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Involving men in achieving gender equality

Report

Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

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Summary

Despite legislative progress made these past years, new avenues must be explored in order to achieve gender equality in reality and allow both men and women to benefit from a more egalitarian society in the Council of Europe member states.

In this context, involving men appears as a prerequisite for achieving equality between women and men. Given the lessons learnt from the parliamentary dimension of the Council of Europe campaign "Stop domestic violence against women" (2006-2008), the Parliamentary Assembly should consider that involving men is crucial to make society progress as a whole and contribute to change mentalities, in particular in the field of combating violence against women, balanced participation of women and men in public and political life, reproductive health, conciliation of professional and private life and parenthood.

The Assembly should invite member states to promote actions and policies that counter stereotypes, incorporate a gender perspective and encourage the involvement of men. The Assembly should encourage national parliaments to discuss the issue of men's role in society and men's involvement in equality projects and to set up networks of men committed to ending violence against women and achieving gender equality.

The Assembly should moreover encourage the Committee of Ministers to ensure men's involvement in its work and its action programmes, especially in sectors traditionally reserved for women – while ensuring that women have access to sectors traditionally reserved for men, and establish a balance between women and men by 2010 in the expert groups and committees it sets up.



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A. Draft resolution

1. The Parliamentary Assembly considers that involving men is a prerequisite for achieving equality between women and men. It therefore believes that public policies must not only incorporate a gender perspective and counter stereotypes but also include action that encourages the involvement of men.
2. Drawing attention to its [Recommendation 1769 \(2006\)](#) on the need to reconcile work and family life, the Assembly maintains that men, no less than women, can benefit greatly from a fairer distribution of roles between women and men and a more equal society.
3. On the basis of the results of the parliamentary dimension of the Council of Europe Campaign “Stop domestic violence against women” (2006-2008) and its [Resolution 1635 \(2008\)](#) on Combating violence against women: towards a Council of Europe convention, the Assembly stresses that involving men is crucial for the pursuit of active policies to combat violence against women.
4. It also notes that Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec (2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making provides that “the representation of either women or men in any decision-making body in political or public life should not fall below 40 %”.
5. The Assembly underlines that discrimination against women can be both direct and indirect, and that both of these types of discrimination must be fought by men and women.
6. The Assembly urges the governments of the member states to:
 - 6.1. set up educational programmes designed to encourage boys and men to get involved in equality projects, and propose specific activities to make them aware of gender equality issues;
 - 6.2. from the earliest years, promote boys’ and men’s involvement in combating violence against women and girls;
 - 6.3. educate men and offer a framework to encourage them to take an active part in tasks traditionally assigned to women (childcare, management of social and educational matters) and in this respect, pay special attention to programmes enabling men to train men on these issues;
 - 6.4. take action against the enduring use of stereotypes confining men and women to traditional roles and against the use of pornographic representations of women depicting them as sexual objects, in the media and advertising;
 - 6.5. promote positive measures to improve women’s and men’s participation in public and political life (in line with [Resolution 1489 \(2006\)](#) on Mechanisms to ensure women’s participation in decision-making);
 - 6.6. promote the position of women on the labour market and their access to the decision-making posts, and thus help to tackle unequal pay;
 - 6.7. accordingly, introduce special programmes to promote parenthood and ways of reconciling work and private life among male employees in the civil service and encourage enterprises in the private sector to propose similar programmes, in line with [Recommendation 1769 \(2006\)](#) on the need to reconcile work and family life;
 - 6.8. fully involve men in sectoral policies concerning their responsibility for contraception and reproductive health, the reorganisation of working time and family policies, while explicitly addressing the issue of gender equality;
 - 6.9. change legislation, if this has not already been done, to introduce paid parental leave including a part that is non-transferable to the mother, which encourages men to take it and to play an active part in the care of young children;
 - 6.10. introduce gender budgeting, an important tool for analysing the impact of public policies on citizens of both sexes and for restructuring revenues and expenditure so as to reduce socio-economic inequalities between men and women, in line with the Assembly [Recommendation 1739 \(2006\)](#) on Gender budgeting.
7. The Assembly encourages national parliaments to:
 - 7.1. discuss the issue of men’s role in society and men’s involvement in equality projects, and promote the drawing up of action plans of the subject;

7.2. set up networks of men, in parliaments and elsewhere, committed to ending violence against women and achieving gender equality.

