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Commission staff working paper

Roadmap for equality between women and men (2006-2010)
2009-2010 Work Programme

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Roadmap for equality between women and men (2006-2010), adopted in March 2006[1], defined the Commission's commitments to gender equality for the period 2006-2010. To monitor the implementation of the Roadmap actions, two work programmes were drawn up[2], and a mid-term progress report was adopted at the end of 2008[3].

This document is the third and last work programme before the preparation of a renewed framework for equality between women and men. The aim is to monitor the actions implemented in 2008 and at the beginning of 2009, and to set out the actions that the Commission services will implement in 2009 and 2010. This work programme is drafted with contributions from all Directorates-General and contains in annex a scoreboard to monitor the activities implemented (references in italics in the text).

The Roadmap ends in 2010, when a final evaluation is due to accompany the preparation of a new framework for gender equality policies.

It should be noted that this work programme is drawn up in the context of a severe economic downturn, which has a significant impact on employment and social prospects, and entails the risk that the situation of women, in particular, will be affected. Fierce competition for public spending could also lead to a redefinition of priorities in the Union, and to less attention being devoted to gender equality policies.

2. MAIN ACTIONS CARRIED OUT IN 2008 AND FORECAST FOR 2009-2010

2.1. Achieving equal economic independence for women and men

2.1.1. Achieving the Lisbon employment targets (A1)

The analysis of the trends in the improvement of the integration of women in the labour market carried out in 2008 showed that the female employment rate has risen (58.3%) and is now closer to the Lisbon target (of 60% by 2010). However, as stated in the Joint Employment Report[4], "most countries are still far from adopting a full gender-mainstreaming approach to employment policies, notably through systematic gender impact assessment of policy measures". Despite the fact that gender had a limited profile in the recommendations

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1 COM(2006) 92 final
2 SEC(2007) 537, SEC(2008) 338
3 COM(2008) 760 final
4 Document of the Council of the EU 7435/09

that were proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council[5], the Commission has underlined for most Member States, in its detailed analysis of the employment policies of the Member States[6], a number of challenges linked to female employment or to reconciling work, private and family life. In order to promote a better application of the gender mainstreaming principle by Member States, the Manual for gender mainstreaming: employment, social inclusion and social protection policies has been translated into 21 EU languages.[7]

A Communication entitled "New skills for new jobs - anticipating and matching labour market and skills needs"[8] was adopted in 2008 to examine how to achieve a better match of skills and labour market needs. It pointed out that the educational and professional choices of young men and women continue to be influenced by traditional gender paths. Reducing gender imbalances in sectors and occupations could partly address future skills shortages, for example in technical and managerial occupations.

2009 is the last year before the new Lisbon cycle that is due to start in 2010, and the economic downturn will inevitably have an impact on its preparation. There remains a need for better and wider gender mainstreaming in all policies, as well as a need to develop objectives in relation to gender; these are likely to include female employment, reduction of gender gaps in employment, unemployment and pay, gender segregation, and reconciling work, private and family life.

2.1.2. Eliminating the gender pay gap (A2)

In an economic crisis it is particularly important that all stakeholders support gender equality in the labour market. In 2008, the Commission has been active in addressing the gender pay gap through legislative and non legislative activities.

Equal pay for equal work of equal value is a fundamental principle of the EU, enshrined in the founding Treaties. Following one of the actions identified in the 2007 Communication on the subject of the gender pay gap[9], the Commission undertook to conduct an analysis of this current legislative framework. The results of an external study were presented at a conference in March 2009. On the basis of this analysis, the Commission will decide whether there is a need to amend the legislation in order to complement it and/or make it more effective.

A major communication campaign[10] has been launched on the occasion of the International Women's Day 2009. The target audience is the general public, but also employers and workers.

One of the main goals of the campaign is to raise awareness among citizens, employees and employers of the different causes of the gender pay gap and how it can be tackled. To this

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5 Document du Conseil de l'UE 6457/09 http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st06/st06457.en09.pdf

6 Implementation of the Lisbon Strategy Structural Reforms in the context of the European Economic Recovery Plan: Annual country assessments – a detailed overview of progress made with the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy reforms in Member States in 2008: http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/pdf/european-dimension-200812-annual-progress-report/annualass_detail.pdf

7 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/booklets/equality/equality_2008_en.htm

8 COM(2008) 868/3

9 COM/2007/424 final

10 Http://ec.europa.eu/equalpay

end, the visual concept of the campaign focuses on the working lifecycle of women and men. Non-legislative measures to support and encourage gender equality at the workplace are also being studied.

Eurostat has implemented a new methodology (based on the SES - Structure of Earnings Survey) in order to obtain a harmonised and comparable measure of the unadjusted gender pay gap among Member States. It has also launched a study on econometric methods to evaluate the Gender Pay Gap using SES data; that study will be available in 2009.

