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REPORT

on gender mainstreaming in the work of its committees and delegations
(2008/2245(INI))

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

Rapporteur: Anna Záborská

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on gender mainstreaming in the work of its committees and delegations (2008/2245(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 2, 3(2), 13 and 141(4) of the EC Treaty,
 - having regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the revised European Social Charter and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights,
 - having regard to the work of the Council of Europe’s Directorate-General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs, and in particular the Council of Europe’s steering committee for equality between women and men,
 - having regard to Directive 2002/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2002 amending Council Directive 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions¹,
 - having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2003 on gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament²,
 - having regard to its resolution of 18 January 2007 on gender mainstreaming in the work of the committees³,
 - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (A6-0198/2009),
- A. whereas equality between men and women is a fundamental principle of Community law and, in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty, is one of the tasks to be promoted by the Community,
- B. whereas Article 3(2) of the Treaty lays down the principle of gender mainstreaming by stating that, in all its activities, the Community should aim to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between men and women,
- C. having regard to the steady increase in the percentage of female Members of the European Parliament from 17.5 % in 1979 to 31.08 % in 2009,

¹ OJ L 269, 5.10.2002, p. 15.

² OJ C 61 E, 10.3.2004, p. 384.

³ OJ C 244 E, 18.10.2007, p. 225.

- D. having regard to the low proportion of female Members in top positions in Parliament bodies (for example, chairs or members of the bureaux of committees or delegations),
- E. whereas women are over-represented in Parliament's Directorates-General for Internal Policies and External Policies, where they account for 66.5% and 66% of staff respectively; noting, however, the major progress achieved over the last few years in the Directorate-General for Internal Policies, as evidenced by the 2007 Equality – Good Practices Award for the creation of a working environment conducive to equality and gender mainstreaming, together with a major increase in the percentage of women in senior administrative posts (for example, in 2005 the percentage of female heads of unit rose from 5% to 30%),
- F. whereas the majority of parliamentary committees generally attach importance to gender mainstreaming (for example in the context of their legislative activity, their institutional relations with the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, the drawing up of a programme of action for equality, etc.), although a minority of committees rarely or never take an interest in the matter,
- G. whereas in practice the network for gender mainstreaming in parliamentary committees, consisting of MEPs and staff, has not yet achieved the desired results,
- H. whereas the High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity has proposed that a similar network should be established in the interparliamentary delegations for the purpose of gender mainstreaming in the context of EU external relations,

Assessment of gender mainstreaming

1. Stresses that the call for gender equality must be translated into a practical approach which does not set women against men;
2. Stresses that gender mainstreaming is a positive development for both women and men;
3. Points out that gender mainstreaming involves the reorganisation, improvement, development and assessment of policies to ensure that an equal-opportunity approach is incorporated into all policies at all levels and at all stages by those normally involved in policy-making;
4. Reiterates the need to adopt and apply a gender mainstreaming strategy incorporating specific targets in all Community policies which fall within the purview of parliamentary committees and delegations;
5. Stresses the importance of the task of the High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity and calls on it to continue to encourage and promote this process throughout Parliament, in its relations with the Commission, the Council and other institutions and in cooperation with them;
6. Congratulates the parliamentary committees which have put gender mainstreaming into practice in their work, and calls on the other committees and delegations to do likewise;