B. Draft recommendation

1. The Parliamentary Assembly, drawing attention to its Resolution ... (2008) on Involving men in achieving gender equality, considers that involving men is a prerequisite for achieving equality between women and men. It therefore believes that public policies must not only incorporate a gender perspective and counter stereotypes but also include action that encourages the involvement of men.
2. The Assembly points out that the Council of Europe has a particular responsibility for involving men in gender equality projects, promoting balanced participation of women and men in public and political life and thus furthering gender equality in Europe. The Assembly welcomes the steps taken in this area by the Council of Europe, especially as part of the Council of Europe Campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence. It welcomes Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec (2007)17, which acknowledges that "the full involvement of boys and men is decisive and instrumental to achieve [the aim of equality between women and men], which will have a positive impact on and bring added value to the lives of both girls and boys, women and men".
3. It also notes that Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec (2003) 3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making provides that "the representation of either women or men in any decision-making body in political or public life should not fall below 40 %".
4. The Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to:
 - 4.1. ensure men's involvement in its work and its action programmes, especially in sectors traditionally reserved for women (social affairs, education, gender equality) while ensuring that women have access to sectors traditionally reserved for men;
 - 4.2. check that member states implement Recommendation Rec (2003) 3 as far as the functioning of its own bodies and steering committees is concerned, establishing a balance between women and men by 2010 in the expert groups and committees it sets up.

C. Explanatory memorandum by Mr Sigfússon, rapporteur

1. Introduction

1. For ten years, the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men has sought to promote parity democracy and to combat violence against women. Particular emphasis has been placed on combating the discrimination suffered by women (in the job market, and in economic and political decision-making posts) and the inequalities between women and men which are firmly rooted in society and which, in some cases, can result in violence against women, in both the public and private spheres.

2. The enactment of new and effective legislation in the field of gender equality has fallen short of what is required because European societies, still heavily patriarchal, put up considerable resistance. New avenues must be explored to take equal opportunities further and to ensure that in the Council of Europe member states, both men and women can benefit from a more egalitarian society. While it must be stressed that the contribution of women's organisations has been crucial in advancing the cause of equality between women and men in Europe, it has to be acknowledged today that if there are to be real changes in attitudes and behaviour in terms of gender equality, then men have to become more involved.

3. For example, although the situation of women has improved considerably since the time when the Council of Europe was founded, it is still unsatisfactory. Too few women are in positions of responsibility. In 2008, women account for just 27% of PACE members, 23% of national members of parliament and 33% of economic decision-making posts in the European Union. This inequality persists even though it is now a known fact that women are in the majority in secondary and post-secondary education and, more particularly, that more women than men successfully complete higher education courses¹. Although the situation has changed in the past few years, it is nevertheless too early to measure the impact.

4. Internationally, since the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the concept of promoting equality has been more closely defined: whereas the emphasis previously was on promoting women, it is now placed on gender equality. It highlights the need to include men in the framing of equality policies. This dimension was also recognised in the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers' recent Recommendation Rec (2007)17, which states that "Because gender equality is a concern of all members of a society, the full involvement of boys and men is decisive and instrumental to achieve that aim, which will have a positive impact on and bring added value to the lives of both girls and boys, women and men".²

5. The implementation of innovative policies in Council of Europe member states today opens up new prospects. The so-called "male" professions are slowly becoming accessible to women – while few men accept to work in so-called "female" professions. Over the last 30 years there has been a gradual, albeit still insufficient, improvement of the participation of women in national parliaments. In order to reach the critical mass of 40%³ of women in elected assemblies and thereby maximise the development potential of society as a whole and individuals, it is essential for men to be fully involved in gender equality policies and themselves benefit from the new relationship between women and men.

