

Thursday 17 January 2008

9. Welcomes the fact that the newly elected parliament showed its independence by the election of Mr Kenneth Marende as its speaker and underlines the decisive role to be played by that parliament in restoring civil liberties in Kenya;
10. Calls for concrete measures to establish a truly impartial Election Commission which will be better able to conduct free and fair elections in the future;
11. Draws attention to the statement by Samuel Kivuitu, Chairman of the ECK, who has distanced himself from the presidential election results published in the media and called for an independent inquiry into the allegations of fraud;
12. Calls for fresh presidential elections should it prove impossible to organise a credible and fair recount of the votes cast in the presidential election by an independent body;
13. Regrets the failure to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the 2007 presidential elections to consolidate and further develop the electoral and wider democratic process;
14. Calls on the leadership of the political parties to take responsibility for preventing further violence in the country, demonstrate a commitment to the rule of law and guarantee respect for human rights;
15. Is deeply preoccupied by the social repercussions of the current economic crisis, its detrimental effect on the country's socio-economic development and the economic consequences for neighbouring countries, which depend to a large extent on Kenya's infrastructures and whose humanitarian situation is being undermined by the crisis;
16. Calls on the Kenyan Government and the Commission to arrange rapid humanitarian assistance to the internally displaced people and to provide all necessary humanitarian relief workers;
17. Calls on the relevant authorities to ensure free and independent press coverage and to reinstate live broadcasting with immediate effect;
18. Regrets the disbursement of European Development Fund budget aid to the Kibaki government directly after the elections, which could be misconceived as demonstrating political bias, and asks for all further budgetary support to the government of Kenya to be frozen until a political resolution to the present crisis has been achieved;
19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the government of Kenya, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the Chairmen of the Commission and the Executive Council of the African Union.

---

## **The role of women in industry**

P6\_TA(2008)0019

### **European Parliament resolution of 17 January 2008 on the role of women in industry (2007/2197(INI))**

(2009/C 41 E/09)

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Articles 2 and 3(2) as well as Articles 141 and 157 of the EC Treaty,
- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union signed on 12 December 2007<sup>(1)</sup>, in particular Articles 15, 23, 27, 28 and 31 thereof,

---

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 303, 14.12.2007, p. 1.

**Thursday 17 January 2008**

- having regard to the communication from the Commission of 5 October 2005 entitled 'Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme: A policy framework to strengthen EU manufacturing — towards a more integrated approach for industrial policy' (COM(2005)0474),
  - having regard to the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 18 July 2007 entitled: 'Tackling the pay gap between women and men' (COM(2007)0424),
  - having regard to the Commission report on industrial relations in Europe 2006,
  - having regard to the Commission report on recent developments in the European sectoral social dialogue, published in 2006,
  - having regard to the conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organisation on gender equality at work,
  - having regard to the framework for action on equality between men and women signed by the social partners at European level,
  - having regard to its resolution of 23 May 2007 on promoting decent work for all <sup>(1)</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 25 September 2002 on representation of women among the social partners of the European Union <sup>(2)</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 3 February 2000 on the communication from the Commission entitled: 'Women and science — Mobilising women to enrich European research' <sup>(3)</sup>,
  - having regard to the public hearing held by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality on 5 June 2007 on the role of women in industry,
  - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and the opinion of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (A6-0519/2007),
- A. whereas industry is of strategic importance in the various Member States of the European Union in creating prosperity and employment, and this role should be safeguarded,
- B. whereas the stereotypes which still exist with regard to the educational and occupational options available to women contribute to their uneven spread in the industrial sector,
- C. whereas the role of women in industry should at all times be based on the principles of equality of salaries and career prospects in order to promote the increased participation of women even in industries which, according to stereotype, are not typically open to women,
- D. whereas the role of women in industry varies as a result of their variable representation in the various sectors, specifically over-representation in some sectors (textiles, garments, embroidery, footwear, cork, cabling, electrical and electronic equipment, food) and under-representation in cutting-edge technology sectors, leading to differentiation in the problems encountered,
- E. whereas, while more subtle than they used to be, gender barriers still impede women's progress in industry,

<sup>(1)</sup> Texts Adopted, P6\_TA(2007)0206.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ C 273 E, 14.11.2003, p. 169.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 309, 27.10.2000, p. 57.

