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A Roadmap for equality between women and men

2006-2010

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This impact assessment synthesizes the results of the contributions and available studies that support the orientation of the Roadmap. It confirms that despite significant achievements, there are persistent gender inequalities in the economy and in society. Inequalities exist on the labour market, in the reconciliation between work and private life, in social protection and social exclusion, in health, in entrepreneurship, in political and economic decision-making, in science and technology. Gender stereotypes affect both women and men from early ages on: women and men still follow gender stereotyped education and training paths, and stereotypes lead to a concentration of women in labour market sectors often with lower wages and wastes human resources. Immigrant women increasingly face double or multiple forms of discrimination. Gender-based violence and trafficking in women are unfortunately widespread realities. Despite achievements, there remain outstanding gaps in terms of women's economic, civil, and political independence around the world.

This impact assessment analyzes these problems and challenges, and presents three possible options to tackle them. The first option would be for the European Commission to no longer take any initiative to promote gender equality but to rely on existing measures to be carried our by Member States, social partners, and civil society. The second option would be to consider a sectoral policy approach, where the different Commission services would be responsible for promoting gender mainstreaming and specific actions in the areas under their own responsibilities. The third option would be to propose a roadmap with an overarching and comprehensive approach, which would cover all the internal and external policies of the European Union, with particular attention on the achievement of a number of key objectives.

Option 1 and 2 have been discarded at an early stage and Option 3 has been chosen as the most effective alternative. It is the best option to provide the required political impetus for effectively responding to the socio-economic challenges of the renewed Lisbon Strategy, for ensuring respect for the fundamental rights of women, and for fulfilling the international commitments of the EU. It is also the best option to respond to the stakeholders' expectations.

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Commission is presenting a roadmap for equality between women and men in the European Union for the period 2006-2010. Taking a coherent, global approach, the roadmap will present all the internal and external policies of the EU and define actions to tackle persistent gender inequalities. This will be done in cooperation and partnership with the Member States, the social partners and civil society.

Following the Impact Assessment Guidelines[1], this working document sums up the contributions and studies supporting the roadmap and assesses the impact its implementation is likely to have. The impact analysis is proportional to the objective and nature of the roadmap. The impacts are essentially described in a qualitative manner, also highlighting synergies with other policies. The more detailed impact of future actions to promote gender equality will be analysed on a case by case basis and by the specific service concerned with their promotion.

Work on the impact assessment began in September 2005. Representatives of all DGs within the Commission's Inter-Service Group (ISG) on gender equality met on September 15th to discuss the roadmap. They were invited to form a steering group to prepare it's the impact assessment. The steering group met several times, with the first meeting taking place on September 28th.

2. PREPARATORY STAGES: CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE REFLECTION AND CONSULTATION

The European Commission has, over the years, maintained regular consultation with the different stakeholders in the field of gender equality. These include the Advisory Committee on Gender Equality[2], the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming[3], the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, the Helsinki Group on Women and Science[4], the European Network to Promote Women Entrepreneurs[5], the Advisory Committee "Women in rural areas"[6], the Expert Group on Gender and External Relations, the European social partners, and the European Women's Lobby (EWL)[7]. The stakeholders are the relevant parties and target groups involved in gender equality policy. Thus the Commission has complied with the minimum standards for the consultation of interested parties[8].

It has also been able to rely on the findings of various reports. These include research reports prepared by the Group of Experts on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment[9]; reports by the network of independent legal experts in the fields of employment, social affairs, and equality between women and men[10]; the evaluation report of the Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005)[11]; a progress report[12] prepared by the Luxembourg Presidency on EU achievements in gender equality since the Beijing Platform for Action; recent social research[13]; and other studies.

Recurrent themes addressed by the stakeholders include the need to accelerate progress towards real gender equality by improving and ensuring a widespread application of the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions. Several contributions refer to the key role of equality between women and men in achieving the Lisbon goals of growth and jobs, in particular within the context of an ageing society. The challenges of globalisation and the need to protect women's human rights and to promote gender equality in development and external

relations are also highlighted.

Other challenges the stakeholders identify include achieving the Lisbon employment targets; eliminating the gender pay gap; promoting reconciliation policies for both women and men; addressing the democratic deficit of women's under-representation in economic and political decision-making; ensuring the integration of immigrant women in the labour market and guaranteeing the enjoyment of their rights; encouraging equality between women and men in pension systems; fighting poverty which affects women more than men; protecting women's human rights, especially by eradicating violence against and trafficking in women. Women's active participation on the labour market is identified as a key factor to reaching gender equality on the ground, as it can ensure economic independence throughout their lives and in particular when they are older. The promotion of women's entrepreneurship in particular is often seen as an important tool to enhance women's position

All the stakeholders give priority to combating gender stereotypes, and some refer explicitly to the important role the media play in this. They want to see more young women encouraged to go into scientific and technical fields and more young men to go into the social field, especially in areas like care or education.

In addition, the need for a reinforced partnership and stronger institutional mechanisms for gender equality is stressed**.** The social partners[14] have an important role to play in promoting gender equality, and dialogue with civil society has to be improved. Effective political leadership at the highest level and adequate human and financial resources are considered fundamental. Improving comparative data at EU level, developing gender equality indicators and ensuring systematic implementation and monitoring are also essential. Among the instruments to be used, some contributions refer to the feasibility of new legislative initiatives and also to the necessity to improve the implementation of gender equality legislation on the ground.

These contributions provide important impetus for the future of the EU's gender equality policy, and have been taken into account at all stages of the impact assessment, ie. problem definition, objectives, policy options, as well as monitoring and evaluation. It has been implicitly and explicitly recognised that progress has been made in the field of gender equality. However, a more effective and strategic action, backed by a stronger political commitment and increased monitoring, is needed.

3. PROBLEM DEFINITION: GENDER INEQUALITIES IN THE ECONOMY AND IN SOCIETY

Gender inequalities continue to be prevalent in a number of areas: women have a lower employment rate and higher unemployment rate compared with men; they earn less than men; and take recourse to part time work and parental leave arrangements more often than men. They also tend to have lower pension entitlements, are more at risk of poverty than men, and face differences in health status and access to health care. Women are also less involved in entrepreneurship and decision-making positions, science and technology, and in certain sectors of education. Despite concerted actions, they continue to be the primary victims of trafficking and violence. The civil, political, and economic independence of women have yet to be achieved in many parts of the world.

Gender inequalities on the labour market

Women's employment rate reached 55.7%[15] in 2004, up from 53.6% in 2000, and, as a result, the gender gap in employment rate decreased by 2.4 p.p. to 15.2 p.p.[16]. Apart from younger women aged 15-24, women's employment rates continued to increase for all age groups and particularly for older women (by 4.8 p.p. to reach 31.7% in 2004), though the gap between older women and men remains the highest (19 p.p.).[17] The difference in unemployment rates between women and men is declining, from 2.9 p.p. in 2000 to 2.1 p.p in 2004, according to the latest data available from Eurostat. Unemployment rates are 10.2% for women and 8.1% for men.[18]

Notwithstanding the positive achievements, the 2010 Lisbon employment target for women's participation rate (60%) will be hard to reach without renewed and persistent efforts to create conditions to have women (re-) enter and stay on the labour market. A raise in women's employment rate in all ages will be instrumental to reach the targets of 70% overall employment rate and 50% for older people.

The gender gap remains strikingly high for part-time work. This concerns on average 32.6% of women employees compared to only 7.4% of men[19]. This is one of the many factors behind the gender pay gap and the gap in decision making positions. The more children women have, the more likely they are to be in part-time work, which is not the case for men[20]. The figures for part-time work range from 34% for women with one child under 12 to 44% for those with two children and 52% for those with three or more children[21].

There is still little evidence of a narrowing of the gender pay gap, which on average stands at 15 p.p.[22] in the EU-25. Many factors contribute to the pay differences between men and women, which legislation alone cannot tackle. It is a multifaceted problem that reflects a series of structural gender inequalities: the overrepresentation of women in part-time work; the labour market segregation where women work in a smaller number of less well remunerated and less valued professions mainly in services; the glass ceiling for women to access decision making positions; the lack of transparency of career and wage structures more favourable to men; the lack of reconciliation of work and private life forcing women out of the labour market or to unwanted part-time work arrangements; and the persistence of direct or indirect discrimination by employers against women. Available figures underline that the pay gap is lower in the public sector than in private companies.

These problems have been tackled by the European Employment Strategy, which works to boost women's employment by promoting the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions in the employment policy priorities of the Member States, and this via the Open Method of Coordination. The new European Employment Guidelines[23] underline that gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality should be ensured in all actions taken. The need for action to increase female participation and reduce gender gaps in employment, unemployment, and pay is stressed. A key role is also played by the Structural Funds—especially the European Social Fund—which promote equality between women and men. They also play an important role in addressing difficulties faced by women in the agricultural and fisheries sectors. In addition, gender is mainstreamed[24] across all actions, and is promoted through the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming in the Structural Funds. Equality between women and men is also within the objectives of the four Community initiatives for 2000-2006: EQUAL, INTERREG, URBAN II and LEADER +.

With regard to the specific situation of immigrant women, they increasingly face double or multiple forms of discrimination based upon their origin and gender[25]. The employment rate of immigrant women is considerably lower than that of EU national women, by 16.9 p.p., while the difference is somewhat smaller for men, 11.0 p.p..[26] Highly qualified immigrant women are particularly disadvantaged, as their employment rate is 23.2 p.p. lower than that of highly qualified EU national women. The difference here is again smaller for highly qualified men, at 13 p.p..

Immigrant women often work in low-paid industries and occupations, such as cleaning and care, without being given the chance to fully utilise their labour potential. They are often disadvantaged because of lower wages. In 2000, women in the EU on average earned 16p.p. less than EU men, but immigrant women earned an additional 10 p.p. less than EU women. This difference was less for men, at only 4 p.p..

The European Commission has addressed the question of employment and social inclusion of immigrants through the European Employment Strategy, as well as through the Social Inclusion Process. The Commission's recent Communication on a Common Agenda for Integration [27] has put forward the framework for the integration of third-country nationals, including the integration of immigrant women into all aspects of society.

Reconciliation between work and private life

Women continue to be the main carers of children and other dependant persons, such as the elderly. For example, participation in employment and the amount of time worked by 20 to 49-year-old women are closely linked to the number and age of their children, which is less the case for men[28]. The employment rate for women ages 20-49 is 61.1% when they have children under 12, compared with 75.4% when they do not. For men with children under 12, however, the employment rate is 91.2%, compared with 85.6% for men without children. The employment rate for women ages 20-49 with one child under 12 is 65.5%, falling to 58.5% for women with two children and to 41.3% for those with three or more children.

In a study carried out by Eurostat in 2004[29] on how Europeans ages 20 to 74 spend their time in nine EU Member States (Belgium, Germany, Estonia, France, Hungary, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom) and Norway, it was confirmed that a gender gap continues in reconciliation between work and private life. In all countries, women spent significantly more time on domestic work with almost four hours per day on average, while the average for men was just above two hours daily. In all countries men had more free time than women.

Similar differences between women and men exist for parental leave schemes[30]. A Eurobarometer survey carried out in 2004 showed that 84% of men said they had neither taken parental leave nor were thinking of doing so, although they were aware of their right to it. Research has shown that the level of remuneration of parental leaves and their social security coverage influence men's choice to take parental leaves. Furthermore, largely extended parental leave schemes or parental leaves exclusively taken by women can adversely affect their employment and often their pension level.

Europeans have a fertility rate which is insufficient to replace the population. Surveys have revealed the gap which exists between the number of children Europeans would like to have (2.3) and the number they actually have (1.5). The low fertility rate is the result of obstacles to private choices, including the lack of work-life balance. Experience shows that Member States

with effective reconciliation policies for both women and men have higher fertility rates and a higher labour participation of women[31].

Public services also have a role to play in reconciliation. In the case of public transport, women's needs are in general different from men's because they are more likely to be in part-time employment and to travel outside peak hours, or be travelling with children.

The European Employment Strategy has given an important role to reconciliation policies for both women and men, especially through the provision of care facilities for children in the context of the Barcelona targets, as well as for other dependants, and flexible work arrangements. Education and culture policies also play a role.

