

## EQUALITY CALENDAR

25-26 February

General Assembly of the European Women's Lobby, Lisbon

4-7 March

Conference "Parité et Audimat", in the context of the NIKI Prize, Lisbon

7 March

Award of the NIKI Prize, Lisbon

8 March

International Day for Women

21-22 March

Committee on Women's Rights, Brussels

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

### COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The Committee on Women's Rights met in Brussels on 25-26 January 1994 with Christine Crawley (United Kingdom) in the chair. Pádraig Flynn, Member of the European Commission responsible for social affairs, addressed the meeting. He presented the European Commission Green Paper on social policy (of which one tenth of the contributions were produced by women), and commented on the chapter on equal opportunities. A wide variety of proposals were put forward in the Green Paper to overcome the barriers which prevent women from attaining their goals. The Green Paper puts forward specific proposals aimed at reconciling family and working life, diversifying training for women, promoting women's participation in decision-making, ensuring adoption of the memorandum on equal pay for equal work etc. While Members of Parliament expressed their support for the Green Paper, they none the less stressed the importance of putting the proposals in the document into practice. Mr Flynn reassured Members, saying that he would urge the Greek Presidency to see that the directives on parental leave and the reversal of the burden of proof were adopted.

Pádraig Flynn requested the Members of Parliament on the Committee on Women's Rights to do all in their power to see that women's interests were correctly represented in the debate on-going



# WOMEN OF EUROPE NEWSLETTER

Dear Reader,

*The 8th of March is the 84th International Day for Women. It will be an opportunity to remind the world that respect for human rights implies true equality between men and women.*

*The 8th of March will also be an opportunity to remind our so-called advanced societies of the various barriers to full integration and participation of women that still exist in economic, social and political life. It will serve as a reminder that our societies continue to perpetuate stereotypes which no longer reflect the reality of most women's daily lives. Combating fixed ideas and outmoded female stereotypes, and promoting a positive image of women on television are the primary aims of the NIKI prize which will be awarded on the eve of the International Day for Women. It was created in 1988 by DG X of the European Commission following a proposal by the European Parliament and is awarded to television programmes which highlight the progress made and women's role in society, which is equal to that of men.*

*It will also be an opportunity to remind women of their own responsibilities: they must make an effort if they want to participate fully in the life of society. The true aim of equality will not have been attained until men and women are equally represented in decision-making and at all levels of society and politics. It is also an opportunity to remind men and women of the European Union that the European Parliament elections will soon be held, and that a "vote for women" will help to redress the "democratic deficit" by increasing the number of women in European decision-making bodies.*

*The International Day for Women will also provide a special opportunity to point out that right on our doorstep, in the heart of Europe, human rights are being systematically mocked, that everyday women and children are the innocent victims of bloody conflicts. These barbaric attacks taking place inside Europe should be denounced on the 8th of March.*



Colette Flesch  
General Director of DG X

debate on the future of social policy in the European Union with its focus on employment. For Mr Flynn, employment was the issue which brought economic and social questions together. He also called attention to the forthcoming European Parliament elections and stressed that nearly one fifth of the Members of Parliament were women. Although this proportion was comparable to the situation in most Member States, it was far from being representative of the population of Europe. He repeated his wish to see a European Parliament in which power was more equally divided. The 1994 work programme for the Commission's Equal Opportunities Unit was presented at the meeting of the Committee on Women's Rights. One of the Unit's priorities would be to keep the Member States' citizens better informed regarding its equal opportunities policy. Agnès Hubert, Head of Unit, announced that three important conferences would take place during the year: one in Toledo on 14-15 April to prepare for the Beijing Conference (see article on this below), one on 16-17 May on women in the decision-making process, and one on equal opportunities to be held in Brussels at the end of May.

### PROGRESS REPORTS

Marijke Van Hemeldonck (ESP, Belgium) who drafted the opinion on the report on employment in Europe for the Committee on Social Affairs, Employment and the Working Environment gave her conclusions regarding the report. She emphasized the problems of women's unemployment and referred to the numerous atypical forms of work in which women are engaged. She advocated a range of measures in several areas (training, job creation, specific programmes, fiscal policy, social protection, etc.) to promote women's employment in the European Union. She welcomed the Commission's new approach in the White Paper to combating unemployment, but regretted the vacuum in Community law concerning atypical forms of work, parental leave, and the lack of recognition of equivalence of qualifications and diplomas, which in many cases impeded flexibility and worker mobility. The conclusions contained in this opinion were adopted unanimously.

The draft report on the appointment of a counsellor in firms to deal with cases of

...



