organising discussions with the social partners at European level on applying the open method of coordination in specific areas;

— disseminating the necessary information through the Internet for each adjustment of the open coordination method;

7. Calls on the Council and the Commission to take greater account of Parliament’s observations when establishing guidelines; calls on the Commission and the Council to ensure Parliament has the necessary time to draw up informed and high-quality opinions; undertakes to ascertain whether it would be appropriate to adjust its practices and procedures to its role as a democratic and proactive participant in the open method of coordination;

8. Considers it equally important that the European Parliament be formally involved in scrutinising the implementation and the actions taken on the basis of the guidelines; underlines that the European Parliament must be able to hold the Council accountable;

9. Calls on the Council and the Commission, together with Parliament, to ensure that the application of the open method of coordination:

— does not serve as a fig leaf for a country’s failure to take action;

— cannot be used as a means of replacing more binding forms of Community regulation, for the express purpose of avoiding such regulation and, at the same time, undermining the whole concept of the European Social Model;

10. Notes that, given that the open method of coordination is intended to be applied to a series of areas having direct implications for women, including the European strategy on employment and the policy for combating social exclusion, it is necessary to include the dimension of equal opportunities for men and women and gender mainstreaming at all levels of formalisation of this new policy management instrument;

11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the parliaments of Member States, the Economic and Social Committee and the President of the European Convention.

P5_TA(2003)0268

Open coordination procedure

European Parliament resolution on the application of the open method of coordination

The European Parliament,

A. whereas, in connection with its ten-year modernising strategy, the Lisbon European Council in March 2000 established the ‘open method of coordination’ for policies which are the responsibility of Member States,

B. whereas the open method of coordination has developed into the Member States together establishing common objectives, agreed quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks, regular reporting and identification of best practice,

C. whereas the European Convention and the coming IGC are opportunities for rethinking, reforming and improving the ways in which the European institutions work together,

1. Draws attention to its profound attachment to all of the Treaties’ provisions governing the fields of culture, youth, education and audiovisual policy, particularly to what is commonly known as ‘the Community method’ in these areas;

2. Points out that the provisions of the Treaty on European Union on enhanced cooperation create a framework for cooperation that helps to encourage the fulfilment of Community objectives while complying with the principles of the Treaties and the Union’s unique institutional framework;
3. Considers that the open method of coordination should be developed not only in fields connected to the Lisbon strategy, such as education and life-long learning, but also in the fields of youth, media, culture and sport;

4. Reiterates, nevertheless, its belief that, as the body directly representing the citizens of Europe, its role in the procedure must be clarified and enhanced so that the process gains democratic legitimacy;

5. Stresses that the open method of coordination must not evolve into a parallel, but covert, legislative procedure which subverts the procedures laid down in the EC Treaty;

6. Calls on the Council and the Commission to join in negotiations for an interinstitutional agreement with the European Parliament, laying down rules governing the selection of policies for open coordination, and providing for a coherent application of the method with the full involvement, on equal terms, of the European Parliament;

7. Underlines that such an interinstitutional agreement must include rules for the involvement of the European Parliament in drawing up objectives and indicators, as well as access to documents, participation in meetings, monitoring and reviews of progress, information about reports and best practice, and a procedure for developing the open method of coordination into the Community method which could be formalised through the work of the European Convention and of the coming IGC;

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the applicant countries, and the European Convention.

P5_TA(2003)0269

Women and sport

European Parliament resolution on women and sport (2002/2280(INI))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to Articles 3 and 141 of the Treaty establishing the European Community,

– having regard to Articles 21 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,

– having regard to the declaration on sport annexed to the Treaty of Amsterdam,

– having regard to the declaration by the European Council in Nice of 7, 8 and 9 December 2000 on the specific characteristics of sport and its social function in Europe, of which account should be taken in implementing common policies,

– having regard to the statement by the European Council meeting in Lisbon on 23 and 24 March 2000, aimed at making it easier to reconcile working and family life, in particular by improving child-care provision,

– having regard to United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women of 18 December 1979,

– having regard to the declaration and platform for action adopted by the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995 and the ‘Beijing+5’ resolution seeking to implement the declaration and platform for action, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 June 2000,