

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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*Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality*

**2006/2118(INI)**

11.7.2006

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on Turkey's progress towards accession  
(2006/2118(INI))

Draftswoman: Emine Bozkurt

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## SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas, although the legal reforms in Turkey in the area of women's rights go a long way in implementing the *acquis*, translating the reforms into practice remains a serious problem,
- B. whereas the Commission's progress report identifies the following areas of concern as regards the situation of women: violence against women, particularly domestic violence and crimes of honour, forced marriages, the high illiteracy rate and lack of appropriate access to education, the low level of participation by women in parliament and in local representative bodies, and the low level of participation and prevailing discrimination in the labour market,
- C. whereas, in some regions in Turkey, newborn children are not registered immediately, and whereas, by means of the practice of later registration, the age of young women can be arbitrarily fixed and under-age girls can be declared to have reached majority, thereby providing 'de facto' legitimation for forced marriages,
  - 1. Stresses that respecting human rights, including women's rights, is a *conditio sine qua non* for membership of the European Union and calls on the Commission to make the issue of human rights, including women's rights, central to the agenda for the negotiations with Turkey;
  - 2. Commends the Turkish Government and parliament on the legislative reforms relating to the situation of women in the fields of the Constitution, the Civil and the Penal Code and the Labour Code; expresses its concern regarding application of the reforms and urges the government to direct more attention to implementation of the legislation;
  - 3. Calls on the government to provide women who are victims of violence or are at risk of violence with healthcare and legal support and protection and more and better shelters, and to provide telephone help lines to report violence and request support;
  - 4. Reiterates its demand to the Commission to present Parliament with a full report concerning the brutality of the Turkish police in Istanbul on 6 March 2005 during the demonstration to mark International Women's Day;
  - 5. Calls on the Turkish authorities to engage in a constant dialogue with the European Parliament on women's rights and on the role of women in Turkey in social, economic and political life;
  - 6. Calls on the Turkish Government to eliminate the obstacles women continue to face in gaining access to education and ensure equal access for them;
  - 7. Calls on the Commission, in the accession negotiations with Turkey, to press for steps to be taken to ensure that newborn children are registered immediately, thereby putting an

end to any illegal practices, in particular that of applying to Turkish family courts to have girls' ages increased so that they can officially be declared to have reached majority, with a view to avoiding prosecution for forcing girls into marriage;

8. Calls on the Turkish Government to ensure that marriages are registered legally throughout the country;
9. Calls on the Turkish Government to implement a global strategy for the promotion of gender equality and the protection of women's rights across the spectrum of its policies and in cooperation with political parties, social partners, NGOs and the media.

## PROCEDURE

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| <b>Title</b>  | Turkey's progress towards accession  |
| <b>Procedure number</b>   | 2006/2118(INI)   |
| <b>Committee responsible</b>                                      | AFET   |
| <b>Opinion by</b><br>Date announced in plenary                    | FEMM<br>1.6.2006   |
| <b>Enhanced cooperation – date announced in plenary</b>           |  |
| <b>Drafts(wo)man</b><br>Date appointed                            | Emine Bozkurt<br>28.6.2006   |
| <b>Previous drafts(wo)man</b>                                     |  |
| <b>Discussed in committee</b>                                     | 11.7.2006  |
| <b>Date adopted</b>   | 11.7.2006  |
| <b>Result of final vote</b>                                       | +: 27<br>–: 0<br>0: 0  |
| <b>Members present for the final vote</b>                         | Edit Bauer, Emine Bozkurt, Hiltrud Breyer, Maria Carlshamre, Edite Estrela, Ilda Figueiredo, Věra Flasarová, Lissy Gröner, Zita Gurmai, Livia Járóka, Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Urszula Krupa, Astrid Lulling, Siiri Oviir, Doris Pack, Marie-Line Reynaud, Teresa Riera Madurell, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Amalia Sartori, Eva-Britt Svensson, Britta Thomsen, Anna Záborská |
| <b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>                   | Iratxe García Pérez, Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, Anna Hedh, Mary Honeyball, Christa Kläß, Karin Resetarits   |
| <b>Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote</b> |  |
| <b>Comments (available in one language only)</b>                  | ...  |