



REPORT SEMINAR

"POWER AND PARTICIPATION, HOW CAN YOUNG WOMEN IN EUROPE CREATE THE MISSING LINKS?"

17 - 21 September 2004 - Brussels

Organised by the Europe Region of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, the European Youth Forum, and the European Women's Lobby

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FOREWORD

Hiltrud Breyer, Member of the European Parliament

Gender equality and activism for women's rights are a fundamental part of our democracy. The commitment to women's rights is self-evident to me in my work as a member of the European Parliament. Especially when attending public meetings, I often find that people take the EU-institutions to be very far away. But 80 per cent of the decisions taken in Brussels do concern our everyday life. This is only one reason why it is so important to be active in the socio-political arena.

For us female European citizens the EU policy on gender equality is a milestone. It has contributed a great deal to achieving equality between women and men. With their activism on different levels, women have made it possible that gender mainstreaming is included in the EU constitution as a horizontal clause. Due to massive support it was made possible that equality between women and men is part of the values and objectives of the Union. Only when women are in a good "constitution", will they be enthusiastic about Europe. Moreover, with the latest EU-directive we have made an important step in securing equal treatment in goods and services. It is, for example, no longer possible that women and men have different insurance premiums as a result of costs relating to pregnancy and motherhood.

At the same time - and this conference proved this again - there is much work to be done until we women finally gain equality. This is why it is so important to become active in the socio-political arena, be it on a local, national or international level. It especially holds true for young women. I am pleased that you are not the ones twiddling your thumbs, and I wish you all the best for your further activism.

Lissy Groener, Member of the European Parliament

All progressive women, young women but also male supporters should focus their energy and through close networking, continue on the road of equality until women and girls get half of heaven, half of the earth and half of the power.

As a Rapporteur on the "Youth in Action Programme" at the European Parliament, I support the goals of the new Programme to encourage the active citizenship of youngsters and to develop more solidarity between generations as well as understanding for different cultures and peoples.

Since the today's youth represents the future for us all, I want to contribute to the development of mutual understanding and free expression, but also to the acquisition of other languages and cultures, promoting fundamental values, tolerance, diversity and solidarity.

"Power and Participation, how can Young Women in Europe create the Missing Links?"
September 2004 - Seminar report.

An important base for this is the new European Constitution, which guaranties these values with full recognition of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

In particular we need to abolish all barriers that prevent young women from participating in European society and from achieving their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world. I'm fighting to realise these goals as the European Socialist Party Co-ordinator on the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality.

Hence, I am happy that conferences like "*Power and Participation - How can young Women create the missing Links?*" meet the needs of young women in order to build a world of equality, fairness, creation, understanding and co-operation in and between our countries.

PSE Women Parliamentarians will fully support your work. We cannot accept that today power in Europe is in hands of mainly white, middleclass, well-educated and heterosexual chauvinists.

May our work be fruitful and powerful!

Catherine Stihler Member of the European Parliament

The work of WAGGGS, the European Women`s Lobby, and the European Youth Forum is absolutely critical to empower young women.

There are still too many missing links when it comes to women breaking the glass ceiling. We need to do all we can to provide young women with the opportunities and support to be all they can be.

No challenge is too great when young women work together.

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PRESENTATION OF THE EVENT AND INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

To promote the participation of young women in decision-making and democratically elected structures, the Europe Region of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), the European Youth Forum, and the European Women's Lobby (EWL) organised a joint 4-days seminar. This event, entitled "Power and Participation, how can Young Women in Europe create the Missing Links!", took place from 17th to 21st September 2004. It brought together 35 young people from across Europe to discuss the barriers that prevent young women from participating in European society and from achieving their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world. It also focused on how to address these barriers and enable young women to become active citizens and take their place in society.

In the framework of this seminar, an information session was also organised on Young Women and the Enlargement of the EU and on European Gender Equality Policies.

The results of the seminar were presented during a special session in the European Parliament on 20th September 2004, in the presence of Members of the European Parliament, under the patronage of the members of the European Parliament Catherine Stihler, Lissy Gröner and Hitrud Breyer.

The aim of this report is to present the full outcomes of the seminar, as expressed by the participants in the different working groups on the following issues: politics - young women in public life; young women in the economic sector; and the image of young women.

Those themes were introduced by keynote speeches, that are included in the report, together with the outcomes of the debate that followed, prior to the work in groups. Some of those debates are presented in the format dialogues, thus expressing the dynamism and open discussions that took place. Those dialogues refer to the main ideas exchanged, but are not to the letter.

The last part of this report relates to the closing session that took place at the European Parliament.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank **Hitrud Breyer MEP**, **Lissy Groener MEP** and **Anna Zaborska MEP** and in particular **Catherine Stihler MEP**, for the active support of her cabinet in the organisation of the session in the Parliament.

We would also like to thank the following

Speakers:

Aysun Sayin, KA-DER - Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates; **Juliane Bir**, European Trade Union Confederation; **Maria Pereira**, Portugese Network of Young People for Equality; **Sara Lindquist**, Swedish Medacritical Network Allt är Möjligt ("Everything is Possible"); **Barbara Helfferich**, Cabinet of European Commissioner for Social Affairs; **Diane Dixon**, Chairman Europe Region WAGGGS; **Sandra Dybowski**, Committee Member, Europe Region WAGGGS; **Cécile Gréboval**, Policy Co-ordinator European Women`s Lobby, **Mary McPhail**, Secretary General European Women`s Lobby; **Renaldas Vaisbrodas**, Vice-President European Youth Forum; **Pascale Boulanger**, Bureau Member, European Youth Forum

Trainers

Teresa Fragoso, European Federation for Intercultural Learning; **Kateryna Shalayeva**; **Lara Tonna**, Maltese Girl Guide Association

Participants

Katju Aro, **Zsofia Batory**, **Claudia Berjano**, **Lovise Brade Johanson**, **Sandra Bûttner**, **Charlotte Cox**, **Ruth Diaz-Ulfano**, **Alexandra Dolezlova**, **Anja Liza Frandsen**, **Alenah González Vidal**, **Coline Granger**, **Charmaine Grech Christoffer Grønstedt**, **Helena Hurtig**, **Ksenia Jovonic**, **Renata Kalivod**, **Dörthe Köhler**, **Jemma Lee**, **Rachel Matthews-McKay**, **Karine Mkrtchyan**, **Lusine Navasardyan**, **Barbara Nowacka**, **Nüría Palua Tur**, **Laura Paoletti**, **Sarah Parkin**, **Maria Rygge**, **Marie-Aude Schwarz**, **Bettina Schwarzmayr**, **Dimitra Seropanagiotopulous**, **Ivonene Urriola Pérez**

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OPENING SPEECHES

Pascale Boulanger, European Youth Forum, Bureau member

The main goal of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) is to promote the active participation of young people in the realisation of a common Europe based on the values of human rights, democracy and mutual understanding. Promoting youth participation also helps building a Bridge between young people and Europe. Ten persons compose the Bureau of the EYF, among which there are five women and six men. Despite the considerable progress made, gender equality amongst young people remains a pressing issue, especially in some areas of Europe and young women still have fewer opportunities to participate in society

To help achieve this, gender equality policy is complementary to our overall youth policy and the YFJ recognises that young women represent a specific issue asking for specific actions. Young women are not an homogenous group, and the fact that particular groups face even greater barriers due to their personal situation, justify that actions are taken to overcome multiple discrimination against women..

To create the missing links that would help overcoming those discrimination, both **willingness** and **co-operation** are strongly needed to pass on the message to Europe policy-makers. Co-operation between NGOs, institutions and individuals can help achieving our common aims and the closing event of this seminar at the European Parliament will be an opportunity to do this.. The co-operation between the three organisations is also key to this seminar and the Youth Forum thanks its two partners for this.

Cécile Gréboval, European Women's Lobby, Policy Co-ordinator

The European Women's Lobby (EWL) first thanks the two other NGOs for the very fruitful co-operation to organise this seminar. EWL comprises 4000 member organisations, working together to realise equality between women and men in Europe and to ensure that gender equality is taken into account into all EU policies. EWL currently has 18 National Co-ordinations and we hope soon to have 25, we also have 22 European member organisations. EWL works at national and European level and also at International level with the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

"Lobbying" has sometimes a bad name in many countries, but that is what EWL does. Day to day, we try to influence people make decisions, to make sure that women's concerns remain central to EU policies and we act as a resource centre providing information about women's rights in Europe. EWL tries to build a link between civil society and the EU and the women's movement and the EU. The areas of work of EWL include notably the European gender equality legislation (directives, the European Constitution), social policies from a gender perspective but also the fight for women's human rights and against violence against women. 2005 will be the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, which is a United Nations Action Plan for women's rights, so EWL is currently very involved in this review called "Beijing+10".

In relation to young Women and gender equality, there still is a long way to go before we have equality in practice. For example women continue to do 80% of the housework, the gender pay

gap is still 84%, and violence against women is widespread: 1 women in 5 in Europe experience violence by their intimate male partner.

EWL has been working on young women for a few years already, in doing this, we have several aims, the first is to mainstream young women's needs and perspectives into our work, the second is to strengthen the participation of young women in society and within our internal decision-making structures. We hope that this conference will help us achieving these aims, as participation is crucial. Indeed, there are three main issues related to young women's participation:

- firstly they are **not always visible**;
- secondly young women are often **misrepresented**, stereotyped for example in the media;
- thirdly they are **hardly represented at all** in decision-making.

We hope we can find together those "missing links" between the energy of young women, their potential and what is happening in our European societies.

Diane Dixon, Chairperson Europe Region WAGGGS

I hope over the course of the next few days you will be challenged, you will debate, your perceptions may be changed and you will return home with fresh ideas and a determination to ensure that young women in your associations / groups do have power and participate fully. You all come from different backgrounds and are here representing an organisation whether it is the European Youth Forum, The European Women's Lobby or the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. So what is WAGGGS? Some of you will feel that as members you already know the answer to this question or do you?

