

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights met in Brussels on 24-25 February with Christine Crawley (ESP, United Kingdom). The meeting provided the opportunity to meet Ms Arseni, Delegate Minister of Greece responsible for equality between women and men, who presented the programme of the Greek Presidency in the field of equal treatment of men and women.

Programme of the Greek Presidency

Ms Arseni underlined the importance of dealing with social and economic affairs together. The top priorities in the field of equal opportunities for women and men are therefore: employment, initial and on-going vocational training and equal opportunities for men and women. More precisely, during its term of office, Greece will place the emphasis on long-term unemployed women, lone-parent families and vocational training for women who enter the labour market. An international conference on this final point will be organized in May. She also stressed the need to continue the examination of the three proposals for Directives before the Council of Ministers: reversal of the burden of proof, parental leave and the principle of equal treatment of men and women under the laws and regulations governing professional activities in the field of social security. Ms Arseni reaffirmed that the legal loophole in these fields constitutes a handicap to women on the labour market and jeopardizes the social rights of women in the future. Christine Crawley stressed the need for Ms Arseni to be present at the Social Affairs Council in order to persuade the Council to adopt the Directives held in abeyance.

Greece also supports the conclusions of the reports by Marijke Van Hemeldonck (ESP, Belgium) on employment in Europe, Teresa Domingo Segarra (NI, Spain) on growth, competitiveness and employment and Anna Hermans (EPP, Belgium) on the European social policy. The Greek Presidency plans to take action in the relevant fields based on the contents of these reports.

Another focus of interest is women in the decision-making process. Ms Arseni congratulated the European Commission on the implementation of the third action programme and Jessica Larive (LDR, Netherlands) for the excellent report on this sub-



WOMEN OF EUROPE NEWSLETTER

Dear Reader,

The 1994 Niki Prize ceremony was organized with enjoyment and conviction by RTP (Portuguese television and radio), with the assistance of the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), in Lisbon, on 7 March 1994, the eve of the International Day for Women.

This prize arises from a 1988 European Commission initiative and is awarded every two years to programme directors who contribute to changing the image of women on television. This year the BBC (United Kingdom) received the prize for the best documentary, whilst ZDF (Germany) and NRK (Denmark) were the winners in the film and children's programme categories respectively.

The large number of entries – 82 films were presented from not only European Union Member States, but also Central European and EEA countries – demonstrates the real success of the Niki Prize. Indeed, it proves that the media are becoming increasingly aware that the situation of women merits special attention.

An absolute priority for the end of this century is the gradual disappearance of the stereotype images of women still shown by some media, making way for a fair and positive image of women, with the emphasis on equality between the sexes.

It is at this level that the Niki Prize, through the quality of its programmes and the professionalism of the directors, is a European event of major importance. The prizewinners set an example to all the media, to prove to them that their role in the abolition of sexist clichés is fundamental to the advent of totally equal opportunities.

Manuela Furtado

Manuela Furtado
1994 Niki Prize Organizer (RTP)

ject (see Newsletter article). In order to make public opinion, and particularly women, aware of the importance of the participation of women in decision-making bodies, especially with a view to the European elections, the Greek Presidency is planning to organize a conference in Salónica on 16-18 May 1994 on women in the decision-making process.

LEONARDO programme

Mr Massangioli, of the Human Resources Task Force of the European Commission, informed Members of Parliament about the principles of the Community's LEONARDO programme, deriving from the Treaty on European Union, which establishes the general objective of contributing to developing the quality of education and training. He described the experience obtained from Community training and education programmes, such as PETRA and COMETT, at the same time specifying that LEONARDO will be based on the successes of these initiatives. This new instrument covers initial and on-going vocational training. The European Commission will provide additional assistance to Member States in order to improve their training structures to adapt them to technological change and trends in the labour market. LEONARDO will thus follow developments in changes in job content and qualifications required. Mr Massangioli stressed the need for more research, resources and cooperation between the European Commission and Member States. Christine Crawley and a good number of Members of Parliament stressed the importance of taking account of the specific needs of women in this programme. Mr Massangioli stated that more studies and research will be undertaken to provide the best response to educational requirements and that care will be taken that the committees and project selection respect the criterion of equal treatment for men and women.

