Basic information

1995/0206(CNS) CNS - Consultation procedure Decision	Procedure completed
Equal opportunities between men and women: 4th action programme 1996-2000 **Subject** 4.10.04.01 Programmes and actions for gender equality	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
FEMM Women's Rights	BENNASAR TOUS Francisca (PPE)	20/07/1995

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	HAUG Jutta (PSE)	07/09/1995

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Fisheries	1899	1995-12-22
Social Affairs	1892	1995-12-05
Social Affairs	1872	1995-10-05

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
19/07/1995	Legislative proposal published	COM(1995)0381	Summary
05/10/1995	Debate in Council		Summary
09/10/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
13/11/1995	Vote in committee		
13/11/1995	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A4-0280/1995	
17/11/1995	Debate in Parliament		Summary
27/11/1995	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1995)0602	Summary

22/12/1995	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		Summary
22/12/1995	End of procedure in Parliament		
30/12/1995	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1995/0206(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
Legal basis	EC Treaty (before Amsterdam) E 235
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	FEMM/4/07148

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A4-0280/1995 OJ C 323 04.12.1995, p. 0013	13/11/1995	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0572/1995 OJ C 323 04.12.1995, p. 0143-0167	17/11/1995	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(1995)0381 OJ C 306 17.11.1995, p. 0002	19/07/1995	Summary
Modified legislative proposal	COM(1995)0602 OJ C 029 02.02.1996, p. 0008	27/11/1995	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0106	05/03/1999	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES1303/1995 OJ C 039 12.02.1996, p. 0039	22/11/1995	Summary

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act	
Decision 1995/0593 OJ L 335 30.12.1995, p. 0037	Summary

Equal opportunities between men and women: 4th action programme 1996-2000

1995/0206(CNS) - 22/11/1995 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

The ESC welcomed the basic thrust and objectives of the fourth action programme and stressed once again that equal opportunities should be a constant Community concern. The Commission could be proud of its legislative achievements emanating from Article 119 and complementary articles. Much still remained to be done however. Networking, partnership, active information exchange, mobilisation of public opinion and concerted efforts to achieve a fundamental change of attitudes with regard to the role of women in society were all, no doubt, vital. Likewise, ‘support pilot projects’ and the promotion of ‘30 to 40 Integrated Equality Projects throughout Europe’ would also commendably scratch away at the surface of societal prejudice and continuing discrimination against women. The ESC stressed, however, that, in the final event, it was in terms of real equality before the law and in the application of law that concrete progress towards effective equality of opportunity would continue to be made. The ESC urged the Intergovernmental Conference to consider incorporating the principle of equality and equal treatment in the Treaty, including a provision for positive measures so as to give a firm legal base to equality. It welcomed the Commission’s emphasis on promoting equality in a changing economy by encouraging women’s entrepreneurship and through mechanisms of mainstreaming, studies and greater information dissemination. It noted with regret that no measures or actions had been proposed in the programme that focused on health and safety issues at work or the problems associated with all forms of atypical work. It also regretted that no specific measures were included in the programme that addressed the issues associated with homeworking. The ESC was in favour of the Commission’s proposal for a framework directive for the care of children and other dependents. It reminded the Commission that such legislative initiatives needed to be accompanied by appropriate financial commitments.

Equal opportunities between men and women: 4th action programme 1996-2000

1995/0206(CNS) - 22/12/1995

The Council adopted the Decision on a medium-term Community action programme on equal opportunities for men and women (1996-2000).

Equal opportunities between men and women: 4th action programme 1996-2000

1995/0206(CNS) - 17/11/1995 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs BENNASAR TOUS (EPP, E), Parliament approved the Fourth Programme of equal opportunities for men and women, with the following amendments: - Parliament recommended that the programme should be designed: . to incorporate the principle of equality of opportunities in the drawing up and implementation of all policies and measures applied at both Community and State level; . to develop and strengthen the monitoring and implementation of directives in all the Member States as well as to direct positive actions which seek to reduce the degree of inequality and discrimination against women. The programme has six objectives: . to monitor and implement Community legislation in this area, . to inform all the social representatives of the inequalities which exist and to promote a change in mentality, . to promote equality by taking account of the most vulnerable women, . to stimulate a policy of reconciliation between family life and professional life by taking account of the implications in respect of taxation and social security; . to promote equality between men and women in decision making; . to reinforce the policy of integrating women in all measures and policies relating to the economy, social security, culture, etc. The different objectives are incorporated in the concrete actions to be taken within the framework of the programme. Among the actions which are eligible under the programme, Parliament proposed the support and implementation of Community legislation in the Member States, the carrying out of integrated research into all issues relating to women's inequality and the integration of women, the exchange of information (taking account of regional and local differences and seeking to reach the specific target audience), the setting up of a data base collating statistics and studies on women's representation, and the coordination of information on equal opportunities between Community institutions. - In the context of budget transparency, Parliament called for complementarity to be encouraged both through existing actions and through the measures being proposed within the framework of the International Women's Conference