As the largest organisation for girls and young women in the world, WAGGGS has 10 million members in 144 countries, with 30 more countries working towards membership. The majority of our members are girls, from the age of 5 to young women up to the age of 19 years. Additionally more than a million volunteers work with our girl Guides and Girl Scouts and leaders and trainers. In Europe, the region stretches from Ireland to the most easterly tip of Russia. We support 65 national associations, representing over 1 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts across 40 countries with more countries working towards membership

WAGGGS' mission is to enable girls and young women to develop their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world. Our vision is that we are a growing worldwide movement - the voice of girls and young women who influence issues they care about and build a better world. So what does this mean? For many people the image of Guiding is a traditional one of camping, tying knots, wearing a uniform, having fun etc. What you may not know is that WAGGGS is a progressive, non-political, voluntary youth movement based on spiritual values of duty to one's country and service to others. It gives the girl the opportunity to try out new ideas, activities in a non-formal way and through this form of non-formal education can help girls and young women develop for the future. It may spark an idea that becomes planted and leads to a future career. It helps to develop leadership skills, negotiation skills, practical skills, teamwork, project management, interaction - all skills that are used later in to negotiate the workforce and society. By being an international movement it can help to broaden horizons by providing opportunities to travel to events held by associations in all parts of the world. Through events like this, participants have the opportunity to experience a new culture, meet

new people, get a closer look at what may be going on in a community, debate topics and return home with fresh ideas and a widened horizon.

Earlier this year at the European Conference the Young Woman of the Region Award was presented to Nicola Grinstead from Girl Guiding UK. Nicola was nominated for the award for her commitment to Girl Guiding on a local, national and international level - having volunteered on projects concerning HIV/AIDS in South Africa and preventing a Brownie Unit from closing down in her local community. Reflecting on what Guiding/Girl Scouting has given her she said: Through these experiences I had the opportunity to develop many skills including project management, team working, leadership, facilitation, strategic planning and training. I have found these skills to be invaluable both in Guiding in the UK and in my job. Part of Nicola's work had been in South Africa and she presented the story of Rita, A Guide leader from Soweto who overcame her reluctance to talk about AIDS to other people and eventually became involved in a HIV project. Meeting women like Rita taught me a lot about what it means to be a GLOBAL citizen. Her determination to face challenges head on and to overcome her personal fears for the benefit of other people was inspirational and overwhelming.

The development of self-confidence and self-esteem and leadership development are areas that are entwined in the Guiding programme and through the concept of learning by doing absorbed by the person. Members work in small self-governing groups, exercising the initiative and leadership skills that prepare girls and young women to play a constructive role and for equal partnership in society. In Guiding some of our associations have mixed units and some girls only. Each is appropriate to the association and the country and provide the girl with the opportunity to develop in a supportive atmosphere. Member organisations provide a safe and supportive environment for our young members to develop and participate in activities to promote life-learning skills and dynamic projects on world issues such as HIV/AIDS and the prevention of adolescent pregnancy. Members are working in these areas by raising awareness of the issues and helping to educate others can pave the way for change in the future.

IN 2002, WAGGGS launched Our Rights. Our Responsibilities - A Call to Action, which is the current theme for the world association and one that addresses issues of world citizenship and the taking of responsibility for all aspects of life by specifically addressing

- The right to be me
- The right to be heard
- The right to be happy
- The right to work together
- The right to learn
- The right to live in peace

These themes are being developed by associations and in the regions to help their members further develop themselves through awareness, empowerment, positive attitude, cultural awareness, political awareness and learning by doing. Much of what you debate this weekend is probably linked into Our Rights, Our Responsibilities, it just will have a different name on it. I hope that you all have a very good event over this weekend. Be bold in your thinking, be creative and enjoy.

SEMINAR

Background theme: The construction of gender identities

Keynote speech: "The construction of gender identities- Issues of Gender in Schools", Maria Pereira, Portuguese Network of Young People for Equality

I would like to start by saying that it is a great pleasure and honour to be here with you to talk about power and participation and the ways in which young women in Europe can create the missing links. I would like to thank the European Women's Lobby, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and the European Youth Forum for inviting me to participate in this conference as a keynote speaker.

In this conference, we are focusing on young people, particularly young women, and discussing issues that relate to them and their lives. Therefore, it is interesting and relevant to talk and think about schools. They are a very important part of young people's lives, a major social institution and agent of socialisation, a working and learning environment, a site where multiple relational processes are constructed and sustained. In other words, a place where young people spend a considerable part of their time, where they communicate and interact with others, where they learn, play, grow up and shape their personalities.

I would like to talk to you about schools as institutions which are actively involved in the social construction of gender, of femininities and masculinities, of gendered identities. I will discuss the role of schools in these processes from two different but inter-related perspectives. First, I will present a theoretical framework, exploring the ways in which school cultures and structures influence the formation of gendered identities, the negotiation of the meanings of gender and young people's performance of femininities and masculinities. After that, I will speak from a more practical perspective, discussing how we can work with young people in schools and other educational settings to raise their awareness of issues of gender, discrimination and equal opportunities. I will describe some of the work that has been done at this level in Portugal by the NGO that I am representing here, the Portuguese Network of Young People for Equality, and I will outline the methodologies and techniques that we have used.

Issues of Gender in Schools: a Theoretical Framework

The system of symbols, meanings, descriptions and classifications referring to sexual difference that we call gender is a central feature of school cultures and structures. A school's institutional arrangements, organisational practices, management strategies, relations of power and authority, sets of rules, routines, rewards and sanctions, curricular and extra-curricular activities, and its use of space and resources are all structured around specific representations of femininity and masculinity and ideas about what it means and what it implies to be female or male. In the context of schools, certain forms of femininity and masculinity are seen as more "natural", legitimate and acceptable, whereas others are perceived as

problematic and deviant, potentially requiring punishment. This helps to shape pupils' (and also teachers' and staff's) gendered identities and influences the ways in which they react and respond to others' behaviours.

One aspect of schools that plays an important role in these processes is its hierarchical structure. Schools are not only contexts of learning, but also of paid employment and therefore they reproduce dominant workplace arrangements in terms of hierarchies in the division of labour, and patterns of horizontal and vertical occupational segregation. Schools are often characterised, in several countries, by an asymmetrical allocation of power, with more men in management and disciplinary positions. Moreover, there is usually a gendered division of subjects and areas of knowledge between male and female teachers. This means that young people are faced from a very young age with an unequal division of work and authority in the school. The effect of this is aggravated by the fact that official school discourses are constructed around values of equality, meritocracy and the rejection of practices of discrimination, which means that the often sexist character of schools' structures remains implicit and is not recognised or questioned. This makes the unequal division of labour seem "natural", a result of inevitable biological differences between the sexes in terms of their pedagogical aptitudes and roles. It is a powerful socialising mechanism that contributes to the reinforcement and legitimisation of stereotypes.

The formation of gendered identities is also structured by the academic curricula, i.e. what is taught to young people at school. Certain areas of knowledge are considered to be more "feminine" and others more "masculine", and may be offered only to pupils of a particular sex. As a result, interest and participation in certain academic subjects becomes a way of expressing and asserting femininity and masculinity. This limits (directly or indirectly) young people's choices in terms of the areas they plan to study, with boys frequently refusing or criticising subjects that they believe are too "girly" and girls not taking an interest in subjects that they feel are the domain of boys.

Another aspect of school life that is relevant to a discussion of issues of gender is the use of space. Students' mobility, access to and control over space is profoundly gendered, particularly in the playground. Specific places are (officially or unofficially) marked as boys' or girls' areas. Therefore, the occupation of space in schools must be understood as a means of marking gendered identities and as a resource used in the production and preservation of power relations.

These structural and organisational aspects of school life are extremely important but they do not provide a complete picture of the processes of social construction of gender in educational sites. It is necessary to look beyond the official structures and rules of schools and focus also on peer group cultures and the interactions between students (and also between the students and the teachers/staff), because young people are not passive recipients of socialisation but active agents in the formation of their own identities. Power and control are not instruments used only by teachers and staff: relations of power exist also among and between students. In the context of these relations, young people monitor each other's performances of femininity and masculinity. Girls and boys who do not behave according to

what is considered "natural" and desirable in terms of gender will often be excluded, labelled, laughed at, criticised or even subjected to physical violence. Frequently, accusations of homosexuality are directed at students who are viewed as not masculine or feminine enough, or too masculine or feminine. This means that the social construction of gendered identities in schools (and also in society as a whole) is a complex process that also involves (and interacts with) the production of specific sexual identities, insofar as (hetero)sexuality acts as a mechanism for regulating and policing the performance of gender within a peer group context.

This was a very brief outline of some of the multiple ways in which schools act as sites for the construction and negotiation of young people's gendered identities. Not all aspects of these processes were mentioned and many other issues could be discussed. However, what is important to keep in mind is that gender is intertwined into and constituted through the practices of schooling. We have all attended schools at some point in our lives and schools are so familiar to us that we often fail to question the gender asymmetries and inequalities on which school structures and rules are based, and to realise the role they play in the social construction of gender.

Before moving on to the next section of my presentation, where I will discuss the "practical" aspects of raising awareness of gender in schools, I would like to stress that schools do not (re)produce only discourses and ideologies of gender, but are also structured according to other axes of social differentiation, such as race, ethnicity, class, disability, etc. Consequently, when we focus on the construction of gendered identities in schools, we must also consider the ways in which they interact and intersect with other dimensions of young people's identities. Another aspect to bear in mind is that schools do not exist autonomously. This means that we must also problematise the relationships that link schools with other institutions involved in young people's lives, such as the family, the media, the State, the labour market and religion, among others.

Working in Schools to Raise Young People's Awareness of Issues of Gender

Schools are particularly adequate and relevant sites for the development and implementation of awareness-raising projects on gender aimed at young people. They are settings where you can find a considerable number of young women and men, and which have material conditions and resources which can be used in very productive and interesting ways to promote discussion and reflection about gender. The NGO to which I belong has been doing some work in this area and I would like to describe it briefly. However, before starting to do so I will tell you more about this organisation, the Portuguese Network of Young People for Equality (in Portuguese, Rede Portuguesa de Jovens para a Igualdade de Oportunidades entre Mulheres e Homens).

It was created in 2000, in the context of a project developed by the European Women's Lobby in order to mobilise young women for equality in Europe. It is a platform of youth associations, women's rights NGOs, political youth organisations, and other associations which develop activities targeted at young people and non-organised youth. Its main objectives are: to raise young people's awareness of equal opportunities between women and men; to support the integration of the particular needs and concerns of young women in the political agenda at the national, European and international level; to contribute to the inclusion of equal

opportunities between women and men in formal and non-formal education and training; to encourage youth associations to include and integrate issues of gender and equal opportunities in their work; to increase the participation of young women in decision-making. It has been involved in many national and international projects in partnership with other youth associations and it has organised training courses, youth exchanges, seminars and workshops, aimed at diverse groups of young women and men. Some of these workshops have taken place specifically in schools and other educational settings. The aim of these workshops is to create a forum for debate and discussion about issues of gender, rather than give a lecture where students sit, listen and (more or less) passively "absorb" information (or not!). Through these workshops, we encourage students to think about gender stereotypes and the multiple forms of sexual discrimination, we try to develop their creativity, argumentation and communication skills, and we foster a reflexive and critical attitude towards the processes and agents involved in the social construction, reproduction and legitimisation of stereotypes, prejudice and inequality.