7. Calls for the strengthening of the gender mainstreaming network with regard to interparliamentary delegations and election observation missions;
8. Encourages the Secretary-General to prioritise training in gender mainstreaming for officials working at every level in parliamentary committees and delegations; reiterates its call for all Members of Parliament to be provided with equal opportunity training from the beginning of the next Parliament;
9. Continues to encourage networking amongst those officials working in parliamentary committee and interparliamentary delegation secretariats who, in the Directorates-General for Internal Policies and External Policies, are specially trained in gender mainstreaming to ensure regular exchanges of best practice;
10. Stresses the need for the parliamentary committees and delegations to have at their disposal appropriate means of gaining a sound understanding of gender mainstreaming, including indicators, data and statistics broken down by gender, and for budgetary resources to be allocated with an eye to ensuring equality between women and men;
11. Stresses that the implementation of gender mainstreaming should take account of the specific features of each parliamentary committee or delegation; calls for the committees and delegations to play an active role in the regular assessments carried out under the auspices of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality on the basis of the questionnaire submitted to the chairs and vice-chairs responsible for gender mainstreaming, including any shortcomings in the work of the committees and delegations as well as the progress made in implementing gender mainstreaming in each committee;
12. Stresses the importance for parliamentary committees and delegations of ensuring that their role and responsibilities in the field of gender mainstreaming are clearly defined;
13. Stresses the importance of effective and coordinated cooperation by the High-Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity with the gender mainstreaming network within the committees and interparliamentary delegations and with the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality;
14. Calls on the Secretary-General to continue to implement the integrated strategy for combining life in the family and at the workplace and to facilitate the career development of female employees;
15. Urges the political groups to take account of gender equality objectives in selecting staff to fill senior posts;
16. Calls on its Bureau to stress, in its dealings with the parliaments of the Member States, the positive example set by the high level group on gender equality and diversity;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Council of Europe.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This own-initiative report (Gender mainstreaming in the work of the committees and delegations (**INI/2008/2245**), **rapporteur: Anna Záborská**) is based on a questionnaire sent to the chairs and vice-chairs responsible for gender mainstreaming in the parliamentary committees and delegations. Nineteen (out of the 21) committees responded, one of which (ECON) replied by means of a letter to the rapporteur. In contrast, no delegation responded to the questionnaire.

The questionnaire included 28 questions divided into four parts covering the following areas: the scope of the committee, the gender equality strategy, implementation of gender mainstreaming and expert assessment, consultation and cooperation on gender-related issues.

A. SCOPE

Gender mainstreaming issues are important for the **legislative work** of the twelve committees (AGRI, CULT, DEVE, ECON, EMPL, ENVI, INTA, ITRE, JURI, LIBE, REGI, and TRAN). (Question 4.)

The **key sectors** where gender equality was a relevant issue cited by the committees varied according to the policy fields for which they are responsible under the Rules of Procedure, and included:

- gender in the context of the implementation of the EU Treaty and the assessment of its operation; balanced representation of men and women when appointing Parliament representatives to attend intergovernmental conferences and future conventions, increasing the number of female members of the European Parliament (AFCO);
- particular attention to gender mainstreaming at the stage where reports and opinions are drawn up; encouragement of gender-neutral language at committee meetings and in committee documents, discussion of gender equality in the course of discussions with invited speakers and in delegation meetings (AFET);
- rural development, development of the Common Agricultural Policy (AGRI);
- gender-related issues are important in all areas falling within the committee's remit (CULT);
- Millennium Development Goals, humanitarian aid and Development Cooperation Instrument (identified as a 'horizontal issue' in many country strategy papers (DEVE));
- insurance, pensions, Lisbon Strategy, tax treatment of services of general interest and microfinance (ECON);
- employment, social policy, working conditions, discrimination in the employment market (EMPL);
- public health, pharmaceutical and cosmetic products, environmental health (pesticides, biocides, waste) (ENVI);
- public hearings and exchanges of views, gender equality taken into account by rapporteurs when drafting committee documents, gender balance of speakers (DROI);

- consumer policy (IMCO);
- trade and development aspects (INTA);
- research, industry (ITRE);
- fundamental rights (LIBE),
- inshore fisheries and the integrated and sustainable development of fisheries, aquaculture and the processing industry, structural policy (PECH);
- EU legislation on Structural Funds, ERDF, Cohesion Fund and European Social Fund, assessment of other Union policies with an impact on social cohesion (REGI);
- ESDP missions – conduct towards the local population of the personnel deployed, explosive debris/unexploded ordnance and mine clearance, disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR) process in post-conflict situations (SEDE);
- employment and road-safety aspects of transport (TRAN).

