

# Non discrimination and gender equality: European year of equal opportunities for all 2007

2005/0107(COD) - 17/05/2006 - Final act

**PURPOSE :** to designate the Year 2007 as the "European Year on Equal Opportunities for All" (the European Year).

**LEGISLATIVE ACT :** Decision 771/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007) - towards a just society.

**CONTENT :** this Decision designates 2007 as the "European Year of Opportunities for All". The objectives of the European Year are as follows:

**Rights:** Raising awareness of the right to equality and non-discrimination and of the problem of multiple discrimination. The European Year will highlight the message that all people are entitled to equal treatment, irrespective of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. It will make groups that are at risk of discrimination more aware of their rights and of existing European legislation in the field of non-discrimination.

**Representation:** stimulating debate on ways to increase the participation in society of groups that are victims of discrimination and a balanced participation of men and women. The European Year will encourage reflection and discussion on the need to promote their greater participation in society, and their involvement in actions designed to combat discrimination, in all sectors and at all levels.

**Recognition:** facilitating and celebrating diversity and equality. The European Year will highlight the positive contribution that people, irrespective of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, can make to society as a whole, in particular by accentuating the benefits of diversity.

**Respect:** promoting a more cohesive society. The European Year will raise awareness of the importance of eliminating stereotypes, prejudice and violence, promoting good relations between all in society, and, in particular, among young people, and promoting and disseminating the values underlying the fight against discrimination.

**Content of actions:** the actions designed to meet the objectives may entail support for, in particular: meetings and events; information, promotional and educational campaigns; Community or nationwide surveys and studies. Details of the actions are set out in the Annex.

**Gender mainstreaming:** the European Year must take into account the different ways in which women and men experience discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

**Cooperation and implementation at national level:** each Member State must designate a national implementing body to organise its participation in the European Year, and inform the Commission of its choice by 17 June 2006. That national implementing body will be responsible for defining the national strategy and priorities for the European Year and for selecting the individual actions to be proposed for Community funding.

**Financial arrangements:** Community-wide measures may be subsidised up to 80 % or give rise to procurement contracts financed from the general budget of the European Union. Local, regional or national measures may be co-financed from the general budget of the European Union up to a maximum of 50 % of the total consolidated costs of the actions implemented at local, regional or national level, and in accordance with the procedure set out in the Annex.

**Consistency and complementarity:** the Commission will decide on the selection of beneficiaries. The Commission together with the Member States will ensure that the measures provided for in the Decision are consistent with other Community, national and regional action and initiatives. They must ensure that the European Year fully complements other existing Community, national and regional initiatives and resources, where they can help to attain the objectives of the European Year.

**Participation of non-Member States:** participation in the European Year will be open to non-Member States, including countries with which the EU has signed a Treaty of Accession, candidate countries, EFTA States that are parties to the EEA Agreement, the countries of the western Balkans, and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) partner countries.

**Budget:** the financial framework for the implementation of the actions for the period 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2007 shall be EUR 15 000 000, of which EUR 6 000 000 shall be for the period until 31 December 2006. For the period following 31 December 2006, the amount is indicative and shall be deemed to be confirmed if it is consistent, for this phase, with the multi-annual financial framework in force for the period commencing on 1 January 2007.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** by 31 December 2008, the Commission must submit a report on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the actions provided for in the Decision.

ENTRY INTO FORCE : 20/06/2006.