In order to create such a forum and achieve these goals, we have used different types of materials as starting points of discussion, such as advertisements and other images from the media, cartoons and comics, traditional expressions and proverbs, different types of texts, excerpts of TV shows and films. The students are encouraged to look at, think about and engage with the materials critically, and to draw upon these materials and also their own experiences and ideas to discuss (among themselves and with us) issues of gender and discrimination. We act as facilitators of interaction and debate, rather than teachers. We raise questions and provide topics for discussion, rather than give rigidly structured and fact-filled presentations which provide little space and opportunity for student initiative and participation. We have gradually realised that working with young people in this way helps to overcome some of their resistances to these topics, increases their involvement in the activities and discussions, and makes them feel less distant from the issues which are discussed.

The scarcity of contexts where young people can talk about discrimination and equal opportunities between women and men makes it particularly important and urgent to create situations where these issues are addressed. Organising awareness-raising activities in schools (and other formal or non-formal educational settings) is one of the ways of doing so. It is desirable to make these activities as regular and numerous as possible, but even one-off workshops can contribute to the development of young people's critical and analytical skills in what concerns gender. Creating opportunities for young people to question and discuss the world that surrounds them (and the images, discourses and representations on which it is based) alerts them to the causes, effects and dynamics of inequality. But it does more than that: it raises their awareness of their rights (and duties) as citizens and is therefore a step towards their empowerment and more active participation in all dimensions of social and political decision-making.

Debate

Boys and girls at schools: towards a balanced share of space?

Participant (P): Mixed groups girls don't speak up and boys take more space, how do you deal with that?

Maria do Mar Pereira (Maria): I gently address those who look like they want to say something and try to let them have the same sorts of interactions as they usually have; boys start telling jokes or making fun of each other, which changes the dynamic of the discussion. It depends on specific interactions and you have to adjust to it. Usually we have small mixed groups and don't usually separate the groups as often they end up deconstructing stereotypes together as one will make a general statement and then one will say something opposing that.

Education on gender stereotypes: welcomed by schools?

P: What is the political climate like for what you do? Do you have resistance?

Maria: In Portugal feminism is like the "F" word. The school teachers are often naïve about why education on gender stereotypes is necessary.

P: If teachers are undermining it, have you done work with the teachers?

Maria: There is work done with the teachers but not so much with my NGO. It is definitely not part of their teacher training.

P: Have you had much resistance from the schools themselves? Religious schools run by religious groups who may protest what you are teaching does this happen?

Maria: So far it is schools approaching us. I have noticed that teachers have often undermined what we are supposed to do right before we do it even with just how they introduce us.

The involvement of men in women's organisations

P: How many men are involved in your organisation?

Maria: Recently we have two male members but they are my boyfriend and my best friend so I don't think it is representative at all. We would love to have more men. In Portugal, if most girls think that it is all sorted then most men think that too and if there were still a problem in their eyes, then it would be for women to sort out themselves. Men who are involved face other sorts of stereotypes. Men trying to maintain reputation and not be perceived as gay.

P: There is a danger in thinking that we have to get men involved in order to give feminism status. We take on the responsibility for women to get emancipated but then we also take on the responsibility for men to get involved and of course it is a give or take balance but it is important to realise that it is not just our responsibility to get men involved.

P: How do we change this? Especially if men won't change their behaviour.

Maria: Do it slowly and keep trying. Small differences are a difference.

Theme 1: Young women and politics

Keynote speech: Women in Political decision-making - Aysun Sayin, KA-DER, Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates (Turkey)

Before I start with my presentation, I would like to share the objectives of the NGO of which I am a member of, namely KA-DER: Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates. KA-DER is established in order to increase women's awareness of men's dominance in political life in Turkey and to increase sensitivity towards women's problems. Its main objective is to ensure the presence of women as political representatives. There are some obstacles on women to enter the political decision-making process. In Turkey, KA-DER has the mission of overcoming these obstacles. As well as this, the organization is working to assemble women of different political views and opinions and to make them strive together for women's problems. The major issue for KA-DER is to ensure that political parties put into effect a quota for women in political representation.

In this presentation, I aim at clarifying why participation in the political decision-making process is necessary in today's world for women. Afterwards I will mention one of the provisions that need to be taken to increase women's representation, namely the "quota". Finally I will talk about women's place in political life in Turkey. The issues that I will mention are indeed common problems for women across the world, only the intensities of these problems differ from country to country. I come from a country where nearly no women are represented in her country's Parliament.

Women have struggled for centuries to obtain equal rights as men. They have put gradual and great efforts. The right to education, presence in the working world as well as men and the right to vote are among their gains as a result of their struggle. However, women's struggle has not finished yet but rather is still ongoing. The reason is that gaining these rights doesn't necessarily mean that women can benefit as equally as men do from these rights. We cannot deny that the right to vote is a turning point in women's struggle for equality. Women hoped this would solve their problems. They hoped they would have a say in decisions concerning their future. However, it never turned out to be so. Not in the past, not now.

The rate of women parliamentarians in the world is 15.6 percent. EU member countries have a rate of 22.1 percent. EU and candidate countries have 20.1 percent. In Turkey this number is 4.4 percent. As shown in these statistics, women have *de jure* right to vote. And because they have not taken place in political processes, they have a limited chance of making their voices heard. They could not create solutions to their problems.

Providing equal rights in law is not sufficient to break the present inequality. Applying special prevention policies as bases for equal opportunity policies is a must to improve women's representation in politics. Special prevention policies should be implemented until the present situation becomes equal for all. They do not aim at positive discrimination for women but

instead eliminate the existing discrimination. It is a must that women have a say in decision-making mechanisms in order to obtain equal and effective participation of women in all areas of life. Political representation of women, who occupy more than half of society, is a necessity for exposing their problems and creating solutions.

The unequal representation of women is not a problem concerning women only. It also is a problem of democracy. The major international convention for equality between men and women is CEDAW- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. CEDAW aims equality in civil, political, economical, social and cultural participation. This convention states that special prevention measures should be taken to reach equality. ***Article 4: States will take temporary and special measures to provide de facto equality between men and women and these measures will not be considered as discrimination.***

Countries that side with CEDAW hold World Women Conferences in which have taken place every five years since 1975. In these conferences, how the rights of women can be put to life is discussed and action plans are determined. In the 1995 World Women Conference in Beijing, it was agreed that equal representation of women is not only the basis for democracy but also for social progress and peace. In the June 2000 Conference in New York, it was said that quota policies should be applied for obtaining women's participation for equality. Additionally, legal regulations should be created to enable women's participation in civil, political and economical life.

According to article 141 of the Treaty of Amsterdam, special advantages should be given to women to obtain equality and this is not discrimination. **(Taking special prevention measures by member states, which will eliminate the disadvantages of the unequally participating sex, is appropriate to equal action principle).** The European Commission has shown its supportive approach with its Council recommendation number 85, which indicates, *member states are liable to take special temporary provisions in all areas of inequality to provide real equality between men and women.*

Another important document in the issue of equality in political life and the removal of barriers to women's participation is the 1997 Declaration of the European Balkan Conference on Equality between Men and Women, held in Istanbul. According to this declaration, ***"Equality is a general problem of the whole society, not only of women. For a democratic society, acquiring full participation of women to all social spheres is a must. The reasons for unequal participation include the structure and operation of election systems, political institutions and parties. There exist preventive measures and responsibilities of governments and political parties to overcome inequality"***.

The obligations of governments defined by this declaration include:

- The minimum representation rate of women in public service should be 33%,
- An election law for parity democracy should be attained,
- Special provisions for women's political participation should be taken and applied,
- Equal representation in decision-making mechanisms of the government should be supported.

The obligations of political parties include;

- Attaining equal participation of women in administration and decision mechanisms of parties,
- Taking special provisions for women's participation,
- Strengthening women's groups in parties.

Quota application is one of the provisions that need to be taken to increase women's presence in decision-making mechanisms and processes. Quota is not an application leading to inequality and discrimination, but rather aims to eliminate the existing discrimination. It is not directed at the quality of persons to be elected but at the candidate determination process. Hence it is an election technique. It does not determine who is to be elected but determines the distribution by sex. The unequal base of decision-making processes that we experience is a discrimination against women who occupy half of the world's population.

Quota applications to increase women's representation exist in today's European Union member countries and in some other countries. For example, Sweden, the member country with the highest rate of women's representation in the National Parliament, processes quota application. The rate of women in their parliament is 45.3 percent. On the other hand, Albania had a representation rate of 29 percent, which decreased to 5.2 percent after abandoning quota application. The demand of the European Women's Lobby is parity democracy, aiming a rate of 50 percent.

Now I would like to continue by talking about the present situation of Turkey's women in representation mechanisms, the reasons for this and our demands. As I mentioned before, the rate of women in the Turkish Parliament is 4.4 percent and the local elections resulted with a demoralising rate of below 1 percent. Women in Turkey have acquired the right to vote many years before other countries. In 1930, women obtained the right in local elections and in 1934, the right for elections in general. At the first election just after acquiring the right to vote, the rate of women in parliament was 4.5 percent. So, it can be seen that there has been no progress since then.

The reasons are, first of all, politics in Turkey is under the hegemony of men. Politics is used as an instrument of power and authority. Men, who cannot share this power area even in between them, do not want women in. Therefore, no action is taken to improve women's representation neither in election law, nor in political parties having a group in the parliament.

In Turkey, women are expected to be good wives and mothers. They are expected to leave the public sphere and especially the political sphere to men. These are the roles taught to women since childhood. Although well-educated women have recently started to break these roles, they still do not appear in political decision-making processes.

As this is the situation, what do women want?

We, as half of Turkey's population, want our right of equal representation in decision-making process. We demand from political parties and election laws our minimum representation right of a 33 - percent quota. This is our target and aim for now. Yes, we are well aware that what

should be is parity democracy, but we demand our minimum representation rights just for now considering Turkey's reality and we are struggling for this.

Debate

Quotas:

The discussion concerned first quotas and whether there should be quotas for women and for young people. In relation to young people, the general feeling was that young women and men are not enough represented but that they have a legitimate reason to be in decision-making because all decisions made affects them as well. There was a feeling that young people male and female are full of energy, but they hit a brick wall, when it comes to politics, linked to rules, history, procedures etc. Concerning quotas for women there was a general discussion about the importance of qualifications of women, if these eventually will pay off or might there be structures in the way that make quotas necessary? Several participants were in favour of quotas and some stressed that the question was not about being qualified or not, because many women are, but about structures and mentalities, which still favour men.

