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REPORT

on the Commission's final report on the implementation of the first phase of the Community action programme Leonardo da Vinci (1995-1999)
(COM(2000) 863 – 2001/2069(INI))

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

Rapporteur: Gabriele Stauner

(Delegation of the power of decision - Rule 62 of the Rules of Procedure)

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PROCEDURAL PAGE

By letter of 22 December 2000, the Commission forwarded to Parliament its final report on the implementation of the first phase of the Community action programme Leonardo da Vinci (1995-1999) (COM(2000) 863 – 2001/2069(INI)).

At the sitting of 17 May 2001 the President of Parliament announced that she had referred the report to the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs as the committee responsible and the Committee on Budgetary Control, the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport and the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities for their opinions.

At the sitting of 14 June 2001 the President of Parliament announced that the Conference of Presidents had delegated the power of decision to the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, under Rule 62.

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs had appointed Gabriele Stauner rapporteur at its meeting of 4 April 2001.

It considered the Commission's final report and the draft report at its meetings of 23 October, 19 November and 3 and 4 December 2001.

At the latter meeting it adopted the motion for a resolution unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Michel Rocard, chairman; Marie-Thérèse Hermange, vice-chairman; Gabriele Stauner, rapporteur; Jan Andersson, Elspeth Attwooll (for Luciana Sbarbati), Regina Bastos, Hans Udo Bullmann (for Harald Ettl), Philip Bushill-Matthews, Alejandro Cercas, Luigi Cocilovo, Elisa Maria Damião, Proinsias De Rossa, Jillian Evans, Ilda Figueiredo, Hélène Flautre, Marie-Hélène Gillig, Anne-Karin Glase, Koldo Gorostiaga Atxalandabaso, Stephen Hughes, Jean Lambert, Elizabeth Lynne, Thomas Mann, Mario Mantovani, Manuel Medina Ortega (for Ioannis Koukiadis), Claude Moraes, Paolo Pastorelli (for Raffaele Lombardo), Manuel Pérez Álvarez, Bartho Pronk, Ursula Schleicher (for Winfried Menrad pursuant to Rule 153(2)), Herman Schmid, Miet Smet, Ilkka Suominen, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, Ieke van den Burg, Anne E.M. Van Lancker and Barbara Weiler.

The opinions of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport and the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities are attached. The Committee on Budgetary Control decided on 29 May 2001 not to deliver an opinion.

The report was tabled on 5 December 2001.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

European Parliament resolution on the Commission's final report on the implementation of the first phase of the Community action programme Leonardo da Vinci (1995-1999) (COM(2000) 863 – 2001/2069(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission's final report on the implementation of the first phase of the Community action programme Leonardo da Vinci (1995-1999) (COM(2000) 863),
 - having regard to Council decision 99/382/EC of 26 April 1999 establishing the second phase of the Community vocational training action programme 'Leonardo da Vinci'¹,
 - having regard to the interim report on the implementation of the Programme Leonardo da Vinci (COM(1997) 399),
 - having regard to Council Decision 94/819/EC of 6 December 1994 establishing an action programme for the implementation of a European Community vocational training policy²,
 - having regard to Rule 47(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having delegated the power of decision to the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, pursuant to Rule 62 of the Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport and the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities (A5-0449/2001),
- A. whereas the Lisbon European Council stressed the importance of vocational training to the development of a competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based society,
- B. whereas the Leonardo programme, as a laboratory of innovation and experimentation, is making a significant contribution to the development of high-quality vocational training in Europe,
- C. whereas, furthermore, the mobility measures, in which over 125 000 people have participated, are of incalculable value in developing cultural awareness and introducing people to the European dimension in training,

Importance of the programme

¹ OJ L 146, 11.6.1999, p. 33-47.

² OJ L 340, 29.12.1994, p. 8-24.