Social protection and social exclusion

Women represent the majority of older people — nearly 60% of those over 65 and close to two thirds of those over 75 are women. However, pension systems are not always particularly geared towards women's evolving needs. Most pension schemes were traditionally designed for men as family breadwinners, working full time and without career breaks. Women's needs were met through their husband's income, or, after his death, through widows' pensions, complemented by child allowances. This approach is still reflected in the basic principles of many pension schemes, although many Member States are progressively adapting their systems in accordance with existing Community law and in the light of the higher labour-market participation of women and aspirations to greater gender equality.[32]

Since 2001 common objectives exist at EU level for the modernisation of pension systems. These serve as a basis for closer cooperation with Member States in accordance with the Open Method of Coordination, which includes establishing national strategy reports.

The common indicators of poverty and social exclusion for the published *Joint Reports on Social Inclusion* in 2004 and 2005 show that the 'at-risk-of-poverty' rate is higher for women in most countries. The European Parliament, in its recently adopted *Report on women and poverty in the European Union* also argues that extreme poverty is more prevalent among women, saying that in seventeen of the Member States the risk of extreme poverty amongst women greatly exceeds the risk of extreme poverty amongst men[33]. Most vulnerable are older women and single mothers, and women in certain target groups of discrimination such as ethnic minorities or immigrants. Figures, however, are likely to underestimate the problem as data are collected at household level and then split in two, with the assumption that the income is equally shared between women and men within the family.

Since 2000, the Member States can work with common EU objectives to combat poverty and social exclusion in the Social Inclusion Process. This includes establishing national action plans every two years detailing measures to promote inclusion.

Health

Both gender differences and gender inequalities can give rise to inequities between men and women in health risks, health status, access to health care and health outcomes. The most obvious differences in the health needs of women and men are those related to their reproductive characteristics. But socially constructed inequalities between men and women are also determining for a healthy life. Gender divisions have a direct impact on the health needs of women and men and affect their access to care.

The recognition of the gender dimension in health is promoted through the Programme of Community action in the field of public health. Gender-oriented actions are also put forth with regards to preventive health. Furthermore, inequities in access to care and in health outcomes are addressed within the context of the open method of coordination in the field of social protection and social inclusion.

Entrepreneurship

The contribution of women entrepreneurs to economic activity and employment has increased over time, but the percentage of self-employed female entrepreneurs is only between 25% and 35% (without taking into account family businesses that are co-owned by men and women) in most EU countries[34]. While both women and men face a number of difficulties in establishing and maintaining businesses, in many cases the situation is more difficult for women entrepreneurs. Women may have to cope with a poor business environment, an inadequate choice of business types and sectors, poor access to networking, a lack of adequate support services that respond to women entrepreneurs' needs, gender discrimination and stereotypes and a weak and inflexible supply of childcare facilities. However, women in general are found to create smaller but relatively more viable enterprises.

The European Commission has addressed the issue of female entrepreneurship within the framework of various policies and initiatives, including by providing financial support through the Structural Funds and specific pilot projects and by conducting studies[35]. Furthermore, with the Entrepreneurship Action Plan[36] adopted in 2004, the Commission works with the Member States to address actions in the areas of finance, entrepreneurial networks and social security of new small business owners, including co-helping partners. The Commission supports the activities of the "European Network to promote Women's Entrepreneurship".

Political and economic decision-making

The Commission's database on "Women and men in decision-making"[37] provides an insight into the participation of women and men in the decision-making process and in leadership positions. Despite considerable progress over the course of the last years, the available data clearly shows that women are still disproportionately under-represented in political and economic decision-making in most Member States. While there are major differences among countries, data collected in 2005 show that the average number of female presidents and members of national parliaments in 2005[38] was 24% for the single/lower house and 20% for the upper house, while women occupied 23% of the posts as senior ministers. Moreover, women ministers are more present in social and cultural fields (average 39%) than in the economic field (average 14%)[39]. Results are also poor for the highest decision-making body in the top 50 publicly quoted companies[40], where women make up 10% of the members and only 3% of the presidents.

Various instruments have been used to raise women's participation in political decision-making, such as awareness-raising and networking, or sometimes more binding rules like the introduction of the quota system in political parties. In addition, financial incentives, gender awards, positive actions, gender respectful human resources policies, the promotion of Corporate Social Responsibility and the exchange of good practises, are used to increase the participation of women in decision-making within companies of the private sector[41].

Science and technology

Gender equality in science concerns both the participation of women in scientific research and the integration of gender issues in research content. Since the 1990s, the majority of university graduates in Europe have been women, but the proportion of women in top positions in European science is still very low.[42] The scarcity of women in senior positions and in bodies such as scientific boards means that their individual and collective opinions are less likely to be voiced in policy and decision-making processes, which may lead to biased decision-making on topics of future research development[43]. The reconciliation of private and professional life has also been identified as being more difficult in research than in other professions[44]. Significantly more women professors than male professors do not have children, and inequalities in career advancement and drop-out rates are significantly higher for women with children.

The promotion of gender equality in science is one of the most successful areas of the EU, showing a high political commitment, dedicated and adequate human resources, which are fundamental for gender equality policies to succeed. In 1999, the Commission adopted an action plan[45] on women in science, in co-operation with Member States and other key actors. Since the launch of the action plan, the European Commission has sought to promote gender equality in scientific research both through specific policy-oriented actions (in the context of the so-called Policy Forum) and through gender mainstreaming measures within the Research Framework Programmes[46] (the Gender Watch System). It has also worked closely with national authorities through the Helsinki Group on Women and Science, to structure and coordinate policy debate at European level. The collection of data to support this process and to help define new policy directions is seen as an integral part of this cooperation. As only 15% of the researchers in industry in 1999 were women, an expert group on industrial research[47] called for concerted efforts of companies, governments and universities to mobilise more women for industrial research and to quadruple their number by 2010. This call led to the establishment of a new expert group in January 2005 to analyse the promotion of women in science and technology from a business perspective and to develop an integrated approach of the involved cultural change.

The usage of information and communication technologies (ICT) at work is clearly expanding throughout all the European countries, but ICT is still less commonly used in the private life. A 2004 Eurobarometer survey[48] showed that men consider ICT more important both in their professional and private lives than do women. Men (58%) agree more than women (51%) that ICT usage at work makes it easier to combine work and private life, though more women (48%) than men (39%) are convinced that teleworking makes it easier to do so. The survey shows that 11% of Europeans are currently teleworking. Results reveal a significant lack of a structured and updated training on ICT skills. Men (57%) are considerably more numerous than women (47%) to admit that they acquired ICT skills on their own at home.

The issue of unequal access by women and men to ICT-related education, jobs, and the use of it, has been tackled at Council level including through a Council resolution[49], which gives several recommendations to improve this situation.

Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes affect both women and men throughout their lives from early ages on. Women and men still follow gender stereotyped education and training paths. This leads to a concentration of women in labour market sectors often with lower wages and wastes human resources. Stereotypes contribute to the gender pay gap, as well as to the difficulties, largely

faced by women, of reconciling professional and private lives. The stereotyped portrayal of women and men in the media contribute to perpetuating these problems.

The European Commission has, over the years, promoted a number of measures to fight gender stereotypes, including through educational and cultural programmes, including sport[50], dialogue with the stakeholders and the media, as well as awareness-raising, and the promotion of men's role in reconciliation policies, including their encouragement to take parental leaves and to hold more responsibilities in the household.

Education and taining

Education is the field where the most progress has been realised in terms of gender equality. Women have closed the education gap with men. They (80.0%) are now outnumbering men (74.6%) in having completed at least upper secondary education[51], while men (17.1%) have a larger tendency to leave school early, with at most lower secondary-level education, than women (12.7%)[52]. Women are also more active in lifelong learning schemes, 11.7% of them participate in education and learning in the 25-64 age-group, compared with 10% of men[53]. Despite this progress, gender inequalities remain in the field of school and university education, in particular as far as the fields of studies are concerned. Sectoral gender inequalities are particularly strong in the scientific and technological fields, although the numbers of women entering science studies and completing degree and doctorate level qualifications have increased. Nevertheless, in 2003, only 7.8% of graduate and post-graduate women earned their degree in science and technology, while this number was 9% higher for men.[54]

The European Union supports actions and projects that aim at improving career guidance with regard to non-traditional careers for both women and men; improving women's level of qualifications, particularly in the scientific and technical fields and in new technologies; and preparing women for better access to management posts in the public and private sectors. The European Social Fund has also been used for this purpose. The promotion of gender equality is specifically included in the primary objectives of programmes such as Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci or youth programmes, with an obligation to assess the achieved results.[55]

Gender-based violence and trafficking in women

Gender-based violence and trafficking in women are unfortunately widespread realities, but it is difficult to establish the exact number of women affected due to the absence of reliable and comparable statistics.

The fight against violence forms part of the overall EU objective of providing citizens with a high level of protection from violence and of health. The European Commission, through the Daphne II Programme, finances targeted actions to fight violence against women by aiming to prevent violence against children, young people, and women and protecting victims and groups at risk.[56] More than half of the 420 projects funded under Daphne since 1997 have implemented actions in favour of women who are victims of violence or found ways to prevent violence from occurring. In addition, the Commission's annual Reports on equality between women and men, presented to the Spring European Council since 2004, have underlined the need to strengthen efforts to prevent and combat gender-based violence.[57] The fifth and sixth Research Framework Programmes have also supported projects addressing gender-based human rights violations.

Women remain the primary victims of trafficking. Many children, mainly girls, are exploited every year in the sex industry or are subject to coercive sexual relations, forced marriages or/and were infected last year with HIV. The sexual exploitation emerges from obvious poverty and these situations almost always involve children and women.

The European Commission has recently taken several initiatives to combat trafficking in human beings and their exploitation, including the mainstreaming of the EU counter-trafficking policy into employment and social affairs, EU enlargement, external relations and development; the establishment of the AGIS programme on police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters[58]; funding available under the Daphne II programme; the setting up of a consultative Expert Group on Trafficking in human Beings[59]; and the recent Communication of the European Commission on trafficking in human beings[60]. This Communication was an important contribution to the Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings[61].

Women in the candidate countries and outside Europe

In the context of the enlargement policy, the Commission is helping with the transposition of EC gender equality legislation in the acceding, candidate and potential candidate countries, and is supporting and monitoring the implementation and effective enforcement of national legislation through the various instruments of the pre-accession strategy. Acceding countries have to have the legislation in place by the time of their accession. The full transposition and enforcement of all the EU Directives in the gender equality field is a strict condition for membership in the EU.

Different pre-accession financial assistance programmes[62] are used to raise awareness of the Community's gender equality policy and to finance specific projects in relation with acceding, candidate and potential candidate countries. Gender equality is part of the twinning instrument, which targets administrative cooperation to assist candidate countries to strengthen their administrative and judicial capacities. Within the CARDS Regulation, particular attention is given to gender issues in projects for displaced people and refugees. Gender equality aspects are also present in the field of justice and home affairs where there is a specific need to fight trafficking. Through the TAIEX instrument, specific training seminars on gender equality issues have also been organised in acceding, candidate and potential candidate countries.

The EU and its Member States are leading partners in the global effort to reduce gender inequalities and promote women's rights, most notably in the framework of the United Nations, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. Guaranteeing women’s equal rights and equal access to resources is a prerequisite for the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals and the reduction of poverty. EU Member States, with backing from the Commission, co-sponsored a number of UN resolutions on issues such as crimes committed in the name of honour, women in the UN system, trafficking in women and girls, women’s equal ownership of land, elimination of violence against women, and integrating the human rights of women throughout the UN system. In 2005, the EU actively participated in the 49th Commission on the Status of Women. In the areas of peace and security, EU Ministers on Gender Equality in February 2005 reaffirmed their commitment to implement and encourage initiatives, policies, and programmes, following the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 concerning women, peace and security (UNSCR 1325). The resolution calls for an increased involvement of women at all decision-making levels, in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict

reconstruction.

Over the last ten years significant progress has been made on the economic, civil and political status of women in many of the EU's partner countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. The most positive changes have taken place in countries where there is strong leadership and political commitment towards gender equality. In the field of education and health significant improvements have been made in the enrolment of girls in primary and secondary education and in the quality of health care for women. Despite these achievements, there remain outstanding gaps in women's economic, civil and political independence, as well as in girls' access to education and a safe environment. More than 1 billion people in the world today live in poverty, and the great majority are women.

The EU is strongly committed to gender policy in its development cooperation and external relations with third countries. The Programme of Action for the Mainstreaming of Gender Equality in Community Development Co-operation (2001-2006) establishes a strategy for integrating gender issues into the priority areas of EU development co-operation. It promotes the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions and acknowledges that gender equality is closely linked to the EC development cooperation's overarching goal of poverty reduction through its contribution to effective and sustainable development. Focal areas of intervention have been education for girls and women, reproductive rights and health and the fight against HIV/AIDS.