Diversity and loyalty between women:

The issue of the diversity was also stressed in relation to representation of all groups of women: black, migrant, disabled women, lesbians etc. It was also said that it is important to be loyal and to vote for women because most men vote for men. Some examples of good practices were also given such as the organisation of a youth parliament. A discussion followed about the need for role models and young women and education, as girls are outperforming boys in all subjects in high school but then this seems to be washed aside by society.

Outcomes of the working group on young women in decision-making

Foreword by the group: *"Women have their own identities linked with the socialisation they come through and their own personal circumstance, but the norm is based on heterosexual white male. Being visible often means that you have to act like a male to be viewed as normal".*

Participants identified 4 areas in which actions need to be taken to overcome the barriers that impede young women to participate in decision-making:

- Education
- Institutions and political parties
- Regulation and Mechanism
- Networking

How to fill the gap in the field of Education?

- ⇒ Include gender awareness in curriculum,
- ⇒ Work with boys and girls on gender,
- ⇒ Develop tool kits for schools,

- ⇒ Support non-formal education projects and encouraging young people to act as participants in non-formal education, i.e.: the citizenship curriculum,
- ⇒ Support the work of NGOs as tools to overcome barriers,
- ⇒ Make existing European directives and other legal instruments more visible.

How to fill the missing links in institutions and political parties?

- ⇒ Increase awareness in parties on gender issues,
- ⇒ Provide training on gender issues,
- ⇒ Organise specific training in areas where women are under represented.

How to fill the gaps in regulations and mechanisms?

- ⇒ Establishing quota systems,
- ⇒ Implement a system of double charring of positions,
- ⇒ Ensure family friendly hours and facilities,
- ⇒ Implement existing directives, manuals and tools,
- ⇒ Discover and implement gender budgeting.
- ⇒ Regulate hate/sexist crimes,
- ⇒ Remove legal and invisible obstacles through for example education programmes,
- ⇒ Use gender sensitive language,
- ⇒ Policy and policymaking: allow for diversity and diversity management,
- ⇒ Support women who experience domestic violence.

How to improve networking?

- ⇒ Develop better women's coalitions across political parties,
- ⇒ Establish mentoring systems, so that women may support other women,

Theme 2: Young women in the economic sphere

Keynote speech: Young Women's Participation in the economic sector", Juliane Bir, European Trade Union Confederation

I have been asked to speak to you today about young women in trade unions - where they are and what they are doing. But before I do that perhaps I should say something to you about ETUC and my role therein.

ETUC is an umbrella organisation of trade unions across Europe - we cover almost 77 national trade unions and a large number of Industry Federations from 35 countries across Europe - total membership is over 60 million, of which 40% are women.

ETUC does a lot of work lobbying and trying to influence players in the EU arena - the European Commission, European Parliament etc, in all areas to do with employment and social affairs. We have a privileged position in that we are recognised as being important

representatives in this area and are what is called a social partners - this means that we have the right under law to sit with the European employers organisation and together to try to draft a piece of future EU legislation. So far we have done this for parental leave, part time work and fixed term workers - we drew up a framework agreement, which was given to the European Commission, who made it into law.

Within the ETUC I wear a number of different hats - I am an advisor in charge of CSR, I have recently been given the dossier on immigration/asylum policy and I am also responsible for youth issues. Within the European Youth Forum, I am Bureau member in charge of employment and social affairs. So combining those youth hats, I will try to give you an overview of where young women are today in trade unions.

Before I go any further, I should *explain what we mean by a young person* - we have given a fairly loose definition to the term, because in the trade union movement, young members can either be students or young workers. Therefore we felt it necessary to widen the definition of young people to include all those 35 and under! (so it is really not so young).

Without a doubt, across Europe and indeed probably globally, trade unions are facing similar problems - membership of unions is falling and many young people have no interest in joining a union. Therefore trade unions need to radically change the way they operate to reverse this trend.

Within the trade unions themselves, where there are young members, they tend to be in badly paid positions and often with poor prospects for promotion. This is similar in many ways to the situations being faced by women on the labour market. Which means that for young women, many are facing double discrimination!

Something that always strikes me in trade union events, but I think also in general in political or indeed NGO events, is that the participation tends to be very pale, male, stale. Most organisations tend to keep their women - and especially young women - members invisible. Is this because they don't exist or is it perhaps due to a fear that maybe we want to take all the power?

What I would like to do here is to **focus on 2 key issues** and try to explain to you what the ETUC is trying to do in this respect, before making a few suggestions of what can still be done in the immediate future. The first issue is regarding **women in the trade union movement** and the second is regarding what we are doing to organise and recruit young members.

Women in the trade union movement.

First of all, a word about women across Europe:

Women make up 52% of the population in Europe - in other words we are the majority. Yet we continue to be discriminated against in many areas of society, and none more so than in the world of work. More women than ever before are actively involved in the labour market in one

way or another. Yet glaring inequalities still exist in terms of pay, access to training and senior positions within organisations, as well as issues concerning reconciling work and family life.

Against this backdrop, where are women in the trade union movement?

To answer that question, the ETUC Women's Committee decided to carry out a **detailed study** of all ETUC affiliates to assess the position of women in trade unions. This study was presented to the ETUC Congress in July 1999.

I think that some of the findings are worth mentioning here:

1. The Membership rates for women stands at an average of 40% - with variations from under 20% to over 60% in different unions.
2. However, less than a quarter of senior management positions are held by women (i.e. General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary, President or Vice President)
According to our results we have 4 women general secretaries:
FGTB (Belgium), CFDT (France), MHP (Netherlands) Tco (Switzerland)
3. Most of the national confederations questioned do have a women's committee or a women's department, which is positive. However, only half of the women's committees and only a third of the women's departments have their own budget and are therefore restricted in what they can do and how to do it.
4. Furthermore, over half of the women's committees have only an advisory role in the trade union.
5. A small majority of trade unions have included equal opportunities in their constitution, but few have any action programmes or policies in place to implement this part of the constitution.

So, we can see that in spite of women making up the majority of the population across Europe, in spite of the fact that more and more women have joined the work force and in spite of the fact that women account for approximately 40% of Trade Union membership, our trade unions in general are run by men for men.

For this reason, ETUC Women's Committee has decided to present these results during Congresses, as well as **Equality Plans**, which were adopted. Very briefly, the first Equality Plan focused on 3 aspects, which we believe are the most critical:

1. ***The visibility of women in collective bargaining and other decision-making bodies in the trade union movement:***
 - Increase the number of women in decision-making bodies, so that the percentage of women involved is in proportion to the percentage of women affiliates (this can also be referred to as parity).
 - Increase the number of women trade unionists in the collective bargaining process - i.e. in the preparation phase, the negotiation phase and the implementation phase.
2. ***Integrating equal opportunities between women and men in all trade union policies (gender mainstreaming).***
3. ***Equal Pay:***
 - Action, particularly in the framework of the collective bargaining process, needs to be taken so as to reduce the difference in pay levels between women and men.

Like its predecessor, the new plan takes a dual approach, tackling specific gender equality issues as well as gender mainstreaming, calling for the inclusion of the gender dimension in other policies.

The plan refers to the concept of a representation gap, which is the difference between the proportion of women in the decision making bodies of the organisation and the proportion of women in the overall membership rate. However, this should not prevent national confederations or European industrial federations, particularly those with a predominantly male membership, from setting quantified objectives which are higher than those which respect proportionality.

The 3 main objectives of this new plan are the following (I don't develop the different actions):

- to eliminate the female representation gap in decision-making bodies.
- to extend gender mainstreaming.
- to strengthen the role of the body responsible for gender equality policy.

Turning now to look at what ETUC is doing **in terms of its young people**. In many ways, trade unions are only now waking up to the reality that the movement is getting old, and is not being replaced by young members.

Trade unions are slowly recognising that they need to change and adapt their methods if they are to recruit new young members, and hence survive. The world of work we know today is vastly different to that of 10 years ago, and is likely to continue to change. Trade unions have to move with these changes if they are to bring themselves into the new millennium. Young people are not going to join an organisation which they believe does not represent their needs, nor will they join an organisation, which is predominantly run by old people, particularly by old men. Young girls of today are not going to join a trade union which keeps its women members out of the positions of power, or that is seen to ignore many of the injustices faced by women workers across the world. So it is clear that trade unions have a huge job to do in terms of rejuvenating their image.

Young people are crucial to the trade union movement. Their participation is essential - it strengthens and revitalises trade unions and offers young people the opportunity to work for a better future.

ETUC has for many years had a youth committee in place, which was made up of national youth officers from affiliated organisations. We have structured the group so as to strengthen the links between the ETUC policy areas and the working of the youth group. We now have a youth representative on the main ETUC policy committees (employment committee, education and training, immigration, collective bargaining committee and enlargement committee) so that the interests of young people are reflected in each of these. This also recognises the contribution young people have to make in the core areas of trade unionism! We feel that this is an important step to have taken.

Under this structure, we are working on a number of different levels:

- We are trying to "mainstream" youth into general ETUC activities via our involvement in ETUC policy committees
- We are also trying to develop specific youth proposals on topics of particular concern to young people.
- We also organise training seminars open to young trade unionists across Europe on certain themes.

Throughout the last two years, the committee has focused a lot of attention on the issue of **organising and recruiting young people**. As a first step, we carried out a preliminary study across Europe to find out what trade unions are doing in this respect.

As I said earlier, nearly all trade unions across Europe are facing the same problem - fewer and fewer young people are joining and as a result the movement is getting older. The problem is being dealt with in different ways by some unions and not at all by many. For that reason, we commissioned a small research study to be carried out. The study looked firstly at the position of young people in the labour market and secondly at young people in trade unions.

Briefly, the main findings here were:

- The proportion of young people in the EU is falling.
- Young people are tending to stay in education for longer, which means that they are entering the labour market at an older age. There is also a reduction in the number of apprenticeships being carried out
- Young people are more likely to be unemployed than older people, especially in Southern Europe. Cyclical fluctuations have a bigger impact on young people than on older workers, i.e. when the economy is doing well, young people are recruited. When the economy is performing badly, young people are often the first casualties.
- Young workers are three times more likely to be employed on fixed term contract than older workers, and young workers are more likely to work part-time (EU total is 17.4%, among young workers the figure is 22%).
- In all EU member states, employment in the service sector is growing and it is here where much future work will be found.