2.1.3. Women entrepreneurs (A15, A5)

In order to increase female entrepreneurship, three lines of action have been developed. They are: better access of women to finance, development of female entrepreneurial networks and the adoption of the "Small Business Act"[11] and they present, for the first time, a comprehensive policy framework for SMEs. The Act provides for measures to establish an EU network of female entrepreneurship ambassadors and to promote entrepreneurship among women graduates. Female entrepreneurship is also encouraged through the adoption in 2008 of a Regulation[12] regarding block exemption for State aids, notably in the case of small enterprises created by women entrepreneurs.

In 2010, in the framework of the Small Business Act, mentoring will be promoted to inspire women to set up their own enterprise and also contribute to the growth and jobs potential.

Practices aimed at encouraging greater equality between women and men have also been supported in the context of the business-led European Alliance for corporate social responsibility (CSR) with laboratories on "mainstreaming diversity in the company" and "equality between women and men". A study on women innovators and entrepreneurship was also finalised in 2008 to analyse how to make better use of women's potential and their contribution to Europe's competitiveness.

2.1.4. Gender equality in social protection and the fight against poverty (A1, A7)

The mainstreaming of gender aspects in the National Strategy Reports on social protection and social inclusion presented by the Member States in the autumn of 2008 showed, as the 2009 Joint Report concluded[13], that gender considerations feature more prominently than in the past, but could be mainstreamed more consistently. It is also acknowledged that the gender pension gap is expected to persist in the future and might become even wider. In order to take this situation into account when defining future policies, the impact of pension systems on women has been analysed and the legal aspect of gender equality in social protection is being studied.

Gender issues have also been identified as a general principle to be taken into account in the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in 2010. Member States should explain how gender will be included in their National Strategies to implement the objectives of the EU year.

2.1.5. Recognising the gender dimension in health (A4)

A Communication is being prepared on the subject of solidarity in health to reduce health inequalities in the EU. As gender inequalities in health are still a persistent problem, the Communication will also aim at tackling mainstream gender issues in health and other policies. The access of women and men to healthcare and long-term care, reproductive health and women's health in general is also being studied.

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[11] COM/2008/0394 final

[12] Commission Regulation (EC) 800/2008 OJ L 214, p 3

[13] COM(2009) 58 final

2.1.6. Combating multiple discrimination, in particular against immigrant and ethnic minority women (A3, A9)

In July 2008, the Commission adopted a new Communication on non-discrimination and equal opportunities[14], which has highlighted the need to mainstream gender issues as a way of tackling multiple discriminations. The accompanying Staff Working Paper[15] sets out the instruments available at Community level for the social inclusion of the Roma, and gender aspects have been identified in each of the themes addressed.

A study of the labour market situation of migrant women concluded that third-country migrant women face multiple disadvantages compared to native-born women and third-country migrant men, and that third-country migrant women are concentrated in low-skilled sectors. The definition of the strategy on migration policy[16] took this situation into account, particularly as regards the participation of women in the labour market and the protection of women who are victims of trafficking. As part of the implementation of the policy plan on legal migration, legislative proposals[17] have been presented aiming at harmonising the admission procedures, criteria and rights of certain categories of third-country nationals. The so-called "Blue Card Directive"[18], lays down attractive conditions for entry and residence of third-country nationals for highly qualified employment. The Commission will present two proposals for directives on seasonal workers and intra-corporate transferees. Also, a proposal for a directive on remunerated trainees, which modifies Directive 2004/114/EC, will be presented following the report on the evaluation of the implementation of this Directive, to be issued in 2010.

The negotiation of the draft directive on a single permit and a common set of rights for third country workers is ongoing in the Council.

Under the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (2007-2013)[19], annual calls for national programmes are launched and Community actions are carried out. Measures in 2008 have addressed the specific needs of women.

2.1.7. Role of European Funds for cohesion policy, rural development and fisheries (2007-2013) (A 10, 11, 12, 13)

Under the terms of the European Funds 2007-2013 for cohesion policy[20] the Member States must integrate equality objectives to facilitate access to employment, education and training, promote participation in decision-making and strengthen the reconciliation of working and family life in their national programmes. An evaluation was launched to analyse the impact of ESF on gender equality for the period 2000-2006 and a study will be looking at whether those priorities have actually been integrated during the period 2007-2013. The HLG on gender mainstreaming in Structural Funds has organised its work so as to promote exchanges of

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14 COM(2008) 420 final
15 SEC(2008) 2172 final
16 COM(2008) 359 final
17 COM(2007) 637 final
18 Council Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment adopted by the Council on 25 May 2009
19 2007/435/EC (25/06/2007)
20 Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund

practices on key policy themes of the Roadmap. The Funds for rural development[21] and fisheries[22] also encourage Member States to promote gender equality. The Commission is following up the implementation of this priority in the national programmes.

As part of the response to the economic crisis, legislative changes have been made to the Funds' Regulations to make it easier for the Member States to rapidly implement support to all policies that are designed to help people get jobs, keep jobs and avoid falling into poverty and social exclusion.

