



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

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*Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality*

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**2013/2008(INI)**

17.12.2013

# OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Regional Development

on the European Commission's 7th and 8th progress reports on the EU  
Cohesion Policy and the Strategic Report 2013 on programme implementation  
2007-2013  
(2013/2008(INI))

Rapporteur: Vilija Blinkevičiūtė

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## SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas equal opportunities for men and women and the gender mainstreaming principle are expressly stipulated in the regulations governing the Structural Funds as transversal dimensions of policy programming and implementation;
  - B. whereas women, while forming the majority of the population with higher education qualifications, are more than twice as often inactive as men (21.0% of EU-28 women in 2012 compared to 8.4% of men<sup>1</sup>) and more frequently report personal or family reasons for this inactivity (in 21% of cases, whilst only 0.5% of men cite family as a reason);
  - C. whereas women are at greater risk of extreme poverty than men, and whereas there are more women than men employed under precarious conditions, especially in rural areas; whereas insecurity for women is steadily increasing in urban areas, particularly as a result of the economic and financial crisis;
  - D. whereas, while the evaluations of cohesion policy programmes over the 2007-2013 period co-financed by the European regional development fund (ERDF) and the Cohesion Fund show good overall awareness in the Member States of the gender equality requirement when setting up such programmes (70%<sup>2</sup>), they also indicate that gender equality is by no means effectively integrated into the programmes through clear identification of problems or quantified targets (less than 8%); whereas financial support for promoting equality between women and men has been decreasing<sup>3</sup>;
1. Calls on the Member States, in the context of cohesion policy, to develop programmes and actions aimed at promoting equal economic independence for women and men by ensuring equal participation for women in the labour market and in vocational training, while combating, as soon as possible, the persistent gender pay gap and consequently the gender pension gap; calls on the Member States and local and regional authorities accordingly to take specific measures to realise the potential of women as an essential step towards economic recovery;
  2. Calls on the Member States to introduce gender budgeting in cohesion policy programming with the intention of analysing not only programmes that are specifically targeted at women, but also all government programmes and policies, their effects on resource allocation and their contribution to equality between women and men;
  3. Calls on the Member States to pay attention to the deferred effects that fiscal consolidation may have on women, and to how the effective implementation of cohesion

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<sup>1</sup> [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Unemployment\\_statistics](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/pdf/2009-03-16-inception-report.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/pdf/2009-03-16-inception-report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/opinions\\_advisory\\_committee/opinion\\_on\\_gender\\_equality\\_in\\_the\\_cohesion\\_policy\\_2014-2020\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/opinions_advisory_committee/opinion_on_gender_equality_in_the_cohesion_policy_2014-2020_en.pdf)

policy could be used to minimise these effects;

4. Calls on the Member States and regional and local authorities to develop innovative measures and programmes with a view to combating the feminisation of poverty and promoting social inclusion, aimed in particular at the most disadvantaged groups of women such as women with disabilities, single mothers, women with large families, migrant women, women who have been victims of violence, women with little training and women who are subjected to multiple and intersectional discrimination; advocates the collection of data specifically relating to women prior to the launching of programmes and actions, so as to target their specific needs effectively;
5. Calls on the Commission, in cooperation with the European Institute for Gender Equality, to further improve Member States' reporting systems by introducing and utilising indicators so as to make it possible to assess the support provided under cohesion policy for genuine progress on gender equality and to what extent this is being achieved; stresses that data on how cohesion policy programmes are meeting the gender equality objectives should be gender-disaggregated;
6. Calls on the Commission and Member States to assess the impact of cohesion policy in general and Structural Funds in particular on the situation of women, so as to ensure appropriate responses and effective programme implementation for the period 2014 - 2020;
7. Calls on the Member States to use existing available EU funds more actively to promote equal treatment for women and the development of family-friendly, high-quality, affordable and accessible care facilities and other social structures; stresses the importance of reconciling work and family life in the context of equal opportunities and measures to combat unemployment and social exclusion;
8. Urges that particular attention be given to the cultural and creative sectors, contributing to the achievement of the 'Europe 2020' strategy objectives, in particular job creation; stresses the vital contribution of these sectors to the development of regions and cities; calls for sustained measures to promote continuing education for women specifically relating to these sectors in a bid to ensure that their qualifications can be effectively turned to account and new job prospects created;
9. Calls on the Member States to find ways of reducing unemployment among women so as to avoid them being excessively subject to mobility for career purposes, given that this has a direct and detrimental effect on children;
10. Calls on the Commission to promote the exchange of best practices between Member States on gender mainstreaming in cohesion policy programmes.

## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

<b>Date adopted</b>	16.12.2013
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 16 -: 0 0: 0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Edit Bauer, Iratxe García Pérez, Mikael Gustafsson, Livia Járóka, Constance Le Grip, Astrid Lulling, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Norica Nicolai, Britta Thomsen, Anna Záborská
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Doris Pack, Rui Tavares, Angelika Werthmann
<b>Substitute(s) under Rule 187(2) present for the final vote</b>	Biljana Borzan, Hans-Peter Mayer