On the basis of these findings, the study also found that in general, trade union membership among young people has tended to decline quite rapidly. Three key reasons for this have been identified:

1. **Attitudes:** Young workers are more individualised (less attracted by the collective ethos of trade unions) and instrumental (tend to see the benefits of membership outweighed by the costs - perhaps unions are less effective at getting better conditions at work).
2. **Attractiveness of trade union to young workers:** Trade unions often seen as being too formal, with rigid structures. The pale, male, stale image rears its ugly head again. Trade unions are not seen to reflect the needs of young people.
3. **Structural:** Shifts in the labour market towards private services have not been matched by trade union recruitment policies in general. That is to say, many young people are finding work in the IT sector, where so far most trade unions are not active, either because they haven't started to organise people there or because they are not allowed to organise!

During the forum of cultures last summer in Barcelona, we organised a big conference with 80 young trade unionists to discuss how to develop a trade union culture among young people and to try to see what we can do to reverse this trend and at national level currently, a project of awareness raising is ongoing as well as various campaigns and actions to attract young people.

Conclusions

In closing, let me say a few words about what still can be done to try to improve the position for young women in trade unions. Many of these ideas can also be transferred to your own organisations!

Firstly, I would strongly recommend a **mentoring system** - its benefits are self-evident and it only requires a little organisation and forward planning to be successful.

Secondly, something needs to be done urgently to ensure that more young people are exposed to various meetings and conferences. Over recent years, the system of ensuring a *gender balance* in meetings has begun to be put in place, gender proofing - in other words, when a trade union sends its list of delegates to conferences, it has to ensure a gender balance.

Why not *extend this to include young people* - if, for example, a union can send 10 delegates to X conference, why not insist on 5 women, 5 men, with at least one of each being under 35 years of age. It would at least be a start.

A third suggestion is to have young people recruiting young people - like recruits like, ditto in national women's councils.

Fourthly, mainstreaming youth issues into policy areas of the organisation - n.b. in a twofold way - involves young people in core trade union issues and recognises the important contribution young people have to make to the activities of the unions.

A final suggestion linked to this is to **constantly raise awareness** within unions to push the point of involving young people in your activities - an example of such a campaign was carried out in one of our organisations at the end of 1999. In preparation for their last congress, they adopted the following slogan - *99 in 99*, which meant ensuring that 99 young people attended the Congress in 1999. As the Congress was in Sydney, Australia, many of the European trade unions at first had problems with the idea of sending a young person all the way there. However, although they didn't quite hit 99, they came very close, which proved, that pushing the slogan and constant awareness-raising of the issue worked.

I think we could all learn from that....

Outcomes of the working group

Participants identified the following **barriers** to Young Women's Participation in the economic sector:

- ⇒ Lack of role models,
- ⇒ The fact that social roles/stereotypes are linked with social perception,
- ⇒ Barriers linked to some legal/structural systems (social & economic factors),
- ⇒ Direct & indirect discrimination such as sexism, language, economic discrimination...,
- ⇒ All forms of violence against women,
- ⇒ The fact that women are often relegated to the domestic sphere,

⇒ Religion.

Participants identified 3 areas in which actions need to be taken to **overcome the barriers** that impede young women to participate in the economic sphere:

- Education
- Regulation and other mechanisms
- Networking

How to fill the gaps in the field of Education?

Establish mentoring systems in schools

Promote non-formal-education (NFE)

⇒ Develop toolkits or teaching training manuals for schools/students/learners to participate in and be active citizens in NFE and formal education,

⇒ Develop education materials/ role models/ tools for dissemination of know-how/ leadership skills & other training,

Alternative and gender sensitive education

⇒ Include gender awareness with NFE methods in formal education curricula,

⇒ Work with boys and girls in gender awareness and stereotypes raising to break stereotypes,

⇒ Deconstruct social roles and stereotypes.

How to fill the gaps in regulations and mechanisms?

Lobbying/Legislation

⇒ Lobby to improve the legislative framework at the European level,

⇒ Monitor the implementation of the existing legislation,

Participants stressed the important role of NGOs on this, and the need to need to organise effective campaigns

Facilities/support to victims

⇒ Establish/improve facilities for victims of violence,

Regarding violence, participants underlined the need to name violence as gender violence and not just call it domestic violence as that is too narrow

⇒ Discuss the impact of language: how language influences actions, by stressing that words make an impact,

⇒ Use all resources in a sustainable way & finding new resources for civil society,

⇒ Increase funding for all social areas.

⇒ Establish/improve social services (childcare, eldercare, parental leave, single mothers)

⇒ Develop tools to disseminate know how.

How to better share information and ideas?

⇒ Develop/improve networking on all possible levels,

⇒ Involve the society as a whole, including minority groups,

⇒ Support and promote local networking and networking between national and international organisations.

Participants stressed that this has to be done among all sorts of organisations, not just among those dealing with women specifically. They also underline the important role of NGOs to develop co-operation among all parts of society, to broaden the network: "it's up to NGOs to find and use all the resources available, to network, inform each other about resources, share information and ideas".

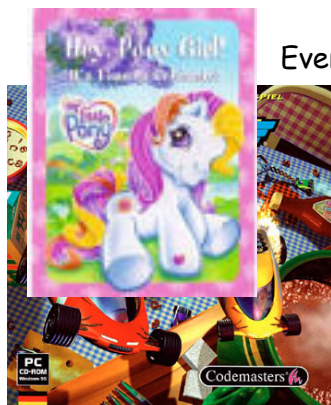
Theme 3: The image of young women

Keynote speech: The image of young women in the media: what impact on women's self image", Sara Lindquist, Swedish mediacritical network *Allt är Möjligt* ("Everything is Possible")

My organisation is called "Everything is possible" and it is committed to education on gender and stereotyping in the media. In my presentation I will go through stereotypes of women in media and the conditions of it.

Sweden has gone far with equality but not with gender stereotyping. According to the statistics, the number of women in news media amounts to 20 percent. What does this say about women's importance? News media is a forum for democratic discussion. Women are systematically reduced in the news, while they are over represented as sex objects in other kinds of media. So the focus is on what men create for men and by men. We separate this news media from the general media outlet. There is an unequal distribution of men and women in the media outlet and in reality. In the media, young women represents a big part to such an extend that it looks as young women have a lot of power. In reality, they are over represented in commercials and movies in stereotypical ways. They are "beautiful" and they are always pictured in their private sphere, at home and not in public. We don't see overweight women or handicapped women or older women: they are invisible. So what happens when a group is invisible? Why aren't they there?

We should also ask ourselves why we have such stereotypes and what do they mean. In this picture you can see a toy for girls, my little pony, and one for boys, micro-machines. Pink for girls, black and blue for boys. The girls are pictured inside the house, while boys are pictured outside. The ad suggests: "girls, you can put your hair up!" And, "boys, you can put the machine in your pocket and go play outside"



Everyday we are exposed to stereotyped images of women and girls, men and boys.



Here are two more ads. The man is ready to go out and face the world. As for the woman, all she has to do is simply being sexually

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appealing.

Another picture: man in suit ready to go, the most common man in the media today, he is busy. The woman is vacant and ready to sit and wait. While in reality women are doing the they are much busier than their male colleagues.



depicted as having all the time in the world, she looks to sit and wait. While in reality women are doing the they are much busier than their male colleagues.

We consume



about six hours of media per day. We consume stereotypes everyday.

There are also pictures of sexually available man. The question is: is this man there for a man or for a women? Is it an improvement, a sign of progress that also men are being sexualized? The answer is no, we are obsessed with our appearance,



and it looks like this is a time for beautiful people only. Moreover, because men are started being depicted as sexual objects, there is a tendency to sexualize the image of women even more than before. As a result, women's role models are passive icons whose role is to be beautiful whereas men have other role models.

This is an example of what I call the power slut in the media today. It is an encouragement to identify with a power slut. Does she have the power to be seductive or to take political decisions? What kind of power does she have?

The positions and poses women make in pictures are not realistic. In what conditions are women made visible?



Competent women are never pictured enough in the media. Men in media are often pictured as professional and at work.



Why should women be eager to reaching a high position in a company or getting into politics if this is the way they are portrayed?



headings. An Wallstrom is goes to Brussels".



Have a look at these article on Margot entitled: "Fairy tale girl This article on Tony Blair

reads: "Messiah of politics". He is the world's saviour and she is a little girl going on a field trip. Swedish politicians are often pictured in a way that women always sit there waiting for you; while men are terribly busy.

These media stereotypes are powerful and get their way in to our surroundings. How does this affect the way we view ourselves as women and the way we look at women who have power?

How the UN and the EU have been dealing with these issues. This has been an open question in the UN for the last 25 years. No pressure has been applied on Member States to adopt and enforce new laws addressing the problem. In the EU there is a strategy that includes gender stereotyping as one of five areas, which says really clearly that stereotypes have negative effects and are not helping to change the world.

There is a lot of work that has to be done by the NGOs.

Debate

The media by and for males; how to overcome stereotypes?

Participant (P): Identity is more than only gender, what we could see quite well in the pictures is that they are all white and able bodied. Media is written and produced by and for males.

P: How can we work against stereotypes in media?

Sara Lindquist: There are organisations such as 'adbusting' that deconstructs media. In Sweden we don't have regulations on media because of freedom of speech and distribution. We should encourage all people to respond to the commercials and to state their views. As media users, we need to react and take responsibility for all of the pictures that surround us:

Try and do it where you are.

In the media, if one person complains it represents a thousand people.

P: This is a "democracy problem" and not just a women's problem.

Educating journalists!?

P: Did you ever talk to journalists? And what came out?

Sara: We lecture journalists as well as students, all media producers and consumers. Journalists have not tools and they are not encouraged to search for the tools. When we have lectures for journalists they start so see the structures. The interest in Sweden is growing and spreading.

P: Percentages are interesting. In Belgrade we worked with the same percentages: 20 percent of women are in the news. We are trying to do something but we are stuck in some way as we were trying to work with journalists but the media is a big machine and it is about money. It is business and money, they don't want that to be threatened.

How women are portrayed ...

P: I wrote a press release to my local paper about this seminar and said I would give them some pictures. Can you give us tips as how to portray ourselves?

Sara: Women are often portrayed from above to look small and men are often photographed from below to look bigger. Women are often photographed to look beautiful. Women are often always smiling and not serious looking.

P: The question is more complex, i.e. women are beautiful in advertisements, which implies that women have the time to do that. These kind of advertisements generate a lot of money, and therefore companies won't stop using them.

Sara: Your point of view arises from the thought that all men think that naked women are beautiful, but at the same time people are more complex; even as a selling argument you could be more innovative and create a broader field of stereotypes and still actually gain profit from new areas.

