

Development cooperation: promoting gender equality

2003/0176(COD) - 26/11/2003

The committee unanimously adopted the report by Olga ZRIHEN ZAARI (PES, B) amending the proposal under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure. The committee said that the main beneficiaries of aid should include NGOs operating in the field of gender equality and women's organisations. The local private sector might also be a beneficiary, given that it organises schemes involving education for young girls, training grants, etc. Projects eligible for aid should focus on areas such as HIV/AIDS programmes, measures to combat violence, the education and training of women of all ages, human rights, conflict prevention, democratisation and the participation of women in the political decision-making process. It should be specified that the measures taken under the regulation should have an impact on women of all ages. The report also stressed that special attention should be paid to girls' education and said that one way of starting to redress unequal opportunities for girls was by recruiting and training local female teachers. Lastly, MEPs called for the budget for this policy to be increased from EUR 9 million, as proposed by the Commission, to EUR 11 million for the period 2004-2006.