•••

sexual harassment prepared by Teresa Domingo Segarra (NI, Spain) was unanimously adopted and would be examined by the House. It clearly demonstrates the link between the appointment of a counsellor in firms and the prevention of sexual harassment at work. The report requests that Member States adopt legislation on the issue in order to prevent harassment.

Also on the agenda was the draft opinion on the European Commission White Paper, Growth, Competitiveness and Employment: The challenges and ways forward into the 21st century. The rapporteur, Teresa Domingo Segarra (NI Spain), welcomed the positive measures to integrate women into the labour market set out in the white paper and went on to underline the need to promote various measures to resolve the structural crisis in the European Union. For women, this meant continuing Community-level training programmes (such as NOW), adopting the directive on parental leave, and developing social directives establishing workers' rights in all the Member States.

Christine Crawley (ESP, United Kingdom) also expressed her views on the White Paper. Although the document was imaginative and creative in the areas it covered, she deplored the fact that women were not placed in the front ranks of the work force in the 21st century. She was critical of the White Paper's emphasis on the benefits accruing to women from job creation in the area of health care given that this was an unpopular, low-paid sector with insecure working conditions. The conclusions and amendments to the report were adopted unanimously. An in-depth debate of the subject will be held at the next meeting of the Commission on Women's Rights in March before the report goes to the House.

Also at that meeting the opinion drafted in the form of a letter concerning the harmonization of policy on family reunification addressed to the Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs Committee was adopted. The Committee insisted that no immigration policy could be implemented unless it respected the fundamental right of family reunification.

The draft report on improving the status of health-care workers presented by Anna Hermans (EPP, Belgium) and Marlene Lenz (EPP Germany) listed the various problems facing health workers: low pay, inappropriate training, overwork due to demographic trends (growing numbers of elderly persons in the

European Union) and few openings to associated occupations. María José Cueto, Equal Opportunities Unit, DG V, observed that the Commission might consider networks, recommendations and action programmes in this area. A discussion would be held with nursing staff experts at the next meeting of the Committee on Women's Rights.

The draft opinion concerning the Green Paper on European social policy drawn up by Anna Hermans (EPP Belgium) was discussed and will be adopted at the next meeting. The report by Mrs Larive (LDR Netherlands) on women in the decision-making process was to be presented at Parliament's plenary session in February. We will come back to this at a later date.

Lastly, Christine Crawley informed the Committee that there would be a public hearing on women and the process of accession to the European Union in April.

*Information: European Parliament, 97-113 rue Belliard, B-1049 Brussels, or the Plateau de Kirchberg, L-1919 Luxembourg.*

### **Half the Members of the Commission should be women, claim the socialists**

Since Vasso Papandreu (Greece) left the Commission in 1993 only one member of the European Commission has been a woman – Christiane Scrivener (France). The socialist group observes that parity is far from being achieved, and in its political programme for women it urges that half the Members of the Commission should be women.

The programme drafted by various members of Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights – including Christine Crawley, Karim Junker, Raymonde Dury and Marijke van Hemeldonck states that democratic power should be shared equally with women, and that the European Union should establish a Council of Ministers for Equality and that governments should appoint equality ministers in all Member States. It further requests the Commission to prepare a report on the situation of women in the European Union to be examined at the intergovernmental conference on the revision of the Maastricht Treaty in 1996. The Treaty should be amended to

include clear definition of the concept of equal opportunities for men and women.

---

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

---

### TARGET BEIJING 1995

The main event for women in 1995 will undoubtedly be the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women to take place in Beijing from 4 to 5 September. The conference theme will be "Action for Equality, Development and Peace". It is the fourth of its kind and will take place 10 years after the Nairobi conference, and will evaluate the outcome of the strategies for women adopted in 1985.

Many NGOs, governments, UN bodies and the European Commission are currently engaged in preparations for the conference. Various regional conferences (including the European regional conference to take place in Vienna in October 1994) are planned before the final event in September 1995.

The first important date for the Twelve will be the conference on 14-16 April in Toledo. It will be organized by the European Commission and the Spanish women's institute and will be a consultative meeting in preparation for the European regional conference. Participation in the conference will be by invitation. An initial meeting was held in Brussels at the end of December with the representatives of the national coordinators of the Member States and the accession candidates, the Directorates-General concerned (DG I, V, VIII and X) and the European Women's Lobby. The Toledo conference will have three main objectives:

- to lay the foundations for a common position of the Member States of the European Union prior to the European conference in Vienna in October 1994;
- to analyse the progress of preparations for the Beijing conference in the various Member States and the applicant countries;
- to study the main subjects and proposals to be broached at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The topics to be discussed in Toledo will be adopted before the end of February



after consultation with the Member States' and applicant countries' representatives. So far three main topics have been pinpointed at the preparatory meetings: women and the economy, women in public life and women and solidarity.