1. Points out that the Lisbon European Council meeting of 23 and 24 March 2000 adopted new strategy guidelines seeking to make the promotion of a high level of employment a fundamental objective and to bring the EU-wide employment quota for women up to 60%;
2. Points out that education and training are essential to enhance employability, and that the Leonardo Da Vinci programmes I (1995 - 1999) and II (2000 - 2006) are invaluable instruments for implementing a European training policy;
3. Welcomes the fact that the Leonardo da Vinci programme has already contributed significantly to the overall development of vocational training policy and the definition of its priorities, particularly with regard to mobility, transparency of qualifications, study and training periods, the promotion of employability and the use of information and communication technologies;

Evaluation procedure

4. Regrets that, although the first phase of the Leonardo programme ran from 1994 to 1999, the final evaluation report nevertheless contains incomplete data for 1998 and 1999;
5. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the interim reports on the implementation of Leonardo II scheduled for June 2002 and June 2004 and the guidelines for the second half of the programme scheduled for December 2004 are completed on time;

Structure of the programme in general

6. Notes that the main aspects criticised in connection with the external assessment, namely the complex structure of the programme, complicated and lengthy selection procedures and the fragmented and unclear division of responsibilities, originate in the Council decision itself;
7. Recognises that, under the legislative procedure establishing the second phase of the Leonardo da Vinci programme, a number of improvements were made, in particular with regard to limiting the objectives of the programme, defining responsibilities, implementation of payments and exploiting results;
8. Notes, however, that certain major structural weaknesses relating, for example, to the number and conduct of selection procedures and a lack of clarity with regard to the strategic management of the programme have still not been eliminated;

Administrative procedures

9. Acknowledges the Commission's efforts to simplify tendering, selection and administrative procedures in connection with the programme; takes the view, however, that it is still difficult to explain to the European citizen the need for even the current reduced period of eight months for the selection procedure; and urges therefore that these efforts should be intensified;
10. Considers that *internal Commission* procedures and practices in respect of decision-making, data management, coordination across departments and financial management are - looking beyond this specific case - not always in accordance with the requirements of a modern administration; calls on the Commission, in connection with its internal reform process, to tighten up procedures and widely eliminate red tape;

Players involved

11. Considers that, in view of the complexity of the programme, National Coordination Units have a crucial role to play in looking after applicants; expresses its concern that a number of coordination units evidently do not have the personnel resources necessary to fulfil this task;
12. Notes the role played by Commission staff in dealing with the crisis affecting the programme following the termination of the contract with the Technical Assistance Office; welcomes the fact that the tasks of the Technical Assistance Office are clearly defined for the second phase of the programme;
13. Calls on the Leonardo da Vinci Committee, in the face of heavy criticism of its narrow focus on matters relating to the allocation of resources, to concentrate to a much greater extent on its role in guiding the programme in terms of thematic focus: reserves the right to take budgetary action should the actual objectives of the programme continue to be neglected by the Committee;

Content and priorities of the programme

14. Considers that Leonardo should adopt the Lisbon objectives so as to make a more effective contribution towards the ultimate objective of social cohesion and full employment;
15. Notes that the Leonardo programme has failed to become firmly established in the business world and calls on the Commission, in the future, to take appropriate action to encourage firms to participate;
16. Underlines the need for full mutual recognition of the qualifications and experience gained through work placements provided under the programme and of the value thereof;
17. Regrets that the final report on the implementation of the first phase of the Community action programme Leonardo de Vinci (1995 - 1999) contains no data on gender mainstreaming or the promotion of equal opportunities in the selected projects, so that it is difficult to assess the impact in these fields;

18. Regrets that in the final report no mention is made of any special measures taken to promote access for women returning to work after a longer period of time, who could benefit precisely from vocational training programmes, as intended at the outset;
19. Regrets that the Commission has not made an effort to select best practices and disseminate the results, particularly in the field of promotion of equal opportunities; calls for greater efforts to be made in this direction in the future;
20. Calls, therefore, for all future reports to include gender-specific data;

Exploiting results

21. Welcomes the Commission's intention, in partnership with participating states, to develop a coherent strategy for disseminating and utilising the results of projects in future; considers that this will only have the desired success if the exploiting of results is recognised as a key element of the programme and the resources provided for this purpose at project and Commission level are substantially increased;
22. Also considers that Leonardo should, in the medium- to long-term, become a quality mark for vocational training; points out that rigorous quality management on the part of the Commission is an essential precondition for this;
23. Considers that the results achieved within the framework of Leonardo should be *systematically* incorporated into other Community initiatives, and in particular the ESF and the European Employment Strategy; expresses its disappointment with the results achieved to date in this respect, and calls for the setting up, at Commission level, of a coordination body over the various directorates-general concerned;