P: One picture is worth more than a thousand words and I don't know any pictures exhibition that don't show women in stereotypical ways. Adverts have problems to show something different than typical stereotypes

Outcomes of the working group on the image of young women

Participants identified **3 areas** in which actions need to be taken to deal with the image of young women:

- Religious institutions
- Regulations and other mechanisms
- Networking

Role of religious institutions

Participants had conflicting views on this issue. Some of them said that religious institutions should play a more active role in the media to express a larger point of view, to avoid texts that perpetuate discrimination and to encourage women to play an active role in communities. The group pointed out that religious institutions could provide a forum that would appeal to young people as an alternative to the regular media.

Tackling assumptions: availability, sexualisation and heterosexuality

- ⇒Lobby to change the way women are photographed: i.e. with more clothes, using different techniques etc,
- ⇒Lobby colleges and universities where photographers are trained,
- ⇒Lobby the fashion and media industry and make statements that we can be different and happy with ourselves,
- ⇒Picture men and women as allies,
- ⇒Create women's own media for women in rural areas, to support each other,
- ⇒Support all women by giving them more power through communication,
- ⇒Encourage integrity: visualizing barriers; recognizing that those assumption are barriers, overcoming stereotypes,
- ⇒Practise solidarity -encouraging women not to compete,
- ⇒Ignore dominant ideals - create your own ideals,
- ⇒Encourage the media to bring out everyday women,
- ⇒Stop labelling, by putting ethnicity/sexuality in context,

⇒ Encourage people not to buy magazines that present young women stereotypically or as sexual objects.

Public space: places of visual harassment?

Participants discussed the concept of space as a barrier; how to secure public space from visual harassment and to ensure that public city space promote gender equality.

Images in advertisement in the streets are often portraying women half-naked, over sexualized, always available, anorexic, ethnic women rarely portrayed & if they are they are overly sexualised. This has an impact on children and young women regarding their self-image. It has also a strong impact on the perception men have of women, who often perceive women as sexual objects, which can lead to sexual harassment and rape.

Participants therefore called for the public space to be free of *visual harassment*.

The emphasis was put especially on city space, as;

- One can choose not to read magazines but one cannot choose not to walk in city space,
- Many young women fear some city spaces, which limits the space they can use without feeling insecure.

What solutions can be applied and what action shall be taken to tackle the problems linked to advertisement:

⇒ What is needed to improve regulations:

- Ethical committees on advertisement,
- Censorship on pornography,
- Municipal committees on the use of the public space,
- Consumers' rights committees,
- Study and research on advertisement and its effect on girls and women,
- Develop European/international ethical rules on advertisement.

⇒ NGOs should join their efforts to protest advertising on large and small scale.

⇒ International petitions against sexist advertising.

⇒ NGOs should encourage the implementation of Beijing Platform for Action, which mention this issue: "representing sexist stereotypes in the media is a form of discrimination against women".

⇒ NGOs should lobby for a European directive on women and the media,

⇒ Existing international tools on women and the media should be better disseminated.

Regarding the issues of TV and media, the group expressed the need to have:

⇒ Education seminars on gender issues,

⇒ Campaigns on women's voices; more support to NGOs dealing with the problem of women's appearance in the media.

⇒ Networking and support of each other's work on this issue.

⇒ Encourage individuals to send letters to media professionals and editors.

"Power and Participation, how can Young Women in Europe create the Missing Links?"

September 2004 - Seminar report.

⇒ Undertake/ disseminate existing research on how the media affects the image of young women.

INFORMATION SESSION

"Young Women and the Enlargement of the EU", Aysun Sayin, KA-DER - Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates (Turkey)

I have divided this presentation into three parts. The first part includes looking at of the EU enlargement process in terms of equality between women and men as well as the responsibilities of the countries that are evaluated within the enlargement process. In the second part, Turkey's initiative as a candidate country to the EU, in terms of providing equality of women and men will be discussed. Finally, I will mention the expectations of young women in Turkey.

As you know, the EU is a union with legal dimensions. Therefore both the principle of anti-discrimination and gender equality policies exist within the obligatory political criteria for the candidate countries in the enlargement process. The effective support of legal regulations in line with equality between women and men and the presence of mechanisms protecting these regulations are signs of the EU's intention towards the application of law. Therefore, we can speak of two basic parts of the enlargement process. The first one is candidate countries' obligation to make the necessary legal regulations in accordance with council directives and the second one is putting these legal regulations into effect. The EU has power and is an auditor that ensures both of them.

The conditions that EU candidate countries should define in their legislation are:

- Clear definition of the principle of equal treatment;
- Clear definition of the principle of equal opportunities ;
- Clear definition of indirect discrimination;
- Clear definition of burden of proof and rules of evidence in discrimination on the basis of gender;
- Definition of situations requiring special prevention policies;
- Development of special mechanisms for gender equality.

Furthermore, the EU requires candidate countries to place emphasis on political representation and on domestic violence against women. The European Commission criticises candidate countries on these issues in the regular progress report, which is published annually.

Now I would like to go on with Turkey in the enlargement process. Turkey gained candidate country status in 1999. The EU has had an accelerating effect on the application of equality policies within the law in Turkey. The requests of women's NGOs, which have been campaigning for human rights of women for years, have been taken into account since 1999. Nevertheless, there are still regulations that aren't accepted by women, which mostly occur in working life, political representation and in the social sphere.

In working life, regulations can also be seen to be a reflection of Turkey's commitments to the process of EU accession. In the EU enlargement process the articles regarding the regulation of sexual harassment in the working environment and the banning of indirect discrimination have been included in the Turkish Labour Code. These regulations are quite important for working women and they are some of the reforms that Turkey has achieved during the candidature process.

Although the principle of equal pay for work of equal value exists in our law, women in Turkey still earn forty percent less than men. As well as this, there is discrimination in the recruitment process. There is no legal regulation that is against the promotion of women in Turkey, however the "glass ceiling" that is a problem in many countries, is also an obstacle in women's careers here. To illustrate, in Turkey, the rate of women with high positions in working life is 7 percent. Another issue is that society imposes traditional roles on women; hence women focus on traditional positions in working life. That is why women are usually recruited in the service sector. Moreover, the rate of women's participation in working life is twenty percent. There is no regulation increasing the employment rate of women in Turkey. For instance, there are no regulations concerning parental leave or childcare.

Unemployment, which is one of the biggest problems affecting Turkey, mostly affects women. To give a rate, 91 percent of unemployed people are women. It is especially young women who have to return back to their parents' homes since they cannot find a suitable job for themselves after graduating from university.

In brief, Turkish legislation is not fully in compliance with the EU Council directives in terms of equality between women and men. Discriminatory legislation towards women exists particularly within the social security system. Most women in working life are outside the social security system; only 14.5 percent of them have social security rights.

When it comes to political representation of women in Turkey, women make up on 4.4 percent of the Turkish Parliament. This situation was criticised in the Regular Progress Report for Turkey published by European Commission in 2003. Nevertheless, the Turkish Government has not made any attempts to address this criticism until now. Women make up half of the population of Turkey; however they almost never appear in the political decision-making process. Until equality is actually sustained we demand to have special prevention policies to be established and implemented. In order to increase the rate of women in the political decision-making process, we require quotas to be put into effect in the Law on Political Parties and Legislation of Election.

Concerning the social sphere I would like to talk about the Turkish Civil Code and the Turkish Penal Code. The Turkish Civil Code, which women's NGOs have tried so hard to change over a period of more than 50 years, has been amended during the EU accession period. Since January 1st 2002, Turkish women have acquired a civilized and modern civil code. Discriminatory measures that go against the equality of women and men and that put a secondary role to women in the family were abandoned. The new Civil Code abolished the supremacy of the husband in the marriage union. The most important regulation of this civil

code is the principle of participation to the acquired goods. According to this regulation, women have the right to fifty percent of the goods that are acquired during marriage. However, women's NGOs are trying to remove the condition that this regulation only covers marriages after 2002.

Besides this, women's NGOs are trying to terminate the problem of domestic violence against women. Through the help of women's NGOs' pressure on government, a regulation was made in 1998; however as the regulation is not sufficient to overcome the problem, we can often observe incidents of violence against women in Turkey. The issue has been criticised in all EU Progress Reports on Turkey. Even though there are legal regulations on this, 58 % of women are still objected to domestic violence. The request of women's NGOs from the government is to have special houses for protecting these women. At the moment there are 8 special houses of this kind, although there are approximately 33 million women living in Turkey. Women facing domestic violence usually cannot leave their houses due to monetary reasons so domestic violence simply continues. Therefore, to protect these women, legal regulations should be supported by practical implementation.

Recently, Turkey has worked on amendments to its Penal Code that include regulations against women's human rights. In order to remove discriminating clauses in the law, we are working to change some articles. These are:

- Removal of virginity tests (article 289)
- Removal of restriction by the government of sexual relations of young men and women (article 107)
- The term of sexual orientation to be added into each regulation of anti-discrimination besides the terms of women and men.
- Increasing the sanctions on the so-called honour killings

I shall try to explain the context of these discriminating regulations, which are of major concern to young women in Turkey. First of all, I want to define the honour killings that were criticised in the EC Regular Progress Report prepared for Turkey in 2003 and that have not been solved yet. It is the strictly conservative part of Turkish society that has been particularly involved in the killing of young women under the concept of "honour". 533 women have been killed because of honour in the last 5 years. These conservative people consider honour as "male honour" and that unmarried women shouldn't have a sexual life. Even if they are married, they shouldn't have extramarital sex. They deserve to die in case of extramarital sex, because women having such an affair are considered to destroy the honour of men in the family. The situation is the same with rape, that is to say, women are killed under this concept because these kinds of incidents are regarded as detrimental to the concept of "male honour" which I have just explained.

The problem is that the existing regulation gives inadequate punishment to the murderers of these women. In my opinion, this is evidence of the fact that governments have a similar approach as well. That's why we - women's NGOs - could not succeed in increasing the sanctions towards these murders for years. We request that the EU prioritises the issue in the Progress

Report for Turkey that is supposed to be published on 6th October 2004, and in all negotiations with Turkey from now on.

Another issue being debated is the article of the same Code that restricts the sexual affairs of young people aged between 15 and 18. We request this article, which interferes with the freedom of youth and which is against Human Rights, not be put into the Code. According to this article, young women can be taken for a gynaecological examination with the decision of a judge that virginity tests will be applied on the women. We demand that all implementations that will result in virginity tests be abandoned, since this means violation of human rights. Moreover, this article may certainly cause an increase in the number of honour killings. Because of extramarital affairs young men will have punishment of jail between 6 months to 2 years. Nowhere in the world an age is defined for having sex. I am aware that the situation is hard for you to understand; even I cannot understand this mentality. Unfortunately this is the reality that we are facing. We as women's NGOs in Turkey demand that this article, which is a way of banning the sexual affairs of youth, not be present in law.

