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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE  
COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Annual Report on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men  
in the European Union 2000**

# **Executive Summary**

## ***The Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality and the new Programme 2001-05***

In June 2000, the Commission adopted the first comprehensive Framework Strategy on Gender Equality covering all aspects of the question: equality in economic, social, and civil life, equality in decision-making and gender roles and stereotypes. It combines measures designed specifically to foster equality with the mainstreaming of gender issues in all Community policies. In line with the integrated approach, the Strategy makes use of all existing tools and structures, while supporting the development of new ones: monitoring, indicators and benchmarking.

The Strategy is accompanied by a Programme, which will provide €50 million over the next five years for promoting gender equality. The Programme will support awareness-raising measures, policy analysis and the forging of networks for equality between EU institutions, national authorities, social partners and NGOs. It will aim to promote good gender-equality practice, enhance understanding of gender discrimination and help key players in the fight against gender inequality.

### ***Gender mainstreaming***

Mainstreaming commits the EU to incorporating the goal of gender equality into the full range of its activities, not just those aimed directly at promoting it. It is a central element in the Commission's new Framework Strategy.

Over the past two years, progress has been concentrated in those areas where most had already been done. Efforts must now be extended to other areas. It is also vitally important to develop effective tools for this relatively new approach: better monitoring systems and statistics are needed. Sufficient human resources must be allocated to the task, and staff training is required to raise awareness.

Parliament has expressed its commitment to mainstreaming on several occasions over the past year, and both the Portuguese and French Presidencies encouraged discussions on mainstreaming in the Council.

### ***Gender equality in employment***

There is still a large gender pay gap and the female employment rate is still 18 percentage points below the male rate. In response, the Lisbon European Council in March set ambitious new targets for women: most importantly, measures should be taken to increase the female employment rate to 60% by 2010 from today's 53%.

The Employment strategy should play an important part in achieving that target. Under the gender-equality pillar, there was an encouraging amount of activity aimed at helping working people to reconcile work with family life. By contrast there was little action to reduce the pay gap.

Gender equality is also pursued through the other pillars: employability, entrepreneurship and adaptability. Employability measures should not be focused too narrowly on benefit claimants, as this excludes many women who may want work but are not registered as unemployed. Little has been done to promote adaptability, though working time and work

organisation more generally are of great relevance to working women. Measures must be taken across the board to increase the number of women in information and telecommunications industries.

### ***A gender perspective in EU human rights policies***

In 2000, the Commission put forward a proposal to amend the 1976 Directive on equal treatment. The proposal makes use of the new Treaty provisions on gender equality and tightens up the wording in line with European case law. Most importantly, it would recognise sexual harassment as a form of discrimination, enable victims of discrimination to be represented by organisations in administrative and legal proceedings, and guarantee women the right to return to work after maternity leave.

The Commission also announced its intention to propose a new gender-equality Directive in 2002, based on Article 13 of the EC Treaty.

At the Beijing+5 Conference in New York, the EU reaffirmed its commitment to the Action Platform it subscribed to in 1995. It blocked attempts to water down the language used in the Platform but was less successful in its attempts to strengthen it on a number of issues including trafficking in women.

Trafficking in women was high on the political agenda in 2000. The Commission continued to fight it through the STOP Programme, and proposed a two-year extension to the Programme. On domestic violence, the information campaign came to an end but the Daphne Initiative was superseded by a fully-fledged Programme.

### ***Equality in the enlargement process***

Under the Commission's strategy paper on enlargement, endorsed at the Nice European Council, provisional completion for negotiations on employment and social policy are scheduled for the first half of 2001 for most countries.

Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Lithuania appear to be the front runners in passing Community legislation on gender equality into national law. Other countries still have a great deal of work ahead of them, though some progress was made in 2000. Poland and Turkey seem to have made no progress in adopting the *acquis* over the past year.

Candidate countries must also ensure that their institutions are capable of enforcing equality legislation. Here again, Hungary and Lithuania made most progress. On the whole, institutional capacity is not up to the task. It is to be hoped that the candidate countries will make use of the help available through the new action programme on gender equality. The take up rate under the previous programme was low.

The figures on labour-market inequalities appear to paint a more optimistic picture. The female employment rate, for example, compares favourably with the EU's average rate. However, the picture is more complicated: a persistent pay gap; the scarcity of good-quality childcare facilities and discriminatory social attitudes all keep female participation in the labour market down. Furthermore, the labour market is still segregated, with women concentrated in certain occupations and industries.

As regards political participation, women are seriously under-represented in national and regional political arenas and positions of authority. Rates are significantly below the EU average.

### *Promoting a gender balance in decision-making*

Women are still under-represented in the EU too. Correcting the gender imbalance in decision-making is a slow process despite the measures taken at national and European level. Work will continue under the Strategy for gender equality. The Programme will support the development of statistics on women in economic and social decision-making, currently lacking.

The Commission is committed to tackling its own gender imbalance, through recruitment targets and by taking gender into account as one of the criteria for selecting candidates. It will also take steps to ensure that women are properly represented on all its committees and expert groups.

At national level, a wide variety of measures have been tried to raise female representation, with varying degrees of success. Long-term commitment, political will and a good mix of policies appear to be more important than any single tool.

The issue of women in business is only just starting to be addressed in a systematic way. Good statistics are needed to make the glass ceiling and other obstacles more visible. A recent Commission study found that only 23% of businesses in the EU are owned by women.

# **The Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005) and the new Action Programme**

## **THE STRATEGY**

On 7 June 2000, the Commission adopted a new Community Framework Strategy for gender equality.<sup>1</sup> For the first time, the Strategy brings together, under a single umbrella, all the different initiatives and programmes that tended to be dealt with in isolation from each other in the past, often under different budget headings.

This comprehensive, integrated approach combines specific measures and policies designed to promote gender equality with an across-the-board mainstreaming approach, the purpose of which is to ensure that all policies take gender issues into account; accordingly, all Commission departments will be asked to report on what they are doing to incorporate the goal of gender equality into their policy-making process.

The Strategy focuses on five objectives, which provide a frame of reference for policy development and to which all Community gender equality initiatives will be linked:

- equality in economic life;
- equal representation and participation in decision-making;
- equality in social life;
- equality in civil life; and
- changing gender roles and overcoming stereotypes.

The Strategy applies not just to policies of direct relevance to EU citizens, but also in the Union's dealings with the rest of the world, though the enlargement process, development cooperation and external relations generally.

The Strategy makes use of existing tools, structures and methods, such as gender impact assessment, whilst also supporting the development of new, more effective ones. Common indicators are being introduced and benchmarks set, to improve monitoring and evaluation and to enable activities to be refocused over the Strategy's lifetime.

## **THE PROGRAMME**

Attached to the Strategy is a new Programme that will run alongside it from 2001 to 2005.<sup>2</sup> Through the Programme, €50 million will be available over the five-year period to fund: awareness-raising measures; analysis and evaluation of policies affecting equality; and the

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<sup>1</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – Towards a Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005) COM(2000) 335 final

<sup>2</sup> Council Decision of 20 December 2000 establishing a Programme relating to the Community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-05)

forging of equality networks linking EU institutions, national authorities, social partners and NGOs. These activities, in turn, serve three objectives:

- to promote and disseminate good gender-equality practice and the values underlying it;
- to provide insight into the issues related, directly or indirectly, to gender discrimination by finding out where it exists and exploring policy responses; and
- to develop the capacity of key players, such as NGOs and social partners, to promote gender equality.

# Gender mainstreaming

## MAINSTREAMING COMMUNITY POLICIES

The EU's mainstreaming policy commits it to pursuing the goal of gender equality through all its policies, legislative measures and other activities, not just those with equal opportunities as their primary purpose. Mainstreaming is a central element in the Commission's new Framework Strategy. It was also a guiding principle behind the Fourth Medium-term Community Action programme on equal opportunities, which came to an end in 2000. Around a quarter of all the projects funded were concerned primarily with gender mainstreaming.<sup>3</sup> Many explored how gender can be integrated into the development and implementation of local and regional policy, into urban policies, or how to familiarise key players in the labour market and the media with the concept.

In August 2000 the Commission carried out a survey on gender mainstreaming. In particular, the survey looked at the organisational and methodological framework set up for gender mainstreaming, and the impact of the gender mainstreaming methods used. The process was also useful in guiding the Commission's choice of priorities for the new Framework Strategy on gender equality.

The survey revealed that, as a rule, the greatest efforts to promote gender equality were made in those policy areas where most progress had been made in previous years: the Structural Funds, education and training, development co-operation and social affairs, and science and research. Advances were also made in economic policy: the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines for 2000 included two recommendations on equal opportunities. One concerns wage discrimination while the other calls for more work to be done on equal opportunities policy for women and men. Efforts must now be extended to other areas, where the obstacles noted in 1998 are still largely in place.

## Tools, techniques and resources

1. **Gender impact assessment** is an essential first step in formulating gender-sensitive policies. It has already been introduced into a number of Community policies: a series of gender impact studies were launched in June 2000 under the Fifth Community Framework Programme for Research; in the field of Community humanitarian aid, gender is now one of the issues examined in the regular ex-post evaluations; and new techniques and tools for assessing national tax policies are currently being developed.
2. **Statistics and data broken down by sex** are also essential tools for mainstreaming and gender assessment. Statistics, indicators and benchmarks make it possible to measure progress towards equality; they reveal the differential impact on women and men of all policies, some of which were previously thought to be gender-neutral.

Despite technical complications and a reluctance on the part of data suppliers to provide data broken down by sex, progress has been made.

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<sup>3</sup> See Directory of projects 1999 - medium-term Community Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for women and men. See link at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/equ\\_opp/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/index_en.html)

- Gender benchmarks and indicators are being developed on science, and development cooperation.
  - The Council is promoting the development of indicators on balanced participation of women and men in decision-making and reconciliation of work and family.
  - In 2000, Eurostat launched a broad collection of gender statistics and a feasibility study about comparable statistics on childcare.
3. It is now recognised that institutional practices and structures, clear responsibility and accountability, high-level support and interdepartmental cooperation are all essential elements in the mainstreaming policy. Furthermore, senior officials throughout the organisation must be aware of and give sufficient attention to gender issues, and provide appropriate training. To flourish, gender mainstreaming must be properly rooted in the institution rather than dependent for survival on the efforts of committed individuals.

The high mobility of staff in charge of gender equality needs to be offset by good-quality training throughout the Commission to increase levels of awareness. Hence, in 2000, the Commission continued to provide training on gender equality and mainstreaming, and stepped up its attempt to raise the profile of gender issues.

### **Successful gender mainstreaming: selected examples**

#### *Women and Science*

Following the 1999 Communication on "Women and Science",<sup>4</sup> considerable progress has been made on integrating gender issues into the EU's science and research policies. Gender impact assessment of the Fifth Framework programme for Research and Technological Development (RTD) is currently under way and € 1.4 million has been invested in gender impact studies, including on new technologies. When the Commission issues calls for proposals for science and research projects, it includes in the call a standard clause encouraging proposals from women, or from groups involving women.