Further measures

24. Recommends, in the light of the observations made:
 - that the competent committee, within the framework of the existing informal working group, monitor on an ongoing basis the success of reforms introduced in connection with implementation of the second phase of the Leonardo da Vinci programme;
 - that the interim reports scheduled for 30 June 2002 and 2004 be used as an opportunity to adjust the funding for the programme if necessary;
 - that the communication on the continuation of the programme, to be submitted by 31 December 2004 at the latest, be used in order to draw up, on the basis of information gathered by that date, a report on fundamental reform of European training-related programmes;
 - that the assessment report to be submitted by the Commission should refer to all the projects carried out, while laying down specific criteria;
 - that the conclusions of the Commission's assessment report be evaluated and used effectively during the assessment phase for new projects and that the

conclusions become genuine selection criteria for the future;

- that the Commission improve monitoring and technical assistance to those countries least represented in Leonardo, providing them with all possible instruments to enable them to present quality, innovative projects;

25. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission and the parliaments of the Member States.

18 September 2001

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, YOUTH, EDUCATION, THE MEDIA AND SPORT

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on the Commission's Final Report on the Implementation of the First Phase of the Community Action Programme Leonardo da Vinci (1995-1999)
(COM(2000) 863 – 2001/2069(INI))

Draftsperson: Christa Prets

PROCEDURE

The Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport appointed Christa Prets draftsman at its meeting of 22 March 2001.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 3 and 18 September 2001.

At the latter meeting it adopted the following conclusions unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Giuseppe Gargani, chairman; Pedro Aparicio Sánchez, Marielle de Sarnez, Robert J.E. Evans (for Lissy Gröner), Cristina Gutiérrez Cortines (for Christopher Heaton-Harris), Thomas Mann (for Ruth Hieronymi pursuant to Rule 153(2)), Maria Martens, Pietro-Paolo Mennea, Barbara O'Toole, Doris Pack, Roy Perry, Mónica Ridruejo, The Earl of Stockton (for Theresa Zabell), Kathleen Van Brempt, Luckas Vander Taelen, Eurig Wyn, Sabine Zissener.

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

BACKGROUND

1. The Maastricht Treaty extended the competence of the Community to vocational training: Leonardo da Vinci (1995-1999) was the first integrated Community programme in this area. With a budget of €620 million, its main objective was to support transnational (29 countries participated) projects and partnerships between training organisations. Implementation was temporarily interrupted in 1999 when the Commission decided not to renew its contract with the Technical Assistance Office. This difficulty notwithstanding, the programme was extended: Leonardo da Vinci II (2000-2006) has a budget of €1.15 billion.

THE COMMISSION REPORT

2. The Commission report draws on an external evaluation by Deloitte & Touche; reports from the national authorities; and reports from the Social Partners at European level. It offers an appraisal of Leonardo I and, in each area it examines, suggests what action needs to be taken to ensure that Leonardo II works better.

3. **Successes:** Leonardo I brought together 77 000 partners to work on transnational projects, creating networks of cooperation and exchange of good practice, and supported exchanges and placements for almost 127 000 trainees. It also served as a 'laboratory of innovation and experimentation', supporting more than 2 500 pilot projects. Finally, it helped the pre-accession countries prepare their vocational training programmes for accession.

4. **Programme design:** Leonardo I was an amalgam of five previous programmes, pursued 19 objectives through four strands and 23 measures, and used three different selection procedures for projects. Unsurprisingly, it 'lacked a user-focus ... the complexity of different priorities, strands, measures, and objectives resulted in difficulties for users and inhibited its potential to realise its original intentions'. Leonardo II is simpler. The number of objectives has been reduced to three (to strengthen the skills and competences of people, especially young people, through initial vocational training; improve the quality of, and access to, continuing vocational training and the lifelong acquisition of skills and competences; promote and strengthen the contribution of vocational training to innovation). The number of measures has been reduced to five (support for transnational mobility projects for trainees and trainers; support for transnational pilot projects to develop and transfer innovation and quality in vocational training; promotion of language skills in vocational training; building up transnational networks; compiling reference material). The Commission aims to lighten the administrative burden on project partners by simplifying application forms and reporting requirements: the Council rejected a proposal to reduce the number of selection procedures from three to two.