6. In general, men have more to gain from a more equal society. In effect, gender equality is not a zero sum game. Reinforcing the role of women does not weaken the position of men – on the contrary. According to a recent study published in Sweden based on the relationship between paternity leave in 1978-1979 and male mortality in 1981-2001, Swedish men who take parental leave benefit from a significant reduction in their mortality risk (16%).⁴ This figure might be surprising, but a possible explanation could be that parental leave can mean reduced professional stress and healthier lifestyle and attitude.

7. The Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men was asked by the Bureau of the Assembly to draft a report on "involving men in achieving gender equality", following the motion tabled by José Mendes Bota (Portugal, EPP/CD) and others, which was a follow-up to Motion 10604, "Men's involvement in equality projects" tabled in 2005 by Jean-Guy Branger (France, EPP/CD) and others. By appointing a man as its chair in January 2008, ten years after it was set up, and by instructing me to draft the report, the Committee on

1. Source EU 25, PISA, the OECD's international student assessment programme, reproduced by Eurostat, The life of women and men in Europe, 2008 edition, page 31.

2. Para. 76 of Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)17 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on gender equality standards and mechanisms.

3. See Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making and PACE Recommendation 1676 (2004) on women's participation in elections.

4. See A. Månsdotter, L. Lindholm, A. Winkvist "Paternity leave in Sweden—Costs, savings and health gains", in Health Policy, Volume 82, n°1 (June 2007), Pages 102 – 115.

Equal Opportunities also wished to send a strong political signal and encourage PACE male parliamentarians to promote gender equality policies in Europe. I would like to thank the members of the committee who, at its meetings on 6 June and 12 September 2008, made valuable contributions to the debate.

2. Involving men: lessons learnt from the parliamentary dimension of the Council of Europe campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence

8. If we are to achieve gender equality, the role of men is crucial. The path to equality requires a gender perspective to be a part of all fields of action – ie not only a gender mainstreaming approach, but also specific action to make men realise that a continuation of gender inequality is harmful for the human and economic development of society.

9. I would like to illustrate this aspect of the problem by the lessons we have learned from the parliamentary dimension of the Council of Europe campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence (2006-2008)⁵. Violence against women by men is one of the most widespread and frequent violations of human rights in our societies. Even though a minority of victims of domestic violence are men, violence against women is often the ultimate expression of a patriarchal society which makes women subordinate to men.

10. The Council of Europe campaign has helped to break the silence on the extent of the problem which affects all member states and all social classes. According to available figures, it is estimated that one out of four women has been a victim of physical violence or threats in her life. These figures differ significantly from one country to another. In certain countries, there seems to have been a positive development⁶. During the campaign, the Parliamentary Assembly stressed the need for parliaments to adopt or monitor the application of seven key priority measures⁷. The campaign showed that it is vital to change mentalities and involve men as a *crucial factor for change in order to combat violence against women*, in the words of the declaration adopted by the Standing Committee in Bratislava on 25 November 2007.

- Changing the attitudes and behaviour of violent men often entails specific treatment for the perpetrators of violence. Several countries have set up special programmes (eg *Reform centres for Men* in Norway⁸ which run anger management seminars, and the *Mentors in Violence* programme in the United States designed for US Navy personnel). Violence may often be accentuated not only by marginalisation phenomena such as alcohol problems or personal failure but also by traditions and customs which may glorify a patriarchal conception of masculinity.
- In order to encourage the involvement of male parliamentarians in this campaign, the Assembly recommended setting up networks of male MPs active in combating violence against women. This initiative was inspired by the network of Swedish parliamentarians set up by Lars U Granberg and his colleagues, the oldest network of male MPs dedicated to combating violence against women. It was set up in 2004, following a seminar organised by the Nordic Council on trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation. The initial objective was to encourage men to learn more about this issue. The network's focus was quickly extended to cover action to combat violence against women and the fight for equal opportunities in working life. Accordingly, the Council of Europe encouraged the setting up of networks of parliamentarians along the Swedish model in four parliaments (Albania, Andorra, Croatia and Moldova). Initiatives have been taken in Portugal and the United Kingdom. Mention should also be made of other networks of men combating violence against women: on 23 April 2008, the president of the Basque Autonomous Community Juan José Ibarretxe and a group of 27 Basque men from the world of culture and sport signed a charter on equality and against sexist violence⁹. These initiatives owe much to the action of NGOs such as *Men in Schools*, *the Male Forum*, *Masculinity and paternity* and the *White Ribbon campaign* to encourage men to take action to combat violence¹⁰.

