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Equality Summit, Berlin, 30 and 31st January 2007
[Chair's conclusions]

The European Union has made much progress in promoting equality, accommodating diversity and fighting discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion belief and sexual orientation. New equality legislation has been adopted and national equality bodies have been set up.

Despite this progress, inequality and discrimination on the grounds mentioned above continue to exist, at a considerable cost for the individual women and men concerned and European societies as a whole.

A renewed commitment

The 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All is an opportunity to renew our shared vision of a Europe, where all people are equal and free from discrimination. Representatives from the governments of and participants from all 30 participating countries, heads and representatives of Equality Bodies, social partners, employers' and civil society organisations reaffirmed their commitment to the full equality of chances and the realisation of equity as a necessary condition for a peaceful and tolerant social existence as well as the growth and well being of Europe and its people.

Initiate lasting change

The 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All is also an opportunity to confirm that gender equality, equality for all and diversity are core values of the European Union. It also is an opportunity to initiate lasting change in the societies of all Member States. The Summit identified concrete steps in order to make equal opportunities a reality in today's Europe, and to take a win-win approach to the growing diversity of our societies.

The legacy of the Year

Participants agreed on the necessity to:

- ensure a full and effective implementation of European anti-discrimination laws and gender equality legislation, furthering the awareness of these regulations and promoting the benefits of existing diversity;



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- secure the independence of specialised equality bodies to respond appropriately to allegations of discrimination in a timely and effective manner to support victims and to make an active contribution to achieving full equality in practice;
 - consider the possibilities of developing and implementing further equality mainstreaming so that policy making and programme development in the public sector give due regard to the promotion of equality and to the value of diversity;
 - strengthen the gender mainstreaming principle, especially in relation to education and training, as well as in the policy-making ;
 - take into account the specific difficulties in case of multiple discriminations;
 - stimulate a growth in awareness among those who experience unjustified inequality of their rights with regards to the existing equality legislation, to strengthen their self-confidence and their ability to exercise those rights;
 - secure improved participation for disadvantaged groups for example in key areas such as employment, education, health and accommodation;
 - stimulate enhanced acknowledgement for the mutual benefits of diversity for both Europe and each individual;
 - support participation in decision making for women and men that experience inequality and enhance their capacity to form organisations and to defend their interests and perspectives;
 - develop new solidarities between the different groups and people that experience unjustified inequality through mutual support in their common goal of a more equal society;
 - improve old and build new relations of mutual responsibility, solidarity and trust between groups that experience inequality and all society;
 - encourage synergy between public authorities and civil society, particularly groups which can play a multiplier role; by developing and disseminating information and awareness-raising tools. Public authorities should take the expertise of civil society organisations in the area of equality into account.