5. **Complementarity:** Leonardo operated alongside other Community programmes (e.g. Socrates, Youth) and there was an obvious danger of double funding: coordination between the different programmes was difficult because they were managed at different levels (European, national, regional). There is no evidence of significant overlap or double-funding of projects, but opportunities for synergies were plainly lost: Deloitte & Touche concluded that the 'different EU programmes tend to operate in parallel rather than in an integrated

fashion'. Leonardo II envisages joint actions with Socrates and Youth: it also foresees complementarity with the Research Framework Programme. The Commission concedes that 'The multiplicity of different training provisions in many Community programmes demands a more strategic approach in order to make efficient use of public funds.'

6. **Management:** Under Leonardo I, 80% of funds were administered centrally (i.e. by the Commission), 20% by national offices. Project promoters generally judged management at national level to be efficient, but complained of excessive bureaucracy at European level and long delays in payments. Under Leonardo II, 80% of the budget will be managed at national level. Fewer projects will be selected but these will receive greater funding. A handbook for project managers, new guidelines for external technical assistance, and a standard contract between the Commission and the national offices have been introduced.

7. **Inputs/outputs and dissemination:** The report states that, taking administrative costs into account, €794 million of Community money was spent under the programme (the Deloitte & Touche report estimates €801 million), mostly on transnational mobility and pilot projects. Competition for funding was tough: less than one-third of proposals were approved. Dissemination of the results of the programme was unsatisfactory, however, and an opportunity to establish links with the European Employment Strategy was lost. In Leonardo II, the Commission will work more closely with the Member States and ask for the assistance of CEDEFOP and the European Training Agency.

8. **Impact:** Did the programme achieve its general and specific goals? In many areas, the Commission concludes, it is too soon to say. Moreover, 'measuring accomplishments ... is also difficult when ... the objectives are numerous, overlapping or not quantifiable.' The programme's biggest impact was probably on those directly involved: participation in pilot projects improved trans-national cooperation; participation in mobility projects was a valuable vocational training and cultural experience for almost 127 000 young Europeans. It is too early to judge the programme's impact on most national training programmes, but there is evidence that this was significant in the pre-accession countries. The employment prospects of participants improved but, generally, the programme's impact on combating social exclusion, investing in human capital and promoting access to lifelong learning 'is assessed as low': it made an even smaller contribution to promoting Social Dialogue or equal opportunities for women. By contrast, efforts to promote exchange of comparable data between national authorities cost little and produced impressive results. Leonardo II has strengthened the transnational dimension to the programme (partners must now come from three states rather than two), the Commission is making more effort to make sure that the results of projects are disseminated to the national authorities, and some projects will be singled-out as 'model products'.

DRAFTSPERSON'S COMMENTS

9. **Punctual and complete reports:** Delays in the submission of reports on which it is based led to the Commission's report itself being delayed by six months. Yet even now, the report is incomplete: the Commission concedes that 'the results of the projects are not yet fully available (particularly for the years 1998 and 1999)'. There will, of course, always be a time-lag between the funding and final assessment of projects. But the Parliament cannot draft opinions and reports on the basis of incomplete data: if it is to be fully-informed, the Commission and national authorities must report punctually. It is also worrying that the

Commission and the external evaluators give different estimates of the total cost of the programme.

10. **Design and management weaknesses of Leonardo I:** The reduction in the number of objectives and measures under Leonardo II is welcome. Equally sensible is the shift from centralised to decentralised management of expenditure: management at national level is plainly more user-friendly and more sensitive to regional and national particularities. However, multiple selection procedures were a major cause of confusion for applicants in phase I and their retention is worrying. An opportunity to learn the lesson that administrative arrangements should be as simple as possible- and to begin applying this across the range of internal policy programmes - seems to have been lost.

11. **Complementarity:** Community programmes must operate in a more integrated fashion, maximising their cumulative effect and reflecting a clear strategic vision: there is no excuse for the absence of such vision where a number of programmes are managed by a single Directorate-General. Support for joint actions in the new generation of education, training and youth programmes may help to reinforce this, as may the introduction of activity-based budgeting. The Commission should establish strategic planning units in each of its Directorates-General; and the Parliament and Council should demand clear evidence of complementarity, synergy, strategy, value for money and European added-value, when considering Commission proposals.