The proportion of women in senior scientific positions is currently very small and statistics are in short supply. The Council Resolution of 20 May 1999 on Women and Science<sup>5</sup> invited the Commission to produce, building on Member States' contributions, comparable data and European indicators to assess at EC level the situation of women in RTD. Since then, and after having assessed the limited potential to be found in major European statistical surveys (e.g. LFS, R&D surveys, etc.), the Commission has launched a three-year project, "Design and collection of statistical indicators on women in science". In its Communication "Making a reality of the European Research Area: Guidelines for EU Research activities (2002-2006)"<sup>6</sup>, the Commission identified the situation of women in science as one of its key concerns. It will recommend that gender equality should be mainstreamed into the Sixth framework programme (2002-06).

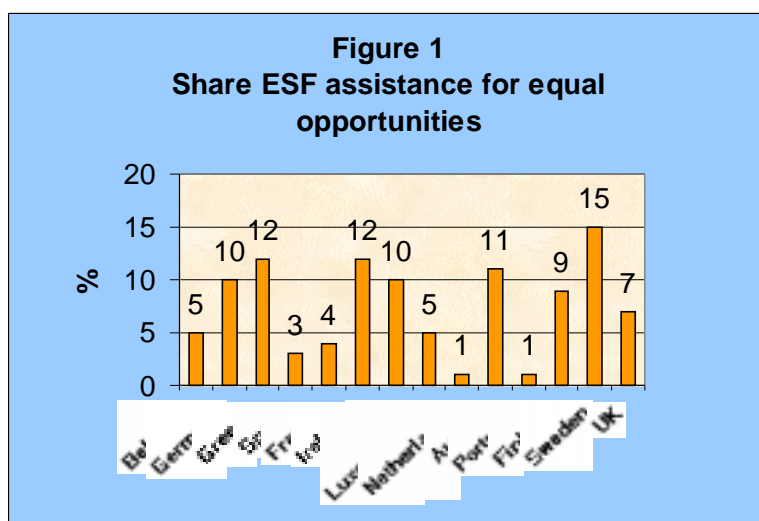
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<sup>4</sup> COM(99) 76

<sup>5</sup> OJ C 201, 16.2.1999, p. 1

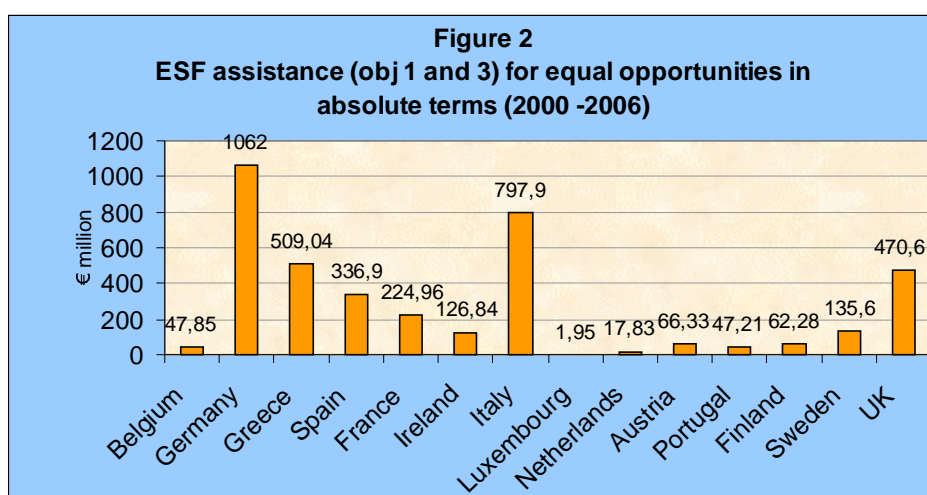
<sup>6</sup> COM (2000) 612





Source figure 1 and 2<sup>7</sup>

In negotiations with the Member States on the content of the new programmes for the new Structural Fund Regulations (2000-2006), the European Commission stressed the need for more effective action on equality.<sup>8</sup>



A new more comprehensive approach has been introduced. Amongst the improvements made:

- There is more in-depth analysis of socio-economic inequalities between women and men, and the remaining obstacles to equality are more clearly defined. However, the analysis has not always been followed up with quantified targets for greater equality.
- Programmes for Spain, Italy, Sweden, Portugal, Ireland, Greece and the United Kingdom provide for the setting up of working groups on equal opportunities, to handle preparatory work for the Monitoring Committees.
- In Germany, Greece, Italy, the UK, Spain and Sweden, bodies promoting equality have been invited to take part in the work of the Monitoring Committees.

<sup>7</sup> Commission Communication on European Social Fund support for the European Employment Strategy Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 of 21 June 1999 laying down general provisions on the Structural Funds. The Commission has produced a technical paper on the issue of mainstreaming equal opportunities for women and men in Structural Funds programmes and projects. See <http://www.inforegio.cec.eu.int>

<sup>8</sup>

- A number of Member States made a general commitment to the idea of balanced participation of men and women in Monitoring Committees.
- More attention is devoted to the development of childcare services. In Ireland, €1 755.4 million has been earmarked for them for the 2000-06 Structural Fund programming period. Greece and Italy are also planning initiatives in this area.

Since gender equality is mainstreamed throughout the entire strategy, it is not possible to calculate exactly how much is devoted to it. However, the ESF budget for measures specifically concerned with gender equality now stands at some € 4 billion (see figs 1 and 2.)<sup>9</sup>

Many of the new rural development programmes adopted in 2000 devote greater attention to gender equality in rural life than in the past. Women currently account for 34% of the workforce on farms, and 22% of heads of farm are women. The programmes aim to support the major role that women can play in diversification of the rural economy.

The LEADER+ Community initiative, approved in 2000, identifies measures for women in rural areas as a priority area. This is reflected in the programmes presented to the Commission, many of which include quantifiable targets relating to women.

#### *Development co-operation*

In 2000, the focus was on developing a new Action Plan<sup>10</sup> to implement Directives and Recommendations through practical measures. The key challenge is to increase the number of projects that are gender assessed – currently around 20% and address the lack of engendered information, evaluation and reporting.

The issue of gender awareness is also given explicit attention in the EU Budget where a specific budget line aims at providing technical support for the inclusion of gender issues in the whole body of EU development-cooperation policy.

#### *The euro*

Even the euro has a gender dimension that needs to be taken into account: surveys have repeatedly shown that women are less enthusiastic than men about the single currency and feel less well informed.<sup>11</sup> In line with the mainstreaming approach, the Commission co-funded an information campaign on the euro aimed at responding specifically to women's needs and concerns. Women's magazines in three countries<sup>12</sup> have agreed to help by increasing coverage on the Euro, targeted at women.

### **Conclusions and outlook**

The mainstreaming strategy is very much a work in progress. Strong foundations are already in place: the Amsterdam Treaty and the Commission's 1996 Communication on

<sup>9</sup> The Commission communication of 16 January 2001 (COM(2001) 16) outlines how the ESF underpins the Member States' commitments under the European employment strategy

<sup>10</sup> Draft Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament of 25 October 2000 - Action plan for mainstreaming of gender equality in Community development cooperation

<sup>11</sup> Eurobarometer survey published in July 1999

<sup>12</sup> Femmes d'Aujourd'hui (Belgium), Emma (Germany), Noi Donna (Italy)

mainstreaming.<sup>13</sup> The edifice is now taking shape with regulations on gender mainstreaming in relation to the Structural Funds, the employment strategy, development cooperation and research.

At a conference on 27 October in Paris the French Presidency raised the issue of gender mainstreaming in the Council, which they hoped would be established as a permanent feature. Both Sweden and Belgium plan to pursue this issue during their Presidencies.

However, some essential building blocks are still missing. In some policy areas –transport, the environment, consumer protection, agriculture and culture – a stronger "mainstreaming reflex" needs to be developed to honour the Commission's clear commitment to promoting gender equality across the board.

In general, the aim should be to:

- make statistics broken down by sex the norm rather than the exception, and enhance monitoring and evaluation;
- increase awareness of gender issues at the decision-making levels in the Commission and provide training to develop the necessary gender expertise among the Commission officials; and
- strengthen institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming.

### **Parliament's commitment to mainstreaming**

The European Parliament regularly calls for gender mainstreaming in all Community activities. In its resolution of 5 October 2000,<sup>14</sup> Parliament expressed the view that any type of aid, funding or benefit granted by the union must be subject to the requirement to observe the principle of equal pay for men and women. It has called for measures in a wide range of policy areas: to increase women's access to decision-making; encourage diversity in the career choice of women and girls; persuade more women to enter the ICT sector; and examine what bearing part-time work and atypical employment have on pay, social security contributions, women's pensions and the spread on female poverty.

In its resolution on the Commission annual reports it takes the view that sex-disaggregated statistics and gender indicators are "an essential tool for assessing progress towards equality goals and for promoting gender mainstreaming by showing the differential impact on women and men of all policies, particularly in fields previously thought to be gender neutral." Parliament also considers it essential to identify comparable indicators, analysis procedures and information to facilitate a correct assessment covering all aspects related to gender equality.

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<sup>13</sup> COM (96)67 final, Communication on incorporating equal opportunities for Women and Men into all Community Policies and Activities

<sup>14</sup> Parliament Resolution of 5 October 2000 on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the European Union, Commission Annual Reports 1997, 1998 and 1999

### **Mainstreaming at national level**

In February, Denmark passed a new law establishing the principle of gender mainstreaming and new institutional mechanisms for gender equality. A new Italian equal opportunities minister was appointed in April 2000 with increased scope for mainstreaming gender issues into all government policies. Meanwhile the German Government introduced gender mainstreaming in all Federal ministries.

### **Tools and indicators**

The Irish Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform commissioned research into the mechanisms for monitoring gender equality, with a view to developing indicators to measure the practical impact of policies and programmes. Germany set up an inter-ministerial working group to develop mainstreaming tools.

### **Training**

The Nordic Council outlined a gender equality training programme, to be launched in 2001. The German Government also plans to arrange training for its officials. Portugal incorporated gender equality in its teacher training programmes.

# Gender equality in employment

## NEW TARGETS FOR EQUALITY

If social justice did not demand equal opportunities for women and men in employment, then the economy would. Equal pay, proper recognition of women's skills and abilities, and policies that enable employees to combine work and family life: all help draw more women onto the labour market and give the economy a productive boost. The increasing economic activity rate among women has been a significant factor in Europe's economic growth. For the EU as a whole, it is estimated that almost a fifth of the annual GDP growth of 2.3% can be explained by women's increased labour force participation.

Yet inequalities are still very substantial, albeit diminishing (see figures 3-9).

- The employment rate for women in the EU is still 18.2 percentage points below the male rate.
- The unemployment rate for women is on average 3 percentage points higher than the male rate.
- The labour market is segregated by gender, with women concentrated in certain occupations and industries and men in others.<sup>15</sup>
- When women are employed, they earn less than men, accounting for 77% of low-income employees.

In March 2000, the Lisbon European Council<sup>16</sup> identified ambitious new targets for women in employment, chiefly to raise the female employment rate in the EU from 53% today to 60% by 2010. This is essential if the EU is to raise its overall employment rate to 70%, another of the Lisbon targets. The 60% target is an ambitious one. Reaching it would take female employment in the EU to a level never seen before. In absolute terms, it means drawing an additional 10 million women onto the labour market. The shortfalls are particularly large, in absolute terms, in Italy, Spain and France.