Many preparatory events at European and international level for the Fourth World Conference on Women will take place in 1994 and 1995. In the interests of clarity, the timetable of major events leading up to Beijing are given below.

- March 1994, New York, Committee on the planning of NGO consultations
- March 1994, New York, 38th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
- 14-17 April 1994, Toledo, NGO Forum, organized by the European Commission, the Spanish Women's Institute and the European Women's Lobby
- 17-21 October 1994, Vienna, preparatory European regional conference
- March 1995, Copenhagen, United Nations' Social Summit
- 20-31 March 1995, New York, Committee on the planning of NGO consultations
- 13-24 March 1995, New York, 39th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
- 4-15 September, Beijing, Fourth World Conference on Women.

*Information: Irene Kingston, Equal Opportunities Unit, DG V, European Commission, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.*

## INFORMATION/ COMMUNICATION

### European Network of Women Journalists

The women journalists in the various media, meeting in Bonn last December, asked that Europe be made more comprehensible and more alive for women. The working party of German women journalists on European affairs which was set up is known as "Dialog Europa." It will meet two or three times a year to exchange points of view on information for women with colleagues from the other Member States of the European Union. The working party will circulate basic information which is of interest to women at European level.

This initiative to set up a "European Network of Women Journalists" was launched by the Information for Women Unit of the European Commission in spring 1993. Its main aim is to alert women to what is at stake in the European elections. The Italian and Spanish networks have already been set up, the French and Belgian ones will follow. This European network is supported by the European Women's Lobby and the European network for "Women in decision-making."

*The working party is open to other journalists who are interested. They can contact Beate Gminder, Office of the European Commission. Tel: (0228) 53009-20 or Kerstin Hoth, Europublic, 21 Riesstrasse D-53113 Bonn. Tel: (0228) 914230. Fax: (0228) 914233.*

### International file on women's associations

Under the direction of Patricia Niedzwiecki, the Research Institute for the Development of the European Cultural Area has prepared an international address file of women's associations. The first part of the electronic file "Women of Europe", which contains details of all European women's associations, is available for hiring since 1 January 1994.

The second part, "International Women", which contains details of all the associations worldwide, will be available on 1 March 1994. The file is arranged in lists classified by headings with the name and address of the association sought in the form of lists of addresses or self-adhesive labels.

*New associations wishing to make themselves known or wanting information on the files can contact the Research Institute for the Development of the European Cultural Area, International Women's Associations Adresses, 50 rue de Roumanie, B-1060, Brussels. Tel: (32 2) 537 97 60.*

### Women's participation in education

Eurostat (Statistical Office of the European Communities) recently published the results of its survey on women's participation in education during 1991 and

1992. The result was reassuring. It appears that there is parity between men and women in the Twelve. There are almost as many women as men in the various levels of education, even if there are slightly fewer women in higher education. However this parity is not really found when the situation concerning women's participation in education is examined by Member State. Portugal leads with 56% women in the entire student body (higher education), but women account for only 43% of the total in German higher education.

### Guide to your rights in Europe

On 1 January 1993, expiry date for the abolition of checks on the internal borders of the European Union, the ECAS association (Euro-Citizen-Action-Service) launched its first hotline in order to test border checks. In response to numerous questions from correspondents concerning their rights, ECAS published a practical guide entitled "Your rights in Europe: fifty questions and fifty answers." This guide contains the questions most frequently put on the hotline. It answers them simply and objectively and thus follows a typical European citizen on a journey through the Community. Questions on equal treatment for men and women, the family and children's education are also included in the guide. *Information: Tony Venables or Hannah Jones, ECAS, 1 rue Defacqz, B-1050 Brussels. Tel: (32 2) 534 51 66. Fax: (32 2) 534 52 75.*

## CONFERENCES

**Women's history and knowledge of the institutions**, a series of lectures organized by the European Political Institute for Training Women under the direction of Yvette Roudy. Beginning in February 1994, the European Political Institute for Training Women is planning 12 lectures on two central themes: women's history (Feminist movements, Right to vote and to stand for election, Women's work, Control of the body, Girls' education, What is the situation with regard to the difference between the sexes?), Knowledge of the institutions (The institutions in France, European Institutions, The political forces:

...



...

Parties and Trade Unions, Public opinion, The political decision, Integration and immigration models).

*Information: CNIFF, 7 rue du Jura, F-75013 Paris.*

**Europe 2000 Conference: opportunities and prospects for women**, Bonn, 25 and 26 April 1994. This conference which is organized by the European Parliament, the Bundestag, the German Government and the EC Office in Bonn is aimed at information relays. Four central themes will be discussed: the European Parliament, women as voters, women and Community law and experiences of the internal market, positive action and programmes for women.