Thursday 17 January 2008

- F. whereas, in sectors where women constitute the majority of workers, lower salaries predominate, reflecting the discriminatory attitudes towards women's work; whereas collective agreements generally fail to take sufficient account of the gender dimension and the specific needs of women, and whereas more vigorous efforts must be made ensure that existing legislation is applied,
- G. whereas, on average, around 14 % of women in employment in the EU work in industry, though this figure rises to 25 % in some countries; whereas, of that average figure, more than 21 % are employed on a part-time basis, and whereas women represent 65 % of part-time workers in the industrial sector,
- H. whereas companies have a general duty to comply with the principle of equality at the workplace, regardless of their size or the sector in which they operate,
- I. whereas women in precarious, part-time, temporary and non-standard work suffer more discrimination, particularly when they become mothers, and generally have fewer opportunities for basic, life-long learning and vocational training; whereas women in precarious or part-time work are often unable to contribute consistently to a pension fund and are therefore at greater risk of not having a sufficient income with which to support themselves in later life,
- J. whereas the integrated vision of industrial policy advocated by the Commission in the abovementioned Communication of 5 October 2005 does not take sufficient account of the gender dimension, even though it includes economic and social cohesion among its objectives,
- K. whereas 99 % of the manufacturing industry, in which 86 % of the female industrial workforce is concentrated, comprises small and medium-sized undertakings (SMEs), which employ around 58 % of the total workforce in this sector,
- L. whereas the development of work in industry is currently characterised more by the erosion of traditional patterns of employment than by an improvement in working conditions and career opportunities, particularly for women,
- M. whereas there is a close link between the lack of childcare structures, involuntary recourse to part-time work, the lack of training opportunities, and reinstatement aid, all of which threatens to leave women in the least qualified posts without adequate career prospects,
- N. whereas there are few gender-differentiated statistics on the division of labour in the various occupational categories and the corresponding wage levels in industrial sectors,
- O. whereas the health risks and types of occupational illness may be different for women and for men, and it is therefore important to analyse current situations and their consequences and study them in greater depth, also taking account of specific consequences as regards childbearing,
- P. whereas continuing education and accelerated learning increase the productivity of women and the contribution they make,
- Q. whereas it is only in a non-discriminatory work environment that the productive potential of both female and male employees will be nurtured, and it is essential to create a climate in which every individual is valued and his or her goals are recognised,
1. Highlights the role of women in industry and encourages action to promote the situation of women in relation to wage equality, working conditions, career opportunities, vocational training, with motherhood and fatherhood being borne in mind as fundamental social values;
  2. Encourages Member States to promote female entrepreneurship in the industrial sector and to provide financial support for women setting up companies;

Thursday 17 January 2008

3. Emphasises the need to encourage women working in industry to continuously acquire the skills they need to be successful in their careers;
4. Draws attention to the fact that there are many underlying causes at every stage of career development that lead to an inhospitable climate for women in industry, such as recruitment and hiring practices that create de facto entry barriers for women, different standards for women and men, disparities in the distribution of highly qualified job assignments and the gender pay gap; believes, therefore, that each of these underlying causes must be addressed by specific policies designed by the Commission and the Member States;
5. Recognises the need for an integrated industrial policy that takes account of the indispensable driving force of competitiveness, while guaranteeing workers' social and economic rights;
6. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to urge large companies to draw up and introduce their own negotiated equality programmes on a compulsory basis and also to encourage small and medium-sized undertakings to do likewise;
7. Affirms that the promotion of decent work forms an integral part of the European Union's values and calls on the Member States to take effective measures with a view to complying with social standards and guaranteeing decent work in the various industrial sectors, thereby ensuring decent incomes for workers, and in particular women, the right to safety and health at work, to social protection and trade union freedom and, in this way contribute significantly to abolishing all forms of discrimination between men and women at work;
8. Calls on Member States to take all necessary measures to effectively combat the exploitation of women at work, which occurs most frequently in certain sectors such as the textile industry, in order to ensure that the basic rights of workers, in particular women, are respected and that social dumping is prevented;
9. Is of the opinion that the role of women in any industrial sector cannot be viewed in isolation from the state of industry in the European Union generally, the challenges that industry in the EU is facing, or the need for appropriate answers;
10. Welcomes the fact that, according to the latest available statistics, exports to countries outside the EU in many sectors have maintained their proportion of total turnover, which is a sign of the competitiveness of the EU in those fields; expresses nonetheless its concern as to the stagnant domestic demand in a number of Member States, the increasing imports from outside the EU, and the persistent phenomenon of sectoral job losses in the EU, often affecting women;
11. Stresses the need for urgent measures for the full and effective implementation of Directive 75/117/EEC<sup>(1)</sup> in order to combat wage discrimination, particularly by greater trade union involvement and by drawing up phased sectoral plans, with precise targets, which will make it possible to put an end to direct and indirect wage discrimination;
12. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to take all necessary measures to ensure protection against sexual and gender-based harassment;
13. Considers it important to look into the establishment of a methodology for analysing exactly what jobs entail, which will guarantee the right to equal pay for women and men;
14. Considers it important to implement EQUAL projects aimed at giving proper status to work which promotes equality, and stresses the importance of supporting pilot projects seeking to analyse exactly what jobs entail with a view to guaranteeing the right to equal pay for women and men, and giving proper recognition to individuals and occupations;

