

European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1980 - 1981

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DOCUMENT 1-78/80

Interim Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment

on the position of woman in the European Community

Rapporteur: Mrs S. DEKKER

On 27 September 1979 the European Parliament referred the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Maij-Weggen and others pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure on the position of women in the European Community to the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment.

On 30 October 1979 the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment appointed Mrs Dekker rapporteur and discussed an introductory note at its meeting of 29 January 1980 and a draft interim report at its meeting of 1 April 1980. The Committee on Social Affairs and Employment adopted the latter on 1 April 1980 unanimously with 3 abstentions.

Present: Mr Van der Gun, chairman; Mr Peters, vice-chairman; Mrs Dekker, rapporteur; Mr Albers (deputizing for Mr Oehler), Mr Calvez, Mrs Clwyd, Mrs Tove Nielsen, Mr Pininfarina, Mr Prag, Mrs Roberts (deputizing for Mr Spicer), Mr Spencer, Mr Vandewiele.

The explanatory statement will be presented orally in plenary sitting.

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The Committee on Social Affairs and Employment hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the position of women in the European Community

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution (Doc. 1-345/79/rev.),
 - having regard to the interim report of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment (Doc. 1-78/80),
 - whereas a United Nations world conference will be held from 14 to 30 July 1980 in Copenhagen as a follow-up to that held in Mexico City in 1975 in the context of International Women's Year,
 - stressing the importance of the directly elected European Parliament among the international institutions,
 - whereas the European Parliament has decided¹ to set up an ad hoc Committee on Women's Rights whose task it will be, in cooperation with the Commission and drawing on a report by the Commission setting out the basic principles, to prepare a parliamentary debate to be held before the 1980 summer recess in order to define the measures to be taken on the basis of the Treaties with regard to questions concerning women;
 - assuming that a delegation from the European Parliament will take part in this second United Nations World Conference for the Decade for Women in Copenhagen,
 - concerned that, in spite of the binding directives adopted in the European Community particularly since 1975, the world economic crisis will be used as a pretext for the continued failure properly to implement the anti-discrimination legislation,
 - aware that the European Community has great social and economic responsibilities not only for its own social development but also for the development of Third World countries, in particular the ACP states with special links with the European Communities,
1. Points out that the United Nations World Conference on Women in Mexico in 1975 drew up 14 minimum objectives to be achieved by 1980²;

¹ OJ C 289 19.11.1979, p.57

² UN world action programme, world conference on International Women's Year, Mexico City, 19.6.1975 - 2.7.1980, Articles 46, 47, 48, p. 16-18, Annex I

2. Notes that the follow-up conference in Copenhagen in 1980 will not only review the attainment of these objectives but will be used mainly to prepare concrete measures to improve the situation of women with regard to training, employment and health care in particular for the second half of the decade;
3. Draws attention to the fact that apart from these demands relating to training and employment, which are of particular importance for the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, there is also considerable discrimination in the legal, educational and health systems, the elimination of which must also be vigorously pursued;
4. Regrets that, despite the urgency of solving the problems specified in the demands of the 1975 World Conference on Women, the actual results in 1980 in the participating countries, and in particular in the Member States of the European Communities, are still unsatisfactory;
5. Considers that the former European Parliament had already dealt with the problems of women in training and employment in detail and with commitment and draws attention to the demands already made in this connection in the report by Mrs Dunwoody¹;
6. Reiterates the demand for the provision of statistics 'showing clearly the special structural problems relating to women's employment; regrets that the statistics produced to date too often give superficial and misleading information';
7. Insists, in particular with regard to the economic crisis, on receiving information on:
 - the structure of female employment,
 - part-time employment, calculated on the basis of annual hours so as to avoid the distortions which occur in statistics based on numbers of people,
 - vocational training, level of employment and sectoral concentration, branches of industry,
 - persistent discrimination in wage systems (low wage groups),
 - links between technological developments and female unemployment,
 - actual numbers of women who are unemployed, including persons willing to work but not officially registered, their age and the length of time they have been unemployed;
8. Considers that the European Communities should have the following priorities for the Copenhagen conference and thereafter:
 - establishment of an independent advisory committee within the institutions of the European Communities on equal treatment of men and women