Another major problem for Turkey in this regard is discrimination because of sexual orientation. Women's NGOs and organisations of homosexual people are working together to acquire legal rights. We require the statement of sexual orientation to be added into articles that regulate anti-discrimination. Homosexual people are forced to hide their sexual identity in Turkey and they are isolated from society. Transvestites and transsexual people are unable to find jobs in either the public or the private sector. The only alternative for them is prostitution and they are exposed to violence, they are even killed.

Finally, I would like to discuss the issue of punishment of adultery, which has been discussed recently in Turkey. As a result of the objections of women's NGOs to the punishment of adultery and the criticisms from the EU towards this, the matter hasn't been put into the Turkish Penal Code. Women's NGOs have made several demonstrations in order to protest against this. The latest one was organised by 80 women's NGOs and held while this issue and some other issues in the Turkish Penal Code were discussed in Parliament. In conclusion, thanks to women's NGOs and EU pressure, adultery hasn't been put into the scope of punishment. We request to have a Penal Code that protects freedom. We believe, adultery, which is banned and considered as a punishment only in countries governed by canon law, should in no circumstances exist in Turkish Penal Code.

In conclusion, I want to re-emphasise that women's NGOs in Turkey have strived for the removal of discrimination from the law for years. I think that the government's intentions are not sincere enough to sustain equality between men and women, whereas their positive intention for accession to the EU is so clear. That's why we request that the EU put the issue of equality between women and men into first place of their criticism. It is clear that the accession period of Turkey to the EU is very effective for our struggle. Since actual equality can only be possible by individual, social and political changes, I believe that the EU should have a larger framework for the candidate countries to take further steps on sustaining equality and that the EU should prioritise equality between men and women within the negotiation process.

"European Gender Equality Policies", Barbara Helfferich, Cabinet of European Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs

I am going to give you an overview of what is going on in the European Commission right now in terms of gender equality and future developments for tackling gender inequalities. I have been involved at EU level for 12 years and seen the developments in this area for many years now. I was first part of the feminist movement and then recruited to the European Commission, I saw this as being a martyr to the cause. When you are part of an NGO you are protected relatively and when you go to an institution you go into the male sphere and you have to have different tools to use with the problems that arise.

Overview of developments in the area of gender equality at EU level, the developments can be divided into three phases:

- 1) Early 70's legislation on equal treatment was adopted as decision-makers realised that the labour market needed more people so they turned to women. Employment protection and access to employment were keys to this era.
- 2) A switch came in the early 90's with the preparation for the Beijing World Conference on Women. At the time the European Women's Lobby was critical of the concept of gender mainstreaming but supported the concept of getting out of the "women's ghetto" and mainstream gender into all areas. Now in fact we can look back and see that relatively little has happened since then.

Thanks to the Beijing conference, the issue of participation was brought onto the agenda, while it was not much accepted at the time. The new countries of the former Soviet Union were for the first time participating in the conference and were not supportive of the issue of "forced participation". But there was a real dialogue on these issues. Also, the southern women's movement and the northern women's movement became more united. We came back from Beijing strengthened at the EU level; there was a feeling that we could change the world after Beijing!

But the institutions quickly reacted. At this time, the European Parliament and the European Court of Justice (ECJ) were going to look at cases linked to the use of quotas. Unfortunately, the ECJ decided that quotas could not be automatic. So we started off after Beijing with institutional barriers and the period 1995-1999 was one of strong resistance from the institutions.

As we started to work on the Treaty of Amsterdam, we co-operated with other organisations to establish gender equality in the Treaty, we joined in this with Youth Organisations, and Trade Unions and succeeded in putting gender mainstreaming into the Treaty and Gender Equality is now one of the principles of the Union.

3) From 1999-2005 was a period where the gender mainstreaming strategy was taken forward. The gender mainstreaming strategy means the integration of a gender perspective in all. There was a policy progression with policy proposals on gender equality put forward in different departments. The gender mainstream strategy is coupled with specific measures in the

Commission's strategy on gender equality. One of the things that is lacking in this strategy is the issue of diversity. We have tried our best to integrate women's issues and how policies affect women in different areas, but we have not had a very diverse view of women. Another issue is that the understanding of gender is even less clear than the one of women and of the diversity among women. This is why the issue of gender needs to be taken up by young women. An example of EU action on gender equality is the Daphne programme, which is the only mean to support women to fight against violence against women. But this programme does not take into account the different forms of violence throughout the life cycle. Gender mainstreaming has two dimensions: the integration of the issue itself and the other differences that gender provides.

Another policy axis is the EU anti-discrimination policies based on Article 13 TEC. One directive was adopted against discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin. Another directive is still in Council that forbids discrimination in access to goods and services, including insurance and pensions. For the moment, women pay more for pension insurance; for health insurance women can expect to pay up to 150 Euros more per month due to being women and "risking" pregnancy. This directive tries to outlaw that but there were numerous barriers to pass this in Council and it looks like there is going to be a compromise.

At the same time the Commission is looking at the whole issue of discrimination, through for example the recent *Green paper on anti-discrimination*. This paper focuses on a horizontal anti-discrimination policy and bundle funds in this one area. It is a difficult area to debate. We used to have different policy areas for different discriminations at European level. Racial discrimination is fundamentally different than other types of discrimination. But the new approach is to use the horizontal approach despite the fact that this approach has been abandoned around the world by various countries such as Canada, the US and New Zealand.

Questions about communication policy, gender mainstreaming and why it is not being implemented properly and the public consultation and how these are ranked.

Talk in Portugal about the new COM for gender equality.

Barbara: there is no single rule, often times the decision of an individual on how to handle things. Done at services level. Public consultation and how it is done remains with the head of unit. Then a consultant gets hired and applies his or her own rules. It depends on what the consultant thinks is important. There are good consultants. You can't really have single rules as every circumstance is different. The composition of committees is important, one rule in the EC is that every committee must have 40 percent women. Often it happens some group is not including a single woman. Gender mainstreaming has to be accompanied by gender training.

The new President of the European Commission Barroso came out and said that gender was important. Complained to Member States that there were not enough women. This Commission is the one with the most women but the distribution of portfolios is a different matter. Equal opportunities is now added to the name of DG employment and social affairs. Thus M. Barroso handed back the gender equality issue to the Commissioner rather than taking it on himself.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PRESENTATION

Presentation of the conclusions of the conference by the participants

The dynamic presentations summed up the main conclusions of the conference and proposed recommendations to the members of the European Parliament present.

"I am a woman with breasts..... and I want you to talk to my face!" As an introduction to the presentation of the main conclusions of the conference, some of the participants stood up and demanded respect, power and participation for themselves and young women across Europe.

For the three previous days the conference participants had been discussing the barriers that prevent young women from participating in European society on an equal basis with men and thereby narrowing their possibilities of achieving their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the European Union. The aim was to identify and develop strategies for young women as well as presenting practical political proposals to decision-makers, and thereby address and challenge the unequal division of power between women and men in society.

The discussions were organised around 3 themes: "**Politics** - young women in public life", "Young women in power in the **social and economic sector**" and "The **image** of young women in relation to power and decision-making". The conclusions for each theme included:

- a) An identification of the **barriers** facing young women in relation to power and participation in Europe today, as well as reflections upon the interlinked social, structural and cultural mechanisms that produces these barriers.
- b) Concrete suggestions **on how to address and challenge such mechanisms** in order to develop a more equal society and create a link between the dreams and ambitions of young women and the actual social and political circumstances.

As an introduction, the close relation between the three themes was stressed as the participants pointed to the 'male, heterosexual, white, able bodied, middle class-norm' that dominates the general perception of those individuals who actively engage in the public sphere. As young women with different backgrounds in terms of country, ethnicity, class and sexual preferences the conference participants found, that they were supposed to act as the norm specifies (e.g. as a male) in order to be viewed as 'good' or 'normal'. An active effort to challenge and deconstruct this norm was thus considered crucial in order to make male-dominated areas such as politics and decision-making attractive and accessible for young women in their diversity.

Young women in politics

In the area of politics, barriers such as *socialisation, culture, identity, structures and norms* were highlighted. The ways to overcome such barriers related particularly to education and the working routines, regulations and structures of political institutions and parties. For each of these areas, different concrete actions and suggestions were presented.

Concerning the issue of **education**, the participants stressed the need to include specific gender-related projects and awareness-raising activities in all school curricula as well as the need to pay more attention to the gender aspects of the existing citizenship curriculum. They also requested the adoption of a European directive on equality between women and men in the field of education. Moreover, more non-formal education projects should be supported and encouraged and the results of experiments with non-mixed lessons in scientific subjects investigated. The need for gender sensitive teaching materials and tool kits as well as manuals on gender issues for teachers was underlined.

In the area of political decision-making (institutions and regulations) a number of concrete recommendations on how to achieve gender equality was made, including affirmative action through:

- Parity laws or quota systems,
- Diarchia/duo-leadership strategies - e.g. having two persons sharing the responsibilities of central and/or powerful positions in political organisations,
- Zipper lists for all elections - i.e. to always have a male candidate following a female (or opposite) on the electoral lists for all mandates.

The need to pay attention to the **patriarchal and not family-friendly structures** of most systems was stressed, and the following recommendations were made:

- The use of a gender sensitive language in all official documents and in the media,
- Action on the segregation of the labour market, that is the removal of obstacles linked to gender-stereotypes in vocational educational programmes & employment sectors,
- Specific efforts in professional areas where either women or men are under represented,
- Family-friendly hours and childcare facilities in the workplace,
- Parental leave systems focusing on male participation.

A number of other strategies such as **gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and diversity management** were highlighted as ways to document and restructure power relations in all forms of public life, and a call for autonomous bodies specialised in gender issues at all levels was made. The group also stressed the need for sisterhood and support amongst women through networks, mentoring and cross-parties women's coalitions, etc.

Young women in power in the social and economic sector

The group focusing on the social and economic sector identified barriers such as gender roles, violence and discrimination against women, the double working day (the fact that women both work in paid employment and still undertake the great majority of care and household tasks) and competition among women. The group stressed the fact that changes are needed at all levels and should be initiated by all committed individuals everyday and everywhere. The stereotypical gender roles should be challenged and changed through formal and non-formal education, by presenting alternative and more realistic images and role-models for young women and by focusing on how language influences our actions and self images.