2.2. Enhancing reconciliation of work, private and family life

2.2.1. Flexible working arrangements and better reconciliation policies for women and men (B4, B5)

The Commission presented a framework communication in order to provide "stronger support for reconciling professional, private and family life"[23] and to achieve the Union's growth and employment objectives.

In October 2008, after consulting the European Social Partners, the Commission presented as part of this package two legislative proposals[24] to modernise the current relevant legislation in the field of reconciliation between private and professional life. It was proposed to update the Directive on maternity protection and maternity leave[25] in order to increase the minimum length of maternity leave from 14 to 18 weeks and establishing the principle of full pay. A proposal for a directive was also presented to ensure equal treatment for self-employed workers and assisting spouses and to entitle them to maternity leave.[26] Furthermore, in 2009 the social partners reached an agreement to adapt the current framework on parental leave to evolving family structures and to encourage fathers to take a greater share of family responsibilities.

The availability of statistics has improved with the agreement on the contents of the 2010 Labour Force Survey ad hoc module on "reconciliation work and family life", and the corresponding Regulation has been adopted[27]. Moreover, Eurostat will shortly be releasing a publication analysing the 2005 module on the same subject.

In addition, the working group of experts on reconciling work and private life and on "dual careers" in the area of Science and Technology in the private sector has analysed the correlation between women's scientific or engineering career "leaky pipeline" and work/life balance policies. A final report on the "leaky pipeline and work/life balance policies" entitled "Women in science and technology: Creating sustainable careers" will be published in May 2009. Also to support women's careers in science, the language used by companies in marketing and recruitment material was checked to ascertain whether it is biased or gender stereotyped.

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21 Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005
22 Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006
23 COM(2008) 635 final
24 COM (2008) 636 and 637
25 Directive 92/85/EEC
26 Directive 86/613/EC
27 Regulation (EC) No 20/2009 of 13 January 2009

2.2.2. Increasing care services (B2)

The Commission has reported[28] on the progress made by the Member States in improving the availability of childcare facilities in line with the targets agreed at the Barcelona European Council in 2002 (for 90% of children between the age of three and school age and for 33% of children aged under three). This assessment has been possible thanks to the availability, since 2008, of harmonised EU figures on childcare facilities. In its report, the Commission calls on the Member States and other stakeholders (social partners, companies) to make further progress in the provision of quality and affordable childcare services. It also underlines the EU's support in this process through political commitment and monitoring, EU funding possibilities and exchange of successful national policies.

In 2008, the Commission launched a programme of exchanges of good practices to reinforce the potential for countries to learn from each other, to develop synergies, both in partnership with the Commission and, where appropriate, with social partners and NGOs, in order to achieve the objective of the Roadmap. The first two exchanges were organised to transfer successful experiences on childcare (Slovenia) and parental leave (Iceland)[29].

Pre-primary education is also a priority of the European cooperation in education and training, as set out in the Updated strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training[30]. This cooperation will promote generalised equitable access and reinforce the quality of provision and teacher support. To support this objective, the Council agreed on a benchmark on pre-primary education especially in the case of those from disadvantaged backgrounds: by 2020, at least 95% of children between 4 years old and the age for starting compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education[31].

The gender dimension is an important one for the socio-economic research conducted under the Research Framework Programmes. A policy synthesis of research results of a series of FP4 and FP5 socio-economic projects on the common themes of family and welfare is available[32]. The changing relationship between work, care and welfare in Europe has been researched in the recently completed WORKCARE[33] project (focusing on the care of children in households). A "social platform" on research on families and family policies will support the European Commission in defining a future research agenda in this area, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and policy-makers. A European Data Centre[34] on Work and Welfare gives information on and direct links to comparative and national, quantitative and qualitative data on work and welfare and closely related fields.

The Commission has encouraged the use of Structural Funds measures, in particular by publishing a brochure on funding family-friendly actions and through the exchange of practices regarding child-care and care for dependent persons in the High Level Group on gender mainstreaming in the Structural Funds.

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28 COM(2008) 638 final
29 http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=574&langId=en
30 COM (2008) 865 final
31 2941th Education, youth and culture Council meeting
32 http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/policy-review-series-02_en.html
33 http://www.abdn.ac.uk/socsci/research/nec/workcare
34 http://www.edacwowe.eu

2.2.3. Challenges of demographic changes for gender equality (B1)

Family policies were analysed in the 2008 demography report[35], including the gender gap in life expectancy, to describe new trends in family situations and the state of play of family policies. The second demographic forum, held in November 2008, provided policy makers and stakeholders with the opportunity to discuss recent developments and best practices in the fields of active ageing and family policies within the European Union. Furthermore, the Forum reviewed where Member States stood as regards responding to the challenges of demographic change. The Commission is also continuing to encourage the exchange process implemented by the European Alliance for Families and will conduct a series of assessments and seminars related to family situations and policies. A specific focus will be directed at the assessment of the family policies framework prepared by OECD, as regards several objectives which will include: gender equality; impact of social and professional difficulties of young people and particularly women on family projects, and the role of women in promoting active ageing, following the Council conclusions in June 2009. Best practice meetings on regional and national family policies (for example, child care by childminders in France) will take place, as well as studies on family situation and policies.

