

Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1999/2186(COS)	Procedure completed
Employment: combating discrimination, guidelines for Community initiative EQUAL		
Subject 4.15.08 Work, employment, wages and salaries: equal opportunities women and men, and for all		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		14/10/1999
		PPE-DE STENZEL Ursula	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	LIBE Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs		23/11/1999
		GUE/NGL SYLLA Fodé	
Council of the European Union	ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy		07/12/1999
		V/ALE SCHRÖDER Ilka	
	RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism		24/11/1999
		GUE/NGL MARKOV Helmuth	
	FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities		25/11/1999
		PSE GHILARDOTTI Fiorella	
European Commission	Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	Commissioner	

Key events			
13/10/1999	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1999)0476	Summary
01/12/1999	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
01/02/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
01/02/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0034/2000	
14/02/2000	Debate in Parliament		
16/02/2000	Decision by Parliament	T5-0053/2000	Summary

16/02/2000	End of procedure in Parliament		
29/11/2000	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1999/2186(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 050; Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	EMPL/5/12155

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(1999)0476	13/10/1999	EC	Summary
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report		CES0085/2000 OJ C 075 15.03.2000, p. 0016	26/01/2000	ESC	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0034/2000 OJ C 339 29.11.2000, p. 0006	01/02/2000	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0053/2000 OJ C 339 29.11.2000, p. 0061-0131	16/02/2000	EP	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0327/1999 OJ C 156 06.06.2000, p. 0018	16/02/2000	CofR	
Follow-up document		COM(2003)0840	31/12/2003	EC	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0096/2004 OJ C 318 22.12.2004, p. 0015-0016	16/06/2004	CofR	

Employment: combating discrimination, guidelines for Community initiative EQUAL

PURPOSE : to establish guidelines for the Community Initiative Programme (CIP) for which Member States are invited to submit proposals in the EQUAL Initiative framework. **CONTENT** : the European Commission has approved draft guidelines for the EQUAL Community Initiative, the objective of which is transnational cooperation for the promotion of new practices to combat all forms of discrimination and inequalities in relation with the labour market. EQUAL will also take due account of the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers. The new initiative will capitalise on the experience gained under the current Community Initiatives EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT. The successful innovations and the good practices developed in the EQUAL framework shall be the subject of wide dissemination and, if the case arises, integrated into the mainstream programmes of the Structural Funds. The first group of thematic fields, which will serve as the basis to the first call of projects, is as follows : - facilitating the access and the return to the labour market so as to promote a labour market which is open to all; - combating racism at work; - opening up business creation process to all; - improving the quality of jobs in the social economy (third sector); - developing integration practices in the work place and continuing professional training; - introducing information technologies, anticipating change and upgrading skills; - developing new forms of work organisation in order to reconcile professional and family life; - reducing the gaps between men and women and supporting job desegregation. The total contribution of the European Social Fund to the EQUAL Initiative for the period 2000-2006 is estimated at EUR 2.847 million.?

Employment: combating discrimination, guidelines for Community initiative EQUAL

The committee adopted a non-legislative report by Ursula STENZEL (EPP/ED, A) on the Commission guidelines on the Community EQUAL initiative. The vote in committee was a complicated one, and the committee was split on various issues. It criticised the Commission for making the administrative structures and procedures of the programme far too complex. However, a major area of controversy was whether all asylum seekers should be allowed to benefit under the EQUAL programme. The report as adopted stated that all asylum-seekers (asylum applicants, those under temporary protection and those denied refugee status and threatened with repatriation) should be eligible for the programme. The report also wished to add various topics to the EQUAL guidelines under the different "pillars", such as combating all forms of discrimination, racism and xenophobia, developing more efficient forms of work organisation to reconcile family and professional life, and promoting the development of the local economy. It pointed out that any change in priorities for the EQUAL initiative would require that Parliament be

consulted again, and also pointed out that problems could arise with co-financing at the preparatory stage of the initiative. It called on the Commission to set specific ceilings for administrative expenditure and to ensure proper coordination between the activities and budgetary funds provided by the EQUAL initiative and other relevant Community policy instruments in order to optimise the use of Community resources. After the vote, the main political groups in the committee signalled their readiness to negotiate further compromises in time for Parliament's plenary debate on the report.

Employment: combating discrimination, guidelines for Community initiative EQUAL

The European Parliament approved the report by Mrs. Ursula Stenzel (EPP/ED, Aus) on the resolution welcoming the Commission's new initiative to promote equal opportunities - the EQUAL programme. This programme expresses in concrete terms the EU's aim to reinforce social cohesion and combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, which is also suffered by refugees and asylum-seekers. The MEPs adopted this resolution subject to a number of amendments that are designed to reinforce the commitment to combating discrimination and calling on the Commission to use simple and clear language in all documents explaining the programme. This is to avoid perpetuating the ambiguities which already exist in the various language versions and to give practical meaning to the concepts of prevention, innovation, transnationality, co-operation management, comprehensive dissemination, including via the Internet, evaluating and gender mainstreaming. Furthermore, the EP calls on the Commission: - to make explicit in the EQUAL Guidelines that Member States must choose both Geographical and Sectoral Development Partnerships for each of the selected thematic fields in their Community Initiative Programmes in order to ensure a balanced involvement of all discriminated groups in the EQUAL programme; - to ensure that thematic fields identified in the EQUAL guidelines are to be fully and easily accessible to all discriminated target groups supported by the EQUAL programme and that no thematic field is identified for participation by one discriminated target group to the exclusion of all other discriminated groups. With regard to the assessment of results, the EP calls on the Commission to ensure that programmes will be monitored and evaluated in such a way as to fully exploit the potential leverage effect, in particular in terms of best practice.?

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PURPOSE: Establishing guidelines for the second round of the Community initiative EQUAL. CONTENT: The EU sponsored programme EQUAL has been devised in order to create better jobs and to ensure that everyone has equal and impartial access to these jobs. It is a learning platform, or a laboratory, with the specific aim of establishing new ways in which to tackle both discrimination and inequality in the labour market. The second round of the EQUAL programme is to be launched in 2004 coinciding with the EU's enlargement from fifteen Member States to twenty-five. The implications are such that the EQUAL programme is set to cover twenty-seven new programmes. The aim of this Communication is to describe and illustrate some of the early results of EQUAL, highlighting promising practices helping to contribute to new ways of tackling discrimination. The Communication also aims to set the scene for the second round of the EQUAL initiative. The second round of EQUAL continues the thematic approach established in the first round. They are: - Facilitating access and return to the labour market for those who have difficulty in being integrated or reintegrated into a labour market which must be open to all. - Combating racism and xenophobia in relation to the labour market. - Opening up the business creation process to all by providing the tools required for setting up in business and for the identification and exploitation of new possibilities for creating employment in urban and rural areas. - Strengthening the social economy (third sector), in particular the services of interest to the community, with a focus on improving the quality of jobs. - Promoting lifelong learning and inclusive work practices, which encourage the recruitment and retention of those suffering discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market. - Supporting the adaptability of firms and employees to structural economic change and the use of information technology and other new technologies. - Reconciling family and professional life, as well as the re-integration of men and women who have left the labour market, by developing more flexible and effective forms of work organisation and support services. - Reducing gender-gaps and supporting job desegregation. - Supporting the social and vocational integration of Asylum seekers. The Communication promises that new and emerging challenges will also be examined, such as addressing the Roma people.?