The 2004 Regulation on "Promoting gender equality in development cooperation" represents progress in a clearer policy formulation of objectives. Moreover, the Commission's proposal for a joint declaration by the Council, the European Parliament, and the European Commission on the European Union Development Policy, "The European Consensus"[63], restates the achievement of gender equality as a key priority in the development agenda, and equality between women and men and the active involvement of both genders in all aspects of social progress as key prerequisites for poverty reduction.

A number of tools and resources for gender mainstreaming are available, such as the Network of Gender Focal Points; newsletters on gender in EC development cooperation; the inclusion of gender issues in the results-oriented monitoring of external actions; a toolkit on mainstreaming gender equality in EC development cooperation; a Gender Help Desk; and annual exchanges among Member States gender experts.

Under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) the promotion of gender is to be mainstreamed in all the thematic priorities pursued. Specific projects aim to improve the condition of women, such as the abuse of reproductive health and rights (Female Genital Mutilation) and the fight against trafficking in women and children.

4. OBJECTIVE: PROGRESS TOWARDS FULL EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN

As shown in the problem definition section, real equality between men and women is yet to be achieved. A future approach to promote equality between women and men must therefore address and tackle these inequalities effectively and in partnership with all stakeholders, so that women and men can enjoy the same quality of life.

As highlighted, gender inequalities on the labour market and in specific domains hinder the

equal participation of women and men in employment and contribute to the increasing feminization of poverty, which, amongst others, affects many older women. As a future objective, it is therefore necessary to promote measures to create the conditions for reaching equal economic independence for all women and men. It is important to include measures that aim at reaching the Lisbon employment target for a 60% employment rate by women and at eliminating the on average 15% pay gap. Furthermore, action should target the adaptation of social protection systems and social inclusion measures to the specific needs of women and men; the better recognition of the gender dimension in health, and the provision of better conditions for women to become entrepreneurs. Addressing the multiple discrimination faced by many women, in particular immigrant and ethnic minority women, should also be considered.

Because women continue to be the main carers of children and other dependants, it is important to support effective reconciliation policies for both women and men. While reconciliation policies also contribute to achieving equal economic independence, they could as well be considered as an objective in themselves, as they allow women and men to have the number of children they desire while enabling the labour market participation of women. Measures should in particular target the promotion of flexible working arrangements; the achievement of the Barcelona childcare targets and the provision of care facilities for other dependants; as well as the more active involvement of men in family responsibilities.

The unequal participation of women and men in decision-making is a serious democratic deficit. Measures to tackle this problem should focus on the promotion of women into political and economic decision-making positions and into leading positions of science and technology.

Gender-based violence and trafficking in women are, as shown, widespread phenomena. They constitute violations of fundamental rights and as such they should not be tolerated. The need to step up efforts for eradicating gender-based violence and trafficking and to develop comparable statistics should be highlighted.

An underlying cause of gender inequalities in education and in the labour market is the stereotyped roles of women and men. Combating gender-stereotyped as a cross-cutting issue is therefore essential, and measures should cover education, training, and culture; the labour-market; as well as the media.

The systematic promotion of gender equality in relations with third countries will be essential, as gender inequalities exist in many parts of the world.

To achieve these objectives, attention should be focused upon ensuring better governance and a systematic follow-up and monitoring of progress.

5. POLICY OPTIONS

There are three basic options.

The first option would be for the European Commission to no longer take any initiative to promote gender equality but to rely on existing measures to be carried our by Member States, social partners, and civil society. In this option the Commission's role would be to follow-up the implementation of the already existing EU legislation in the area of gender equality (a list of Directives is provided in Annex III) and to carry out, until their expiry, the already existing

sectoral programmes tackling gender inequalities. The Commission however, would not propose a new overarching approach after the expiration of the current Framework Strategy for Gender Equality (2001-2005), nor would it put forth new sectoral programmes to tackle gender inequalities.

The second option would be to consider a sectoral policy approach, where the different Commission services would be responsible for promoting gender mainstreaming and specific actions in the areas under their own responsibilities. In this option the Commission would retain the previous choice for not proposing a new overarching approach, but allow the services to take full ownership for their gender equality activities.

The third option would be to propose a roadmap with an overarching and comprehensive approach, which would cover all the internal and external policies of the European Union, with particular attention on the achievement of a number of key objectives. In this option the Commission would also take account of sectoral policy challenges, but it would promote gender mainstreaming and specific actions in a coherent way, thereby showing commitment and visibility for the field. This roadmap would in fact build on and improve the previous Framework Strategy for Gender Equality (2001-2005), which also presented an overarching approach, and it would also build on the analysis of the remaining challenges.

6. ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACTS OF THE DIFFERENT OPTIONS

Following the principle of the proportionate analysis indicated in the Impact Assessment Guidelines[64], the assessment of the impacts will follow the suggested procedure for "Broad policy-defining documents". Therefore, the analysis will be preliminary and will not provide detailed quantitative data.

Option 1 would imply no new action by the Commission to improve gender equality. This option would mean that the Commission gives the signal that no EU-level impulse is being needed anymore to promote gender equality. In this option, the Commission believes that the efforts of the past 50 years have created the framework to propel Member States, social partners, and civil society to promote it. This would mean that, from the Commission's point of view, the desired results could be achieved by maintaining only the monitoring of the proper implementation of legislation and the carrying out of the already existing sectoral programmes addressing gender inequalities. This would certainly entail simplification and the lessening of the administrative burden, as no new initiatives would be proposed. The danger of this signal, however, would be the perception that the promotion of gender equality does not require the continued efforts of Member States, social partners, and civil society, and the concerted effort of all available instruments to promote gender equality. The risk is therefore the progressive disappearance of gender mainstreaming from policies and the absence of specific actions to tackle the challenges, which would lead to a regress in achievements, the persistence of existing challenges and the non-achievement of the aforementioned objectives. The progressive dismantling of EU-level structures would in fact lead to the demobilisation of certain actors, because the Commission has always been an engine of progress, and some Member States are more committed than others to advance gender equality. This option would therefore entail a loss of EU added value. Moreover, it would disregard the expectations of the European Parliament and civil society, who see the Commission playing an active role in the promotion of gender equality.

Option 2 would imply a sectoral approach to promote gender equality, i.e. gender mainstreaming and specific actions would be ensured by the specific Commission services, in the areas under their own responsibilities. This would entail the use of sectoral expertise and the adaptation of gender equality objectives to the specific sectoral needs. This would allow for the full ownership of the service to tackle gender inequalities effectively. This option, however, also has a number of shortcomings, the main ones being the loss of overarching mechanisms already established and the absence of overall and comparable monitoring, which could lead to the uneven presence of gender considerations in EU policies. It is therefore expected that some policies might tackle gender inequalities more effectively than others, exhibiting commitment for achievements, while others could lag behind As a result, some sectors facing challenges may not necessarily move forwards and could even regress, leading to a non-achievement of the objectives even on a sectoral basis. Moreover, the ensuing lack of visibility and coherence could give the impression that gender equality is not high on the political agenda of the EU, to which reaction by the stakeholders could be expected.

Option 3 would imply the presentation of a roadmap, paving the way for all EU policies to advance gender equality as part of an overarching, coherent and global structure. It would allow focusing on priority actions to tackle the challenges and would underline the need for commitment in all sectoral policies, thereby showing visibility. It would also emphasize the need for strong partnership with all actors and for accountability. The roadmap would utilise existing gender equality mechanisms, dialogue structures, and policy instruments, but where deemed necessary, it would add new ones to address current challenges. Furthermore, it would highlight the specificity of gender equality towards the stakeholders and citizens. With the roadmap it would also be possible to monitor and evaluate the overall progress achieved. This roadmap would respond to the expectations of the European Parliament, Member States, and civil society. Furthermore, it would increase the visibility of gender equality policy at the European and international levels and ensure the systematic fulfilment of the Union's international commitments, in particular the follow-up of the Beijing Platform of Actions. The main challenge of this option, however, is that the required political commitment by Member States may not always be present. This risk however, could be reduced by allowing the Commission to be a pro-active pusher for tackling the existing challenges, as this option envisages.

7. COMPARING THE OPTIONS

	Option 1: **No more action at EU level**	**Option 2:** **Sectoral approach**	**Option 3** **Roadmap**
Affected EU policies and commitment:	All policies are negatively affected, as gender issues would not be highlighted and there would be no political signal and commitment	Some EU policies will tackle gender inequalities, but others will not push forward in the absence of a political signal for commitment	All EU policies would benefit from addressing gender inequalities and strong commitment at EU level is emphasized

Institutional structures	The progressive disappearance of some existing structures	Use of existing institutional structures within the individual policy domains and for bilateral dialogues, LOSS of the function of overarching mechanisms	Use of the existing structures AND the addition of new structures to enhance effectiveness where necessary
Monitoring and evaluation	No method for monitoring of progress	Some monitoring in the individual policy domains can be expected, but no overall and comparable monitoring of progress	Overall, comparable, and systematic monitoring is foreseen
Expected impact	Progress in equality on the ground only in certain MS where there is commitment, and no further progress at EU level	Uneven progress and not necessarily in priority areas	Progress in priority areas in a coherent way that shows visibility
Risk	The disappearance of gender mainstreaming from policies and of specific actions to tackle the challenges; perception that the promotion of gender equality does not require the continued efforts of Member States, stakeholders, and civil society, and the concerted effort of all available instruments; demobilisation of some actors; regress in achievements and the persistence of existing challenges, leading to the non-achievement of the objectives; strong reaction from stakeholders	Insufficient mobilisation of actors; regress in some policy fields where there is no action, leading to a non-achievement of the objectives, even on a sectoral basis; strong reaction from stakeholders might also be expected	The requirement for a constant political will by the Member States may not always be present – this risk however could be reduced by allowing the Commission to be a pro-active pusher, as put forth by this option

Both Option 1 and option 2 have been rejected. Option 1 was discarded at an early stage because of the high risks entailed by the disappearance of gender mainstreaming and specific actions from policies, leading to the jeopardization of the achievements and regress, the non-achievement of the objectives and strong reactions by the stakeholders. Option 2 was disregarded because of its insufficiency to effectively respond to the challenges and to meet the objectives, even on a sectoral basis, and the likelihood of strong reactions by the stakeholders. Option 3 has therefore been chosen as the most effective alternative. It is the best option in providing the required political impetus to allow the Commission for effectively responding to the socio-economic challenges, for ensuring respect for the fundamental rights of women, and for fulfilling the international commitments of the EU. It is also the best option to provide for monitoring of progress, thereby giving visibility to gender equality. Moreover, it is the option which best responds to the stakeholders' expectations.

8. THE EXPECTED IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

It is not possible to assess in advance the specific impact of the actions that are proposed in the roadmap, but it is general estimated that these actions will encourage a greater mobilisation of actors, and ensure more effective cooperation and coherence among the different actions taken, all of which could be reasonably achieved in the period of the roadmap. Concerning the overall economic impacts, it is expected that the proposal will bring a more efficient allocation of human resources and a better utilisation of the labour potential of women and men, thereby contributing to greater efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness. These would further the goals of the renewed Lisbon strategy[65].

By actively promoting reconciliation measures, it would be possible to better respond to the underlying causes and consequences of the demographic changes facing our society, notably low fertility rates and a shrinking working population. Furthermore, adapting pension, health and social inclusion policies to the needs of women and men will contribute to the modernisation of welfare systems. This will help better respond to economic and social change, and promote growth and employment.

Impacts on the lives of women and men

The implementation of the roadmap is expected to bring improvements in the quality of life of both women and men, though some may only be felt over time, as gender equality often involves a change in mentality that occurs over an extended period.

Supporting the efforts of Member States to address the underlying causes of the gender gaps will create the conditions for a better utilisation of the human resources of both women and men. Compliance with equal treatment legislation and the full use of the potential of the Structural Funds by the EU and its Member States can help increase women's employment. The individualisation of rights linked to tax and benefit systems can ensure it pays both women and men to work. Tackling direct discrimination against women and structural inequalities (including the gender segregation in certain sectors, occupations, and work patterns; access to education and training; biased evaluation and pay systems; and stereotypes), both of which contribute to the pay gap, will enable a more balanced and equally valued participation of women and men on the labour market. Creating better conditions for women to become entrepreneurs will contribute to their economic independence. All of the above will help to achieve equality in pensions and to eradicate poverty, which affects an increasing number of

women. Better recognition by the health sector of the influence of gender on health will contribute to better serving the health needs of women and men. Combating multiple discrimination, especially as faced by immigrant and ethnic minority women, and adopting a gender perspective in integration policies, will contribute to the better use of the employment potential of many women.

