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Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

2007/2114(INI)

27.6.2007

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Culture and Education

on Adult learning: It is never too late to learn
(2007/2114(INI))

Draftswoman: Věra Flasarová

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SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas lifelong learning, as part of the Lisbon strategy, plays a pivotal role in supporting economic development and social cohesion in the EU,
- B. whereas the structural funds, in particular the European Social Fund, have the potential to support the development of lifelong learning, having regard to the preparation of the Grundtvig programme, as part of the lifelong learning programme, for the period 2007-2013,
- C. whereas an efficient adult learning system with clear priorities and monitored implementation, integrated into lifelong learning strategies, can support the linguistic, social and cultural integration of excluded groups, such as immigrants and the Roma, many of whom are also early school-leavers,
 1. Emphasises the importance of gender equality with regard to programmes relating to lifelong learning, so that both men and women can take advantage to the same extent of the possibilities offered by such learning; calls on the Commission to make use of all tools for the monitoring of sensitive gender equality policies in the preparation of adult learning, in cooperation with the European Institute for Gender Equality;
 2. Regrets that gender mainstreaming is not taken adequately into account in the Commission's Communication;
 3. Emphasises the need to eliminate discrimination in education and promote measures to increase the participation of women in lifelong learning, in particular enabling them, particularly mothers at the end of a period of maternal leave and women caring for dependants, to enter or return to the labour market;
 4. Calls on the Member States to ensure sufficient investment in the education and training of older women and female migrants, but above all to ensure education and training which matches the needs of the learner;
 5. Emphasises the need to increase access for women to new technologies, including women who live in remote and rural areas and old women, thereby giving them an equal chance of competing on the labour market; further emphasises the need to support steps to reduce the gap between men and women in terms of technical and scientific qualifications;
 6. Recalls the objectives of the Barcelona European Council of 15 and 16 March 2002 and emphasises the progress made by the Member States towards achieving the objectives of providing nursery and kindergarten places and preschool education as well as establishing the Day of child care and of care of other dependent persons; points out, at the same time, that some Member States are far behind schedule in meeting the Barcelona objectives;
 7. Calls on investors to focus attention on developing programmes, skills and qualifications

that allow women to obtain a grounding in managerial and entrepreneurial skills and to improve their qualifications with a view to advancement to executive positions;

8. Calls on the Member States to invest in adult lifelong learning programmes, particularly for women, in order to fill any gaps in formal or informal education created by the unequal division of family obligations and to make use of the skills and abilities they have acquired from working in the household or in agriculture or while bringing up children or caring for dependants;
9. Recommends that employers take responsibility for creating appropriate working conditions for both mothers and fathers caring for children and that these parents have the opportunity to continue with lifelong learning at the same time; considers that in such situations, employers should be compensated for this through tax relief;
10. Encourages employers, in the context of corporate social responsibility, to finance vocational training programmes which promote lifelong learning, particularly for female staff, with a view to extending their active working life and enhancing women's opportunities for participation in the labour market and professional development;
11. Points out the need to create appropriate conditions for lifelong learning, especially for national and ethnic minorities, immigrants and people with disabilities;
12. Calls on the Member States to improve coherence and to contribute to more efficient spending by coordinating and creating partnerships for their respective National Reform Programmes, in order to level out differences in access to education; furthermore, calls on the Member States to support open and distance learning services, promote information and guidance, create tailored programmes and flexible teaching arrangements, and respond to new forms of illiteracy by granting access to and use of ICT.

PROCEDURE

Title	Adult learning: It is never too late to learn
Procedure number	2007/2114(INI)
Committee responsible	CULT
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	FEMM 21.6.2007
Enhanced cooperation – date announced in plenary	
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Věra Flasarová 20.3.2007
Previous drafts(wo)man	
Discussed in committee	2.5.2007 25.6.2007
Date adopted	25.6.2007
Result of final vote	+: 20 –: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Edit Bauer, Emine Bozkurt, Esther De Lange, Edite Estrela, Věra Flasarová, Esther Herranz García, Urszula Krupa, Pia Elda Locatelli, Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou, Zita Pleštinská, Christa Prets, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Eva-Britt Svensson, Anna Záborská
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Gabriela Crețu, Anna Hedh, Mary Honeyball, Elisabeth Jeggle, Maria Petre, Corien Wortmann-Kool
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	
Comments (available in one language only)	...