



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

From :	Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)
To :	Council (Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs)
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Subject :	Review of the implementation by the Member States and the EU institutions of the Beijing Platform for Action - Draft Council Conclusions

Referring to the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted during the United Nations World Conference on Women in 1995, the Italian Presidency has chosen to continue the work on the theme of female representation in economic decision-making centres, undertaken by the Greek Presidency, which developed a specific study together with data collection on this theme.

In particular, the Italian Presidency has developed a series of nine quantitative indicators, reliable in terms of data comparison, devoted to the measurement of the representation of women and men in economic decision-making centres.

Delegations will find attached in the Annex the text of the draft Council conclusions on which general agreement was reached by COREPER on 21 November 2003. A paper concerning the nine indicators put forward by the Italian Presidency can be found in the Addendum 1 to this document.

For the moment, all delegations, apart from the Irish and the United Kingdom delegations, maintain linguistic scrutiny reservations and the Danish delegation has a Parliamentary scrutiny reservation.

**Draft Council conclusions
on the review of the implementation by the Member States and the EU institutions
of the Beijing Platform for Action**

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Whereas:

1. Following the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the Madrid European Council (15 to 16 December 1995) requested an annual review of the implementation in the Member States of the Beijing Platform for Action.
2. The follow-up process in 1996 and 1997 revealed a need for more constant and systematic EU monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.
3. On 2 December 1998, the Council agreed that the annual assessment of the implementation of the Platform for Action would include a proposal on a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks.
4. On 22 October 1999, the Council therefore adopted conclusions which took note of the proposed indicators in relation to women's participation in power and the decision-making process.
5. The Council subsequently adopted conclusions concerning the "Reconciliation of family life and working life" (2000), "Unequal pay" (2001) and "Violence against women" (2002).

6. The conclusions adopted by the Council (2002) observed that the theme of women in the decision-making centres of the European Union should be brought up during the examination of the implementation in the following year (2003).
7. The Conference “Women in decision-making processes”, held in Syracuse on 12 September 2003, underlined the need to give all women the opportunity to access and improve their position in the labour market according to their qualifications.
8. This conference also underlined the necessity of renewed commitments and partnership between governments, social partners, private actors and political parties; of strengthening policies for reconciliation between work and family; of an active policy of gender mainstreaming at all levels; of the use of indicators and time-bound targets in order to assess progress in view of the 10th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2005.
9. The promotion of gender equality is one of the Community’s central tasks laid down in the Treaty.
10. The European Council of 20-21 March 2003 invited the Commission to prepare, in collaboration with the Member States, an annual report to the European Spring Council on developments towards gender equality and orientations for gender mainstreaming of policy areas.
11. The European Parliament called on relevant stakeholders to reinforce their actions in order to achieve a balanced representation of women and men in decision-making both in its resolution¹ on the "Representation of women among the social partners of the European Union" and in its resolution² on "Election 2004: How to ensure balanced representation of women and men".

¹ European Parliament Resolution (2002/2026 (INI))

² European Parliament Resolution (2003/2108 (INI))

12. In the Commission Decision³ on gender balance in expert groups and Committees set up by the Commission of May 2000, the Commission states its intention to have at least 40% of each sex in each of these committees and expert groups. The progress towards this goal is continuously monitored.
13. The European Commission is establishing a database on women and men in decision-making in politics, the economy, and social life. The database will be a tool to raising awareness and monitoring progress in the field of women and men in decision-making positions in the Member States, the EEA countries and the acceding countries.
14. The Commission intends to organise round tables in the Member States and the acceding countries, in order to raise awareness and enhance visibility as regards a balanced participation of women and men in the European Parliament in view of the forthcoming elections in June 2004.
15. The Greek Presidency of the EU carried out a comprehensive survey among the Member States concerning “Women in macroeconomic decision-making centres”.
16. On the basis of the Greek Presidency’s preparatory work in this area, the Italian Presidency has drawn up the following nine indicators concerning women and men in economic decision-making:
 1. The proportion and number of women and men among Governors and deputy/vice-governors of the Central Banks
 2. The proportion and number of women and men among members of the decision-making bodies of the Central Banks

³ Commission Decision (2000/407/EC)

3. The proportion and number of women and men among ministers and deputy ministers/vice-ministers of the Economic Ministries
4. The proportion and number of women and men among presidents and vice-presidents of the Labour Confederations
5. The proportion and number of women and men among members of total governing bodies of the Labour Confederations
6. The proportion and number of women and men among presidents and vice-presidents of the Employer Confederations
7. The proportion and number of women and men among members of total governing bodies of the Employer Confederations
8. The proportion and number of women and men among chiefs of executive boards of the top 50 firms publicly quoted on the national stock exchange
9. The proportion and number of women and men among members of executive boards of the top 50 firms publicly quoted on the national stock exchange.

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1. RECALLS in the process of economic decision-making that, following the Beijing Platform for Action, the lack of female participation represents an obstacle to achieving gender equality;
2. TAKES NOTE of the nine indicators proposed by the Italian Presidency for the future follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action regarding the representation of women and men in economic decision-making centres of the European Union;

3. INVITES forthcoming Presidencies to continue the follow-up of indicators on the representation of women and men in economic decision-making centres and to develop the process of establishing indicators through joint formulation of data collection aims and joint design of the tools needed;
4. RECALLS that the Member States have committed themselves to taking measures and developing proper indicators to support female representation in economic decision-making centres and encourages Member States to adopt the necessary actions;
5. INVITES the Member States to consider producing national data and progressively updating it so that statistics may regularly be produced, through the involvement of the National Statistical Institutes, on the nine indicators proposed by the Italian Presidency as well as on the other indicators relating to the topics of the Beijing Platform;
6. URGES Governments, involving relevant Ministries, to adopt further active measures, strategies and action plans with the aim of achieving a balanced representation of women and men in economic decision-making centres, and to take into account indicator follow-up, verifying the possibility of integrating these activities with actions devoted to increasing the female presence in centres of political decision-making;
7. EMPHASISES the need for a partnership between governments, social partners and all other actors to achieve a balanced representation of women and men at all levels of economic decision-making;
8. INTENDS during the forthcoming Presidencies and in connection with activities under the Community Framework Strategy on gender equality (2001-2005) and other EU Community activities, to continue developing indicators and comparative analysis to monitor female participation in the decision-making process and in other critical areas of concerns pointed out in the Beijing Platform for Action;

9. CONSIDERS reviewing the Member States' implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action acknowledging its 12 Chapters which deal with women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, human rights, and women and the media, women and armed conflict, women and the environment, the girl child, as well as violence against women, women and the economy, women in power and decision making and institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women;
10. INVITES forthcoming Presidencies to take into account the Syracuse conference "Women in decision-making processes", which in particular highlighted the need for a balanced representation in decision-making processes and the necessity of improving women's access to the labour market, equal pay and career progression;
11. UNDERTAKES regularly to review the progress achieved and invites the forthcoming Presidencies, in collaboration with Member States, to return to issues which have previously been discussed and assess progress in those areas with the help of the established indicators;
12. URGES the European Commission to take into account the issues discussed in the context of the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, for which indicators have already been adopted, in other Community processes, where appropriate;
13. URGES that the theme of "Sexual harassment at the Workplace" should be taken up when the Member States' implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action is next reviewed.