Women tend to carry the triple responsibility of caring for children, elderly people, and working. Reconciliation measures for both women and men will help to better balance these responsibilities. The measures will also help both women and men to enter and stay on the labour market and to have the number of children they want. More affordable and accessible quality care facilities for children and other dependants, and more accessible services, such as appropriate public transport, will contribute to a better balancing of responsibilities for both women and men. The active involvement of men in taking up family responsibilities, also participating in flexible work arrangements, parental and paternity leave, and sharing leave entitlements with women, will enhance the quality of life of both sexes.

Promoting women's active citizenship and participation in political and economic decision-making, as well as in scientific and technological careers, in particular in leading positions, will bring benefits to the whole of society by eliminating a serious democratic deficit.

By supporting networking, the exchange of good practises and research on gender-based violence, it will be possible to put in place better prevention strategies and provide more effective support to victims. An integrated approach to fight trafficking and the establishment of gender specific prevention strategies, as outlined in the Commission's recent Communication on trafficking in human beings[66], will contribute to combating trafficking in women and girls more effectively. The development of comparative statistics on gender-based violence and on trafficking will provide for better policy response and hence is expected to contribute to ameliorating the lives of many women.

Eliminating gender stereotypes in education, training, and culture, combating it in the labour market, and fighting gender stereotypes in the media will allow for a more balanced understanding of the roles of women and men in all aspects of life.

The systematic promotion of gender equality in all external policies will help to achieve the economic, political, and civil independence of women around the world.

It must be noted that in many areas outlined in the roadmap, the expected impact does not only depend on the Commission, but, respecting the subsidiarity principle, on the efforts at the level of Member States, social partners, and civil society.

Impacts on governance

It is expected that strong leadership and commitment at the European level will strengthen the gender equality mechanisms and contribute to their systematic application. A European Pact for Gender Equality would in particular demonstrate this commitment and give it visibility. Reinforcing Commission structures; dialogue with Member States, the European Parliament, the European social partners, as well as civil society (including organisations not working specifically on gender equality); and reinforcing the effectiveness of legislation are expected to contribute effectively to gender equality. Ensuring the application of gender equality methodologies, such as gender impact assessments[67] and gender budgeting, will provide for

greater transparency and enhance accountability.

The European Gender Institute[68] will be an important tool to raise the visibility of achievements and challenges through its dissemination capacity, thereby bringing gender equality closer to citizens. EU-level cooperation and networking are a key element for progress. Supporting the already existing structures and creating an EU network of gender equality bodies, as well as an EU network of women in economic and political decision-making positions, would contribute to raising the awareness of actors in certain fields and to the exchange of best practises.

The continued monitoring of progress through the annual report on gender equality, as well as through the annual work programme on the implementation of the roadmap, and through the Group of Commissioners on Fundamental Rights, Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunities would promote both accountability and visibility.

The systematic collection and dissemination of reliable and comparable gender statistics and the creation of a Gender Equality Index would enable a better measuring of progress and form the basis of proper policy response. The development of indicators, in particular in the framework of the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action, would allow the EU to fulfil its international commitments.

Synergies with European policies and Community instruments

The roadmap is also expected to have a positive impact on other existing policy initiatives and Community instruments.

Synergies with European policies

Synergies are sought with existing policy initiatives primarily in the context of the renewed Lisbon Strategy and external policies. However, they are also sought with all EU policies, as they address, explicitly or implicitly, distributive issues between women and men.

In the context of the Lisbon Strategy, promoting the equal economic independence of women and men, facilitating the more effective reconciliation of work and family life, the equal participation of women and men in decision-making, and the elimination of gender stereotypes will contribute to achieving the goals of the European Employment Strategy. Allowing women and men to accumulate individual pension entitlements, ensuring gender mainstreaming in social inclusion policies, as well as in policies dealing with health and long-term care, will further the goals of the recently adopted OMC in Social Protection and Social Inclusion[69]. Promoting the better recognition of the gender dimension in health will contribute to the goals of the new Health and Consumer protection Strategy[70]. Promoting gender equality in EU entrepreneurship policy will further the goals of the Entrepreneurship Action Plan[71]. Ensuring gender mainstreaming in migration and integration policies will not only contribute to achieving the goals of the European Employment Strategy, but it will also meet the objectives of the Commission's recently adopted common agenda for integration[72], which represents a new framework for the integration of third-country nationals, and whose orientations were supported by the JHA Council[73]. Furthermore, it will also contribute to achieving the goals of the Commission's recent policy plan on legal migration[74], in particular as far as rights of third-country workers are concerned. Promoting the greater involvement of women in science and technology, especially in leading positions, would contribute to the goals of the 7th EU

Research Framework Programme. Promoting women's access to scientific and technical careers would respond to the objectives of the Education and Training 2010 Framework Program[75]. Supporting the elimination of gender stereotypes in education, culture, and on the labour market will contribute to the goals of the EU Lifelong Learning Strategy. Supporting awareness-raising activities on gender equality and promoting dialogue with the media and the citizens would contribute to the objectives of the Citizens for Europe Programme[76] and the Commission's plan for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate[77].

In the context of external policies, promoting gender equality in relations with acceding, candidate and potential candidate countries will help achieve the goals of the EU's accession criteria and those of its various instruments for pre-accession strategy, including pre-accession financial assistance programmes. Promoting gender equality in external relations and development cooperation will contribute to meeting the international commitments of the EU. It will help achieve the goals of The European Consensus[78], the Commission's upcoming Communication on "A European Vision on Gender Equality in Development Cooperation", the follow-up of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Promoting a gender perspective in all relevant crisis management training activities will contribute to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Gender considerations will also provide benefits to the European Neighbourhood Policy and to EU humanitarian interventions.

As far as policies are concerned, no significant negative externalities are foreseen.

Synergies with EU instruments

Legislation has already had a significant impact in several domains[79], including the labour market participation of women, the fight against sex discrimination at the workplace; the fight against poverty and social exclusion; and industrial relations[80]. Legislation has also brought multiple benefits under the individual citizen's perspective[81]. However, increased efforts are still needed to achieve the systematic application of the existing gender equality *acquis* and make it a reality on the ground.

There are issues that legislation alone cannot address. The elimination of all inequalities in fact requires more than the proper implementation of existing legislation, and must entail the concerted effort of all other policy instruments: the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions; financial tools such as the Structural Funds (the European Social Fund[82] and the Cohesion Fund[83]), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development[84], the European Fisheries Fund[85], the proposed programme for Health and Consumer protection[86], the proposed Integration Fund[87], the 6th [88] and 7th [89] EU Research Framework Programmes, Daphne II[90] and future programmes in the field, as well as external assistance[91]; and the "Open Method of Coordination" with Member States.

The roadmap does not propose additional costs on the Community budget. It is worthwhile noting that the budgetary aspects concerning it are already part of the proposals made within the context of the financial perspectives. The specific gender equality strand within the proposed PROGRESS programme[92] will support an effective implementation of the principle of gender equality and promote better gender mainstreaming in EU policies.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation are key elements for the success of the roadmap and it is an area where much attention needs to be concentrated in the future.

It is important that on the political level there is a systematic follow-up of progress that accompanies the implementation of gender-mainstreaming and specific actions in European policies, in order to increase accountability and transparency. Follow-up will be ensured by the meetings of Gender Equality Ministers and by the Group of Commissioners on Fundamental Rights, Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunities. The annual Report on equality between women and men, presenting key challenges and updates on progress to the Heads of State and Government at the Spring European Council, will continue to be an important measuring tool.

Monitoring the effective implementation and enforcement of EU gender equality legislation and reviewing existing EU gender equality legislation that was not included in the 2005 recast exercise are foreseen. Furthermore, presenting a report in 2010 on the implementation of the Directive on equal access to goods and services[93], including gender equality in insurance, is envisaged.

The development and dissemination of EU-wide, comparable and reliable gender statistics and indicators, including the continued follow-up of the already established indicators[94] agreed by European Councils, will contribute to monitoring and evaluating progress towards the objectives of the Roadmap. A Gender Equality Index will be defined in 2006 and indicators not yet existing for the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action be developed by 2010.

In order for the Commission to reinforce the gender equality exercise in its own institutional practise, progress will also be monitored towards gender equality within the Commission's human resources policies. In addition, measuring the achievements of targets set by the Commission for its committees and expert groups will take place through the presentation of a Communication in 2007.

The different services of the Commission are expected to evaluate the implementation of their own gender mainstreaming of policies and specific actions. Annual work programmes of the Commission on the implementation of the roadmap will provide for horizontal transparency and will follow up the implementation of the roadmap.

The Commission's Inter-Service Group on Gender Mainstreaming will support the Group of Commissioners, contribute to the preparation of the annual work programme and link with other groups working on gender equality.

An overarching exercise, bringing together the achievements in all policy domains, and the effectiveness of the coordination instruments, is expected to be finalized prior to the expiration of the roadmap. This will be preceded by a report on the state of implementation in 2008.

ANNEX

ANNEX I: Summary of contributions

The Advisory Committee on gender equality provided an opinion[95] on the future of the gender equality policy at the European level in October 2005. The Committee acknowledged that gender is a fundamental organising principle of society, and expressed its concern that in recent years progress towards achieving gender equality appears to have lost momentum. To speed up progress, the Committee invited the Commission to review its gender mainstreaming strategy with the aim to improve its effectiveness. It asked the Commission, in partnership with the Member States, social partners, and civil society, to promote full gender equality, by taking into account the gender dimension in all aspects of managing globalisation, in facing economic and social problems, and the demographic changes. The AC requested Commission initiatives to close the gender gaps in employment, to work towards gender equality in public and political decision-making, and to protect the human rights of women. Integrating migrant women into the labour market and into the society of the Member States was also mentioned. The Committee stressed the importance of involving the whole society and addressing gender stereotypes. It strongly recommended pursuing the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions, raised the issue of considering the feasibility of further legislation, asked the speeding up of efforts to implement gender budgeting in macro-economic and financial policy and other core areas of EU-expenditure. The AC also underlined the necessity to reinforce implementation and monitoring, including measures such as stimulating and supporting the effective implementation of gender equality legislation. The Committee underlined that the Commission should take a lead in promoting equality between women and men in Europe and across the world.

The High Level Group (HLG) on Gender Mainstreaming is the main forum for planning the strategic follow-up of the Beijing Platform of Action, including the development of indicators in the areas of concern of the Platform. It is also the main forum to coordinate the activities of the Presidencies on gender equality and to prepare EU presidential conferences on gender equality and conferences of ministers for gender equality. It has also provided an important informal forum for discussion and for exchanging information on best practices and experience in order to support and improve the synergy among national policies on gender equality and strategies for gender mainstreaming at national level.

A recent report on progress made by the European Union since the Beijing Platform for Action provides an overview of what has been achieved at the European level in the development of institutions, bodies, legislation, and policy tools to promote gender equality. The report underlines three key ongoing challenges: to continue the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions; to gender mainstream anti-discrimination policies; to combine both new forms of technical expertise and new forms of democratic representation. The strengthening of national mechanisms, including good organisational support and sufficient resources, and the development of methodological tools (gender impact assessments, gender budgeting, and indicators) are further challenges the report underlines. This report has also been the basis for the conclusions[96] of the June 2005 Council which recognised the importance of the HLG, asking for a continuation of the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, in particular the development of indicators, gender mainstreaming in Council formations, and the

importance to link the BPfA to the Millennium Development Goals.

The Helsinki Group on Women and Science expressed its concern about the under-representation of women in the scientific careers[97], calling attention to the considerable wastage of women's skills and knowledge. The group highlighted the large diversity among Member States in terms of scientific infrastructure, equality measures and the climate for women seeking to pursue scientific careers, and noted that the lack of gender-balance in decision-making about science policy is a common factor. Future priorities, stressed by the Group, should entail facilitating collaborative working to sustain mutual learning and progress, as well as more support for gender studies research and the development and use of a series of tools to evaluate and monitor positive action and gender mainstreaming measures.

The European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship (WES) has recently[98] highlighted the relevance of initiatives such as promoting women's entrepreneurship through the creation of governmental bodies to support women entrepreneurs, as well as researching and collecting data on women's entrepreneurship issues, and linking projects to ICT and the use of electronic platforms, forums and portals. One issue that the network in particular emphasized as deserving further consideration is ethnic minority women entrepreneurs.

