Equal opportunities between men and women: 4th action programme 1996-2000

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The rapporteur, Mrs BENNASAR TOUS, recalled the different stages of the programmes on equal opportunities between men and women (1982, 1986, 1990) and stated that the present document differed from the others because it developed the citizenship of women. The priority objectives of the fourth programme were information and training for women, in particular with a view to adopting or strengthening the legal measures to combat all forms of social or private violence. She called for further mainstreaming of the programme, in other words integration of equality in all of the EU's programmes, actions and structural funds and in all policies at every level. In short, the programme, which was based on the positive outcome of the Beijing Conference, sought to mark a change of attitudes towards the relationships between men and women within the family and in the workplace. Commissioner Flynn noted first and foremost that Parliament and the Commission had similar views on this issue. In this respect, he hoped to give priority to the amendments that significantly improved the programme. The Commission would continue to develop the programme from a legislative perspective and would present a communication on the principle of mainstreaming. The 'Anima' technical assistance unit would assist with the implementation of the programme. However, the amendment on the autonomous collection of statistics could not be taken over as its substantial financial costs would encroach upon the programme's limited budget; it could perhaps receive support from Eurostat. Finally, Mr Flynn confirmed that he would support the negotiation in the IGC of a specific legal basis in the social field, and in particular for equal opportunities.