CONCLUSIONS

The Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following points in its motion for a resolution:

1. Regrets that, although the first phase of the Leonardo programme ran from 1994 to 1999, the final evaluation report nevertheless contains incomplete data for 1998 and 1999;
2. Believes that, in the interest of transparency and democratic accountability, the Commission, national authorities and other participants in European Community programmes must report punctually and fully on their management of such programmes and disbursement of public money;
3. Wishes, following the decentralisation of management of programmes in the Member States, to see guarantees that public monies will be scrupulously managed, together with a clear outline of the monitoring procedures that will be used;
4. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the interim reports on the implementation of Leonardo II scheduled for June 2002 and June 2004 and the guidelines for the second half of the programme scheduled for December 2004 are completed on time;
5. Believes that, if they are to be effective, Community programmes must aim at as great a degree of administrative simplicity as is consonant with the achievement of their objectives at reasonable cost; welcomes the reduction in the number of objectives and measures, and the decentralised management of a greater share of expenditure, in the

second phase of the Leonardo programme; hopes that the national agencies will in future properly inform the public and regional and local authorities; regrets, however, the retention of three selection procedures;

6. Regards the poor dissemination of results as a real weakness of LEONARDO I; welcomes the Commission's efforts to improve this in LEONARDO II;
7. Notes that the Leonardo programme has failed to become firmly established in the business world and calls on the Commission, in the future, to take appropriate action to encourage firms to participate;
8. Calls on the Commission, in the interests of mobility and facilitating young people's involvement in the programme, to create a list of companies on its Internet site, accessible to future beneficiaries of the programme and to national agencies;
9. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the business quality criteria take account of the merit of the presence during the training process of students, teachers or specialists from other countries;
10. Regrets the limited contribution of LEONARDO I to combating social exclusion and promoting access to lifelong learning; underlines its belief that Community programmes must seek to bridge the widening gap between the highly-skilled and the less-skilled, and to diminish social inequalities; and expects LEONARDO II to make a more impressive contribution in these areas;
11. Is particularly disappointed by the minimal contribution made by LEONARDO I to establishing equal opportunities for women and men and expects LEONARDO II to make more impact in this area;
12. Underlines the need for full mutual recognition of the qualifications and experience gained through work placements provided under the programme and of the value thereof;
13. Believes that the SOCRATES, YOUTH and LEONARDO programmes should operate in a more integrated fashion, avoiding overlap and double-funding from other sources, maximising their cumulative effect and reflecting a clear strategic vision;
14. To this end, calls on the Commission to set up strategic planning units in each of its Directorates-General, charged with preparing an annual 'business plan' aiming to maximise complementarity, synergy, value for money and European 'added value' among the programmes and actions it manages; and to establish a central strategic planning unit charged with coordinating the work of the individual Directorates-General.

11 September 2001

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on the Commission's Final Report on the Implementation of the First Phase of the Community Action Programme Leonardo da Vinci (1995-1999)
(COM(2000) 863 - 2001/2069 (INI))

Draftsperson: Marieke Sanders-ten Holte

PROCEDURE

The Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities appointed Marieke Sanders-ten Holte draftsperson at its meeting of 21 June 2001.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 11 July and 11 September 2001.

At the latter meeting it adopted the following conclusions unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Maj Britt Theorin, chairperson; Jillian Evans, vice-chairperson; Marieke Sanders-ten Holte, draftsperson; María Antonia Avilés Perea, Ilda Figueiredo (for Marianne Eriksson), Fiorella Ghilardotti, Marie-Hélène Gillig (for Elena Ornella Paciotti), Lissy Gröner, Heidi Anneli Hautala, Anna Karamanou, Christa Klaß, Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Astrid Lulling, Maria Martens, Christa Prets, Amalia Sartori, Patsy Sørensen, Joke Swiebel, Sabine Zissener.

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The new employment strategy guidelines, adopted at the Lisbon European Council meeting of 23 and 24 March 2000, seek to make the promotion of a high level of employment the Union's fundamental objective. Europe's education and training systems are essential to enhance employability. The Leonardo Da Vinci programmes I (1995 - 1999) and II (2000 - 2006) are invaluable instruments for implementing a European training policy.