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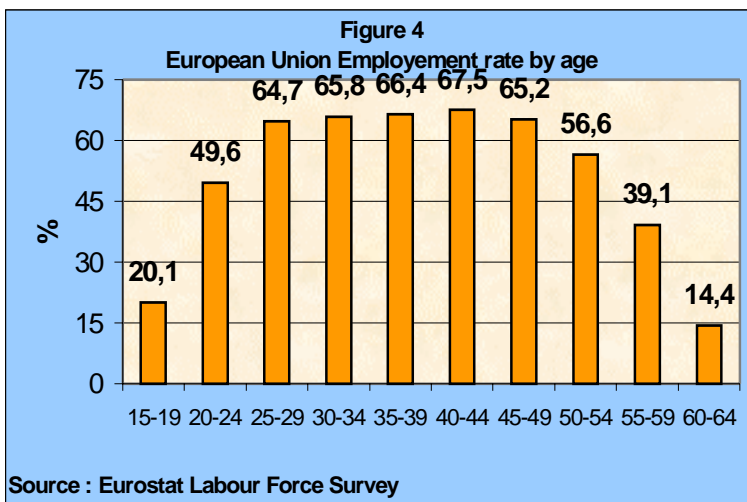
<sup>15</sup> For statistics, see Joint Employment Report 2000, point 3.4.2.

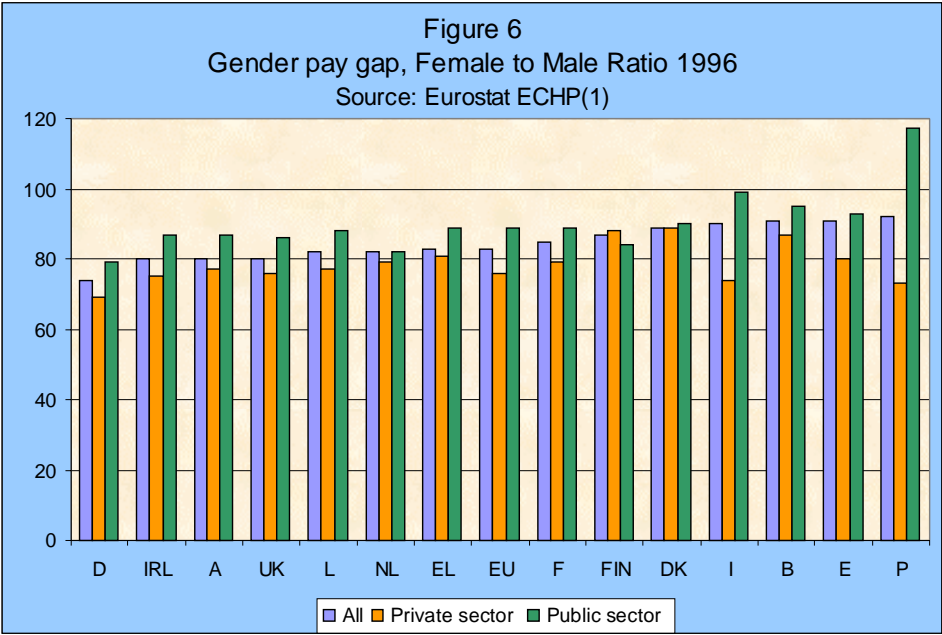
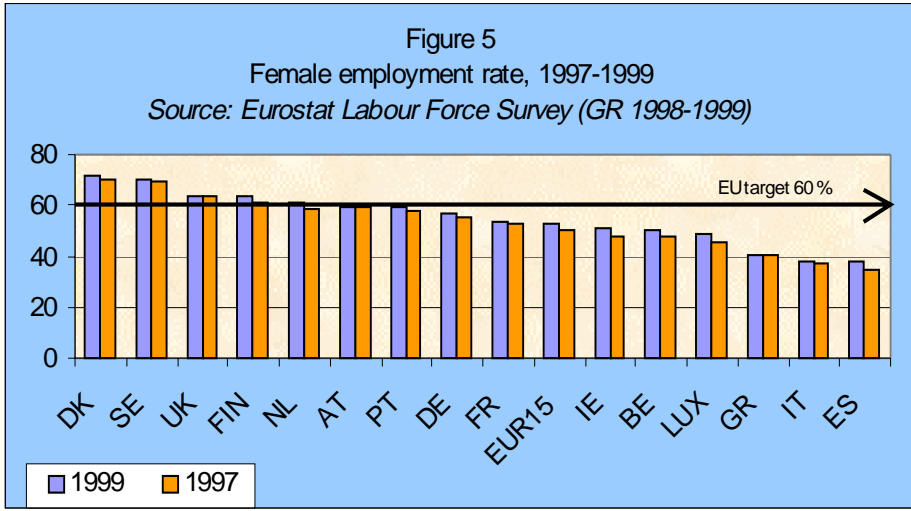
<sup>16</sup> Presidency conclusions (Lisbon 23 and 24 March 2000) <http://ue.eu.int/en/Info/eurocouncil/index.htm>

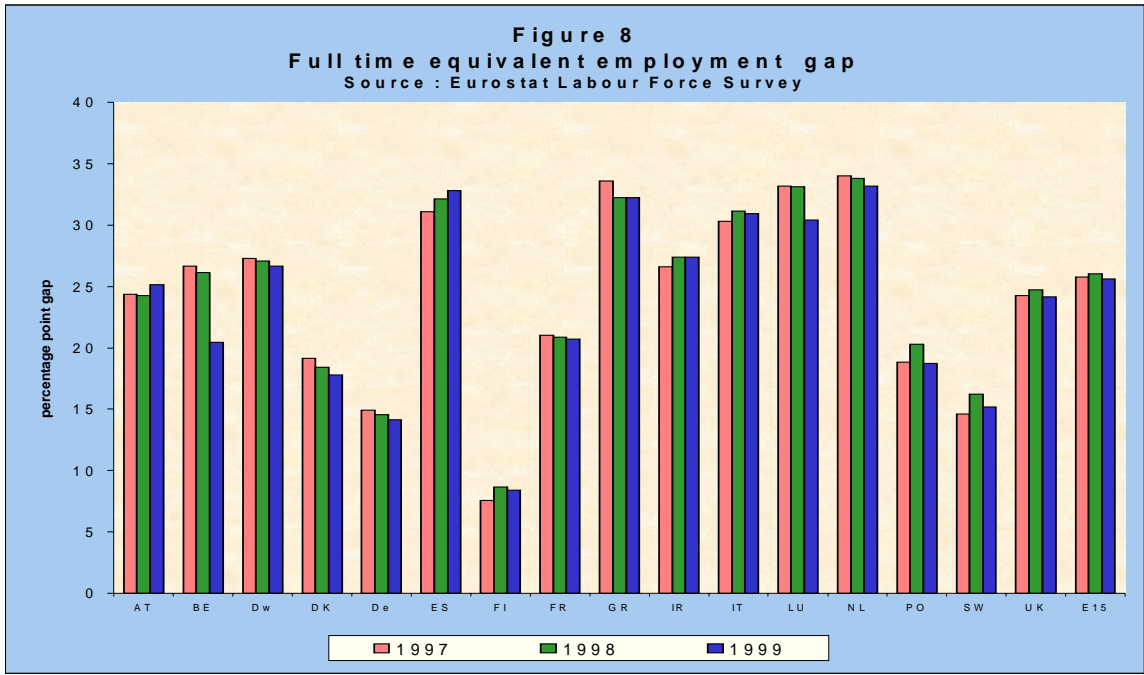
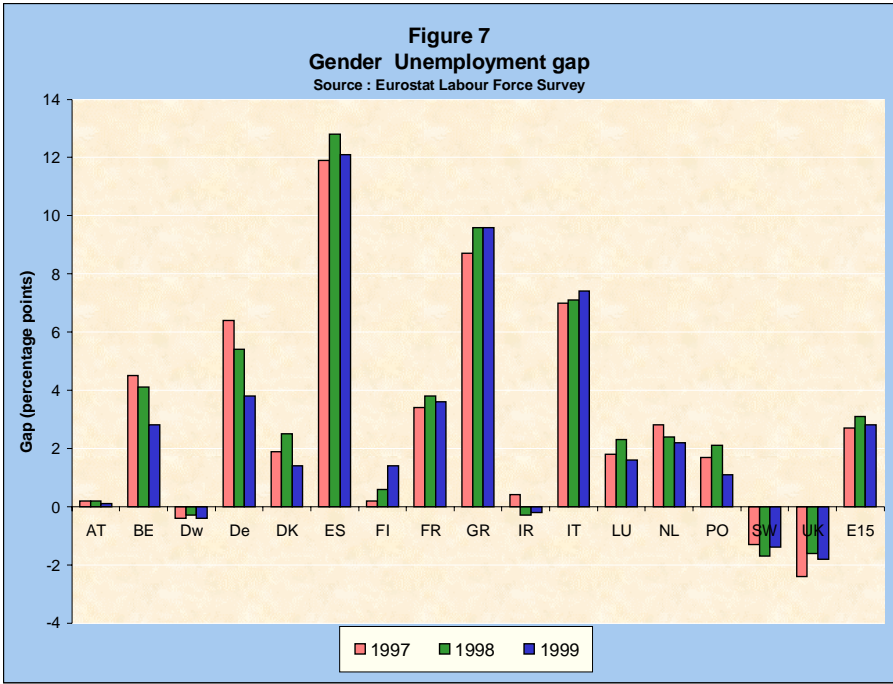
Figure 3

Country	Women Employed	Employment rate 1999	Target figure – 60% of working-age women in absolute terms	Additional women's jobs to be created
AT	1 600.4	59.7	1 608.5	8.1
BE	1 672.7	50.2	1 998.5	325.8
DE	15 590.2	57.1	16 396.0	805.8
DK	1 241.7	71.6	Target already achieved	
ES	4 952.8	37.3	7 962.8	3 010.0
FI	1 105.7	64.6	target already achieved	
FR	10 144.4	53.5	11 383.0	1 238.6
GR	1 443.8	40.7	2 130.7	686.9
IE	638.3	51.4	745.3	107.0
IT	7 401.9	38.1	11 658.3	4 256.5
LU	68.5	48.5	84.7	16.2
NL	3 217.9	61.3	Target already achieved	
PT	2 064.2	59.6	2 078.8	14.6
SE	1 920.6	68.9	Target already achieved	
UK	12 084.4	63.9	Target already achieved	
Total	65 147.5	52.6	74 289.7	10 469.5

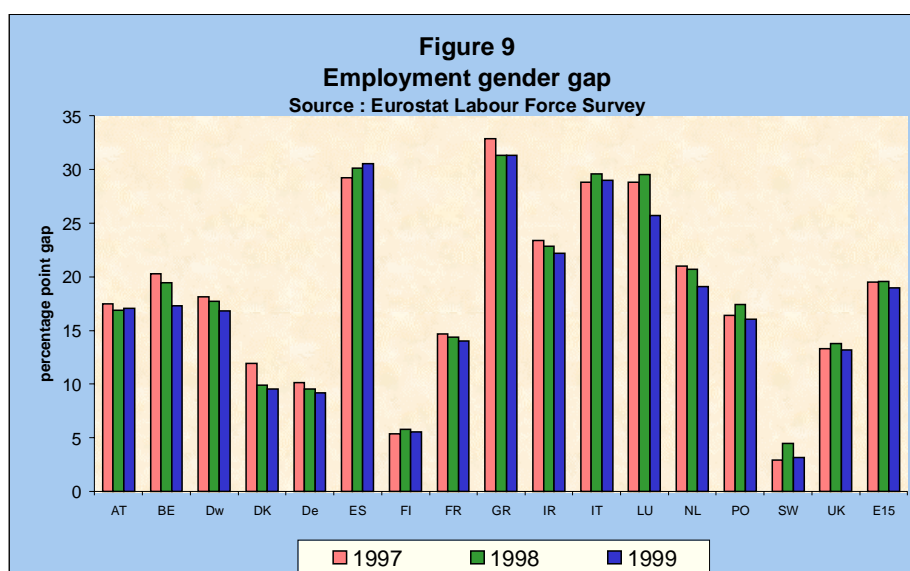
**Source Labour Force Survey 1999**











## ASSESSMENT OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLANS FOR 2000

The European Employment Strategy, now entering its fourth year, has provided a new focus and stimulus to employment policy across Europe. Each year, a set of EU-wide employment guidelines are drawn up. The Member States then produce national action plans (NAPs) to implement the employment guidelines. The Joint Employment Report provides a comparative assessment of the NAPs, and examines each Member State's response to the individual recommendations for 2000 (see below).

