way forward is that, *"the EU should push Member States to do more on gender equality. The differences in Europe are huge and will not go away by simply gathering statistics."*

Relevant Information:

**Progress Made in Promoting Equality between Women and Men.** The European Commission has determined that in view of the current demographic and economic challenges, the participation of women is an essential contribution to growth, employment and social cohesion in the European Union (EU).

For instance, in 2008 the **rate of employment** for women was close to the objectives set by the Lisbon strategy (60 % in 2010). However, the proportion varies between 36.9 % and 73.2% according to the Member State. Moreover, women are overrepresented in precarious, short-term or part-time jobs. They are more exposed than men to **situations of poverty**. This is the case for 32 % of single mothers and 21 % of women over the age of 65.

In the political arena, we can see how far gender equality stills needs to go for full equity. For instance, the current position situation is that only slightly over one third of **MEPs** are women.

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## Metadata

**LANGUAGE:** German, English

**GENDER AREAS:** [politics](#)