¹OJ C 140 of 5 June 1979

- signing, immediate ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women,¹
 - analysis of and subsequent positive changes in the prevailing pattern of appointment and promotion;
9. Considers it essential to deal with the following main areas in the near future:²
- reduction of working hours, redistribution and reorganization of working hours for paid and unpaid work so that family structures can become more flexible, transparent and realistic,
 - development of microelectronics and employment of women,
 - greater promotion of vocational training in occupations other than 'typical' women's occupations and guarantees of opportunities for the employment of women in these occupations after training (Preparatory Committee para. 5)
 - expansion of child-care facilities in the broadest sense, bearing in mind the equal responsibility of father and mother for the child, parental leave and general improvements and adaptation of commercial life and commuter traffic to the timetable of working women,
 - special consideration of the specific problems arising for female migrant workers,
 - awareness of and responsibility for the often severe difficulties of women in the Third World;
10. Urges not only the Commission but also the governments of the Member States to make available to the directly elected European Parliament documents and in particular the United Nations questionnaire duly completed, and suitable statistics to allow coordination of the preparatory work for the follow-up conference in Copenhagen in 1980;
11. Calls on the Commission to prepare a report on the legal position of women as regards pay, employment, education and training in the applicant states, with particular reference to any disparities which may exist with present Community legislation.
12. Also calls upon the Councils of Ministers of the European Community to report officially to the European Parliament on:

¹ See also the European Parliament's debate on the UN Convention on 14 March 1980 (Minutes or proceedings of the sitting of 14 March 1980, O.J. No. 85, 8 April 1980, p. 93).

² Preparatory Committee for the United Nations World Conference for the Decade for Women: equality, development and peace; seminar on the role of women in the economic development of the EEC 17 August - 7 September 1979

- the progress made in implementing the objectives of the Mexico Conference for the first half of the decade up to 1980,
 - their practical proposals and programmes for the second half of the decade to 1985, particularly in vocational training and employment,
 - practical actions to improve the position of women in the Third World, in particular in the ACP States which have been taken on Community level and which are intended to be taken in future;
13. Requests its Committee on Social Affairs and Employment to submit a report dealing extensively with the improvement of the position of women, in the light of the results and conclusions of the Copenhagen Conference, and calling on the Commission of the European Communities to present an action programme in this field;
14. Requests its President to bring this resolution to the attention of the Council and Commission.

At the end of the first five-year period (1975 - 1980) at least the following should have been achieved¹

Minimum objectives to be achieved by the end of the first five-year period (1975-1980)¹:

- (a) a distinct increase in literacy and in the social education of women, particularly in rural areas;
- (b) the expansion of mixed lower-level technical basic skills and for education and vocational training for men and women in agriculture and industry;
- (c) equal access to all levels of education, compulsory primary education and measures to prevent premature school-leaving;
- (d) increased job opportunities for women, a reduction in unemployment and greater efforts to eliminate discrimination in terms of employment and working conditions;
- (e) setting up and expanding much-needed infrastructure both in urban and rural areas;
- (f) introducing legislation on equality with regard to the right to vote and to stand for election, equal opportunities and condition of employment, including pay, and equal legal status both in theory and in practice;
- (g) encouraging participation by women on a larger scale in shaping policy at local, national and international level;
- (h) wider facilities for comprehensive measures in the fields of health, education, services, hygiene, nutrition, parenthood, family planning and other welfare services;
- (i) guaranteed parity in the exercise of civil, social and political rights, and rights concerning marriage, citizenship and business activities;
- (j) recognition of the economic value of women's work whether it be in the household, in the production and marketing of food, or in voluntary work, which is traditionally unpaid;
- (k) steering education (inside and outside school) and continuing education towards a re-evaluation of the roles of men and women in order to ensure their full development as individuals in family and society;
- (l) setting up, as an interim measure, of women's organizations within trade unions and educational, economic and professional institutions;

¹ WORLD PLAN OF ACTION - UN WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR, Mexico City, 19 June - 2 July 1975, Art. 46, 47 and 48, pp. 17/18 (Official Dutch text).