<sup>(1)</sup> Council Directive 75/117/EEC of 10 February 1975 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women (OJ L 45, 19.2.1975, p. 19).

Thursday 17 January 2008

15. Stresses the need to encourage initiatives that contribute to setting up and implementing in companies positive human resources policies as well as measures promoting gender equality, and to encourage information and training measures making it possible to promote, transfer and incorporate practices that have been successful in organisations and companies;

16. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to be more active and to do more to raise awareness and monitor undertakings in respect of compliance with codes of conduct and corporate social responsibility criteria in their daily work as well as guaranteeing better working conditions, paying attention to working times, compliance with maternity and paternity rights, notably by guaranteeing reinstatement at work following maternity and parental leave, and reconciling working life and family life, and calls on them to enshrine these rights in legislation; stresses the need to create conditions that will facilitate the sharing of family responsibilities;

17. Recommends that there should be more choice in the workplace, thereby enabling men and women to have greater options for the development of both their family lives and their working careers; believes that work should be much more readily available to men and women to match their changing needs;

18. Calls on the Member States to introduce better, more flexible and portable pensions; recalls its position at first reading on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving the portability of supplementary pension rights<sup>(1)</sup>;

19. Emphasises the need for a reliable social services network and for flexibility in pre-school and primary school facilities, in order to support employed women during the time they are engaged in the upbringing of their children;

20. Emphasises the fact that long working hours put employees under great pressure and have a negative effect on their health, well-being and satisfaction with life;

21. Calls on the Member States to recognise companies that take action to promote equality between women and men and facilitate work-life balance, in order to foster the spread of good practices in this area;

22. Stresses the need to ensure that measures taken in the field of reconciling professional, family and private life do not lead to the separation or gender-stereotyping of the roles of men and women, and are in line with the priorities of the Roadmap for Gender Equality 2006-2010, in particular as regards the full and equal involvement of women in the labour market and their economic independence, and calls on the Member States to ensure comprehensive access to affordable social services, such as crèches, nurseries, leisure facilities for children, and support for elderly people, which tend otherwise to be provided by women; calls for effective technical and, where possible, financial support or incentives for SME employers to implement these policies and practices;

23. Stresses the importance of negotiations and collective bargaining in the fight to abolish discrimination against women, in particular with regard to employment, wages, working conditions, careers and professional training;

24. Calls on the Commission and the sectoral social partners to define high standards for health protection at work that take account of the gender dimension, and in particular maternity protection, at the level of research, monitoring, and preventive measures; notes that women are overrepresented in sectors in which repetitive movements are responsible for occupational diseases such as musculo-skeletal disorders, and that special consideration should be given to such conditions;

25. Encourages the Commission and the Member States to devote more attention to the gender dimension in national studies and surveys;

<sup>(1)</sup> Texts Adopted, 20.6.2007, P6\_TA(2007)0269.