As in previous years, the Guidelines for 2000 were divided into four policy areas, or pillars. One pillar is specifically concerned with promoting equal opportunities. However, in line with the mainstreaming approach, gender-equality issues are also taken into account in the other three pillars, aimed at improving the employability of the workforce, encouraging entrepreneurship and promoting adaptability.

### The Equal opportunities pillar

The Equal Opportunities pillar calls for measures to close gender gaps in the labour market (gaps in employment and unemployment, gender segregation in occupations and sectors and promoting equal pay), to improve reconciliation of work and family life, and to make it easier for women and men to re-enter the labour market after an absence.

Member States have started to acknowledge the gender pay gap. However, measures tended to be rather vague, or relied too heavily on voluntary compliance. Only a few Member States have developed practical job-evaluation instruments as a tool to help close the pay gap.

The level of activity in the field of reconciliation between work and family life was encouraging. While there was little progress in developing care infrastructure for the elderly most Member States put forward concrete proposals to expand childcare facilities. Childcare services also showed signs of increasing flexibility. A number of Member States made changes to the provision for leave, making them more flexible or introducing specific leave provisions for fathers. However, few Member States increased levels of remuneration during leave periods, even though fathers may be reluctant to take leave unless it is remunerated at reasonable levels.

### **Promoting desegregation of the labour market**

The labour market is segregated both horizontally and vertically: across the economy as a whole, women are concentrated in certain occupations, industries and sectors; and in any given industry or sector, they are under-represented in senior, well-paid positions and over-represented in lower-paid jobs. While some countries launched ambitious programmes to tackle gender segregation, most measures related to horizontal rather than vertical segregation, with the exception of some programmes for the public sector.

#### *Denmark*

A training placement scheme was launched to encourage men to move into traditionally female areas and vice versa. All municipal administrations must report every two years on progress in reducing sex segregation.

#### *Finland*

A three-year strategic project on labour market equality was launched. Employers and schools will look into and attempt to influence factors affecting boys' and girls' career choices.

### **Gender Mainstreaming in the employment strategy**

The requirement to mainstream the gender perspective is a valuable addition to the employment policies in Europe. The Nordic countries have an established commitment to mainstreaming, which they continue to honour as their employment policies develop. Italy, France and Ireland all made a major effort to mainstream gender equality in their national action plans (NAPs) for 2000.

However, much remains to be done in the majority of Member States to establish new mechanisms, programmes and institutional arrangements for mainstreaming. Many employment policy areas are still not subjected to a gender analysis; monitoring and evaluation amounts to little more than establishing participation rates by gender; specific targets or indicators for gender equality are still thin on the ground.

### **Examples of innovations in gender mainstreaming policies**

#### *France*

An inter-ministerial committee on women's rights has been set up covering eight fields of action. Each field will be assessed for contributions to gender equality on an annual basis. This mainstreaming initiative follows the setting up of a new Government Secretariat for Women's Rights in 1998.

#### *Ireland*

An Equal Opportunities Promotion and Monitoring Unit has been set up in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. It monitors gender mainstreaming generally and advises on appropriate indicators. A committee has been established to co-ordinate equality objectives in the National Development Plan.

### *Gender Mainstreaming in the Employability Pillar*

Employability tends to be given more attention than the other pillars in the NAPs, which makes it particularly important from a mainstreaming point of view. Those Member States most committed to mainstreaming have by and large recognised that, if employability measures are targeted too narrowly on benefit claimants, they will miss a large number of women who want to work but who currently do not. Consequently, they have provided access to active labour-market programmes for women returners and others not eligible for unemployment benefits because of family circumstances or a lack of continuous employment. Where this approach has not been taken, women are predictably under-represented in the programmes.

### *Gender Mainstreaming in the Entrepreneurship Pillar*

Many Member States have established some form of positive action programme to encourage women in business. Germany launched a new loan programme for women setting up small businesses; counselling and information services are also to be available. In Sweden, a group of senior managers was set up to devise ways of involving more women in leading positions in business.

More could be done to open up opportunities for women in lucrative areas traditionally dominated by men, such as IT; at present, the issue of gender segregation is not given due attention. Member States must also check that general schemes promoting entrepreneurship are fully accessible to women.

#### **Entrepreneurship: initiatives at European level**

The European Network to promote Women's Entrepreneurship, WES, was officially launched in June 2000. The network has seventeen members, from all EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. Delegates represent national Governments and bodies that promoting female entrepreneurship. The aims are to raise the profile of existing women entrepreneurs, create a more favourable climate increase the number of new women entrepreneurs and help existing businesses run by women to expand. According to a study into women entrepreneurs in the EU and central and eastern Europe women find it harder than their male counterparts to raise capital for start-ups and expansion. They are also less aware of available support.

### *Gender Mainstreaming in the Adaptability Pillar*

Many NAPs have devoted relatively little attention to adaptability in general, so mainstreaming is not very advanced. Yet issues of work organisation and working time are clearly highly relevant to gender equality.

Gender analyses within this pillar are still rare, even though there are still large gender gaps in the proportion of workers on atypical contracts and in part-time work, for instance. Some Member States continue to promote flexibility with little regard for the impact on gender equality.

Gender equality has not, as a rule, featured strongly in the social partners' discussions on adaptability. France is something of an exception: the social partners are to be required to include equal opportunities in their bargaining agenda.

## **Reconciliation of work and family life: high on the Portuguese and French Presidencies' agendas**

The issue of reconciling work and family life was one of the main issues tackled during under the Portuguese Presidency in the first half of the year. At the initiative of the Portuguese Presidency, the Member States adopted a Resolution on the balanced participation of men and women in family and working life on 6 June 2000. The Resolution drew attention to the importance of this issue, as one of the basic conditions for *de facto* equality.

As part of the Beijing+5 follow-up process, the French Presidency took up the thread by developing a set of indicators on reconciliation. Amongst the issues covered by the indicators were flexible working schemes, parental and other forms of leave and care-service opening hours. On 27 November, the Council of Ministers (Employment and Social Affairs) called on Member States to ensure these indicators were kept up-to-date and to adopt new measures and strategies with the aim of achieving a more balanced distribution of professional activity and home-related work between women and men.

## **Recommendations on the implementation of Member States' Employment Policies**

On the basis of the analysis in the Joint Employment Report, the Commission drew up employment-policy recommendations for 2000, for each individual Member State. The recommendations, adopted by the Council, recognise that gender gaps in the labour market require comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategies and measures to reconcile work and family life. Recommendations on gender issues were issued to twelve Member States.

## **New developments in the Employment Guidelines for 2001**

The Guidelines for 2001 were endorsed at the Nice European Council in early December 2000. The mainstreaming element for 2001 has been strengthened. Member States are committed to developing more effective procedures for consulting gender-equality bodies, assessing the gender impact of measures under each guideline and developing indicators to measure progress towards gender equality, again for each guideline. Furthermore, the new guidelines for 2001 take account of the Lisbon target for increased female employment. They also call on Member States to consider setting national targets for increasing care facilities.

## **Women in the knowledge-based economy**

Women are badly under-represented in the information technology and communications industries. Even though women outnumber men in high-education sectors taken together, within those sectors, they are less likely than men to secure the most highly-skilled, highly-paid jobs.

If Europe is to make a successful transition to the a knowledge-based economy, it cannot afford to under-utilise the enormous untapped potential of its female population. Accordingly, when the Commission and the Council set out their ideas on how to achieve the targets set at Lisbon in the e-Europe 2002 Action Plan,<sup>17</sup> they stressed the importance of attracting women into IT professions.

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<sup>17</sup> e-Europe 2002 – an Information society for all, prepared by the Council and the European Commission for the Feira European Council (19-20 June 2000), Brussels, 14 June 2000

Likewise, the e-learning initiative,<sup>18</sup> adopted by the Commission in May, seeks to prevent the gap from growing any wider between those with access to the new information technologies and those without, including women. Education plays a crucial role. One reason that women are under-represented in well-paid IT professions is that they do not study the relevant subjects in sufficient numbers at school or in higher education. It is important to break down the barriers that prevent them from doing so.

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<sup>18</sup> e-Learning – designing tomorrow's education, COM(2000) 318 final, 24 May 2000

# **A Gender perspective in EU human rights policies and external relations**

## **WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE EU**

### **Proposal to amend equal treatment Directive**

On 7 June 2000, the Commission presented a proposal to amend the 1976 Directive on equal treatment in employment.<sup>19</sup> The legal basis for the proposal, Article 141(3) of the EC Treaty, gives Parliament considerable influence through the codecision procedure, and specifies that the Council can adopt the proposal with a qualified majority.

The proposal aims to bring the Directive up to date with recent thinking on equality, and to tighten up the wording of some provisions in the light of European case law.

If adopted the proposal will:

- class sexual harassment at work as a form of discrimination and define sexual harassment, in line with the definition given in the Article 13 Directives (see below) and the Commission's code of good conduct;
- enable independent bodies to pursue administrative or judicial claims on behalf of the victims of gender discrimination under certain conditions;
- clarify the notion of indirect discrimination;
- guarantee women the right to return to their jobs, or an equivalent post, after maternity leave;
- and encourage social partners to help implement the principle of equal treatment by adopting collective agreements on discrimination;

### **Other legal developments**

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union was proclaimed by the Presidents of the Council, the Parliament and the Commission at the beginning of the European Council meeting in Nice on 7 December 2000<sup>20</sup>. The Charter is written in gender-neutral language ; it is addressed to everybody, with no predominance of one gender over the other. However, it does include a number of specific provisions whose aim is to promote gender equality. Article 21 prohibits discrimination on any grounds, sex in particular. Article 23 sets out the principle of gender equality in all areas, specifying that positive action is a legitimate tool in pursuit of this goal. Slavery, forced labour and trafficking in human beings are banned by Article 5, although women are not specifically mentioned. Protection from dismissal for a reason connected with maternity and the right to paid maternity leave are laid down by Article 33. Under Article 34,

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<sup>19</sup> Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Directive amending Directive 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions, COM(2000) 334 final

<sup>20</sup> OJ C 364, 18.12.2000, p. 1

the European Union has to recognise and respect the entitlement to social security benefits and social services providing protection in cases such as maternity<sup>21</sup>.

