


# Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	<a href="#">1998/2143(INI)</a>	Procedure completed
Family policy and social protection of battered children		
Subject 4.10.03 Child protection, children's rights		

Key players			
European Parliament			
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	<b>LIBE</b> Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs		24/11/1998
		PSE <a href="#">D'ANCONA Hedy</a>	
	<b>FEMM</b> Women's Rights		25/06/1998
		ELDR <a href="#">KESTELIJN-SIERENS Marie-Paule (Mimi)</a>	

Key events			
03/06/1998	Non-legislative basic document published	<a href="#">B4-0692/1998</a>	
19/06/1998	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
05/01/1999	Vote in committee		Summary
05/01/1999	Committee report tabled for plenary	<a href="#">A4-0004/1999</a>	
14/01/1999	Debate in Parliament		
28/01/1999	Decision by Parliament	T4-0055/1999	Summary
28/01/1999	End of procedure in Parliament		
07/05/1999	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1998/2143(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	EMPL/4/10259

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		<a href="#">B4-0692/1998</a>	03/06/1998	EP	
Document attached to the procedure		<a href="#">B4-0800/1998</a>	07/09/1998	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		<a href="#">A4-0004/1999</a> <a href="#">OJ C 104 14.04.1999, p. 0005</a>	05/01/1999	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0055/1999 <a href="#">OJ C 128 07.05.1999, p. 0015-0079</a>	28/01/1999	EP	Summary

## Family policy and social protection of battered children

The Committee endorsed a report by Marie-Thérèse HERMANGE (UFE, F) on the protection of families and children. It called for guidelines for an integrated family policy which takes account the diversity of family models and goes beyond the strictly economic approach of policies geared to benefits and allowances. The Member States should conduct specific family policies supporting and protecting the family financially and in its educational and social role. Children should be placed at the heart of the European debate, too. The Committee suggested that all proposals for Community acts should be accompanied by a family impact statement geared to the well-being of children. Furthermore, an extraordinary European Council should be organized to debate the consequences of the demographic, family and child protection policies pursued by Member States. The Commission should hold a conference on the situation of children in the EU. In addition to the institutional and procedural measures, the Committee put forward several proposals concerning the development of a child-protection policy which should focus on protecting children's health and promoting an environment which favours child development. In practical terms this would require, inter alia, \* the establishment of a European prenatal epidemiological network to combat child and maternal mortality; \* the rapid implementation of directives related to reconciling work and family life; \* a directive on child care; \* the appointment of national children's ombudsmen; \* the creation of a European centre for children in danger; \* the approximation of national child protection laws; \* the harmonisation of legislation on child pornography and the introduction of rules governing extra-territorial powers making it possible to prosecute and punish people who have committed sexual offences outside their national territory; \* adoption of a code of conduct with the aim of curbing the development of sex tourism; and \* combatting the exploitation of children at work by giving preference to countries which respect international provisions and by promoting a labelling scheme guaranteeing those provisions. ?

## Family policy and social protection of battered children

The report by Marie-Thérèse Hermange (F, UPE) on the protection of families and children was adopted by the European Parliament. The report considers it necessary to define guidelines for an integrated family policy and calls on Member States to conduct specific family policies supporting and protecting the family financially and in its role as an educational force and a source of solidarity between the generations, while taking account of the diversity of family models. It further calls for specific measures to involve fathers more closely in the upbringing of children and to deal with the situation facing single-parent families. The report places a particular stress on the situation of children and asks that family policy place this subject at the heart of the European debate. To this end, it recommends: - an extraordinary European Council meeting to discuss the consequences of individual Member States' demographic, family and child-protection policies; - a Council of Ministers responsible for family affairs and children should meet once a year, or part of the agenda of the Social Affairs Council should be devoted to these issues once every six months; - a clearly identified unit should be set up within the Commission entirely devoted to family affairs and child protection, maintaining contact between the European Parliament, family and child-protection organisations and Europol; - the revival of the Commission's inter-departmental group on matters related to childhood; - a conference to be held by the Commission in the coming year, with the European Parliament, NGOs and the Council of Europe on the situation of children in the EU; - the introduction of guidelines for action in favour of children; - a strengthened structure and role for the European Family Policy Observatory; - the introduction of a European perinatal epidemiological network to combat child and maternal mortality; - speedy implementation of directives to reconcile family life and social life; - backing up the Council recommendation on child care with a directive; - dissemination of best practice in the Member States by the Commission on family related issues; - Provision of financial support at Community, national and local level for measures to improve children's integration into social life, commit both parents to child care, and benefit children and young people in rural areas; - appointment by Member States of children's ombudsmen to settle conflicts involving young people under 18; - public awareness-raising information campaigns conducted by Member States on the issues surrounding problems affecting children, particularly abuse; - creation of a European centre for children in danger to help prevent mistreatment and violence suffered by children; - harmonisation of Member States' child-protection laws; - action within Member States to set up agencies, foundations or telephone services and multi-disciplinary structures to provide assistance to victims of violent family situations; - a co-ordinated European mechanism to avoid penalising children in the event of divorce between partners of different nationalities; - measures to combat sexual exploitation and prostitution of children, child pornography and sex tourism; - a Commission assessment of the application of Council Directive 94/33/EC on the protection of young people at work; - equipping Europol to identify and tackle criminal networks in trafficking and sexual exploitation of children and using the Schengen Information System (SIS) to exchange information; - adoption by Member States of measures analogous to Directive 97/36/EC on television without frontiers to protect children from exposure to damaging situations in the media.?