held in Pekin; - programme activities which are open to non-member countries are to be cofinanced under the PHARE and MEDA programmes; - there was a call for the participation of all representatives from civil society who are involved in this area (NGOs, etc.); - as regards information, Parliament asked to be kept up to date each year on the actions taken under this programme from 1996 on. To this effect it was to receive an interim report detailing the programme's deficiencies and successes. A final report is planned for 31.03.2001. At the same time, Parliament drew attention to the fact that: . it was essential to monitor the application of Community legislation in order to have real equality of treatment, . the principle of equality should be incorporated in the Treaty on European Union such that the concept of equal rights would be applied not only in the economic field but also in the political, social and cultural sectors, . the legal basis for the programme should be revised in order that Parliament might be more actively involved, . the economic crisis tended mainly to affect women rather than men, and that women should have a greater and more effective involvement in the employment sector, . organisations and business undertakings should adopt a new social contract between men and women.

Equal opportunities between men and women: 4th action programme 1996-2000

1995/0206(CNS) - 27/11/1995 - Modified legislative proposal

In its amended proposal, the Commission adopted a limited number of the amendments proposed by Parliament. These related to the following: - inclusion of a reference to "equality of treatment" alongside the existing references to "equality of opportunities" contained in the proposal, - taking account of the decisions reached at the European Council of Cannes and at the UN's Pekin Conference, - consideration of the phenomenon of the feminization of poverty in the EU, - highlighting the importance of access to education and professional training, as well as the promotion of diversification in the professional choices available to females of all ages and access to information and structures which will enable women to exercise their rights in full, - promotion of an active partnership between the Commission, national and local authorities and female-oriented European NGOs, when drawing up the measures to be adopted, - highlighting the positive actions which the programme can take to promote the cause of women, - as regards the measures to be taken, technical and financial support should be provided for the identification and transfer of good practice in the economic, social and cultural sectors, as well as in other areas which have already been included in the programme, - the programme should also provide support for actions related to equal opportunities, by taking account of national, regional and local differences in order to maximize the impact of the measures adopted, - in implementing the programme, the Commission shall cooperate with social representatives who are involved in promoting equal opportunities, notably NGOs and the relevant authorities at EU and Member State level.

Equal opportunities between men and women: 4th action programme 1996-2000

1995/0206(CNS) - 05/10/1995

The Council held a policy debate on the proposal for a decision on a Fourth Programme on equal opportunities for men and women. It covered the following points in particular: - the objectives of the programme; - the incorporation of the principle of equality between men and women in all policies and programmes (mainstreaming); - the respective roles of the Community and the Member States. The delegations spoke favourably of the principle underlying the programme. Many felt, however, that important aspects of it should be made more specific. At that stage one delegation maintained a reservation on the legal basis proposed by the Commission, namely Article 235 of the Treaty. The same delegation also doubted that certain actions proposed would be compatible with the principle of subsidiarity. On the conclusion of the debate the President noted that: - the delegations felt that this sort of programme would give new momentum to action in this area; - the objectives, among which ‘mainstreaming’ was considered essential, were adequate although they should be made more specific; - the legal difficulty that had emerged must be examined in greater depth. The Presidency confirmed its intention of having the Fourth Programme approved at the Council’s December meeting on Labour and Social Affairs in order to ensure continuity of action in this field.