The European social partners adopted in March 2005 a framework of actions[99] on gender equality for the period until 2010, which should contribute to the implementation of the Lisbon strategy for economic growth, more and better jobs and social cohesion, as well as to the EU legislative framework on equal treatment between women and men. The social partners at European level agreed on four priorities on which they want national social partners to take action: addressing gender roles, promoting women in decision-making, supporting work-life balance, and tackling the gender pay gap. Several sectoral social partners are also carrying out important work on gender equality, for example through research on the situation and challenges for their sector, and seek to develop initiatives and tools to promote the exchange of good practise and mutual learning.

The European Women's Lobby (EWL), the largest umbrella organisation representing the interests of women, adopted, in October 2005, a Gender Equality Road Map for the European Community 2006-2010[100]. The aim of gender equality policy, underlined by the document, is that women and men have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in all areas of life, which is still not the case, despite the existence of equality before the law in most EU Member States. In every country of the European Union, highlighted by the document, access to resources, rights and power are unequally distributed between women and men and gender inequality is pervasive at every level and across all groups within society. The achievement of gender equality, according to EWL, requires a strategy that sets out how gender equality efforts are to be pursued, the necessary institutional mechanisms that are capable of delivering the strategy, and strong political leadership. EWL argues for the continuation of the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions, for fighting multiple discrimination against women, and for ensuring that the goal of gender equality and of safeguarding women's human rights are integrated into all relevant EU external policies. It identifies six main themes with strategic objectives and concrete actions to be undertaken by the European Commission in 2006-2010. These include (1) strengthening the institutional mechanisms for the realisation of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, and promoting gender equality in order (2) to achieve economic and social justice for women and (3) to advance the position of women in decision-making. EWL stresses (4) the need to take all necessary measures to address and eradicate violence against women and implement women's

human rights and (5) identifies Europe's role in advancing women's rights in an international context. It also lays emphasis upon (6) eliminating patriarchal gender roles and stereotypes.

Recent reports prepared by the Group of Experts on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment (EGGSIE) highlighted the positive development concerning the expansion of childcare services and some other work reconciliation measures in relation to facilitating employment[101]. However, reconciliation measures are still largely targeted at women and the promotion of men's use of parental leave and working-time adjustments is under-developed.[102] The experts also emphasized that poverty is increasingly feminized and affects in particular single mothers, older women, and immigrant women or women belonging to ethnic minorities.

The network of independent legal experts in the fields of employment, social affairs, and equality between women and men has recently highlighted that in law, if not fully in fact, EU legislation on the principle of equal pay between men and women has been implemented relatively successfully in the national legal systems in all Member States. However, several problems in relation to the practical enforcement of this principle have been underlined, for example the lack of statistical information, the highly segregated labour market and the secrecy of pay scales. These factors contribute to the difficult establishment of an adequate and de facto equal pay framework at national level.[103] The experts call attention to the fact that in spite of the gradual progress on the protection of workers on maternity and parental leave in the Member States, parents are still reluctant to take up leave.[104] In many countries gender equality litigation is very limited, as pointed out by their reports. Adducing evidence of discrimination continues to pose considerable problems, despite the shift in the burden of proof. Lack of awareness, particularly among potential litigants themselves, is also an issue in some Member States. Legislation in all Member States allows for positive action measures**.** However, such measures are not widespread, and even where they exist they are not systematically analysed.

The ongoing evaluation of the Framework Strategy on Gender Equality and of the Programme relating to the Framework Strategy (2001-2005) emphasized that gender equality is starting to be treated as a principle of European good governance, influencing the different stages of the decision-making process (conception-decision-implementation and monitoring – evaluation). The identification of the actors to implement the objectives, however, is not always clear.

The European Parliament, especially through its Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, has proactively engaged in promoting the issue of gender equality in several domains over the last years through a number of opinions and reports (such as women and men in the decision-making process[105], equal pay for work of equal value[106], gender budgeting[107], women and men in the use of the Structural Funds[108], etc.), all of which request follow-up action by the Commission. The Committee follows closely the gender dimension in implementing the Lisbon Strategy. In 2005 it underlined, inter-alia, the importance of combating violence against women more effectively and addressing trafficking in women and children for the sake of sexual exploitation. It emphasized the need to tackle the feminisation of poverty[109] and argued for taking into account the gender aspect in all health policies and decision-making processes[110]. Members of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality expressed their concern for the lack of visibility regarding gender equality and the non-systematic application of gender mainstreaming at a meeting with President Barroso and Commissioner Špidla on June 7th, 2005.

Social research[111] has focused on a number of issues in EU gender equality policy. It

confirmed gender inequalities in labour market participation and highlighted that women are segregated into low-paid jobs with poor terms and conditions of employment, and poor levels of social protection. It showed that women are over-represented in flexible work (particularly part-time work) and in casualised employment, and pointed out that much greater policy attention is needed to protecting the rights and entitlements of flexible workers. Research has also drew attention to the fact that women do not get paid for caring labour, and by virtue of sacrificing employment opportunities and rights in order to perform it, they also lose out in terms of the rights attached to full-time, lifetime, paid employment: paid holidays, sickness pay, and most importantly, pension provision. Changing employment patterns and family arrangements, as highlighted by the research, have significant implications for the design and provision of public services, which should be more closely geared to the reconciliation of work, care, and other areas of life. It was noted that there is ambiguity surrounding the concept of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. This results in a lack of coherence and a weakening commitment. Recommendations therefore entail the systematic evaluation, at both EU and Member State level, of the effectiveness of gender equality policies.

ANNEX II: List of Commission actions proposed by the roadmap

The roadmap proposes the following Commission actions under the six priority objectives and in relation to governance:

PART I: PRIORITY AREAS OF ACTION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

1. ACHIEVING EQUAL ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE FOR WOMEN AND MEN

Key actions

The Commission will

- monitor and strengthen gender mainstreaming in particular in:
    - the Integrated Guidelines for growth and jobs and the new streamlined open method of coordination that covers pensions, social inclusion, health and long-term care[1], including by preparing in 2007 gender equality manuals for actors involved in these processes and assessing how social protection systems can promote gender equality
    - health policies, including by updating the analysis of the gender dimension in health
    - national and European activities in the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All and in the 2010 European Year of Combating Exclusion and Poverty
    - together with Member States, promote gender mainstreaming and specific measures in the programming and implementation of the new Structural Funds, the EFF and EAFRD (2007-2013), including through monitoring and ensuring adequate resources for gender equality
    - the Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the EU[2], the follow-up to the Policy Plan on legal Migration[3], the European Social Fund (ESF) and the proposed European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals
- present a Communication on gender pay gap in 2007
- prepare in 2010 a report on the implementation of the Directive on equal treatment for women and men in the access to and supply of goods and services[4]
- promote female entrepreneurship and a business environment that facilitates the creation and development of women-led companies; encourage corporate social responsibility initiatives on gender equality

2: ENHANCING RECONCILIATION OF WORK, PRIVATE AND FAMILY LIFE

Key actions

[1] COM(2005)706
[2] COM(2005)389
[3] COM(2005)669
[4] Dir 2004/113/EC

The Commission will

- present in 2006 a Communication on Demography[5], addressing the issue of reconciliation of family and work life

- support the achievement of the Barcelona targets on childcare and the development of other care facilities through the Structural Funds and the exchange of good practices

- support research on health and social sectors professions and work with international organisations towards a better classification of these jobs

3: PROMOTING EQUAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN DECISION-MAKING

Key actions

The Commission will

- monitor and promote gender mainstreaming in particular in:

    - the European research policy and the 7th Framework Programme, including by ensuring the implementation of Gender Action Plans, developing gender specific research, monitoring gender mainstreaming and women's participation in the announced European Research Council

    - the Education and Training 2010 Programme by promoting women's access to scientific and technical careers in line with the European objective of redressing the gender imbalance in this field; develop in 2007 a European Guide of Best Practices on ICT Gender Issues

    - the implementation of the future Citizens for Europe Programme by including gender equality in the field of active citizenship as one of the priority themes, and through mobilisation of existing networks

- establish in 2007 an EU network of women in economic and political decision-making positions

- support awareness-raising activities, the exchange of good practices and research, including on the basis of the European database on women and men in decision-making, particularly in view of the European Parliament elections in 2009

4: ERADICATING OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND TRAFFICKING

Key actions

The Commission will

- issue a Communication on the establishment of a system for comparable statistics on crime, victims and criminal justice in 2006 and monitor progress at EU level

[5] COM(2005)94

- support Member States and NGOs in their efforts to eradicate gender-based violence, including customary or traditional harmful practices, by promoting awareness-raising campaigns, supporting networking, exchange of good practices and research, and by implementing programmes for victims as well as perpetrators, encouraging Member States to establish national action plans

- follow up on the Communication and the EU Action Plan on trafficking in human beings and promote the use of all existing instruments, including the ESF, for the reintegration into society of victims of violence and human trafficking

5: ELIMINATING GENDER STEREOTYPES IN SOCIETY

Key actions

The Commission will

- support actions to eliminate gender stereotypes in education, culture and on the labour market by promoting gender mainstreaming and specific actions in the ESF, ICT programmes and in EU education and culture programmes, including EU Lifelong Learning strategy and the future Integrated Lifelong Learning programme

- support awareness-raising campaigns and exchange of good practices in schools and enterprises on non-stereotyped gender roles and develop dialogue with media to encourage a non-stereotyped portrayal of women and men

- raise awareness on gender equality in dialogue with EU citizens through the Commission's plan for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate[6]

6: PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY OUTSIDE THE EU

Key actions

The Commission will

- monitor and raise awareness on the transposition, implementation and effective enforcement of the Community acquis on gender equality in the acceding, candidate and potential candidate countries, including in the programming of pre-accession aid and in accession negotiations

- monitor and promote gender mainstreaming and specific measures in the ENP, EU external relations and development policies, at policy dialogue and programming levels (Country Strategic Papers and Poverty Reduction Strategic Papers). At implementation level, particular attention will be devoted to gender mainstreaming in the new aids modalities (budget support and sector programmes)

- present in 2006 a Communication on A European Vision on Gender Equality in Development Cooperation

- promote gender mainstreaming in EC humanitarian aid operations by including the gender

[6] COM(2005)494

dimension as a part of thematic and technical reviews (including for capacity building) and evaluations

- strengthen gender equality in the Mediterranean region, including by organising in 2006 a Euromed Ministerial Conference on gender equality, preceded by a civil society consultation, which could lead to the adoption of an action plan

- contribute to the achievements of the BPfA and other relevant international and regional conventions by supporting programmes, capacity building and data collection capacity in developing countries

- contribute to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, including by developing in 2006 guidelines on gender mainstreaming in crisis management training activities

- promote women's organisations and networks

PART II: IMPROVING GOVERNANCE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Key actions

The Commission will

- reinforce its structures

    - take part, in 2007, in the setting up of the European Institute for Gender Equality

    - monitor progress in gender equality in the human resources policy in the Commission and present, in 2007, a Communication on the achievement of targets set for its Committees and Expert Groups[7]; facilitate training on gender equality for its staff, including management and staff working in external and development cooperation fields

- reinforce networking and support social dialogue

    - create in 2006 an EU network of Gender Equality Bodies set up in compliance with Directive 2002/73

    - reinforce EU-level cooperation with NGOs, including dialogue with women's organisations and with other civil society organisations

    - encourage and support the work of Social Partners on gender equality at both cross-industry and sectoral levels

- support gender impact assessment and gender budgeting

    - reinforce the implementation of a gender perspective in the impact assessment[8] of Community policies and legislation and explore the possibilities of developing gender budgeting at EU level, particularly in the Structural Funds within the

[7] 2000/407/EC
[8] SEC(2005) 791

possibilities of the shared management

- encourage gender budgeting at local, regional and national level, including through exchange of best practices

- reinforce the effectiveness of legislation

  - review the existing EU gender equality legislation not included in the 2005 recast exercise[9] with a view to updating, modernising and recasting where necessary

  - monitor implementation and enforcement of EU gender equality legislation

  - inform EU citizens on their gender equality rights through the "Your Europe[10]" portal and the Citizens' Signpost Service[11]

Monitoring Progress

The Commission will

- monitor progress in gender equality and provide orientation on gender mainstreaming through its annual Report on equality between women and men and follow up the implementation of the Roadmap through its annual work programme

- ensure political follow-up through the meetings of Gender Equality Ministers and the Group of Commissioners on Fundamental Rights and Equal Opportunities. The Commission Inter-Service Group on Gender Mainstreaming will support the Group of Commissioners, contribute to the preparation of the annual work programme and link with other groups working on gender equality

- further develop indicators where necessary; define a new composite Gender Equality Index in 2007; develop, by 2010 and together with Member States, new indicators for the 12 critical areas of the BPfA; support the development of EU comparable data on gender equality and statistics broken down by sex

- present a report on the state of implementation of the Roadmap in 2008 and carry out, in 2010, an evaluation of the Roadmap and propose appropriate follow-up

[9] COM(2004)279
[10] http://europa.eu.in/tyoureurope/nav/fr/citizens/home.html
[11] http://europa.eu.int/citizensrights/signpost/front_end/index_fr.htm

ANNEX III: Evolution of legal guarantees on equal treatment between women and men

European legislation and decisions of the Court of Justice in the field of equal treatment have had a great impact in the past and were a major focus of interest within European social policy. They have grown to a substantial and important pillar within the framework of Citizen's individual rights in the European Union. In this context it should be noted that the Charter of Fundamental Rights proclaimed in Nice in 2000 by the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission provides for a number of fundamental rights which are of direct importance for gender equality, in particular Article 21 "Non discrimination", Article 23 "Equality between men and women" and Article 33 "Family and professional life".