In May 2000, Parliament held a public hearing on the fight against discrimination and the new possibilities opened up by Article 13 of the revised EC Treaty, where gender discrimination is one of the main themes. The Commission has now announced its intention to propose a new gender equality Directive in 2002. The proposal will venture for the first time outside the realm of employment to combat inequalities in other areas too.

Article 13 has already indirectly benefited the cause of the gender equality, through the new Directive against racial discrimination.<sup>22</sup> Gender equality has been mainstreamed into the Directive, in recognition of the fact that discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin may affect women and men differently.

At national level, the UK Government issued a joint action plan to combat forced marriages. Planned measures include data collection by the police and NGOs and the production of information materials for educational institutions.

### **THE REVIEW OF THE BEIJING+5 PROCESS**

Last year saw the fifth anniversary of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women. The United Nations General Assembly convened a Special Session in June 2000 entitled "Gender equality, development and peace for the twenty first century, Beijing+5". The Session provided an opportunity to review progress and discuss ideas for future action.

On 19-21 February 2000, a regional preparatory conference was held by the UN's Economic Commission for Europe, in partnership with the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the UNDP and UNIFEM. NGOs played an active role in the discussions, which focused on just four areas of the Beijing Platform for Action. In February, an EU level conference reaffirmed the EU's commitment to the objectives set out in the Platform for Action, but pointed to a weaknesses in the implementation framework<sup>23</sup>. Moving from commitment to Action has proved more complex than expected.

The Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament presented reports on the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action.<sup>24</sup> Both called for the establishment of indicators and benchmarks. On 28 March, Parliament's Committee on women's rights and equal opportunities organised a public hearing on the progress made in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action.

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<sup>21</sup> See Communication from the Commission on the legal nature of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, COM (2000) 644 final of 11 October 2000

<sup>22</sup> Council Directive of 29 June on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin

<sup>23</sup> Beijing+5 An overview of the European Union follow-up and preparations a publication prepared by the European Commission to mark the five-year review of the Platform for action adopted at the UN Fourth World Conference of Beijing, 1995.

<sup>24</sup> CES 172/2000 and A5-0125/2000

In June, at the UN conference, the EU successfully opposed attempts to water down the agreement reached in Beijing. Indeed some significant advances were made, and the Outcome Document<sup>25</sup> incorporates a number of the EU's proposals. It:

- reiterates the human rights of women and the importance of education;
- contains new, clearer language on the state's obligation to combat violence against women, reflecting the EU's stance in the UN Commission for Human Rights (56<sup>th</sup> session) in Geneva in March 2000;<sup>26</sup>
- highlights the link between gender equality and poverty eradication, and the need for a more equal distribution of paid work and care between women and men; and
- stresses the need for benchmarks and indicators, in line with the reports presented by Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee at the European preparatory conference.

However, the Outcome Document did not meet all the EU's expectations. Faced with some strong opposition, the EU was unable to gain acceptance for a statement on the need to combat discrimination on all grounds, including sexual orientation. Strong resistance also blocked attempts to move forwards on poverty eradication, gender-based violence, sexual rights of women, trafficking in women and access to abortion.

### **Activities in the Member States on Beijing+5**

A report on the implementation of the Platform for action was presented to the Parliament in Belgium. A yearly Ministerial meeting will be held in order to reach, in all ministries, strategic objectives and establish a national machinery. In Ireland, work is under way on the development of a national action plan for women, which will be influenced by the Beijing+5 process. In Italy, the national Statistics Institute began studies to produce gender sensitive data. In Norway, a committee of the relevant ministries has been set up to review progress on implementing the Beijing Platform.

### **DEFENDING WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE WIDER WORLD**

2000 was the first year of implementation of the Human Rights Regulations adopted in 1999<sup>27</sup> which provided a coherent framework and a legal basis for all human rights and democratisation activities under Chapter B7-70 of the EU budget (European Initiative for democracy and human rights). Gender mainstreaming was integrated in the 2000 programming document for the European Initiative. A number of gender-specific projects were funded in the Mediterranean region, such as a programme of positive action on the rights of women in the Maghreb and a project on women in decision-making in Egypt. Approximately € 3 million were spent on gender-specific projects in 2000. On 14 November 2000, the Commission adopted a report on the implementation of measures intended to promote observance of human

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<sup>25</sup> Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. A/S-23/10/Rev.1. Draft resolution II Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. UN 2000.

<sup>26</sup> The EU called for UN Members to prevent and punish all types of gender-based violence in the private and public sphere, emphasising that the human rights of women included sexual rights and rights related to reproductive health.

<sup>27</sup> Regulations 975/1999 and 976/199 – OJ L120/1 of 8.5.99



rights and democratic principles in external relations that covers the 1996-1999 period<sup>28</sup>. This document contains a comprehensive section on the empowerment of women. A similar report is under preparation for 2000.

On 15 November 2000, the EP adopted a report and resolution on the participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution.<sup>29</sup> The report is based on the premise that virtually all analyses and policies regarding conflicts have been gender blind. Women are generally absent from official initiatives to end conflicts; their voices should be heard in peace processes.

### **THE FIGHT AGAINST VIOLENCE, TRAFFICKING AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Violence against women is only now starting to receive the political attention it deserves. The EU campaign that ended in 2000 helped to raise awareness of issues, amongst men as well as women.

In 2000, the Daphne Initiative was superseded by a fully-fledged Programme to combat violence against women, children and young people (2000-03).<sup>30</sup> The new Daphne Programme supports the work of public authorities and private-sector organisations, in the EU, the candidate countries and the EEA; multi-annual projects are now eligible.

At national level, Portugal adopted a strategy to remove perpetrators of violence from the home, in Liechtenstein a draft legislation was tabled with the same aim and discussions were started in France. The German Government launched a nation-wide action plan to combat domestic violence.

Trafficking in women remained high on the political agenda in 2000. Trafficking is a global problem ; women are brought to the EU from central and eastern Europe, north and central Africa, Latin America and Asia. The STOP Programme (1996-2000)<sup>31</sup> continued in 2000 to support training, projects, seminars, studies, with assistance for victims and prevention as two of the priorities. An external assessment of the projects funded was largely positive. The Commission has proposed a two-year extension to the Programme. At the same time, it helped the candidate countries tackle trafficking through the Phare Programme. Furthermore it has put forward a proposal for two Council Framework Decisions on combating trafficking in human beings and combating the sexual exploitation of children and child pornography.<sup>32</sup> The objective is to approximate the Member States' criminal law on these matters, to ensure there are no safe havens for offenders.

The European Parliament attaches great importance to the fight against trafficking of women for sexual exploitation. In February, it held a public hearing on trafficking in women; in March a working paper linked trafficking with other forms of organised crime, and pointed out that, measured against the severity, and the profitability of the crime, the punishment for trafficking was relatively light.

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<sup>28</sup> COM (2000) 726 final

<sup>29</sup> A5-0308/2000

<sup>30</sup> European Parliament and Council Decision No. 293/2000, OJ L 34 of 9.2.2000

<sup>31</sup> Joint Action 96/700 JHA, OJ L 322 of 12.12.1996

<sup>32</sup> COM(2000) 854

In January 2000 Spain adopted one of the most far-reaching laws on the rights of victims of trafficking. Victims and witnesses residing illegally in Spain can obtain the right to stay and work, if they testify against the organisers of trafficking. Italy has also changed its law on immigration to allow victims of trafficking to stay for at least six months and receive support from social services. A help line is being set up. Lastly, the Italian Penal Code is being amended to make trafficking in human beings a crime.

# Equality in the enlargement process

## INTRODUCTION

At its meeting in Nice in December 2000, the European Council reaffirmed the historic significance of enlargement and the political priority it attaches to the process. Success will depend, amongst other things, on the candidate countries' ability to adopt the European social model, with its commitment to gender equality and equal opportunities.

Clearly, this means legislating to implement Community law (the *acquis*) on equal opportunities, but the candidate countries will also have to build the institutional capacity to enforce those laws effectively. All types of inequality must be tackled: economic, political, social and cultural.

## PROGRESS ON ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS DURING 2000

February 2000 saw the opening of accession negotiations with Bulgaria, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia (although negotiations on employment and social policy, which includes equal opportunities, have yet to begin with Bulgaria and Romania).

In December the Nice European Council endorsed the Commission's strategy paper on enlargement, which sets out a timetable for the next two years: provisional completion of negotiations on employment and social policy is scheduled for the first half of 2001 for most countries. To meet this target, candidate countries will, at the very least, have to produce detailed, credible plans over the next six months setting out how and when they will meet EU membership requirements in this area.

The Nice European Council also endorsed the Commission's proposal for an Accession Partnership for Turkey, which will identify the main priorities that must be addressed to meet the basic conditions for membership laid down in the Copenhagen criteria.

## IMPLEMENTING COMMUNITY LAW

In the field of equal opportunities, there are nine Community Directives which must be transposed into national law.

	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Cyprus	Estonia	Hungary	Latvia	Lithuania	Malta	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Slovenia	Turkey
Candidate country target date for transposition (end of year)	2002	2002	2003	2002	2001	2002	2002	2003	2002	2001	2003	2003	Screening not commenced
State of accession negotiations on chapter 13	Not yet opened	Open	Prov. closed	Prov. closed	Prov. closed	Open	Open	Open	Open	Not yet opened	Open	Prov. closed	
Directive 75/117/EEC <sup>33</sup>	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	
Directive 76/207/EEC <sup>34</sup>	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	
Directive 86/613/EEC <sup>35</sup>	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	
Directive 92/85/EEC <sup>36</sup>	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	
Directive 96/34/EC <sup>37</sup>	0	2	1	1	2	1	2	0	1	2	1	1	
Directive 97/80/EC <sup>38</sup>	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Directive 79/7/EEC <sup>39</sup>	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	
Directive 86/378/EEC <sup>40</sup> and Directive 96/97/EC <sup>41</sup>	0	0	1	0	2	2	2	0	2	2	1	2	

<sup>33</sup> Council Directive of 10 February 1975 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women, OJ L 45, 19.2.1975

<sup>34</sup> Council Directive of 9 February 1976 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions, OJ L 39, 14.2.1976

<sup>35</sup> Council Directive of 11 December 1986 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity, and on the protection of self-employed women during pregnancy and motherhood, OJ L 359, 19.12.1986

<sup>36</sup> Council Directive of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (tenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16 (1) of Directive 89/391/EEC), OJ L 348, 28.11.1992

<sup>37</sup> Council Directive of 3 June 1996 on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC, OJ L 145, 19.6.1996

<sup>38</sup> Council Directive of 15 December 1997 on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex, OJ L 14, 20.1.1998

<sup>39</sup> Council Directive of 19 December 1978 on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security, OJ L 6, 10.1.1979

<sup>40</sup> Council Directive of 24 July 1986 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in occupational social security schemes, OJ L 225, 12.8.1986

<sup>41</sup> Council Directive of 20 December 1996 amending Directive 86/378/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in occupational social security schemes, OJ L 46, 17.2.1997

Key:

0: no compatibility with *acquis* in national legislation

1 ; national legislation partially compatible with *acquis* (on information supplied by relevant national authorities. Not yet verified by the European Commission)

2: national legislation fully compatible with *acquis* (on information supplied by relevant national authorities. Not yet verified by the European Commission)

The Czech Republic is ahead of schedule, having adopted appropriate legislation in all areas, save social security, in 2000. Lithuania appears to have implemented all legislation except the Burden of Proof Directive. Hungary looks set to achieve alignment with the *acquis* as projected, by the end of 2001. The apparently strong progress made by Romania during 2000 will be considered in detail when negotiations open on the employment chapter.

