Basic information

2006/2277(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Situation of disabled women in the European Union **Subject** 4.10.06 People with disabilities 4.10.09 Women condition and rights	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	HERRANZ GARCÍA Esther (PPE-DE)	20/12/2006

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	ŠPIDLA Vladimír

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
29/11/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
19/03/2007	Vote in committee		Summary
29/03/2007	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0075/2007	
26/04/2007	Decision by Parliament	T6-0160/2007	Summary
26/04/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
26/04/2007	Debate in Parliament		
26/04/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2006/2277(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	FEMM/6/42381

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE382.510	17/01/2007	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE384.412	30/01/2007	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0075/2007	29/03/2007	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0160/2007	26/04/2007	Summary

Situation of disabled women in the European Union

2006/2277(INI) - 26/04/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report by Esther **HERRANZ GARCIA** (EPP-ED, ES) on the situation of women with disabilities in the EU. It noted that nearly 80 per cent of women with disabilities are victims of psychological and physical violence and the risk of sexual violence is greater for them than for other women. Women with disabilities suffer discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, impairment and disability and are at greater risk of poverty and social exclusion. Parliament asserted that the equal treatment of women with disabilities and mothers of children with disabilities is a fundamental human right and an ethical obligation.

It called on the Commission and the Member States to ensure the removal of existing barriers and obstacles, including architectural barriers, with a view to creating equal rights and opportunities for women and girls with disabilities to play a part in family, political, cultural, social and professional life. This should be done through better implementation of Community anti-discrimination and gender-equality legislation and better use of the opportunities provided by relevant Community programmes and the European Social Fund. Member States must take full account of the needs of persons with disabilities and the special needs of women in all national, regional and local policies, particularly those relating to town planning, education, employment, housing, transport, health and social services.

Parliament also called on the Commission and the Member States to put in place effective legislation focusing on women and children which will ensure that instances of exploitation, violence against and sexual abuse of persons with disabilities – within their places of residence and elsewhere – are identified and investigated and lead to prosecution. Particular attention should be paid to women with disabilities whose disability prevents them from representing themselves. Preventive measures must be drawn up to eliminate any differences between the rights of disabled women and those of other women as regards their personal physical integrity and their sexual expression.

Parliament was shocked at the fact that women with disabilities are three times as likely to be the victims of violence as women without disabilities and called therefore for the Daphne Programme to be used also to combat this type of violence.

It made several recommendations on the issue of women with disabilities, amongst which were the following:

- the Commission and the Member States should promote pilot schemes and tried and tested procedures for integrative establishments from kindergarten, school and training to professional life;

- the European Union needs to take all possible steps, including legislative action, to streamline its aid system and make more funding available for women and children with disabilities;

- people with disabilities must be given the same opportunities to study and must have a right of access to the labour market so that they can support themselves;

- women and girls with disabilities should be encouraged to seek education and employment on the basis of their resources and interests rather than of what they are lacking;

- in view of the fact that ITC facilities are a fundamental instrument for the integration of persons with a disability, the Commission and Member States should draw up appropriate measures to eliminate the digital divide between the sexes, so that women with disabilities may have access to ITC facilities and benefit from them under equal conditions with men;

- with a view to improving access to the labour market for persons with disabilities, use should be made of all possible incentive measures, including tax incentives, to encourage employers to take on persons with disabilities and tailor working hours to the needs of parents bringing up children with disabilities;

- the Commission and the Member States should incorporate flexibility into matters relating to disability in recognition of the fact that every disabled person has different needs, in order that, in a diverse community of citizens, assistance can be tailored to each individual situation;

- the Commission and the Member States were called upon to seek to make responsibility for the care and participation of people with disabilities the responsibility of society as a whole rather than that only of the families of persons with disabilities and to take into account, when devising policies, the particular dedication of women who are responsible for persons with disabilities and the situation of those persons – often relatives – who take responsibility for persons with disabilities. It was important to reiterate the fact that this work is mainly done by women and that women are therefore particularly affected by cuts in public care services, both as paid carers and as relatives.

- Member States should harmonise municipal regulations governing parking for the disabled and consider whether to reduce transport fares for those who accompany disabled persons;

- the Commission and the Member States must put in place legislation ensuring independent living for disabled women and men, acknowledging that this is a fundamental right that must be respected;

Parliament stressed the important role of non-governmental organisations working with disabled women and called on the Commission and the Member States to support them. It emphasised the need to ensure care for the reproductive health of women with disabilities, paying attention to aspects such as family planning, health services and information about motherhood, so that they may be able to establish relationships that are equitable, responsible and satisfying.

It reminded the Commission that thorough knowledge of this matter and of the 'social model of disability', which focuses on society's barriers, as opposed to the 'medical model of disability', which deals only with the medical aspects of disability, is the proper basis for providing solutions, services and support, for devising policies, for assigning resources and for measuring the impact of policies on the situation of persons with disabilities.

Lastly, Parliament paid homage to the work of parents' associations, usually created and run by the mothers of children with disabilities, who, via their organisations and Internet sites, compile information (on specialised medical centres and regulations on education, social security, etc.) thereby helping other parents and raising the awareness of the public authorities.