Progress reports

A large number of reports were debated during the same session. Firstly that by Margaret Daly (EPP, United Kingdom) on the position of women in small businesses. The report underlines the many obstacles encountered by women who set up their own businesses, such as pension rights, financial taxes, bank interest, discrimination against women – essentially coming from banking institutions. She also stressed the European Commission's lack of information concerning the initiatives for women in this field and the possibility of receiving subsidies from this institution. Marijke Van Hemeldonck (ESP, Belgium) again presented her report on research and development scientists. She called on the European Commission to introduce positive measures for women in the field of

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scientific research and to provide a breakdown of grant recipients by sex.

Maria Belo (ESP, Portugal) presented her report on violations of human rights regarding women. The main subjects covered by this report will include pornography, discrimination against women in cases of adultery, prostitution, trafficking in women, sexual mutilations in the Third World. The report is to place the emphasis on the instruments available to combat all forms of violations against human beings. The rapporteur appealed for contributions from Members of Parliament in drawing up this report.

The following reports were unanimously adopted by the Committee on Women's Rights: that of Anna Hermans (EPP, Belgium) and Marlène Lenz (EPP, Germany) on improving the status of health-care workers, that of Anna Hermans on European social policy (Green Paper) and that of Marie-Claude Vayssade (ESP, France) on the 1992 discharge – General Budget.

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

Plenary session

Two reports by the Committee on Women's Rights were adopted in February during the plenary session of the European Parliament.

Action plan to promote women in decision-making bodies

"Women at the European Parliament are fed up that women, having made up the leeway in terms of education and having increasing opportunities for access to the labour market, have still not achieved parity in decision-making posts", Jessica Larive (LDR, Netherlands) stated at the plenary session of the European Parliament in February.

The report by Jessica Larive concerning women in decision-making bodies was adopted at the plenary session. This report stresses that a European policy should be defined to complement national policies. In view of the low level of representation of women in decision-making bodies (the report recalls that the participation of women in public decision-making amounts to only 11% in the national Parliaments of all the States and just over 10% in top civil service posts), the report stresses the need to take measures to change the situation in the next five years.

The rapporteur calls on the European institutions, as employers, to set target figures for the recruitment of women and for the representation of women in senior posts. If these targets are not met by the year 2000, quotas will have to be applied, the Member of Parliament stressed. The European Commission is called upon to take the lead in this respect and to devote additional resour-

ces to defining the concept in Member States and political parties and to take action and measures designed to increase the number of women elected to the European Parliament.

Women and Poverty

Women represent the majority of the 50 million poor living in the countries of the European Union. This is the fact underlined in Lissy Gröner's report on poverty among women in Europe, adopted by Parliament on 24 February 1994.

To combat this poverty, the European Parliament is demanding general decisions on the subject, such as, for example, the extension of the competence of the European Community to health and housing or the adoption of a minimum guaranteed wage in all Member States. As far as the specific case of poverty among women is concerned, the European Parliament takes its opinion from Lissy Gröner's report.

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

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MEN

The 32nd meeting of the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men was held in Brussels on 22-23 February 1994, with Anne Grete Holmsgard (Denmark) as new chairman.

During the meeting, Hywel C. Jones, Director-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs of the European Commission, presented the work programme of his Directorate-General. This will place the emphasis on questions of employment, which will be dealt with taking account of the White Paper. The Green Paper, the implementation of the social charter, public health (present in the Maastricht Treaty), health and safety at work, social exclusion, the reform of the European Social Fund (study of the application of the new Regulation by Member States) will form the key points of the work programme of the Directorate-General in question.

Mr Jones also stressed a number of important points concerning equal opportunities in the Commission's social policy and specified that it was necessary to practise

mainstreaming in the field of equality. He invited Committee members to look to the equality dimension present in the White Paper, to make a clear contribution to the Green Paper, to exert pressure for the adoption of the Directive on part-time work – since flexibility of the labour market will tend to increase in coming years – to be in contact with the members of the Social Dialogue Committee – in view of the enhanced role to be given to the two sides of industry – and finally to ensure that every opportunity is taken to have the equality dimension incorporated in all areas of work and to centre the Committee's work programme on the priorities of the European Union.

