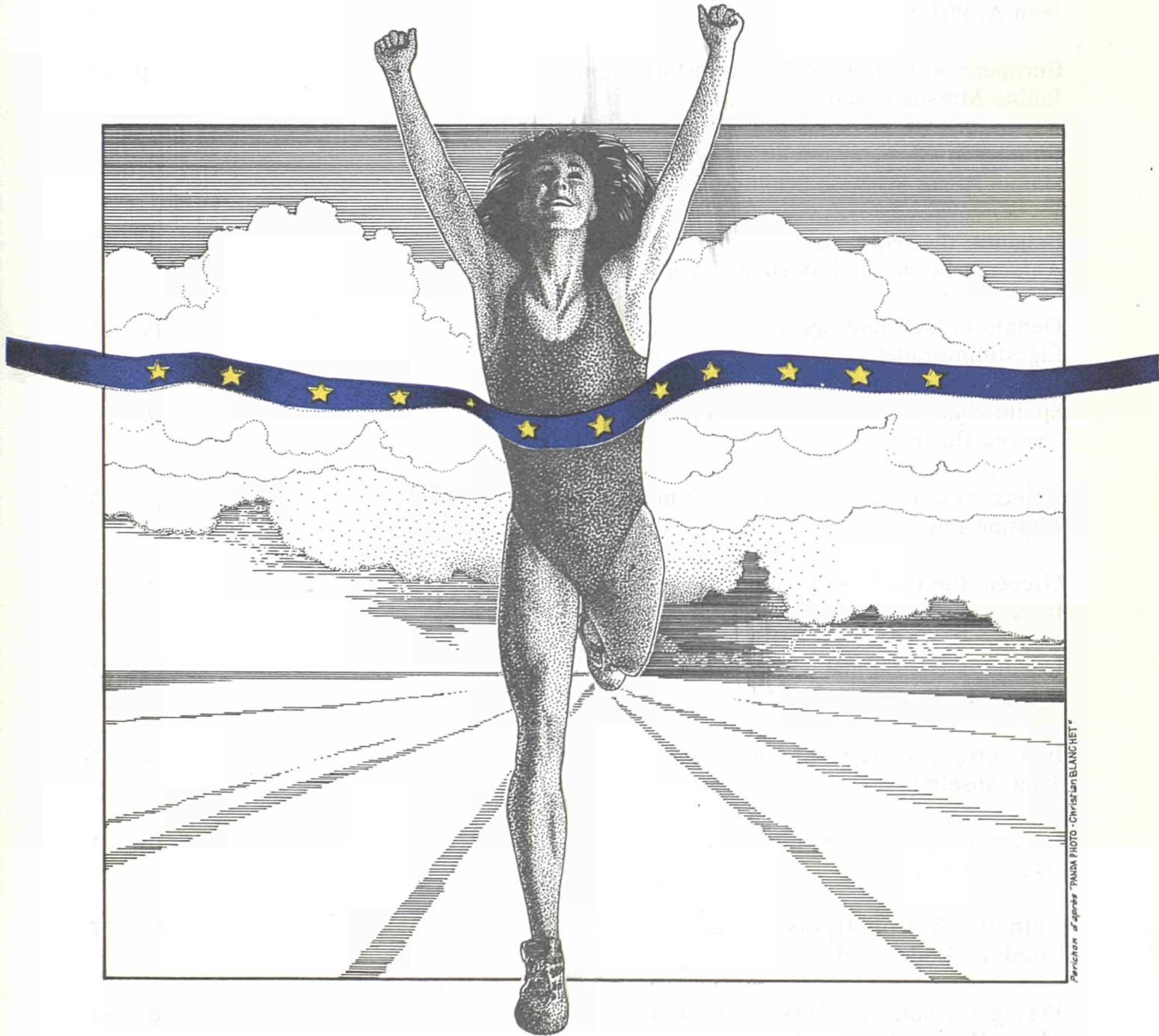


WOMEN OF EUROPE

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FINAL ISSUE



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WOMEN OF EUROPE...

This final editorial is dedicated to thanking all those mirrored by "Women of Europe".

Between the lines of this final editorial, you will find the long road travelled together, through economic crisis and political upheaval, since the beginning of the United Nations' Decade of Women, the campaigns for the election of the European Parliament, the discussions on the Directives on Equal Opportunities, the accession of Greece, Spain and Portugal, the fights for Action Programmes, the struggle for education, training, more equitable professional advancement for women, physical respect and dignity, imagination, creativity.

In this final issue, progress is reviewed country by country. The result is positive, despite the amount still to be achieved and constructed. The result is positive and the Community policy to promote equal opportunities is its motive force and guarantor. The initiative of the Commission of the European Communities, the commitment of the European Parliament and the confirmation of the European Court of Justice are to be found at the origin of all the legislative progress in our countries. In reading these reviews - which Janine Mossuz-Lavau summarizes in the introduction - it will be seen that each author has his or her individual style; but, for all that, a surprising harmony emerges: this is because our preoccupations, our objectives and our ambitions are now shared beyond the frontiers, from one country to another.

Almost without us being aware of it, our hopes and fears have taken on a "European dimension". This common sensitivity is a new source of wealth, in which we shall find the necessary strength for further progress and which it will soon be necessary to share with the women of so many other countries wishing to join the Community.

In its way and for its part, "Women of Europe" will have contributed to this cohesion, to this spirit of enterprise which will continue to benefit Europe and women for a long time to come. The use you have made of the information set out in these pages has been like a daily reward for us.

Thank you all very much.

Fausta DESHORMES LA VALLE

WOMEN OF EUROPE, a communications phenomenon

by J.A. Pirlot
Editor of "Women of Europe"

The review "Women of Europe" will have marked its time in two ways: in the service of women and as an unprecedented communications phenomenon. Why is this?

As an administrative commonplace, the "DIN A4" format is unbeatable. The page-setting is not only strict; it is ascetic. The black ink gives no quarter. The eye is not treated to any joyful arpeggio of characters giving sparkle to the titles. In terms of imagination, the typewriter brings all its poor splendour to bear. And for all that, for specialists in international communications, "Women of Europe" will remain a fascinating phenomenon and a model.

A measured cocktail

"Women of Europe" owes its entire success to a simple, magnificent idea: that the information conveyed by the review reflects both action by women and the work of the European institutions.

To speak of the militant life of women and their associations is not, at first glance, the task of an authority. Especially when it is a European authority, i.e. still in its infancy, very sensitive to criticism and all the more mindful of its respectability. A few eyebrows were raised in perplexity in the offices of the Commission of the European Communities when the first issues were published.

To impose this decisive choice, Fausta Deshormes La Valle took account of a key element: the simultaneity between the building of Europe and the campaign embarked upon by women for greater equality. During the same period of time, in fact, women and Europe undertook to find an identity, to change the old prejudices, to restructure society. A fascinating convergence.

It is in this line of thinking that the catch-phrase was devised which would later become the famous "**Europe, an opportunity for women; women an opportunity for Europe**". These words contain something quite different and far more than a simple publicity slogan: both a motto and a programme of action.

A little history

The policy conducted by Fausta Deshormes is rooted in the very action of citizens in favour of a united Europe. Long before the signature of the Treaty of Rome, there was the "**European Youth Campaign**" during the fifties, in which Fausta La Valle took an active part as Chief Editor of the review "Giovane Europa".

Since that time, faithful friendships have been formed throughout Europe. The imagination and creativity of the militants proved to be effective. The international

campaign was allowing new strategies.

The associative way of life was, incidentally, from the start, an essential vehicle for the transmission of European information. Jacques-René Rabier, at the time Manager of the Information Service of the European Communities, had clearly understood how democratic, voluntary organizations could actively relay opinion and be constructive partners.

The case of women

In the six founder Member States of the European Community at least, the associative way of life already went back a long way and was very closely linked to the countries' social and political life. Citizen participation in the building of Europe was self-evident: can Europe be imagined without perpetual exchanges with the trade unions, the employers' confederations or the agricultural trade organizations, not to speak of the "think tank" as the European Movement can be termed?

Thanks to close contacts with the youth organizations, the Directorate-General for Information of the European Communities had already been able to bring together some three hundred leaders in Brussels in June 1970. The result of this enjoyable, unconventional colloquium was the "Youth Forum of the European Communities", a vital bridge between young people and the developing Europe.

In the particular case of women, specific sociological factors had to be taken into account: on the one hand, the communications strategy had to address all women in the Community, since they were all - or would be - affected by the trends in legislation and behaviour; on the other hand, within the very heart of the group of women, certain already long-standing associations were supplemented or even opposed by other organizations with less experience, but more pugnacity.

A bubbling of initiatives was perceptible among women all over Europe. In addition, at the time of the publication of the first issue of "Women of Europe", the United Nations' Decade for Women had already been launched.

Now, for want of financial resources and linguistic abilities, the militants of the various countries were unaware of almost everything which was happening beyond their frontiers. In diffusing information, "Women of Europe" was to play a decisive role. Only the Commission of the European Communities in fact had the means of gathering together, translating and redistributing information in five, then seven, eight and finally nine different languages. To share this extraordinary advantage with the women's organizations was the key to success.

The style

To be understood by Danish women farmers, Greek women engineers or Irish women trade unionists alike calls for strict rules as far as style is concerned. A poorly chosen adjective can cause laughter in some quarters and anger in others. Interminable discussions took place among the editors: how should the Anglo-Saxon term "Ms",

avoiding the distinction between "Mrs." and "Miss", be translated into other languages? To get round the difficulty, the habit was adopted wherever possible of indicating the forename followed by the surname.

Another constant concern was in fact to "personalize" the information and, through it, to give if not faces at least names to the initiatives, measures and ideas. An identity - or rather a series of identities - were emerging.

It was also necessary to inform and explain to readers the titles and abbreviations used in other countries (Folketing, Taosaich, DGB,...). This led to the habit of mentioning the official title in the country of origin, followed not by a translation in brackets, but an explanation. For example: **During a meeting at the beginning of March, the Bundesrat (Federal Parliamentary assembly representing the regions)...**

In a society in the midst of discussions and change, information is in general self-contained. For this reason, there are very few comments in the text. When Ireland divided on the question of divorce, **"Women of Europe"** confined itself to reporting on the attitudes and initiatives of the various groups.

The articles are short. One page is a rare maximum, since the subject matter is copious. This means that an "average" issue contains at least 150 pieces of information. The titles are explicit: either they indicate the subject (women and banking; young mothers and employment; night work), or they indicate the body whose activities are referred to (Emancipatierraad, Centro Donna, Y.W.C.A., etc.).

Useful address

"To make a virtue of necessity" is a proverb which is possibly difficult to translate but applies throughout Europe, including to the editors of **"Women of Europe"**. The idea of having each piece of information followed by a "useful address" was therefore a must, from issue zero. From that time, it was clear that the brand new department run by Fausta Deshormes would be totally unable to reply to the foreseeable flood of letters asking for details on one or other association.

To indicate a "useful address" was to share the information - and therefore the power -, to offer the freedom to go back to the source, to give readers the possibility of establishing direct links with one another.

A few, not very scientific, soundings allowed it to be verified that a piece of information gives rise to an average of four or five letters. In this way, thanks to **"Women of Europe"**, but often unbeknown to it, an astonishing network of relationships, friendships and exchanges was becoming established, which would subsequently produce joint action, effective solidarity, shared experiences...

From the first editorial, it had been said that the information must **"flow like life blood"**. Thanks to the system of the useful address, the reading rate of **"Women of Europe"** was allocated a coefficient rarely studied by information specialists: the utility rate.

For "**Women of Europe**" is not really a magazine like any other. Its prime function is not to entertain but to bring about action. And the finest compliment - and the most often repeated - in readers' letters to the editors stressed the "useful" nature of the publication. Without doubt, it is the functional nature of the review which, in the long run, allowed its austere appearance to be excused and even appreciated.

There was hence almost complete equivalence between the product/information and its packaging/page-setting. Mac Luhan can rest in peace: at least in the case of "**Women of Europe**", the media is the message.

In this way an information policy has become a communications policy, which is its finest destiny, and an instrument for the participation of women citizens in the construction of their Europe.

The logo

Very quickly, the editorial moved from the cover to page three, to leave room for a drawing. The objective was two-fold: to relieve the general presentation somewhat, but above all to make an easily copied "woman" illustration available to the other publications.

Michel Matagne had already displayed his surprising talent as an artist in other European Commission publications and in particular on the cover of EuroForum. Modest or cautious, he rarely ventured to propose an illustration. On the other hand, effective and rapid, he portrays with extreme care the ideas put forward by those in charge of the publication.

The exercise was not easy at a time when the European Community was itself seeking its identity. The twelve stars have become inevitable today, but for a long time Europe was symbolized by an "e", to the derisive amusement of scientists: "e" = possibly irrational exponential variable...

The use of the well-known "female" sign was just as delicate. On the one hand, it came from a rather cold, rigorous scientific tradition and, on the other, it was forcefully claimed by the most radical feminist movements. The decision was made thanks to the UN which, showing the way, included the female sign in a dove for the Decade of Women.

With use, the female sign was distorted in every conceivable way. It became the controls of an aeroplane (serious question: in front of the pilot or the co-pilot?), an inkwell, the needle of a compass, a hole in a wall, the iris of an eye (a triumph!), an apple landing on the head of Isaac Newton (but who understood this?). It was even - and this met with unexpected success - felicitously associated with the good chap with the famous "smile".

The semiologists could go to town. The use of the female sign in fact provides quite an accurate reflection of the rise to power of women in European society. As directives and Community action programmes for equal opportunities were introduced, the sign was increasingly in evidence, becoming part of technological reality, a symbol of action rather

than of a state, a reflection of dynamism and no longer of waiting.

The sources of information

Dozens of publications, letters, press releases, not to speak of all the official sources (minutes of meetings, preliminary reports of all kinds, studies and publications by public services): for each issue, it was necessary to reduce some fifty kilos of paper to a few pages.

The first selection was made by Fausta Deshormes La Valle herself, her pen flying over all the documents she received.

At the same time, a network of correspondents in each country was preparing its contribution. At the difficult time of choices, two criteria were essential: is the information exemplary? is the information useful?

For example, the Equal Opportunities Commission of Great Britain was for a long time a model for a number of other countries where women were hoping for a similar body to be set up. Its successes, as well as its failures, therefore merited very special attention.

Likewise, to list the difficulties encountered by a woman docker in having her qualification as crane driver recognized allowed widespread solidarity to be set into motion:

To indicate that five women hold the rank of officer in the municipal police force in Italy has a two-fold purpose: to indicate to all the municipalities of Europe that women are capable of taking command and to say to the Italian local authorities that a courageous political decision does not go by unnoticed. Each example quoted was opening a breach into which other women could advance. Each example quoted led to the disappearance of a stereotype. The main thing was to disseminate the models.

In this way, the perception of a common destiny between the women citizens of Europe was strengthened.

Convergence

The office of Fausta Deshormes La Valle in a short time became a kind of immense sorting station with entire convoys of ideas, experiences, plans, successes and failures passing through. From this promontory - and sometimes not without astonishment - the next convergences could be seen approaching from afar.

There were refuges for battered women set up here and there, academic research on the history of women, exhibition rooms for women artists, increasingly numerous protests of women against the stereotypes portrayed by the media. An idea launched in Dublin would crop up in Lyons. A hypothesis put forward in Copenhagen was discussed in Glasgow. Even the place of women in the religious hierarchy - a subject not covered by the Treaty of Rome... - was mentioned with increasing frequency, but prudently making intensive use of the understatement.

Bursting into politics, Italian women were demanding greater transparency, more honesty. Only a few months later, it was German women Liberal Members of Parliament who were setting the example, putting their mandates at stake after a change in majority in the Federal Government.

Differences were also emerging where there was a need to understand the origins. At the time when so many countries wanted more binding legislation in the field of equality, why were the women of the SPD (German Social-Democrat Party) and the DGB (leading German trade union) resisting so strongly? In "**Women of Europe**", it was necessary to explain the very special power complex which enables German trade unions to obtain more favourable provisions from the employers than those laid down by law.

Little by little, women and their organizations were getting to know one another, to appreciate one another, to conduct specific actions together. The European institutions were placed under surveillance. Beyond national, linguistic, political, social, cultural and religious divides, women were defining their common objectives, sharing the targets, preparing strategies.

The campaigns

Thanks to "**Women of Europe**", women and their organizations discovered the specific nature of communication in Europe: i.e. its multidimensional nature. Unlike an arrow which only aims for and reaches one target, a well launched piece of information may reach several objectives at the same time. And to obtain maximum effect, it necessarily has to be a "multiple warhead". It therefore has to be designed accordingly.

A real-life case: a school for aeroplane pilots in Germany - as incidently a school for marine officers in Belgium - systematically eliminated women applicants before they entered the establishment. The management believed it was only setting a few women ex-future pupils against itself. Pointed out without comment by "**Women of Europe**", these anomalies were to start reactions not only from the country concerned, but also from the European Commission and the other Community countries. The poor director suddenly found himself in the spotlight and bombarded by protests sent from all the Community countries.

This sudden fame had immediate effects in both these cases and in many others.

Although there have been some moments of intense jubilation at "**Women of Europe**", there was more often worried concentration and pensive soberness at the size of the stakes. The first election of the European Parliament by universal suffrage was one of these moments. It was clear that the participation by electors, men and women, would be a key factor in the success. But it was also clear that the results of the women candidates would mark a turning point in the political life of the young Community.

It was necessary to set to work early, i.e. from the nomination of the candidates, to ensure that women were given a good place on the lists. The internal procedure of each political party was analyzed in detail and all the more strictly as this procedure is far from being uniform in the various Community countries.

A poster competition reserved to women had been organized to encourage women electors to go to the polls. This was very successful. The number of women candidates was extraordinary. A special issue of **"Women of Europe"** was devoted to them.

What was even better was the score achieved by the women at the elections: with 17% women members, the European Parliament straight away achieved a higher rate than almost all the national Parliaments. It was following this victory that the Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women of Europe was set up, followed by the Parliamentary Committee on Women's Rights, each meeting of which is reported on by **"Women of Europe"**.

In the crush and still with the assistance of the "Women's Information" Department, the women's organizations got into the habit of meeting. The strategy finalized in Bonn at the first of these meetings made it possible to have the first Equal Opportunities Action Programme (1982) adopted, which at the time had been seriously threatened by the hesitations of the Finance Ministers.

The last of these meetings, held in London in 1989, was finally to lead to the decision to create a "Women's lobby" (actually created at the end of 1990).

Preparing for the future

Still with an eye to the future, **"Women of Europe"** published supplements on subjects which were so important that they could not be dealt with in a few lines: Women and Development, Women and Research, Women and Music... The list is long, but shows a two-fold concern: to bring to mind the history and to prepare for the future. The Supplements Women of Greece, Women of Spain, Women of Portugal were published without awaiting the official date of accession and Women of Hungary without awaiting the chances of history, etc.

"Women of Europe" was and will remain a communications phenomenon. To date, no other publication has reflected and influenced the development of our society in all the official languages of the European Communities. Without awaiting the decisions of the Heads of State and of Government or the end of the debates on "federalism" or "confederalism", it promoted solidarity between the women of Europe. It has given a form, a face and a breath of life to the motto **"Women, an opportunity for Europe; Europe, an opportunity for women"**.

EUROPEAN WOMEN IN 1992: in transformation

*by Janine Mossuz-Lavau, Director of Research
at the CNRS and at the Fondation Nationale
des Sciences Politiques (National Foundation
for Political Sciences)*

In recent times, the situation of European women has been constantly changing. Not that it is possible triumphantly to give credence to the idea that they have had all their demands met, but it cannot be denied that a point of no return has without doubt been reached and that the necessary changes cannot be deferred much longer. The review of the achievements of the past few years, in the fields of political life, professional life and private life, shows that more than a tremor is being recorded.

POLITICAL LIFE

Examining the distribution of the jobs involving political responsibilities in the twelve Community Member States, one is struck first of all by the wide variety in situations. The share reverting to women is in fact entirely different from Denmark to Greece. A preliminary classification can be made by taking the single Chambers or the Lower Chambers in the case of countries with bicameral systems (see next page).

Roughly speaking, a distinction may be drawn between three groups. The first is that of the countries in which women account for between a fifth and a third of Members of Parliament: Denmark (33%), the Netherlands (25%), Germany (20.7%), Belgium (19%). The second group together the countries which only grant them between 10% and 15% of the seats: Luxembourg (14.6%), Spain (14.6%). Finally in the third, the proportion of women in the assemblies is under 10%. This group comprises Ireland (8.4%), Portugal (7.6%), the United Kingdom (9%), France (5.7%) and Greece (4.3%).

A spread of nearly thirty points therefore separates the most "feminist" country from the least.

If the other seats of political power are examined, is this classification overturned? In the Upper Chambers, which exist in half the Community Member States, women are, as a rule, even less well represented than in the Lower Chambers but here too, a country from the first group, Belgium, where women account for 9.8% of its senators or Spain (10.8%) can be compared to France, which, still bringing up the rear, only has 2.8%. Ireland, is a very special case, since its Senate has more women (11%) than its Lower Chamber.

Examination of the municipal councils leads to a few corrections being made. Even though Denmark remains the country which accords women the largest place in its local bodies (26.2%), it must be noted that France and Greece, respectively with 16.9% and 8.9% of women in their municipal councils, show signs of an effort at openness and France is even ranked above Luxembourg (7.2%) and Italy (9.2%).

These few figures in any case emphasize the fact that, contrary to what might have been thought, it is not much easier for women to enter local government than national government. In fact, several countries which, at first sight, could be termed as "advanced", are not hurrying excessively to grant women positions of responsibility at municipal level. Possibly traces should be seen in this of a traditional diversity between the centre and the outlying areas, between the large towns and the small localities (and even more the rural areas), the former accepting innovation more readily than the latter and through this, accepting more readily that women enter a preserve which has long remained exclusively masculine. It is doubtless one of the reasons why, where the power of decision lies with national leaders, for example for the formation of governments or for access to the head of Parliaments, it is not unusual to see women selected, even in countries where they are not yet well represented in the "lower" ranks.

Table: Proportion of women in the Single Chamber or the Lower Chamber at the beginning and end of the 1980s, in the 12 Community Member States.

	Single Chamber or Lower Chamber at the end of the 1980s		Single Chamber or Lower Chamber at the beginning of the 1980s	
Denmark	33	(1990)	23.4	(1979)
Netherlands	25	(1989)	18	(1982)
Federal Republic of Germany	20.7	(1990)	8.7	(1980)
Belgium	19	(1987)	7.5	(1978)
Luxembourg	14.6	(1988)	6.7	(1979)
Spain	14.6	(1989)	5.4	(1979)
United Kingdom	9	(1991)	3.1	(1979)
Ireland	8.4	(1988)	4.8	(1982)
Italy	8.2	(1992)	7.9	(1983)
Portugal	7.6	(1987)	9.2	(1983)
France	5.7	(1988)	5.3	(1981)
Greece	4.3	(1988)	3.7	(1981)

SOURCES: For the first column, reports supplied by the various countries to Women of Europe;
For the second column, Mossuz-Lavau (Janine), Sineau (Marianne), La situation des femmes dans la vie politique en Europe, Report prepared for the Council of Europe, 1984, 182p.