*Information: Kerstin Hoth, Europublic GbR, Agentur für Europäische Kommunikation, 21 Riesstrasse, D-53113 Bonn. Fax: (49) 0228/914233*

**16th Women's International Film Festival**, Créteil (France), 18 to 27 March 1994. 60 previously unreleased international films produced by women are competing in this festival. They will include documentaries, such as a self-portrait by Catherine Deneuve, a section for young people and a survey of the films distributed in 1993. There will also be special events such as a section on women pioneers of silent films both past (1900-1925) and present, a meeting to take stock of the situation in Europe and to see how the solidarity networks react to GATT, or even a tribute to the producer, Mireille Dumas.

*Information: Women's International Film Festival, Maison des Arts, place Salvador Allende, F-94029 Créteil Cedex. Tel: (33 16) 1 43 49 80 98. Fax: (33 16) 1 43 99 04 10.*

## PUBLICATIONS

**Women and language**, part of the series "Women of Europe Supplements" has been published by the Information for Women Unit in DG X. This supplement, written by Patricia Niedzwiecki, gives a general picture of the subject called "women's language," "feminisation of the language." The author traces the origins of differences in language between women and men and their development over time, analyses the real or imaginary obstacles in the matter of the feminisation of the language and studies the measures taken by the Member States in this field. As stated by the aut-

hor, this supplement is intended not only for "students, specialists and research workers, but also and especially for people who are sometimes puzzled by the extreme complexity of a topic which provokes emotional rather than rational reactions."

*This "Women of Europe Supplement" can be obtained from the Information for Women Unit, DG X, European Commission, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels. Tel: (32 2) 299 94 16.*

**The organizations responsible for promoting equal opportunities for men and women in the Member States and European Community institutions:** this document is part of the series "Women's Rights" produced by the European Parliament. It reviews the organizations responsible for promoting equal opportunities in the European Union. This document also deals with equal opportunities' mechanisms in the European institutions, the Council of Europe, the UN and in some applicant countries.

*Obtainable from: Andrée Subhan, European Parliament, Directorate-General for Studies, Office 6/43, Schuman, L-2929 Luxembourg. Tel: (352) 4300-2969. Fax (352) 43 40 71.*

**The Hill/Thomas case and French national identity**, published by the Revue Internationale française, New feminist issues. This publication analyses the Anita Hill case, one of the leading cases of the decade in the USA. In a certain way it brought Bill Clinton to power. This case met with great success in the media in France where Anita Hill was portrayed as a liar and a vamp. The French press took the opportunity to deny that sexual harassment existed. The publication proposes to study these hypotheses.

*Obtainable from: N.Q.F, c/o C.Delphy, 59-61 rue Pouchet, F-75849 Paris Cedex 17.*

**EU Social Fund, Evaluation of Women's Involvement:** this publication by Social Europe evaluates women's involvement in measures co-financed by the European Social Fund. Its aim is to measure the potential impact of ESF measures on the situation of women in relation to the employment market in order to serve as a guide for the choice of future ESF measures mainly under the NOW programme. The analysis contains quantitative and qualitative descriptions of women's involvement

in measures co-financed by the ESF, it gives an opinion on the results of the measures taken and recommendations for the application of policies to promote the vocational training of women.

*Obtainable from the Equal Opportunities Unit, DG V, European Commission, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels or the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, L-2985 Luxembourg.*

**Female population by citizenship:** this Eurostat (Statistical Office of the European Communities) report gives detailed information on women's lifestyles in the Member States and on the immigrant female population. It supplies numerous data on age structure, fertility and the status of women on the employment market.

*Obtainable from Eurostat, L-2920. Tel: (352) 43 01 34 567.*

**Abortion in Europe:** this document presents the various political, social and technological aspects of abortion in Europe. It reviews the situation with regard to abortion and contraception in Europe and the former Soviet Union. Various themes such as the role of the law, contraception and psychological effects are dealt with.

*Obtainable from Europe Region, IPPF, Regents College, Inner Circle, Regents Park, London NW1 4NS.*

**Guide for women:** this document is a reference guide to the status of women in Europe. It gives a general account of the rights and obligations of women at work and of matters concerning the family, politics, the law, immigration, education and health.

*It is published by Scarlet Press, London. Ref: ISBN 1 85727 0053, 1993.*

Editor in Chief and coordination:  
Anne Blanche HARITOS  
WOMEN'S INFORMATION UNIT  
European Commission  
Directorate-General for Information,  
Communication, Culture, Audiovisual.  
Rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels  
Tel. (32 2) 299 94 11