11. It should be noted that several countries (eg Denmark, Norway and Sweden¹¹) have sought to incorporate this mobilisation of men against domestic violence within their development policy.

5. www.coe.int/stopviolence.

6. According to a recent Danish study, violence against women has fallen 30% between 2000 and 2005.

7. See [Doc.11372](#), report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, and [Resolution 1582 \(2007\)](#) (Rapporteur: Mr Mendes Bota, Portugal, EPP/CD).

8. http://www.reform.no/index.cfm?kat_id=11&subkat_id=85.

9. http://www.eitb24.com/article/fr/B24_95684/societe/PARITE-HOMMES-ET-FEMMES-Une-charte-des-hommes-basques/

10. AS/Ega (2005) PV 7 addendum I.

12. Lastly, the Council of Europe has taken some welcome initiatives to promote men's involvement, both during the campaign "Stop domestic violence against women"¹² and in the activities of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs.¹³

3. Reconciling private and family life: a challenge for women and men

13. Societies which have introduced an active gender equality policy have the highest GNP per capita, the highest life expectancy at birth and the highest level of education. This is what is measured by the Human Development Index, devised by the UNDP in 1990. Iceland, Norway, Australia, Canada, Ireland and Sweden topped the list in 2005. These countries all have particularly high employment rates for both women and men¹⁴.

14. Female employment has been the main factor in the steady growth of employment in the EU in recent years. Between 2000 and 2006 employment in EU-27 grew by nearly 12 million, including more than 7.5 million women¹⁵. As such, it appears among the Lisbon objectives, Growth and jobs, and in the United Nations Millennium Goals (Goal 3 – Promoting gender equality and empowering women). This leads me to the conclusion that the way to make our societies prosper is to improve child-care provision, put into place parental leave attractive to both women and men, and put into place other measures to reconcile work and family life.

15. Thanks to the potential of the new information and communication technologies (ICTs), the implementation of flexicurity (flexibility of the labour market combined with job security) concerns women first and foremost. The availability of teleworking opportunities, child-care provision and domestic services helps establish a more equal balance between male and female career paths within the couple. However, despite significant changes, working women continue to spend more time than men on unpaid domestic chores¹⁶ and a higher proportion of women work part-time – often not their preferred choice – since for many women this is the only way they can manage to combine working life and family life, given, among other things and not least, the lack of child-care facilities.

16. The FOCUS project (Fostering Caring Masculinities)¹⁷ funded by Daphné in 2006 compared the legal framework in 5 European countries and assessed the prospects for re-establishing a balance between men and women in reconciling work and family life¹⁸.

17. Parental leave as it exists in Iceland is one example of best practice. This system divides parental leave into three non-transferable phases, 3 months to be used exclusively by the mother, 3 months exclusively by the father and the remaining 3 months by either one of the two parents. Parental leave is paid on the basis of 80% of the average wage earned during the 24 previous months, and is financed by a special fund. During the hearing of 13 September 2005 organised by the Parliamentary Assembly's Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Reykjavik, minister Árni Magnússon said that this new system was *one of the best investments for the future both from a social and an economic point of view, as well as being a very important scheme that encouraged men's involvement in equality projects*¹⁹. Some countries have run information

11. Ending gender-based violence: A call for global action to involve men, A summary of research prepared by: Harry Ferguson, Jeff Hearn, Øystein Gullvåg Holter, Lars Jalmert, Michael Kimmel, James Lang, Robert Morrell, Costs of male violence By Stefan de Vylder Ending gender SIDA 2004

http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=118&a=3108&language=en_US

12. Council of Europe seminar on men's active participation in combating domestic violence, Zagreb, Croatia, 9-10 May 2007.

