

ORAL QUESTION O-0086/01/rev.1

pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure

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to the Commission

Subject: Rights of homosexuals in the EU institutions

More than ten years ago, the first EU Member States granted cohabiting homosexuals the same social and legal rights and duties as all other citizens. Today, these rights and duties apply to a large majority of the homosexual citizens in the EU. In many of the remaining countries, the introduction of similar provisions is being much debated.

In several international organisations (e.g. the European Central Bank) and in many private companies, cohabiting partners can obtain the same rights as other employees in fields such as health insurance, family allowances and pensions for survivors, simply by presenting a statement of cohabitation.

In the light of these sociological and legal facts and in connection with the forthcoming reform, can the Commission confirm that it will propose that persons who are permanently living together will be granted absolutely the same rights as their colleagues who are married? In other words, how will the Commission ensure that a homosexual employee (who also contributes to the social security and health system on equal terms with everybody else) and his/her permanent partner will be granted the right, not only to health insurance and family allowances, but also to the survivor's pension, which is an important element in any couple's financial situation?

As the above-mentioned problems affect cohabiting partners of the opposite sex or homosexuals living in a registered partnership as well, can the Commission confirm that it will assign couples of the opposite sex the same rights as their colleagues who are married?

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Deadline for reply: 23.10.2001