


Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	2001/2144(COS)	Procedure completed
Equal opportunities for women and men in the Union. 5th annual report 2000		
Subject 4.10.04 Gender equality		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities		Appointed 12/07/2001
			PPE-DE AVILÉS PEREA María Antonia
	Committee for opinion		Rapporteur for opinion
Council of the European Union European Commission	AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	Commission DG		Commissioner
	Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion		

Key events			
02/04/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0179	Summary
03/09/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
26/02/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
26/02/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0067/2002	
24/04/2002	Debate in Parliament		
25/04/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0206/2002	Summary
25/04/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
05/06/2003	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2001/2144(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)

Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	FEMM/5/14968

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2001)0179	02/04/2001	EC	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0204/2001 OJ C 107 03.05.2002, p. 0082	15/11/2001	CofR	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0067/2002	26/02/2002	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0206/2002 OJ C 131 05.06.2003, p. 0018-0158 E	25/04/2002	EP	Summary

Equal opportunities for women and men in the Union. 5th annual report 2000

PURPOSE : to present the Commission's annual report on equal opportunities for women and men in the European Union 2000. **CONTENT :** this Commission annual report to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions concerns equal opportunities for women and men in the European Union 2000. In June 2000, the Commission adopted the first comprehensive Framework Strategy on Gender Equality covering all aspects of the question. In line with the integrated approach, the Strategy makes use of all existing tools and structures, while supporting the development of new ones: monitoring, indicators and benchmarking. The Strategy is accompanied by a Programme, which will provide EUR 50 Million over the next 5 years for promoting gender equality. With regard to gender mainstreaming, this commits the EU to incorporating the goal of gender equality into the full range of its activities, not just those aimed directly at promoting it. It is a central element to the Commission's new Framework Strategy. With regard to gender equality in employment, there is still a large gender pay gap and the female employment rate is still 18 points below the male rate. In response, the Lisbon European Council in March set ambitious new targets for women: most importantly, measures should be taken to increase the female employment rate to 60% by 2010 from today's 53%. The Employment strategy should play an important part in achieving that target. With regard to a gender perspective in EU human rights policies, in 2000 the Commission put forward a proposal to amend the 1976 Directive on equal treatment. In addition to other initiatives, the Commission also announced its intention to propose a new gender-equality Directive in 2002, based on Article 13 of the EC Treaty. With regard to equality in the enlargement process, under the Commission's strategy paper on enlargement, endorsed at the Nice European Council, provisional completion for negotiations on employment and social policy are scheduled for the first half of 2001 for most countries. Hungary, the Czech Republic and Lithuania appear to be the front runners in passing Community legislation on gender equality into national law. However, on the whole, the institutional capacity is not up to the task of enforcing gender legislation. While the figure on labour-market inequalities appear to paint a more optimistic picture, the political participation of women is low and significantly below the EU average. Finally, with regard to promoting a gender balance in decision-making, women are still under-represented in the EU too. Work will continue under the Strategy for gender equality. At national level, a wide variety of measures have been tried to raise female representation, with varying degrees of success. The issue of women in business is only just starting to be addressed in a systematic way. Good statistics are needed to make the glass ceiling and other obstacles more visible. A recent Commission study found that only 23% of businesses in the EU are owned by women. ?

Equal opportunities for women and men in the Union. 5th annual report 2000

The committee adopted the report by María AVILES PEREA (EPP-ED, E) on the Commission's annual report for 2000 on equal opportunities for women and men in the EU. It felt that the report was an improvement on previous years, although it expressed disappointment that there was hardly any mention of Commission measures to ensure enforcement of existing legislation on equal treatment in the Member States. Commenting on the findings of the annual report, the committee noted with concern that too high a proportion of women were still concentrated in part-time, unstable and low-skilled jobs. Women were also still seriously under-represented in the IT sector and the Member States were therefore urged to facilitate women's access to education and training in the new technologies, as agreed at the December 2000 Nice Summit. In line with the Lisbon Council objective of raising the female employment rate to 60% by 2010, Member States were also urged to set specific objectives to desegregate the labour market and reduce the pay gap between men and women. The committee's report acknowledged that Member States had made progress with regard to the provision of childcare structures, as part of the policy of reconciling work and family life. It pointed out, however, that the issue was not confined to childcare alone and that little progress had been made as regards improving care for other dependents such as elderly, sick or disabled people. MEPs also highlighted the need to develop statistical methods, including in the candidate countries, in order to compile statistics broken down by sex, thereby making it possible to assess the impact on women and men of the various policies implemented. The Commission was urged to make full use of the funding possibilities offered by the new action programme on gender equality (2001-2005) in order to compile and update statistics. The committee also raised the possibility of drawing up an index of gender development in the EU. Other points taken up in the report included a call for the Commission to come up with proposals to encourage Member States to achieve a more balanced participation of men and women in decision-making. This issue should also be addressed in the context of the accession negotiations. On enlargement, MEPs stressed that respect for the "acquis communautaire" as regards equal treatment and opportunities for women was an absolute prerequisite for accession. Lastly, the committee

called on the EU Member States and the applicant countries to take urgent measures, including appropriate criminal penalties, to tackle the problems of domestic violence and trafficking in women. ?

Equal opportunities for women and men in the Union. 5th annual report 2000

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drawn up by its rapporteur Maria AVILES PEREA (EPP-ED, Spain) on equal opportunities in the EU. (Please refer to the document dated 26/02/02.) It regretted that few Member States have made efforts to integrate gender equality in their national action plans (NAPs) for 2000 and that many measures are still considered to be gender neutral. In the light of the Lisbon objectives, Member States should: - integrate the gender dimension in the employment policies covered by the first three pillars of the employment guidelines when drawing up their NAPs to implement those guidelines; - set specific objectives and adopt rules on positive action to desegregate the labour market; - introduce precise quantitative objectives and deadlines for reducing the pay gap; and - bring in comparable indicators and procedures for monitoring and assessing equal opportunities in all areas of employment. Parliament went on to suggest to the Commission that, when statistics and comparable tables are drawn up, the order in which countries are listed should go from best to worst in line with their results in the concept measures and their consequences for gender equality, and not in alphabetical order or order of protocol. It proposed that an index of gender development in the EU could be debated. In any event, bearing in mind that only 23% of businesses in the EU are owned by women, the Commission needs to tackle this issue directly by preparing a comprehensive report including precise and comparable data which will facilitate analysis and make it possible to identify the main problems in this area. The Commission should also draw up a progress report on the integration of the equal opportunities dimension in the Structural Funds.?