In other candidate countries, much work remains to be done to align national legislation with the *acquis*. Slovakia has relaxed its total ban on women working at night and outlawed job advertisements that discriminate on grounds of gender. An amendment to the Labour Code has strengthened the rights of pregnant employees. In both Latvia and Malta, much of the *acquis* has yet to be transposed. However, over the last twelve months Latvia has made necessary amendments to its law on social security and Malta has adopted legislation that is compatible with the Pregnant Workers' Directive.

A number of candidate countries have commenced or pressed ahead with preparatory work. For instance, draft legislation has been presented in Cyprus, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia and Slovakia. In April, Estonia adopted a concept paper on gender equality, intended as a basis for legislation transposing the *acquis*. Bulgaria has set up a working group with representatives from Government and the voluntary sector to prepare draft legislation. Given the target dates for transposition, it is to be hoped that this work will result in legislation in the next twelve months.

Neither Poland nor Turkey appear to have made any legislative progress in 2000. The Polish timetable for implementation now seems somewhat optimistic.

In summary, there has been some progress in the adoption of legislation that is compatible with the *acquis*, but much is still to be done and the pace of change remains slow and varies markedly from country to country.

## **INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY**

The candidate countries have themselves recognised the need to develop institutional and administrative structures to implement and enforce equality rights.<sup>42</sup>

Lithuania has made significant progress in developing institutional capacity. For example, in March, it set up an inter-institutional equal-opportunities commission. The equal opportunities ombudsman has also proved effective in improving implementation of legislation.

Hungary, too, has made further progress in 2000 through its participation in the medium-term Community action programme on gender equality, with three projects concerned with developing institutional capacity. Meanwhile, Romania established a consultative inter-ministerial commission on equality of treatment for men and women, to promote mainstreaming. Otherwise, much work needs to be carried out in Romania.

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<sup>42</sup> See National Plans for the Adoption of the *Acquis* 2000

Institutional structures exist in Malta and Cyprus, but need strengthening. During 2000, the Maltese government set up an equal opportunities unit.

In other candidate countries, particularly Bulgaria and Poland, institutions are not properly equipped to enforce existing national legislation in this field, let alone the *acquis*. There has been no significant progress during 2000.

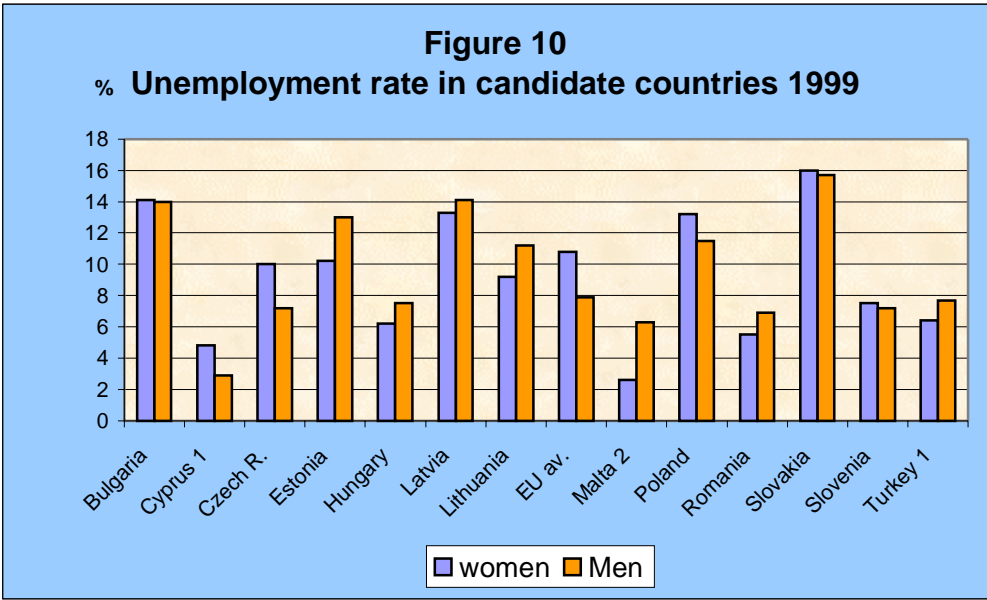
Measured against what needs to be done, the progress made is clearly inadequate. Much more will have to be done over the next twelve months. Community programmes can assist through the provision of expertise and finance, but only Hungary participated in the medium-term Community action programme for the period 1999-2000. A larger number of projects in several candidate countries have been accepted for the period 2000-2001 and it is to be assumed that applications will be received from candidate countries for participation in the programme relating to the Community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005).

**ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE**

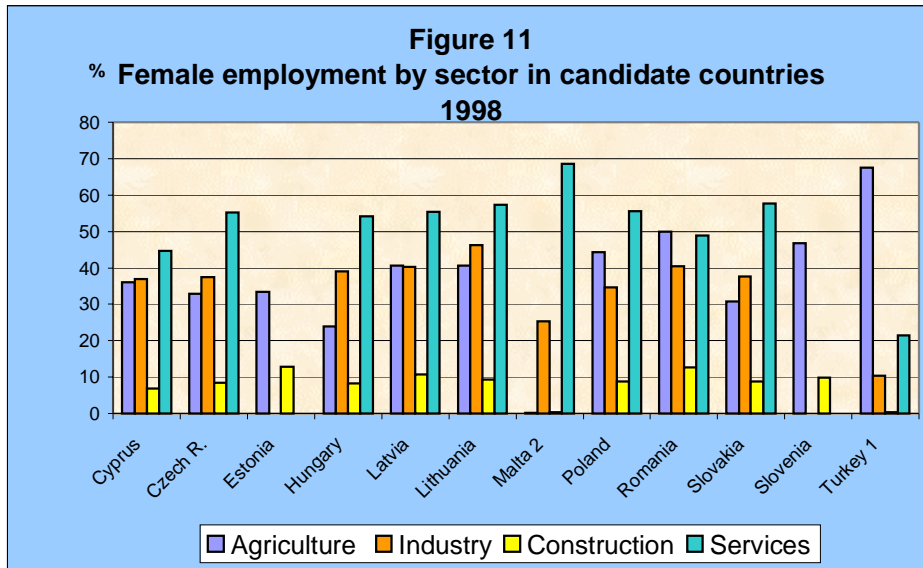
Adopting and enforcing the *acquis* is only a small part of the battle against gender inequality. Equal rights should be accompanied by greater economic, political and social equality on the ground.

**Women in the economy**

The candidate countries have undergone radical economic change over the last decade: technological progress, preparations for EU accession and, in many countries, the transition from a command to a market economy. One unwelcome consequence has been a rise in unemployment. (Figure 10)



Source: Employment in Europe 2000, European Commission 1 Euro-Mediterranean statistics, 1/2000, EUROSTAT; p.47

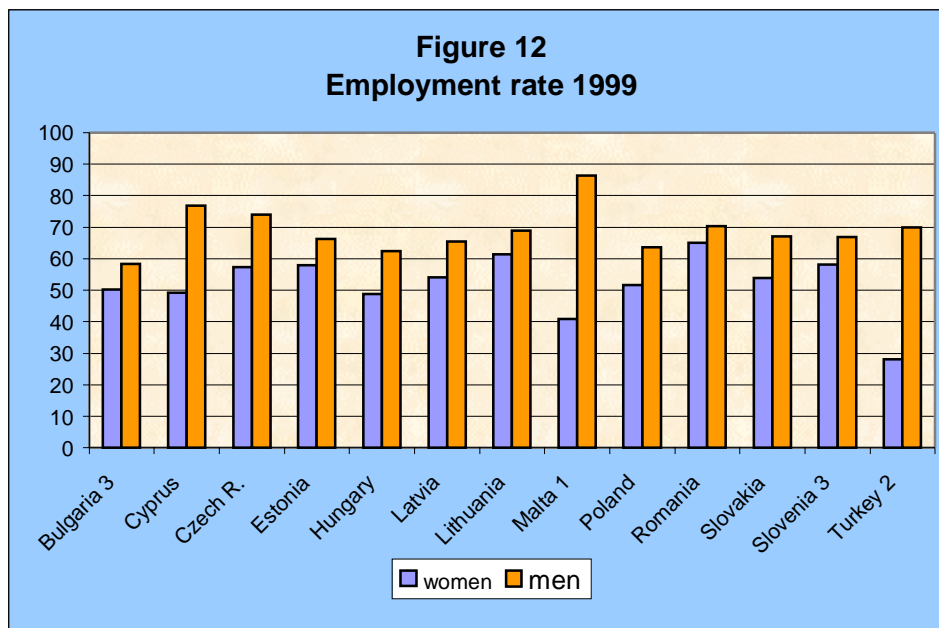


Source: Statistical Yearbook on candidate and South-East European countries 2000

Agriculture includes hunting, forestry and fishing

Industry includes mining, manufacturing, electricity, water and gas supply

Services include all other branches; 1 data for 1999, <http://lmsnt.pub.die.gov.tr/lmise>, Ankara, SIS; 2 Women and men, 1999, p. 41; comparable data for Bulgaria are n. a.



Source: Employment in Europe 2000, European Commission 1 Women and Men 1999, COS Malta, data for 1998 for fully and part-time employed; 2 <http://lmsnt.pub.die.gov.tr/lmise>, Ankara, SIS; 3 data for 1998; 4 data for 1996/97, material of the embassy of the Republic of Cyprus

The figures for female unemployment compare favourably with those for the European Union. In the candidate countries, the average unemployment rate in 1999 was 9.2% for women and 9.6% for men (which include 1998 figures for Malta and 2000 figures for Turkey). The European Union average for the same period was 10.8% for women and 7.9% for men.

- In Malta, Cyprus and Turkey, both the level of female employment and the gender gap is far below the European Union average, and the gender employment gap far greater

- In the countries of central and Eastern Europe, the level of female employment and the gender gap compare favourably with the European Union average, inherited from the old command economies the former command economies have a history of high female participation in the labour market.

