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Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities

26 June 2002

OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities
for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on the scoreboard on implementing the Social Policy Agenda
(COM(2002)0089 – 2001/2241 (INI))

Draftsperson: Anna Karamanou

PROCEDURE

The Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities appointed Anna Karamanou drafts person at its meeting of 22 May 2002.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 17 and 18 June 2002.

At the last meeting it adopted the following conclusions unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Olga Zrihen Zaari, acting chairperson; Jillian Evans, vice-chairperson; Anna Karamanou, drafts person; María Antonia Avilés Perea, Regina Bastos, Lissy Gröner, Mary Honeyball, Miet Smet, Elena Valenciano Martínez-Orozco, María Izquierdo Rojo, (for Helena Torres Marques) and Olle Schmidt (for Lousewies van der Laan).

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

The annual scoreboard is conceived as an instrument for keeping track of the achievements and for measuring the progress made in the implementation of the Social Policy Agenda, as defined in the Lisbon European Council of March 2000. It is meant as a complement to the annual synthesis report on the actions stipulated therein.

The Commission Communication, presenting the scoreboard of 2001, refers to a large spectrum of activities either already undertaken or foreseen in the framework of achieving the aims of the Social Policy Agenda.

However, as the Committee responsible rightly points out, the European Parliament should be more involved in the planning and implementation of the social measures and the scoreboard should be more than a simple list of Commission activities in this field.

In particular, the data on concrete progress made in the field of promoting equal treatment between men and women are noticeably insufficient. Although the main issues of women's employment, of gender mainstreaming and of gender pay gaps are mentioned, the scoreboard does not include any systematic approach of the global issue of gender equality. Indeed, there is no provision of a comprehensive strategy in gender issues and a serious lack of assessment of the impact of measures already implemented as well as the foreseeable impact of the proposed actions.

Some other issues, such as the gender impact on life long learning, poverty and social exclusion as well as specific health problems of women are totally absent in the present document.

CONCLUSIONS

The Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following points in its motion for a resolution:

Recital A

Whereas the promotion of equality between men and women, an important part of the Social Agenda as adopted in Nice, means that this aspect must be incorporated in all policies that concern directly or indirectly the working and living conditions of all citizens;

Paragraph 1

In this respect, health problems linked to gender should be adequately researched and specific measures foreseen;

Paragraph 2

Asks the Commission to accelerate its work in the field of improving the understanding and measuring of poverty and social exclusion, taking specifically into account the generally lower economic and social position of women and propose measures to improve the situation of women.

Paragraph 3

Requests new initiatives to promote the full participation of women in decision making by establishing and following a system of best practices in the Member States;

Paragraph 4

Asks the Commission to grant more importance to the respect of human rights and in particular rights of women in the external dimension of EU policies.