- (m) developing modern rural technology, cottage industries, day nurseries, time and energy saving devices to help reduce the heavy workload of women, particularly those living in rural areas and poor women living in urban areas, and providing facilities enabling women to make their voices heard on local, national and international issues;
- (n) setting up within the government of inter-disciplinary and multi-sectoral bodies to ensure that women more rapidly achieve equality of opportunity and full integration into national life.

These minimum objectives must be worked out in more specific terms as part of regional action programmes.

The active participation of women's non-governmental organizations is necessary to attain at all levels the objectives of the ten-year World Plan of Action to ensure that appropriate use is made of the help of volunteer experts, and to promote the creation and management of institutes, the execution of projects for the well-being of women and wider diffusion of information on improving their lot.

Recommendations submitted for the consideration of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations World Conference for the Decade for Women: equality, development and peace¹

1. Efforts must be redoubled to ensure equality of access for women to education, retraining and employment. Studies should be made of the experiences of countries which have already adopted specific measures to resolve these problems.
2. Measures should be taken to make the working day more flexible, particularly by reducing the number of working hours and adopting different work schedules.
3. When policies are being formulated there should be proper consideration of the effects of economic and technical developments on the opportunities for women in employment, education and training and on their working conditions.
4. Given that responsibility for children in general falls to society as a whole, efforts should continue to improve their situation. Employers and society as a whole should acknowledge that both father and mother have equal responsibilities for their children.
5. Efforts should be made to provide broader education and training with relevance to all sectors of the economy so that women entering and re-entering the job market are assured of a wider range of job opportunities.
6. The vocational advisory services for women leaving school and those reentering the job market must be improved and expanded.
7. A modular training system should be set up so that short and long-term vocational training courses are linked.
8. Efforts must be made to change the attitudes of parents, teachers, employers and women themselves with regard to careers for women.
9. So that there is better division of responsibilities within the family, the education system should provide family education courses for boys as well as for girls and education based on a stereotyped view of the sexes should be suppressed wherever it occurs.
10. There should be a closer examination of the problems connected with the increasing number of women among the migrant labour force.

¹A/CONF. 94/PC/11, French, page 2

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION (DOCUMENT 1-345/79/rev.)

tabled by Mrs MAIJ-WEGGEN, Mrs CASSANMAGNAGO CERRETTI, Mrs RABBETHGE, Mrs LENZ, Mrs GIAOTTI DE BIASE, Mrs BOOT, Mrs MOREAU, Mrs SCHLEICHER, and Mrs WALZ

on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party (Christian-Democratic Group)

Miss BROOKES, Lady ELLES, Miss HOOPER and Miss FORSTER

pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure on the position of women in the European Community

The European Parliament,

- whereas a United Nations world conference will be held from 14 to 30 July 1980 in Copenhagen as a follow-up to that held in Mexico City in 1975 in the context of International Women's Year;
- whereas an international action programme was adopted in Mexico City to promote action throughout the world in the decade 1975-1985 to check discrimination against women and foster their participation in all sectors of social life;
- whereas the conference in Copenhagen will examine the progress made within the framework of this international action programme in the field of health, employment and education;

1. Requests the Commission

- to draw up three reports on the position of women in the nine Member States of the Community, in regard to health, employment and education, in the light of the changes which have occurred in men and women's roles and responsibilities in the family and the society of today;
- to submit these reports in April 1980 to the parliamentary committees most directly concerned;

2. Resolves

- to devote a general debate to the position of women in the nine Member States during the part-session of June 1980;
- to send a parliamentary delegation to the United Nations world conference in Copenhagen;

3. Requests the President of the European Parliament to lead this delegation herself.