



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

2011/2107(INI)

18.7.2011

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

on the Green Paper: 'From challenges to opportunities: towards a common strategic framework for EU research and innovation funding'
(2011/2107(INI))

Rapporteur: Britta Thomsen

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality calls on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas over 60 % of students graduating from universities are women, but the majority of senior positions in universities (e.g. PhD posts and professorships) are still held by men,
- B. whereas since the start of the European Research Council (ERC) in 2007, 1700 projects have been selected to receive funding from the ERC, representing some EUR 2.5 billion in grants, and whereas almost 90% of these grants went to male candidates,
- C. whereas a highly problematic 'glass ceiling' seems to exist for female researchers, meaning that the share of female researchers decreases with seniority,
- D. whereas female entrepreneurship is a key source of increasing the female employment rate, which is one of the aims of the Europe 2020 Strategy, whereas female entrepreneurship ensures business dynamism and innovation, offering a potential which is far from being harnessed in the European Union,
- E. whereas the target rate for participation by women in research was 40 % in FP7 and the figure in the mid-term evaluation was only a disappointing 25.5 %; whereas, however, this is a slight improvement compared to the participation rate of female researchers under the FP6,
- F. whereas the public consultation on the Green Paper on a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding found that gender balance should be fully integrated in all aspects of the Common Strategic Framework,
 1. Reminds the Commission that the FP6 ex post evaluation recommended a Gender Action Plan; calls for a Gender Action Plan to be established as part of the Common Strategic Framework (CSF);
 2. Criticises the fact that the Green Paper 'From challenges to opportunities: towards a common strategic framework for EU research and innovation funding' is gender-blind, and the fact that gender mainstreaming is not taken adequately into account;
 3. Calls on the Commission to implement gender mainstreaming in the CSF – including all programmes forming part of the CSF – by setting gender indicators concerning the participation of women in EU-funded research and collecting gender-disaggregated data on the representation of women and men and on the allocation of funding;
 4. Calls on the Commission to step up international cooperation and to promote the role of women in this connection;
 5. Calls on universities and research institutions to implement equality strategies and to enable women's participation in scientific disciplines;

6. Calls on the Commission to promote merit-based criteria that help women to pursue a successful career in the R&D&I field on an equal footing with men and to devise methods of positive discrimination for research projects, where female researchers make up 40 % of the total, which should also be the target for female representation in the CSF;
7. Calls on the Commission to establish a cross-cutting committee to monitor and advise on the representation of female researchers as part of the CSF;
8. Notes that in the educational systems of many Member States gender stereotypes are still prevailing in research areas such as the natural sciences¹;
9. Considers it necessary to review the criteria for promotion to senior research positions (e.g. professorships) in order to include a strong gender perspective and address the lack of women in these posts;
10. Calls on the Commission to establish clear links between the CSF and the Gender Equality Institute in Vilnius in order to create a knowledge base for gender mainstreaming and ensure strong participation by female researchers in the CSF; calls on the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) to analyse the so called 'leaking pipeline', as many young female researchers give up at some point their scientific careers²;
11. Calls for intangible assets and social accounting to be promoted with a view to fostering a business culture;
12. Calls on the Commission to make a special effort to increase the number of female entrepreneurs in the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and to support their access to adequate finance; welcomes the Commission's plans to facilitate female entrepreneurship by setting up networks for female employers, but underlines that adequate financial resources and a number of ambitious measures need to be assigned for this purpose;
13. Stresses that mobility of women researchers is an important precondition for their professional advancement and recommends that the next framework programme consist of appropriate measures to enable female scientists to move across the EU while reconciling family and work life;
14. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to improve the situation for female researchers and entrepreneurs through improved childcare facilities, social security provisions and maternity leave; stresses that the reconciliation of work and family life is the responsibility of both men and women;
15. In line with gender mainstreaming, stresses the need for researchers at all levels to be given the opportunity to postpone the start of a grant or to suspend work on it, for reasons of maternity leave, paternity leave or parental leave, in respect of projects where this is possible, and to have the option of extending the validity of a grant agreement, for the same reasons, in respect of projects where time is not of the essence; calls on the Member

¹ See European Parliament resolution on women and science, paragraph 2. Texts adopted: P6_TA(2008)0221.

² See report on equality between women and men 2010 (COM(2009) 694).

States to grant researchers these options;

16. Insists that the structural funds and cohesion policies be used in synergy with the Common Strategic Framework to finance initiatives aimed at guaranteeing equal opportunities and increasing female employment in technology and innovation and educating female researchers;
17. Emphasises the importance of promoting non-gender-segregated research areas; calls on universities, EU institutions and Member States to promote science as a field of interest to both sexes from the early stages of education by promoting female researchers as role models and by conducting information campaigns about the possibility of becoming a researcher and about opportunities available in the research field;
18. Stresses the importance of having women represented in leading positions in research institutes as well as in specific and concrete research projects;
19. Calls on universities to appoint at least one female professor to their decision-making bodies, especially the staff appointments committees;
20. Welcomes and supports the activities of platforms which enable female scientists to obtain and exchange information about involvement with programmes, grants and international projects and which give women access to scientific networks and help them to make contacts; therefore requests the Commission to collaborate with social networks and support them in their activities;

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	13.7.2011
Result of final vote	+: 30 -: 0 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Regina Bastos, Edit Bauer, Marije Cornelissen, Silvia Costa, Edite Estrela, Ilda Figueiredo, Zita Gurmai, Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio, Nicole Kiil-Nielsen, Astrid Lulling, Barbara Matera, Angelika Niebler, Siiri Oviir, Antonyia Parvanova, Nicole Sinclaire, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska, Eva-Britt Svensson, Britta Thomsen, Marina Yannakoudakis, Anna Záborská
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Christa Klaß, Mojca Kleva, Mariya Nedelcheva, Norica Nicolai, Chrysoula Paliadeli, Antigoni Papadopoulou, Sirpa Pietikäinen, Angelika Werthmann
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Jacek Włosowicz