**Thursday 17 January 2008**

26. Emphasises the fact that most studies into the working poor show that single-income households, especially where women earn that income, are particularly affected by poverty; stresses that the eradication of poverty and social exclusion must remain a political priority for the European Union; calls on the Commission and Member States to specify and pursue an ambitious objective of reducing the number of working poor in Europe;
27. Calls on the Commission to promote professional training policies and programmes, including the development of computer literacy skills, aimed at women in order to increase their participation in various sectors of industry, taking into account existing financial support available at local, national and Community levels and creating greater incentives to use these for large companies and SMEs alike;
28. Calls on the Commission to intensify the support given to vocational training programmes for women in SMEs in the industrial sector and support for research and innovation, in line with the Seventh Framework Programme and the European Charter for Small Enterprises approved in Annex III to the Presidency Conclusions of the European Council of 19 and 20 June 2000 held in Santa Maria da Feira;
29. Calls on the Commission to support education, higher education and vocational training; stresses that education is an essential way for women to overcome the gender-segmented labour market;
30. Calls for the widest possible distribution of the Strategic Research Agenda of the European Technology Platform for the Future of Textiles and Clothing, and urges all stakeholders to move towards innovative technologies and business models which have a balanced participation of women and men at all levels;
31. Regrets the low level of participation of women in organisations set up by the social partners, and invites the social partners to intensify training on gender equality for negotiators and those responsible for collective agreements, and to strengthen the participation of women in their decision-making bodies;
32. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to encourage balanced representation of women and men on the management boards of companies, particularly where the Member States are shareholders;
33. Stresses the need to encourage the creation of women's networks within individual companies, between companies in the same industrial field, and between the different industrial fields;
34. Regrets the low proportion of women in the advanced technology sector, and stresses the importance of operational educational and training programmes in science and technology, which guarantee the quality and diversification of training opportunities for women in the various Member States, and the promotion of scientific and technological studies for girls;
35. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to develop and implement strategies to address discrepancies in the work environment and the career development of women working in science and technology;
36. Considers it important to disseminate existing good practice regarding women's participation in industrial research and cutting-edge industries; stresses, in this context, the importance of raising awareness of the gender perspective among management in industrial undertakings with low female participation, which should be reflected in numerical objectives;
37. Encourages the Member States and the Commission to take account of the specific situation of women in industry in all related policies, in particular in the sectors affected by structural changes and measures in the field of world trade, whether in relation to employment issues, vocational training, or health and safety at work;

Thursday 17 January 2008

38. Stresses the need to retrain those women who have had to stop their career, to enhance their employability; calls on the Member States to increase life-long learning possibilities;
39. Recognises that some regions are characterised by a high concentration of undertakings in the textile and garment sector, in which sector a large proportion of working women are employed, particularly those coming from less-favoured regions of the EU; calls for particular attention to be paid to the import of products from third countries;
40. Stresses the need to support the development of less-favoured regions, areas with permanent structural disadvantages, the outermost regions, and areas affected by recent deindustrialisation or industrial restructuring in order to strengthen economic and social cohesion, and women's social inclusion in these areas and regions;
41. Considers that relocations have affected industries with a high concentration of female labour, such as textiles, clothing, footwear, cabling, ceramics, electrical and electronic equipment and various segments of the food industry, and that this situation more seriously affects Member States with a lower level of economic development, causing unemployment and jeopardising economic and social cohesion;
42. Stresses the need to monitor the relocation of companies in EU Member States and reorientate the policy on granting Community funds so as to guarantee jobs and regional development;
43. Calls for Community aid not to be granted to companies which, after benefiting from such funding in a Member State, transfer their production to another country without fully implementing contracts concluded with the Member State concerned;
44. Recommends that the Commission closely monitor the current processes of closure and relocation of industrial undertakings, and demand that funds granted be returned in the event of irregularities;
45. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to take account of the gender dimension when distributing European Global Adjustment Fund aid, so as to ensure that such aid also reaches sectors with a high concentration of female labour;
46. Stresses the need to concentrate on controlled structural change in the textile industry and the need to direct and encourage women to undertake further education in order to improve their employability in the growing branches of industry;
47. Stresses the importance of Community programmes that encourage the creation of trademarks, the protection of products' designation of origin and the external promotion of Community products from industrial sectors where women predominate, in particular at professional and international trade fairs, promoting women's work and guaranteeing the employment of women;
48. Considers that, among the measures to be taken by the Commission, in particular in the context of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations, account must be taken of the context and specific characteristics of each sector, the opportunities and challenges facing each sector, and the difficulties encountered by each Member State, specifically as regards the employment of women and women's rights;
49. Insists on protection for the rights of female and male workers in restructuring processes affecting industrial undertakings, on the need to guarantee their structures, in particular the European Works Councils, full access to information and the possibility of decisive intervention throughout the process, including the right to veto, and on the need to define the criteria for the compensation that would be owed to workers in the event the undertaking fails to comply with its contractual obligations;
50. Considers that it is important to make it easier for employees to return to work after a career break;
51. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.
-