For example, from May 1991 to April 1992, France had a woman Prime Minister and, on several occasions, women have headed ministries which until then were led by men, such as Agriculture or European Affairs, whereas this country is, with Greece, bringing up the rear in Europe as far as representation of women in Parliament is concerned.

It should also be noted that, in Italy, there was a woman President of the Chamber of Deputies during the last Parliament; likewise, a woman holds the office of President in Luxembourg. But although Denmark - always the same country - can pride itself on having 20% women among its Ministers, there are only 6.5% in Portugal and, in Greece, there is only one woman Minister and one woman Secretary of State. In countries where the second sex is rare among political personnel, some women therefore hold responsibilities, but it has to be said that they hold them "by the restraint of princes"

rather than as a reflection of their presence within the elected Assemblies.

However, one body is seeing its quota of women increasing. This is the European Parliament, for which the majority of countries have had fewer reservations in placing female representatives in good positions on the lists. Is this associated with the fact that the European Parliament is not seen as a body where power is really exercised? And what will be the position on the day when it holds more?

In total, although a good half of the Community Member States have opened up their assemblies to women, the fact nevertheless remains that a large proportion still have very low percentages of women among the political elites.

In the assessment which may be made of these figures, it is nevertheless important not to stop here and to compare them with those supplied some ten years ago. In so doing, there is no denying that a great deal of progress has been made, in any case as far as the place of women in Parliament is concerned.

Denmark, which at the time only had 23.4%, has achieved a 10 point leap, the Netherlands have progressed by 7 points, the Federal Republic of Germany by 12 points (it rises from 8.7 at the beginning of the eighties to 20.7 today), Belgium by 11.5 points, Luxembourg by 8 points and Spain by 11 points.

These last four countries were all below the 10% bar ten years ago as far as the proportion of women in their single Chamber (or Lower Chamber) was concerned, i.e. at the level of the "third group" described above (the countries which still have not reached this threshold today).

The other countries too which, at the start of the nineties, scored between the 8.4% for Ireland and the 4.3% for Greece, have made slight progress too - apart from in Portugal: for example, Ireland has risen from 4.8% to 8.4%, the United Kingdom from 3.1% to 9%.

There is therefore clearly a "tremor" in the countries of the final group which could be the forerunner of future development comparable to that experienced over ten years by Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain and Italy. This is especially so as, in some of these countries, significant trends are to be seen as far as the place of women in local authorities is concerned.

In France, for instance, there were only 8.5% on the municipal councils in 1977, whereas the figure for 1989 is 16.9%. It may be assumed that, among these new local feminine elites, some will try to obtain national mandates and, having proved themselves in the municipalities, will have less reason to see themselves rejected by the machinery.

This is on condition that they evolve in line with public opinion. The latter is in fact extremely favourable to women assuming the highest responsibilities. For instance, over 80% of the French would consider it desirable for a woman to be President of the Republic; do they know that, as far as the sharing of political power between the sexes is concerned, France only just manages to do better than Greece? In Spain, as early as

1986, three people in four considered it necessary for women to be more in evidence in political life. (1)

Europe has nevertheless made progress in this field and without doubt several reasons account for this trend. The first relates to the structural changes which have taken place right through this continent. In fact a development is to be seen in education, remuneration and town planning, as well as a decline in the practice of religion, all of which promote the acceptance of the entry of women into politics.

Women are seen less and less as having to be exclusively wives and mothers, attached only to the sphere of private life. Their presence in the public arena has become legitimate and people are no longer shocked by the fact that they wish to "enter politics". Women, for their part, are claiming these new roles. A large number of women's groups, associations, circles and movements are calling for them to be able to assume political responsibilities.

Furthermore, initiatives have been taken by the public authorities themselves. For example, in the Netherlands, the Commission for Emancipation, set up by the Government in 1974, was replaced in 1981 by an Emancipation Council, which gives its opinion on everything concerning women. And just recently, the Council suggested to the Government adjusting its financial assistance to the political parties in line with the efforts they make to promote women.

We have not yet reached this stage in most of the other countries, but mention must be made of the national campaigns (such as in Belgium on the eve of the 1991 elections and already in 1988, on the theme of "Vote for greater balance in your municipal council") or the creation of government bodies (as in the Federal Republic of Germany, where there is now a Ministry for women and young people). A weapon which is not always effective however, if one judges by France, where a Secretary of State for Women's Rights was introduced as early as 1974 (and even became a Ministry in 1981), without this leading to notable progress of women among Members of Parliament.

In fact, it seems that one of the best ways of achieving this progress lies in the adoption of a quota policy. In Germany, where both the SPD and the Greens have adopted the idea, it was seen that the number of women politicians rose spectacularly (2). All the same, the "law" must be respected. For the French Socialist Party, which introduced a quota of 30% for female representation, did not for all that have 30% elected at the recent conferences.

Another reason could encourage the party headquarters to make more room for women. The decade which has just come to an end has seen them starting to participate as much as men during electoral campaigns and in certain countries, such as Denmark, Greece, Germany and France, voting as far to the Left as men (if not further).

Appearing more and more as a stake between the parties of the Right, which would like to keep them, and the parties of the Left, which wish to see them join their ranks in growing numbers, women will possibly be less neglected by the machinery in the years to come.

PROFESSIONAL LIFE

One of the characteristics of the end of the twentieth century is the massive entry of women into the labour market. In many Community Member States (apart from Greece, Ireland, Italy and Luxembourg), they now account for 40% of the labour force (46.2% in Denmark, 44.7% in Belgium, 44.5% in France and even 43.2% in Portugal), a figure which is significantly up on that of ten or fifteen years ago. They are not therefore very far from forming half of those engaging in a profession.

Between 25 and 49 years of age, the vast majority of women work, including when they have young children, which is a break with the model of female activity current only a while ago: a discontinuous job, stopped or resumed in accordance with strict family imperatives.

Henceforth, women have a possibility of being autonomous, even if, for a good number of them, it is a "limited" autonomy. In almost all the Community countries, over 80% of them are employees who therefore no longer work, as their grandmothers did, in a family firm (agriculture, crafts or trade). This means that they are increasingly leaving their home to go to the premises of a "firm" where they obtain a salary, where they meet colleagues, where they are integrated into a different universe from that of the family unit.

This new integration has effects. In particular, it is known that the fact of engaging in a profession affects all political and cultural behaviour (3). Women who work outside are more politically aware and more committed to the Left, more favourable too to what is known as "cultural liberalism", i.e. hedonist and anti-authoritarian attitudes. They are obviously more in favour of educative and domestic tasks being shared between men and women, more in favour too in women being able to have control over their bodies.

Furthermore, they exercise a not inconsiderable influence on their friends and on their children, who become less sexist. Finally, it must be noted that women are now penetrating the upper echelons of the professional hierarchy. In France, for example, between 1980 and 1989, their share in the group of top executives - liberal professions rose from 25% to 29% (it was 14% in 1954). In the United Kingdom, one general practitioner in four is a woman (one in seven in 1979) and, likewise, one lawyer in four.

But alongside these touches of colour there are shady areas. "Women and work" is not yet a fairy tale. For many of them, it is a matter, first of all, of a part-time job: a quarter of Spanish, Belgian, Danish and French women work part-time, a third of German women and 42% of British women. Work is not always chosen, the opportunities for promotion are often limited and it only yields a supplementary wage. But, for a large number of women, it is also sometimes the only way of reconciling family life and professional life in societies where working hours are too long for everyone and the facilities for looking after young children are still too scarce to permit the adoption of other formulae. The Women's Movement in the Netherlands has clearly understood the situation, as it militates in favour of a 25-hour working week for everyone.

Furthermore, women hold far more so-called "atypical" jobs than men: precarious, for

a limited duration etc., which makes them more sensitive to the scourge with which they are already only too familiar: unemployment. Indeed, leaving aside Denmark, where women (11.3%) are "only" just more numerous than men (8.3%) in being unemployed, in most Member States of the European Communities, they are twice as often in this situation as their male counterparts.

In Greece, the situation is even more serious, since 12.4% of women (4.8% of men) are "seeking employment". In Italy, they comprise 57.4% of the unemployed, whereas they form only 34.6% of the "employed" labour force.

Finally, the "equal work, equal pay" rule is still not fully applied. In the majority of cases, remuneration differs, to the obvious detriment of women, even though the gap is smaller than twenty years ago. In France, over this period, the gap has been reduced from 40% to 23%. In Portugal, the average wage for a woman is equal to three-quarters that of a man. In the United Kingdom, full-time women workers earn about 77% of the amount obtained by men.

Women also tend to be found more often than men in small enterprises where there are few possibilities of joining a trade union. And in fact they are fewer in number to join a trade union, except Danish women: 83% of them are trade union members, as opposed to 86% of Danish men, but very few occupy positions of power. For example, in the United Kingdom, a bastion of trade unionism, 26% of women have "their card", as opposed to 47% of men.

In fact, both the progress and the resistance must be related to the key development factor for women, i.e. the level of education. In this field, which conditions all subsequent professional activity, an extremely important trend has occurred in recent times, i.e. in the majority of Community Member States, girls have entered higher education in greater numbers than boys. This is a phenomenon which will doubtless remain one of the most important in the history of women and of European societies of the past twenty years.

Mention must be made of the case of Denmark where "only" 44.5% of students are girls. Otherwise, in Belgium, Spain and the Federal Republic of Germany, they account for 50% of those following higher education. And in France, Portugal and the United Kingdom, they are in the majority. We have therefore long passed the time when girls, destined primarily to be wives and mothers, were doomed to short studies.

Today, they are enrolling for higher education en masse and are obtaining qualifications enabling them to work and above all to obtain skilled jobs. For instance, in Spain, where women's overall labour force participation rate is particularly low, not exceeding 35%, it must be emphasised that 80% of those with higher education diplomas engage in a gainful occupation.

What is more, girls would appear to have better school careers than boys. According to a very recent study conducted in France, "girls beat boys today in the four stages of the educational structure. At primary school, more of them pass through as time goes by; at comprehensive school, from which they are expelled less frequently for apprenticeships

or technical occupations; at grammar school where, already more numerous, they obtain slightly better results than boys in the baccalauréat; in higher education, finally, through a higher access rate" (4).

However, not too idyllic a view should be taken of this progress in higher education. In fact, girls do not follow the same courses as the boys, they do not choose the most profitable in terms of job prospects, salaries and power. Even today, girls are far more numerous than boys in choosing the literary types and more generally humanities or social sciences than enrolling for science and technical courses. For example, in Ireland, only 25% of girls study physics. According to the French study mentioned above, girls are considered to lack the necessary pugnacity to consider following courses to become "high-fliers", which would reflect the different education still received today by the two sexes.

However, there too, progress can be noted. For instance, in France, in 1976, women only formed 9% of the graduates of the schools of engineering, whereas today there are 21%. And, in the majority of the Community countries, efforts have been made to encourage girls to take science and technical courses, the only way of obtaining a real gender mix in jobs in the future, which will in turn lead to a new conception of work, career, etc.

The relationship between working time and family time should then become more balanced for all, men and women.

PRIVATE LIFE

The changes which have occurred in the working life of women are essentially attributable to the better training they have received in recent times, but also to achievements with regard not only to being able to have control over their bodies, but also to being relieved in part - to a greater or lesser extent depending on the country - of educational and domestic tasks.

It can be said that today, in Europe, contraception has largely become a custom, even though, among the young, in rural environments and in the poorest strata of the population, recourse to the most effective methods is still not systematic. It must be pointed out in fact that in France, every year, nearly 6,000 minors give birth to a child. In Spain, 49% of 20-24 year-olds state that they have never used methods of contraception.

Abortion has been legalized in most countries, apart from Ireland where it is still prohibited, including in the case of rape and incest, but - a historical fact - last February the Supreme Court of Dublin authorized an adolescent who had been the victim of rape to have an abortion in England. It should be noted that Spain and Belgium still have restrictive legislation, since distress is not recognized as a reason to obtain an abortion (this was authorized only in cases of rape, danger to the health of the mother, malformation of the foetus).

In Belgium, the new legislation was only passed in 1990 and not without difficulty, since King Baudoin abdicated temporarily - for just under forty-eight hours - in order not to

initial a text which it went against his conscience to sign.

It is known that the unification of Germany nearly faltered on a single question, that of abortion and that a common position between the old and the new Länder has to be adopted between now and the end of 1992.

Apart from Ireland, Belgium and Spain, as well as a few German Länder where, on account of religious pressure, it is sometimes difficult to obtain an abortion, women are now mistresses of procreation throughout the Community. Depending on their personal and professional aspirations, they can therefore say: "A child if and when I want one".

More than in the past - but still to very varying degrees - European women may also receive assistance for child care. This is a fundamental area in which a great deal still remains to be done. Indeed, for a long time, it was considered that the family was the only conceivable structure for looking after children, up to the age of six years in any case.

Now, there is a tendency to demand that the State takes over partly and looks after small children for part of the day. France is a pioneer in this respect since it has constantly developed nursery facilities (even though these are still manifestly inadequate, the number of places has been multiplied by 5 between 1972 and 1988).

From three years of age, children can go to nursery school and 95% of 3-4 year-olds have education provided for them in this type of institution. The majority of schools have canteens, which allow the pupils to eat at school. It should also be specified that after a birth (or an adoption), the father and mother may take parental leave of three years with the guarantee of getting their jobs back and that, in the event of the illness of a child, the father or the mother is entitled to 12 days of absence per year.

These last two measures (parental leave after the birth and in the event of the illness of the child) are now fairly widespread in Europe. In Portugal, absence of up to 30 days per year is authorized to deal with sick children, in the Federal Republic of Germany, 10 days are granted. In Spain, the father can obtain 4 of the 16 weeks of maternity leave and leave following birth is one year.

However, there are crying shortcomings. First of all, in some countries, the situation is still deplorable in that it can in no way encourage couples to have children or leads to the mother giving up work.

For instance, in the United Kingdom, half the women who give birth do not qualify for maternity leave. There is no parental leave and the number of public day-nurseries has been halved since just after the war. But the deficiency in child care facilities is not unique to the United Kingdom.

The lack of day-nurseries, kindergartens and pre-school systems is deplored in practically all the countries. It should be pointed out too that in Luxembourg and the Netherlands, even when children are in school, they must have lunch at home. This prevents a large number of women from having a full-time job and keeps them in a position of inequality

in relation to men.

In Germany, the possibility is being examined for children of three years of age to be admitted to kindergarten... from 1997. And neither Spain, nor Portugal, nor Italy offer sufficient structures suitable for relieving families of part of their activities of looking after, caring for and educating.

It is therefore the women who are primarily penalized by these deficiencies, even though in other respects they are very happy to spend more time with their children. When the children are bigger and no longer need such constant presence at home, they are then liable to pay a very high price for the contribution made to their offspring during their early years: in unemployment, in downgraded work, in low wages, in total in an occupation where the symbolic and material rewards will be far less than if they had remained in work. And in the event of divorce or widowhood, they come up against major financial difficulties.

It must finally be added that, despite the progress made during the past decade, domestic chores are not yet shared equally between men and women.

For instance, in France, even when they go out to work, women spend three hours on such activities, whereas men only give one hour of their time. And this is in spite of the feminists' campaigns, in spite of the social pressure designed to make those who leave their companion to earn the daily bread feel guilty. It has to be admitted, as Jean-Claude Kaufmann states, that "The egalitarian idea comes up against the burden of reality which, on the contrary, encourages the strengthening of gender differentiation and it is only by an effort of will by an entire society, organized for action, that the inequality between men and women will not become greater.

It is not possible to be easily satisfied, to settle the problem calmly by legal measures or by increasing the number of social facilities" (5).

To overcome this historical sluggishness, it is no doubt only still possible to count on new education, which would be given to boys and girls, both at school and in the families, where there has so far been a tendency to ask the girls rather than the boys to set the table or to wash up. But in so far as fathers and mothers still conform to old stereotypes, it can be thought that the egalitarian transmission of values is a good way from being achieved in full.

The media could play a role by ceasing to present advertisements for domestic products or activities systematically used or accomplished by women. In fact, it is on all fronts that a change should be urged, since resistance is strong and Europe will not possess the desired mixture, the sole generator of equality, without very careful attention to these problems. For the time being, throughout the European Community, we cannot join Elisabeth Badinter in saying, "One is the other" (6), even if the women of today are far from reproductions of the image bequeathed to them by their grandmothers and some of their mothers and affirm their will for independence more and more.

In this respect, a "plus point" from Europe could be beneficial to women if that leads to

injunctions for equality becoming more urgent and if information circulates more: it will then become difficult to sustain a situation which is too unfavourable to women in a country when, in the neighbouring countries, their situation is far better. The objective is for the Member States of the Community to become democracies in the full sense of the term, i.e. régimes in which women, in the same capacity as men, will be parties in taking economic, political and cultural decisions.

References:

(1) Women of Europe, 15 May-15 July 1986.

(2) On 30 August 1988, the SPD took the decision to introduce a quota of 40% women in the party authorities from 1994 and among the electoral candidates from 1998. The Greens, for their part, adopted a quota of 50% women. At present, in the Bundestag, there are 26.8% women among the SPD Members and 37.5% in the "Alliance 90/Greens". In the "legislative" bodies of these two groups (executive committees), they account for 35% and 55% respectively. Source: Union interparlementaire, Les femmes et le pouvoir politique, "Rapport et Documents" series, no. 19, Geneva, 1992, pp. 69-72.

(3) On these effects cf. Mossuz-Lavau (Janine), Sineau (Mariette), Enquête sur les femmes et la politique en France, Paris, P.U.F., 1983, 280 p.

(4) Baudelot (Christian), Establet (Roger), Allez les filles! Editions du Seuil, 1992, p. 11.

(5) Kaufmann (Jean-Claude), "Hommes-femmes: l'égalité impossible?", Libération, 6 March 1992. J.-C. Kaufmann is the author of La trame conjugale, analyse du couple par son linge, Nathan, 1992, 216 p.

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WOMEN IN GERMANY UNITED AT LAST

by Hanna Beate Schöppe-Schilling, Head of Department for "FRAUENPOLITIK" (women's policy, at the Federal Ministry of Women and Young People).

POLITICAL WORLD

As this 20th century draws to a close, the Federal Republic of Germany must face up to a situation which is unique in history, with repercussions which are and will be considerable, precisely in the field of women's policy: Germany has been united, the progress of Europe will be achieved with closer cooperation.

At the end of the first elections organized in the united Germany, a Federal Ministry for Women and Young People was created at the beginning of 1991, to take over from the former Federal Ministry for Young People, the Family, Women and Health, in which the "Women's Policy" Department had been set up in 1986.

Given the capacity to take legislative initiatives and with the full right to intervene, initiate and adjourn, this new Ministry is also able to play an active role in serving women's interests. This trend indicates the continuing growth in the importance attributed to women's policy as part of Government policy.

In line with the federal structure of the Federal Republic of Germany, this trend at Federal level has also been accompanied by a trend at Land level: each Land has a ministry or, at the very least, an equivalent body at the level of the Land government.

In the meantime, 1070 municipal bodies have also been set up, the first being in 1982 in Cologne. In 1991, the first conference of women ministers was held and attended by the Federal Minister and the women ministers of the Land. The trend started in 1989 in the institutional sector in this way achieved its objective: women's policy is seen as a horizontal sector, which affects almost all the other policy areas.

Women's policy, with its legal foundation recognized as early as 1949 in article 3 of the Constitution, is today a factor which is constantly present and of growing importance in the Federal Republic of Germany.

The first Parliament of the united Federal Republic of Germany saw the election of 136 women members (20.7%), i.e. 56 more than in the previous eleventh Bundestag, which represents a 70% increase. The proportion of women in the Land parliaments varies between 8.8% and 29.9%.

In the political parties, the number of militants has also been constantly rising in recent years.

Both the CDU (Christian-Democrat Party) and the FDP (Liberal Party) wish to achieve, through voluntary commitment, equal treatment of men and women at all levels of party organization.

The SPD (Socialist Party), on the other hand, sees the most effective instrument to

promote women within the party to be the introduction of fixed quotas. For their part, the GREENS have written in their statutes that all the authorities and all the bodies of their federation must contain at least 50% women.

WORKING WORLD

Prior to the unification of the Federal Republic of Germany, the percentage of women in the total insured labour force has risen constantly since 1983 and exceeded 40% on 3 October 1990.

Of five new jobs created, three were occupied by women. The public authorities endeavoured, on the one hand, to extend the range of professional occupations available to young women and, on the other hand, to encourage the reincorporation of women into the labour force, for example by amending the law on vocational advancement, which allows mothers returning to work to benefit more easily from financial assistance for vocational training or apprenticeship premiums.

There are also specific pilot programmes (25 million DEM over five years), which led to the creation of 17 information centres for women returning to work and provide for the payment of apprenticeship subsidies to employers who recruit women in this situation for an indefinite period and ensure that they receive training in-house or during working hours.

In the former German Democratic Republic, the rate of women employed was 90% (including pensioners who, parallel to their retirement, engaged in part-time work). The system of the socialist planned economy guaranteed job security and included a large number of provisions allowing the reconciliation of family and professional life - in the latter case for women. It should not be forgotten in this connection that these provisions were part of the ideological, economic and demographic perspective of the system.

In addition, the totalitarian nature of the East German régime left no freedom of choice at either professional or family level. Full-time work was the rule for women as well.

Article 31 of the Unification Treaty lays down a certain number of obligations concerning women and the family, according to which the Federal Government is required, during the lifetime of the present Parliament, to draw up supplementary measures to advance women more and to improve reconciliation between family and working life.

The legislation on equal opportunities for men and women will be developed further and improvements will be made in the legal situation from the point of view of the compatibility of family and working life. Educational leave with a guarantee of employment will be extended to three years from 1 January 1992, the payment of the education allowance being increased to two years from 1 January 1993. Leave granted to parents in the event of illness of their children is increased to 10 days per child and per employed parent; single parents are allocated 20 days.

During the first half of 1991, the participation of the Federal Government in the

financial costs of day-nurseries in the new Länder came to 1 billion DEM. In the meantime, the majority of these Länder have adopted legislation guaranteeing the continued existence of these institutions. Legal entitlement to a place in a kindergarten (from the age of 3 years) from 1997 is currently under consideration at Federal level.

