



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

2011/2116(INI)

23.11.2011

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on the Statute for a European cooperative society with regard to the
involvement of employees
(2011/2116(INI))

Rapporteur: Edite Estrela

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SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas the European economy is facing difficult challenges and the European Cooperative Society (SCE) can offer valuable opportunities to many women in terms of entrepreneurship, access to products and services, or participating in a business that has ethical values and principles and provides income-generating opportunities;
 - B. whereas it is estimated that most cooperative workers are women but that too often obstacles in the form of negative stereotypes about women's leadership potential continue to limit change and progress; whereas specific measures should be encouraged to support women to seek and gain senior leadership positions;
1. Highlights the potential of the SCE for promoting gender equality through the implementation of policies and programmes at various levels, paying particular attention to education, vocational training, action to promote entrepreneurship and ongoing training programmes; notes that gender equality in decision-making at various levels is economically beneficial and also creates favourable conditions enabling skilled and talented people to carry out management and supervisory duties; stresses, further, that some aspects of cooperative work provide flexibility that makes it easier to reconcile family and professional life; calls on the Commission to design a mechanism for the exchange of best gender equality practices between the Member States;
 2. Stresses that the SCE can respond to women's needs, improving their standard of living through access to decent work opportunities, savings and loan institutions, housing and social services, education and training;
 3. Regrets the present limited number of SCEs; calls on the Commission to pay more particular attention to the problems encountered in setting up SCEs and calls for a targeted, effective and comprehensive communication and information campaign on the SCE for the various stakeholders, focusing on local, regional, national and European information for women;
 4. Calls on the Commission to deliver a study presenting updated, comparable, gender-disaggregated data in order to make available better knowledge of female participation rates in cooperatives in the EU, including managerial positions, and the impact of cooperatives on fostering gender equality on the labour market; calls, further, for contacts to be established between SCEs with a view to setting up networks that will encourage exchanges of good practice with the aim of promoting increased female participation; calls on the Commission, in this connection, to boost communication between the various SCE contact points in the Member States;
 5. Regrets that some Member States still do not comply with Directive 2003/72/EC in terms of promoting gender balance in the method used to nominate, appoint or elect the members of the special negotiating body (SNB) of the SCE and calls on the Commission

to take the necessary steps to ensure that this Directive is transposed as swiftly as possible;

6. Calls on the Commission to carry out an assessment of women's representation in the SNBs of SCEs and of the measures taken by the sector and by Member States to improve their representation;
7. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to encourage cooperatives to intensify their efforts to increase the participation of women in the SNB and to implement diversity policies that will make it possible to guarantee gender equality in professional and private life; notes that cooperative resilience can only be reinforced when programmes aimed to ensure equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men to participate fully in economic and social development are implemented, particularly at senior management levels;
8. Urges the Commission to include SCEs in the possible European regulations in order to guarantee that women are better represented at senior management levels and on the boards of public and listed companies, in the event that companies do not voluntarily achieve the targets of 30% by 2015 and 40% by 2020;
9. Calls on the Commission to take account of the importance of entrepreneurship in the social economy and the gender perspective when monitoring the correct implementation of the Directive, as well as in the future revision of the SCE regulation; calls on the Commission, further, to adopt guidelines for the promotion and development of women in female cooperatives and special negotiating bodies.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	22.11.2011
Result of final vote	+: 22 -: 0 0: 5
Members present for the final vote	Regina Bastos, Emine Bozkurt, Andrea Češková, Marije Cornelissen, Tadeusz Cymański, Edite Estrela, Ilda Figueiredo, Iratxe García Pérez, Mikael Gustafsson, Mary Honeyball, Lívia Járóka, Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Constance Le Grip, Astrid Lulling, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Siiri Oviir, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska, Marc Tarabella, Britta Thomsen, Marina Yannakoudakis, Anna Záborská
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Anne Delvaux, Sylvie Guillaume, Norica Nicolai, Angelika Werthmann
Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote	Kinga Gál