Equal treatment for men and women is fundamental for the social concept of the European Community. As early as 1978, Art. 119 EEC (Art. 141 EC) was described as a fundamental principle of law. [112] The principle of equal treatment has been considerably enforced by the European Court of Justice (ECJ). Art. 141 EC (ex. Art. 119 EEC) has been declared directly applicable in the horizontal relationship, the direct relationship between citizens[113]. The European legislator has considerably enlarged the principle of equal treatment enshrined in Art. 141 EC (ex. Art. 119 EEC) following a Council Decision about the action programme in social policy 1974.[114]

Since then, the creation of a series of secondary legal instruments (Directives) on equal treatment between men and women in employment—including consecutive development of provisions in primary law, Art 141 EC, Art 137 EC, Art. 13 EC, Art. 3(2) EC—became of outstanding importance:

- The first equal treatment Directive, adopted in 1975, deals with equal pay and clarifies the scope of ex. Art. 119[115].

- In 1976, the Directive on equal treatment in employment followed.[116]

- To progressively implement the principle of equal treatment in social security, Directive 79/7 was adopted in 1979[117] relating to statutory social security schemes.

- In 1986 the Council Directive 86/378 introduced the principle of equal treatment for men and women in occupational social security schemes. This Directive was amended in 1996 by Directive 96/97 as a consequence of the court's decision in Barber.[118]

- In 1986 Directive 86/613[119] introduced the principle of equal treatment for men and women engaged in an activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity.

- A Directive on the protection of pregnant workers was adopted in 1992[120].

- In 1995 the framework agreement on parental leave was concluded between the European-level cross industry organisations: UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC. This was subsequently adopted as the parental leave Directive[121].

- In 1997 the burden of proof Directive was adopted.[122]

- In 2002 the equal treatment in employment Directive 76/207/EEC was substantially amended by Directive 2002/73.[123] As new elements the Directive defines indirect discrimination in a broader way than Directive 97/80, but in line with the two Directives based on Art. 13 EC, Directive 2000/43[124] (Racial Equality Directive) and Directive 2000/78[125] (Employment Framework Directive). Furthermore, harassment and sexual harassment are defined. The scope of the principle of non-discrimination is substantially enlarged by including harassment and sexual harassment as well as instruction to discriminate. Less favourable treatment of a woman related to pregnancy or maternity leave are defined as discriminations. Protection against victimisation (Art. 7), the right for associations, organisations or other legal entities to engage on behalf or in support of complainants with their approval in any judicial or administrative procedure is defined in Art. 6. Bodies for the promotion, analysis, monitoring and support of equal treatment, so called "Equality Bodies", and their tasks, are defined in Art. 8a. Art. 8b describes an obligation for Member States to promote social dialogue with a view to fostering equal treatment. Provisions dealing with equality plans and the encouragement of social partners to promote equality between men and women are mere recommendations. The provisions on legal remedy in Art. 6 para 1 and the obligation to Member States to ensure the effective application of equal treatment provisions by compensation (as one possible kind of sanctions) without a prior upper limit (Art. 8 para 2) as well as the obligation for Member States to set up a sanctions regime (Art. 8d) in general is the result of Court's judicature.[126] Other provision like Art. 2 (6) simply codify the Court's decisions in Brown, C-394/97, Gillespie, C-342/93, Johnston, C-222/84, Kreil, C-285/98, Sirdar, C-273/97. The Directive had to be transposed by 5 October 2005.

It can reasonably be expected that the 2002 Directive will have a major impact on developing gender equality policy. The stronger involvement of social partners in promoting gender equality on enterprise and industry level is expected to give a new impetus to developing a policy that is not primarily dealing with the antidiscrimination aspect but is more specifically focusing on the implementation of measures to actively improve upon a defined female employment situation. Equality plans, greater transparency on gender sensitive information are some possible aspects to be tackled. The required creation of so called "Equality Bodies" who are designated to conducting independent surveys concerning discrimination, publishing independent reports and making recommendations as well as providing independent assistance to victims of discrimination in pursuing their claims, is expected to have a positive impact on closing existing gender gaps. The same accounts for organisations or other legal entities to engage on behalf or in support of complainants in any judicial or administrative procedure. These provisions prepare the floor for a more proactive and forward oriented litigation and arbitration strategy in all Member States. This is particularly important for those Member States who have only recently adopted the relevant *acquis communautaire* and where there has been no tradition in litigation for sex discrimination. This Directive may also have a noticeable impact especially on the development of non legislative measures.

- In 2004 the Council adopted Directive 2004/113/EC on implementing the principle of equal treatment between women and men in the access to and supply of goods and services. The Directive prohibits direct and indirect discrimination based on sex, sexual harassment and harassment based on sex. Exceptions are permitted for differences of treatment if they are justified by a legitimate aim, and they are appropriate and necessary. The use of sex-based

actuarial factors in insurance is banned in principle, but Member States may decide not to apply the ban in cases where "sex is a determining factor in the assessment of risk based on relevant and accurate actuarial and statistical data". Nevertheless, all Member States must ensure that insurance costs related to pregnancy and maternity (e.g. health insurance) are attributed equally to both men and women.

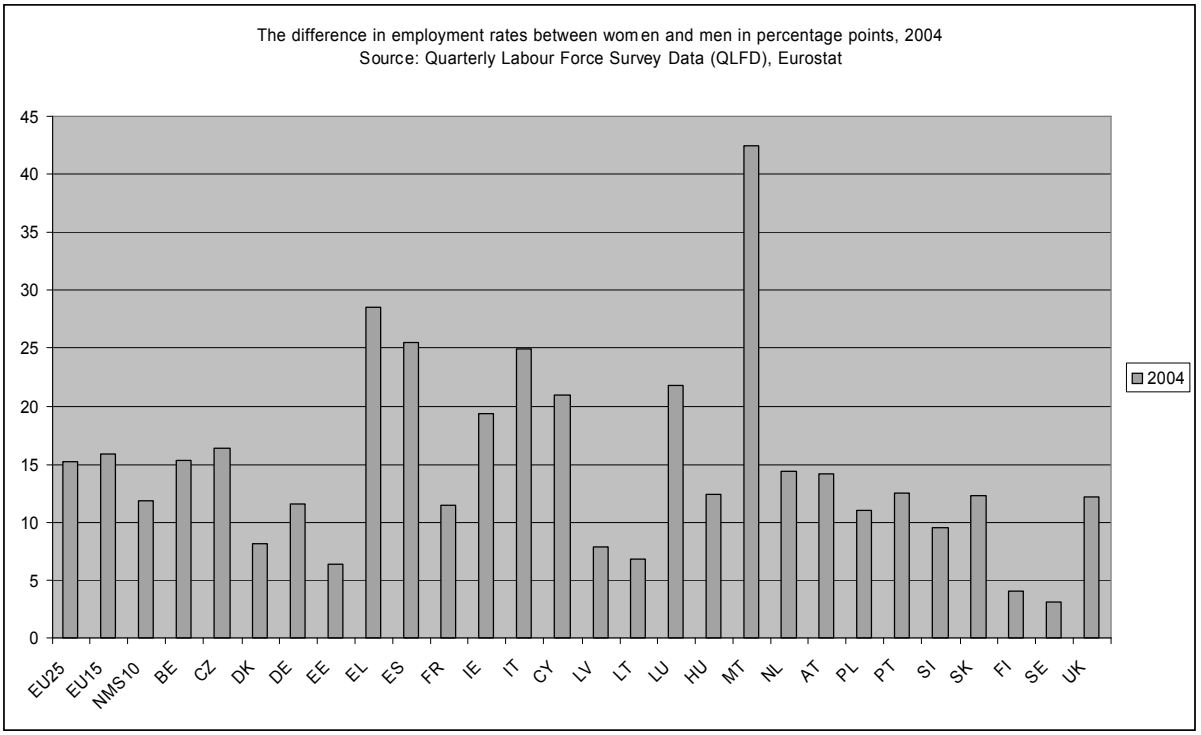
- In order to improve readability and accessibility of European gender equality legislation, the Commission has proposed the project of a recast Directive that merges six Directives into a single legal text[127]. The Council has endorsed general approaches on the draft Directive which is now in the first reading in the European Parliament and is expected to be finally adopted in 2006.

The European Court of Justice has from the beginning played an important role in contributing to combat effectively discrimination based on sex.

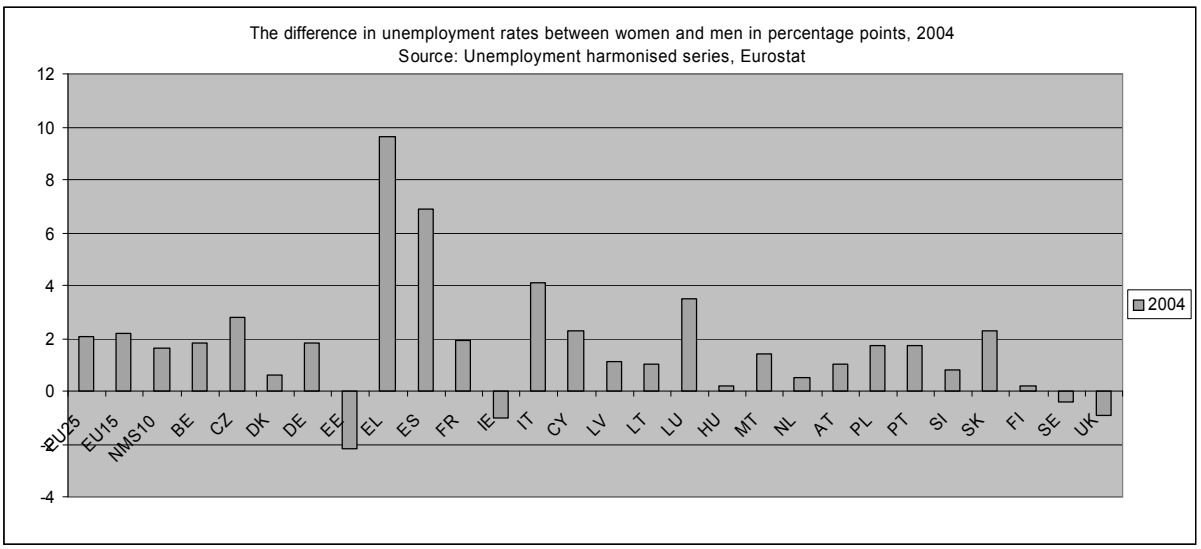
As a direct result of European equal treatment legislation new concepts in equality had been introduced in the Member States. Discrimination on grounds of pregnancy is direct discrimination. A female employee cannot be refused employment because she is pregnant even if a national law prevents her to perform her duties during pregnancy.[128] Indirect discrimination was introduced as a new concept, totally new to the UK and Greece and with far reaching consequences in most Member States by considerably enlarging the number of potential cases of sex discrimination. The equal pay principle was in a number of Member States expressly not applied to occupational schemes. In the Netherlands equal treatment was not applied to survivor's benefits for male employees and accession to the schemes by (married) women.[129] The Court's judgement in Barber[130] reflected clearly that in principle all considerations derived from occupational social security schemes and paid by the employer had to be regarded as pay in the sense of Art. 141 (ex Art. 119) of the Treaty. Therefore the principle of equal treatment had to be applied in all occupational social security schemes. This has led to new legislation in a number of Member States to conform with Community law. Night work for women was prohibited or restricted in a number of Member States who were party to ILO Conventions N° 4 and 89 concerning night work. Several rulings of the Court showed that the prohibition of night work for women was contrary to the principle of equal treatment between women and men as laid down in Directive 76/207/EEC[131]. Member States have adjusted their legislation respectively.

