


Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	1996/2242(INI)	Procedure completed
Discrimination against women in advertising		
Subject 4.10.09 Women condition and rights		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	FEMM Women's Rights	PPE LENZ Marlene	02/07/1996

Key events			
19/05/1995	Non-legislative basic document published	B4-0545/1995	
15/11/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
23/07/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
23/07/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0258/1997	
16/09/1997	Debate in Parliament		
16/09/1997	Decision by Parliament	T4-0435/1997	Summary
16/09/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		
06/10/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1996/2242(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 143-p5
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	FEMM/4/08422

Documentation gateway				

Non-legislative basic document		B4-0545/1995	19/05/1995	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0258/1997 OJ C 304 06.10.1997, p. 0006	23/07/1997	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0435/1997 OJ C 304 06.10.1997, p. 0025-0060	16/09/1997	EP	Summary

Discrimination against women in advertising

The Committee adopted the report by Marlene LENZ (EPP, D) which takes issue with how the advertising industry portrays women. Member States should ensure that national advertising rules ban sexual discrimination and insist on the avoidance of stereotypes. The advertising industry is asked to be more creative in its advertisements, and show the variety of roles played by women in society. It should also ensure that self-regulatory codes include minimum standards for non-discriminatory advertising. The Commission is asked to implement the "Beijing action programme" (which includes for example help with child care for working women) in respect of women and the media and to set out the results in the annual report. The report points out that most complaints about advertising in the EU, with the exception of Denmark, Greece and Luxembourg, concern the portrayal of women. Several examples are included. ?

Discrimination against women in advertising

In adopting the report by Mrs Marlene LENZ (PPE, D) on discrimination against women in advertising, Parliament welcomed the fact that abolishing all discrimination on grounds of sex had been included in the Draft Treaty of Amsterdam, although it was disappointed with the decision-making procedures that had been chosen. It called on the Member States to introduce legislation that would prevent any form of pornography in advertising. As regards more specifically the advertising industry and the media, Parliament rejected the dissemination of images of women which denigrated the dignity of women or their equality with the male sex in commercial communication. It called for a fight against sexist stereotypes in the content, images and language of advertising. It also called on the advertising industry to abandon the denigration of women as sex objects for men through technical means and visual representations such as reducing the female role to external beauty and sexual willingness. In Parliament's view, it was important to carry out activities that would encourage a change in values in this respect. Equally, it called for women's importance in society, at work, in the family or in public life to be stressed. It also called for a more balanced participation by women and men at the production and decision-making levels of the advertising industry and the media. Similarly, Parliament recommended the setting up of a code of ethics for television advisory councils in the Member States where this had not already happened. Parliament called on the national advertising standards authorities to ensure that consumers were made more aware of procedure objectives, the principles of control of advertising and their right to complain. It hoped that the European Advertising Standards Authority (EASA) would become a self-regulatory body for the European advertising sector. This body would be responsible for drawing up European principles for the advertising media, particularly as regards discrimination in advertising, and it would have control and be able to give recommendations in cases involving cross-border advertising. Parliament also urged the self-regulatory bodies to reach agreement on efficient forms of monitoring advertising in respect of the new media and called on the Commission to encourage all those concerned to draw up a self-regulation core to combat all forms of discrimination. The Commission should, moreover, continue its efforts aimed to achieve a realistic portrayal in the media of modern women. In this respect, the existing European legal framework for advertising should be revised, taking these issues into consideration. Similarly, Parliament supported the Commission in its plan to create a consistent legal framework for the protection of human dignity and against the abuse of audiovisual and information services. Finally, Parliament suggested to the Commission that a European advertising prize should be awarded by analogy with the NIKI prize. ?