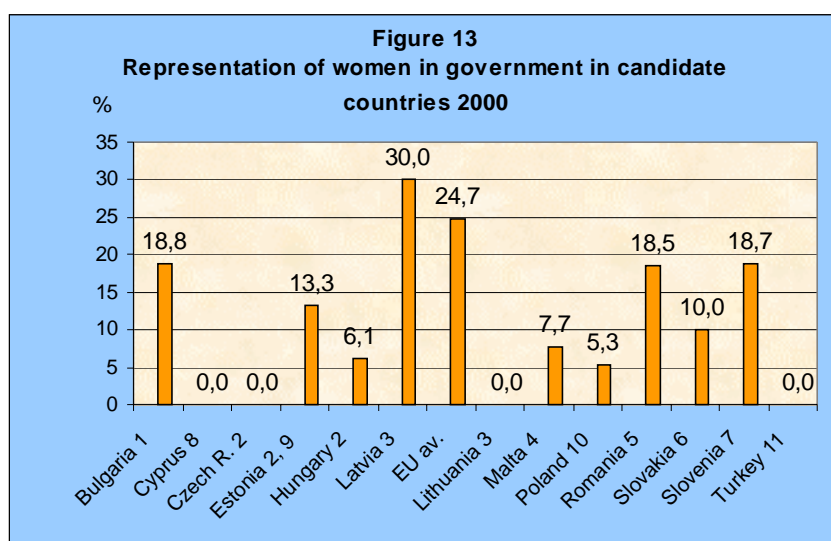
However, the picture is not as positive as it first appears. First, male-dominated manufacturing sector bore the brunt of job losses in the last decade, but future pressures on employment are likely to affect all sectors and hence affect more women. All the candidate countries are experiencing pressures on female employment similar to those in the EU.

- Women do not have the same incentives to work as men. Female employment is concentrated in the lower skilled and lower paid service and agricultural sectors. Reliable figures are not available for every candidate country, but on the latest information, the gender pay gap is bigger in many countries than the EU average. In the Czech Republic, for example, women's average wages are only 69% of men's.
- Good quality, affordable childcare facilities are scarce. The extensive provision of institutional child-care and pre-school education in the former command economy countries has not survived the transition to a market economy. The inadequacy of parental leave, in particular in Malta, compounds the problem.
- There is evidence that female employment is not accorded the same value as that of men. This is especially the case in Turkey, but also in Cyprus, Malta and Poland.

It is in all countries' economic interests to make the best use of their human resources. That means increasing women's participation – attracting them onto the labour market and providing them with the incentives to stay there. In practical terms, that means: giving them equal employment rights with men; enforcing equal pay; encouraging family friendly policies at work, and equal burden sharing at home.

### Women in decision-making

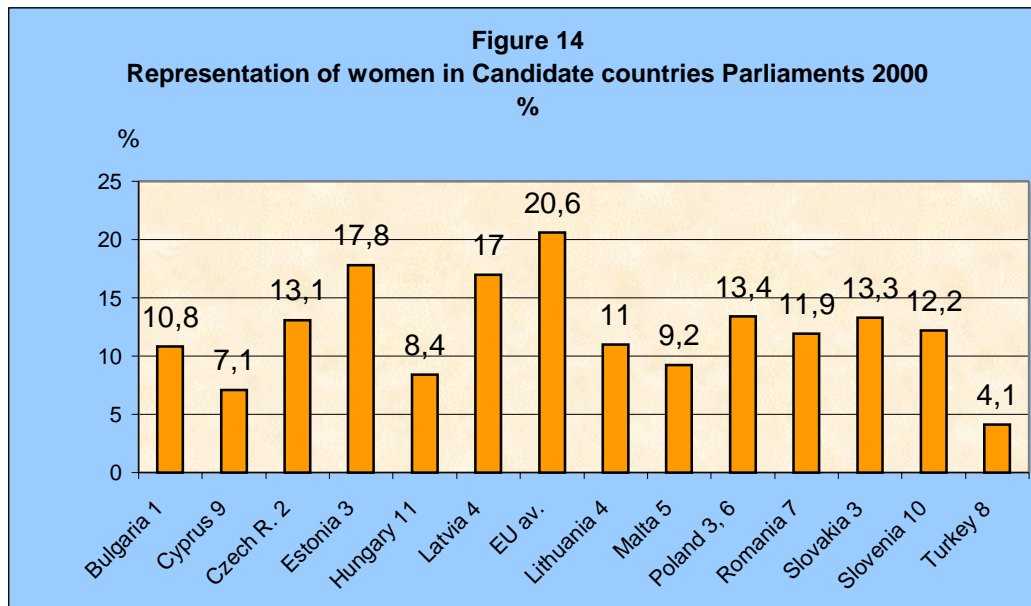
The representation of women in the governments and parliaments of the candidate countries is significantly below the European Union average. Balanced participation is a pre-requisite for a healthily functioning democracy.





Sources: Data collected in 12/00

1 data from I/01, [www.government.bg](http://www.government.bg); 2 data from I/01, European Database Women in decision-making, <http://www.db-decision.de/english/default.htm>; 3 Gender Equality in Baltic States, 1999; 4 data from I/99, material from Ministry for Social Policy of Malta, page 1; 5 data for 2000 after elections, [www.cdep.ro](http://www.cdep.ro); 6 data from XII/00, [www.government.sk](http://www.government.sk); 7 data from XI/00, [www.sigov.si](http://www.sigov.si); 8 data from XII/00, [www.kyprus.org/PIO/ministry](http://www.kyprus.org/PIO/ministry); 9 data from 3/99; 10 data from VIII/00, [www.kprm.gov.pl/gov](http://www.kprm.gov.pl/gov); 11 data from I/01, material from the embassy of the Republic of Turkey.



Sources:

1 data from XII/00 (38<sup>th</sup> National Assembly), [www.parliament.bg](http://www.parliament.bg); 2 data from XII/00, Lower House: 15 %, Upper House: Senate: 11.1 %, European Database Women in decision-making; 3 data from X/00, European Database Women in decision-making; 4 data from XII/00, Special material of the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, p. 5; 5 data from XII/00, European Database Women in decision-making; 6 data from XI/00, [www.senat.gov.pl](http://www.senat.gov.pl), European Database Women in decision-making; 7 data for election 2000, Senate: 13 %, Chamber of deputies: 10.7 %, [www.infoeuropa.ro](http://www.infoeuropa.ro); 8 data from I/01, material of the embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Berlin; 9 data from I/01 [www.kyprus.org](http://www.kyprus.org); 10 data from I/01, [www.dz-rs.si](http://www.dz-rs.si); 11 data from X/00, European Database Women in decision-making

## Trafficking in women

Analysis of trafficking in human beings in Europe is hampered by the lack of reliable statistics and of a unified legal definition of the crime.

However, on the limited information available there can be no doubt that the trafficking of women to, within and from the candidate countries of Central and Eastern and Europe and Turkey is a growing phenomenon.

The European Union and the candidate countries must take urgent measures to eliminate the trade in women. These should include:

- introducing appropriate criminal penalties against traffickers. In May 2000, the Latvian Parliament made trafficking a criminal offence.
- improving detection and enforcement mechanisms in candidate countries;
- developing mechanisms to provide support and protection for victims.

- tackling structural weaknesses, in particular unemployment, poverty and a lack of opportunities for women in candidate countries.
- raising awareness. Much work is already being done through the STOP programme. Also, in 2000, the Budapest office of the International Organisation for Migration undertook a wide-ranging awareness-raising campaign with the participation of both governmental agencies and NGOs.

### **Domestic violence**

Domestic violence against women is also a human rights issue of growing concern in many candidate countries. Again, comprehensive reliable statistics are not available. However, the European Commission Regular Report 2000 identifies domestic violence as a matter for concern in Estonia, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey, though the Report mentions that limited steps that are being taken to tackle the issue. In Poland, a UN project on spousal violence remains suspended by the government.

Many of the remedies applicable to trafficking will also be relevant to tackling domestic violence. In both cases, it is assumed that candidate countries will take full advantage of the opportunities afforded under the Programme relating to the Community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005).

# Promoting a gender balance in decision-making

## INTRODUCTION

In a democracy, participation in the decision-making process must be open to all citizens – women and men – and both genders must be properly represented in positions of power. The Member States, the Commission and the European Parliament have taken numerous measures to ensure that is so. The long-term trend is in the right direction, but progress is slow. These were the findings of the Commission's report<sup>43</sup> on implementation of the 1996 Council Recommendation on the balanced participation of women and men in decision-making.<sup>44</sup>

A sustained political commitment from all players must be accompanied by a co-ordinated mix of policies and practical measures: sound statistics, regular monitoring, structures designed to fit the national cultures of the Member States, effective legislation and adequate funding.

In 2000, the European Parliament demonstrated its continuing commitment to increasing the proportion of women in decision-making positions. In March, it adopted a resolution on women in decision-making, calling for a variety of measures from the Commission, Member States and social partners to promote gender balance in decision-making. In particular, it urged the Commission to work on developing statistical tools and to urge Member States to take action. Conversely, Member States were asked to help create a healthy gender balance in EU institutions. Parliament endorsed the use of quotas as a transitional measure to bring more women into decision-making.<sup>45</sup>

In 2000, the Fourth Action Programme funded a number of transnational projects promoting gender balance in decision-making. Many of these projects will extend into 2001.<sup>46</sup> They covered a range of activities, including mentoring and training to motivate women to take an active part in politics and public life; networking and exchanges of ideas on best practice; and measures to improve the gender balance in the European Parliament.

## DECISION-MAKING IN THE NEW FRAMEWORK STRATEGY AND THE NEW PROGRAMME

Gender balance in decision-making is one of the five core priorities identified by the Framework Strategy. The Strategy's approach is based on the findings of the Commission report referred to above, and work done by the Member States. Of particular importance was the Finnish Presidency's very comprehensive report to the Council, covering women in political life, including the EU institutions, in public administrations, and in the judiciary.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> COM(2000)120 final of 7.3.2000

<sup>44</sup> Council Recommendation of 2 December 1996 on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process OJ L 319 of 10.12.96, p.11

<sup>45</sup> Minutes of 2 March 2000, resolution B5-0180/2000, see also Report of Ms Karamanou on the implementation of Council Recommendation 96/694 on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process

<sup>46</sup> Directory of Projects 1999, p.125 See footnote..

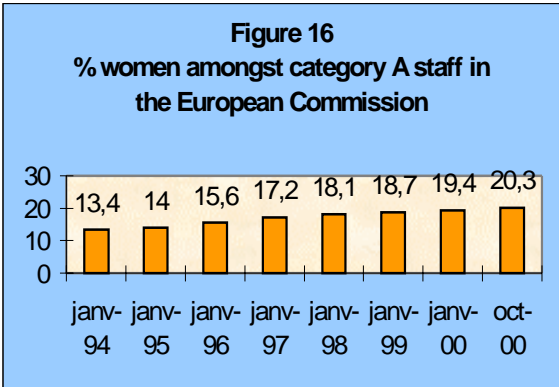
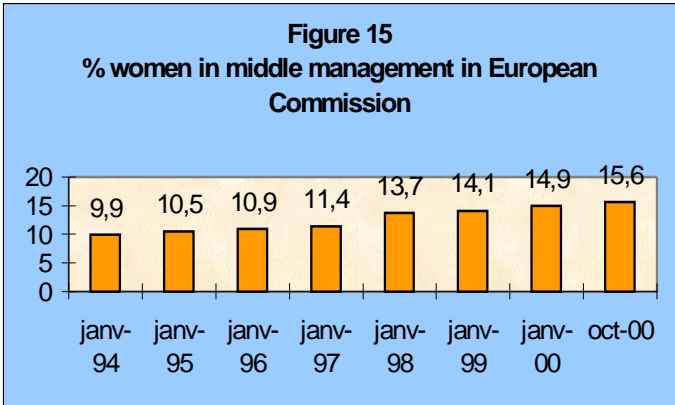
<sup>47</sup> See Council Conclusions of 22 October 1999

The Strategy and accompanying programme are not solely concerned with political life, however. Another major theme is women in decision-making positions in economic and social life. With funding from the Programme, a full set of statistics will be compiled and regularly updated on women in decision-making positions in the economy and in society. It will also finance research into the transition from education to working life, and the recruitment and career development of women with the potential to reach senior management positions.

