

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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*Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality*

24.9.2004

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Budgets

on Draft General Budget of the European Communities for the financial year  
2005

Section III: Commission  
(SEC(2004)0660 – 2004/2001(BUD))

Draftsperson: Lissy Gröner

## SUGGESTIONS

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

### General introduction:

1. The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality has followed the 2005 budgetary procedure to the extent possible considering that 2004 has been the year of the biggest Enlargement of the European Union so far and at the same time the year of the European elections.
2. The Committee strived to followed the principles as defined by the provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty and has examined a broad range of Community policies and measures from the point of view of equal opportunities and protection of women's rights. In this respect, gender mainstreaming does not apply only to measures designed specifically to promote equal opportunities but extends to cover the defence of women's position and rights in the context of all budget items. In this respect, the Committee observes with regret that the practice of gender budgeting remains undone.
3. Regarding the aspect of scrutinising the implementation of policies financed from the Community budget the Committee fully supports the proposals in 2005 budget lines to achieve the expected results in those areas where inequalities between men and women continue to exist.
4. In view of the similar objectives being already implemented in many budget lines in previous years, as proposed by the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities, the proposals for the 2005 budget aim mainly at completing the above-mentioned objectives.
5. Under the Article 3(2) of the EC Treaty the promotion of gender equality is a fundamental principle of the EU and should be implemented in all Community actions and programmes. Therefore the Commission has to ensure that gender equality is taken into account in the implementation of the budget - the implementation of the gender balance in all the expenditure of all the policy areas of the EU.
6. The Commission has to set up an effective reporting system clearly showing in the different budget lines the effect on men and women, how the budget expenditure took into account the gender equality and what projects were financed to achieve gender balance. This should be done especially under those budget items which expressly foresee expenditure for promotion of gender equality and protection of women's rights.

### Specific areas:

7. The *Expenditure on administrative management of the Community measure to achieve*

*equality between women and men*) comprises (Article 04 01 04 05) "expenditure on technical and administrative assistance the Commission has to delegate to and implementation agency governed by the Community law". The Code of Conduct on setting up of an Executive Agency obliges the Commission to inform the Parliament when it contemplates setting up of such an agency, in accordance with the budgetary procedure and respecting the principle of transparency. To the knowledge of the European Parliament, no such agency has been set up, therefore the reference should be deleted.

8. Implementation of Beijing Platform for Action and Lisbon Strategy demand better involvement of women in economic decision-making. Women constitute a minority in the upper echelons of employers' organisations and in executive posts in employees organisations. Social partners play an important role in the promotion of equal opportunities through collective bargaining. The budget does not reflect in strategies and affirmative action programmes to reach balanced representation of women among the social partners.
9. The current Programme relating to Community framework strategy on gender equality terminates on 31.12.2005. At the same time expires also the Community action programme to combat discrimination. It is therefore necessary to prepare a new programme on gender equality for the period after 2005 and to ensure a smooth continuation of Community action in this field. A new programme should be established without prejudice to the creation of European Institute for Gender Equality.
10. Conclusions of the Limerick Ministerial meeting of 7 May 2004 and the Results of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council of Minister on 1-2 June 2004 demand the setting up of the European Institute for Gender Equality. A creation of new budget line is therefore proposed to prepare for the setting of the Institute (04 05 04). It should be complementary to the Programme relating to Community strategy on gender equality.
11. Implementation of gender equality principle in this particular EU information policy area is essential to reach full participation of women in the information society. This general objective should be complemented by special expenditure for improvement of information dissemination to the citizens.
12. The political context of MEDA region is marked by serious tensions and constant aggravation of the situation, particularly towards the end of 2004 and the beginning of 2005. Women's participation in the prevention and resolution of conflict, peace negotiations, reconciliation and reconstruction for the development and preservation of sustainable peace and democratisation in the MEDA region has to be ensured.
13. In accordance with the Conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council, women have an active role to play in peace-building and peace-keeping. European aid to the countries and areas which have been devastated by armed conflicts and war, such as the western Balkans, Afghanistan, Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries, and especially Iraq, should be explicitly committed to encourage this role and to promote

the reintegration and participation of women in social, economic and political life. The fact that the impact of war and conflict disproportionately affects women and girls and that the violence is extreme and widespread has to be taken into account.

14. The Accession Partnership constitutes the cornerstone of EU-Turkey relations and the appropriations for *Pre-accession assistance for Turkey* (Article 22 02 04 01) have significantly increased. In particular in view of the decision to be taken by the European Council of December 2004, it is crucial to support Turkey to further improve protection of human rights especially of women's rights, and demand the fulfilment of Copenhagen Criteria. The Commission Regular Report on Progress towards accession by Turkey in 2003 established that the protection of women's rights is insufficient and that the violence against women is severe.

## PROCEDURE

<b>Title</b>	Draft General Budget of the European Communities for the financial year 2005
<b>Procedure number</b>	2004/2001(BUD)
<b>Committee responsible</b>	BUDG
<b>Enhanced cooperation</b>	No
<b>Draftswoman</b> Date appointed	Lissy Gröner <b>26.7.2004</b>
<b>Discussed in committee</b>	30.8.2004 23.9.2004
<b>Date suggestions adopted</b>	23.9.2004
<b>Result of final vote</b>	for: 20 against: 0 abstentions: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Maria Carlshamre, Edite Estrela, Ilda Figueiredo, Věra Flasarová, Claire Gibault, Lissy Gröner, Zita Gurmai, Lívia Járóka, Urszula Krupa, Pia Elda Locatelli, Angelika Niebler, Siiri Oviir, Doris Pack, Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou, Christa Prets, Teresa Riera Madurell, Amalia Sartori, Lydia Schenardi, Eva-Britt Svensson
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	
<b>Substitutes under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote</b>	Sophia Helena In 't Veld