

Mid-term assessment of the Lisbon strategy from a gender perspective

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In preparation for Spring European Council meeting, the Council held a discussion with the intention of defining its contribution to the European Council meeting in the fields of employment, social policy and equal opportunity. The Council highlighted key messages that the review of the Lisbon Strategy must confirm the interaction between policies on economic growth, quality job creation, the modernisation of social protection and the promotion of sustainable development, which reinforce each other.

In addition, the Council feels that the recent strategy on economic growth and job creation must be combined with the promotion of social and environmental objectives within the framework of the general sustainable-development strategy.

The Council feels that the employment aspect of the Lisbon Strategy must concentrate on the following four action priorities:

- attracting more people to and keeping them on the labour market;
- increasing the adaptive capacities of workers and undertakings;
- investing more, and more effectively, in human capital and making lifelong education and training a reality;
- ensuring the effective implementation of reforms through better governance.

As regards social protection, the Council feels that the lengthening of working life and increasing the rate of employment are still fundamental objectives.

Social inclusion measures must essentially aim at combating the deep causes of poverty and exclusion, and priority actions must include:

- the prevention of child poverty;
- supporting the caring capacity of families;
- promoting the equality of men and women and reconciling work and family life;
- the improvement of social services;
- treatment of the phenomenon of homelessness;
- the development of new approaches to the integration of ethnic minorities and immigrants.