13. See notably the proceedings of the seminars on "Therapeutic treatment of men perpetrators of violence within the family" (EG-SEM-MV (2003) Proceedings), on "Measures dealing with men perpetrators of domestic violence

(Strasbourg, 25 – 26 June 2003, EG-SEM-MV (2003) Proceedings) and on "Violence within the family: the place and role of men (Strasbourg, 6-7 December 2005, EG-SEM-MV (2005) Proceedings). Recommendation Rec(96)5 of the Committee of Ministers on reconciling work and family life (19 June 1996) or the CDEG study on Parental Leave in Council of Europe member States (CDEG (2004) 14 Final) also tackle the involvement of men.

14. Eurostat 2008 (ibid) page 53.

15. Com (2008)10 Equality between women and men, page 3.

16. Eurostat 2008 (ibid) page 111.

17. Caring Masculinities The European Dimension, Trude Langvasbråten, Research assistant and Mari Teigen, Research Director Institute for Social Research (ISF), Norway http://www.samfunnsforskning.no/files/AR_2006_7_fulltekst.jpg.pdf

18. See the report of the conference, 20-22 November 2006 <http://www.caringmasculinities.org/Articles/216.html>.

19. AS/Ega (2005) PV 7 addendum I.

campaigns to familiarise fathers with their parental leave rights (eg Belgium²⁰ and Denmark, where the Danish equality ministry issued a brochure "Take your leave!"²¹). However, awareness-raising campaigns – even the most successful ones – cannot correct deeply-ingrained structural weaknesses of a system.

18. The *European Fatherhood* site is a source of interesting information on men's involvement in parenthood²². Several countries have organised special programmes for future fathers during pregnancy; health-care staff attending the mother are made fully aware of the role the father will be required to play²³.

19. As highlighted in the report by Ms Papadopoulos (Cyprus, ALDE)²⁴, states have a vital role to play in putting in place reconciliation measures incorporating the gender dimension, enabling men and women to have access to arrangements which are both effective and attractive. The introduction of paid parental leave for both men and women, part of which must be used exclusively by men, is an excellent example of the type of incentives which could help change mentalities. The Nordic countries have shown the way in this field, in particular Sweden and Iceland²⁵. Because this parental leave is paid leave and part of it is non-transferable to the mother, it constitutes a major step forward in gender equality²⁶. Ingolfur V. Gislason of the Gender Equality Centre in Iceland believes that employers are more positive about paternity leave when it is forced upon them by law than when it is voluntary²⁷.

4. Making boys equality-conscious: achieving gender equality from an early age

20. Involving men also entails raising boys' awareness from an early age through a new and non-stereotyped distribution of roles to girls and boys, and by bringing boys and girls up in an equality-based approach. This is a key challenge which will impact on future relationships between men and women. At school, it is essential to provide children with an open education which integrates the gender perspective and offers equal opportunities to both girls and boys. The Canadian authorities have been at the forefront of this, publishing several textbooks aimed at boys.

21. Here, I would like to focus particular attention on the image of women conveyed in the media. All too often, as condemned by the Parliamentary Assembly²⁸, the image of women in advertising and in the media is based on stereotypes perpetuating inequalities between women and men, or even trivialising violence against women and violations of their dignity. Subsequently in adolescence, young people's discovery of sexuality is heavily influenced by pornography.

22. Clearly, parents have a responsibility to be attentive to such developments among their children, but the public authorities must also regulate and combat such images, in particular through specific action targeting men so that they question the negative side of masculinity and the attitudes and behaviour which fail to respect the human rights of women and girls.

23. Boys and men need to be involved in other areas too. In the field of reproductive health, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has undertaken very specific action in Turkey with the first division football federation²⁹, the textile federation, the police training colleges, imams and the newspaper *Hürriyet*'s campaign to combat violence against women.

24. Numerous sectoral programmes are also specifically aimed at involving men (such as in the field of health, reproductive health, fatherhood, etc). A study by the World Health Organisation assessed 58 programmes designed to encourage greater involvement amongst men. It showed that such action is particularly effective when it covers several themes and includes specific discussions on social perceptions of

20. <http://www.emploi.belgique.be/defaultTab.aspx?id=554>.

