



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**NOTE**

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from : Working Party on Social Questions  
to : Permanent Representatives Committee (Part I) / Council EPSCO

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Subject : **Review of the implementation by the Member States and the EU institutions  
of the Beijing Platform for Action**  
- **Indicators in respect of the Education and Training of Women**  
= **Draft Council Conclusions**

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In the context of the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted during the United Nations World Conference on Women in 1995, the German Presidency has chosen to work on "the Education and Training of Women" and has produced a report including a set of indicators.

Delegations will find attached in the Annex draft Council Conclusions on which general agreement was reached at the level of the Social Questions Working Party on 24 April 2007. The accompanying report from the German Presidency will be forwarded separately as Addendum 1 to this document.

**DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS**

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

**Education and training of women**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. RECOGNISING that:

- (a) gender equality is a fundamental principle of the European Union enshrined in the EC Treaty and one of the objectives and tasks of the Community and that mainstreaming equality between women and men in all its activities represents a specific mission for the Community;
- (b) gender equality policies are essential instruments for economic growth, prosperity and competitiveness and thus for the Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment;
- (c) the participation of women in science and technology can contribute to increasing innovation, quality and competitiveness of scientific and industrial research and that the balanced participation of women and men in this area will contribute to a decrease in the skills shortages experienced by the EU in those sectors;
- (d) the gender ratio when entering the tertiary educational system has reached equilibrium and on average women achieve a higher level of education/training than men, yet women often remain under-represented at the highest levels in academic and professional life;
- (e) the Education, Youth and Culture Council is pursuing a coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training.

2. CONSIDERING that:

Following the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the Madrid European Council (15 and 16 December 1995) requested an annual review of the implementation in the Member States of the Beijing Platform for Action, and subsequently

- (a) 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;
- (b) since 1999, sets of quantitative and qualitative indicators have been developed by subsequent Presidencies in some of the 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action, namely: Women in power and decision-making (1999); Women in the economy (reconciliation of work and family life) (2000); Women in the economy (equal pay) (2001); Violence against women (2002); Women and men in economic decision-making (2003); Sexual harassment at the workplace (2004); Women and health, (2006); and Institutional Mechanisms (2006). Each year the Council has adopted conclusions on these indicators;
- (c) in line with the European Council of 20 and 21 March 2003, the Commission prepares, in collaboration with the EU Member States, an annual report to the Spring European Council on developments towards gender equality and orientations for the gender mainstreaming of policy areas;
- (d) in the context of the 10-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action, the EU ministers responsible for gender equality and gender mainstreaming, meeting in Luxembourg on 4 February 2005, adopted a common declaration which, *inter alia*, reaffirms their strong support for and commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

- (e) in June 2005, the Council invited Member States and the Commission to strengthen institutional mechanisms for promoting gender equality and to create a framework to assess the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in order to create a more consistent and systematic monitoring of progress and invited the Commission to include the assessment of relevant indicators, developed for the follow-up of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, in its annual report to the Spring European Council;
- (f) the Beijing Platform for Action declares that “investing in formal and non-formal education and training for girls and women (...) has proved to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development and economic growth that is both sustained and sustainable”;
- (g) in the Beijing Platform for Action, Member States have declared education to be a human right, and committed themselves to creating non-discriminatory education in terms of environment and content for girls and women as well as boys and men, and to ensuring equal access to and attainment of educational qualifications;

Germany’s EU Presidency has prepared a report presenting the following three indicators concerning the education and training of women, focusing on areas that need particular attention as regards gender equality:

- (1) *Proportion of female graduates and male graduates of all graduates in mathematics, the sciences and technical disciplines (tertiary education)*

The indicator addresses the gender ratios in fields of studies that are considered as key areas for realising the Lisbon strategy for growth and employment and serves to assess progress towards the reduction of the unequal representation of women and men in mathematics, science and technology, as stipulated in the benchmark set by the Education, Youth and Culture Council (2003): “The total number of graduates in mathematics, science and technology in the European Union should increase by at least 15% by 2010, while at the same time the level of gender imbalance should decrease” ;

- (2) *Employment rate of women and men (aged between 25 and 39 years; and aged between 40 and 64) by highest level of education attained*

The indicator investigates the impact of educational attainment on employment for women and men, as well as the gap between the employment rates of women and men with the same level of educational attainment. The indicator helps to assess progress towards reaching the Lisbon employment target of a 60% employment rate for women by 2010, and also includes a qualitative dimension;

- (3a) *Proportion of female/male ISCED 5a-graduates of all ISCED 5a-graduates and proportion of female/male PhD graduates of all PhD graduates by broad field of study and total*

The indicator examines the gender ratio among highly qualified graduates as they reach the point of admission to advanced research programmes or of entry into employment, specifically research and development. Gender equality at the advanced research level is one of the prerequisites for an innovative and competitive R&D environment in the European Union;

- (3b) *Proportion of female and male academic staff differentiated by level of seniority and in total*

The indicator assesses the gender ratio at different levels of seniority in academia. A balanced distribution of women and men at all levels is crucial for the promotion of gender equality in research and development, in decision making in academia and research, and in tertiary education overall, including the contents of curricula.