2.3. Gender-balanced participation in decision-making

2.3.1. Women's participation in politics and in economic decision making (C1, 2)

The Commission is continuing to update and improve its database on women and men in decision-making[36] and to report regularly on the situation and trends. As 2009 is an important year for the EU (European Parliament elections, appointment of a new European Commission and nominations to various high-profile posts in the European Institutions), particular emphasis has been placed on the issue of gender balance in politics. In this context, the European Commission's services published and widely disseminated an expert report, entitled "Women in European politics – time for action"[37]. The report covers the gender balance in politics at all levels and examines the situation of women as elected representatives, the extent to which they are selected as candidates for election, how this links to electoral success and some of the reasons behind the limited progress to date. The report also presents an analysis of the situation in other areas, including business and public administration. The report confirms that, while there has been undeniable progress, women are still under-represented in all spheres of power in the majority of Member States, as well as within the EU institutions.

The participation of women in political life was also a theme developed in 2008 in the Europe for Citizens programme with a view to the 2009 European Parliament elections. Greater involvement of women in democratic processes is one of the priorities of a Europe for citizens.[38] Initiatives have been taken[39] in support of debates on European issues and the participation of young people and women in European Parliament elections so that they can convey their aspirations for Europe. A brochure[40] was prepared in 2009 to make women more sensitive to the importance of voting in EP elections and covering Europe's contribution to gender equality and to the interests of women. Actions were also directed at women's

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35 SEC(2008) 2911
36 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/women_men_stats/index_en.htm
37 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/booklets/equality/pdf/ke8109543_en.pdf
38 Decision No 1904/2006/EC
39 COM(2005) 494 and COM(2008) 158
40 http://ec.europa.eu/publications/booklets/others/80/index_en.htm

magazines. A Eurobarometer on Women and European Parliamentary Elections[41] was also published in 2009.

In June 2008, the European Commission launched a European Network to promote women in decision-making in politics and the economy[42] which brings together representatives of European networks active in the field and provides a platform for co-operation, exchange of information and experience, mutual learning and sharing of best practice at European level. The Network has already met four times[43], in particular to discuss issues such as mentoring, networking and role models, and their importance in helping women to progress in their careers. The results of the Network's discussions highlighting examples of good practice will be published in 2010.

In 2009, a Czech Presidency conference, co-financed by the Commission, included a panel discussion to raise awareness and exchange best practice on the issue of gender balance in decision-making.

2.3.2. Women in science and technology (C3, 4)

The promotion of gender equality under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research[44] is a two-tier process. Women's participation and the relevance of gender in specific research topics are encouraged and highlighted in the work programmes which are prepared yearly. In addition, large projects are encouraged to include gender equality actions (costs which are covered by the project funding). In order to facilitate the inclusion of gender issues, a training toolkit is being prepared to inform the scientific community and the research administrators about the gender relevance of certain research topics Projects will be funded to identify best practices in gender management in research institutions, introducing a new focus on the structural change that the research institutions have to face. A European conference was co-organised with the Czech Presidency in May 2009 on "Changing research landscapes to make the most of human potential - 10 Years of EU activities in Women in Science - and beyond"[45]. It has provided an opportunity to highlight the diversity and gender management solutions that private and public research institutions are implementing to improve their efficiency, with a view to adapting and transferring them in other institutions and/or countries.

The report "Mapping the maze: Getting more women to the top in research" has reviewed positive actions and gender equality measures at institutional and national level to promote women. In addition, the data on the female research workforce in universities broken down by gender ('She Figures') are regularly updated: a short leaflet will be available in May 2009 and the next publication is due to appear at the end of 2009. In May 2009, a further report will be published on selection procedures for the allocation of research funds (Gender challenge in research funding).

Actions to reduce gender inequalities in scientific education were promoted in the World Economic Forum in Davos. To encourage young girls to follow studies and subsequent careers in ICT, the shadowing initiative continued for the third year producing a video addressing young people. A Code of Best practice for Women and ICT was launched in March 2009 at

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41 http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_en.htm
42 http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=418&langId=en
43 June, October and December 2008 and April 2009
44 Decision No 1982/2006/EC
45 http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.topic&id=27

the conference commemorating International Women's Day. The Code is the result of the co-operation of the ICT industry and the Commission. In the same conference young girls discussed what they thought were the barriers for technological studies and a career in the ICT sector. The statistical report on Women in ICT is being updated to include the latest data available from Eurostat.

Through the "Education and Training 2010" work programme, the Commission and the Member States have monitored the total number of graduates in maths, science and technology, which should increase by at least 15% and the gender imbalance in these subjects, which should be reduced.