**Women within the Commission**

The number of women in decision-making positions is steadily increasing in the Commission, as in the other EU institutions. However, women are still under-represented in management posts.

The Commission is committed to tackling the gender imbalance in its staffing structure as part of its wider internal reforms.<sup>48</sup> For example, women are to be given preference for senior appointments when there are male and female candidates of equal merit. The Commission aims to double the number of women in senior management positions by the end of its term of office in 2005. Measures will be taken to make it easier for staff – including management – to reconcile work and private life. The Commission will use management training courses and other channels to raise awareness of gender issues. It will examine recruitment and promotion procedures for gender bias.



Source figure 15 and 16: Directorate General Personnel and Administration

In June 2000, the Commission decided that neither gender should account for less than 40% of the membership of *any* of its committees and expert groups.<sup>49</sup> Previously, the binding target had applied only to committees and groups in the field of science and research. The Commission has called on Member States, the social partners and other bodies responsible for nominating members, to make sure they put forward enough people of both genders.

**At national level**

Some Member States have made a sustained effort over a period of years to increase the number of women participating in political decision-making, with good results. Others are

<sup>48</sup> White Paper "Reforming the Commission" COM (2000) 200 of 1 March 2000  
<sup>49</sup> Commission Decision relating to Gender Balance within the Committees and Expert Groups established by it (2000/407/EC of 19/06/00), Official Journal L 154, 27/06/2000 p. 34

just starting to set targets. No less diverse are the tools employed: official or informal quotas, gender alternation systems on electoral lists, quotas for women in government committees, awareness-raising activities, and measures to facilitate reconciliation of political work and family life. Even where these measures have proved effective, women still have difficulties breaking through into the most senior government posts.

Though progress is slow, the Nordic countries demonstrate that a sustained commitment does pay off in time. It is difficult to point to a single policy that makes the difference; a comprehensive approach combining a number of policies seems to be the key. Political will is important too in ensuring that policies are properly implemented.

### **Advances in 2000**

In France, following an amendment to the Constitution in 1999, Parliament adopted a law in May 2000 requiring that parties' electoral lists be made up of equal numbers of men and women. Otherwise, the lists may be declared invalid and state funding for election campaigns withheld. The municipal elections in 2001 are likely to be the first held under the new rules.

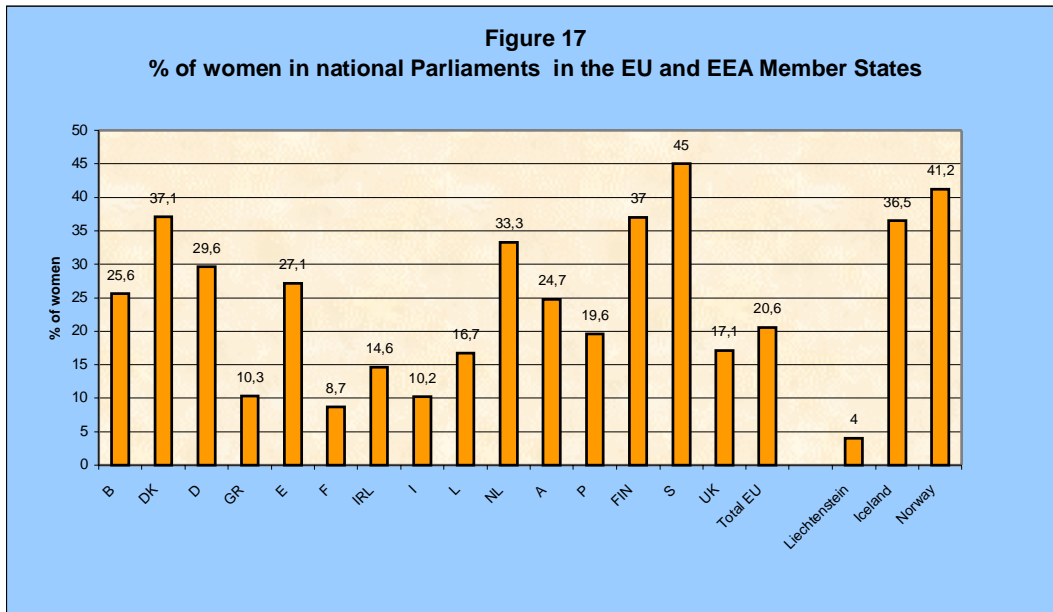
In Belgium, the Government has drafted a similar bill, requiring absolute gender equality in party lists. Furthermore, from 2005, parties will have to put forward one man and one woman for the top two positions on the list.

The United Kingdom Government is committed to achieving gender parity in public appointments. Government Departments must draw up action plans detailing past progress and future goals. The Civil Service reported a steady increase in the number of women applying for and being appointed to the highest posts.

On 27 October, the French Presidency organised a conference<sup>50</sup> for ministers, social partners and representatives from the European Parliament, the European Women's Lobby and the Commission. One of the issues discussed was women and decision-making. The conference revealed a high degree of agreement on the need to set time-bound goals for progress on decision-making. There was also widespread support for the idea of devising a strategy for change, involving research and the exchange of information, ideas and experience between a wide range of partners.

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<sup>50</sup> For information contact; Service des droits des femmes et de l'égalité, 10, 16 rue Brancion 75015 Paris, France, tel.: +33-1 40 56 60 00



Source Figure 17 and 18: Frauen Computer Zentrum Berlin, European Database on Women in decision-making, <http://www.db-decision.de/index.html>

### Women in national parliaments

In national parliaments across the EU, the proportion of seats held by women rose to just over a fifth in 2000.<sup>51</sup> Only Sweden and Norway's parliaments count as gender balanced, with over 40% women, though Denmark, Finland, Iceland and the Netherlands have all reached, or remained above, the 30% mark. France, Greece, Ireland and Italy all had rates under 15%. Discouragingly, the proportions fell slightly in Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

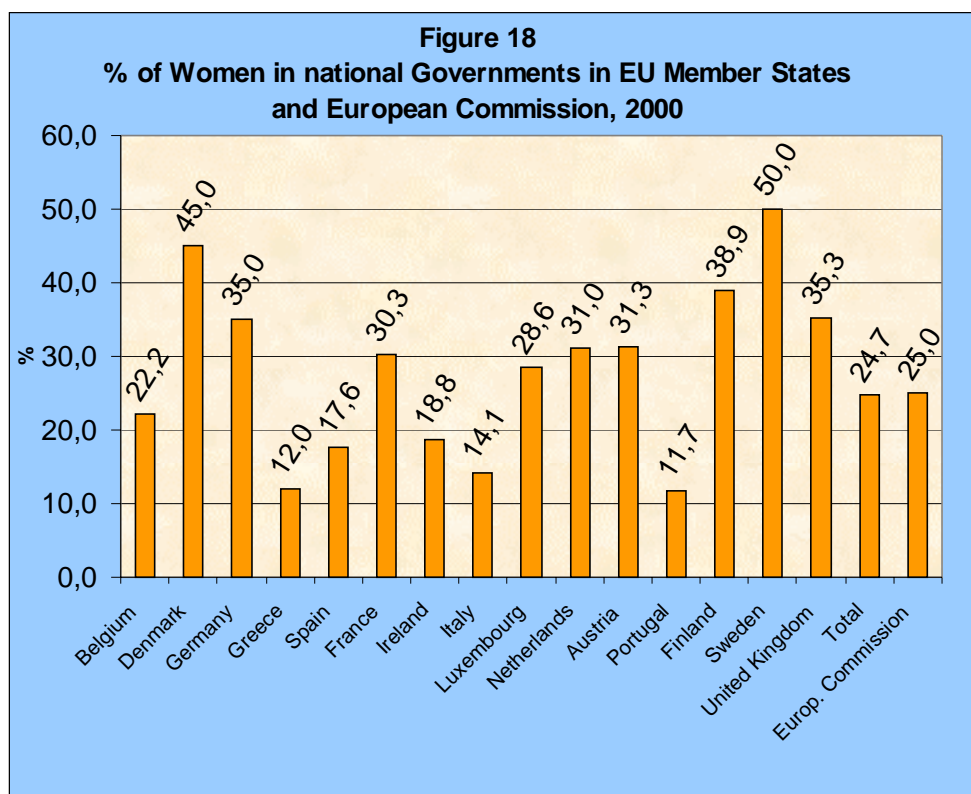
Regional assemblies saw a healthy increase in female representation, from 22% in 1999 to 29% in 2000.

### Women in national and regional governments

The number of women in national Governments rose again in 2000, though only by a tiny margin. Sweden is the only country where the number of women and men in the Government is exactly half and half. By contrast, less than 15% of Greek, Italian and Portuguese ministers are women.

Similar slight improvements were noted in regional governments too, though in Germany and Sweden, the trend was downwards. In Portugal, there is still not a single woman in any of the regional governments.

<sup>51</sup> Data from the European Database "Women and Decision-making" of the FrauenComputerZentrumBerlin, <http://www.fczb.de>



### Women in economic and social decision-making

A study financed by the European Commission estimates that only 23% of businesses in the EU are owned by women.<sup>52</sup> Clearly, the situation is far from satisfactory, but a lack of precise and comparable data makes detailed analysis difficult. The Framework Strategy on Gender Equality and the new action programme aim to remedy this. The programme will fund the compiling and regular updating of statistics in this area.

Sweden has already made a start by publishing statistics specifically concerned with women and power.<sup>53</sup> Finland has produced figures on women in management positions in companies.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Study on "Young Entrepreneurs, Women Entrepreneurs, Co-Entrepreneurs and Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs in the European Union and Central and Eastern Europe" of the Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research (CEEDR) Middlesex University Business School, UK, published by DG Enterprise:  
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/entrepreneurship/craft/craft-studies/entrepreneurs-young-women-minorities.htm>

<sup>53</sup> Statistics Sweden: "Women and Men in Sweden: Facts and Figures 2000", see in [http://www.scb.se/Scbeng/OVRHTM/women\\_and\\_men.htm](http://www.scb.se/Scbeng/OVRHTM/women_and_men.htm)

<sup>54</sup> "Women and Men in Finland 1999", published by Statistics Finland, contact: Population statistics [irja.kyto@stat.fi](mailto:irja.kyto@stat.fi)