Many commissions had applied **gender mainstreaming to their legislative and/or non-legislative activities** (Q7). Fourteen of the nineteen committees (up from 12 out of 19 in 2006) stated that they had already introduced gender mainstreaming into their legislative and non-legislative work. Some examples:

AFET- promotion of gender equality at international level

AGRI- opinion on equality between women and men in the European Union – 2007

CULT- gender-related issues are fully taken into account when drawing up reports and opinions and in other committee activities such as public hearings and delegations

DEVE- the Millennium Development Goals include a gender dimension. One of the goals focuses on gender equality and the empowerment of women (MDG3)

DROI- women's rights form an integral part of human rights; subjects covered recently include 'honour' crimes and a study of gender mainstreaming in the EU's external action

ECON- employment of women and integration of women in the employment market, education, life-long training, reconciling professional and family life, financial and consumer-credit education

EMPL – working time directive, pensions and employment guidelines

IMCO- specific needs of vulnerable groups emphasised in the report on consumer policy strategy

PECH- reports on inshore fishing and problems encountered by inshore fishermen, women's networks in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and diversification in the context of the integrated management of coastal regions in **Europe**

REGI- gender mainstreaming is a horizontal aspect of programmes and policy implementation under the Structural Funds regulations

SEDE- included in two reports (von Wogau and Kuhne) on the European Security Strategy

TRAN – amendments and reports on transport and tourism, study on women and transport in Europe

AFCO, ENVI, JURI, LIBE and CONT have not incorporated gender mainstreaming into their legislative work.

B. STRATEGY ON EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN: COMMITTEES' SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM AIMS

Eleven parliamentary committees had neither discussed nor adopted a **strategy on equality**

between men and women in the various domains falling within the scope of their activities. The four committees which did adopt such a strategy were: AFET, PECH, REGI and SEDE. AFCO, AGRI and ENVI held discussions with a view to adopting a strategy. For purposes of comparison, in 2006 there were fourteen committees which had neither discussed nor adopted a strategy, while four committees had discussed a strategy and only one had already adopted one.

In its *Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan*, AFET has committed itself to actively promoting gender equality in its work and continuing to raise these questions with guest speakers and in delegations. AFET will also ensure that gender equality issues are duly taken into account when drawing up reports and opinions. It will try, where possible, to ensure that 33% of speakers taking part in hearings are women. AFET has committed itself to promoting gender-neutral language in its documents and at its meetings. It also intends to examine the gender balance of the EU's special envoys and heads of committee delegations.

The SEDE's strategy was adopted on 19 March 2007 in the form of a *Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan*. The SEDE sub-committee has undertaken to promote equality between men and women in its work by including gender-equality issues in its reports and opinions. When allocating reports and opinions it will also take account of the relative proportion of men and women and try to ensure proportionate representation on delegations; it will also take gender balance into account when inviting speakers to attend public hearings, and plans to set a quota of 33% for women speakers. SEDE has also undertaken to promote gender-neutral language at meetings and in its written documents.

SEDE regards two questions as vital in the context of gender equality: the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 in the context of ESDP and general rules of conduct for ESDP operations, and reforms in the security sector and the disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration process (DDRR).

REGI, in its *Mission statement on promoting gender equality in the work of the committee*, has undertaken to promote gender equality in its internal workings by asking the political groups to ensure, in so far as reasonably practicable, that women are represented on the committee in a proportion reflecting the proportion of women in the Parliament and that this proportion is equally reflected in the nominations for members of the Presidency and appointments of Co-ordinators to the Committee. It also asks its Bureau to ensure the gender balance on the Committee is adequately reflected in the distribution of its Reports and Opinions. It also wishes to check the application of the principles of equal opportunities in respect of appointments to its Secretariat. In its external workings, REGI undertakes to incorporate gender-related investigations into its workings on a regular basis in the course of its legislative or own initiative reports and/or own initiative reports specifically concerned with gender equality in the field of regional development. It will also closely monitor the effects of mainstreaming gender equality on the use of structural funding.