2.4. Eradicating gender-based violence and trafficking in human beings

2.4.1. Eradication of gender-based violence (D3, D5)

Gender-based violence will be a priority for the Union during the Spanish Presidency in the first half of 2010, when Council conclusions on gender-based violence are due to be adopted.

The Daphne III programme[46] supports actions to prevent and combat all forms of violence, particularly through the funding of projects. Studies on female genital mutilation and on the legislation against violence, as well as a eurobarometer survey, will be conducted in 2009 to gain a better knowledge of citizens' perceptions and the role of legislation.

In March 2009, the Commission adopted a Proposal for a new Council Framework Decision on combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, aimed at stepping up prosecution of criminal, protection of child victims and prevention of offences

The European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) presented on 25 March a new report on ‘Developing indicators for the protection, respect and promotion of the rights of the child in the European Union’. This study proposes a comprehensive series of indicators to measure child rights across the EU, also in the area of protection from exploitation and violence.

Gender-based violence is also a priority of the "Youth in action" programme which supports projects to combat violence against women.

As part of the programme of exchange of good practices between Member States, one focus in 2009 will be on gender violence (Spain).

2.4.2. Elimination of trafficking in human beings (D1, D2, D4)

The majority of victims of trafficking are women and children. The monitoring and evaluation of Union's action plan on best practices, standards and procedures for combating trafficking in human beings was adopted[47] and determines the short-term actions and the new strategy post-2009. In March 2009, the Commission adopted a Proposal for a new Framework Decision on trafficking in human beings, aimed at further developing legislation and penalties, ensuring successful prosecution, better protection and assistance to victims, favouring effective prevention.

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[46] Decision No 779/2007/EC

[47] COM(2008)657

The common framework for defining indicators and collecting data on trafficking in human beings is being implemented. A survey conducted amongst practitioners and experts was published in 2008. The cooperation with Eurostat on data availability will continue and the initiatives in this field will be coordinated. The fundamental Rights Agency has presented an in-depth study on child trafficking in 2009[48].

2.5. Eliminating gender stereotypes

2.5.1. Elimination of gender stereotypes in education, training and culture (E1, E4)

Gender stereotypes are still a main root cause of inequalities between women and men which need to be addressed in education schemes from the earliest stage. To implement the Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013), projects are focusing on themes directly linked to gender equality, such as gender stereotypes and reproductive health, or are intended to adopt a mainstreaming approach by including a gender equality dimension. Equality between women and men is being mainstreamed in the preparation of the EU Strategy for Youth due to be adopted in 2009. The Lifelong Learning programme aimed at European cooperation in the fields of education and training (encompassing school, higher and adult education and vocational education and training), includes among its objectives the reduction of gender inequalities.

Attention is also being paid to gender equality in the preparation of the Communication on University-Business cooperation in 2009, in order to combat gender segregation and to improve gender governance in this field.

Tackling gender inequalities in education is among the priorities of the Swedish Presidency. The European Commission has also commissioned two reports on this subject. The report of the Network of Experts in the Social Sciences of Education (NESSE) will provide a summary of key conclusions from a large body of research on this topic and their implications for policy development. The EURYDICE network is currently working on a report on gender and education, with a mapping of relevant experiences in Member States.

2.5.2. Elimination of gender stereotypes in the labour market (E2)

Overcoming gender stereotypes and applying gender equality messages at the workplace can help SMEs gain a competitive advantage. The final conference on the initiative "Raising the awareness of companies about combating gender stereotypes" was held in November 2008. It provided an opportunity to disseminate the Training Toolkit for SME advisors and human resource managers, as well as a website, posters, leaflets and video clips with best practices from SMEs[49].

In the context of the programme for the exchange of good practices between Member States, one focus in 2009 will be on gender stereotypes (Germany).

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48 http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/news&events/infocus09_0707_en.htm

49 http://www.businessandgender.eu/

2.5.3. Elimination of gender stereotypes in the media (E3)

The AVMS (Audiovisual Media Services) Directive[50] is due to be transposed into national law by the end of 2009. It prohibits discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in commercial communications. As a result, this ban will apply to both linear (broadcast) and non-linear (video on demand) audiovisual media services. An independent analysis of the compliance by Member States with the qualitative rules on advertising, including those on non-discrimination based on gender, will be carried out for five Member States in 2009. As from 2010, the monitoring will be extended to include both broadcasting and video on demand services.

2.6. Promoting gender equality outside the EU

2.6.1. Enforcement of EU legislation in acceding, candidate and potential candidate countries (F1, F2)

Technical assistance and training were provided to candidate countries and potential candidate countries to align themselves with the *acquis communautaire* on gender equality. A seminar on gender equality was held in Turkey and a study tour to Brussels on Women in business, which dealt with non-discrimination and gender equality, was organised in the context of the TAIEX People-to-People programme for civil society organisations from the Western Balkans. The yearly Progress reports also addressed gender issues and will be continued in 2009. Accession negotiations on the negotiating chapter "Social policy and employment", which also covers equal opportunities, are expected to be provisionally closed with Croatia and to be opened with Turkey in 2009, provided that the necessary conditions are met. On the basis of an invitation by the Council, the Commission will prepare opinions, also addressing gender equality, based on possible EU membership applications. An opinion on Montenegro's membership application submitted in December 2008 is due to be prepared in the course of 2010.

