Equal opportunities: women participation to the European scientific research

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The European Parliament approved a resolution on women and science drafted by Mrs. E. McNALLY (PES, UK). The Resolution welcomes the Commission's proposal to increase the involvement of women in programmes organised by the EU and supports the strategy of research by, for and on women as being comprehensive and constructive. It approves the aim of collating a more comprehensive set of statistics on the involvement of women in different fields of science and research and supports the Commission's efforts to produce comparable data. It calls for gender-impact studies on the implementation of the Fifth Framework Programme to be taken into account when the Sixth Framework Programme is being drawn up so as to ensure that research topics of special interest to women are given due priority. It also calls for the appointment of a large percentage of women to serve on committees that set policies, select and evaluate projects and control funds at both EU and Member State levels. It calls on the Member States: - to improve the balance between men and women when they nominate such national experts and committee members; - when granting aid, to ensure that the award criteria are clear and that grants are made in conditions of the greatest possible transparency; - to take measures which support the dissociation of attitudes to course selection from traditional gender specific role models. Among other things, it calls on the Commission: - to investigate the reasons for the discrepancy between the number of women graduating in scientific disciplines and the number who are successful in obtaining professional posts; - to promote the need for greater levels of numeracy, statistical and IT training; - to avoid where possible and to combat when necessary, the unjustified positive discrimination in favour of boys in educational and scientific policy with regard to both the world of work and higher education; - to facilitate mentoring systems within networks of women scientists; - to observe 'International Women's University of Technology and Culture' to be held as part of the Hanover Expo 2000. Lastly, it invites the Commission to consider setting up a properly resources group with responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of mainstreaming in the work of each DG and for addressing the under-representation of women.