21. http://www.lige.dk/files/PDF/far_brug_din_orlov.pdf (in Danish).

22. <http://www.european-fatherhood.com/>.

23. Example of Denmark <http://www.european-fatherhood.com/bestpractice.php?mode=view&id=68&field=4>.

24. Report on *The need to reconcile work and family life* (Doc. 11019).

25. Germany introduced this system in January 2008.

26. Fríða Rós Valdimarsdóttir, Nordic experiences with parental leave and its impact on equality between women and men, Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen, 2006, http://www.jafnretti.is/D10/_Files/Nordic%20experiences%20with%20parental%20leave.pdf

27. Contribution to the conference of the Nordic Council of Ministers, "Fathers need to take more leave" (22 November 2007), <http://www.norden.org>

28. Doc. 11286 and Resolution 1557 (2007) on the image of women in advertising.

29. Public hearing of the Equality Committee of 7 December 2007.

men and masculinity. It was not enough to involve men in sectoral projects, it was also essential to initiate substantive debate on issues of (in)equality between women and men in order to change mentalities and attitudes³⁰.

5. Sharing political and economic power

25. Involving men in equality policies should enable women to participate fully in society and to reach the objective of the Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation by women and men in political and public decision making, which sets out that “the representation of either women or men in any decision-making body in political or public life should not fall below 40%”.

26. Above and beyond parliamentary parity, sharing political power not only means a balanced distribution of experts on consultative committees, but also the provision of budgetary resources via *gender budgeting*. These principles should also apply to the Council of Europe, as requested by the Parliamentary Assembly in its [Recommendation 1738 \(2006\) Mechanisms to ensure women’s participation in decision-making](#) (Rapporteur: Ms Cliveti, Romania, SOC) and [Recommendation 1739 \(2006\) on Gender budgeting](#) (Rapporteur: Ms Curdová, Czech Republic, SOC).

27. Out of the 20 countries that have broken through the critical threshold of 30% of women in their parliament, 10 are Council of Europe member states³¹. Spain and Finland are the only countries with a government having more women than men.

28. Although women’s participation in economic life has increased significantly, their representation in key posts of power and influence falls well below that of men³².

29. The Norwegian law on gender quotas for boards of directors of listed companies is ground-breaking in terms of improving the representation of women in the decision-making bodies. The law has been in force since 1st January 2006. It provides that on 1st January 2008 any company which does not have at least a 40% gender quota may be delisted from the Oslo stock exchange³³. In 2006, Norway already had a much higher feminisation rate than other European countries, standing at almost 28%.

30. However, despite the adoption of legislative measures to bring about greater involvement of men, male employees are reluctant to avail themselves of these facilities. This may be explained by the culture of presenteeism, the risks this may represent for career advancement, and the stereotypes that persist both in society (the man as breadwinner versus the woman as home-maker) and in the work environment. This is also reflected in advertising³⁴ and in the incomprehension or hostility met with from employers, work colleagues or other family members³⁵.

31. Companies can also exert a positive influence to help reconcile working and family life and promote positive parenting among their male employees. There are specific guides in this field, in particular the Decalogue for Companies and Organisations, drawn up under the European “All together” project³⁶, and the “Handbook for Companies to promote positive parenting among male employees: a work equality issue”³⁷. The aim is to help companies identify the cultural and structural barriers to genuine equality at work, put forward proposals for consulting the social partners, trade unions and staff on this issue, manage working hours and organisation, propose facilities for parents, draw up action plans and assess the arrangements in place.

30. Gary Barker, Christine Rocard and Marcos Nascimento, Engaging men and boys in changing gender-based inequity in health: evidence from programme interventions, WHO, Geneva, 2007, http://www.who.int/gender/documents/Engaging_men_boys.pdf

31. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>.