The Unification Treaty also contains a clause providing that the current legal distinction concerning the termination of pregnancy between the old Länder (regulations making abortion subject to certain symptoms) and the new (regulations authorizing abortion up to a certain time from the start of the pregnancy) must be abolished by the end of 1992 and that it is appropriate to introduce, alongside the criminal law regulations, certain legally guaranteed rights for pregnant women to qualify for social aid. The Parliament has currently been referred various bills from the different parties represented in the Bundestag; these bills range from the total abolition of the penal provisions concerning the time limits on abortion, with and without a consultation requirement, to extensive or strict regulations making abortion subject to certain symptoms.

The German Democratic Republic was also experiencing the problem of the segmentation of the labour market, on the grounds of gender. It is regrettable that the vital reconversion of the planned economy based on autarchy of the ex-German Democratic Republic is hitting the women of the new Länder particularly hard.

Of the 1.03 million unemployed in October 1991, 61.2% were women. The introduction of employment policy instruments (short-time working, regulations in the field of early retirement, in-service training and retraining, job creation measures) enabled an additional 2 million people to be taken on.

In view of the high number of women without work, it is almost exclusively women who participate in the in-service training and retraining. On the other hand, as far as the job creation measures are concerned, the results are still insufficient, in spite of the intense efforts by the Federal Government and employment agencies.

The Federal Ministry for Women and Young People allocated some 7 million DEM this year to special programmes assisting women in the new Länder; these credits serve to encourage the formation of women's associations and to develop the initiatives coming from women, to finance the introduction of women's refuges and to create itinerant advice offices and information centres. These programmes are to be continued in 1992.

Women of both old and new Länder are showing increasing interest in part-time work. In the old Länder, the rate of increase in part-time work is twice that of all work; about one third of all working women have part-time jobs.

Equal treatment of male and female full-time and part-time workers, introduced into labour legislation by the Advancement of Employment Act of 1985, was an important measure, which has since then been applied increasingly frequently by the two sides of industry.

All the Community directives have been translated into German legislation and are therefore applicable to the women in the new Länder.

HIGH-RANKING AND INFLUENTIAL POSITIONS

Measures to encourage women are essential to support the slow development under way which affects the distribution of tasks and roles in society. Women are distinctly under-represented in management positions, in public life and in the political decision-making bodies. This derives from our living and working conditions and from the resultant distribution of the roles.

However, a growing number of women are taking part in public life, on account in particular of the improvement in the level of training and professional qualifications. The women's associations and federations play an important role by stimulating the initiatives in the field of women's policy.

Reviews dealing with questions of women's policy and feminine literature contribute to influencing public opinion.

In spite of this, the rate of increase in the number of women in the parties and associations, in works councils and denominational movements, is not always expressed by a proportional increase in the number of women in positions involving a high level of responsibility.

Even though women already hold eight positions as Minister or Parliamentary Secretary of State in the present Government, there are still only two among the 192 departmental heads of the Federal Government administration.

The law on equal treatment, currently being drafted, besides specifying the legislation on the advancement of women in the Federal Government administration, as well as other aspects, will also regulate the appointment of women and men to the Federal public authorities under the title of "law governing the Federal authorities".

One of the findings of a study is that of over one thousand authorities, departments and appointments analyzed, including for example advisory committees, committees of experts, supervisory councils and executive committees of establishments and foundations governed by public law, courts and monitoring committees, the proportion of women only came to 7.2%; authorities where the proportion of women is equal to or in excess of 20% only came to a total of 36.

EDUCATION

The level of education of girls and women has also been greatly improved in recent decades: from 1975 to 1988, the number of women receiving diplomas from higher education or from higher technical colleges has almost doubled, whereas the number of men has increased by only half; of the number of graduates, the number of women has risen to 49%.

The proportion of women employed in technical and commercial occupations also rose;

however, it is in the 10 occupations where women are the most predominant that nearly 55% of young women are still trained. The Federal and Länder Governments, as well as the employment services, are endeavouring through pilot projects, information campaigns and appropriate consultancy work, to bring about a change.

School textbooks are being altered increasingly to provide a realistic image of men and women.

Whereas on account of the demographic trend, it was not always possible to fill all the apprenticeship posts in the old Länder, this year it has been possible in the new Länder, in spite of the economic upheaval and at the price of considerable effort, to offer the young people leaving school apprenticeships in firms or in inter-firm apprenticeship centres.

REACTION BY PUBLIC OPINION

Reunification is both a motive force and a challenge for women's policy in the Federal Republic of Germany. It is a matter of being able to respond to the different situations in terms of life experience and expectations of women in both new and old Länder, with regard for example to the salaried employment of women or the regulations allowing reconciliation between family and professional life, and of facilitating reconversion, for the women of the new Länder, which affects all aspects of their lives.

The European Political Union represents a new challenge for women's policy. Indeed, it will be necessary to tackle the problems which can only be resolved at international level, such as the problems of immigrants on the job market or the traffic in women and girls.

The Federal Republic of Germany will contribute to this through its experience in the field of women's policy and will devote itself constructively to new projects. It is possible together to create a "Europe for women", if the newly acquired room for manoeuvre is used judiciously and rationally.

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BELGIUM: THE REORGANIZATION OF THE INSTITUTIONS

by Annemie Pernot, Chairman of the Commission du Travail des Femmes (Commission on Women's Work); and Martine Voets, Associate of the Commission du Travail des Femmes

POLITICAL WORLD

"The world of politics must cease to be an exclusively masculine preserve". This was how the Chairman of an important party recently described the presence of women in the political world. The situation is indeed not very brilliant and the figures speak for themselves.

In the latest parliamentary elections of 1991, women took 20 out of 212 seats in the Lower House, i.e. 9.4%. In the Senate, they obtained 7 direct elections out of 106, or 6.6%. Three women are members of the Government of Mr. Jean-Luc Dehaene: Mrs. Miet Smet is Minister for Employment, Mrs. Mieke Offeciers, Minister for the Budget, and Mrs. Laurette Onckelinx is Minister for Health.

Examining the composition of the community and regional assemblies, women are even less in evidence: 9% of the Flemish Council are women; 6.8% of the Council of the French-speaking Community are women; 4% of the Council of the German-speaking Community are women; 6.7% of the Walloon Regional Council are women. Only in the Council of the Brussels Capital Region are the ranks of women stronger at 26.7%.

It should also be noted that the chairs of all these assemblies are held by men, apart from that of the Council of the Community.

The upheaval occurring in the structure of the Belgian State in recent decades has multiplied and divided up the seats of power. Care will have to be taken from now on to ensure that they are all occupied by a sufficient number of women. To this end, it will be necessary to step up the campaigns for women to assume political responsibility, so that they become aware that they must be actresses rather than spectators in the political arena.

In the hope of improving the representation of women among those elected at the general elections of 24 November 1991, the Secretary of State for social emancipation and the women's associations organized a vast campaign to urge the political parties to give women the place to which they are entitled in terms of both numbers and status.

Indeed, it can be seen that several parties are opening their ranks to women candidates, without for all that giving them a real chance of being elected. The women who achieve this must often expend more energy in the process than men.

The obligation to vote in force in our country means that 52% of the electorate are women. It is therefore a matter of encouraging this electorate, on the eve of the

elections, to vote for the women candidates. A symbolic action was organized in the form of wearing "Vote Woman" badges.

Even though the accession to the highest echelons of political power is still only a reality for a minority of women, it could be hoped that a better place is reserved for them at provincial and community levels.

On examining the statistics, it can be seen that since the 1987 elections, 12.3% of the councillors at provincial level are women, compared to 10% at the previous elections. In spite of this trend, there are still only four women on the provincial executives out of 58 posts, i.e. 7.4%, and no women governors.

As far as municipal administration is concerned, 14.3% of the local councillors are women, as opposed to 9.8% at the previous elections. Women have also increased their presence on the local executives: 10.4% of aldermen are women, compared to 7.1% at the previous elections. On the other hand, there was no similar trend in the increase in the number of mayoresses. Only 3.9% of these offices were conferred on women at the last elections, as opposed to 2.9% at the previous elections.

The trend in the presence of women in local administration was fostered by two practical measures taken on the initiative of the Secretary of State for social emancipation. These were the signing of the "Charter of women in politics" by the women's authorities of the various political parties and the campaign conducted on the theme of "Vote for greater balance in your municipal council", on the eve of the 1988 elections.

Since then, a policy to encourage the process of the emancipation of women at local level has been pursued in several pilot municipalities. For instance, a certain number of aldermen for social emancipation have been introduced.

From the figures given above, we see that, contrary to what may be believed, women do not participate any more in local administration than they do in community, regional or national administration, quite the opposite.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that the implementation of the work of the political authorities is based essentially on the administrations allocated to them. Therefore the concern to take account of the integration of the principle of equality in political decisions should be shared by the administrators.

As far as the civil service is concerned, the statistics show that the public authorities represent a substantial proportion of employers of women. The presence of women in the civil service has been increasingly constantly in our country, but there is still a significant imbalance and the vertical and horizontal segmentation of employment keeps them well away from positions of responsibility and from certain categories of posts.

Hence the implementation of equal treatment at this level required the introduction of a Royal Decree providing for measures with a view to promoting equality between men and women in public services. This applies to the majority of the administrations and other Government departments, as well as to the provincial and municipal administrations.

The decree also specifies the method to be followed to implement positive measures and sets a timetable for the practical achievement of the various stages. Finally, it provides for accompanying measures, both internal and external, and for assessment bodies.

So far, we have the feeling that this binding measure has the merit not only of detecting the remaining inequalities at the level of both general civil service policy and the institutions concerned, but also of bringing the debate on equality to the heart of the institutions. And where there is dialogue, something necessarily changes.

WORKING WORLD

Although Belgian women are slow to enter the political arena, the same is not true if one examines their place in the labour market. During the past decade, the size of the total labour force has been influenced primarily by the increased percentage of women joining its ranks. In 1977, women accounted for 38.6% of the total labour force, in 1989 this figure was 44.7% and, according to the Bureau du Plan, it is expected to continue to rise.

The forecasted trend in the women's labour force participation rate will offset the negative impact on the total labour force of the fall in the population of working age through demographic trends. Consequently, the female working population remains the demographic support for the supply of labour in the medium and long term.

On examining professional status, 82% of the female labour force are employees or civil servants, whereas 18% of working women are either company directors, self-employed workers or assistants to self-employed workers. More detailed analysis of professional status nevertheless gives food for thought. It emerges from this that half the non-salaried women are unremunerated assistants. These are women who assist their husbands or fathers in their work without remuneration.

Likewise, among the women employees, the ratio is not identical to that of men: only 1/4 of women are employed as manual workers, the others have jobs as white-collar workers or civil servants.

Furthermore, over half the working women work in scientific occupations, teaching and as office personnel. About 30% of working women are in the following groups: services, sports, leisure enterprises and sales jobs. The percentage of women in the other occupational categories is low.

Likewise, the proportion of women in the group: company director, manager or senior executive, is low. In 1988, 20,000 women occupied such positions, as opposed to 100,000 men.

Only 13.85% of the salaried female workforce has a job in the secondary sector; 84.2%, i.e. almost 9 women in 10, are in the tertiary sector.

60% of women employed in the secondary sector have a job in the treatment and

processing industrial sector and more particularly in the food, textiles and footwear and clothing industries.

In the tertiary sector too, women are to be found essentially in certain sectors, such as trade, for example, where they are especially attracted to retailing, catering and housing enterprises. More than half the women employed are concentrated in the sector "other services".

Part-time work developed strongly in the first half of the 1980s. Between 1981 and 1988, the rate of part-time work rose to 24.9% for women workers.

Half this type of employment is to be found in the category of employees. The increase in part-time work must be considered in the context of the economic crisis of the 1980s.

On the one hand, the public authorities conducted a policy of labour redistribution; on the other hand, there was a call by firms for flexible working hours. Part-time work consequently developed primarily in the tertiary sector. It is under the influence of these developments that the traditional profile of part-time workers changed and they occupy an important place in all the female age groups.

This does not however correspond to the expectations of part-time workers, of whom only 13.8% refuse a full-time job. But they are incorporated more into a system of flexible working hours on account of the weakness of their position on the job market and the fulfilment of the dual role which often limits their career requirements.

It is not therefore primarily the individual characteristics of women (age, level of education, professional experience), but rather the socio-cultural factors which mean that they primarily perform the part-time jobs.

If the position of the Belgian woman on the job market is examined, mention must be made of the characteristics of her position among the unemployed. These are rather alarming. Indeed, the unemployment rate for women is twice as high as that for men. Although it emerges from analysis of the unemployment figures that the total numbers of unemployed have fallen among both men and women since 1985, it must nevertheless be pointed out that women are still more affected by it.

Comparison of the unemployment rates is revealing: it amounted to 8.3% in 1990 for men, whereas it was 16.9% for women. When we examine the level of education of unemployed women, this shows a higher level of education than among unemployed men. Since 1985, the fall in unemployment concerns men more than women.

It will consequently be necessary to intensify the specific measures, knowing that the rate of women's participation in the labour force has not yet reached its peak and that the massive entry of women to the labour market is expressed by a growth in female employment and a lesser reduction in female unemployment.

In the light of the situation described above, it is found that Belgian women have engaged in a movement towards adaptation of the labour market which has not been

matched by a similar movement at the level of job vacancies. It is therefore all the more important to examine the mechanisms capable of contributing to finding a balance.

The Belgian model of social dialogue involves the two sides of industry in the definition and implementation of social policies. Consequently, the presence of women in these relations is crucial.

Examining the importance attached by each of the partners to the presence of women in their ranks, it is seen that, as far as the trade unions are concerned, the proportion of female worker representatives is far below their representation among the members. It is not unusual to find male delegates for essentially female sectors. Within their internal organization, few women reach the decision-making bodies. Recently, the trade unions have been implementing plans for positive measures within their internal structures.

The situation is no different in the employers' organizations. However, no moves towards change are under consideration.

These social policy actors meet within consultative bodies. At enterprise level, 22.7% of the members of committees on health, safety and embellishment of the workplace are women, as are 19% of the members of works councils.

Unfortunately, this representation declines spectacularly at sectoral level: 4.9% of the members of joint committees are women and, at national level, 7.6% women sit on the Conseil national du travail (national labour council) and 7.4% on the Conseil central de l'économie (central council for the economy).

Recent social elections could lead to favourable changes in this representation. Indeed, the Commission du travail des femmes (Commission on women's work) conducted a massive campaign in favour of women candidates. This campaign was supported by the trade unions and the Minister for Employment. Since the end of 1989, the former Chairman of the Commission du travail des femmes has been appointed the Chairman of the Conseil national du travail, a supreme negotiating body in our country. 3 women perform the duties of social arbitrators among 21 male colleagues.

This change brings about a fresh approach to social problems, which are no longer examined exclusively under the male microscope. Furthermore, following an agreement between the two sides of industry, a unit comprising women experts under the authority of two women arbitrators, has been set up in order to enlighten the two sides of industry and to contribute to the positive measures in favour of women being taken into account in the collective labour agreements.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Examining the position of women in the field of training, it is noted that the divergence in the level of training of women in the groups over 30 years of age is being resolved, both in secondary and higher education. Nevertheless, there is no breakthrough by women to be seen in the choice of the various types of studies.

There is a dearth of girls in the technical and vocational sections of advanced secondary education, which prepare for occupations in industrial technology. There are slightly more of them in the courses on new technologies, biochemistry and graphics techniques.

In vocational secondary education, there is a breakthrough in the bakery, butchery and hotel trade sectors. Following the positive action campaigns, some girls are training as mechanics and electricians.

At the higher education level, girls account for nearly 50% of students, but it is in the choice of disciplines that the differences are still marked. They are over-represented in the social science faculties and in a vast minority among the engineers.

It is interesting to list the difficulties which we encounter in introducing positive action campaigns in favour of occupational diversification in the career choices of girls.

Indeed, the educational world includes a certain number of structural obstacles to the achievement of this objective. Its structure is such that it reproduces the segmentation of the labour market. Indeed, women teachers are absent in schools and universities frequented almost exclusively by boys and cannot therefore contribute to real account being taken of co-education, which has consequences on the psychological, pedagogical, but also on the practical level.

Likewise, the personnel found in the school career guidance centres, who are mainly psychologists and social workers have still not been trained in matters related to equal opportunities for men and women. Consequently, specific programmes have been introduced with the vocational training centres of the two sides of industry in order to guarantee that account is taken of the general conditions of work in training and of the problems encountered specifically by women.

Finally, for the past five years, a vast investigation has been taking place at political, economic and associative levels into the sharing of professional and family responsibilities and on the sharing of roles between men and women in society. Certain measures have been introduced by the Minister for Labour and Employment and a large number of colloquiums have been and will continue to be organized in order to detect the obstacles to the change in mentality and to promote the development of new behaviour.

From this very brief glimpse of the position of women in Belgian society, we can deduce that a large number of things still need to be done, but that the introduction of converging strategies to promote equal treatment is pushing us inexorably towards a future world which is fairer to women.

Useful address

Commission du Travail des Femmes
Ministère de l'Emploi et du Travail
Rue Belliard 51
1040 Brussels

DENMARK: FACTS AND FIGURES

Text drawn up by the Ligestillingsrådet (Danish council for equal opportunities)

POLITICAL WORLD

National Government

Women currently occupy 59 seats in Parliament. At the last general elections in December 1990, women increased their share of the seats in Parliament from 30.7% to 33%. In the present Government, women hold 4 out of 19 ministerial positions.

The representation of women in Parliament is fairly evenly spread among the political parties. The "Centre Democrats", a liberal party, has the highest percentage of women. 56% of its representatives in Parliament are women. The lowest percentage of women representing their party in Parliament is to be found in the Conservative Party at only 23% and the Christian People's Party at 25%. The rest of the parties represented in Parliament have female representation of between 33% and 43%.

Local government

In local government, women's representation has grown steadily since the beginning of the seventies. In 1970, women held 10.5% of the seats in local government. In 1989, the percentage had risen to 26.2% and it was at these elections that women obtained seats in all local governments in the country for the first time. Calculations have shown that at this rate, women's representation will equal that of men in the year 2020.

This increase in the representation of women is accompanied by an increase in decision-making posts, although the proportions are completely different. At the 1985 local elections, women were elected to 9 posts as mayoresses, whereas in the 1989 elections, they won 22. This means that women currently occupy 8% of the decision-making posts in local governments.

WORKING WORLD

Women's participation in the labour force in Denmark is among the highest in Europe and has been steadily increasing during the past decade. In 1980, 70.9% of women between 16 and 66 years of age participated in the labour force. This percentage rose to 75.9% in 1989. The participation rate of men fell from 86.8% to 84.6% during the same period. In 1990, women constituted 46.2% of the labour force.

The participation rate for married women was 70.3% in 1988 (most recent statistics available). This is practically identical to the participation rate of women in general. Furthermore, women with small children is the group with the highest participation rate.

These very high percentages must be regarded with caution, for a certain percentage of women in Denmark have part-time jobs, although this phenomenon is currently on the

decline. In 1980, 36% of women and 8% of men held part-time jobs.

In 1989, the percentage of women in part-time jobs had fallen to 28%, whereas the figure for men rose to 10%. These figures show that the employment patterns for women and men are becoming more and more alike, in spite of the fact that employment in Denmark is highly segmented according to gender.

Only 12% of the labour force engage in an occupation in which 40-60% of employees are of the same sex. 52% engage in occupations in which 60-90% of employees are of the same sex and 36% in occupations where 90-100% of employees are of the same sex.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate for women is significantly higher than that for men, with unemployment steadily rising. 25% of the labour force was affected each year by unemployment over the period 1979 to 1984.

In 1980, 7.6% of women were unemployed, compared to 6.5% of men. In 1990, women's unemployment had reached 11.3%, compared to 8.3% for men.

In 1990, the average length of time for which women were unemployed was four and a half months, compared to four and a third months for men. Measuring the duration of unemployment over several years and not over a single year, it can be seen that gender inequality in unemployment is more pronounced.

35% of women without employment in 1987 had been unemployed for more than two years (some since 1982), whereas only 28% of men had been in this situation over the same period. In general, it can be concluded that women are more severely hit by unemployment than men and that they have greater difficulties in finding a job once they have been unemployed.

Protective legislation

Denmark has a strong tradition of opposition to special measures to protect women. Consequently, Denmark has not ratified several ILO conventions, such as the ban on night work for women.

Danish legislation on equal treatment is not an obstacle to regulations giving women special protection. The legislation on the working environment contains no provisions affording special protection to women.

Nevertheless, the legislation allows special health and safety measures to be defined to ensure that the work is properly planned, adapted and carried out. This legislation may be used to define special measures for pregnant women.

HIGH-RANKING AND INFLUENTIAL POSITIONS

Whereas women have experienced a marked increase in their political influence both nationally and locally during the past decade, their influence in the civil service, the municipal administrations and in other similar fields, such as State-controlled organizations, is still very limited. In addition, it is growing at a very slow rate.

With respect to the civil service, women hold only 10% of the middle executive posts and only 3.3% of the top executive positions.

There has been very little improvement in this field in the past five years. In the municipal administrations, the percentages of women in management positions are the same as those mentioned above.

On the other hand, women occupy almost all the management positions in the social institutions, such as child care centres, nursing homes and old people's homes.

To improve equal opportunities in the civil service, the government has issued an action plan which calls on all the ministries to introduce measures allowing greater equality between the sexes at all levels of their organizations. The action plan was launched in 1987 and the first phase was completed in 1990. The second phase is to be continued until 1993.

State-controlled agencies

Some public enterprises, such as Danish Radio and Danish Railways, employ equal opportunities advisers. These advisers are highly placed and cooperate closely with the personnel departments.

Their task is to focus on matters of equality between the sexes and to suggest and implement measures to improve equal opportunities. One of their main objectives is to create the conditions for more women to achieve management positions.

In private enterprises, the percentage of women in management is more or less the same as in the civil service, but the increase in the number of positions occupied by women is more rapid.

Their number has tripled over the past decade. Women held 4.9% of the positions in middle management in 1982 and 10.6% in 1989. Over the same period, the percentage of women in senior managerial positions rose from 2.6% to 4.5%.

In order to improve the influence and participation of women in decision-making in society, the Danish Parliament passed the "Act on Equality in the Appointment of Members to Public Committees and Boards" in 1985.

This Act had a very positive effect on the appointment of women to boards and committees by ministers. Prior to its implementation, women only accounted for 12.7% of the members of such boards and committees. This percentage has increased steadily

and in 1990 it was 38%. Among the public agencies and authorities, it is the trade unions and employers' organizations which experience the greatest difficulties in appointing women to their committees.

Trade unions

Even though unionization is almost as great among women as among men (83% of women in the labour force are union members, compared to 86% of men), the percentage of women with responsible positions in the trade unions is very small.

For example, at the FTF (Confederation of Federal Employees and Civil Servants), which groups together the "white-collar" workers, two-thirds of the members, but only 30% of the executive committee, are women. In the "blue-collar" workers' unions, the percentage is even lower; at the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions, only 4 out of 26 executive committee members are women.

