



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on Family-Friendly Scientific Careers - towards an Integrated Model

*2871st COMPETITIVENESS
(INTERNAL MARKET, INDUSTRY and RESEARCH) Council meeting
Brussels, 29 and 30 May 2008*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. RECALLS:

- the crucial role of research and technological development policy in the context of the Lisbon strategy, the importance of the successful realisation of the European Research Area (ERA) and the importance attached by the European Council of 22/23 March 2005 to the development of human capital in the context of the mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy ;
- its Resolutions on science and society and on women in science (26 June 2001) , on the reinforcement of the mobility strategy within the European Research Area (10 December 2001) , on investing in research for European growth and competitiveness (22 September 2003) , on the profession and the career of researchers within the ERA (10 November 2003) , on equal access to and participation of women and men in the knowledge society for growth and innovation (27 November 2003) ;
- its conclusions on reinforcing human resources in science and technology in the European Research Area of 18 April 2005, which, inter alia, reaffirm that "Europe needs strong coordinated equal opportunity policies and actions to improve the participation of women especially in decision-making positions";

P R E S S

- its conclusions on the "Future of Science and Technology in Europe" of 23 November 2007, which, besides other indicated actions to ensure sufficient human resources for R&D, suggest to develop the objectives for the EU as a whole for the next decade" in some areas, including the increase of the share of women among new researchers as well as to develop a comprehensive set of measurable indicators for the growth, attraction and retention of human resources in Science and Technology;
- the general principles reflected in the European Charter for Researchers and in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, which could help to establish a genuine European labour market for researchers;
- the decision No 1982/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013) (hereinafter referred to as "the Seventh Framework Programme"), which states that the role of women in science and research will be actively promoted by appropriate measures with a view to encouraging greater numbers to become involved in this domain and further enhancing their active role in research;
- the principles reflected into the Council Decision N. 973/2006/EC of 19 December 2006 concerning the specific programme "People" implementing the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007 to 2013), to ensure gender mainstreaming by encouraging equal opportunities in all "Marie Curie Actions" by benchmarking gender participation (a target of at least 40 % participation by women), as well as by taking into account the researchers' family situation, inter alia by facilitating the resuming of a research career after a break;
- the Mandate for the Helsinki Group approved in April 2007 to exchange experience and inform the Commission about policies and measures implemented at local, regional, national and European levels to promote gender equality in science, to develop joint activities at European level and to encourage the participation of women scientists in the Framework Programme and in the European Research Area;
- the results of the Public Consultation on the Green Paper "The European Research Area: New Perspectives", where 88% of respondents considered that more women would be attracted by a research career if conditions for a better work-life balance were created;
- the results of the workshop organised by the Slovenian Presidency in Brdo on 8 February 2008 about "Family-Friendly Scientific Careers - towards an Integrated Model";
- the European Council held on 13 and 14 March 2008, urging the Member States and the European Union to remove barriers to the free movement of knowledge by creating a "fifth freedom", notably by making the labour market for European researchers more open and competitive, providing better career structures, transparency and family-friendliness;

2. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the efforts already undertaken and the policies introduced up to now by Member States and the Commission in the field of human resources in science and technology to put into practice a number of actions, such as direct support measures, preferential recruitment policies and funding schemes supporting research carried out by women;
3. **STRESSES** the need for an empowerment of the women's role by encouraging their equitable representation in decision-making bodies and in high-level appointment, as well as the importance to develop better work-life balance conditions making scientific careers more family friendly;

4. **CALLS ON** the Commission and on Member States to identify and overcome remaining financial, administrative, cultural and mobility obstacles and to create more attractive and flexible working conditions in the scientific field, which will stimulate women's and men's interest in pursuing careers in all areas of science;
5. **TAKES NOTE** of Commission's Communication on "Better Careers and more mobility: a European Partnership for researchers", aiming at facilitating mobility and careers of researchers across Europe;
6. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the valuable contribution of the Helsinki Group to the correction of the gender balance in science by long-term monitoring and expert advice and **INVITES** the Member States to exchange their best practices to promote women representations in high level positions, as well as to develop model initiatives which could help the reconciliation of family and professional life;
7. **INVITES** the Commission to continue and intensify its efforts to promote the role of women in science and technology by ensuring an effective mainstreaming of the gender dimension when implementing the R&D Framework Programmes;
8. **RECOGNISES** the need to further promote transparency in project funding and career development in order to tackle any gender discrimination and disadvantages;
9. **INVITES** the Member States and the Commission to promote the principles reflected in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their Recruitment;
10. **INVITES** Member States and the Commission to apply the above mentioned principles in their research cooperation with third countries, including when addressing the participation of researchers from developing countries in research activities, taking into account gender equality;
11. **REAFFIRMS** that the Commission in cooperation with the Member States should dedicate more efforts to develop a comprehensive set of measurable indicators, relevant statistics and comparable data in order also to support concrete measures to promote and develop better work-life balance conditions;
12. **INVITES** the Commission and Member States to develop an integrated model of scientific careers based on an appropriate policy mix ensuring family-friendly environment for researchers."