32. Eurostat 2008 (ibid) pages 68 to 72.

33. <http://kilden.forskningsradet.no/c16880/artikkel/vis.html?tid=50642>

34. The Canadian Media Awareness Network (www.education-medias.ca) points out that “interest groups for fatherhood rights often complain that many TV ads portray fathers as buffoons who get no respect in the home and cannot perform even the most minor of childcare tasks.”

35. Conclusions of the “Handbook for Companies to promote positive parenting among male employees: a work equality issue” published by the Study Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility and the National Women and Families Information and Documentation Centre (France, September 2008).

36. www.all-together.org, “Ten reasons for facilitating the involvement of your male staff in their domestic and family responsibilities”.

37. “Handbook for Companies to promote positive parenting among male employees: a work equality issue”, op. cit.

32. It is essential to improve women's labour market participation in order to tackle unequal pay between women and men³⁸. According to the European Commission's figures (2005), women in the European Union earn an average of 15% less than their male counterparts³⁹. Here again, it is crucial to involve men in the issue of women's position in the world of work, in order to change attitudes, further equality between women and men and thus take active steps against unequal pay, which is unacceptable.

33. Men must be involved in a comprehensive discussion of the traditional roles assigned to women and men and of ways to combat stereotypes and promote equality in the private, public and economic spheres. A noteworthy experiment has been conducted in Norway, where the Minister for Children and Equality Karita Bekkemellem set up a "men's panel" in 2007, comprising 32 men from political, artistic and sports circles and other personalities from the private and public sectors and grassroots associations⁴⁰ to discuss men's rights (particularly in the areas of divorce, childcare and health). As part of the government's preparation of a White Paper on "The role of men in society", the panel drew up a memorandum in March 2008⁴¹ and put forward a series of recommendations on education, violence, health care and the integration of migrants. Parliament will discuss the White

6. Conclusions

34. The Parliamentary Assembly believes that men's involvement is an essential precondition for achieving gender equality. Accordingly, PACE should take the view that public policies should incorporate not only a gender perspective but also measures to combat stereotypes and encourage men's involvement. Its stance should be that men too can benefit from a fairer distribution of the roles between women and men and from a more egalitarian society.

35. The Assembly should urgently call on the governments of member states to:

- initiate educational programmes to encourage boys and men to play a part in equality projects and to put forward proposals for specific action to raise their awareness of the importance of gender equality;
- promote the involvement of men, at the earliest possible age, in combating violence against women and girls;
- educate men and offer a framework to encourage them to take an active part in tasks traditionally assigned to women (childcare, management of social and educational matters);
- take an active part in stopping the perpetuation of stereotypes confining men and women to traditional roles, particularly in advertising;
- promote positive measures to improve women's and men's participation in public and political life (in line with [Resolution 1489 \(2006\)](#) on *Mechanisms to ensure women's participation in decision-making*);
- promote the position of women on the labour market and their access to the decision-making posts, and thus help to tackle unequal pay;
- introduce special programmes to promote parenthood and ways of reconciling work and private life among male employees in the civil service and encourage enterprises in the private sector to propose similar programmes, in line with [Recommendation 1769 \(2006\)](#) on *The need to reconcile work and family life*;
- fully incorporate men's involvement in sectoral policies relating to reproductive health, the organisation of working time and family policies, while at the same time explicitly addressing the question of gender equality;

38. See in particular the conclusions of the official report of Norway's Equal Pay Commission, 2008:6, "Gender and Pay – Facts, analyses and measures to promote equal pay

http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/BLD/Rapporter/2008/Gender_and_Pay_English_summary_of_NOU_2008_6.pdf

39. "Tackling the pay gap between women and men", Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, COM (2007) 424 final, 18 July 2007.

40. Aftenposten, 7 August 2007, <http://www.aftenposten.no/english/local/article1924493.ece>.

41. Concluding memorandum by the men's panel, including the panel's recommendations on possible measures, Oslo, 3 March 2008,

<http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/BLD/Menn%20og%20likestilling/Konklusjonsnotat%20fra%20mannspanelet2.pdf>.

