Situation of the wives of self-employed workers

1995/2086(INI) - 18/12/1996

The Committee on Women's Rights unanimously approved the report by Mrs Lulling (PPE,L). The Committee was of the opinion that the weak wording of Directive 86/613 on the equality of treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity has led to little progress for assisting spouses of self-employed workers in terms of recognition of their work and adequate social protection. The report calls for a more binding directive. The Member States should establish a legal status for assisting spouses, enabling them to choose between the status of employed spouse, partner spouse or collaborating spouse, on the assumption that in the latter two cases the person concerned must, even if unpaid, be registered and therefore eligible for social protection, or even insurance cover for health care, retirement pensions, maternity benefit and replacement services and invalidity benefit. The report considers that assisting spouses should not be disadvantaged in terms of inheritance or succession rights or in the event of divorce.