The Committee also heard Mr Zorbas, who spoke on the implementation of the social protocol of the Treaty on European Union. He indicated that the most fundamental implications of the Maastricht Treaty for the social dialogue are the expansion and clarification of Community competence and the recognition of the role of the two sides of industry. He pointed out that the social protocol now forms part of Community law and may be relied upon before the European Court of Justice. Alternative legal bases therefore now exist to take measures in the areas covered by social policy: the traditional bases of the Treaties of Rome and Maastricht (where decisions are taken by qualified majority for subjects concerning equality between men and women) and the social protocol (where agreements are possible between 11 Member States).

The Committee also heard a presentation of the medium-term assessment of the Third Community Action Programme. It transpires that, although the third programme was innovative and consistent at horizontal level, success seems to be less visible at the level of the transnational partners. Dina Sensi, of the University of Liège, responsible for the assessment together with Nathalie Wuiame of the CESEP (Center for European Socio-economical Policies) also stressed the need to introduce a true policy to assess the equal opportunities policy. We shall come back to this.

John Morley, Head of the Employment Task Force in DG V of the European Commission, presented the employment dimension included in the White Paper. In the context of equal opportunities and the White Paper, solidarity is a key word which must be linked to competitiveness, John Morley stated. Stressing that a great deal of work in the European Union is performed by women without due recognition, he pointed out that if the definition of work were to change, the contributions made by women would be more visible. It is therefore necessary to take into consideration the multiplier effect of women's entry into the labour market, he affirmed, adding that if all women were properly paid and more visible on the labour market, other jobs could be created (such as child-care services).

Other points were debated during this meeting: the Green Paper, equal opportunities

in the Community initiative on human resources (see article in this Newsletter), the national promotion strategies of the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities, the report of the European network for "Women in decision-making" (we shall return to this), the report of the Steering Committee for Radio and Television, the Toledo Conference (see the February Women of Europe Newsletter) and the Conference organized by the International Labour Office on "Women and Employment", which took place in Turin on 21-22 March. We shall return to this. One day was devoted to discussing the Green paper on social policy.

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

Community initiatives to promote employment and the development of human resources

On 16 February 1994, the European Commission approved its overall approach to Community initiatives for the period 1994-99. In this context, an initiative concerning employment and the development of human resources was launched. The initiative proper will comprise three parts: firstly, the existing programme NOW (New Opportunities for Women); secondly, the HORIZON programme (programme in favour of the disabled, the underprivileged and the long-term unemployed); thirdly, YOUTHSTART, which will develop activities to promote employment of the under 20s.

What is new for NOW? Its primary aim remains unchanged: to reduce women's unemployment and to improve the position of those who are already on the labour market by promoting equal opportunities in employment. NOW will support the development of innovative strategies to meet the changes in the organization of work and in job requirements. 370 MECU will be earmarked for the NOW initiative.

The NOW activities will be based on the experience it has acquired since it was set up in 1991. However, target groups will be enlarged in order to cover new categories included in the European Social Fund. For instance, categories such as unemployed women facing social exclusion, working women threatened with unemployment, women in education and the public sector in general will be able to benefit from aid given by NOW. The emphasis will also be placed on the need to change the training and employment systems in general so that they meet the needs of women on the labour market and of women who seek to have access to it.

NOW has clearly shown in its first programme that it was important to develop a strong, active partnership at local, national and translational levels so that the best practices used at these various levels can gradually be incorporated into the training and employment systems, so priority will be given to activities actively involving the two sides of industry at all levels. The new priorities for NOW also place more explicit emphasis on the importance of extending transnational partnerships, for they reinforce the development of innovative activities in favour of women. To ensure a maximum multiplier effect for the activities, special attention will be devoted to developing training for instructors, structures, methodologies and instruments of the training programmes. Extension of cooperation between public training centres, improvement of links between institutes of higher education, training centres and firms, and promotion of on-going training are also proposed among the new measures.

Information: Celia Alexopoulou, Management of the European Social Fund, Coordination Unit, European Commission, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.

INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION

1994 NIKI PRIZE

"Changing the image of women on television" has been the objective of the NIKI Prize since it started in 1988. This challenge, as emphasized by João De Deus Pinheiro, the Member of the European Commission responsible for Information, Communication, Culture and the Audiovisual Media, during the Niki Prize presentation ceremony, "has proved to be all the more topical with the advent of the Single Market". However, "although it is true that new opportunities are available to women today, it is nonetheless necessary for everyone to be aware of the difficulties they still encounter in seeking total equality, but also of the progress they have made towards this objective and the new chances offered to them", the Commissioner declared.

The winners

At the end of a three-day conference on "Parity in Primetime", the winners of the 1994 NIKI Prize were announced at the Gala ceremony organized by RTP (Portuguese Radio and Television). Prizes were awarded for three categories: documentary, film and children's programme.

- Documentary category: BBC (United Kingdom) (Director: Brenda Nixon - Producer: Bob Long) "Major, the Miners and Me", which analyses the role of miners' wives facing the crisis generated by the closure of a large number of pits in the United Kingdom.
- Film category: ZDF (Germany) (Director: Norbert Kückelman Producer: Ingeborg Janiczek) "Abgetrieben" (Aborted), which is based on a true story: the trial of Dr Theissen, who was accused of performing over a hundred allegedly criminal abortions.
- Children's programme category: NRK (Norway) (Director: Tana Haugan - Producer: Kalle Fürst) "Midt i Smoroyet" (Smack in the Bull's Eye), a variety show compèred by children - each programme focuses on a specific subject.

The panel also gave the following special mentions in each category:

- Documentary category: RAI (Italy) "La Donna che Lavora 1958-1993" (The Working Woman 1958-1993).
- Film category: RTE (Ireland) "Gold in the Streets".
DFFB-Schramm Film/ZDF/Arte co-production "Con Amore Fabia" (With Love Fabia)
Czech television "Dum smutku" (House of Anguish)
- Children's programme category: YLE (Finland) "Who is Lisa?"

The three winners of the 1994 NIKI Prize received a replica of the "Victory of Samothrace" and ECU 5 000. This European Prize is awarded every two years to directors of programmes who contribute to changing the image of women on television and in society.

"Parity in Primetime" Conference

To mark the 1994 NIKI Prize, a conference was organized on 6-7 March in Lisbon by the RTP and the BBC, with the support of the Equal Opportunities Unit of the European Commission. Whilst contributing to the promotion of the NIKI Prize, the Conference aimed to foster discussion essentially among professionals (directors and programme controllers), to analyse the representation of the sexes on the screen in the current struggle in most countries of Europe to attract viewers and to ask questions about the place in the media world today for programmes which fight the sexist clichés, at the same time improving the audience share. A brochure containing the conclusions of this conference is currently being prepared.

Information: Jane Krish, NIKI Prize Coordinator, BBC, Broadcasting House, White Ladies Road, Bristol BS8 2LR, UK, Tel (44 0) 272 733 082 or Information for Women Unit, DG X European Commission, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049-Brussels, Tel (32 2) 299 94 16.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR WOMEN

At the European Commission

As every year, a wealth of events and demonstrations were organized as part of the International Day for Women. Beyond mere commemoration, this day is the opportunity for women to express their wishes and to remember that our society still seems to be powerless to create the conditions necessary for women to participate fully in political, economic and social life. This year, the International Day for Women coincided with the tenth anniversary of the Committee on Women's Rights of the European Parliament (we shall return to this in the next issue of the Women of Europe Newsletter).

The Member of the European Commission responsible for social affairs, Pádraig Flynn, underscored the International Day for Women by a statement in which he stressed the need to create new forms of work which are more favourable to women and families. It is desirable, in the interests of all, for society to turn the abilities of women to account, the Commissioner declared. However, it is necessary to improve the variety and quality of the jobs available to women and for the working world to change its attitude to women so that this objective – contained in the White Paper on "Growth, Competitiveness and Employment" – can be achieved. The Commissioner also stressed the importance of promoting the participation of women in decision-making bodies, politics, business and the civil service.

