

Gender equality: Community framework strategy, programme 2001-2005

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PURPOSE : Communication and Programme relating to the Community framework strategy on gender equality. **CONTENT** : this document contains two parts. The first part is a Communication which sets out the Commission's ideas on a strategy on gender equality over the next five years. The purpose is to establish a framework for action within which all Community activities can contribute to attain the goal of eliminating inequalities and promoting equality between women and men, as set out in Article 3(2) of the Treaty, either by adjusting policies and/or by implementing concrete actions. This integrated approach marks a change from the previous Community action on equal opportunities, mainly based on compartmental activities and programmes funded under different specific budget headings. The framework Strategy aims at coordinating all the different initiatives and programmes under a single umbrella built around clear assessment criteria, monitoring tools, the setting of benchmarks, gender proofing and evaluation. There are five inter-related fields of intervention: economic life, equal participation and representation, social rights, civil life and gender roles and stereotypes. Within each field, the Communication sets out operational objectives, such as strengthening the gender dimension in the European Employment Strategy, and improving the use of the use of the Structural Funds for the promotion of gender equality. The second part of the document sets out a supporting programme which will develop the horizontal and coordinating actions (such as networking, awareness-raising) required successfully to implement the framework strategy. The programme will have the following objectives: - to promote and disseminate the values and practices underlying gender equality; - to improve the understanding of issues related to direct and indirect gender discrimination by determining where it exists and to what extent and by evaluating the effectiveness of policies and practices. - to develop the capacities of key players (independent bodies responsible for the promotion of gender equality, social partners and non-governmental organisations) to promote gender equality effectively, in particular through supporting the exchange of information and good practice and networking at Community level. In order to achieve these objectives, actions will be undertaken - awareness raising, primarily by emphasising the Community dimension of the promotion of gender equality and publicising the results of the Programme, through publications and campaigns. - analysis and evaluation of factors and policies, including the collection of statistics, studies, gender impact assessment etc. -capacity building, through the promotion of networking and exchange of experiences at Community level. EFTA/EEA and candidate countries may participate in the Programme, which will run from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2005. The total budget is EUR 10.65 million.