Basic information

2000/2117(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Balances participation of women and men in the decision-making process (Recommendation 96/694/EC). Report **Subject** 4.10.04 Gender equality	

Key players

European Parliament	**Committee responsible**	**Rapporteur**	**Appointed**
	FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities	KARAMANOU Anna (PSE)	26/01/2000
Council of the European Union			

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
07/03/2000	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2000)0120	Summary
03/05/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/11/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
22/11/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0373/2000	
18/01/2001	Decision by Parliament	T5-0034/2001	Summary
18/01/2001	Debate in Parliament		
18/01/2001	End of procedure in Parliament		
18/09/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2000/2117(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	FEMM/5/12599

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	**Committee**	**Reference**	**Date**	**Summary**
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0373/2000 OJ C 232 17.08.2001, p. 0008	22/11/2000	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0034/2001 OJ C 262 18.09.2001, p. 0179-0248	18/01/2001	Summary
European Commission				
Document type		**Reference**	**Date**	**Summary**
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2000)0120	07/03/2000	Summary

Balances participation of women and men in the decision-making process (Recommendation 96/694/EC). Report

2000/2117(COS) - 07/03/2000 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: To report on the implementation of the Council's 96/694 recommendation on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process. CONTENT: With the aim of increasing the number of women in the decison-making process, and thereby altering the content of decisions, the Council adopted the Recommendation on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process on 2 December 1996. The Recommendation calls on the Commission to submit a report on its implementation to the EP and the EcoSoc, for the first time three years after adoption. The overall objective of the Recommendation was to encourage the Member states to promote a more balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process, and to adopt specific measures to achieve this goal. Against this background, the report reveals that in spite of a host of different measures adopted by member states, the under representation of women in governments and Parliaments, and committees preparing decisions as well as in higher levels of hte labour market has not changed considerably. The average percentage of women in government of all the Member states and EEA countries is 24.5% and 22.5% in the national parliaments, varying from 6.3% in Greece to 43.6% in Sweden. The number of women in committees preparing decisions is even lower. Even in those countries (Belgium and Germany) where data on the composition of committees is collected systematically and where laws provide for an equal or a minimum of a one third participation of the underrepresented sex in decision-making bodies, the percentage of women is only 18.68% and 12.2% respectively. A considerable number of committees do not have even one woman (28.7% in Germany). Whereas the Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom target a 50% participation, most countries consider a participation rate of at least 30% to constitute the critical mass above which women or men can exercise any real influence. Substantive progress in women's participation has been shown in countries with longstanding traditions of equal opportunities policies such as Sweden and Finland with a participation of 52.6% and 44.4% of women in the governments respectively. 68% of Finnish public sector committees have a female participation of 44%. In general, what is needed to promote gender balance is a policy mix including- as the msot important factor- long term political commitment, sound statistics, regular monitoring, appropriate structures- depending on the culture of the Member states- anchored in legislation and the provision of financial resources. There is growing awareness for the need to recruit and promote qualified women in most European institutions and many of them have adopted positive action policies to redress the staff balance. Less has been done however, on the gender balance in committees. While legislative measures have some impact on the public sector, the private sector needs particular attention and posssibly a different approach. Austria, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Finalnd and the United Kingdom are promoting projects aimed at making employees aware of the economic benefits of employing women. More progress also needs to be made regarding women in senior positions in the civil service and publicsector bodies. The report has revealed a certain lack of comparable data submitted to the Commission which has not facilitated the systematic evaluation of developments. Discussion should be encouraged in the Council with view to improving the collection of data and an eventual decision on new action.

Balances participation of women and men in the decision-making process (Recommendation 96/694/EC). Report

2000/2117(COS) - 18/01/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament voted 341 to 134 with 23 abstentions in favour of the resolution by Mrs Anna KARAMANOU (PES, GR) which calls for pro-active measures including quotas, where applicable, to increase the participation of women in key decision-making bodies. (Please refer to the

previous document). In addition, the resolution calls for the creation of a European Network to promote women in decision-making and for the creation of a network of national committees on equal opportunities. Lastly, the Parliament calls on the Member States to propose at the next IGC amendments to the Treaty which promote gender balance in the EU institutions and all decision-making bodies.