Violence against women was highlighted as an extreme consequence of the unequal relationship between the sexes. It must be fought and addressed at all levels through for instance campaigns, financial and voluntary support, facilities for victims, stronger legislation etc. The group also considered the importance of taking action against poverty and for women's economic independence as a way to help eliminate violence and discrimination.

The problem of the **unequal sharing of domestic and care tasks** between women and men is also an obstacle for women on the labour market and keeps them from engaging more actively in public life. This should be addressed through better and more public social care services (such as childcare, elderly care, parental leave, help for single mothers) and a committed effort to redistribute and share equally between men and women the responsibility in domestic and public spheres. This will also be necessary in order to combat the gender pay gap and the feminisation of poverty.

The group ended up calling for more **solidarity among women** and stressed the need to work together on common goals instead of competing over the same few 'seats reserved for women'. This should be done through further networking between already established women and young women's networks, by using all resources in a sustainable way, including information sharing, mentoring, awareness-raising activities in both national and international organisations etc. A general reference to the '*master suppression techniques*' identified by the Norwegian feminist Berit Aas, was made, as they are tools for women (and others) to identify the mechanisms leading them to not being listened to or to be overlooked and ignored. The participants found that suppression techniques, such as making invisible, ridiculing, withholding information, heaping blame and creating unsolvable dilemmas (damned if you do and damned if you don't) are widely used and that young women should be more aware of how to combat them.

The image of young women

Members of the third group working on the image of young women explained that they had been investigating newspapers and magazines to map out the way women are portrayed in the media. Their conclusion was, that the way women are portrayed in the public space can be regarded as **visual harassment**. The group stressed that images affect women's perception of themselves and men's perception of women. As the images of young women displayed are often sexualised, diminutive or stereotypical, they create a constant barrier for young women to gain self-esteem and to fulfil their potential. Furthermore, those images are not representative of the diversity of young women in society and they might lead to eating disorders, sexual harassment or violence.

Whereas one can choose not to read magazines or watch TV, one cannot choose not to walk in the streets or not to act in and use the **public space**. Therefore the public space should be free of visual harassment. The participants recommended the following concrete actions to address this issue and change the general perception of women in the media and in the public sphere. Actions are divided into 3 different levels:

As an **individual** one could:

- Recognise and challenge ones' own ideals,

- Acknowledge the 'everyday woman' and try to read fashion pictures in a with a critical eye, in order to understand the circumstances around creating such an image e.g. light, graphic manipulation, make-up etc,
- Practice solidarity and activism through encouraging young women to speak out and make their voices heard about those issues,
- Support campaigns against sexist advertisement and/or for a free and equal public space,
- 'Ad bust' or sabotage the pictures placed in the public space - e.g. by painting over pictures, adding words/statements, tearing down 'intolerable' images etc. ,
- Write letters to the editors of sexist magazines and advertising companies.

Concrete actions that **NGOs/groups** of individuals can undertake:

- Lobby colleges and universities where photographers and journalists are trained to introduce gender training in their curricula,
- Lobby the fashion and media industry to picture women and men in a decent and realistic way,
- Lobby for changing the way women are photographed,
- Create alternative media,
- Motivate consumers to take or demand companies to take responsibility e.g. by boycotting companies portraying stereotypical gender roles or showing women in degrading or too traditional situations in their advertisements etc.

Solutions that should be applied on the **political level**:

- Adopt a European directive on women and the media,
- Regulate the media through objective ethical committees,
- Support and/or mandate committees devoted to studying or watching the use of the public space at local level,
- Apply a censorship on pornography. As pornography very often portrays women in degrading and miserable situations servicing men and giving very little attention to their own pleasure and enjoyment, and thus reaffirms the gender hierarchy, more initiatives on limiting the access to pornography should be taken,
- Undertake more study and research of the impact of advertising and the media on women and their body image,
- Support and/or mandate committees devoted to studying or watching the use of the public space at local level,
- Implement fully the Beijing Platform for Action, which contains a chapter about women and the media.

The session ended with an over-all discussion on barriers and potentials for young women's full participation in all spheres of life, and the members of the European Parliament present generally supported the initiatives proposed by the conference participants and urged them to continue the fight for equality and justice for all women and men.

All participants in the conference concluded the presentation by saying:

"We are here and we demand power and participation!"

CONCLUSIONS

The outcomes of this event were very rich, being based on the very active and creative contribution of all participants, but also resulting from debates reflecting the diverse background and approaches of the three organisations involved.

All participants seemed to have left Brussels with a strengthened confidence that young people can create the missing links to ensure more power and participation to young women across Europe. One crucial element to achieve this aim is the cooperation between key actors committed to youth and gender, representatives of both public authorities and the civil society.

This event has deeply contributed to pave the way of this cooperation, through the successful partnership between the European Youth Forum, WAGGGS and the European Women Lobby that co-organised the event, and through the bridge that was built with key partners in the European Parliament.

This report will serve as a basis for further co-operation towards the full and effective implementation of women's rights to participate in decision-making. WAGGGS, the European Youth Forum and the European Women`s Lobby thank all the participants for their dynamic, fruitful and creative contributions in the seminar.

ANNEXES

PROGRAMME

"Power and Participation, how can Young Women in Europe create the Missing Links?"

Brussels, Belgium, 17th - 20th September 2004

Friday 17 September 2004

- 12.00 - 15.00 Arrival and registration of participants
- 15.00 - 16.00 **Official opening and Welcome**
Chair: Heather Roy, Regional Director, Europe Region WAGGGS
Diane Dixon, Chairman, Europe Region WAGGGS
Pascale Boulanger, Bureau Member of the European Youth Forum
Cécile Gréboval, Policy Co-ordinator of the European Women's Lobby
- 16.00 - 16.30 Coffee break
- 16.30 - 18.30 **Keynote speeches:**
- Aysun Sayin, KA-DER - Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates (Turkey): " Women in Political decision-making"
 - Juliane Bir, European Trade Union Confederation: "Young Women's Participation in the economic sector"
- Discussion in plenary
- 19.30 Dinner the hotel
- 21.00 Social event in the hotel

Saturday 18 September 2004

- 9.30 - 11.00 **Keynote speeches**
- Maria Pereira, Portuguese Network of Young People for Equality "The construction of gender identities"
 - Sara Lindquist, Swedish mediacritical network *Allt är Möjligt* ("Everything is Possible") "The image of young women in the media: what impact on women's self image"
- Discussion in plenary

"Power and Participation, how can Young Women in Europe create the Missing Links?"
September 2004 - Seminar report.

11.00- 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 - 13.00	Thematic working groups -Identifying the barriers to young women's participation
13.00 - 14.30	Lunch in the hotel
14.30 - 16.00	Continuation of 3 working groups Plenary report and discussion
16.00 - 16.30	Coffee break
16.30 - 18.30	Simulation game on young women in decision-making

Free evening

Sunday 19 September 2004

9.30 - 11.00	Thematic working groups - Identifying ways to overcome barriers
11.00- 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 - 13.00	Continuation of working groups
13.00 - 14.30	Lunch in the hotel
14.30 - 16.00	Continuation of 3 working groups - discussion on presentation of report Plenary: reports from working groups and preparation of the presentation of the results Discussion

Dinner in town

Monday 20 September 2004

9.30 - 11.00	Information session Barbara Helfferich, Cabinet of European Commissioner for Social Affairs: "European Gender Equality Policies" Aysun Sayin, KA-DER - Association for Supporting and Training Women Candidates (Turkey): "Young Women and the Enlargement of the EU"
11.00- 11.30	Coffee break
11.30 - 13.00	Final preparation of the outcome / EP presentation
13.00 - 14.30	Lunch in the hotel

"Power and Participation, how can Young Women in Europe create the Missing Links?"
September 2004 - Seminar report.

**Closing session in the European Parliament with the kind support and under
the patronage of Catherine Stihler MEP
European Parliament, 4-6pm -Room 5B37**

Closing session: European Parliament 4-6pm - Room 5B37 Paul Henri Spaak

Chair: Heather Roy, Regional Director, Europe Region WAGGGS

Opening speeches

MEP Catherine Stihler

MEP Anna ZÁBORSKÁ, Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
(excused)

MEP Lissy Gröner, Member of both Committees on Youth and Women

MEP Hiltrud Breyer, Member of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

Sandra Dybowski, Europe Committee WAGGGS

Mary Mc Phail, Secretary General of the European Women's Lobby

Renaldas Vaisbrodas, Vice President of the European Youth Forum

Presentation of conference results by participants

Open discussion

Reception : 6pm- Salon des députés, Spinelli building

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Katju Aro	Union League of Finnish Feminists	Finland
Zsafia Batory	Young Women`s Association	Hungary
Claudia Berjano	Associaçao fr Mulheres Contra a Violência	Portugal
Lovise Brade Johanson	Women`s Council in Denmark	Denmark
Sandra Bûttner	BPW Germany	Germany
Charlotte Cox	St Colomb's Park House	United Kingdom
Ruth Diaz-Ulfano	VSI Teenage Programme	Ireland
Alexandra Dolezlova	Gender Studies o.p.s	Czech Republic
Anja Liza Frandsen	KFUK-SID	Denmark
Alenah González Vidal	Escoltes Catalan	Spain
Coline Granger	CLEF	France
Charmaine Grech	KNZM	Malta
Christoffer Grønstedt	LNU	Norway
Helena Hurtig	SSR	Sweden
Ksenia Jovonic	SOS Phone for Women and Children Victims of Violence	Serbia/ Montenegro
Renata Kalivod	LJP	Latvia
Dörthe Köhler	EYCE	Germany
Jemma Lee	IGG	Ireland
Rachel Matthews-McKay	ICTU	Ireland
Karine Mkrtchyan	NYCA	Armenia
Lusine Navasardyan	NYCA	Armenia
Barbara Nowacka	ECOSY	Poland
Nüría Palua Tur	Escoltes Catalan	Spain
Laura Paoletti	AGESCI	Italy
Sarah Parkin	Girl Guiding UK	United Kingdom
Maria Rygge	KFUK-KFUM	Norway
Marie-Aude Schwarz	GSdF	France
Bettina Schwarzmayr	ESIB	Austria
Dimitra Seropanagiotopoulos	SHO	Greece
Ivonene Urriola Pérez	CELEM	Spain

Trainers

Teresa Fragoso, European Federation for Intercultural Learning, Spain
Kateryna Shalayeva, Ukraine
Lara Tonna , Maltese Girl Guide Association, Malta

Organisers

Cécile Gréboval, Policy co-ordinator, European Women`s Lobby
Silvia Lamonaca, Development Executive(External Relations) Europe Region WAGGGS
Kélig Puyet, Human Rights and Equality Policy Officer, European Youth Forum