2.6.2. Promotion of gender equality in the European Neighbourhood Policy, External and Development policies (F3-12)

On a global level, in 2008, the 53rd Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was held in New York to address ‘The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS’ as the priority theme, and agreed conclusions were adopted. The CSW also addressed other significant and timely topics such as: “The gender perspectives of the financial crisis” and “Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels”; an EU side event on "Reconciling family and professional life: the EU approach" also took place. During its 54th session, the CSW will review the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing + 15) and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals. *(F7)*

On a policy level, the Communication on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation will be followed by the adoption, in 2010, of the joint EU Plan of

[50] Directive 2007/65/EC

Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the External Actions which will aim to translate policy into action. *(F10)*

The new "Comprehensive Approach of the European Union to the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security ", jointly prepared by the European Commission and the Council Secretariat and adopted by EU Ministers for Foreign Affairs on 8 December 2008, aims at further strengthening the effectiveness of EU work in the area of women, peace and security. It presents a vision of the role and obligations of the EU in protecting women in conflict situations and in facilitating their pro-active role as peace-builders. In March 2008, an international conference was organised on the theme "Women: Stabilising an Insecure World". As a follow-up to this conference, it was proposed to the UN Secretary General to organise a ministerial level meeting in 2010 to reinforce the commitment to the implementation of SC resolution 1325. Furthermore, the implementation of resolution 1325 has been identified as one of the areas of co-operation between the EU and the African Union in the framework of the Joint Partnership on democratic governance and human rights. *(F8)*

2008 also saw the adoption of the "EU Human Rights Guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them" which confirm the commitment of the EU to prioritise actions to promote and protect women's rights in the overall EU human rights policy in third countries. These Guidelines, in particular, foresee that the EU will continue to raise the subject of violence against women and the discrimination from which such violence originates in its human rights dialogues and consultations with third countries. The December 2008 Annual EU-NGOs Forum on Human Rights discussed in depth the role and involvement of civil society in implementing the Guidelines.

The EU has reaffirmed the principles relating to gender equality in the European consensus on humanitarian aid[51] and is committed to promoting active participation of women and incorporating protection strategies against sexual and gender-based violence in all aspects of humanitarian interventions. In accordance with its action plan,[52] an external review of gender issues, including strategies against sexual and gender-based violence and sexual violence in humanitarian interventions, has been finalised. In addition, internal guidelines for funding humanitarian protection activities have been established. *(F6)*

In 2010, the 10th European Development Fund Country Strategy Papers will be reviewed. To ensure that gender equality is effectively mainstreamed in the mid-term review, gender mainstreaming guidelines[53] have been drawn up. *(F4)*

The EU has consistently supported the Mediterranean partner countries in promoting equality between women and men. The programme on the Role of Women in Economic Life (RWEL)[54] has come to an end. Building on the achievements of RWEL, a new Regional Gender Equality Programme (EGEP) has started in the region aimed at opening a space for discussion between the partners to ensure implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In addition to promoting the exchange of best practices among countries, the Programme creates synergies with other EC initiatives in the region, in particular "Investing in people" which has provided grants to civil

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51 OJ C 25, 30.1.2008, p. 1

52 SEC (2008) 1991

53 http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/F43_genderequality_fin_en.pdf

54 http://www.roleofwomenineconomiclife.net/

society organisations working on women's rights. A new call for proposals will be launched in 2009. A stock-taking exercise on the Istanbul Framework of Action on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society (2006) will take place in 2009. *(F3)*

In September 2008, donors and partners countries agreed on the Accra Agenda for Action on Aid effectiveness which includes commitments on gender equality. The Commission has been at the forefront of the efforts to link up the gender equality and aid effectiveness agendas. The EC/UN (Unifem and ITC/ILO) Partnership on Gender Equality for Development and Peace has generated significant findings on aid effectiveness and gender equality in 12 pilot countries. The EC/ UN Partnership will continue by supporting in-country and regional capacities to bring a stronger gender equality perspective to aid effectiveness. Resources, material and practice are published in an interactive website (www.gendermatters.eu).

The EC/UNIFEM programme "Integrating gender responsive budgeting into the aid effectiveness agenda", funded by the EC Thematic Programme "Investing in People" and launched in early 2008, has also been a valuable resource for generating knowledge on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) Tools and Strategies and their potential in the context of the aid effectiveness agenda and new aid modalities. *(F9)*

The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)[55] gives priority to the promotion of gender equality as a cross-cutting theme in all of its call for proposals. Furthermore, a call for proposals targeting regional and transnational projects was launched in 2008, "Strengthening the role of civil society in promoting human rights and democratic reform, in facilitating the peaceful reconciliation of group interests and in consolidating political participation and representation" giving a specific emphasis on the equal participation of men and women in social, economic and political life. European Commission Delegations also launch country based calls for proposals under the EIDHR and of which some focus on the promotion of gender equality.

