

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4737/05

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to the Commission

Subject: Combating social exclusion and poverty among women in Europe

According to information at our disposal, the at-risk-of-poverty rate in the European Union is higher for women than for men. In the 2003 Joint Report on social inclusion in the EU of 15 Member States, the Commission identified high-risk groups, the risk of poverty tended to be significantly higher for the unemployed, single parents, older people living alone and families with numerous children. In the new 10 Member States, the situation is the same. We know that in all these vulnerable groups the majority are women.

As is clearly identified, the persistent trend of women's poverty and social exclusion in Europe is caused by the wages gap between women and men, part-time employment, low-wage workers and lower level of pensions that, in general, affect specially women.

We would like to ask the Commission how it intends to develop EU policies in the economic, employment and social policy fields in order to decrease the feminisation of poverty in Europe.