EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

2005/2191(INI)

23.3.2006

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

for the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

on non-discrimination and equal opportunities for all - a framework strategy

(2005/2191(INI))

Draftswoman : Claire Gibault

(*) Enhanced cooperation between committees - Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

SUGGESTIONS

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

- having regard to Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin,
- having regard to Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation,
- having regard to Directive 2002/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2002 amending Council Directive 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions,
- having regard to Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services,
- having regard to Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,

A.. whereas equality between men and women, which derives from respect for human dignity, is a fundamental principle of Community law and Article 3(2) of the EC Treaty lays down the principle of gender mainstreaming by stating that, in all its activities, the Community shall aim to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between men and women, whereas there is a need to implement a cohesive equality policy which gives added value to existing programmes and to initiatives already in progress,

B.. whereas the Commission has proposed that the year 2007 be designated 'European Year of Equal Opportunities for All',

1. Urges Member States fully to complete the process of transposition of current EC anti-discrimination legislation into national law; calls on the Commission to ensure monitoring and regular assessment of the application of this legislation by Member States and to carry out a study on possible new initiatives to supplement the existing legal framework on equality; states that the provision of a legal framework to combat discrimination against women does not suffice to ensure effective equality; therefore calls on Member States to implement an active pro-equality policy in the form of specific and differentiated actions, including positive actions;
2. Insists on focusing on addressing poverty, which is suffered by the vulnerable sections of the population including women in particular, and points to the importance of using the open method of coordination to combat social exclusion; emphasises that flexible working hours for women and men and the development of appropriate and quality childcare structures, as well as structures for the elderly, the disabled and dependants, should remain a priority for Member States in the context of their policies on social cohesion;
3. Urges governments to reinforce the implementation of gender mainstreaming in all relevant policy fields, including in employment and social policies, education, research, external relations, development cooperation, budget and financial policies;
4. Calls on the Member States to ensure equal access for women and men to all levels of

vocational training, professional training and advanced training and that no discrimination is made between girls and boys in the career guidance on offer and in the quality of the education provided;

5. Calls on the Commission to incorporate equality between women and men as a priority topic in the 'European Year of Equal Opportunities for All';

6. Welcomes the Commission's intention to organise an annual high-level equality summit and calls on it to include the topic of equality between women and men in its work, ensuring the participation of the European Parliament, European and international organisations, the competent national authorities and bodies, and representatives of civil society; urges the Commission to implement this proposal as swiftly as possible;

7. Calls on the Commission to present, in the communication which it intends to issue in 2006 dealing in more detail with gender equality, comparative qualitative and quantitative data for each Member State in order to identify those areas in which women suffer permanent, serious discrimination, and to propose new approaches;

8. Stresses the importance and the role of the NGOs dealing with equality in implementing European policy on equality between women and men, and calls on the Commission systematically to promote programmes and initiatives which support European and national NGOs in the sector with a view to a pluralist expression of civil society;

9. Calls on the Member States to act on the commitments they made, which were approved by the Barcelona European Council in 2002, to take measures to eliminate the wage differential between the sexes and to ensure women's equal access to vocational training and to qualified and quality jobs as well as guaranteeing equal treatment in terms of salary;

10. Calls on governments to assemble and analyse statistical data concerning men and women in a distinct manner and linked to their activities in order to analyse the different ways in which women or men are subjected to multiple discrimination on the basis of gender, on the one hand, and on the basis of race, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation, on the other;

11. Emphasises that combating all forms of discrimination should hinge around educational work geared towards respect, tolerance and justice aimed at bringing about a change in mentality by raising the profile of citizens' actions, particularly campaigns aimed at young people; calls on the Member States to undertake systematic efforts to gender sensitise society and raise awareness in the area of discrimination by ridding the public sphere of stereotyping and changing gender attitudes;

12. Emphasises that Member States must conduct information and public awareness campaigns for children at as young an age as possible on the equal sharing of family and household responsibilities;

13. Calls on the Member States, without prejudice to the principles of freedom of expression and freedom of the press, to instruct national bodies promoting equality, in consultation with the media and advertising professionals, to draw up a code of ethics and to ensure that no sexual stereotypes of women or men appear in the media or in advertising;

14. Calls on the Member States to designate independent bodies to implement the principle of equality of women and men and to ensure that they have sufficient financial and human resources to fulfil their mission;

15. Calls on political parties at national and European level to review their organisational structures and the procedures which they apply so as to remove the direct and indirect obstacles to non-discriminatory participation by women, and to adopt appropriate strategies for achieving a more equitable balance between the representation of women and that of men within elected assemblies and national governments;

16. Stresses the importance of ensuring that measures taken as part of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All complement and are coordinated with all the activities planned under the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue in 2008, so that the campaigns are mutually beneficial as regards the fundamental objectives of Union policies;

17. Emphasises the positive role played by migrant women in our societies, and calls on Member States to acknowledge the place they deserve in the integration policies of these States so as to curb any form of discrimination; welcomes the Commission's intention to set up a high-level advisory group on social and labour market integration of disadvantaged ethnic minorities in 2006 and to deal, in particular, with the issue of migrant women because of the dual discrimination which they suffer; considers that, in this context, in order to promote a citizens' Europe for people of both sexes, account should also be taken of innovative approaches by non-governmental organisations which, by means of their everyday activities, promote social integration at local and regional level, such as sports clubs, youth and cultural centres, etc.

PROCEDURE

Title	Non-discrimination and equal opportunities for all - a framework strategy
Procedure number	2005/2191(INI)
Committee responsible	LIBE
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	FEMM 27.10.2005
Enhanced cooperation – date announced in plenary	27.10.2005
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Claire Gibault 5.10.2005
Previous drafts(wo)man	Claire Gibault
Discussed in committee	21.2.2006 21.3.2006
Date adopted	21.3.2006
Result of final vote	+: 15 –: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Edit Bauer, Hiltrud Breyer, Ilda Figueiredo, Věra Flasarová, Lissy Gröner, María Esther Herranz García, Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Astrid Lulling, Siiri Oviir, Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou, Teresa Riera Madurell, Amalia Sartori, Britta Thomsen, Anna Záborská
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	
Comments (available in one language only)	...