

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY
Briefing from the meeting of the Executive
Brussels 31 August and 1 September 2007

Participants: Kirsti Kolthoff, Martine Levy, Tanja Auvinen, June Jacobs, Therese Murphy, Iluta Lace, Brigitte Triems
Myria Vassiliadou on the 31st August, Cécile Gréboval, Marie-Anne Leunis (Secretariat)

Welcome to our new Secretary General

We were happy to welcome Myria Vassiliadou, who attended the executive meeting for the first time before taking up her position as secretary general on the 1st of October. **Myria Vassiliadou** said in her presentation of herself that she is very pleased to attend this meeting and is looking forward to working in the secretariat and also with all the EWL members.

Minutes of Executive meeting dated 17 May 2007 were approved via e-mail and had already been sent out to the board.

The minutes of the meeting via e-mail of the executive dated 3 July 2007 on the set up of statutes for the new branch of EWL “the European Policy Action Centre on Violence against Women” were approved.

Matters arising not covered in the agenda

1) Letter to Swedish Women's Lobby on motion passed on Drugs and Alcohol

EWL has sent a letter to the Swedish Women's Lobby informing them that due to a lack of resources in the secretariat, EWL could not implement this motion. SWL has sent this letter to their member organisations and they reacted by saying that EWL should postpone it or do it next year. **Decision** : EWL will write a letter to the Gender Institute to propose that it will take this issue on board.

2) Roles and responsibilities of the executive

A written report of the meeting in Potsdam had not yet come from Marsha Scott. We will contact her and then have the possibility to discuss the issue via email.

3) A Swedish Journalist will join for lunch and attend a part of the meeting tomorrow:

Karin Alfredsson is carrying out a research for the Swedish Women's Lobby for a publication celebrating SWL 10 years birthday.

Feedback from May board meeting and seminar

Seminar:

The full report of the seminar is not finalised yet. The speeches are on the WEB site.

Board meeting:

Different points of views about the board meeting were discussed in order to propose improvements for the future.

Preparation for the GA and the seminar

The results of the preparations have been sent out to the delegates.

The draft agenda was agreed.

A report from The issue groups committee was presented. The committee had worked very hard and had selected 5 issue groups to be part of the GA and wished to consult the executive before the final decision. The choice was agreed by the executive.

Documents about this have been sent out to the delegates.

Emergency motions: we have not received emergency motions yet.

Agenda GA:

New members accepted in 2007 will be invited to have one member on the board attending as an observer until the next elections in 2008. This will be the case for Slovenia and Romania once they are accepted as new members.

The GA draft agenda was agreed. *It has been sent out.*

GA registration fees and membership fees and implementation of Solidarity Fund

Registration and membership fees: For clarification: new member organisations do not pay the participation fee for the 2 first years of their membership. The problem this year is that our members in the new member states have to pay the participation fee, having been members for 2 years now. Due to financial difficulties of our member organisations, some countries are not sending a full delegation to the GA.

Some long term solutions were discussed in order to prepare a paper for the board in January. A short term decision for this year was agreed to be communicated with relevant members.

Solidarity Fund: there were no applicants for the SF for which the deadline was 27 July.

Update on membership issues.

Slovenia: will be presented as a new member at the GA;

Poland: the contacts are not finalised.

European Movement: they have not paid their membership fee for 2006 and 2007. Contacts are ongoing.

Romania: June will travel to Romania in September and will have contacts to discuss in re their future membership.

The International Roma Women's Network: no news yet.

(at this stage contacts were established with Soraya Post, who informed that a delegate will come to the GA from Romania and Kirsti Koltsoff is invited to an international Roma conference as key note speaker thanks to SP.)

The Black Women's Network is to have a conference in Vienna to be followed-up.

Current gender equality developments at EU level including exchanges on the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

The European Commission launched a consultation in July about anti-discrimination.

This is a very complex issue and the risk for gender to be sidelined. EWL will contribute for mid-October. A paper was presented as the basis for our discussion.

It was decided to organise a consultation with the Board. *(A consultation paper was sent to the board with very few answers. EWL has this week submitted our answer to the Commission!)*

High Level group on disability

Representation has up to this date been made by Lydia la Rivière Zijdel, who was asked to continue this important task and who has put a lot of efforts into the work and given EWL a high profile. We thank her very much for this.

Gunta Anca was appointed to represent EWL at the meetings of this High Level Group on Disability.

