

UWE NEWSLETTER 2009 number 1

Dear UWE-members,

In the first newsletter 2009, you will find information on the following topics:

1. Organisational messages
2. News from the Council of Europe
3. News from the EWL
4. IFUW news
5. Biographies of 5 influential Slovenian women by Lilijana Burcar
6. Upcoming Events and Special Days

1. Organisational messages

- a) A call for candidates for President and Secretary has been sent to the CER's/UWE Representatives (see profiles on <http://www.ifuw.org/uwe/history.htm>) (Deadline: July 6)
- b) A new year has started. The treasurer has sent the NFA's their dues invoice. Please remember to pay the annual dues by June 1.
- c) The Project group "European Mentoring" has held their first subsidised meeting in Finland. Read their reports on: <http://www.ifuw.org/uwe/european-project.htm>

2. News from the Council of Europe

Vera John and Renée Gérard have attended the Winter INGO Conference of the Council of Europe. The main event of the winter session was the annual **Plenary Meeting of the Conference of INGO's on Wednesday, 28 January**, during which the elections for the post of **President of the Conference of INGO's** and the posts of **Vice-Presidents** and **Rapporteurs of the Bureau of the Conference** had been held. A large number of the 417 international non-governmental organisations, meanwhile enjoying participatory status with the Council of Europe had sent their representatives to the Conference.

UWE is taking part in **working groups** of the following committees and transversal group

- Culture, Science and Education Committee
- Human Rights Committee
- Civil Society and Democracy Committee
- Gender Equality Transversal Group

Among the future topics on the agenda of the Gender Equality Transversal Group will be „The gender wage gap“and „Involving men in achieving gender equality“.

3. News from the European Women's Lobby

EWL lunch meeting on gender budgeting – The European Women's Lobby coordinated the lunch meeting in January of the Civil Society Contact Group on "Gender Budgeting, an Instrument for Good Governance" in Brussels.

EWL participated to a European Commission expert meeting on the revision of two directives related to asylum: One of the key tools that EWL has been highlighting for many years is the need to have gender guidelines (based on UNHCR guidelines).

EWL met with the EP Rapporteur on the maternity leave directive – On 08.01.09, EWL representatives met with MEP Edite Estrela (PSE, Portugal), European Parliament Rapporteur on the revision of the European maternity directive. The EWL in particular stressed the need for a longer (24 weeks) and paid maternity leave throughout Europe. The EWL also put forward the idea of making the 6 weeks mandatory maternity leave available and paid for all

women in Europe. The European maternity directive from 1992 is currently being revised by the European institutions.

EWL participated to different meetings on the new anti-discrimination directive. EWL met in this framework the European Commission on 15.01.09 and participated to lobbying actions in the month of January targeting the European Parliament who is currently drafting reports on the directive.

Preparing for the Swedish EU Presidency. On 19 January, EWL had a meeting at the Swedish Government offices to discuss priorities and activities for the upcoming Swedish EU Presidency. In the fall 2009, two important conferences will be organised: on economic growth and gender equality, and on men's violence against women. The Equality summit and the 8th European roundtable on poverty and social exclusion will also be held under the Swedish presidency.

4. IFUW news

The 30th Triennial Conference will take place in Mexico City from the 3rd to 9th of August in 2010. 'Education, Empowerment and Development' will be the overall theme for the 30th IFUW Conference. This overall theme will be broken down into four conference themes that will be explored over the course of two days in plenary sessions, interdisciplinary seminars and workshops. Conference participants will have a choice of two themes on each day.

The thematic days will open with a speaker or panel of speakers for each of that day's themes. This will be followed by three interdisciplinary seminars for each theme - two in English and one in Spanish. In the afternoon there will be five workshops (one in Spanish), which will provide an opportunity to examine the themes in a more interactive environment. Each day's activities will be summed in a plenary session for each theme.

Conference Themes:

- Advancing Women through Lifelong Learning
- Challenges to Women's Empowerment in the 21st Century
- New Challenges for Sustainable Development
- Towards A Just Society

31 May is the deadline for submitting abstracts for Interdisciplinary Seminars.

WOMEN & EMPLOYMENT: WOMEN WORKING IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

For three weeks, from 2 to 26 February 2009, the discussions@ifuw.org network is looking at aspects of employment and the labour market as they affect women in a globalized world.