Denmark is the only country, apart from the Netherlands, to have a trade union reserved to women only, the KAD (Women Workers' Union); this groups together unskilled women workers in various sectors.

Universities

In spite of the fact that 44.5% of university students are now female, only 17% of the research and teaching staff and only 5% of the professors are women.

Although there has been a slight increase during the past decade, the future prospects give cause for concern, since the proportion of women in new positions is falling. The same is true of the research scholarships at two of the major Danish universities.

Women have a better chance of obtaining a research grant from the Academy of Science, where a marked increase in interest in favour of women has been felt. The percentage of grants awarded to women has risen from 18% in 1985 to 32% in 1989.

In the National Research Councils, women occupy 28% of the seats. Out of 90 members of the 6 research councils, 25 are women. The "Social Science Research Council" and the "Research Council for Humanities" have the highest percentage of women.

This requirement to appoint women, provided for in the above-mentioned "Act on Equality in Appointing Members to Public Committees", is clearly visible in the relatively high percentage of women on these councils, compared to that of women in teaching and research.

Education

During the past decade, there has been a general increase in women's education. In 1980, 35.5% of women between 16 and 60 years of age were enrolled in the education system. In 1988, this percentage had risen to 44.6%. Nevertheless, it is still lower than the corresponding figure for men (51.8%).

The general trend amongst women is to continue studies for longer. In vocational training, 41.8% of the students were women in 1988 and in higher education the trend is for women to choose to pursue their studies for longer.

44.5% of university students are women.

However, the choice of subjects is still highly segregated by gender. Women still prefer the traditional female study areas. Very little has changed in this respect in the past decade.

In vocational training, women choose health, services and administration, in spite of a campaign in the eighties to encourage women to enter the traditionally male-dominated preserves. In higher education, women have nevertheless increased their participation in the field of science and technology at all levels.

This can be seen as an effect of the efforts made for some time by the primary education system to bring about pedagogical changes to capture the interest of girls in science and technology.

Useful address:

Ligestillingsrådet
Tordenskjoldsgade 27, 3
DK-1055 Copenhagen K

Table 1: Labour force participation rate of 16-66 year-olds (1)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Men	86.8	86.0	85.8	85.7	85.8	85.9	86.0	85.9	85.5	85.6
Women	70.9	71.5	72.4	72.7	73.8	74.9	75.7	76.3	76.4	75.9

(1) N.B. The labour force participation rate is equal to the labour force as a percentage of the total population of people of between 16 and 66 years of age.

Source: Statistisk Tiårsoversigt 1991. Danmarks Statistik 1991. Copenhagen.

Table 2: Unemployment rate (1)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Men	6.5	9.2	9.7	9.8	8.8	7.5	6.1	6.4	7.3	8.0	8.3
Women	7.6	9.2	10.0	11.3	11.7	11.0	10.0	9.6	10.3	11.1	11.3

(1) N.B. The unemployment rate is equal to the full-time unemployed as a percentage of the labour force.

Source: Statistisk Tiårsoversigt 1991. Danmarks Statistik 1991. Copenhagen.

Table 3: Average duration of unemployment (1)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Men	0.269	0.342	0.347	0.352	0.337	0.299	0.276	0.279	0.328	0.357	0.360
Women	0.344	0.377	0.386	0.401	0.406	0.381	0.350	0.339	0.361	0.378	0.377

(1) N.B. A full-time unemployed person is defined as being unemployed for a period equal to 1.0 (over 12 months).

Source: Statistisk Tiårsoversigt 1991. Danmarks Statistik 1991. Copenhagen.

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SPAIN: CHANGING WOMEN, CHANGING SOCIETY

by Carlota Bustelo, member of the United Nations Commission for the elimination of discrimination against women, former director of the Instituto de la Mujer de España (1983-1988)

The adoption of the system of quotas for the parties of the Left in 1988 led to a significant increase in the representation of women at the last general elections as well as in the autonomous regions.

The 1986-1989 Parliament had 6.5% women Members. This figure rose to 14.6% in the 1989-1993 Parliament. Women occupy 10% of the seats in the Senate.

In the assemblies of the autonomous regions, the proportion of women has risen from 7% in 1989 to 14% in 1991.

In high-level administration, the participation of women has risen from 10% in 1987 to 12% in 1991. This increase is due to the positive action programme in the Administration, as well as to the greater presence of women in the higher echelons of the civil service, which fills the top posts in the Administration. At present, 22% of women are among the officials belonging to the upper echelons of the Administration. Women account of 33% of the members of the selection panels responsible for appointments.

RAPID DEVELOPMENT

The numerous and important changes which have occurred in recent years in the legal and social status of Spanish women have undeniably been facilitated by the demands championed by the women's movements from as early as before 1977 and which the political parties and governments have incorporated into their programmes.

Few of these changes would however have come to fruition without the democratic progress of Spanish society, without the upturn in our economy and without the increasingly thorough integration of Spain into the international, and above all the European community. The development in the status of women has been very rapid in our country and, whereas we were bringing up the rear in several areas, we have found ourselves in the leading group of the European countries.

From a legislative point of view, apart from the legislation on abortion, we have gradually, over a period of just over ten years, abandoned one of the legal orders which was among the most discriminatory in Europe to women, to endow ourselves with advanced legislation.

The reversal of the burden of proof in disputes arising from the contract of employment where there is evidence of discrimination on the grounds of sex, the possibility for fathers to apply for four of the sixteen weeks of maternity leave, the obligation of enterprises to keep jobs open for fathers or mothers who take leave on personal grounds of a

maximum of one year to look after a child of less than three years of age, are all part of the recent reforms introduced under the first Programme of equal opportunities for women (1987-1990).

This having been said, on analysing the sociological data, we find nevertheless that not only do major disparities continue to exist between women and men, but also that there are significant inequalities between women themselves.

An increasing number of Spanish women are studying. Even though of the some nine million women of over 40 years of age, only nine-hundred thousand hold a secondary or higher education diploma, of the six and a half million under this age, nearly four million have continued their studies beyond primary school.

From 1975 to 1988, the enrolment of women at university rose by 142%, to the point that over 50% of the university population, which numbers half a million people, is female. Furthermore, over the same period, the proportion of women following vocational training rose from 29% to 43% of the total and exceeds 30,000. The result is that girls are less like their mothers and grandmothers and more like the young people of their generation.

This cultural change explains the alteration in the attitude of young women to work, the family and above all to the number of children they have. An increasing number of women wish to work and whereas in 1984 there were just under four million women in the labour force, of whom three million had a job, at the beginning of 1991, these figures had risen by over a million three hundred thousand and by over a million respectively.

In spite of this, the female labour force participation rate in Spain (33.5%) is well below the Community average as well as the average of Scandinavian countries.

FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

In Spain, as in other countries, the level of education of women rises in line with their rate of employment, almost to join that of men where they have received higher education (80%).

Consequently, since women are studying more and more and obtaining better results than men (in 1984, for example, 81% of women students enrolled for the university admission test passed, as opposed to 62% of male students), it is to be expected that the number of women working or seeking a job will continue to rise over the coming years. This will not contribute to solving the problem of unemployment, which now affects more women than men, not only in percentage terms (23.83% as opposed to 11.9%), but also in absolute figures (some seventy thousand more).

In addition, it will be necessary to eliminate this latent fear that there will soon not be enough people of working age and workers contributing to social security to pay the retirement pensions of the elderly. Spain still has seven million women outside the labour force, from 16 to 65 years of age, who could work, in theory, but who do not find

work.

To obtain a job it is not sufficient to have looked for one, or to have followed vocational or university training, it is necessary to have chosen the right training, i.e. to have specialized in a viable sector.

On this point, girls seem to be less aware of the job prospects offered by the studies they choose, since they diversify their professional options less and continue to opt for "feminine" careers, some of which offer few "outlets" these days. For example, at university level, 38.6% (as opposed to 20.8% of male students) choose to read philology, philosophy and pedagogics, psychology, geography and history and only 1.8% enrol in the technical colleges of higher education (as opposed to 10.8% of male students).

As far as vocational training is concerned, 80% of the women opt for administration, commerce, health, hairdressing and aesthetics.

It is not yet sufficient for girls to make a careful choice of the occupation for which they have been trained. Apart from public administration, where competitive examinations facilitate objective selection of candidates (which explains, for example, why 25% of judges are women), in enterprises - apart from the jobs traditionally considered to be women's jobs, such as secretarial work or cleaning -, if the applications of male and female candidates are equal or even if the female candidates are better, the employer tends to recruit the men.

On top of the more or less conscious sexist prejudices regarding the real value of the candidates of either sex, is the objective reflex that men bother less about domestic contingencies and concern themselves less with family problems.

Indeed, even though they have paid employment, women continue to feel more responsible than men (more than double) for the domestic chores and the education of the children and to spend less time on leisure activities. Such an attitude hampers their opportunities not only to have access to employment, but also to receive promotion. Consequently, in the concern to reconcile working life and family life on the one hand, but also to improve the quality of their life on the other, women have fewer and fewer children and the average has fallen from 2.83 in 1970 to 1.63 in 1987.

Furthermore, they have their first child later - at 25 years of age - and the number of marriages is on the decline. In this respect, it should be pointed out that, according to the fertility survey carried out in 1985, 37% of women questioned stated that they had not had recourse to the various family planning centres and 56.5% stated that they used contraceptives without medical supervision.

It is quite surprising that, among women from 18 to 49 years of age, 33.5% state that they have never used any method of contraception, whereas in the group of 20-24 years of age, this figure is 49%.

CONTINUE THE ENDEAVOURS

These data and many others which would merit comment and which concern wage discrimination on the grounds of gender, the downgrading of activities performed by women, the lack of structures for the care of children of under 3 years of age, the lack of female presence at the helm of political life (about 13%), the non-payment of alimony in the event of separation or divorce, prostitution and the various forms of aggression suffered by a large number of women, bring us to the conclusion that, despite the progress made, there is still a great deal to be done to allow women to escape secular marginalization.

To achieve this, the approval of a large number of equal opportunities programmes by the government and the autonomous communities will be essential. More commitment and initiatives will also be needed from the women's associations, trade unions, employers' organizations, local authorities and universities, without the help of which it will be impossible for all Spanish women to benefit from the rights and opportunities which a large number of them have already won.

To allow women who decide, after having received accurate information, to interrupt a pregnancy which they did not want during the first three months, without risking a prison sentence, should be included in a reform of our penal code which no-one would oppose and which would be consistent with the social change currently taking place in our country.

History has provided ample proof that giving women greater freedom and equality has never jeopardized democratic societies, but has on the contrary strengthened them.

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FRANCE: TOWARDS DYNAMIC EQUILIBRIUM WITH MEN

by Martine Levy, responsible for European questions at Datar (authority with responsibilities including town and country planning), ex-member of the Commission du Travail des Femmes (committee on women's work)

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

The position of women in political and social life in France is punctuated by delays and successes.

They are far, far behind from the point of view of representation in the parliamentary assemblies, which is characterized by stagnation and even a decline since 1944 when, among the last, they received the right to vote and eligibility.

They bring up the rear together with Greece in Europe, since only 5.7% of the National Assembly are women, 2.8% of the Senate and six times more at the European Parliament, i.e. 22.2%.

Feminization is gradual and slow at the grass roots. After 25 years of stagnation (3.1% in 1945), the proportion of women elected to the municipal councils almost quadrupled, rising from 4.4% in 1971 to 16.9% in 1989, almost doubling from 1977 (8.5%).

One mayoress of a town with over 100,000 inhabitants, 22 of towns with over 20,000 inhabitants and 30 of towns with over 9,000 inhabitants; a still small, but growing number of women (there were only 33 in 1978) assume the tricolour sash of office of first municipal magistrate of a now urbanized society.

Under the effect of the rural environment, only 5.43% of mayorships are held by mayoresses and women account for only 4% of councillors and 10% of regional councillors.

It is true that half the men participate in local associative life, as opposed to 39% of women. The place of women in the social hierarchy determines their behaviour. Women senior or middle executives have a rate of membership of associations approaching that of their male colleagues, i.e. 65% to 73% and 62% to 67% respectively. Conversely, women manual workers have the lowest membership rate in the labour force, 29% as opposed to 44%.

Women's organizations in general play a minor role, despite the financial assistance granted to a number of them (71 in 1989) by the Secretary of State for Women's Rights, and the support offered by the Centre National d'Information et de Documentation sur les Droits des Femmes et des Familles (national centre for information and documentation on the rights of women and families) and its network of 200 independent local centres, which receive over 300,000 people per year.

The invasion of the realms of executive power is recent. From the mid-1970s, all the successive governments have had 4 to 7 women Ministers or Secretaries of State. Thus in 15 years, 64 ministerial portfolios have been held by women, including departments such as Defence, Agriculture, European Affairs and Finance, as well as the more traditional Health, Education and Employment; previously in 40 years, women were only appointed 15 times in the many successive governments.

This invasion occurs at all levels of the executive. Between May 1991 and the beginning of 1992, the French Government was led by a woman Prime Minister. Over 38% of the Members of the Cabinet of the Presidency of the Republic are women, including the Secretary General of the Presidency.

The proportion of women in ministerial cabinets is about 24% and major male bastions such as finance, industry and transport have women in the so-called heavy sectors: employment, industrial relations, or in the more delicate sectors such as road transport. Women heads of cabinet are few in number, but no longer entirely exceptional.

This presence of women associated with political voluntarism is also to be found in the appointments to certain choice positions.

This is the case, for example, in the audiovisual sector. The Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel has three women out of nine members.

In the three echelons of television management, the proportion of women varies from 16.3% to 41.7%, or 20.8% of the total.

In the senior ranks of the civil service, following the path of politics, women are making slow progress. In 1989, women held 8.6% of the executive posts there (7.3% in 1983), 12% of the management jobs in the central administration (9.7% in 1983), 9.4% of the positions of head of external department (8% in 1983). There are also 11% women among the general inspectorate.

In comparison, the public bodies seem to be bereft of women, with 5.2% of women in the State Council, 6.5% in the Court of Auditors, 3.3% at the Financial Inspectorate and 8% among the university professors.

The seventies was the decade for lifting the barriers to the elite, university-level professional training colleges and to public bodies; the eighties was the decade for appointments to the most prestigious posts.

Recent years have seen the entry of the first women to the Académie Française, after two decades of literary success by women and centuries of being nearly in the dark ages, and of the first women to the Institute and the Collège de France.

FEMINISM IN GOVERNMENT

The Government taking responsibility for the demands of women, who form the majority

of the electorate (53%) as a result of their longer life expectancy (80.6 years as opposed to 72.3 years for men), is the most visible effect of the transformation of the very content of politics, characterized by the extension of the topics debated and dealt with in the political arena. Apart from women's rights, mention should be made of the problems of child care, the sharing of parental roles and violence within families.

Institutions...

In France, the setting up from 1965 of advisory committees specialized in studying the work of women and having the objective of the professional advancement of women, has made a substantial contribution to founding the basis for public action in favour of equal opportunities.

Then Françoise Giroud, whose ministerial office was an innovation in the world, and Yvette Roudy, Minister of Women's Rights for five years, having held the post of Secretary of State responsible for Women's Employment, succeeded in obtaining the adoption, by the entire government and the Parliament, of the complete modernization of the French legal system.

...to impose standards of equality between the sexes.

All the codes (Civil Code, Tax Code, Rural Code, Social Security Code, Labour Code...) were revised and adapted in various ways.

The traditional family has undergone profound changes to leave room for equality between spouses, shared parental authority, women's control of their fertility and life styles outside marriage.

However, it is in the field of labour that the Government, on the wave of what has to be termed as its feminism, has gone the furthest in providing women with the means to be able to attain the same results as men. This is an almost simultaneous trend as that developed at Community level with the adoption of the sex equality directives and the action programmes, thanks to a reciprocal, collusive lever effect.

Seeking equality through the law has firstly led to the disappearance of all discrimination between men and women concerning access to and pursuit of training and employment and in relation to social protection.

Since the Act of 13 July 1983, under the title of "Professional equality", the Labour Code explains what employers may not do or insert into a contract of employment or a collective labour agreement. Only one exception to equality is authorized in the field of recruitment, with a very strict limitation which refers to three occupations: artists, mannequins and models.

Women now have access to military appointments and in the civil service only 6 public bodies are the subject of restrictions in the form of recruitment quotas (22 in 1977). They concern 4 police units and 2 prison administration units.

This inscription of the principle of equality between the sexes was achieved with the gradual, but incomplete elimination of the protection relating to women. For instance, in 1991, the European Court of Justice condemned France to abolish the clauses of agreements in force in 1983 which had not at that time been revised in spite of the Parliament's order in 1989.

Simultaneously, the **protection of pregnancy and maternity** was strengthened in 1966 and again in 1975, so that giving birth to children should not be an impediment either to employment or to career development. Employed women have a right to paid maternity leave of 14 weeks, extended in certain cases to 20 weeks; women farm workers in 1977, then the other self-employed women workers, including those without status, obtained the right to remunerated replacement leave for maternity in 1983.

Equal rights also result in fathers receiving rights until then reserved to mothers. The clearest example is the introduction of full-time or part-time parental leave of a maximum of 3 years after the adoption or birth of a child with a guarantee of re-employment or, in the civil service, leave for a sick child of 12 days per year open to either parent.

Through the adoption of equal opportunity standards, the so-called Roudy Act explicitly recognizes that the community has the duty to remedy de facto inequalities by contravening the standards of non-discrimination on a temporary basis through the implementation of corrective measures in favour of women only.

The law provides an impetus, as well as an instrument and means for persons concerned to claim the egalitarian objective, especially through the adoption of plans for occupational equality negotiated within the enterprise. The most exemplary received State aid (some thirty in five years). Since 1987, the equality contract also allows small and medium-sized enterprises to adopt individual measures to catch up (about a hundred contracts concluded).

In promoting occupational equality, training has occupied a key position and continues to do so, whether it is a matter:

- of eliminating obstacles to access by girls and women to the entire range of training courses, including the most technological and the most prestigious;
- of rectifying situations inherited from the past by introducing specific training courses for mothers or derogating conditions concerning remuneration of training or job-hunting;
- of ensuring the distribution of the female population into the sectors and occupations statistically reserved to the male population.

In recent years, without rejecting recourse to specific means or measures, such as the creation of a Guarantee Fund for women wishing to set up businesses in 1989, the public authorities have focused their interventions in favour of women on a **strategy of integration into the measures of ordinary law**, which involve considerable human and financial resources.

This primarily refers to the national mechanisms for the occupational integration of young people, for combatting long-term unemployment and for equipping the unskilled with qualifications. The latest additions deriving from this public action are the regional employment programmes for women, which aim to reduce the significant disparities in men's and women's unemployment, through a comprehensive approach geared to the local possibilities.

A supplementary facet of this policy concerns the **development of child care facilities.**

From 1972 to 1988, the number of crèche places was multiplied by a factor of nearly five, with 150,000 new places being created.

The pre-school movement, started at a very early stage, has continued. Today, 95% of children from 3 to 4 years of age and 33% of children from 2 to 3 years of age attend nursery school. With 350,000 places available for 900,000 children of under 3 years of age both of whose parents or whose sole parent works, 20% to 25% of children from 0 to 2 years of age in France are catered for in government-funded facilities.

WORK AS A VEHICLE OF EQUALITY

The facts

This final quarter century is characterized firstly by a **growing place for women at work**, with the weight of women in the national labour force in 1991 nearly equal to that of men (44.5%), or 10.6 million working women and 13.7 million men.

Women continue to provide industry and the services sector with the additional personnel they need (over one million working women from 1980 to 1990, as opposed to fewer than 20,000 men).

With a 35% increase in women employees in two decades, **the status of employee has become predominant (over 85%)** and more frequent than for men.

There has also been a **return by women to setting up businesses** since 1985. Today, one business in four is set up by a woman.

Recent years are then characterized by **the change from a dominant model of the woman in the home to a dominant model of the woman at work.**

The profile of women at work is approaching that of men: in 1989, 75% of women between 25 and 49 years of age had a job or were seeking work, 49% of couples had two wage-earners, whereas the proportion of couples with the man working and the woman not, had fallen to 23%.

The lifting of the barrier of marriage to economic activity by women was followed by the reduction in constraints on mothers regarding work: over two-thirds of mothers with two children pursue an economic activity. In 20 years, the percentage of unskilled women

workers with a dependent child engaging in an economic activity in spite of the constraints of work and domestic chores, has risen from one-third to 55%. In comparison, 86% of women with higher education diplomas and a third of mothers of large families work today, i.e. more than their mothers and grandmothers with just one child.

Opinions

The opinion of women themselves shows a shift in female values.

Professional success has become the number one objective of young women from 18 to 25 years of age, before the couple and children. The higher educated are more demanding with regard to their professional life than young men.

In addition, according to the annual survey by CREDOC on the needs and aspirations of the French, **women at work is an idea which is taking root among the French**, since in 12 years, the conception of women at work as the freedom to choose to work when they wish, rose by 14 points from 29% in 1978 to 43% at the end of 1989.

Only 30% of the French were opposed, at the end of 1989, to continued economic activity by mothers. And for all that, even though the traditional standards for sharing the professional and family roles between men and women are tending to become blurred, the anchorage of women on the labour market has not been accompanied by an equivalent assumption by men of the domestic chores and family responsibilities.

Today, as in the past, **women are bearing the bulk of the domestic chores and the education of the children.** In consequence, in Europe, French women are those with the least free time: 28 hours per week, as opposed to 35 to 50 hours in the other countries. This is in spite of a 15% gain in free time over the past ten years for men.

It is true that in spite of the strong growth in part-time work (one woman in four in 1990, as opposed to one in seven in 1975 and 3% of men), **full-time work remains the norm.**

It is understood that, in an opinion poll carried out for the C.F.D.T. in 1990, **the perception of inequalities by women was more linked to the accumulation of working days than to the constraints of the work as such:** they complained of too little free time and time for themselves.

The problem is however raised of the working conditions of unskilled women workers, as well as that of the discrepancy between the level of pay and responsibility; in general, **the world of production tends to repulse women in France.**

Women's perception of their situation - they do not feel either at an advantage or at a disadvantage at work - seems to correspond fairly closely to statistical reality.

TREND TOWARDS A REDUCTION IN OCCUPATIONAL DISPARITIES

Development of initial training

The increase in the proportion of women in the channels giving access to positions of responsibility concerns:

the public sector, with the feminization of the "A" category competitive examinations; the percentage of women at the ENA (Ecole Nationale d'Administration) rose from 5% to 18% from 1968 to 1977, then stabilized at around 20%,

the means of access to executive posts in the private sector:

- at **University**, women are in the majority; up to 23 years of age, the percentages of girls following full-time education are higher than those for boys, then fall. In the University Technology Institutes, 48% of places are taken by girls; 19% take industrial options.