Since it is quite difficult to bring a gender perspective in that high level group it was decided to ask staff member to act as support. Maria Collins will do this.

Nordic Baltic project – strategy for the future

Malin Björk made a presentation about the project (see document):

- an interim report of activities for the period 1/1/2007 – 30/6/2007 has been sent to the Government Offices in Sweden in July 2007;
- we are in discussion with the funders for the prolongation of the project – see below.
- the web site will be launched in October;
- a networking meeting + a conference will take place in Vilnius early October.

Finances:

The Swedish Government through the Equality Unit (formerly the Foreign Office) has confirmed to make the final payment of 125.000 € in October. They also expressed the will to fund a prolongation of the project – no details yet. Malin and Kirsti are looking into this proposal.

The new EWL structure (EPAC) could technically take over the project (as contract holder) if possible. An intern will be paid from the project to give Malin support and different solutions are being looked into for the work for 6 months during Malin's maternity leave starting in December.

The executive was in favour of extending the project and to try to have the project included in the new structure - the EPAC. Information has to be forwarded to the board and a more detailed proposal to be sent to the executive.

Violence against women

EPAC – European Policy Action Center:

Kirsti Kolthoff met with Colette de Troy to finalise the necessary steps to be taken for the organisation to start. The new statutes were sent to the Belgian Authorities and are accepted.

(Also the Belgian government has now approved of setting up EPAC)

We have now to wait for the call for the Daphne programme in October.

The EPAC board will meet during the time for the EWL GA in Bulgaria in October.

Relationship between the board and the Observatory on Violence:

Marsha Scott is representing the board and it is not necessary to have an executive member in addition. However the executive has to set up a link with MS.

Report of activities president and executive members + secretariat Martine Levy:

- represented EWL at a conference on active inclusion in June;

- attended a workshop on conciliation in Lisbon

June Jacobs:

- chaired the NAWO post CSW meeting held at the office of the Women's Equality Unit. During the meeting it was suggested that we should seek a meeting soon with the Minister for Women, Harriet Harman and Akina Mama Africa;
- had a meeting in Brussels on membership issues;
- will travel to Romania next week;
- Aquina Mama Africa: to bring them in eventually!

Tanja Auvinen:

- attended a conference on Gender Budgeting in Frankfurt as an NGO representative.
- Was involved and active with the observatory, contacted them and worked on an action plan on VAW.

Kirsti Kolthoff from June to July with holiday in August:

- Was a speaker at the Forum on the Future of Democracy in Sweden in a break out session organised by the Swedish Women's Lobby about women in decision making. Important how to use Article 4 in CEDAW;
- Met with M. Laxen, the Swedish Government Equality unit, for the funding for the Nordic Baltic project.
- Was a speaker in a seminar about Discrimination at the Almedalen political week in Sweden
- Was a speaker at a conference on the Year for Equal Opportunities for All organised by the a Parliament Socialist E in Brussels;
- Was a speaker at a conference on the Year for Equal Opportunities for All in Lisboa;
- Had a meeting in the EWL secretariat for funding proposals;
- Had a meeting with Commissioner Spidlar in Brussels invited to a brainstorming about women in decision making.

Iluta Lace:

- attended a conference in Turkey and mentioned EWL
- attended the Almedalen meeting on invitation by the Social Democrat Women's Organisation. Presentation of the DVD not for sale.

Therese Murphy:

- worked with Colette on the new structure of the EPAC.
- Produced a manifesto for the elections in Ireland;
- There is a possibility of funding by the Irish Government for migrant women – to check with Cécile how to coordinate. There is also money for good practices.

Brigitte Triems:

- attended the Gender Budgeting conference. There is a European Network on budgeting.
- Attended a conference organised by the German Presidency on the Framework of women with disabilities. No discussion as well – not useful.
- Did a presentation for the Council during the conference on the 50 years of the European Social Fund – no workshops, no discussions.
- Was invited on the 22/8 to a summer course in Weimar. Eastern European countries were present and are interested in the work of the EWL.
- On the 1/10 - received an invitation from Lissy Gröner to talk about equality in Europe;
- On the 19/9 will have a meeting with Angela Merkel;
- Is invited by an organisation for Blind and Deaf to talk about the situation of disabled

women in Europe.

We thanked Brigitte for her participation in all these conferences organised by the German Presidency!