The thematic programme "Investing in people"[56] has supported the Liberian International Colloquium on Women's Leadership as well as non-State actors in promoting women's ownership rights and countering adult female illiteracy. Moreover, "Investing in People" has supported gender mainstreaming in the health and vocational training sectors.

The yearly progress reports on the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans continued to address the issue of gender equality as well as the promotion of the role of women in social, political and economic life. Exchanges of best practices were carried out in the framework of the TAIEX instrument. In addition, the on-going negotiations on upgrading relations with some of the ENP partners contain a number of provisions on the need to ensure gender equality, social dialogue, sustainable development and sound application of fundamental labour standards.

Gender training sessions, as well as on-line gender training, were organised in EC delegations and in Brussels. Training on gender in the new aid modalities with the UN, within the EC/UN Partnership on Gender Equality for Development and Peace, was prepared. In 2009, thematic training sessions will also be held on the themes of women in conflict, peace and development. *(F7)*

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55 Regulation (EC) No 1889/2006

56 COM(2006) 18 final

Sustainable development and the application of fundamental labour standards in EU trade policy will involve gender equality issues, with the indicators on "decent work" being developed in cooperation with the ILO.*(F11)*

3. IMPROVED GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING *(G1-13, H1-4)*

Progress is being made regarding governance and cooperation with the relevant stakeholders. The Commission has collaborated with the Member States within the High-Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. The Group has concentrated its work on the follow-up of the Commission's Roadmap for Gender Equality, the European Pact for Gender Equality adopted in March 2006 and the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). Its meetings have also provided an opportunity to debate a wide range of policy issues and to co-ordinate the work of the EU Presidencies on gender equality. To ensure high visibility, coherence and continuity between the work of Presidencies on gender equality, a Presidency declaration and a common programme for the second Trio of Presidencies (France, Czech Republic and Sweden) were jointly endorsed (2008). In 2009, an important deliverable will be the drawing up of a report reviewing the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing+15). In 2010, it is expected that the next Trio of Presidencies (Spain, Belgium and Hungary) will agree on a common programme on gender equality for their Presidencies.

At the request of the European Council, the European Commission reports each year on progress towards gender equality and presents the challenges and priorities for the future. The 2009 report[57] gives an overview of recent developments as regards the situation of women and men in the EU. The report underlines the contribution of gender equality policy to economic and social development, and points out that, in today's global economic slowdown, it is more important than ever to keep up the pressure for equality between women and men. This report is targeted at a wide range of stakeholders, including Member States, NGOs and social partners.

The collaboration with Social Partners has also progressed, with the third annual follow-up report on the framework of actions on gender equality being adopted by the European Social Partners in November 2008[58]. The report describes how the framework of actions has been followed up across the social partners' activities on gender equality in 22 Member States and at European level, and provides useful information on a selected number of actions taken at industry-wide, sectoral and company level. Several European and national social partner organisations have also received EU funding to implement their own projects on gender equality.

Organisations representing civil society have been funded with a view to maintaining dialogue and supporting action to promote gender equality. They have made useful contributions to papers on subjects that are relevant for the implementation of the Roadmap.

A number of activities have been carried out to strengthen the legislation on gender equality. A Community network of Bodies responsible for gender equality met twice in 2008 to ensure uniform application of European law on the topic of equal pay. Each year, legal experts have analysed the progress in Community law in Member States and the effectiveness of

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57 COM(2009)77 final and its annex SEC(2009) 165
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/booklets/equality/index_en.htm

58 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/dsw/public/actRetrieveText.do?id=8764

legislation. A study on the structure and work of the National Equality Bodies will be carried out in 2009 to identify best practices.

Legislative progress has been achieved, particularly in the fields of reconciliation and the gender pay gap[59]. A report on the implementation of the Directive on the principle of equal treatment of men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions[60] will be prepared in 2009. A report will be published in 2010 on the state of progress and quality of the transposition by Member States of the Directive on equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services[61].

The Commission has revised the impact assessment guidelines[62] and has made progress in taking into consideration the impact on women and men, and improving the integration of fundamental rights and gender equality into all EU policies and programmes. The revised impact assessment guidelines include a reference to the "Guidance for assessing social impacts"[63] that will help reinforce the analysis of gender issues in impact assessments.

A note analysing the feasibility of a European gender equality index has been drawn up with a view to helping Member States to benchmark their situation and to pay more attention to gender equality.

In general, work on indicators has met the international commitments of Member States. The Commission has cooperated with the latter to develop new indicators and review the implementation of selected existing indicators in the framework of the Beijing Platform for Action. The Commission also produced an inventory of the available data broken down by gender, "the Gender breakdown overview", covering demographic and social statistics in particular.