Moderator is Marion Minis, member of the Status of Women Committee.

During the first week, we discussed personal opinions and experiences with employment in a globalized world. Whether globalization works for you - or not - depends, among other things, on the economic situation in the world. Finding a job, and keeping it, esp. in a period of global financial problems - as we seem to be encountering now - is much more difficult than in economically prosperous times, as some of week 1's answers indicate.

Some of you also mentioned having experienced discrimination, not only from male colleagues / co-workers, but most of all from female colleagues / co-workers, both at work and in your private lives. It is good to be aware of such discriminating behaviour and how it affects you. Would it help to confront these women (and friends and family members) with their negative behaviour? Or are other strategies more appropriate?

According to WHO / ILO discrimination based on sex still pervades the labour market. Inequality between men and women is a determining factor in world poverty, with women

comprising 60% of world's working poor. In many countries, women have higher unemployment rates than men and make up the majority of workers in the informal economy.

NEW IFUW HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORK - highered@ifuw.org

Members are invited to join IFUW's newest member email network - highered@ifuw.org. This network will link professors, lecturers, researchers, women active in higher education governance, and others interested in issues concerning women in higher education.

IFUW EMPOWERING WOMEN POSTER COMPETITION - DEADLINE 28 APRIL 2009

Complete competition deadlines and entry forms can be found at <http://www.ifuw.org/postercomp/>.

IFUW JOINED EUROPEAN INITIATIVE TO STRENGTHEN THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN SCIENCE

IFUW has joined the Hellenic Association of University Women (SEE) and other partners in submitting a multi-faceted project proposal to the European Union for funding. The project seeks to strengthen the role of women in scientific research and scientific decision-making. The proposal is currently under consideration by the European Commission. The working title is NANCY goes into research. Willemijn van der Meer, President of the UWE, is our liaison. The Hellenic Association, IFUW's former affiliate in Greece, is in the process of re-affiliating to IFUW.

7. Biographies of five influential Slovenian women by Lilijana Burcar

VIDA TOMŠIČ (June 26, 1913 – December 12, 1998)

A lawyer, one of the most influential politicians of the post-WWII Yugoslavia and a notable advocate of women's rights. In her groundbreaking 1940 speech at the Communist Party gathering she laid the foundations for what became the socialist programme for women's emancipation and social equality.

ITA RINA (July 7, 1907 – May 10, 1979)

The first internationally renowned Slovene movie star, Ita Rina was an idol for young girls who were dreaming of their own future as film actresses and served as a role model for women who wanted to pursue work outside home and be recognized for their knowledge and skills.

LILI NOVY (December 24, 1885 – March 7, 1958)

A poet and translator who left an indelible mark on the Slovene literary landscape in the first half of the 20th century.

FRANJA BOJC BIDOVEC (November 26, 1913 – November 26, 1985)

A physician and the only female manager of a partisan hospital complex, which was successfully preserved after WWII and named after her. The Franja Partisan Hospital complex is one of the three cultural sites in Slovenia, which received the Label of European Heritage in 2007.

VALENTINA KOBE (February 14, 1905 – September 29, 1998)

Regarded to be one of the first and most significant among female physicians who brazened the way for Yugoslav women in the field of medicine. She was a leading anatomist in post-WWII Yugoslavia and a professor of medicine who educated a number of outstanding medical and surgical experts.

For an English summary of the biographies see: <http://www.ifuw.org/uwe/abstracts.htm>

8. Upcoming Events and Special Days

- 2 – 13 March 53rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, New York
Theme: “The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men,
including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS”
- 21 March General Assembly of the Swiss Association in Bern
- 27-30 April Spring INGO Conference 2009 Council of Europe in Strasbourg
- 25 April Research Day Scottish Federation in Dundee
- 25 April European day British Federation in London
- 16 May Annual general Meeting Scottish Federation in Perth

Warm regards,

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