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## **Gender budgeting**

Recommendation 1739 (2006)

Reply from the Committee of Ministers

adopted at the 973<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (13 September 2006)

1. The Committee of Ministers took note with interest of Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1739 (2006) on gender budgeting, which it brought to the attention of the governments of member states and forwarded for comment to the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG), whose opinion is appended to this reply.
2. Incorporating a gender perspective into the budgetary process is a concrete application of gender mainstreaming. Like the Assembly, and in line with the commitments made by the Heads of State and Government at the Third Summit held in May 2005 in Warsaw, the Committee of Ministers attaches great importance to the gender mainstreaming strategy. This strategy, outlined in Recommendation R (98) 14 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on gender mainstreaming, consists in “the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making”.
3. Several initiatives are currently proceeding in accordance with this strategy under the Council of Europe Programme of Activities, notably in the fields of education, health and social cohesion. They relate in particular to the preparation of guidelines on the promotion of gender mainstreaming in education, gender differences in health policies, users' participation in social services, and delivery of integrated social services, soon to be considered by the Committee of Ministers.
4. These initial experiences go to prove the expediency of applying this strategy more widely. In this connection, the Committee of Ministers draws attention to the report prepared by the CDEG on “Gender budgeting”, which the Assembly has also mentioned and which offers member states a methodology for drawing up budgets with a gender perspective or undertaking reforms in this area.
5. The Committee of Ministers would further inform the Assembly of the discussions on “Human rights and economic challenges in Europe – gender equality” conducted as part of the 6th European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men, held in Stockholm on 8 and 9 June 2006.
6. These discussions led to the adoption of a Resolution entitled “Achieving gender equality: a challenge for human rights and a prerequisite for economic development”, which the Ministers participating in the conference transmitted to the Committee of Ministers. The resolution puts forward proposals for strategies to further equality between women and men, including gender analysis and gender budgeting. The Ministers also adopted an Action Plan setting out the action to be undertaken for “achieving gender equality in all spheres of society”, particularly through gender mainstreaming, including gender budgeting.
7. The Committee of Ministers will shortly consider the conclusions of the 6th Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men and the subsequent action required which, it notes at this stage, coincides in many respects with the Assembly's proposals.
8. Concerning the preparation of a “gender analysis of the Council of Europe's budget”, the Committee of Ministers took note of the Assembly's proposal and invited the Secretary General, in consultation with the Budget Committee, to explore the possibilities of implementing these principles in the Organisation's budgets.

*Appendix to the reply*

**Comments of the CDEG on Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1739 (2006) on gender budgeting**

1. The CDEG thanks the Parliamentary Assembly for its Recommendation 1739 (2006) on gender budgeting, and welcomes this Assembly initiative.
2. The CDEG points out that its report on Gender budgeting, which has just been published, offers member states a methodology for drawing up budgets with a gender perspective or undertaking reforms in this area. The report was presented at the parallel event held in New York on 2 March 2006 during the 50th session of the Committee on the Status of Women.
3. The CDEG also points out that at the 6th European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men to be held in Stockholm on 8 and 9 June 2006, whose main theme is "Human rights and economic challenges in Europe – gender equality", gender budgeting will be discussed under sub-theme 2: "Gender analysis and gender budgeting: tools for economic development."
4. In this context the CDEG plans to propose to draw up guidelines on gender budgeting by the member states and to continue to gather information on the member states' initiatives in this area, as advocated by the Parliamentary Assembly.
5. The CDEG also supports the proposal made in the Parliamentary Assembly recommendation insofar as the committee itself proposes to promote the dissemination of information on gender budgeting to the various players involved in the preparation, adoption and implementation of public budgets, including the Council of Europe budget.