The PECH strategy adopted in 2006 establishes guidelines for the promotion of gender equality. PECH is committed to promoting gender mainstreaming to help ensure greater legal and social recognition of the work done by women and of their rights. This objective can be achieved by developing tools which would make it possible to compile and circulate information about the situation of women, by ensuring women participate in the decision-

making process, by incorporating gender-equality principles in legislative proposals and by ensuring that those principles are effectively implemented in the European Fisheries Fund and other financial instruments relating to fisheries policy. PECH is also committed to incorporating gender equality issues in its legislative and own-initiative reports. Moreover, PECH intends to organise, at least once a year, an exchange of views on gender equality policy and gender-specific impact assessment for coordinators and committee meetings.

AFET, SEDE and PECH have drawn up **specific targets for action**. AFET cites the organisation of a public hearing on women in the Arab countries and examining the gender balance among the EU's special envoys and committee delegations, and is considering calling on its members to ensure that future delegations take the gender-equality dimension into account.

PECH set out its objectives in its strategy (see above).

SEDE refers to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in the context of the ESDP and general rules of conduct for ESDP operations.

C. IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING

All the committees except CULT have included **topics which are of significant interest from the point of view of equality between men and women** in their future plans (reports, public hearings). In most cases, these topics correspond to the key sectors identified in part A of the questionnaire.

Seven committees, namely AGRI, EMPL, ENVI, PECH, REGI, SEDE and TRAN, had checked the availability of **data/statistics broken down by gender**.

PECH deplored the absence of statistical data broken down by gender, despite the existence of various studies relating to women in the fisheries sector. SEDE had asked the Council to produce statistical data on the number of women/men involved in ESDP operations. The committee also had useful statistics relating to '*Gender mainstreaming in ESDP missions*'. AGRI noted that the statistics were incomplete and did not, for example, indicate the work provided by spouses helping on farms. AGRI had asked the Commission and Eurostat to make good these deficiencies and eliminate discriminatory aspects of data collection. EMPL referred to the consideration of legislation relating to employment statistics. TRAN had commissioned a study of women in transport in Europe which contained statistical data relating to the lack of gender balance in the transport sector in Europe. REGI had commissioned a study on gender mainstreaming in the context of Structural Funds use which reviewed the availability of data.

Three committees – DROI, PECH and SEDE – had defined **appropriate indicators**.

According to PECH, quantitative data on employment were the most amenable to measurement, but other data had to be taken into account where possible (legal and social status, social and culturally-determined constraints, access to and level of education and training, etc.). DROI had asked for such indicators in connection with the European democracy and human rights instrument, which had gender mainstreaming as one of its horizontal objectives.

PECH and ENVI were the only committees which had analysed **the distribution of budget resources** in each of the policy areas for which they were responsible from the point of view

of equality between men and women. PECH referred to the provisions of the Council Regulation on the European Fisheries Fund, which contains several constructive references to the subject. This document does not, however, govern the distribution of funds under the various headings, which is a matter for the Member States to decide under their operational programmes (Q15).

With regard to the **various methods to be employed** with a view to implementing gender mainstreaming, four committees applied specific methods with a view to achieving that purpose. AFET uses benchmarking, REGI uses gender-specific impact assessment, SEDE uses statistics broken down by gender and the PECH committee declared it was prepared to use any available method. This was also the position of the DROI committee.

D. EXPERTISE, CONSULTATION AND COOPERATION ON THE GENDER DIMENSION

Most of the committees regularly consult **experts, national bodies and NGOs**, as well as other organisations working directly in the field of gender equality, by holding public hearings or commissioning studies. The only committees which had not conducted any such consultation were AFCO, AGRI, CONT, CULT, IMCO and JURI. DROI stressed that NGO experts on gender issues regularly took part in their public hearings. The same applied to PECH and REGI. Consulting NGOs and outside experts was an essential element of the way DEVE drew up reports and opinions and organised delegations.