- their attendance at the **Grandes Ecoles** (university-level colleges specializing in professional training) depends firstly on their access to the preparatory classes: in total, one third are young women with a higher proportion taking the literary courses (61% in 1972-73, 69% in 1987) and, over the same period, almost a tripling of the number of young women in the scientific preparatory classes, of which they fill 27.5% of the places.

- the number of **engineering diplomas** awarded annually to women had increased from 1975 (4% in 1975, as in 1964, 9% in 1976, 16% in 1983, 21% in 1990); since the number of students had risen considerably, the number of women awarded diplomas increased five-fold between 1960 and 1980 (3,000 to 15,000).

Feminization of the senior occupational categories

From 1962 to 1985, the percentage of women rose from 18.8% to 25% in the professional occupations and from 19.8% to 23.3% among the administrative and commercial executives. An increase of over 10% per year in women executives is to be seen in enterprises.

Since 1985, it is among the executives and intermediary occupations of the private sector that the place of women has increased the most rapidly, even though their access to the highest positions still remains limited. One man in 10 and one woman in 25 have employees under their orders or their authority.

In education, the hierarchies remain traditional: with regard to management positions in schools, women account for 22% of the heads of lycées (grammar schools) and 35% of vice-principals; 19% of the heads of vocational training schools; 45% of the heads of primary schools (67.5% of the teaching staff); in nursery schools, there has been an increase in the number of male teachers (0.4% in 1977, the first year of access and 4.4% in 1989-1990).

Access to in-service vocational training

The inequality of access of men and women continues, but is diminishing: in 1987, one man in four and one woman in five received such training; this divergence is largely explained by the sectoral distribution of women and their greater presence in small enterprises and in implementation jobs.

The reduction in the inequalities of access is shown in the following figures: in 1972, 7% of women, as opposed to 23% of men, followed a training course. The numbers tripled for women (23%) and doubled for men (27%). Now women's opportunities of access to training in enterprises exceed 30% (men 36%); in State-aided schemes, the percentages of men and women are more or less equal.

Reduction in the pay differential

In less than 20 years, an overall reduction from 40% to 23% in the pay differential between men and women is observed. However, the differential is still greater as one moves up the professional hierarchy and along the age scale of a career.

Furthermore, even though the reduction in differentials with men is taking place for the highest qualifications, it is all happening as though there were a disintegration of the basis of wage discrimination associated with the strong segregation of jobs.

Selectiveness of unemployment

The rate of unemployment for women is almost twice that for men. The improvement in women's employment is not sufficient to absorb the growing number of women who are joining the labour force.

The first integration and late reintegration are more difficult and generally start with a period of unemployment. The rate of unemployment among young women reaches 22.6%, against 13.4% for young men (I.L.O. definition 1990).

Unemployment hits unskilled women without diplomas hardest, with a risk of non-employment 4 to 5 times that of women executives (in 1990, 21.4% for unskilled workers and 3.6% for women executives).

Job segregation

Changing occupational divisions proves to be a long-drawn-out task, whether it is a matter, as early as in the education system, of barriers to the technological approaches to the growth sectors, or later of access to skilled jobs in industry or even to positions of authority and command.

The occupational filter is still clearly to be seen:

- 45% of women are concentrated in 20 traditionally female occupations which only employ 7% of men,
- 26% of men are concentrated in the traditionally male occupations in which women represent 9%.

TOWARDS GROWING INEQUALITIES BETWEEN WOMEN

The growing inequalities between women, reflecting those which are maintained with men, occur through the role of the diploma:

- **in access to employment**, with an obligatory transition through unemployment and long-term unemployment (39.5% of unemployed women in 1990) for those without diplomas or those having completed short vocational training courses, where little change is to be seen between 1971 and 1988.

The differential in the unemployment rate between men and women is greater the lower the position of the women in the occupational hierarchy.

- **in their conditions of employment**, with the development of atypical, so-called precarious jobs.

The decade of the eighties is characterized in France by the diversification in forms of employment. This primarily affects the female population, which is in the majority among the movements of entry into employment.

Nearly three million workers hold non-traditional jobs: 1.9 million are part-time employees, 1.3 million hold precarious jobs, of whom 538,000 are on fixed-term contracts. Among them, three-quarters are women; the outlying position on the labour market concerns in total one woman in four (workers and employees with few or no qualifications) and one man in ten.

- **in terms of working conditions**, with the destabilization of working hours which affects women more than men. In the 1980s, the number of women workers on the production line continued to grow. The same is true of the strict working constraints among women workers. For them, the ban on talking has been extended: 10.5% in 1984, as opposed to 9.4% in 1978.

- **in terms of income**, women still account for the majority of employees receiving the statutory minimum wage. In addition to those receiving the Single Parent Allowance (minimum income for one-parent families), there are still 39% of single women among those receiving the Minimum Income for Integration. Finally, they have been predominant (70%) in receiving a minimum retirement pension for many years from the National Solidarity Fund.

Everything is happening as if, in view of the requirements and the level achieved by women, any backwardness or failure had to bear a higher price in terms of exclusion from the primary labour market and even from any employment, with the risks of getting

caught up in poverty and further dependence on the social interventions of the State.

The price to be paid for a minority of women to achieve equality with men could be greater inequalities for those at the bottom of the ladder.

PROSPECTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY FOR WOMEN

Europe is involved in a process of mobilization to promote the **economic and social cohesion of the Community**.

With the reform of the structural funds, it recognized that competition and selectiveness associated with the development of the large market leads to risks for enterprises, regions and groups of the population. It still has to define the true prospects for living together. Women in all their diversity must devote themselves to participating in it and to being its collective beneficiaries; this could be the true meaning of a democratic social and economic model.

As far as women in France are concerned, it has been possible to observe the positive effects of a policy of promotion of equal opportunities through the elimination of discrimination. It has been demonstrated that women, equal to men, can engage in all professions and assume all responsibilities, like men in some cases, differently in others.

Many have been forgotten by the movement of the last few decades; with the renewal of the generations, they form an immense stratum of human potential confronting the need to mobilize and optimize the use of all the available resources.

In the light of this experience, the battle for equality between the sexes essentially belongs to the battles of the 20th century.

Whether it is a matter of the conquest of economic and political power or the invention of dynamic equilibrium with men, women in France are collectively faced with the choice of their objectives for the 21st century.

Sources: the statistics used come from the INSEE, population surveys, employment surveys, as well as biannual compendiums comprising the volumes of social data.

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GREECE: THE ROAD TO EQUALITY

*by Rena Lamposa, Secretary General for Equality to the
Presidency of the Council of Ministers*

Three factors were decisive for improving the position of Greek women:

- the constitutional reform of 1974 (equality of the sexes was recognized by the Constitution);
- the accession of Greece to the European Communities;
- the existence of a dynamic feminist movement.

In recent years, the condition of women has improved in various fields.

POLITICAL WORLD

With regard to the participation of women in political life and especially in the Government, we have taken one step forwards and two steps backwards. After 1988, during a certain period, the Government had a woman Minister and four Secretaries of State.

After the last governmental reshuffle, there is one woman Minister and one woman Secretary of State.

As far as the regional authorities are concerned, there are:

- 8 women among the 360 mayors (2.2%),
- 46 women among the 5,567 municipal presidents (0.8%),
- 507 women among the 5,564 municipal councillors (8.9%),
- 833 women among the 38,780 local councillors (2%),
- 118 women among the 270 district councillors (43.7%),
- 27 women among the 1,079 deputy mayors (2.5%).

Total of the elected regional bodies: 51,710

Women 1,539 (2.97%).

In Parliament, 13 women were elected among the 300 Members at the last elections (4.33%). In the political parties, there are a large number of women who are ordinary members, but few participate in the higher authorities.

Therefore at the base there is female participation of 10-40%, but very few women in the upper echelons. Nevertheless, three of the five largest political parties (PASOK, SYNASPISMOS, EAR) recently adopted the principle of proportional representation of women in their main bodies, officially, by amending their statutes (PASOK, SYNASPISMOS) or not.

INFLUENTIAL AND DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS

1. In the public sector (according to the data collected by the Ministry of the Presidency in 1988), there are very few women compared to men in high positions in the hierarchy.

Nevertheless, the present Government has appointed a woman to the important position of Governor of a major bank and another woman to be head of the National Organization for Employment.

60,480 women and 90,566 men work in the public sector. Only 19.8% of women have management positions and 35.1% are heads of departments. The position of women is slightly better in the State bodies, where it can be seen that 20.4% are in management positions and 41.2% are heads of departments.

2. In the university sector (according to the study by M. Iliou on women graduates, Social Sciences Review, no. 70, 1988), men and women start their career more or less under the same objective conditions, but it appears that women graduates often have to choose between a family and an academic career. This possibly explains the fact that there are far more single people among the women than the men.

In this way, women find themselves more frequently in the lowest positions, making little progress or they are promoted at a slower rate than men, especially if they have a family. According to the statistical data of the National Statistics Office (ESYE) (1966), in 1966-67 there were 7,141 lecturers in higher education, of whom 1,912 or 26.77% were women. In spite of this, and since the profession of university lecturer is traditionally a "masculine preserve", where even today there is keen competition, it can be said that women, slowly but surely, have opened the way and are gaining ground.

The trade union environment continues to be dominated by men. There is greater participation by women at the base, minimal participation in the committees and none in the high level trade union authorities.

3. With regard to the participation of Greek women in the economic life of the country in influential positions, the statistical data are discouraging: only 11.1% in the employees category are women. The participation of women in the category of self-employed workers is 17.3% (of the total female labour force), 20.4% of women are self-employed (University of Panteios in cooperation with the OAED: Employment Drive and the Vocational Training of Women 1991).

4. The participation of women in the judicial sector is of some interest. There has been an invasion of women into the administrative courts: 291 women as opposed to 260 men (51.81%), in comparison with the criminal and political courts, where there are 945 women among 2,338 judges (40.4%). It can be seen that the judicial sector has attracted women barristers in recent years. For instance, of the 70 new judges, 40 are women (57.14%). But going up the hierarchy, there are fewer and fewer women. For example, in the country as a whole, there are 219 women justices of the peace of category O and only 14 of category A. But in the Council of State, women are better represented, since there are 88 men and 30 women (34.09%).

WORKING WORLD

In recent years, women's labour force participation rate has increased in relation to that of men. Today, women account for 35% of the labour force.

Between 1983 and 1988, the population of women rose by 3.9%, whereas the percentage of working women rose by 11.5%. The participation of women in the labour force is continuing to rise.

Naturally, there is still a concentration by sex in many fields of economic activity and in certain branches of industry. Women concentrate in various poorly paid branches without prestige (agricultural and tertiary sectors). Paradoxically, in Greece, the majority of women who work have children (this phenomenon also exists in Belgium, Denmark, France and Portugal). According to an enquiry by the National Centre of Social Research for Women's Employment, conducted in 1988, almost one in three women who work in a family firm or in agriculture are unpaid. In the agricultural sector, the rate of women is 73.7%.

In recent years, Greece has seen an increase in outworking, in spite of the wage rises. Often it is work at home linked to the position of dependency and economic inferiority of the woman worker, which concerns primarily the textiles industry, off-the-peg clothing, leather, fur and toys, particularly in urban regions.

As far as female unemployment is concerned, there seems to be a larger number of women than men without work in Greece. According to a study by the University of Panteios (1991), the 1988 unemployment rate was 7.6%, with 4.8% for men and 12.4% for women (35.9% for young women). For the Community as a whole, in the same year, the rate was 9.7%, with 7.8% for men and 12.5% for women.

In general, it can be said that, despite the adoption of Community directives and of the Third Community Action Programme for Equal Opportunities, women workers continue to be confined to the "traditional" women's jobs. In Greece, laws such as no. 1414/84 guarantee equality for the two sexes in the choice of careers and vocational training, as well as the right to work and equality in professional relationships. In parallel, State bodies have been set up to monitor and control the implementation of these laws.

However in reality, and according to the data of the Commission of the European Communities, in the Community Member States, women's income is 65-85% that of men for manual work, whereas for Greece this figure is 80%.

EDUCATION

1. These are the main measures adopted during the past decade regarding equal educational opportunities:

- Abolition of school uniform (pinafore) for girls (1982).
- Introduction of mixed gymnastics and home economics lessons.
- There is now Careers Guidance in all schools which provides pupils of secondary level

with information about the labour market, having sex equality as a criterion.

- The Secretariat General for Equality is trying to make pupils and teachers aware of sexual equality by means of brochures, conferences and seminars.
- A start has been made, at an experimental level, on adopting programmes for gearing the school timetable to that of working parents.
- New legislation has abolished sex segregation concerning entry to colleges of higher education (for example, with the entry of men to the Home Economics Colleges and of male teachers to nursery schools and of women to the Colleges of the Ministry of Public Order).
- A considerable effort has been made to revise school textbooks with the abolition of stereotype roles of the sexes and the change of expressions and images conveying retrograde mentality concerning the division of labour and the social behaviour of men and women.

It can therefore be affirmed that, in general, there has been significant progress in education towards greater equality between pupils of both sexes in the three levels of education. Nevertheless, a great deal still has to be done to succeed in changing mentalities.

In secondary and higher education, girls tend to choose theoretical branches and to avoid technical and science courses. For instance, according to statistics (ESYE, 1988), there are more girls in the general grammar schools and those oriented towards the classics (55.45% and 50.49% of pupils respectively), but their presence is far lower in the technical and practical sections (female participation rate: 29%).

In higher education, girls tend to choose colleges specializing in pedagogics (71.44%), technical subjects (54.6%), as well as law, political sciences and letters (participation in excess of 70%). Their presence is far less in the faculties of administration, science, medicine and agriculture (less than 20%).

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IRELAND: A TRANSITIONAL GENERATION

*by Sylvia Meehan, Chief Executive, Employment
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POLITICAL LIFE

For some time now in Ireland, there has been considerable growth of awareness of the need for women to be active, involved and in leadership roles in political and public life. The high point in this area was the election of Mary Robinson as President of Ireland in November 1990.

The figures for election of women to the houses of the Oireachtas (Parliament) are not impressive, but they do show a certain increase:

- In 1943, there were 3 women members of the Dail (Parliament) and 3 in the Senate.
- In 1973, there were 4 women in each of the two Houses.
- In 1979, Marie Geoghegan-Quinn received a ministerial appointment.
- In 1981, 11 women were elected to the Dail and 9 to the Senate.
- In the second General Election in 1982, 14 women were elected to the Dail and nationwide 120,968 preference votes went to women candidates in the first round.
- Today, the figures are 13 women in the Dail (166 members) and 6 women Senators, out of a total of 54.

In the 1991 Local Government elections, women comprised 16.58% of the candidates and 11.21% of those elected, i.e. 99 women out of a total of 883 local councillors.

During these years, women have been appointed to the Cabinet, but never more than one at a time and always to junior ministries.

In 1983, the Houses of Parliament set up a joint all-party Committee on Women's Rights. To date, it has produced 4 major reports: on education, social welfare, sexual violence and women in the media.

The obstacles that women face in participating in public life must be understood in the context of their continuing traditional role within the family, whereby they still have to look after children, parents and parents-in-law, the house-keeping and home management in general.

The greatest identifiable obstacle facing women in paid employment and, by inference, participation in active political life, is the absence of communally provided child care, free of charge or not.

The Irish population is currently in the order of 3.5 million people. Of these, approximately 1 million are under 15 years of age. The working population therefore is potentially in the order of 2.5 million. Of these 2.5 million over 15 years of age, 399,000 women and 910,000 men are regarded as being in the paid labour force. This

figure alone tells us a great deal about the different social roles of men and women and the different life experiences of both.

If we look a little closer at available information, we see that 678,000 women and only 3,400 men are regarded as being on what is called "home duties", i.e. outside the paid labour force.

Looking in particular at the age group 25-34 years of age, there is evidently a pattern of experience which is vastly different for men and for women.

Looking more closely at the situation of women in that age group, those with no children have an economic activity rate (i.e. rate of participation in the paid labour force) of 81.8%, whereas the activity rate for those with three or more children is 13.2%.

The labour force participation rate for men in the same age bracket is 96.4%.

The 1990 Labour Force Survey shows women's participation in the employed labour force in 1990 was 371,500 (33%), of which 334,000 (90%) were employees. This shows an increase of 4.5% in the numbers of women engaged as employees since 1987.

Correspondingly, 64% of all men at work are employees, an increase of 1% over the same period.

In broad economic sectors, the most significant increase in employment of women was in the services sector, which shows an increase of 6% between 1987 and 1990.

In non-agricultural industry, there was a 3% increase in the employment of women since 1987. This compares with an 8% increase in the employment of men in industry, whilst men's employment in services remains practically unchanged over the same period.

Part-time work constitutes 6% of all employment in Ireland. 75% of part-time workers are women. It has to be said that one-third of the growth in women's employment between 1987 and 1990 came from part-time work.

51% of single women participate in the labour force, 25% of married women and about 7% of widows. (Married women nevertheless constituted 40% of the female labour force in 1990, a comparable percentage to that of 1987.)

The number of women registered as unemployed was 40,800 (23%) in 1990 compared to 23.8% in 1987.

Women who wish to return to paid work after a prolonged absence for personal reasons face difficulties in meeting eligibility requirements for placement on the official waiting list, which records people as unemployed and seeking work and is the entrance ticket to funded training schemes, social employment schemes and enterprise and incentive schemes.

Normally, anyone with more than two years' absence from paid employment is automatically eligible for inclusion on this list if they satisfy unemployment assistance levels, but the problem is that married women living with their husbands are assessed at the level of their husbands' income and some do not therefore meet these conditions.

Education provision is linked with labour market options and career chances. Before the

1970s, there was a clear difference in education offered to boys and girls at primary and secondary schools. In common with other Member States, research showed that while girls succeeded as well if not better than their male counterparts, their studies were of a different kind and less suited to the world of work.

These differences in subject choices still persist. The gaps are closing, but a considerably smaller percentage of girls take higher level mathematics or physics in the School Leaving Certificate and sex differences are still clearly visible in a large number of school subjects.

Of students taking:

- higher mathematics, 60% are boys
- physics, 75% are boys
- biology, 65% are girls
- technical drawing, 97% are boys
- home economics, 91% are girls.

In higher education, there has been a marked increase in the number of full-time female students. Women now comprise 50% of students in higher education, but whereas 86% of students who choose social sciences, 78% who choose communications and information studies and 63% of those entering arts faculties are women, they are 18% of the students on engineering courses.

It should however be noted that this is already considerable progress compared to their almost total absence from engineering courses 20 years ago and the graph is rising slowly.

Irish trade unions have engaged in programmes to increase the active participation of women in leadership roles. A recent survey showed that executive and regional committees were 24% female and that 17% of full-time officials were women.

4 trade unions have reserved seats for women on their executive/regional committees, in others, women compete in open competition and the ICTU has developed active targets and strategies to encourage unions to have women represented on their executive in proportion to or greater than their women membership.

Since the introduction of the Equal Pay Act of 1974, the Employment Equality Act in 1977 and the establishment of the Employment Equality Agency in 1977, followed by the Maternity Protection Act of 1981 and the Part-time Workers' Act of 1991, the position of women in the Irish workforce has been strengthened by statutory protection of their rights, which they vigorously pursue.

These rights include a statutory right to freedom from sexual harassment, the onus being on the employers to ensure such protection as a condition of work.

Irish women have taken many practical steps to ensure that the issue of women's equality in society is a subject of constant discussion. The Council for the Status of Women, which is an umbrella group of women's organizations, was set up in 1973 and is an increasingly authoritative voice in public affairs.

The Commission on the Status of Women is a Government-established body which was set up in 1991 to review the recommendations contained in the report of the first Commission (1972). Its terms of reference include the following tasks:

- to consider and make recommendations on the means, administrative and legislative, by which women will be able to participate on equal terms and conditions with men in economic, social, political and cultural life and, to this end,
- to consider the efficiency and feasibility of positive action measures.

The Commission will present its report to the Government in July 1992.

The "Problem" of women and women's issues is at last beginning to be seen as a problem of our society and the question is being seen as a need to devise ways to integrate the separate worlds assigned up to now to men and women.

The strategies of change are recognized as strategies to integrate the world of work and the world of the family, the public and private spheres of life.

Marie Geoghegan-Quinn, the only woman member of the Cabinet, has opined: "We are a transitional generation" and it is clearly true that in Ireland family structures, lifestyles, work and leisure patterns have altered significantly since the 1960s. The circumstances and aspirations of women in the 1990s are in many respects different from those of their mothers and grandmothers.

Useful address:

Employment Equality Agency on Women
36 Uppermount Street
Dublin 2

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ITALY: PROGRESS, PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

by Tina Anselmi, former Minister of Labour, Chairman of the Committee for Equal Opportunities between Men and Women to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers

35 years after the entry into force of the Treaty of Rome and on the eve of the opening of the Single Market, the situation of women in the 12 Community Member States is found to be very similar in many respects. The Community has made a substantial contribution to the progress which European women have achieved and a good stretch of the road has been travelled together.

As far as Italy is concerned, the most characteristic trait is the radical revision of legislation to provide for equality between the sexes: in no sector of Community interest has Italy conformed better to Community directives and policies than in the areas concerning women. For example, we recall law no. 125 of 1991 on "positive measures to achieve equality between men and women", which not only provides for these measures and finance for them, but also introduces the principle of reversal of the burden of proof where anyone considering himself or herself to have been a victim of discrimination has produced sufficient objective evidence of this discrimination. A Community directive on this subject has long been awaiting adoption.

Mention should also be made of the legislative proposals which have reached an advanced stage in the discussions in Parliament and which, in the spirit of the Third Programme of Community Action for Equal Opportunities, are designed to reinforce the autonomous work and spirit of enterprise of women, and laws to improve the parental leave already provided for by law 903/1977, a further area which is the subject of a Community directive pending adoption.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that, although progressive, this legislation does not lead automatically to a change in the actual situation on account of very deeply rooted customs and prejudices which act as a curb on the development process: this is in fact where the problems need to be solved.

EQUALITY: THE INSTITUTIONAL MACHINERY

The current "Community Action Programme" very opportunely considers equality between men and women as a unitary process which incorporates many aspects of social life and customs; it therefore calls for a commitment on the part of the Member States which goes beyond matters strictly lying in the Community competence.

From this point of view, the introduction of appropriate landmarks, in the context of this process towards equality, i.e. institutional machinery with the specific purpose of seeking, stimulating, monitoring and assessing the practical achievement of the principle of equality, is of crucial importance.

This machinery is relatively recent in Italy and largely still in the process of construction, but its highly capillary development seems to be particularly appropriate to ensuring that specific account is taken of the problem of equality in the widest variety of real situations.

This machinery is headed by a "National Committee for the achievement of equality and equal opportunities between men and women", established by law 164 of 1990, after having already functioned for some years pursuant to a decree from the President of the Council of Ministers.

