



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

2013/2065(INI)

20.9.2013

OPINION

of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

for the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

on women with disabilities
(2013/2065(INI))

Rapporteur: **Ádám Kósa**

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Recalls that, as the population ages, the proportion of elderly people with a disability is increasing, and that those concerned are more likely to be women owing to their longer life expectancy; stresses that women with disabilities as a group face greater exclusion or, in many cases, multiple discrimination, and have fewer opportunities in the labour market than men with disabilities, as well as a lower activity rate; stresses, furthermore, that women with disabilities occupy jobs requiring fewer skills, with less responsibility and lower salaries, experiencing great social isolation, and having a greater financial dependency on family and/or on care persons, the number of whom is increasing;
2. Notes that all discrimination based on disability and gender shall be prohibited; emphasises that the overlap of such discrimination has particularly negative effects on women and girls with disabilities;
3. Calls on the Member States to review their legislative and policy framework in respect of the participation of women with disabilities and women with intellectual impairments and mental disabilities in the labour market; stresses the need to adopt active labour-market policy measures for women with disabilities, which offer choices for the individual, including flexible, part-time and full-time employment, and to consider the possibility of stimulating small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through financial incentives and other support for better reconciliation of professional and private life; stresses that women with disabilities should have equal access to financing for the creation of small enterprises and other forms of self-employment, as well as the right to choose between different forms of employment; encourages Member States to draw on best practices around Europe; calls on employers to make reasonable adjustments to workplaces and working conditions in order to place a greater focus on providing incentives for disabled people and actively including them in the labour market, with the possibility for individual cases of discrimination to be heard at labour courts in accordance with Article 5 of Directive 2000/78/EC;
4. Reminds governments that discrimination on the grounds of disability is forbidden and calls on Member States to make more ambitious efforts to remove the remaining obstacles;
5. Deplores the fact that the Council has not yet finalised its work on the draft Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, despite Parliament's position given in 2009; calls on the Council to ensure that this legislation is adopted by the end of the current parliamentary term;
6. Calls on the Union and the Member States to facilitate the participation of all citizens in the democratic process, including taking part in public meetings and exercising the right to vote and the right to stand as a candidate; calls on the Member States to identify ways of increasing the representation and participation of women with disabilities in

decision-making;

7. Calls on the Member States to use the European Social Fund as an effective tool to improve the levels of inclusion of women, including young as well as migrant women and girls with disabilities, in all important areas of life, through measures such as barrier-free access to the labour market, training and (standard) education, in particular;
8. Notes that the terminology used to describe physical impairments and disabilities is different and that the focus should be on disabilities instead of impairments in medical terms, in accordance with the approach chosen in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and followed by the European Court of Justice; stresses that employers should focus on the skills and abilities of employees or applicants with disabilities;
9. Stresses the importance of fighting stereotypes by not only presenting positive images, but also by inspiring real examples of women with disabilities and showing how their compensating abilities allow them to enjoy a rewarding working and private life, as well as by avoiding the exacerbation of negative stereotypes in the language used, discourse entered into and policies pursued regarding women with disabilities; calls on the European Union together with Member States to implement positive action measures in order to include women with disabilities in the labour market;
10. Calls on the Member States to consider sexual violence a serious crime which shall be liable for prosecution, particularly in the cases of women with disabilities and especially women with mental disabilities, where the burden of proof shall be on the accused; calls also on the Member States to prevent harassment in the workplace through effective harassment protocols in accordance with the application of Directive 2000/78/EC, in order to decrease the high number of rapes and cases of sexual harassment and violence, as well as forced sterilisations, in particular in large institutions;
11. Highlights that, as regards the notions of barrier-free environments and accessibility, inclusive design, as an innovative approach, covers both architecture and services which better suit the needs of all people, regardless of disability and which foster more sustainable and inclusive lifestyles; stresses that accessibility of the internet, including access to ICT skills, can be beneficial not only for people with visual impairments but also for people with other kinds of disabilities, and that more attention should be paid to the deaf and hard of hearing using sign language, especially older people with hearing disabilities, as their number and share in society is increasing, according to estimations by the World Health Organisation; calls on the Union and Member States, therefore, to share examples of innovative design and to cooperate in the field of standardisation;
12. Notes that education and professional training for disabled people is being carried out in some of the Member States separately and deficiently; stresses the importance of integrating women with disabilities into standard education and professional systems in all cases where the disability allows for such integration;
13. Underlines the need to support disabled migrant girls and women in order to develop their skills and potential in vocational training and to give them opportunities to obtain suitable employment;

14. Calls on the Union as well as Member States to further support disabled parents and, in particular, mothers with disabilities or disabled children, with special regard to their difficult position in the labour market, by maintaining or setting up services better tailored to their needs and by developing positive mainstream actions, with due regard for the fact that women and girls with disabilities have higher than average illiteracy rates, lower education levels, lower rates of participation in the labour market and occupy jobs carrying less responsibility and lower salaries;
15. Recalls that every step in a woman's life not only entails opportunities but also responsibilities, and in this sense women often have to endure disproportional burdens in terms of pregnancy and childbearing when they have to face the implications of pregnancy, especially in cases where fathers neither assume their responsibilities nor contribute to their children's well-being and future, but ignore them; recalls that in a family both parents should share equally the same responsibilities if they have not previously and mutually agreed otherwise;
16. Highlights the need to respect human rights without any discrimination, in particular the right for women with disabilities to enjoy equal and adequate access to medical care and support during and after pregnancies, as well as rights on the labour market in relation to maternity or parental leave and social services; stresses that the conditions should be at the highest standard in all Member States and should not be discriminatory against disabled women; underlines that rights and services should be available for disabled women migrating in the EU, whether as workers or as accompanying partners;
17. Insists that a gender perspective and a disability perspective should be mainstreamed in all Union policies; calls for specific measures to assist young women with disabilities to be included in Union and Member States' proposals to tackle youth unemployment.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	18.9.2013
Result of final vote	+: 33 -: 0 0: 6
Members present for the final vote	Regina Bastos, Heinz K. Becker, Phil Bennion, Pervenche Berès, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Philippe Boulland, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Minodora Cliveti, Frédéric Daerden, Karima Delli, Sari Essayah, Richard Falbr, Marian Harkin, Nadja Hirsch, Danuta Jazłowiecka, Ádám Kósa, Jean Lambert, Patrick Le Hyaric, Verónica Lope Fontagné, Olle Ludvigsson, Thomas Mann, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Csaba Óry, Siiri Oviir, Konstantinos Poupakis, Sylvana Rapti, Licia Ronzulli, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska, Jutta Steinruck, Traian Ungureanu, Andrea Zaroni
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Claudette Abela Baldacchino, Georges Bach, Jürgen Creutzmann, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Anthea McIntyre, Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Antigoni Papadopoulou