When it comes to making use of **Parliament's in-house expertise** (the FEMM committee, its secretariat, thematic department, legal service and library), fourteen committees had consulted the relevant services. PECH stated that it took into account most of the suggestions included in opinions by FEMM and had commissioned a study from the thematic department on the role of women in the sustainable development of European fisheries. EMPL used the library and the thematic department and stated that it took the opinions of FEMM into account. The library had produced for REGI a document entitled 'Gender mainstreaming within a regional policy' and the thematic department had commissioned an external study on gender mainstreaming in the context of structural funds use. ENVI had availed itself of in-house expertise mainly in the form of the FEMM opinions drawn up in connection with its reports. LIBE took account of the opinions of FEMM in connection with its reports. DEVE used the expertise of the thematic department and AFET regularly attended the seminars organised by FEMM.

Overall, seventeen committees stated that **cooperation between their committee and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality** was regular or sporadic. AFET, CULT, DEVE, EMPL, ITRE, LIBE and PECH regularly cooperated with FEMM. For example, DEVE had organised an organisation on '*Women and War*' in collaboration with FEMM, and considered that it cooperated well and regularly with FEMM. AFET cooperated mainly through the vice-chairs responsible for gender mainstreaming and the corresponding network of officials. CULT welcomed the many opinions drawn up by FEMM in connection with its reports and always gave them careful consideration. In addition to cooperation with FEMM, EMPL also mentioned conflicting responsibilities in relation to Commission proposals.

Five committees had asked the Commission **to assess the impact of a dossier** on equality

between men and women (DROI, INTA, ITRE, PECH and REGI). INTA had done so when adopting certain paragraphs of FEMM's opinion on trade and poverty reduction, as had DROI in connection with the application of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights and a more general request concerning the financial instrument.

In answer to the question of how they regarded **the expertise on gender issues** within their **committee's secretariat**, ten committees replied that they were developing the expertise in question. The secretariats of five committees – AFET, CONT, CULT, DROI and EMPL – already had good expertise.

INTA replied that its secretariat had no expertise regarding gender issues.

The **composition of committees** is as follows:

Committee	Female MEPS	Male MEPS	Total	% Women	Comments
AFCO	12	42	54	22.2	
AFET	38	133	171	22.2	
AGRI	28	64	92	30.4	
CONT	31	52	83	37.4	20% of full-time members are women, 39% of substitutes are women.
CULT	32	43	75	41.6	the chair and one vice-chair are women, as are the coordinators of the EPP, PSE and GUE groups.
DEVE	27	44	71	38	
DROI	27	45	72	37.5	
EMPL	43	58	101	42.5	
ENVI	56	79	135	41.4	
IMCO	36	52	88	40.9	(The chair and the first and second vice-chair are women).
INTA	15	50	65	23	
ITRE	38	69	107	35.5	
JURI	16	36	52	30.7	
LIBE	51	64	115	44.3	
PECH	14	49	63	22.2	Current fairly positive trend nevertheless fails to convey the whole picture, as women are among the most active members of the committee and occupy key roles in the Bureau (three vice-chairs) and as political group coordinators.
REGI	30	80	110	27.2	
SEDE	15	55	70	21.4	
TRAN	21	78	99	21.2	

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	31.3.2009
Result of final vote	+: 23 -: 0 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Edit Bauer, Edite Estrela, Věra Flasarová, Nicole Fontaine, Lissy Gröner, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Urszula Krupa, Astrid Lulling, Siiri Oviir, Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou, Zita Pleštinšká, Teresa Riera Madurell, Eva-Riitta Siitonen, Eva-Britt Svensson, Anne Van Lancker, Anna Záborská
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Donata Gottardi, Marusya Ivanova Lyubcheva, Maria Petre, Heide Rühle
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Jean-Pierre Audy, Wolfgang Bulfon, Marie-Hélène Descamps, Jean Spautz