This Committee performs the task of an auxiliary body to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers as far as women's affairs are concerned and has the specific task "of promoting equality between the sexes, whilst removing any direct or indirect discrimination against women and any real obstacle limiting equality". These responsibilities, which are described in detail, extend to the fields of political, economic and social life, information, representation of women in international, national and local bodies, coordination of initiatives for equality in the public sector.

As far as this last aspect is concerned, several laws have in turn attributed the power to the Committee to issue binding opinions on the regulations governing public competitive examinations for the careers to which women have recently been admitted, i.e. the "Corpo delle Guardie Forestali" (corps of forest rangers) and that of the "Vigili del Fuoco" (fire brigade); in the near future, the Committee will have similar responsibilities with regard to the admission of women to the armed forces, the final area of activity from which they are still excluded.

All the private sector contracts renewed in the past two three-year periods, provide for the creation of special joint bodies, including at enterprise level, with a view to implementing positive measures and monitoring equality.

Provision has been made for similar bodies in the public sector under the contracts currently in force, established by trade union organizations and, consequently, resulting in measures with the force of law for the achievement of equality in the various administrative departments.

However, certain ministries have responsibilities, in the field of equality, which go well beyond the circle of their staff. This is the case in particular of the Ministry of the Civil Service with regard to all the Government civil servants, the Ministry of Education with regard to the abolition of stereotypes and more generally of obstacles to equal opportunities in education and of the Ministry of Labour with regard to women workers in the private sector.

The first of these authorities set up a special department for equality within the "Osservatorio sul Pubblico impiego" (monitoring of the civil service) and in 1989 published a report on the distribution by sex of the personnel of the public administration, broken down by levels and qualifications. This report is disappointing as far as the present conditions concerning equality are concerned, but fundamental for monitoring future developments in this field.

The Ministry of Education set up a special committee of experts which has already made proposals to the minister on several occasions.

As for the Ministry of Labour, the ad hoc committee, set up by ministerial decree, which has been working since 1980 already, obtained by law 125/91 the legislative sanction providing for an extension in its structures and terms of reference. Amongst other things, the committee issues binding opinions on positive action projects to be financed.

The above-mentioned law no. 125 explains the mechanism for monitoring equality of the Ministry of Labour through its "Consigliere di Parità" (equality counsellor), introduced at national, regional and provincial levels, who has the task of taking any useful initiatives in respect of equality and of taking action before the court at the request of a woman worker who has been discriminated against and "Jure proprio" in the case of discrimination of a collective nature "even if the workers who are the subject of discrimination cannot be identified individually immediately and directly".

WORK

The greatest progress achieved by women in Italy is to be seen in the working world and takes the form, in particular, of an increase in the levels of employment.

The graph in Table 1 shows the labour force participation rate indices for women during the period from 1959 to 1988. This graph, drawn up by Professor Renata Livraghi in September 1989, also brings out this phenomenon with regard to the trend in male employment. This graph shows a continuous fall until 1972, the year which marked the historical threshold in women's employment and then uninterrupted growth, which accelerated particularly after 1978.

Mention should be made of the most striking social phenomena underlying this trend. During the 1960s in Italy, there was an intense process of rural exodus, resulting in large-scale migratory movements from the south to the north of the country and from the countryside to the towns.

Women, who represent a proportion of the population working in agriculture but who are in fact largely under-employed and without appropriate vocational training, were finding difficulties in the towns in integrating into the industrial and tertiary sectors. The years from 1972 to 1978 are those of the entry into force of important legislation for the advancement of women: Protection of Maternity Act (L 1204) and the five-year plan for the creation of a network of municipal day-nurseries with the financial participation of the Government (L 1044), both of December 1971, and, in December 1977, the Equality Act (L 903).

Although it is true that these acts did not have a direct and immediate impact on employment, their adoption gave rise to keen public interest in the problems of women at work. In particular, law 903 introducing "equal treatment between men and women regarding work" gave rise to a diffuse process of emancipation, resulting in a considerable influx of women into the job market.

This phenomenon concerned not only all the young women who presented themselves on the job market over the past ten years, like men, but also a large number of adult women, housewives, seeking work.

As a result, as the above-mentioned graph shows, the increase in employment in Italy since 1978, in statistical terms, has concerned almost exclusively women.

It should be added that the large supply of female labour led at the same time to a considerable rise in unemployment, since only part of this abundant supply met with demand on the job market.

Female unemployment in fact results not only from women who lost their jobs and young people seeking a first job - the statistics are almost the same as those for men - but also from a large number of women at home seeking work.

The quantitative indices of the phenomena described above are shown in table 2, which describes the situation of employment in 1978 (entry into force of the Equality Act) and 1987 (ten years later) and more recently in 1991.

An increase is to be seen in the female labour force during the period considered of more than two million people and in the number of women employed of just under one and a half million, whereas women's unemployment has practically doubled and represents over half the total unemployment. Consequently, the item "other" (than labour) is reduced, a reduction which primarily relates to women at home.

Table 3 provides detailed information on "persons seeking work". The high figure for women not engaging in an economic activity (housewives) will be noticed, as well as the relative divergence in relation to men.

As far as the qualitative aspects of women's work are concerned, table 4 on the percentage composition of employment by sex and occupational sector, shows the extent of women's involvement in the radical changes in the production structures of our country, which has converted from an agro-industrial economy to a stage characterized by the prevalence of the tertiary sector.

About seven out of every ten women employed are to be found in this sector, fewer than one in agriculture and just over two in industry.

This trend can be considered to be positive overall, even from the point of view of the quality of female employment, in so far as, even though the tertiary sector groups together simple and routine jobs, it also and primarily covers activities termed as the "advanced tertiary sector" and of the social tertiary sector, in which women are in the majority.

However, the statistics do not provide any conclusive evidence with regard to a real qualitative improvement in women's work in senior positions and grades. There is a great deal of information on this subject, but it is episodic and principally refers to emblematic situations, either positive or negative, and this data does not allow an overall

assessment to be made. Nevertheless, the conviction exists that despite undeniable progress, women's "careers" still come up against multifarious obstacles.

A full survey of the percentage distribution of the various sectors of public office by sex, qualifications and grade for the years 1986 and 1987 confirms, on the one hand, the growing participation of women in the working world and especially in public office and, on the other hand, the fact that they are still few and far between in managerial posts. At present, only two women hold the office of director general in ministries.

EDUCATION AND WORK

As far as education is concerned, an important date is that of the creation of compulsory middle school education up to the age of 14 years (1962). This measure allowed not only a significant rise in the average level of education of citizens, but also had a multiplier effect on the attendance of young people at secondary schools and universities.

It is mainly girls who have benefited from these effects. The considerable gap between the participation of women and men has now been caught up for some years. The choice of a career is now of equal interest to boys and girls.

Various initiatives have been proposed to the schools of various grades and disciplines with a view to education offering true equality.

Under present conditions, it appears that the problem to be solved primarily concerns the guidance of young people towards choices and programmes of study offering real, concrete possibilities of jobs, particularly through adequate, systematic information in schools concerning the job market. In this context, the choices of girls guided towards the types of schools associated with occupational activities considered, rightly or wrongly, to be more "compatible" with their future family tasks, such as teaching, or linked to attitudes considered to be "feminine", such as social assistance or psychology, are in reality frustrating and offer no future.

For all that, it cannot be said that women present themselves on the job market uneducated. On the contrary, it has to be said that, in view of the position they occupy, they are generally better prepared from the cultural point of view than their masculine colleagues.

Table 5 (concerning the report by the Ministry of Labour on the application of act no. 903 for the year 1987), drawn up on the basis of ISTAT data, shows the percentages of persons employed and persons seeking work, broken down by sex, level of studies and comparing the year 1978 (entry into force of act no. 903) with the tenth year of its application.

As can be seen, during this decade, there have been profound changes in the section relating to the level of education of both employed persons and persons seeking work: there is a reduction in the percentages "without school certificate" and an increase in the percentage of workers in possession of a certificate of secondary education, but above

all in the numbers of those with certificates of an advanced level of secondary education and university degrees. This positive trend is nevertheless far more marked for women than for men, particularly among those seeking work.

Even though the goal post has not yet been reached in the field of education and vocational training, it cannot be said that the lack of education is a fundamental obstacle to the achievement of equality.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

With regard to social and political life, contrary to the other fields analyzed above, there is no significant evidence which would suggest a real turn-round towards equality.

Political and social life has experienced moments of intense participation, followed by abandonment. For all that, a large number of instruments, particularly of a legislative nature, have been adopted to promote the participation of citizens: these range from laws setting up school management bodies to new possibilities available for contribution by citizens and their associations through the recent Local Autonomy Act, to the legislation governing and enhancing the value of voluntary service.

On the whole, it can nevertheless be affirmed that participation by women in social life is on the whole significant and important at the basic level. In particular, the presence of women in voluntary associations which, according to certain estimates, represents nearly 7 million people in Italy, is on a particularly large scale.

On the other hand, the presence of women in positions of responsibility in the political and administrative life of the country is totally inadequate, even though certain progress has been made (table 6).

The information concerning women elected to both the Lower Chamber and the Senate during the past ten parliaments, gives an idea of the development in this presence, which reached a maximum during the last parliament with 81 women members and 21 senators (see table 7 for the most recent elections).

As far as positions of importance occupied by women in Parliament as a whole are concerned, it has to be said that things are improving slowly. Mrs. Nilde Iotti was President of the Lower Chamber during the last parliament, which ended in April 1991. There was a woman member of Government, in the role of Minister for the first time since 1975: it was I who had that honour as head of the Department of Labour.

In local government, women elected still only represent 8.5% of the total. There are 242 mayoresses, i.e. 3.3%, 2,784 deputy mayoresses (7.8%) and 9,222 women councillors (9.2%).

As can be seen, the conquest of positions associated with the exercising of power is the true objective on the road to equality.

Useful address:

COMMISSIONE NAZIONALE PER LA REALIZZAZIONE DELLA PARITA' TRA
UOMO E DONNA
Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri
Palazzo Chigi, Rome.

Table 1 INDICATORS OF LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES 1958-1988

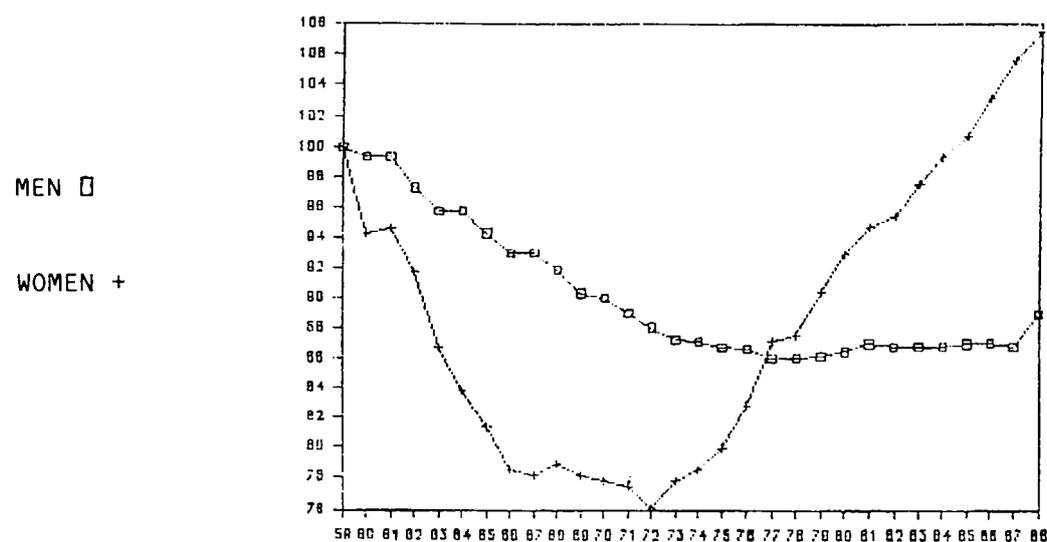


Table 2 Population by sex and professional status in Italy 1978-1987-1991 - Absolute figures in thousands

	<u>Year</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M+W</u>	<u>W/M+W</u>
Labour force	1978	14734	6997	21730	32.3%
	1987	15074	8595	23669	36.34%
	1991	14357	9043	24394	37.4%
Persons at work	1978	14043	6116	20159	30.3%
	1987	13845	6991	20836	33.6%
	1991	14357	7560	21817	34.6%
Persons seeking work	1978	691	880	1571	56.0%
	1987	1228	1604	2832	56.6%
	1991	1098	1483	2581	57.4%
Persons outside the labour force	1978	12481	21694	34185	63.4%
	1987	12512	20482	32994	62.9%
	1991	12456	20292	32748	61.9%
Total population	1978	27215	28691	55806	51.2%
	1987	27586	29077	56664	51.3%
	1991	27809	29335	57144	51.3%

Based on ISTAT data

Table 3 Persons seeking work (in thousands)

	<u>Year</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M+W</u>
Seeking a first job	1978	384	408	792
	1987	665	689	1954
	1991	626	645	1271
Without work	1978	127	85	212
	1987	313	234	547
	1991	227	193	420
In non-professional situation (housewives, students)	1978	179	387	567
	1987	251	681	932
	1991	445	445	890
Total persons seeking work	1978	691	880	1571
	1987	1228	1604	2832
	1991	1098	1483	2581

Table 4 Distribution of employment by sex and occupational sector (percentage)

	<u>Year</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M+W</u>
Agriculture	1978	14.2	18	15.3
	1987	10.2	10.8	10.4
	1990	8.3	8.8	8.5
Industry	1978	42.0	28.4	37.9
	1987	36.9	22.9	32.3
	1990	37.6	23.3	33.2
Other	1978	42.8	53.6	46.8
	1987	52.9	61.8	57.3
	1990	54.1	67.9	58.3

Table 5 Persons employed and persons seeking employment
Distribution by sex and level of study (percentages)

	<u>Year</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M+W</u>
<u>Persons employed</u>	1987	100	100	100
Without school certificate		35.9	30.6	34.1
Certificate of secondary education		37.1	34.2	36.1
Certificate of an advanced level of secondary education and university degrees		27.0	35.2	28.8
	1978	100	100	100
Without school certificate		56.5	52.0	55.2
Certificate of secondary education		26.9	26.6	26.7
Certificate of an advanced level of secondary education and university degrees		17.0	21.4	18.2
<u>Persons seeking work</u>	1987	100	100	100
Without school certificate		25	20.5	22.5
Certificate of secondary education		46.3	41.8	43.7
Certificate of an advanced level of secondary education and university degrees		28.7	37.7	33.8
	1978	100	100	100
Without school certificate		30.5	32.8	31.6
Certificate of secondary education		36.4	34.1	35.1
Certificate of an advanced level of secondary education and university degrees		33.1	33.1	33.1

Based on ISTAT data

Table 6

CHAMBER (Total electoral districts and parties)									
	1948	1953	1958	1963	1968	1972	1976	1979	1983
Total candidates	4018	4720	4768	5040	5040	4410	5670	5670	5670
Women candidates	180	209	207	174	193	169	787	731	616
%	4.4	4.4	4.3	3.4	3.8	3.8	13.8	12.8	10.8
Total elected	574	590	596	630	630	630	630	630	630
Women elected	39	33	22	29	17	24	53	53	50
%	6.7	5.5	3.6	4.6	2.6	3.8	8.4	8.4	7.9

SENATE (Total electoral districts and parties)									
	1948	1953	1958	1963	1968	1972	1976	1979	1983
Total elected	342	243	249	321	322	322	322	322	322
Women elected	4	1	3	6	10	5	11	11	16
%	1.1	0.4	1.2	1.8	3.1	1.5	3.4	3.4	4.9

Source: Min. Int. - Dir. Gen. Amm. Civ.
 Direz. Centrale servizi elettorali
 Servizio informatica (pag.125)
 Updated on 29 April 1991

Table 7

Results of the elections of 5 and 6 April 1992 compared to the 1987 elections		
	1987	1992
Women elected to the Lower Chamber	81 (12.8%)	52 (8.2%)
Women elected to the Senate	21 (6.6%)	31 (9.8%)

Source: Commissione Nazionale per la realizzazione della parità tra uomo e donna

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LUXEMBOURG: DISCREET PRAGMATISM

by Astride Lulling, Chairman of the Comité du Travail Féminin (Committee on Women's Work).

Community policy in the field of equal treatment and equal opportunities for men and women in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was and still is a valuable instrument, an inestimable aid to improve the situation of women in society, in the working world and in the family.

At the dawn of the 21st century, the situation of women in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, compared to that half a century previously, is characterized by radical changes on the right road towards equality of rights, which is almost perfect from the legal point of view; by an appreciable share of equal opportunities, in so far as women know and can avail themselves of them; by increased participation in decisions, although this is still very unequally distributed among the various levels of power.

POLITICAL LIFE

From the legal point of view, there has been nothing to prevent full and complete participation by Luxembourg women in the political world since 1919, when universal suffrage was introduced. However, for decades, they did not know how or were unable to avail themselves of this.

AT THE NATIONAL PARLIAMENT

One woman had been elected to the Lower House as early as 1919. It was only in 1965 that a woman was again elected to the National Parliament, the only one until 1968. Since then, all the parties have taken care to present female candidates and the three national parties, Social Christians, Socialists and Liberals, have since then succeeded in having women elected: not many, because they have taken care not to present too many. In the most recent general elections of **June 1989**, 10 women were elected: 4 Social Christians, 3 Liberals, 2 Socialists and 1 Greng Alternativ Partei.

Since 1979, one woman has belonged to the Executive of the Chamber. At present, the President of the Chamber is a woman. From 1974 to 1979, a woman was Chairman of a political party, the Social-Democrat Party. From 1980 to 1989, a woman was President of the Liberal Party. For a decade, women have chaired parliamentary committees: these include the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Agriculture, Viticulture and Tourism Committee, the Education Committee, the Legal Affairs Committee and the Petitions Committee.

AT THE COUNCIL OF STATE

The Council of State, with its 22 members proposed in turn by the government, by the Lower Chamber and coopted by its members, acts as a 2nd Chamber in the Grand Duchy. Since 1975, it has just one woman among its members, appointed for life (age limit: 72 years).

AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The first Luxembourg woman entered the European Parliament in 1965. After the 1968 general elections, the Luxembourg delegation to the European Parliament, designated by the national parliament until 1979, had two women out of six members until 1974.

Since the European Parliament has been elected by universal suffrage, one third of the members of the Luxembourg delegation were women from 1979 to 1984, 50% between 1984 and 1988. Women again account for 50% since the 1989 elections.

IN THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

In spite of excellent results at the general elections for women candidates since 1964, women are few and far between in the Governments of the Grand Duchy.

The first woman, a Social Christian, not elected to the Chamber, became Minister for the Family and Young People on 3 January 1967. She stayed in office until 19 September 1972. This was followed by a period of more than eight years without women in the Government. From 22 November 1980 to 20 July 1984, a woman Liberal was part of the Government as Minister for Foreign Affairs, Economic Affairs and the Middle Classes. It was only after the 1989 elections that a woman, a Socialist this time, became Secretary of State for Young People and for Social Security.

IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

It was only in 1970 that the first women were elected to mayorships, one, a Liberal, in the capital, the other, a Social-Democrat, in an industrial municipality in the south. Since 1970, with an interruption of less than a year, from 1980 to 1981, the capital has had mayoresses. At present 5 of the 118 municipalities have mayoresses. The capital also has a lady alderman. 13 municipalities have a lady alderman and of the 1,088 local councillors in Luxembourg, there are 79 women.

Would more Luxembourg women be elected at all levels - local, national, European - if the parties were to place more female candidates on their lists?

It is possible, since the Luxembourg electoral procedure, which is a proportional system, authorizing voting on the same ticket for candidates belonging to different parties and preference votes, allows candidates to put themselves forward, because it is not the party

which chooses those who are elected in order of priority, but the electorate. This system has given the few women elected the opportunity of proving through their competence and enthusiasm that they are worthy of the confidence of the electorate. The first woman elected after the Second World War in 1965, who played the role of pioneer, has been re-elected since then at all levels; local, national and European. It can be deduced from this that more extensive participation by Luxembourg women in the decision-making structures at local, national and European levels depends primarily on the will of the political parties to choose a sufficient number of women candidates. The excuse is often given of the lack of suitable women candidates who could win votes for the party. But there have already been cases of the exclusion of women candidates who were too popular and liable to take the place of a man, or even of a woman, the Luxembourg electoral system being what it is.

IN THE PARTIES

The Luxembourg parties (with the exception of the Liberal Party, where "female domination" was resented by men until just over a year ago) remain male bastions. Nevertheless, in 1975, the Year of Women, the Socialist Party chose a woman as Chairman, who was replaced by a man a few years later. The Liberal Party designated a woman Chairman in 1980 and leader of the opposition after 1984.

Today, all the parties again have male chairmen, but one or two women deputy chairmen. On the other hand, there are an increasing number of women at electoral district and local levels, especially in positions where voluntary work is required.

THE WORKING WORLD

When the European Economic Community was first established, the percentage of women participating in the labour force in the Grand Duchy was among the lowest of all the Member States, barely 20%. There were historical reasons and reasons of economic structure for this. The Luxembourg economy was in fact dominated until the 1970s by the steel industry, which only employs a few women in its administrative departments. Since then, the situation has changed a great deal, especially after the veritable explosion in the financial market and in other tertiary activities. The percentage of women residing in the Grand Duchy in the labour force is now in the neighbourhood of 35%, but remains one of the lowest in the Community.

There is practically no unemployment in Luxembourg: 1.3% (2,564). However, among those seeking work and the unemployed receiving benefit, 40.8% are women. Since Luxembourg is still a net importer of labour (immigrants and cross-frontier workers), the existence of female unemployment is essentially due to reasons of training and lack of diversification in career choices of girls and women. Furthermore, women wishing to return to work often have expectations which are inversely proportional to their professional aptitudes and who require retraining. Systematic organization of this has taken too long.

With regard to the conditions of work and pay, there is no doubt that the Community directives in the field of equal treatment of men and women at work, which have been fairly correctly applied in the Grand Duchy, particularly with regard to pay and social security, have made a very large contribution to eliminating instances of direct discrimination.

Indirect discrimination, particularly concerning access to employment, continues to exist, as in the majority of Member States, since the most highly perfected laws cannot, from one day to the next, change employers' practices or mentalities, whether of parents, teachers, girls or women themselves. But positive measures taken on the basis of the Community action programme have had the effect of promoting greater equality of opportunities for women concerning access to employment and vocational advancement.

It is true that the fairly good protective legislation concerning the protection of maternity sometimes has undesirable effects, particularly in the public sector, which has highly developed parental leave regulations. It can be said that there is a certain reluctance on the part of certain employers at the time of recruiting women of child-bearing age, on account of possible absences for maternity and educational leave, which may amount to as much as 5 or even 15 years in the public sector and to 20 weeks or as much as 2 years in the private sector.