- change legislation, if this has not already been done, to introduce paid parental leave including a part that is non-transferable to the mother, which encourages men to take it and to play an active part in the care of young children;;
- introduce the gender perspective into budgets, which is a key means of analysing the impact of public policies on citizens, both female and male, and to restructure revenue and spending so as to reduce socio-economic inequalities between men and women.

36. It should also encourage national parliaments to set up networks of male parliamentarians committed to combating violence against women and to working to achieve gender equality. The Assembly should encourage an exchange of best practices between these groups and draw up guidelines to promote men's involvement and achieve gender equality.

Reporting committee: Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

Reference to committee: [Doc. 11428](#), Reference No. 3396 of 21 January 2008.

Draft resolution and draft recommendation unanimously adopted by the committee on 30 September 2008.

Members of the committee: Mr Steingrímur J. Sigfússon (Chairperson), Mr José Mendes Bota (1st Vice-Chairperson), Mrs Ingrida **Circene** (2nd Vice-Chairperson), Mrs Anna **Čurdová** (3rd Vice-Chairperson), Mr Frank Aaen, Mr Francis Agius (alternate: Ms Marie-Louise **Coleiro Preca**), Mr John **Austin**, Mr Lokman Ayva, Ms Marieluise Beck, Mrs Anna **Benaki**, Mrs Oksana **Bilozir**, Ms María Delia Blanco Terán, Mrs Olena **Bondarenko**, Mr Pedrag Bošćović, Mr Jean-Guy **Branger**, Mr Igor Chernyshenko (alternate: Ms Svetlana **Khorkina**), Mr James Clappison (alternate: Mr Oliver **Heald**), Mrs Minodora **Cliveti**, Mr Vladimiro Crisafulli, Ms Diana Çuli, Mr Ivica Dačić, Mrs Lydie **Err**, Mrs Catherine Fautrier, Mrs Mirjana Ferić-Vac, Ms Sonia Fertuzinhos, Mrs Alena Gajdúšková, Mr Giuseppe Galati, Mrs Claude Greff, Mr Attila Gruber, Mrs Carina **Hägg**, Mr Ilie Ilașcu, Mrs Fatme **Ilyaz**, Ms Francine **John-Calame**, Ms Nataša Jovanović, M. Guiorgui Kandelaki, Mrs Birgen Keleş, Mrs Krista **Kiuru**, Mrs Angela Leahu, Mr Terry **Leyden**, Mrs Mirjana Malić, Mrs Nursuna Memecan, Mrs Danguté Mikutienė, Mr Burkhardt Müller-Sönksen, Mrs Christine Muttonen (alternate: Ms Ana **Blatnik**), Mrs Hermine Naghdalyan, Ms Fiamma Nirenstein, Mrs Yuliya **Novikova**, Mr Mark Oaten (alternate: Mr Tim **Boswell**), Mr Kent **Olsson**, Mr Jaroslav **Paška**, Mrs Antigoni **Papadopoulos**, Mr Claudio Podeschi, Mrs Majda Potrata, Ms M^a del Carmen **Quintanilla Barba**, Mr Frédéric **Reiss**, Mrs Mailis Reps, Ms Maria Pilar **Riba Font**, Ms Jadwiga Rotnicka, Mrs Marlene Rupprecht (alternate: Ms Angelika **Graf**), Mrs Klára Sándor, Ms Miet Smet, M^{me} Albertina **Soliani**, Mrs Darinka **Stantcheva**, Mrs Tineke Strik, Mr Michał **Stuligrosz**, Mrs Doris **Stump**, Mr Han Ten Broeke, Mr Vasile Ioan Dănuț Ungureanu, Mrs Tatiana **Volozhinskaya**, Mr Marek **Wikiński**, Mr Paul Wille, Mrs Betty **Williams**, Mr Gert Winkelmeier, Ms Karin S. **Woldseth**, Mrs Gisela **Wurm**, Mr Andrej Zernovski, Mr Vladimir **Zhidkikh**, Mrs Anna Roudoula **Zissi**.

N.B. The names of the members who took part in the meeting are printed in **bold**.

Secretariat of the committee: Mrs Kleinsorge, Mrs Affholder, Mrs Devaux.