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

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The Council held a debate on the topic "Human resources in R&D: Women in science, career and mobility of researchers". Following the debate, the Council adopted the following conclusions: it emphasised the need to continue developing, at the appropriate levels, coherent integrated strategies for human resources in the ERA, focussing on four main lines:

• substantially reinforcing funding for the training, mobility and career development of researchers, bearing in mind the Barcelona objectives;

• fostering the career prospects of researchers, thereby enhancing the EU's attractiveness for research talent from Europe and from all over the world, as well as developing the interest of young Europeans in research careers;

• promoting gender equality in science through national and European programmes and increasing the participation of women in science and in industrial research in Member States;

• improving the overall environment for researchers in Europe, in particular by broadening their skills base for multi-sectoral careers and by taking steps to remove obstacles to intra-Community and intersectoral mobility which still persist.

Member States are invited to:

• take into account as appropriate, in accordance with their legal system, the principles laid down in the Charter and the Code when formulating their Human Resources and Mobility strategies and funding programmes, such as institutional quality assurance mechanisms, funding criteria as well as auditing, monitoring and evaluation processes;

• raise awareness of the Charter and the Code within their own country, on a voluntary basis, engage actively with employers, funding organisations and researchers and other relevant parties on their application and where appropriate put in place monitoring mechanisms to accompany the different measures;

• encourage the further development of sex disaggregated data on the participation of women in research, including the collection of yearly recruitment statistics;

• formulate ambitious targets for the participation of women focussing on areas where women are seriously under-represented, and in particular increase significantly the number of women in leading positions, with the aim of reaching, as a first step, the goal of 25% in the public sector and boosting their participation in industrial research and technology;

• continue contributing towards working conditions which allow both women and men researchers to combine family and work, children and career; appropriate provisions for parental leave should be put in place in particular; reinforce gender research and the gender dimension in research, including analysis of the changing roles and life plans of women and men in Europe;

The Council invites the Commission to:

• report periodically on the experience in follow-up to the Charter and the Code, including information from Member States;

• continue improving the participation of women as researchers, evaluators, experts and advisory board members in the Framework Programmes and report regularly on progress on this;

• further develop the Gender Watch System by establishing regular progress reports, including the gender action plans.