But the dearth of resident skilled labour means that even though certain employers, particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises, are afraid of over-generous protective legislation (it is not yet protective enough, in the view of the feminist organizations), the opportunities for access to employment for girls with sufficient skills are greater than in most other Member States.

It should further be noted that the Community directives have had the effect of changing the law on the armed forces to admit women and men as volunteers to the Luxembourg army on an equal footing. As a series of posts in the civil service are reserved to army volunteers, this legislation was incompatible with the Community directive on equal treatment with regard to access to employment.

The Luxembourg legislators, rather than abolishing the exclusivity of army volunteers regarding access to certain public duties (such as, for example, postmen, Government bailiffs, forest rangers), preferred to admit male and female volunteers on an equal footing. Our country hence has its first female forest ranger, who started work a few months ago. The police force has had policewomen for years. The first woman officer has been appointed.

HIGH-RANKING AND INFLUENTIAL POSITIONS

There are not many Luxembourg women in such positions. Unfortunately there are no statistics in this respect as yet. But the academic meetings, organized to mark anniversaries, such as, for example, the very recent anniversary of the Chamber of Commerce, when the leading citizens of Luxembourg society gather together, clearly illustrate that we are still living in a world very largely dominated by the male sex.

Although there are still very few women in high public office, the judicial sector is somewhat more mixed and some are even afraid of feminization at magistrate level. Women legal experts have a distinct preference for a career in the civil service, rather than in the profession of attorney. It should however be noted that there is a woman Director of Health.

Workers' trade unions remain the most exclusive preserve of men, even more than the business world where woman company directors are not very numerous, especially where large enterprises are involved. But there are an increasing number of them in small and medium-sized enterprises.

Women are increasingly making careers in the written and spoken press. A relatively good start has been made on the process of women's access to influential and decision-making positions in the Grand Duchy, but it is a long-drawn-out process.

EDUCATION

Co-education has existed in Luxembourg schools for decades: through necessity in the countryside, since the introduction of compulsory education, by deliberate choice after the Second World War. A present, all classes in State schools at pre-school, primary and secondary levels, are mixed.

A problem remains of the extreme feminization of teaching staff in nursery schools, whereas the very unusual system in Luxembourg of admission to primary school teacher training has had the effect of avoiding feminization. This system consisted, under a numerus clausus, of admitting equal numbers of young men and young women to primary school teacher training. It was abolished in 1988 because this admission practice was considered discriminatory and contrary to the principle of non-discrimination enshrined in directive 76/207/EEC, as well as to the Act of 8 December 1981 on equal treatment between men and women, which translates this directive into national legislation.

Since then, there has been a runaway increase in the feminization of the profession of primary school teacher and some are concerned that this feminization will generate future organizational problems and even problems concerning the level and efficiency of this teaching on account of maternity leave, parental leave and leave for part-time working.

At secondary school level, the staff are still well mixed. In this part of the education system, it is more the choice of the pupils in favour of certain branches which worries those who are rightly convinced that the advancement and equal opportunities of women depend on a diversification in the career choices of girls. It must be stressed, in this context, that the school curricula are the same for boys and girls.

Following excellent recommendations of the Sullerot network, and exemplary cooperation between the Luxembourg expert of this network and the Ministry of Education, measures have been initiated and finalized:

- for the elimination of sexual stereotypes from school textbooks;

- for the generalized use of introductory courses to new technologies;
- for the reform of the study plans, to prepare young people more effectively for the society of information technology and communications;
- for the stimulation of the diversification of study options in the context of education policy;
- for demonstrating to the pupils of technological secondary education the various trades in order to encourage girls towards the many options available through this type of education.

All these efforts will only bear fruit if a change in mentality can be brought about among the parents and children concerned. This should be all the easier in the Grand Duchy because there is practically no unemployment, but a severe shortage of resident manpower and a major imbalance between the supply and the demand of labour from the qualitative and quantitative points of view. The Petra network is carrying out exemplary work in Luxembourg, which should bear fruit. For some years, particularly in the context of the Iris network, major retraining and training efforts have been undertaken for the benefit of women returning to work.

In the field of education too, Community initiatives have provided an impetus and valuable assistance in promoting equal opportunities for Luxembourg women.

ATTITUDES, PUBLIC OPINION

It would be an exaggeration to claim that in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg everything is ideal as far as equal opportunities for women are concerned.

As everywhere else, rights are almost perfectly equal on paper, equal opportunities are well on the way, the conditions for achieving this equality, for improving the position of women, are better than ever, praiseworthy endeavours have been undertaken at all levels. Naturally, there are difficulties, there are curbs imposed by those who practise indirect discrimination, which is often very difficult to expose.

So far, the soundly based, realistic Community policy has been able to play its role in the Grand Duchy, where discreet pragmatism has been able to achieve better results than loud and excessive demands which are often counter-productive.

Useful address:

Comité du Travail féminin
Ministère de la Famille et de la Solidarité
14, avenue de la Gare
L-2919 - Luxembourg

THE NETHERLANDS: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

*by Frank R. Boddendijk, member of the Emancipatie Raad
(Council for Emancipation).*

INTRODUCTION

In the Netherlands, there is a distinct difference between the theory and the practice of equal opportunities for women and men, which, in a way, goes back to the beginning of the century.

The proletarian and bourgeois women's movements were involved in a fight for universal suffrage: each using their own strategy. In those days, it was thought that once women had the right to vote, society would change for the better; that equal opportunities would become effective thanks to the participation of women in politics. Universal suffrage was secured in 1919; but instead of speeding up the process of equal opportunities, the question disappeared from the political agenda. When the great depression came, there were even discussions in Parliament about forbidding married women from working outside the home.

Compared to other European countries, the socio-economic and political participation of women in the Netherlands was low over the years, in spite of their legal rights. In the past, there were many explanations. It was said that the Calvinist tradition was a perfect ideology to reproduce traditional gender roles of the man as the bread-winning father and the woman as a mother taking care of children, the home and garden.

Another point is that the Netherlands, unlike France, the United Kingdom and Germany, never experienced the situation in war time of industry needing female labour since the men were at war.

A third explanation lies in the fact that the Dutch trade unions were quite strong at the beginning of the century and they were capable of demanding an adequate wage for their members on which the entire family could have a decent living.

Nevertheless, at the end of the sixties, Dutch feminists demanded that the legal theory of equal opportunities be put into practice. They drew attention to their demands by organizing provocative activities, such as the occupation of men's public toilets.

Since the mid-seventies, the Dutch Government has been involved in an equal opportunities policy. To start with, the issue was seen merely as a problem of assimilation; later, the key word was integration; nowadays, talk is of transformation by putting theories into practice.

ASSIMILATION

At the end of 1974, the Dutch Government appointed an Emancipation Commission to

advise the Government on all issues concerning women. In 1976, the Commission published a policy document: "Five-Year Plan, a Start", which was more or less completely accepted by the Government in 1977 in its first policy document on equal opportunities: "Emancipation, a process of change and development".

The main objective of the emancipation policy was to leave men and women free to decide how to organize their own socio-political and economic existence. Both men and women were to become conscious of their role in society in order to free themselves of the traditional socialization of gender roles.

In reality, women experienced more impediments than men. Growing awareness does not necessarily raise people's low level of education, or give them more experience on the job market or increase their political participation. And replacing discriminatory articles in law by neutral articles from the gender point of view does not automatically close the question of equal opportunities.

In general, this period can be characterized by the concept of "assimilation"; by changing certain laws, very often on the impetus of Community directives, and raising women's awareness, women could adapt to the dominant rules of society and be treated on an equal footing.

At that time, there was a rather formal understanding of equality. An understanding which did not take account of the fact that equal treatment of "unequal" people could only, at best, reproduce the existing inequality. And it has to be said that women and men in those days found themselves at quite a different socio-economic and political level.

Despite the fact that women differed in many respects, they agreed on many points, since in general only principles were discussed. There was no difference between the options of female Social-Democrats, female Christian-Democrats and female Liberals: they all agreed on the fact that women were discriminated against, that the laws should change and that women should have a chance to assimilate.

INTEGRATION

In 1981, the Emancipation Commission, which was meant to be temporary, was replaced by the Emancipation Council, which has the task of advising the Government on all policy issues concerning women, after hearing the opinion of the women's movement.

The final document of the Emancipation Commission was entitled "On Labour"; in this policy document it was explained that society knows three forms of labour which are essential to it: paid professional labour, voluntary labour and domestic labour, including child care.

And as long as these different forms of labour are divided unequally between women and men, equal opportunities would not exist.

The key concept became "integration": women were to be integrated into society, especially by creating opportunities for them to participate in the labour market. Solid

labour market participation would offer them a reasonable chance of a fair share in the most varied forms of voluntary work, especially in politics and administration.

And if women were involved in paid work and important voluntary work, men could always replace them in unpaid domestic labour, including child care.

For the Dutch, it was natural to raise the question of sharing paid employment. But in this "integration" period, the position of men did not change. It is true that more and more women started to participate on the labour market; the majority in part-time work and often in lower qualified jobs. But they had to combine their different tasks. Men still had full-time jobs (or were full-time unemployed); there was no indication that domestic work was to be shared.

As a result, the women's movement demanded a 25-hour working week, which would allow men and women to reconcile their professional and private life.

During this period, the European Community initiatives stimulated the integration of women into society by a policy in which pilot projects played an important role. It was hoped that the pilot projects in the field of equal opportunities would be integrated into the "normal" day-to-day policy.

This "integration period" is also characterized by the fact that the actors directly concerned, such as the women's movement, commissions and the Government, stressed the importance of translating equal opportunities into policy.

In reality, it has been seen how patient legislators could be. During this period, a large number of policy documents were published, discussed in Parliament and even approved. But policy documents are only documents and documents do not change society. Franz Kafka wrote: "Die Fesseln der gequälten Menschheit sind aus Kanzleipapier" (Official papers are the fetters of tormented humanity). Or, as Karl Marx said, "philosophers have discussed how society could be changed; we now have to do the real job of changing society!"

TRANSFORMATION

The Commission of the European Communities has so far adopted three medium-term programmes of action for equal opportunities, which a large number of national governments have applied. If we compare the statistics from the 1960s with those of the 1990s, we can conclude that things have changed. Women in general have by-passed their educational arrears, they have found jobs or are unemployed, and they participate in politics.

It is possible that the changes we see are not the result of a coherent policy on equal opportunities, but merely the consequences of more or less autonomous developments in society. Up to now, the Government and political personnel have not done much to promote equal opportunities.

It is true that they have changed certain laws; and they have created policy documents. But what is needed is the implementation of these documents. An implementation of a genuine equal opportunities policy, by which women and men could really have an equitable share of the various forms of labour in society: paid professional labour, voluntary labour and domestic labour. This implies a transformation of society, not only an integration of women in society, but a real change in power in our existing society.

The Dutch Emancipation Council advised the Government on this issue in 1989 in its report entitled "Emancipation policy from a macroeconomic point of view", in which it gave a coherent view of equal opportunities policy.

As long as men still have full-time jobs and women only part-time jobs, there will be no real equality, since in that case women have the full responsibility for domestic labour, including child care.

What is necessary is a redistribution of paid labour between women and men, by shortening the daily/weekly working hours, so that men and women have equal full-time jobs of 28/32 hours per week, which would also allow women to achieve financial independence.

Since working hours are less than in the past, women and men have the possibility of participating equally in the unpaid voluntary work and in the domestic chores.

If the Government could take certain measures to ensure the reconciliation of professional and private life, such as child-care facilities and parental leave, and if it could stimulate a real "positive action policy" for the appointment of women to different levels of the administration and in companies, then equal opportunities would be stimulated in a concrete way.

Vocational training or retraining of unemployed women and women returning to the labour force after a certain time could give them a fair chance of a real start. The Emancipation Council also added that if these different instruments were implemented as a package deal, it really would stimulate equal opportunities.

In that case, all kinds of benefits which currently exist to support the family could disappear, since both women and men would have paid employment and would be financially independent.

Of course, it was realized that society could not be changed overnight. So why not start with the new generation, with the young people who had their 18th birthdays in 1990 or afterwards? Let us give the new generation a real chance of equality, in which there is harmony between social duties and legal rights. It is a remarkable fact that the official statistics office concluded that the financial consequences of the proposals of the Emancipation Council were neutral from the point of view of the public purse!

There is therefore no excuse for not implementing a genuine equal opportunities policy. Starting with the younger generation, jobs could be transformed into careers allowing boys and girls to combine their professional and private lives in a healthy way.

ACCESS TO POLITICAL LIFE

In many European countries, women possibly have a better position on the labour market, but it must nevertheless be noted that the political participation of women is relatively high in the Netherlands, which is second after Denmark. The Emancipation Council recently advised the Dutch Government on the question of the promotion of women in high-level political and administrative careers.

In a way, this is a delicate matter, since the autonomy of the political parties cannot be called into question in a democratic system; and on the other hand, in the interests of democracy, it is necessary to wait for the various economic and political actors to develop new ideas.

In any case, the Dutch Government provides all the political parties represented in Parliament with a certain budget for their scientific study bureaux. The Emancipation Council is of the opinion that the Government should introduce a kind of contract obligation concerning this measure. Most political parties are officially inclined to a positive action plan for women. It has now become clear to everyone that positive action only makes sense if it is tailor-made with regard to implementation.

Hence the Emancipation Council suggested to the Dutch Government leaving the political parties to develop a tailor-made plan for the promotion of women within them. And if this does not give positive results, they will not receive government aid unless they can prove that they have done their best (in the absence of proof to the contrary). In fact, parties could appoint "equality officers" responsible for the development of these tailor-made plans for positive action.

The reason for such suggestions is, of course, that more equitable participation of women in political life should promote a solution for all aspects of equal opportunities. And the stimulation of equal opportunities will have more success at all levels: education, politics and job market.

Therefore the Emancipation Council also advised the Dutch Government to take certain measures to promote women in management in general and women in school management in particular. We are currently facing a situation in which the smallest schools have to merge and to cooperate with larger units.

In practice, this means that women who are involved in school management will in time disappear, since they are mainly employed in the small schools. By stimulating the creation of larger schools, the Government should also create certain prerequisites which enable women to retain or to obtain access to management posts. This could be in the form of contractual obligations or another form.

But it is clear that equal opportunities are not confined to the beginning of a career; as is generally said, jobs must be understood in terms of careers. And the Government has a certain responsibility for the implementation of this policy,

CONCLUSIONS

A large number of statistics could be published on the situation of women in the socio-economic and political world in the Netherlands. But that would not change the facts. One of the most important facts is that the participation of women on the labour market has grown. Recent data showed that 52% of Dutch women between 15 and 65 years of age participated in the labour market.

Looking behind this kind of statistical data, it is realized that in reality the majority of women in the Netherlands with children work part-time, which does not give them many future prospects in terms of career or financial independence. This is due to the fact that in the Netherlands, as in Luxembourg, the education system is designed for children to have lunch at home.

From the table below, it can be seen that the differences between women and men on the Dutch labour market only start after 25 years of age. Young people today are in a more or less equal position. But this has much to do with the fact that nowadays the average age at which women give birth to their (first) child is 27!

Useful address:

Emancipatie Raad
Anna van Hannoverstraat 4-6
NL-25 95 BJ The Hague

**Population and population in the labour force of 15-64 years of age
by sex and age, in 1987 (1) and 1990**

	Employed		Unemployed		Labour force	
	1987	1990	1987	1990	1987	1990
Women						
15-25 years	581	612	128	95	709	707
25-44 years	1124	1332	188	180	1312	1511
45-64 years	400	461	55	63	455	525
Total	2104	2405	371	388	2476	2743
Men						
15-24 years		665		84		749
25-44 years		2251		135		2386
45-64 years		1036		79		1114
Total		3952		298		4249
Total women and men		6357		636		6992

(1) available only for women

Source: Enquête Beroepsbevolking 1987: gedetailleerde uitkomsten/CBS 1989
Enquête Beroepsbevolking 1990/CBS 1991.

PORTUGAL: CHANGE THE LAWS AND THE MENTALITIES

*by Maria Regina Tavares da Silva, former
President of the Commission for Equality and
Women's Rights*

The constitutional principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women, in all areas, placed Portugal in the front line of legal and formal equality and brought about changes in the patterns of behaviour which have had consequences on the status of women.

In spite of this, the de facto situation is not yet satisfactory.

THE POLITICAL WORLD

In the 12th Constitutional Government there are 61 posts, of which 4 have been allocated to women (the Secretaries of State for Finance, Regional Planning and Development, Administrative Modernization and the Under-Secretary for Culture).

At the local elections of 17 December 1989, of 305 mayors elected, there were 5 mayoresses: in Estarreja, of the Social Democrat Party; in Sardoal, of the Socialist Party; in Alcacer do Sal, of the CDU (Coalition group which includes the Communist Party); in Almada, of the CDU and in Vila de Rei of the Social Democrat Party. In 3 of these municipalities, these were re-elections: Estarreja, Sardoal and Alcacer do Sal. Other municipalities are headed by women replacing the elected mayors.

At the elections for the "Assembleia da República" (national Parliament), held on 19 July 1987, 19 women were elected out of a total of 250 members: 10 for the Social Democrat Party; 4 for the Socialist Party; 4 for the CDU and 1 for the Democratic Renewal Party, giving women a 7.6% representation. A woman was elected for the first time as Vice-President of the Assembly of the Republic.

In 1931, Portuguese women received a limited right to vote. This right was renewed in 1968 and it was only in 1974 that full rights were given to women. At the elections of 6 October 1991, 23 women were elected out of 230 members, i.e. a rate of 10%.

For the time being, there is no woman member of the Council of State.

The Constitutional Court, the highest Court of Appeal on constitutional matters, has 13 judges, of whom 1 is a woman. 3 of the 24 Portuguese Members of the European Parliament are women, of whom two are members of the Committee on Women's Rights.

None of the 7 members elected by the Assembly of the Republic to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe are women.

There are no women leaders of political parties represented in the Assembly of the Republic. However, women are represented to a certain extent in the National Secretariats or Committees of these parties.

WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

In 1990 (4th quarter), 43.2% of the total labour force were women. The labour force participation rate was 42.6% for women and 57.7% for men. The majority of the unemployed were women, who represented 67.3% of the total. The unemployment rate was 8.1% for women and 3.2% for men.

In the same period, 21.4% of employed women were in the primary sector, 25.6% in the secondary sector and 53% in services; whereas for men, 14.9% were in the primary sector, 41.5% in the secondary sector and 43.6% in services. The occupational sectors with the highest percentages of women are agriculture, the textiles industries, educational services, health services and other services (in particular domestic service).

In 1989, women accounted for 54.5% of the scientific and liberal professions, 16.8% of the managers and senior administrators, 50% of administrative personnel, 43% of trade personnel and 51.3% of farmers and farm labourers.

In the same year, as far as their occupational status was concerned, women represented 21% of the self-employed with employees, 47% of the self-employed without employees, 41.2% of the employees and 57.7% of the unpaid family workers.

Female unpaid family workers represented 4.2% of the total female labour force, concentrated mainly in agriculture, commerce, restaurants and hotels.

In 1989, 7.6% of working women were illiterate and 76.9% had only attained the minimum level of compulsory education. The illiterate worked mainly in agriculture. Workers with secondary or higher education represented 14.8% of the total.

The employment status was as follows: 77.6% of female employees had permanent contracts and 22.4% had fixed-term contracts.

In 1989, the average basic wage (taking account of all sectors) received by women was equal to 76.7% of that of men.

During the same year, the rate of participation of married women in the labour force was 52.3%; that of divorced women was 70.8%; that of widows was 16% and that of single women of over 15 years of age was 56.2%.

(Sources: Employment Survey, National Institute of Statistics; Personnel lists, Statistics Department of the MESS - Ministry of Employment and Social Security)

LEGISLATION

Employment

Article 59 of the Portuguese Constitution stipulates that it is the duty of the State to guarantee equal opportunities in the choice of profession or type of work and lays down the prerequisites for access to any post or type of work, without any restrictions of any kind based on sex.

Order in Council 392/79 of 20 September sets out to guarantee equal opportunities for women and men in work and employment. The object of this law is to define the legal framework for the application of the constitutional principles to work and employment and to create mechanisms to ensure the application of these norms and principles.

Employers are prohibited from applying sanctions or prejudicial treatment to a woman worker if she has complained of discrimination. The principle of reversal of the burden of proof applies in these cases.

Order in Council 426/88 of 18 November extended the same regulations to the civil service and its workers. This Order in Council establishes that the worker, as well as his or her union, is entitled to bring legal action on the grounds of discrimination.

Positive Action - the two Orders in Council establish that special temporary measures for preferential treatment of either sex to restore equality are not considered discriminatory.

The "Comissão para a Igualdade no Trabalho e no Emprego" (CITE) (the Commission of Equality in Work and Employment), attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, was set up to monitor the application of Order in Council 392/79. Its terms of reference were extended to the civil service by Order in Council 426/88.

Maternity and paternity

The Protection of Maternity and Paternity Act 4/84 of 4 April and Orders in Council 135/85 and 136/85 which implement it, represent the legal framework for the protection of maternity.

Both parents have equal rights and obligations regarding the support and education of their children. Children must not be separated from their parents unless the latter fail in their duties to them.

All women are entitled to free medical care during pregnancy and for the 60 days following confinement.

Pregnant workers cannot be dismissed without legal justification.

Women workers are entitled to maternity leave of 90 days, 60 of which must be taken after the birth, without loss of their rights at work. For this period, they receive their full

wages or are paid by the Social Security Department.

In certain circumstances, such as physical or mental incapacity, or even the death of the mother, the maternity leave may be taken by the father. These same rights may be granted in the case of the mother following vocational training courses before the confinement and where a long absence could be detrimental to her. The time already spent on vocational training cannot be affected by maternity leave, but the course must be completed in full.

In the case of adoption, maternity leave is 60 days.

Pregnant workers are entitled to time off work for medical consultations, whereas those who breast-feed are entitled to two absences per day, of one hour each, during the baby's first year.

Workers may take up to 30 days in leave per year to provide emergency care or to look after sick or injured children under 10 years of age, including adopted children and stepchildren; they are also entitled to 15 days per year to provide emergency care in the case of illness of their spouse, ascendants or descendants of over 10 years of age. These days of absence do not entail any loss of rights at work, except regarding wages under certain circumstances.

Children in hospital are entitled to the permanent company of their father or mother. Working parents with a child in hospital are entitled to take leave to keep the child company, but not both at the same time.

Working fathers and mothers may opt for unpaid leave for a period of 6 months to 2 years immediately after the maternity leave.

Workers with one or more children under 12 years of age are entitled to work part-time or flexible working hours under certain circumstances.

The law protects the genetic function of men and women, prohibiting or restricting activities which may entail risks in this respect.

Although there is no specific legislation concerning sexual harassment at work, there are legal provisions which allow the employer to punish behaviour which could be offensive to workers, especially women (Order in Council 49408 of 24 November 1969, article 40, n. 2).

DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS

Feminization in the civil service (1988)

<u>EEC GRADES</u>	<i>%</i>
A1	13.2
A2	22.9
A3	28.7
A4	32.4
A5 (principal assistant director)	14.4
A5 (assistant director)	29.4
A6	49.7
A7	47.1
A8	45.6

(Source: Direcção-Geral da Administração Pública)

A recommendation from the Secretary of State for Modernization of the Administration, addressed to all Secretaries of State, encourages the promotion of women to high-ranking positions in the civil service.

Feminization rate in the mass media (1991)

	<i>%</i>
Director	7.1
Assistant Director	3
Chief Editor	5.4
Deputy Chief Editor	2.7
Head of Section	3.1
Head of Department	1
Assistant Editor	24
Sub-editor	16.6
Coordinator	17.9
Editor	10

(Source: Syndicate of Journalists)

Feminization rates in the managerial bodies of trade unions affiliated to the two trade union confederations.

CGTP-IN: 17% (30% of the members are women)

UGT: 24% (46% of the members are women).

There has been an increase in the number of women in key positions in universities, research bodies and economic life. However, no data are available at the moment.

EDUCATION

In 1989, the educational level of the Portuguese population, of 15 years of age and over, was as follows for the two sexes (percentages)

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Total</u>
Cannot read or write	9.4	17.7	13.8
Can read and write but not holding any official diploma	0.7	0.9	0.8
Primary education	79.2	71.1	74.9
Secondary education	6.8	7.7	7.3
Higher education	3.5	2.3	2.9
Other	0.4	0.3	0.3
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	100.0	100.0	100.0

In 1988/89, 51.6% of pupils enrolled in secondary schools were girls.

In the same academic year, girls represented 52.7% of university students and 53.9% of first enrolments at university.

That year, women accounted for 54.4% of students successfully completing their higher education.

The distribution (in percentages) of the female representation in the various branches of higher education, both concerning enrolment and successful completion of studies are given below:

	<u>Enrolment</u>	<u>Completion</u>
Arts	74.5	79.8
Religion and Theology	23.8	20.8
Education and Teacher-training	75.2	80.5
Fine and Applied Arts	56.1	56.9
Architecture and Town Planning	36.5	40.5
Law	53.6	53.5
Social Sciences and Humanities	56.8	57.3
Commerce and Business Management	51.8	60.6
Information and Documentation	58.6	20.3
Exact and Natural Sciences	62.2	65.7
Mathematics and Computer Science	54.2	69.6
Industrial Engineering	54.7	30.0
Civil Engineering	24.4	23.2
Medicine, Health and Hygiene	64.4	61.5
Nutrition	89.8	58.8
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	45.3	41.3
Other	43.2	35.5
TOTAL	52.7	54.4

In 1988/89, the percentage of women teachers at the different educational levels were as follows:

Nursery school	98.6
Primary (1)	92.2
Preparatory	68.2
Secondary	62.7
Higher	33.7

(1) 1986/87

(Sources: Employment Survey, National Institute of Statistics; Education Statistics, N.I.S.)

Innovatory measures

Signature of a Protocol between the Comissão da Condição Feminina (Women's Committee) and the Ministry of Education to achieve in practice equal opportunities for boys and girls in education. This Protocol established a comprehensive programme of measures including, in particular: the training of personnel for general educational departments coming under the Ministry of Education; initial and in-service training for teachers; awareness campaigns and training; the training of educational and careers guidance counsellors; assessment of educational material and of the development of curricula and educational and didactic material with a view to achieving awareness of equal opportunities.

A Project "Education for equality" has been launched at the Teacher-training college of

Setúbal, with the objective of training teachers for a non-sexist school.

The Women's Committee has undertaken a series of studies focusing on the stereotypes and images conveyed by the reading books used in primary education, as well as through children's literature. It also defined parameters for the identification of sexist distortions contained in educational materials and proposed alternative forms for the preparation of balanced materials.

These studies led to a series of publications which were widely circulated, particularly in the schools and the guidance and training bodies.

A research project on the "Factors determining access of women to university and in particular to the science and technical faculties in Portugal" is currently under way, coordinated by the Committee for Equality and Women's Rights and financed by UNESCO.

Attitudes of public opinion

Public opinion in Portugal does not have the same force as in the other countries of the European Communities and it is not really felt to have power and influence.

Although there is no general feeling of misogyny, there is also no positive, peaceful opinion concerning questions of equality between men and women.

The mass media, the main protagonists of public opinion, in so far as they also reflect it, have not dealt with these questions as often and in as sustained a manner as they should have done.

It is a well-known fact that advertising perpetuates stereotypes concerning the gender roles, particularly by portraying situations of family or professional life. However, in recent years, advertising aimed at young people tends to present them in a more egalitarian light.

OBSTACLES TO TRUE EQUALITY

The masculine structure of power and public life is not suited to the multi-dimensional life and activities of women. The reluctance to change certain deeply ingrained habits results from the difficulty for women to harmonize their traditional role of mother and manager of the home, with the new challenges of public life.

A fairer share of family responsibilities and a more rational organization of working hours, allowing women easier access to public life, would result in more efficient, fairer and more democratic exercising of power.

The lack of family support structures, such as day-care centres for children, occupational activities for young people, day centres for senior citizens, help for one-parent families and single mothers, are amongst the main obstacles to achieving equality between women

and men.

Although the Portuguese Constitution and the legal provisions prohibit any form of discrimination between men and women in the field of employment, there are very few means available to enforce these provisions. Therefore, women still earn less, have worse jobs, progress more slowly in their careers and are the first to lose their jobs in times of recession.

Violence against women, both at home and in society, is a serious problem and hampers the achievement of equality between women and men.

There are no specific protection schemes for women victims of domestic violence.

Sexual harassment at the work place reduces the opportunities for women to pursue their careers and/or their economic independence.

Prostitution is also a very serious problem and this, together with the negative image of women created in advertising, degrades the concept of women as dignified human beings.

Useful address:

COMISSÃO PARA A IGUALDADE E PARA OS DIREITOS DA MULHERES
Avenida da República 32-20
P-1093 Lisboa Cedex

oOo

UNITED KINGDOM: EQUALITY IN THE FACE OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

by Lesley Abdela, journalist

A record number of women were returned to the British Parliament as a result of the general election of 9 April 1992. There will in fact be 59 women sitting in the new Parliament, as opposed to 44 during the previous one, which represents an increase of over 30%.

The breakdown of those elected by party is as follows: 20 women MPs for the Conservative Party, of whom 6 are newcomers; 36 women for the Labour Party, of whom 13 newly elected; 2 members of the Liberal-Democrat Party, one of whom is new and finally one woman elected as a Scottish Nationalist, i.e. the loss of one woman for this party.

Two women have ministerial posts in the new Government formed by Mr. John Major. These are Gillian Shephard, Minister for Employment, and Virginia Bottomley, Minister for Health.

WORK

In 1991, around 43% of the 22 million workers in the United Kingdom were women. By 1995, women are expected to represent about half the British paid labour force.

Women are not spread evenly across industries.

In 1989, women formed the majority in the service industries. The number of female employees in the services sector rose by 1.5 million between June 1979 and September 1989. The largest increase occurred in business services, where women doubled their numbers to 379,000.

Nearly half of mothers who were in employment when they became pregnant now go back to work within nine months - double the figure ten years ago. (Maternity Rights Survey, Equal Opportunities Commission).

In the United Kingdom, in the sixties, the average length of time away from the workplace to bring up young children was 6 years. Under economic pressures in the eighties, and in particular house loans, the time taken to bring up young children dropped sharply to an average of 2.4 years.

The majority of women returning to work go to a new employer and often to a job at a lower status than the one they left.

Between 1983 and 1990, nearly 1.8 million new jobs were created in the United Kingdom. 1.65 million of those jobs went to women. 871,000 of them were part-time jobs. (During the same period, male full-time jobs in fact decreased by 76,000.) Many women prefer to start their own businesses: of the 1,000 enterprises set up each week in the United Kingdom, more than two-thirds are started by women.

Equal pay

Despite the fact that Great Britain has a larger proportion of women in the workforce than any European Community country other than Denmark, the earnings gap between British men and women is 10% wider than in the rest of the European Community. (Figures published on 24 September 1991 by the Equal Opportunities Commission, "Women and Men in Britain 1991".)

In 1990, women working full-time earned on average 77% of the earnings of men working full-time. The earnings gap between women and men working full time in Great Britain was £94.10.

Less than a quarter of British women are in the five highest-earning occupations. 60% of women fall into the five lowest-earning occupation categories. In 1990, women accounted for 64% of workers on low pay (defined by the Low Pay Unit as £172 per week or £4.58 per hour.)

A National Pay Equity Campaign was launched at the National Pay Equality Conference in London in September 1991.

According to a survey of British universities published on 28 August 1991, senior women professors are paid up to £2000 less than their male counterparts.

"PAY AT THE TOP OF THE UNIVERSITY LADDER",
United Gouse, 1 Pembridge Road,
London W11

NATIONAL PAY EQUITY CAMPAIGN
21 Tabard Street
London SE1 4LA

Part-time work

In Great Britain, 4 million women work part-time, this representing nearly half of all women employees (42%), compared to 8% of men.

Part-time work is still often seen as marginal and is frequently of low status and poorly paid.

Just over half of all female part-time employees work in the lowest paid non-manual and manual occupations - selling, catering, cleaning and related occupations.

In 1989, female manual workers in part-time employment earned on average 40% of the weekly earnings of their full-time colleagues.

Certain employers offer part-time workers rights to equal pay, benefits and pensions pro rata to the hours worked, but part-time workers in the United Kingdom have no statutory rights.

Trade union officials, the EOC and women's organizations are fighting to win employment rights for part-time workers.

MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

In 1991, around 20% of all management posts in the United Kingdom were occupied by women.

The number of women in managerial occupations, such as office managers, managers of hotels and clubs and in professional occupations such as the law, accountancy, advertising and marketing nearly doubled between 1979 and 1989.

In 1989, women made up 27% of employment in these fields.
(Women and Men in Britain 1991, published by the Equal Opportunities Commission)

Men with managerial positions continue to outnumber women by far in all industrial sectors, except for medical and health services. It is estimated that women hold only 4% of senior management positions and between 1 and 2% of senior executive posts.

Nevertheless, even where women do reach management level, their salaries are lower. The EOC found that 52% of male managers earned £350 a week or more, while only 16% of female managers earned that amount.

WOMEN IN THE TRADE UNIONS

Only just over a quarter (26%) of the 11 million women in employment in Great Britain are members of unions affiliated to the Trade Union Congress (TUC), compared to 47% of working men.

The TUC contains some 40 trade unions with a total of over 8 million members. Overall, in the United Kingdom, women constitute a third of total trade union membership. Nevertheless, only 4 of the 75 general secretaries are women.

One major cause of this lower participation is that women in the United Kingdom are predominantly in low-paid, low-status work, in addition to having heavy, time-consuming family responsibilities. Also women are concentrated in service jobs and small firms where unionization is low.

The trade unions believe that this low membership helps to explain historically why women in the United Kingdom receive only 2/3 of a male worker's wage for the same or equivalent work.

Particular attention on the part of the unions to problems such as pensions, maternity leave, cancer screening, child care and sexual harassment makes unions believe female membership will continue to grow in the nineties.

The TUC has just updated its "Charter for Equality for Women within Trade Unions". This sets targets and quotas for women to attain senior union positions.

In addition, a TUC "Charter for Women at Work" checklist includes negotiators' demands on social benefits pro rata to the hours worked and equal entitlements for part-time workers, 10 days of flexible (paid) paternity leave, (paid) parental leave of three months, personal leave and leave for adoption, cash subsidies for child care costs, an occupational health programme and recognition of the needs of women with disabilities.

Labour Research Department
78 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8HF

WOMEN ON THE BOARDS OF COMPANIES

There are only 4 female executive directors in the top 200 British companies and only 28 non-executive directorships are held by women (The Times Top 1000).

Cracking the old boy networks

Traditional men-only sports and social clubs are where much of the wheeling and dealing and networking for careers, politics and commerce still takes place in the United Kingdom.

The Labour Party's national executive committee has approved a consultative document suggesting a new Sexual Equality Act which will end the right of private clubs to maintain a single sex status. The law would apply equally to the "Gentlemen's Clubs" in London and the working men's institutes. Under current British law, these clubs are exempt from the UK Sex Discrimination Act of 1975.

WOMEN MEET WOMEN

British women have been setting up and using their own networks, for example, the Belgravia Breakfast Club launched in 1989, where senior women executives meet on the last Thursday of each month.

Other multi-business and multi-professional women's networks include Network, City Women's Network, Club 2000, Women in Management, UK Federation of Business and Professional Women and Forum.

A number of networks have been set up inside corporations and colleges such as Women in BP, Women in Midland Bank and the London Business School Women's Network. In addition, women have set up their own networks within their profession, such as Women in Banking or Women in Dentistry.

Women from ethnic minorities have also set up their own networks, such as the

Liverpool Black Sisters and the Camden Black Sisters Group.

The Women's National Commission, the official government advisory committee on women, publishes an annual list of women's organizations in the UK.

WNC
Cabinet Office
Horse Guards Road
London SW1P 3AL

The National Alliance of Women's Organizations (NAWO) was launched in 1990 by Jane Grant. NAWO acts as an umbrella information centre for over 200 women's organizations in the United Kingdom. In May 1991, NAWO produced a very useful report "The Challenge for Women".

NAWO
279 Whitechapel Road
London E1 1BY. Tel. 071 247 7052

OPPORTUNITY 2000: Opportunity 2000 is a new campaign launched on 28 October 1991. The chief executives of 60 major private sector employers, plus two government departments, have agreed to set up voluntary targets and action plans for women employees.

OPPORTUNITY 2000
Chair, Lady Howe
Campaign Director, Liz Bargh
Programme Director, Jane Kershaw
5 Cleveland Place, London SW1Y 6JJ.
Tel. 071 321 6428 Fax: 071 321 6410.

WOMEN IN THE LIBERAL PROFESSIONS

In the past twenty years, women have been entering the professions in significant numbers - particularly in the financial sector, including accountancy, insurance, building societies and the banking sector.

In 1975, 4% of banking trainees were women. In 1991, women accounted for 25% of qualified personnel in the banking industry. A quarter of newly qualified accountants in 1991 were women.

In the legal professions, almost 50% of the posts are occupied by women. However, women are still under-represented on the law profession's ruling council, with only 3 women solicitors out of 70 members on the Law Society Council.

The United Kingdom Inter-Professional Group (UKIPG) (representing 13 professional bodies) has set up a working party to monitor the issues facing women in the professions

in the nineties. In June 1990, the UKIPG published a report "Women in the Professions".

Every year, women are breaking new territory.

Higher education

In 1991, for the first time ever, more female than male students entered higher education.

Medical professions

In 1989, half of all medical school graduates were women, compared to one in four twenty years ago.

The number of women doctors (general practitioners) has increased markedly in the past decade, 1 in 4 being women. In 1979, the ratio was 1 in 7.

81% of employees in the medical and health sectors are female. In June 1991, Virginia Bottomley, MP, Minister for Health, launched an initiative "Opening Minds, Opening Doors" to improve National Health Service employment practices for women.

More than half the managers in the NHS are women - 14,380 out of 26,590. 30% of hospital and community health service doctors are female.

But there are still very few women in the top echelons of the medical profession. Only 15% of consultants are women. Over all surgical specialities, 14% are women and at consultant level just over 3% are female. In general surgery, fewer than 1% are women.

The law

In October 1989, there were 5,226 male barristers (lawyers who act as advocates in the court-room) and 1,040 female.

Women represent 20% of solicitors (lawyers who do not generally appear in court).

In 1990, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay, appointed just over 50% of women magistrates - magistrates in the United Kingdom are unpaid.

But there is much complaint about the paltry number of women in the main judiciary. Of the 426 circuit judges, only 19 are women. There are no women among the 10 Law Lords. There is only one woman out of 27 Lord Justices. There are two women among the 83 High Court Judges.

The media

Women account for 35% of the workforce in the media industry, but very few in influential positions.

There is much concern about their long and inflexible working hours.

In 1990, new contracts were forced on independent television staff requiring them to be

"on tap" at all hours. This is unfair to men but particularly inconvenient (and costly) to women with children.

The BBC has set itself a target of trebling the number of women in senior management to 30% by the year 2000.

In April 1991, the Labour Party was the first political party to launch a special policy for women in the arts and media "The Missing Culture".

In spring 1991, BBC TV Education produced a series on women at work, in the arts, in politics, in health, the law and child care entitled "Great Expectations".

A free booklet based on the series is available from BBC TV Education, London W12.

MATERNITY RIGHTS

Two-thirds of British mothers are in paid employment.

Much of the maternity leave in the United Kingdom is unpaid and half of mothers do not qualify for any maternity leave at all.

At present in the United Kingdom, women are only entitled to paid maternity leave if they have worked continuously full-time (more than 16 hours per week) with the same employer for at least two years, or part-time (at least 8 hours per week) for five years.

The United Kingdom is one of the countries of the European Community where there is no provision for parental leave.

MATERNITY ALLIANCE

15 Britannia Street
London WC1P 2TY

Child care

Women without children earn 30% more over their life-time than women with children. By contrast, there is not much difference in pay between fathers and men without children. (Source: EOC "Women and Men in Britain 1991")

An estimated 80% of mothers in the United Kingdom who want to return to work are prevented from doing so because there is no-one to look after their children at an affordable price.

Public nursery places have dropped by more than half since 1945 and so far only 200 companies - 3% of the national total - offer their employees any kind of child care facilities. This has benefited the parents of some 3000 children.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES

According to Alan Roussell, President of the British Computer Society, only 11% of entrants to computer science degree courses are girls, compared to 45% in the USA and 56% in Singapore.

Steps are being taken to improve this situation. Since 1989, Glasgow University has set up 3000 IT workshop places for schoolgirls and their teachers, with the aid of employers like the Bank of Scotland, BP Exploration, FI Group and others.

By 1989, 90 girls represented nearly 30% of its overall computer science intake and nearly 40% of those on the new business information technology stream.

WOMEN IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

250 Farnborough Road
Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7LU
Tel: 0252 528 329 Fax: 0252 528 030

WISE: Since the Women Into Science and Engineering (WISE) campaign launched in 1984, the percentage of girls choosing to study engineering has doubled to 14%.

Since its launch in October 1991, 100,000 students have attended a WISE course. There are now 6 red double-decker WISE buses touring schools to distribute information on new technologies.

WISE is run jointly by the EOC and the Engineering Council.

PUBLIC LIFE

In the United Kingdom, over 46,000 positions on public committees are appointed by Ministers and civil servants.

Public appointments cover a wide range of organizations ranging from Training and Education Councils, the executive bodies of museums and art galleries, through to Health and Safety Advisory Committees, Boards of Further Education Colleges, etc.

Around 23% of these positions are held by women.

The voluntary group Women Into Public Life Campaign has had a very positive effect on the percentage of women's names on the PAU (civil service union) list of some 5,800 people. In one year, the number of women on the list rose from 10% to 30%. The increase is particularly marked for women in the 20-45 year bracket.

WOMEN INTO PUBLIC LIFE CAMPAIGN

Dr. Lily Segerman-Peck
110 Riverview Gardens
London SW13 9RA Tel: 081 748 1427

THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION

Many of the United Kingdom's greatest recent legal advances in equal opportunities have come from European law. The Equal Opportunities Commission has helped British women bring and win more cases against their government in the European Court of Justice than any other member country.

During 1990, the Equal Opportunities Commission took action in response to 2,500 complaints about discrimination in recruitment to jobs.

POLITICAL LIFE

Up to now, by-elections caused by the death or retirement of Members of Parliament have been central to the advance of women in politics.

Nearly a third of the 44 female Members of Parliament before the last elections won their seats in by-elections.

In 1991, there were more women Members of Parliament than ever before in Britain's history - 44 out of 650 Members, but that is still only 6.8% of the House of Commons. This number was increased at the last elections.

The House of Commons emerging from the elections of April 1992 elected Mrs. Betty Boothroyd, a Labour Member of Parliament, to the post of speaker. Mrs. Boothroyd defeated Mr. Peter Brooke, the former Minister for Northern Ireland and the official Conservative candidate, by 134 votes (372 to 238).

Since its creation in 1258, the post of "speaker" of the House of Commons - the holder of which presides over the debates - has always been occupied by men. Breaking in this way with over seven centuries of tradition, the Members of Parliament symbolically corrected the imbalance of the sexes in the Commons, where women only represent 9% of the elected.

A Member of Parliament since 1973, Mrs. Boothroyd has become the 155th speaker of the Commons and the first, since the Second World War, to have come from the ranks of the opposition.

Over 91% of the seats in the House of Commons are held by men. The lack of women on the Parliamentary benches and the boards and commissions has serious consequences for the 30 million British women.

A report issued in October 1991 by BBC Radio 4, Woman's Hour programme, showed that on several key issues, the views and attitudes of Members of Parliament "do not coincide with those of voters".

Because of Britain's first-past-the-post voting system, the greatest hurdle for women is to be selected by their party for a winnable seat.

Once chosen, the evidence shows that women do as well or better than male candidates.

All the major political parties have taken action to increase the number of women candidates. At the latest general elections (April 1992), there were 528 women candidates.

In the House of Lords, there are 81 women, compared to over 1100 men. Some 770 places are reserved for men by birth.

The proportion of women to be honoured with the title of "life peer" (which entitles them to sit in the Upper Chamber for their life-time but not to pass the title to their children) is 1 to 7 men.

WOMEN IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

Women make up 49% of the civil servants in the United Kingdom.

The proportion of women in the senior levels of the civil service is higher than in the private sector, but still modest.

In 1984, the civil service launched a Programme of Action to improve equal opportunities.

Part-time working, job-sharing and flexible hours are now available in all the Ministries and the main departments of the civil service right up to the senior grades.

The civil service has also been experimenting with permanent "part-year" appointments. There has also been a significant increase in child care facilities for children of employees.

The 1991 report on "Equal Opportunities for Women in the Civil Service", states that "Departments have found that having a nursery has resulted in an increase in the number of women returning to work following maternity leave and the average length of maternity leave has decreased".

The 1991 report showed that since their 1984 Programme of Action for Women, the number of women in the main grade from which civil servants are likely to rise into senior management has doubled from 7% (920 women) to 13% (2,051).

In the past 8 years, the number of women in the top three grades has risen by only 2%. Women made up just 43 of the 688 Permanent, Deputy and Under-Secretaries, a figure hardly changed since the middle of the last decade. No woman has ever held a post of Permanent Secretary running Departments.

Useful addresses:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION
Overseas House, Quay Street
Manchester M3 3HN

EYECATCHER RESEARCH
The Lodge, Conock Manor,
Wiltshire SN10 3QQ
United Kingdom Tel. 0380 840594

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