Equality women and men: promoting organisations active at European level, 2004-2005 action programme

2003/0109(COD) - 27/05/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to give a legal basis to the Community action programme to promote organisations active at European level in the field of equality between men and women. CONTENT : equality between women and men has been recognised as a fundamental principle of Community law since the adoption of the Treaty of Rome. Following the entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam, provisions relating to equality between men and women have been substantially reinforced by Article 2 of the EC Treaty and with the integration of Article 13 which aims to combat all discrimination based, inter alia, on sex. Article 13(2) EC is the appropriate legal basis, since the objective is to support the activities of organisations active at European level in order to achieve equality between men and women in fields extending beyond those of employment and occupation. The activities of these European organisations help to promote gender equality, particularly in the case of Community measures targeted specifically at women. The European Women's Lobby in particular plays a major role in promoting, monitoring and disseminating Community measures aimed at women. Its activity therefore serves the general European interest. In this context, budget lines A-3037 (No ABB 040503) and A-3046 (No ABB 040501) of the general budget of the European Communities for the year 2003 and preceding years are intended to support the European Women's Lobby and organisations active at European level in the field of equality between men and women. The adoption of Council Regulation 1605/2002/EC, Euratom on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities and the decision to base the manner in which the Commission's budget is constructed on the ABB approach (Activity Based Budgeting) involve establishing basic instruments for a number of grants funded on the basis of appropriations defined in Part A (administrative appropriations) of the Commission section of the budget (section III). The objective of this Decision is therefore to provide a basic instrument for awarding an operating grant to the European Women's Lobby and other organisations active at European level in the field of equality between men and women for the years 2004 and 2005. The proposal stipulates that other organisations active at European level in the field of equality between men and women which may be eligible for a grant on the basis of a call for proposals must be established in the Member States or in the countries which agreed at the Copenhagen summit in 2002 to join the European Union in 2004; in the EFTA/EEA countries, in accordance with the conditions established in the EEA agreement; in Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey. Their activities will contribute to the development and implementation of Community actions to promote equality between men and women. Their activities must in all cases be in accordance with the principles underlying Community action in the policy area of equality between men and women and have transnational potential. In addition, the organisations must have been legally established for more than one year, acting alone or in the form of various coordinated associations. Concerning, in particular, the European Women's Lobby plays amajor role in promoting, monitoring and disseminating Community measures aimed at women. Its activity therefore serves the general European interest. For this reason, the proposed basic instrument therefore contains a reference to the beneficiary organisation and the operating grant is awarded without a call for proposals. As regards the budgetary implications of the proposed measure, the amounts provided for take into account in particular the amount granted to the European Women's Lobby and other women's organisations in the European Community budget for the year 2003. The enlargement of the Union will lead to an increase in the activities of the European Women's Lobby in favour of its members, particularly in the new Member States. The total amount proposed is EUR 2 222 000 for the two years covered by the programme.