An external study on the feasibility of introducing gender budgeting into the EU budgetary process was finalised in summer 2008. On that basis, the Commission has pursued further work on gender budgeting at EU level that builds on existing management, reporting and budgeting tools. The Commission has revised its budgetary guidelines for a better integration of the gender dimension into the Preliminary Draft Budget 2010 Activity Statements, which provide the main justification for requests for appropriations. Progress has been made on the reporting of gender issues to the Budgetary Authority.

Several evaluations focusing specifically on gender aspects are either ongoing or due to be carried out in 2009, for example in the area of regional policy ex-post evaluation of objectives 1 and 2 2000-2006: demographic change and gender issues, in the area of Employment and Social Affairs evaluation of ESF support to gender equality and the cross-cutting final evaluation of the Roadmap for equality between Women and Men (2006-2010).

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59 See corresponding chapters above
60 Directive 2002/73/EC
61 Directive 2004/113/EC
62 http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/docs/key_docs/iag_2009_en.pdf
63 Ref to be added

A number of Roadmap actions have been funded under the PROGRESS programme,[64] to support gender mainstreaming in all policy sections and the implementation of equality objectives, including strengthening communication in the area of gender equality.

In addition, the promotion of gender equality within the Commission's administration falls under its Fourth Action Programme on gender equality. The Fourth Annual Monitoring Report was adopted in November 2008[65]. A Communication on the targets for recruitment and appointment of women to management and other AD posts in the Commission for the year 2008 was adopted in May 2008[66]. An evaluation of the 4th Action Programme is due in 2009 in order to prepare the 5th Action Programme. On the basis of the evaluation of teleworking and of other flexible working arrangements, there are plans to introduce guidelines for teleworking in 2009. Also, in order to support the Commission's institutional capacities, a new training course for policy officers on gender mainstreaming is being prepared.

Lastly, the European Institute for Gender Equality[67] has been established and its Management Board has already met four times. The Director took up her duties in April 2009. The work of the Institute will start in 2009 in Brussels and the Institute will later be established in Vilnius.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The significant progress in the implementation of the Roadmap, noted in the mid-term report, continues. The Roadmap is proving to be a political framework which helps to ensure coherence and visibility in the actions carried out by the Commission and also to provide a reference for the EU stakeholders. Since the adoption of the last Roadmap work programme, there have been new achievements with regard to the inclusion of gender considerations in some new areas such as State aid and audio-visual media services.

However, the economic downturn represents both an opportunity and a potential threat for women's employment and gender equality. While unemployment seems to hit the male sectors hardest (construction work, finance etc.) in the first instance, highly feminised services (e.g. public services, health, education) may be next if the crisis worsens. It will be important to pay attention to the gender impacts when designing policies both at EU and at national level to respond to the crisis because, apart from the unemployment situation, previous crises have also had an impact on women's access to credit, to education, and have increased household work. In this regard, the situation of women in developing countries also requires very special attention. There needs to be a focus on combating stereotypes and on the segregated labour market, and also on achieving a better balance between the genders in education and in the choice of a career in the labour market to avoid unemployment impacting only one of the genders in the future. The preparation of the new Lisbon cycle in 2009 is of great importance in this respect. It will need to pay specific attention to the gender aspects of the proposed measures.

An additional challenge will be to evaluate progress and assess the contribution of the current Roadmap to gender equality policies with a view to the preparation of the future strategy. As

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64 Decision No 1672/2006/EC
65 SEC(2008) 2831/3
66 SEC(2008) 1864/3
67 Regulation (EC) No 1922/2006

announced[68], in 2010 the Commission will present a new framework setting out the objectives for gender equality in the next policy cycle of the European Union, while at the same time mobilising all stakeholders.

The Commissioners' group on fundamental rights, anti-discrimination and equal opportunities held an extraordinary meeting on the occasion of the 2009 International Women's Day to take stock of the implementation of 2006-2010 Roadmap on equality between women and men. The meeting was attended by external representatives (the European Parliament's Committee on Women Rights and Gender Equality, the current and forthcoming Council Presidencies, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and the European Women's Lobby) and by representatives from the Commission.

At that meeting, President Barroso confirmed the Commission's commitments to push the gender agenda forward. He noted that gender issues have progressed in all Commission policies, such as employment, education, health, external relations, etc. However, the Commission should remain vigilant and continue to develop its action until gender equality is a reality. The future Commission framework for gender equality should provide a holistic response to the new challenges, particularly those that result as a consequence of the economic crisis.

A conference on "Equality between women and men in a time of change" was organised on 15 – 16 June 2009 to take stock of the progress achieved under the Roadmap for Gender Equality 2006-2010 and to reflect upon the future strategy (2011-2015).

The delivering of tangible results on gender equality depends largely on the Member States and on synergies between all actors involved in policy making. The new framework will have to consider how to create the conditions for combining efforts in order to achieve gender equality.

Annex

- Scoreboard of the Roadmap for equality between women and men: implementation in 2008 and forecasts for 2009-2010.

[68] COM(2009) 73