ANNEX IV: Graphs

Gender inequalities in employment rates:

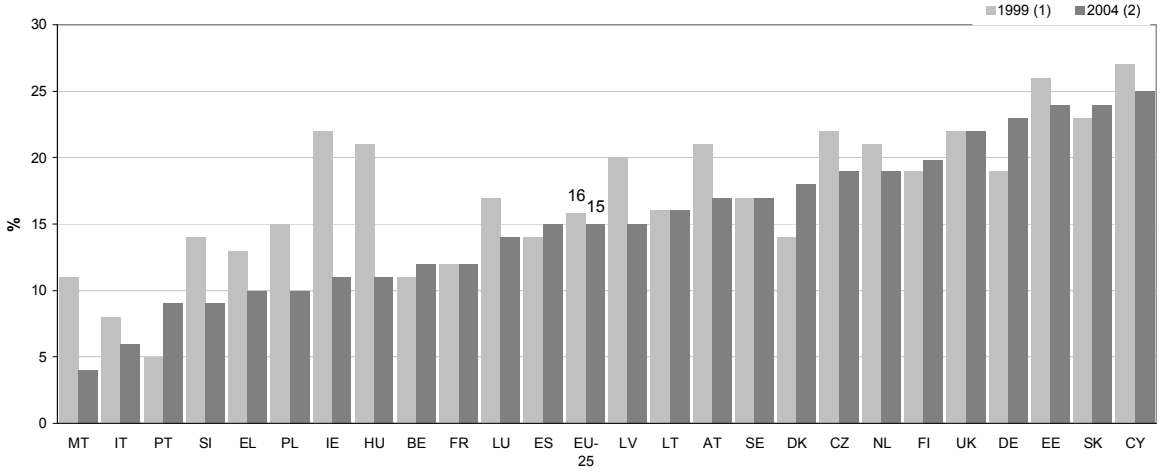


Gender inequalities in unemployment rates:



The gender pay gap:

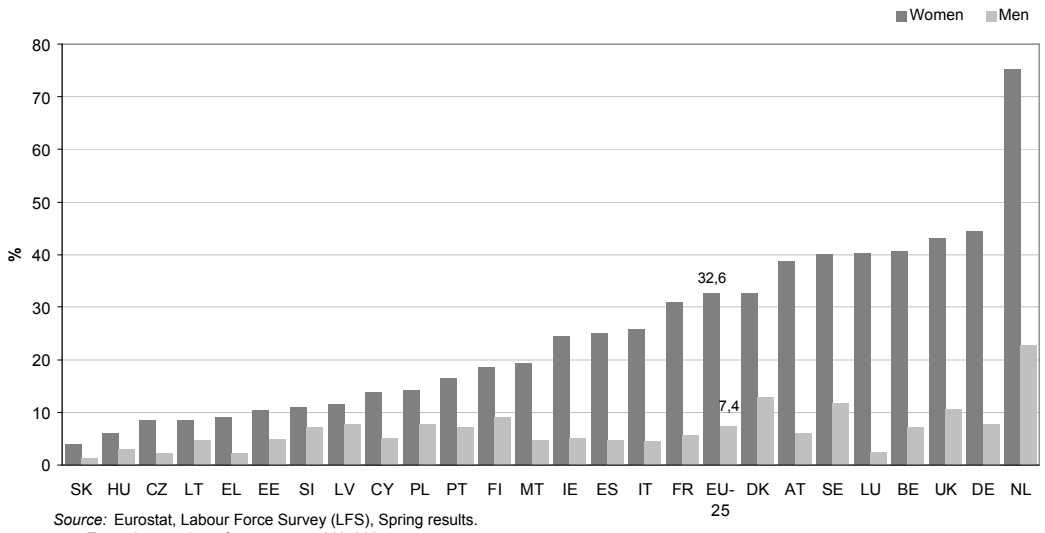
Pay gap between women and men in unadjusted form in EU Member States - 1999 and 2004
(Difference between men's and women's average gross hourly earnings as a percentage of men's average gross hourly earnings)



Source: Eurostat. Administrative data are used for Luxembourg and the Labour Force Survey is used for France and Malta. All other sources are national surveys except as follows:
2004 : Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) - EL, ES and IE The results of this new EU survey are provisional and subject to further quality;
1999 : European Community Household Panel (ECHP) - BE, DE, IT, DK, IE, UK, EL, ES, PT, AT, FI.
NB: EU-25 estimates are population-weighted averages of the latest available national values adjusted where possible, to take into account a change in the data source.
Exceptions to the reference years: (1)2000 for MT. (2) 2001 for BE and IT; 2002 for SI; 2003 for AT, DK, FI and PT.
DK - A change of data source from 2002 is estimated to have increased the gender pay gap value by 4 percentage points.
DE - From 2002 national earnings surveys and the German Socio-Economic Panel have been used. This is estimated to have increased the gender pay gap value by 1 percentage point.
ES - From 2002 data from tax returns and the labour force survey have been used. This is estimated to have increased the gender pay gap value by 3 percentage points.
FR - A change of data source in 2003 is estimated to have decreased the gender pay gap value by 1 percentage point.
FI - A change of data source from 2002 is estimated to have increased the gender pay gap value by 4 percentage points.
UK - A change of data source from 2002 is estimated to have increased the gender pay gap value by 2 percentage points.
AT, IE, EL : Change of data source : EU-SILC from 2003

Gender inequalities in part-time employment:

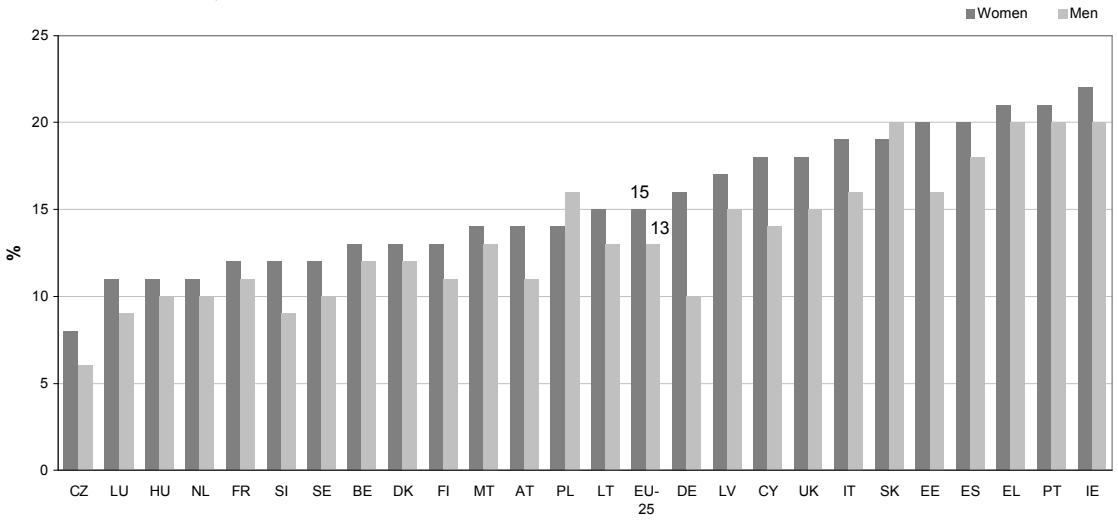
Share of part-time workers in total employment, in EU Member States - 2005



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), Spring results.
NB: Exceptions to the reference year: LU: 2004.
LU: annual average instead of spring result.

Gender inequalities in at-risk of poverty rates:

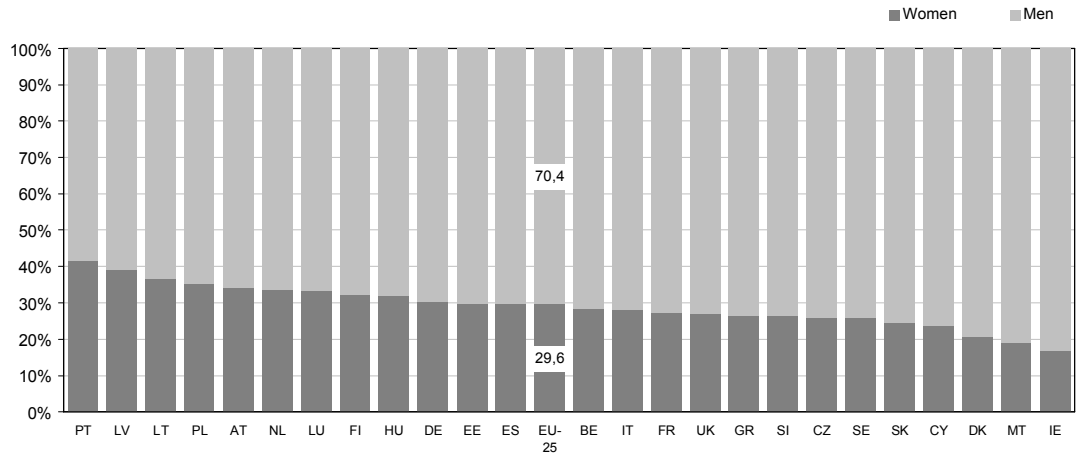
At-risk-of-poverty rate after social transfers[1] for women and men aged 16 years and over in EU Member states, 2003[2]



Source: Eurostat, National sources.
NB: 1) At-risk-of-poverty rate after social transfers - The share of persons with an equivalised disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income (after social transfers). Gender breakdown is based on assumption of equal sharing of resources within household.
2) Exceptions to the reference year: MT: 2000; IT, PT and SE: 2004
BE, DE, EL,ES, FR, IE, IT, LU, NL and PT have used a different methodology for the calculation of the At-risk-of-poverty and results are not comparable with other contries. However comparisons between women and men within MS are still valid and it is not likely that the ranking of the countries would differ much by using the same methodology as the rest.

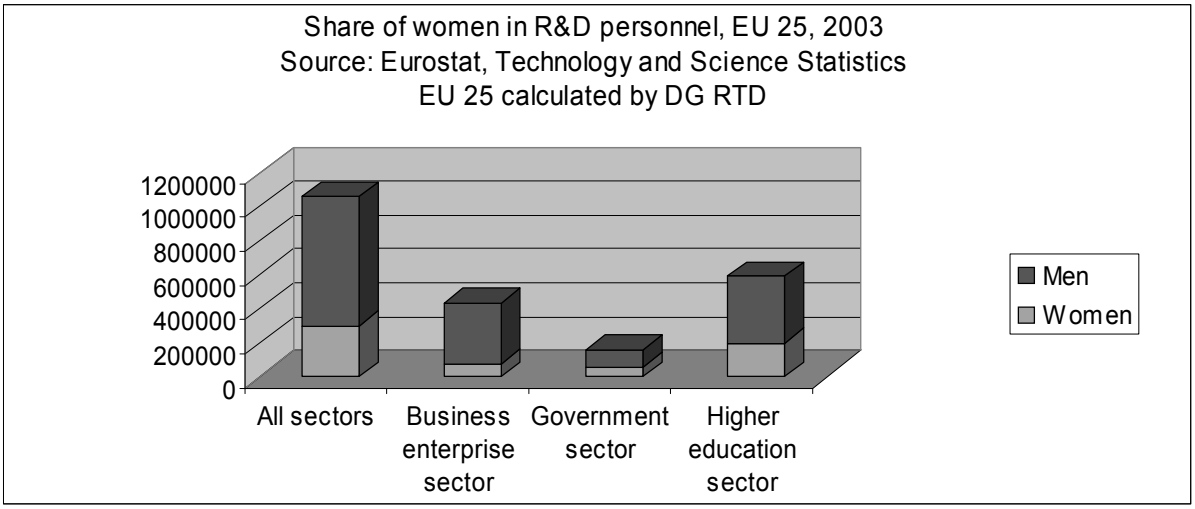
Gender inequalities in entrepreneurship:

Sex distribution of self-employed persons in 2005



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), Spring results.
NB : Exceptions to the reference year : LU : 2004

Gender inequalities in research positions:


Share of women in R&D personnel, EU 25, 2003
Source: Eurostat, Technology and Science Statistics
EU 25 calculated by DG RTD
1200000
1000000
800000
600000
400000
200000
0
All sectors
Business enterprise sector
Government sector
Higher education sector
Men
Women

Endnotes:

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[1] Impact Assessment Guidelines. 15. June 2005. SEC(2005) 791.