### 3. RECALLING:

- (a) the commitment of the Member States to increase women's employment rate to 60% by 2010 and to redressing the gender imbalance in the field of education and training, in the context of the Lisbon Strategy (2000);

- (b) the commitment of the Member States to generating data disaggregated by sex as well as information for the evaluation of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action by the Member States;
  - (c) that the European Council, when adopting the European Pact for Gender Equality on 23/24 March 2006, encouraged actions at Member State and EU level to combat gender stereotypes, in particular those related to the sex-segregated labour market and in education;
  - (d) that eliminating gender stereotypes in education, training and culture as well as promoting the equal participation of women and men in science and technology are priority areas of action set out in the Commission's Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010, as adopted on 1 March 2006;
  - (e) that the Education, Youth and Culture Council in 2003 agreed on the following benchmark: "The total number of graduates in mathematics, science and technology in the European Union should increase by at least 15% by 2010, while at the same time the level of gender imbalance should decrease";
  - (f) that the Competitiveness Council of April 2005 invited the Member States to set the aim, as a first step, of increasing the proportion of women in leading positions in the public sector to 25%, and of boosting their participation in industrial research and technology;
4. TAKES NOTE of the report on gender equality in education and training presented by the German EU Presidency and of the three indicators for the future follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action regarding the critical area of education and training of women, in particular, higher education and research;
5. WELCOMES the fact that the Member States have made efforts and achieved progress towards realising the strategic objective of the Beijing Platform for Action concerning the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in education and training, i.e. the gender ratio when entering the tertiary educational system has reached equilibrium and on average women reach a higher formal educational attainment than men;

6. STRESSES that gender stereotypes nevertheless persist in education and training systems and continue to influence the choices of girls and women as well as boys and men in regard to subject of study, area of training and level of educational and training attainment and thus affect the employment possibilities, career development, pay and lives of girls and women as well as boys and men, often with negative repercussions on girls and women;
7. STRESSES that women are still under-represented in decision-making-positions in the educational system, particularly in research and the academic world;
8. URGES the Member States to promote gender equality and to implement gender mainstreaming in their education and training policies at all levels, including measures to ensure equal access and participation for women and men, a gender-sensitive educational environment as well as unbiased content in education, and to eliminate all kinds of direct or indirect discrimination in education and training, in academic institutions and in all regulations regarding educational or academic advancement, as well as in employment;
9. ENCOURAGES the Member States to combat gender stereotypes in the context of education and training at all levels from an early age, fostering gender equality awareness among students, parents and teachers, including those dealing with career orientation, and encouraging young women and men to choose non-traditional educational fields and occupations, in particular, in order to reduce horizontal segregation at the tertiary educational level and in the labour market;
10. ENCOURAGES the Member States to ensure gender mainstreaming in curricula as well as in research programmes; urges the Member States and the Commission to ensure, monitor and promote gender mainstreaming in the European research policy, including the 7th Framework Programme, and to take measures to avoid the reproduction of gender stereotypes while programming and implementing activities financed by the European Social Fund and by EU Programmes such as Progress, Daphne, and the EU Programmes on youth, culture and lifelong learning, as well as the programme “Europe for citizens”;

11. ENCOURAGES the Member States to promote the equal participation of men and women at the decision-making level in education and research, and to make every effort to reach the target formulated by the Competitiveness Council of 2005;
12. WELCOMES the Commission's recent activities regarding the reconciliation of work, private and family life, particularly those included in the Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010 and the consultation of the European Social Partners on the reconciliation of professional, private and family life;
13. URGES the Member States to adopt appropriate policies to reconcile work and family life as well as family life and education and training, particularly with regard to lifelong learning, to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the targets of the Barcelona European Council 2002 in the field of child care facilities, and to take concrete measures to ensure that parenting and other care responsibilities are shared equally between men and women, namely by encouraging men to take up their family leave entitlements, including through the development of parental leave entitlements for fathers, financial support as well as information and awareness-raising initiatives;
14. ENCOURAGES the Member States to implement gender mainstreaming while formulating and evaluating policies for further promoting lifelong-learning possibilities for men and women;
15. URGES the Member States to take concrete measures to implement gender mainstreaming while developing policies for the integration of migrant girls and women as well as migrant boys and men into the education system in order to overcome gender stereotypes;
16. WELCOMES the foundation of the European Institute for Gender Equality and INVITES the Member States to further improve the collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of timely, reliable and comparable data disaggregated by sex and age, especially through the involvement of the National Statistical Institutes, so that statistics and information on the three indicators proposed by the German Presidency, as well as statistical information on other indicators relating to the topics of the Beijing Platform, can be regularly produced and regular reviews conducted;

17. ENCOURAGES the monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action on “Women and poverty”, “The girl child”, as well as the other remaining areas of concern;
  
  18. URGES the Member States and the 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, and INVITES the Member States and the Commission to regularly review progress on those issues.
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