Gender equality: Community framework strategy, programme 2001-2005

2000/0143(CNS) - 03/02/2003

This document consists of the third annual work programme of the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality and sets out the Commission's planned activities for 2003 in order to promote gender equality in all policy areas. This work programme takes the Commission to the mid-point of the 5-year Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005), at which stage there will be a more detailed study of the progress made in the implementation of gender equality within the various services of the European Commission, including the evaluation of resource implications (human and financial). The Commission gender equality work programme for 2003 builds on the successes achieved in 2002 and includes pro-active as well as reactive interventions, i.e. adjusting existing policies by applying gender mainstreaming, and introducing specific interventions designed to improve the situation of the disadvantaged or under-represented sex in the respective policy area. The gender equality work programme consists of a dual approach - horizontal priorities applicable to all Directorates General and services; and policy specific initiatives by each Directorate-General and service, covering: - the integration of a gender perspective in policy initiatives (gender mainstreaming) and - specific actions addressed to the disadvantaged or under-represented gender in the relevant policy area. The following priority actions will be implemented by all Commission services: - the endorsement of the generalised approach of Impact Assessment. From 2003, an Impact Assessment based on the three pillars of social, economic and environmental sustainability will gradually be applied to all major new initiatives, i.e. those which are presented in the Annual Policy Strategy or later in the Work Programme of the Commission. This impact assessment will replace existing requirements for business impact assessment, gender assessment, environmental assessment, small and medium enterprises assessment, trade impact assessment, regulatory impact assessment etc. Indeed, the new integrated Impact Assessment tool builds on these existing practices and incorporates them into the new tool; - it remains however for individual DGs to ensure that the impact assessments they conduct take into account gender impacts as well. It is equally important that in addition to impact assessments of new policy initiatives, the work of gender mainstreaming continues especially for existing policy initiatives, as part of interim and ex-post policy analysis. - since gender sensitive policy planning and analysis require gender desegregated data as input in the relevant policy area, each service will enhance its efforts to collect gender desegregated data and systematically break down by gender all related statistics. All services will continue the development of indicators, which will allow assessment of progress of gender equality in that policy; - the document shows that there is still a need for awareness-raising on gender issues in the Commission services and for training of the Commission staff on the methods for assessing the different impact of policies on women and men respectively and for mainstreaming a gender equality perspective into thepolicy planning and implementation process. Each Directorate-General and service will therefore insert gender mainstreaming modules in its training plans for staff members of all levels, in particular management level. This may take the form of specific gender equality or gender mainstreaming training sessions or as modules of general training courses. Lastly, the document covers the issue of gender balance in committees and expert groups. The results of the 2002 survey indicate that in comparison with the previous 2 years, the number of women in committees and groups has slightly increased. However, this upward shift is due to the enhanced nomination of women by other bodies, while Commission appointed members seem to have become less gender balanced.