



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

2013/2061(INI)

4.10.2013

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

on the e-Health Action Plan 2012-2020 – Innovative healthcare for the 21st century
(2013/2061(INI))

Rapporteur: Licia Ronzulli

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SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Calls on the Member States, given that the e-Health Action Plan is aimed at creating new job opportunities in the research, health, medicine and ICT sectors, to pay particular attention to gender balance in education, training and recruitment in all these sectors;
2. Stresses that women are especially under-represented in the research and ICT sectors; considers that the Commission should therefore promote integrated and collective actions such as mentoring programmes and schemes to encourage the participation of women in these sectors;
3. Calls on the Member States to guarantee equal treatment and pay for men and women taking up these new roles;
4. Calls on the Member States, when they promote the plan, to stress the importance of gender balance;
5. Asks the Commission and the Member States to ensure equal access for women to the field of e-health, not only as patients but also as caregivers (professional or not), ICT specialists and policymakers; highlights the fact that women are involved at all levels of the health sector throughout their lives;
6. Urges the Commission and the Member States to promote a gendered approach to healthcare and medicine and, when implementing the e-Health Action Plan, to take into consideration the specific needs of women and girls as beneficiaries of healthcare; whereas, due to longer life expectancy and the gender sensitivity of certain diseases, women are affected to a greater extent by chronic and disabling diseases;
7. Calls on the Commission to encourage and promote e-health services designed for women of all ages, more specifically those dealing with women's health issues and therefore offering women-oriented advice and care solutions;
8. Calls on the Commission to encourage and promote e-Health services designed for (informal) family carers, most of whom are still women, so as to support them in their often heavy caring tasks and to enable them to provide the best possible care;
9. Calls on the Commission to encourage e-health solutions for isolated women, not only those living in remote areas but also isolated and home-bound women lacking the necessary mobility and/or (social) support network to maintain their health and wellbeing;
10. Calls on the Commission to promote e-health solutions which facilitate independent living and prevent domestic accidents, so as to enable older women to live an independent life for as long as they wish or need, regardless of their health status;
11. Calls on the Commission to tackle the information isolation of older generations, in particular older women, and to encourage and promote e-health technologies as a

contribution to the Commission's objectives regarding active and healthy ageing (HLY+2);

12. Stresses that the costs of the relevant devices, connections and communications might be an important barrier in the way of women's access to and use of ICTs for health, as beneficiaries or caregivers;
13. Acknowledges the need for e-health technologies to unlock their potential particularly with regard to health issues which are still burdened by major taboos, such as elder abuse, sexual abuse and other sexual and reproductive health issues;
14. Calls on the Commission to view and promote e-health as a contribution to more effective (health)care systems aiming at improving women's health and wellbeing across the lifespan, so as to contribute to closing the gender gap in overall health outcomes;
15. Recalls that, since one of the main objectives of the e-Health Action Plan is to ensure equal access to healthcare services for all citizens of the Union, measures should be taken as a matter of urgency to close the digital gap between the different regions of the Member States and between urban and rural populations, and, more particularly, to tackle disparities affecting women, the elderly, people with disabilities and people from disadvantaged groups in society as regards access to ICTs within Member States; stresses that particular attention should be given to women living in low income settings and rural areas, and to elderly women, who often lack ICT skills;
16. Asks the Commission and the Member States to pay particular attention to digital literacy and technical training for women, especially elderly women, in order to ensure that e-health tools, especially telemedicine, are genuinely effective and accessible for the whole population;
17. Calls on the Commission to promote health and ICT literacy for older generations, in particular older women, and to encourage and promote user-oriented and women-friendly e-health solutions as a contribution to the Commission's objectives regarding active and healthy ageing;
18. Calls on the Member States, when addressing the operational objectives of the Action Plan, to tackle the obstacles to women's occupational mobility in the e-health sector, particularly the training of girls in ICT for future careers;
19. Calls on the Commission to provide clear guidelines regarding funding in order to directly support the ICT and health sectors, which have been acknowledged as the sectors with the highest growth and employment potential;
20. Recommends that the Member States and the Commission, with the help of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), collect gender-disaggregated data on initial findings as regards the accessibility and impact of e-health systems and tools, and calls for steps to be taken to share best practice in e-health implementation;
21. Asks the Commission and the Member States to pay attention to patients' health literacy in order to ensure effective implementation of e-health tools.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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| Date adopted | 3.10.2013 |
| Result of final vote | +: 19 -: 0 0: 1 |
| Members present for the final vote | Regina Bastos, Andrea Češková, Edite Estrela, Iratxe García Pérez, Mary Honeyball, Astrid Lulling, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Krisztina Morvai, Joanna Senyszyn, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska, Britta Thomsen, Marina Yannakoudakis |
| Substitute(s) present for the final vote | Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Minodora Cliveti, Mariya Gabriel, Nicole Kiil-Nielsen, Christa Kläß, Doris Pack, Angelika Werthmann |
| Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote | Gesine Meissner |