It is therefore of vital importance, that the Commission - although 6 months later than agreed upon - has come up with a final report to assess the Leonardo da Vinci I programme, in order to evaluate the impact the programme had on the employment rates. As it was the first integrated community programme for vocational training, replacing the Comett, Eurotecnet, Force, Petra and Lingua programmes, it encountered some difficulties. But, by bringing together 77 000 partnerships it created the potential for stable networks of transnational co-operation and exchange of good practice. The promotion of transnational mobility offered the participants the opportunity to gain a working and learning experience abroad. Through the more than 2 500 innovative transnational pilot projects the programme became a 'laboratory of innovation and experimentation', while through its very transnationality it forced the participants to become aware of all the different cultures within the participating countries. From 1997 onwards the pre-accession countries took part in the programme and have greatly benefited from it. Although from a gender perspective it is a pity that of the 2500 projects only 163 deal specifically with the promotion of equal opportunities (I.1.1.d and II,1.1.d), all the abovementioned aspects make it definitely a very worthwhile programme.

The implementation of the programme, however, has been a source of controversy and criticism in the various Member States. The complexity of the programme's decision-making and management procedures made it difficult for applicants to find their way, while the bad financial follow-up, due to problems between the Technical Assistance Office (TAO) and the Commission, seriously handicapped some of the selected projects.

In addition there was criticism by external evaluators on the handling of the complementarity between Leonardo I and the other training-related Community and/or national programmes. Even though this did not mean there was overlapping it did not enhance the efficiency of the programme.

Another serious drawback was that the Commission has focussed on the management of the funding and less on the content of the various projects and required a lot of unnecessary paperwork. Even though there were Action Monitoring Seminars no data were systematically collected and published. This means that there are no data in the final report on the results of the selected projects or on the level of dissemination. Likewise there is no information available on gender mainstreaming issues, even though Article 8,c in the Council Decision establishing an action programme for the implementation of a European Community vocational training policy (6 Dec. 1994) specifically states that the Commission and the Member States should support equal opportunities for access to initial vocational training. As gender mainstreaming has become part of EU policy (Cf. Art.3.2 in the Treaty), it is essential that the projects should be monitored on this issue and that the results should be taken up in the final report. Although the Technical Assistance Office had started to set up a system to monitor projects on gender mainstreaming the collecting of data was discontinued once the Commission had taken over the management from the TAO. The rapporteur expects the Commission, when reporting on Leonardo II, to "...take into account the promotion of

equality, and of equal opportunities, between women and men". (Art.13,4 of the Council Decision establishing the second phase of the Community vocational training action programme 'Leonardo da Vinci').

It is useful to know that in the Leonardo II programme the lessons of Leonardo I have been integrated. The development of the Learning Society through Lifelong Learning is essential as a means to achieve the strategic goal of a competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy which combines employment, economic growth and social cohesion. Lifelong learning and employability are the best ways to promote equal opportunities!

CONCLUSIONS

The Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following points in its motion for a resolution:

1. Points out that the Lisbon European Council meeting of 23 and 24 March 2000 adopted new strategy guidelines seeking to make the promotion of a high level of employment a fundamental objective and to bring the EU-wide employment quota for women up to 60%. Education and training are essential to enhance employability. Points out that the Leonardo Da Vinci programmes I (1995 - 1999) and II (2000 - 2006) are invaluable instruments for implementing a European training policy;
2. Welcomes the fact that the Leonardo da Vinci programme has already contributed significantly to the overall development of vocational training policy and the definition of its priorities, particularly with regard to mobility, transparency of qualifications, study and training periods, the promotion of employability and the use of information and communication technologies;
3. Regrets the six month delay of the report and calls on both the Member States and the Commission to be more punctual in their reporting;
4. Calls for all future reports to include gender-specific data;
5. Regrets that the Final Report on the Implementation of the First Phase of the Community Action Programme Leonardo de Vinci (1995 - 1999) contains no data on gender mainstreaming or the promotion of equal opportunities in the selected projects, so that it is difficult to assess the impact in these fields;
6. Regrets that in the Final Report no mention is made of any special measures taken to promote access for women returning to work after a longer period of time, who could benefit precisely from vocational training programmes, as intended at the outset;
7. Regrets that the Commission has not made an effort to select best practices and disseminate the results, particularly in the field of promotion of equal opportunities; calls for greater efforts to be made in this direction in the future;
8. Calls on the Commission therefore to carry out an additional assessment as early as

possible on the subject of the abovementioned shortcomings;

9. Endorses the Commission's dissemination and capitalisation plan for 2000 and its resolve to devise and implement a coherent strategy in partnership with the participating countries for knowledge management, product quality, criteria for identifying innovation and best practice. Points out that the framework strategy on gender mainstreaming has to be an integral part of this strategy and consequently be introduced in the formula of every programme as a touchstone for the results.