Equal opportunities between men and women: 4th action programme 1996-2000

1995/0206(CNS) - 22/12/1995 - Final act

- OBJECTIVE: establishment of a Fourth medium-term Community action programme for the promotion of equal opportunities between men and women which is designed to incorporate the principle of equal opportunities in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of all Community and Member State policies and measures, while respecting the latter's various responsibilities. - COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Decision 95/593/EC on a medium-term Community action programme for equal opportunities between men and women (1996-2000). - SUBSTANCE: The programme is scheduled to run for a period of 5 years (01.01.1996-31.12.2000) and is to pursue the following 6 priority objectives: . to promote the principle of equal opportunities in all policies and actions (principle of "mainstreaming"), . to mobilize representatives from the economic and social sectors with a view to achieving equal opportunities; . to promote equal opportunities in a changing economy (education, training, the job market); . to reconcile the family life and the professional life of men and women; . to promote equal participation of men and women in decision making; . to strengthen the conditions for the exercise of equal rights. - The programme is to achieve these objectives by way of the following measures: . in order to permit the exchange of information and experience on good practice, methodological and/or technical and/or financial support is to be given to projects which facilitate the identification and development of good practice and the transfer of information and experience, . the examination and monitoring of relevant policies and the carrying out of studies in this area, . the rapid dissemination of the results of initiatives which have been launched and of all relevant information. The annex to the decision specifies the measures for which Community support could be given and the criteria for the selection of such actions. As regards the support of projects, the Community's financial contribution may, in general, constitute a maximum of 60% of the project cost, or

a higher proportion in certain exceptional circumstances; the other actions would receive 100% funding from the Community. - Annex: the measures eligible for support should be associated with one or more of the following areas: . "mainstreaming", by the promotion and development of methods, strategies, models and studies, . employment and professional life (mainly: education, training and continuing education, and the promotion of equal opportunities at the workplace; access and working conditions; equal pay, etc.), . promotion of equal participation of men and women in decision making, including high-level decision taking, . information and research aimed at promoting a favourable attitude towards equal opportunities, . better use of gender-based statistics. - Coherence and complementarity: the Commission and the Member States shall ensure that the actions taken within the programme are consistent and complementary with those undertaken under the Structural Funds and other Community measures associated with education and professional training, and with those measures taken by the Member States. - Implementation: the Commission, in conjunction with the Member States, shall ensure that the programme is carried out. It will be assisted in this by a management committee. - Participation of other countries: Part of the initiatives provided for in the programme shall be open to the EEA countries, the associated CCEE, Cyprus, Malta and certain other Mediterranean countries which are in partnership with the EU. - Financing: the Council has assigned a total sum of ECU 30 m for the implementation of the programme over 5 years. The annual appropriations are authorized within the limits of the budget perspectives. - Reports: an interim report on the implementation of the programme shall be drawn up by 31.12.1998, to be followed by a final report (by 31.12.2001) which is to be presented to the Council, to Parliament and to the ESC and the Committee of the Regions. - ENTRY INTO FORCE: 22.12.1995.

Equal opportunities between men and women: 4th action programme 1996-2000

1995/0206(CNS) - 19/07/1995 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: establishment of a Fourth medium-term action programme for Community reflection and exchange concerning all initiatives that promote equal opportunities between men and women in the Union and its Member States. SUBSTANCE: The Fourth framework programme promoting equal opportunities is scheduled to run for five years (1 January 1996 - 31 December 2000) and aims to promote the integration of equal opportunities in the drawing-up, implementation and monitoring of all policies, measures and actions applied at Community, national, regional and local level. - It has the following six priority objectives: . to mobilise representatives from the economic and social sectors with a view to achieving equal opportunities; . to promote equal opportunities in a changing economy; . to reconcile the family life and professional life of men and women; . to promote equal participation of men and women in decision-making; . to strengthen the conditions for the exercise of equal rights; . to support the implementation, monitoring and assessment of actions designed to achieve the above objectives. - The programme is to achieve these objective by way of the following measures: . methodological, technical and financial support for projects which facilitate the development of good practice in the economy and industry, the reconciliation of family and professional life and the participation of women in politics; . the monitoring of relevant policies together with studies on the economic, legal and social aspects of equality; . the monitoring of actions implemented under the programme; . the exchange of information and experience acquired at Community level concerning equal pay and equal treatment as well as the results of the actions undertaken. - The actions must be consistent with those carried out under the Structural Funds and other Community measures associated with professional training. - The Commission is proposing to implement this programme in conjunction with the Member States and all interested parties. In particular, it will consult the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. - Part of the initiatives provided for in the programme shall be open to the EEA countries, the associated CEECs, Cyprus, Malta and certain other Mediterranean countries which are in partnership with the Union. - An interim report will be drawn up on the implementation of the programme, to be followed by a final report. - In the financial statement annexed to the proposal, the Commission envisages allocating a total of ECU 60 million for the implementation of the programme over five years.