Cécile Gréboval:

- did the Road Map monitoring document for the GA;
- worked on a document concerning the Institutional Mechanisms for advocacy women – motion of last year;
- Treaty and IGC: to inform members + Platform campaign
- Women Human Rights and Violence: new structure – cooperation with the Fundamental Rights Agency in Vienna;
- Equality and social policies: employment guidelines
- Letter concerning Sigma Huda

Marie-Anne Leunis:

- mostly occupied with the organisation of the 2 meetings in Vilnius for the Nordic Baltic project early October.
- General administration work and follow up of conferences and meetings for the executive members and staff.

EWL work on human rights

Czech women:

We received a request from 2 Roma women asking EWL to support them regarding the problem with illegal sterilization.

The question is when are we going to act? We receive a lot of similar requests. The secretariat has limited resources. After discussion we conclude in that EWL will react in case of:

- requests for cases that are happening in the EU and relating to our the aims and principles;
- we will work together with Amnesty International concerning very specific cases.

We will follow up the case of the Czech women. A possibility is to start a new system of interns for 6 months to do also HR in view to formalize actions for the future.

Sigma Huda:

We did a letter before the judgement asking for a fair treatment.

Update on activities relating to EU Presidencies

Slovenia:

To write a letter to the Slovenian Presidency asking for a meeting and also invite the Slovenian Coordination.

Upcoming meetings

3/9/2007: Sigrd Rausing Trust London – Tea to introduce new director = June Jacobs

10/9/2007 : CLEF – Continuation EWL seminar on migration in Marseille = Cécile Gréboval

12-14/9/2007: Academie Europe – CESI – Symposium – Daring to have children – men and women torn between work and the family in Brussels = Iluta Lace

12-15/9/2007: Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies – ESF workshop “Feminisms and Activism in Nicosia = Myria Vassiliadou and Kirsti Kolthoff

17/9/2007: Portuguese Presidency – Forum on Social Services of General Interest in Lisbon = Thérèse Murphy

28-29/9/2007: Centre for the advancement of women in politics – Queens University Belfast – Gender Justice and Democracy in the EU = Thérèse Murphy

3-4/10/2007: Portuguese Presidency – conference “employability and entrepreneurship – gender stereotypes in Lisbon = Martine Levy and Thérèse Murphy

<p>4/10/2007: EDF Disability Rally in Brussels = Cécile Gréboval 4-5/10/2007: Nordic Baltic conferences in Vilnius = Iluta Lace, Malin Björk, Grainne Healy, Marie-Anne Leunis and Lisa Kerker. 8-9/10/2007: Portuguese Presidency – conference on trafficking in human beings and gender in Porto = Colette de Troy 11-12/10/2007: European Parliament - conference on the situation of discrimination on the basis of gender, religion and belief, disability, age and sexual orientation beyond the job market in Brussels = Kirsti Kolthoff, Tanja Auvinen + secretariat 11-12/10/2007: Assembly of European Regions – Conference on Equal opportunities between women and men in Timisoara = Martine Levy 16-17/10/2007: 6th European Roundtable on Poverty and Social Exclusion in Ponta Delgado = Brigitte Triems and Iluta Lace 5-6/11/2007: Instituto Andaluz de la Mujer – 2nd International seminar on gender mainstreaming in Sevilla = Kirsti Kolthoff 15/11/2007: Mother Child Education Foundation – conference on empowering women in Istanbul = June Jacobs</p>
<p>Care issues Iluta presented a document that was discussed and some changes were accepted. Political actions for changes will have to be made. <u>Regarding the budget:</u> there is no budget forecasted for the 3 next years.</p>
<p>Wise women group The existing mailing list is to be sent to the Executive. Proposals for criteria will be set on the e-mail and to be discussed at the next executive meeting.</p>
<p>AOB <u>5th Women's Conference</u> A group of Soroptimist organisations organised several meetings at the CSW and informed about their intention to organise a 5th World Conference in Bulgaria in May 2010. Nobody reacted to this announcement. The Deutscher Frauenrat received an invitation to attend a conference in Germany to create a planning committee! This is to be followed up. <u>A dish washer was decided to install in the office.</u> <u>EWL name plate outside:</u> The secretariat will check possibilities.</p>
<p>Date and place of next meetings Executive: 25 October in Borovets: all day, December : telephone conference (date to be fixed), 25 January in Brussels, 23 May in Slovenia Board meeting: January 2008 : 26-27 January in Brussels, 24-25 May in Slovenia</p>