Also dealing with the representation of women in decision-making bodies, Karel Van Miert, Member of the European Commission responsible for personnel and administration, chaired a conference on 8 March on the subject of "Women in the civil service". There are still insufficient women in positions of responsibility and in particular in management posts in the European Commission, he stated, adding that it is necessary for the Commission to continue its activities with a view to real sharing of the responsibilities between men and women. The Conference showed, through the outstanding contributions of two speakers, Carlota Bustelo, who is a member of the United Nations Committee on the abolition of discrimination against women, the European network for "Women in Decision-making" and the Spanish Economic and Social Council, and Joanna Foster, who chaired the Commission for Equal Opportunities in the United Kingdom from 1988-1993 and formerly chaired the European Commission Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, that the general situation of women in the civil service and particularly their under-representation in decision-making posts, is not specific to the Community institutions. They also brought out the fact that corrective measures have been adopted which form part of a movement affecting all the Member States.

Common declaration of principle on women in tomorrow's Europe

They were all present... women, but also – and especially women Ministers of the Council of Europe. On the initiative of Miet Smet, Belgian Minister for Labour and Employment responsible for the equal opportunities policy, the women Ministers of the States of the Council of Europe met in Brussels on 6-7 March 1994 to attend a "European Conference of Women Ministers", the objective of which was to determine priorities for the political, social, economic and cultural position of women in Europe by the year 2000. This meeting, the first of its kind, closed with the formal signature of a "Common declaration of principle" with a view to arriving at effective equality between men and women in tomorrow's Europe. This 12-point declaration refers to the most fundamental areas in which equal opportunities between men and women must be improved: the absence of women in the national Parliaments in Europe, the stereotype of women in media and advertising, the choice of studies by girls, the need for quality jobs, the two-fold constraint of family and work, the feminization of poverty, two-fold discrimination (race and sex) against immigrant women, discrimination against elderly women, health problems specific to women, physical and sexual violence to women, rape of women during armed conflicts, trafficking in women and sex tourism.

Information: Ministry of Labour, Employment and Equal Opportunities, rue Belliard 51, B-1040 Brussels, Tel (32 2) 233 50 04.

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY

The European Women's Lobby held its 5th General Meeting on 25-26 February 1994 in Lisbon.

After the annual report had been presented by Barbara Helfferich, Secretary General of the Lobby, the work programme for the year 1994 was described by Denise Fuchs. The activities of the EWL will turn around various central topics; women in decision-making (which includes the European elections and the European Constitution), social policy in Europe (which covers the 3rd and 4th Community action programmes for equal opportunities for women and men, the various Directives in this field and the Commission Green Paper on social policy) and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

In her conclusions, Ana Vale (former chairman of the Lobby) expressed her satisfaction concerning the work carried out by the Lobby and invited the delegates to work quickly on the following subjects: the Community subsidy for the Lobby, the continuation of the "Information for Women"

Unit of DG X of the European Commission as a separate unit, the financing of the NOW initiative, the Green Paper on social policy, the preparation of the Toledo Conference, the European Parliament elections. Finally, the Lobby thanked Ana Vale, as Chairman of the European Women's Lobby, as well as the vice-chairmen for their excellent work. Ann Taylor (Ireland) was elected chairman and Denise Fuchs (France) and Rena Lampsa (Greece) vice-chairmen. We wish them success in their activities.

Information: European Women's Lobby, 22 rue du Méridien, B-1030 Brussels, Tel (32 2) 217 90 20.

PUBLICATIONS

Access to equality between women and men in the European Community, proceedings of the European colloquium organized in Louvain-la-Neuve at the end of 1992. This book, written by University lecturers, legal experts and ministers, takes stock at legal level of equal opportunities within the Community Member States. Three basic subjects are analysed in this work: access to equality, sanctions and remedies and stock-taking and prospects at legal level. This book is published by the Presses Universitaires de Louvain, Michel Verwilghen, and is available in French and English.

Ideas for business, guide to the European network of local employment initiatives. This document was written by women and for women wishing to set up their own businesses, to assist them in developing a strong, innovative business concept. This guide is obtainable in English and French from Breakthrough Consultants, Caroline Turner, 12, Bd. Clovis, B-1040 Brussels, Tel: (32 2) 732 51 19.

Strategies to cope with domestic violence: practical guide, this manual takes stock of the various strategies developed in the world by the public authorities, police, social services and social workers, communities and women's groups to define the problem of violence suffered by women in the home. It is obtainable from Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, United Nations Office, Vienna International Center, PO Box 500, A-1400 Vienna.

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