[2] The Advisory Committee consists of representatives of the relevant Ministries and the national equality bodies of each Member State, of social partners at the European level, of NGOs such as the European Women's Lobby. Representatives of international and professional organisations and of other associations participate in the work of the Committee as observers.

[3] The group is composed of senior officials from the Member States responsible for gender equality. It is chaired by the European Commission.

[4] The group is composed of national representatives directly responsible for issues in women and science in the 25 Member States, Bulgaria, Romania, Iceland, Israel, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. The mandate of the Helsinki Group is to promote discussion and exchange experiences on measures and policies devised and implemented at local, regional, national and European level to encourage the participation of women in scientific careers and research. It is also charged with providing national sex-disaggregated statistics and developing gender sensitive indicators in order to monitor the participation of women in European research.

[5] The network is composed of representatives of the national governments and institutions responsible for the promotion of female entrepreneurship in 27 countries from the EU, EEA and candidate countries. It is aimed at promoting women's entrepreneurship, including raising the visibility of existing women entrepreneurs, creating a climate that is favourable to women entrepreneurs, increasing the number of new women entrepreneurs, and increasing the size (scale) of existing women-run businesses.

[6] The Committee is formed by representatives of agricultural unions, cooperatives, consumers, SMEs and women organisations.

[7] European Women's Lobby: www.womenlobby.org.

[8] Communication from the Commission: "Towards a reinforced culture of consultation and dialogue – General principles and minimum standards for consultation of interested parties by the Commission", COM(2002) 704 final. 11.12.2002.

[9] EGGSIE is an external expert group, supported by the European Commission. It is composed of national experts and academics from the 25 Member States, two candidate countries (Bulgaria and Romania) and the EEA EFTA countries (Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein). The main task of the network is to provide assessments of the extent to which the employment and social inclusion policies of the Member States are gender mainstreamed. This involves, firstly, the analysis of women's and men's position on the labour market, and the assessment of trends and analyses of the causes for the existence of gender gaps in the labour market. Secondly, it consists of analysing the factors that render women more vulnerable to the risk of social exclusion and poverty.

[10] The network is an external expert group, supported by the European Commission. It is composed of academics and practitioners from the 25 Member States, two candidate countries (Bulgaria and Romania) and the EEA EFTA countries (Norway, Iceland, and Lichtenstein). The network has been responsible for giving advice and relevant information to the Commission in the analyses and monitoring of national legislation and policies in the field of gender equality. It has also contributed, where appropriate, to the development of new Community legislative instruments in this field.

[11] Commission Staff Working Document "Interim evaluation Report from the Commission to the Council, the

European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Programme relating to the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality 2001-2005. SEC(2004) 1047. 11.8.2004. See also: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/evaluation/gender01_en.html.

[12] "Beijing +10: Progress made within the European Union." Report from the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

[13] See: "Changing European Gender Relations: The findings of recent social research and their implications for gender equality policy." Policy Synthesis Report to the European Commission, DG Research. September 2005.

[14] Social partners have, in March 2005, adopted a framework of actions on gender equality, in which they agree to take actions to address gender roles, promote women in decision-making, support work-life balance, and tackle the gender pay gap.

[15] Eurostat, Quarterly Labour Force Data (QLFD), 2004.

[16] Eurostat, Quarterly Labour Force Data (QLFD), 2004.

[17] Eurostat, Quarterly Labour Force Data (QLFD), 2004.

[18] Unemployment harmonised series, Eurostat, 2004.

[19] Eurostat, Quarterly Labour Force Data (QLFD), Spring 2005.

[20] Eurostat, *Statistics in Focus, "Gender gaps in the reconciliation between work and family life"*. 4/2005.

[21] Eurostat, LFS, 2004.

[22] Report on equality between women and men, 2004. COM(2005) 44.

[23] 2005/600/EC. Employment Guidelines 2005-2008.

[24] As a result of the legal framework introduced by the Amsterdam Treaty (1999) and the European Employment Strategy, the promotion of gender equality has been more firmly rooted in the Structural Funds Regulations, with the dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific actions, referring to the current 2000-2006 programming period. See Regulation (EC) No. 1260/1999 on the Structural Funds and Regulation (EC) No. 1784/1999 on the ESF). See also the regulations for the ERDF (EC No. 1783/1999) and EAGGF (EC No. 1257/1999).

[25] European Parliament Report on the situation of women from minority groups in the European Union. 2003/2109(INI). 24.2.2004.

[26] Eurostat, LFS, 2003.

[27] Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A Common Agenda for Integration. Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union. COM(2005) 389. 1.9.2005.

[28] Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey, 2004.

[29] Eurostat, "How Europeans spend their time -Everyday life of women and men - Data 1998 – 2002".

[30] European Parliament Report on reconciling professional, family and private lives. 2003/2129 (INI).

[31] Report on equality between women and men, 2004. COM(2005) 44.

[32] "Adequate and sustainable pensions: Joint report by the Commission and the Council", 2003. (CS / 7165 / 03)

[33]European Parliament, Report on women and poverty. 2004/2217(INI).

[34] Young Entrepreneurs, Women Entrepreneurs, Co-Entrepreneurs and Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs in the European Union and Central and Eastern Europe (Study). Available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/ entrepreneurship/craft/craft-studies/entrepreneurs-young-women-minorities.htm

[35] See: http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/entrepreneurship/craft/craft-women/bestproject-women.htm.

[36] Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "Action Plan: The European agenda for Entrepreneurship". COM(2004) 70 final. 11.02.2004.

[37] The database was established in 2004. Data covers the 25 EU Member States and Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Romania and Bulgaria. Data on Turkey will be available from 2006. The database is available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/ employment_social/women_men_stats/index_en.htm.

[38] Commission database on women and men in decision-making. Data collected in September 2005 in the 25 EU Member States and Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Romania and Bulgaria.

[39] Commission database on women and men in decision-making. Data collected in September 2005 in the 25 EU Member States and Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Romania and Bulgaria.

[40] Data collected at the end of 2004.

[41] "Beijing + 10 - Progress made within the European Union." Report from the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

[42] See Annex IV for statistical information on the participation of women in R&D.

[43] "Women and Science: Excellence and Innovation - Gender Equality in Science." Commission document SEC(2005) 370. 11.3.2005.

[44] This is mainly due to due to specific features of a scientific career such as long periods of qualification, high levels of career insecurity and international mobility.

[45] Communication from the Commission: "Mobilising women to enrich European research", COM (1999) 76

[46] See "Women and Science: Excellence and Innovation - Gender Equality in Science." Commission document SEC(2005) 370. 11.3.2005.

[47] European Commission 2003: "Women in industrial research. Good practices in companies across Europe".

Available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/women/wir/pdf/wir-best-practice_ en. pdf.

[48] Eurobarometer survey 2005: *"Information and Communication Technologies and the workplace".*

[49] Council Resolution of 27 November 2003 on equal access to and participation of women and men in the knowledge society for growth and innovation (2003/C 317/03).

[50] The Experts meeting on "Equal opportunities through and in sport 2005" has underlined reasons for concern as to the situation of gender issues in the field of sports. The role of the Commission has mainly been to identify main concerns (access to sport services and the extremely low level of women leaders in sport organisations) and needs to implement equality policy in the field of sports and to promote exchange of good practices. The issue of women and sports has also been raised in the European Parliament, in the Resolution of 21 May 2003 on "Women and Sport" (2002/2280(INI) and in the Report of 21 May 2003 on "Women and sport" (2002/2280(INI).

[51] Eurostat, Spring LFS, 2005 provisional data.

[52] Eurostat, Spring LFS, 2005 provisional data.

[53] Eurostat, Spring LFS, 2005 provisional data.

[54] Eurostat, "Tertiary graduates in science and technology" indicator, 2003.

[55] Information available at the website of the European Commission: http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education _culture/ega/index_en.html.

[56] Council and EP Decision 803/2004/EC of 21 April 2004.

[57] Report on equality between women and men, 2005. COM(2005) 44 final. 14.2.2005.

[58] AGIS was established for the period from 2003 to 2007 with a financial reference amount of 65 million EUR. The aim of the programme is to support projects in areas such as cooperation between law enforcement authorities or other public or private organisations involved in preventing and fighting crime, organised or otherwise. This includes projects focusing on police or judicial cooperation in the area of trafficking in human beings or the sexual exploitation of children.

[59] The Expert Group on Trafficking in Human Beings consists of 20 persons appointed as independent experts that formulated a series of recommendations which was included in a report of December 2004. On that basis, the Commission developed an integrated approach in its recent Communication on trafficking in human beings.

[60] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Fighting trafficking in human beings – an integrated approach and proposals for an action plan. COM(2005) 514. 18.10.2005.

[61] Adopted by the Council and the Commission on 1 December 2005, OJ C 311, 9.12.2005, p.1.

[62] The Phare programme, the Pre-accession Financial Assistance Programme for Turkey, the CARDS Regulation and TAIEX assistance.

[63] Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Proposal for a Joint Declaration by the council, the European Parliament, and the Commission on the European Union Development Policy "The European

Consensus". COM(2005) 311 final. 13.7.2005.

[64] SEC(2005) 791.

[65] Communication to the Spring European Council: "Working together for growth and jobs. A new start for the Lisbon strategy." COM(2005) 24 final. 2.2.2005.

[66] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Fighting trafficking in human beings-an integrated approach and proposals for an action plan. COM(2005) 514 final. 18.10.2005.

[67] See: Impact Assessment Guidelines, 15 June 2005. SEC(2005) 791.

[68] The Commission has already proposed the creation of the Institute. See: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a European Institute for Gender Equality, COM(2005) 81 final, 8.03.2005.

[69] Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "Working together, working better: A new framework for the coordination of social protection and inclusion policies in the European Union". COM(2005) 706 final. 22.12.2005.

[70] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "Healthier, safer, more confident citizens: a Health and Consumer Protection Strategy". COM(2005) 115, 6 April 2005.

[71] Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "Action Plan: the European Agenda for Entrepreneurship." COM(2004) 70 final. 11.02.2004.

[72] Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A Common Agenda for Integration. Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union. COM(2005) 389. 1.9.2005.

[73] JHA Council conclusions on a common agenda for integration were adopted on December 1st, 2005.

[74] Communication from the Commission: Policy Plan on Legal Migration. COM(2005) 669 final of 21.12.2005.

[75] Council: Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and training systems in Europe. 2002/c 142/01. 14.6.2002.

[76] Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing for the period 2007-2013 the programme "Citizens for Europe" to promote active European citizenship. COM(2005)116 final. 6.4.2005.

[77] Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions: "The Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan-D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate". COM(2005) 494 final. 13.10.2005.

[78] Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Proposal for a Joint Declaration by the Council, the European Parliament, and the Commission on the European Union Development Policy "The European

Consensus". COM(2005) 311 final. 13.7.2005.

[79] Gender equality legislation has created a floor of legal guarantees for equality between women and men, from access to employment, vocational training, promotion and working conditions to occupational and statutory social security, health and safety, equal pay, parental leave and procedural rights.

[80] Equal treatment legislation contributes to an improvement in industrial relations through the formalisation of family-friendly policies, implementing anti-sexual harassment policies, and helping to reconcile work-life arrangements.

[81] Equality legislation supports rights for citizens to be treated as individual, not according to stereotypes or group averages; sexual harassment legislation protects rights to privacy and dignity at the workplace; maternity leave supports individual rights to jobs and removes the presumption that a women once a mother would exit the labour market; equal pay enhances the scope for households to decide on different divisions of paid and non-paid work and enhances women's opportunities to live independently.

[82] Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Social Fund. COM(2004) 493 final. 14.7.2004.

[83] Communication from the Commission: Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs, Community Strategic Guidelines, 2007-2013. COM(2005) 0299. 05.07. 2005.

[84] Regulation 1698/2005 on support for Rural Development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) adopted by the Council of Agriculture the 20th September 2005.

[85] Proposal for a Council Regulation: European Fisheries Fund. COM(2004) 497 final. 14.7.2004.

[86] Commission proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision creating the Community Programme for Health and Consumer protection 2007-2013. COM (2005) 115, 6 April 2005.

[87] Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the European Fund for the Integration of Third-country Nationals for the period 2007-2013 as part of the General programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows'. COM(2005) 123 final/2. 2.5.2005.

[88] Decision No 1513/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2002 concerning the sixth framework programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstrative activities, contributing to the creation of the European Research Area and to innovation (2002-2006).

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[92] Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council Establishing a Community

Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS. COM(2004) 488 final. 14.7.2004.

[93] Directive 2004/113/EC of 13.12.2004: implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services.

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