

UWE NEWSLETTER 2007 number 2

Dear UWE-members,

It is time for another newsletter. In this newsletter you will find information on the following topics:

1. Reminder: Bid UWE Meeting 2008
2. Round- table Women in Decision-making positions by the EU
3. March 8th The future of Women in Europe
4. CSW New York
5. Turkish Cyprus
6. General Assembly AFFDU in Montpellier
7. European Day BFWG in London
8. EWL New Secretary General
9. European Mentoring Project
10. Workshops and seminars at Manchester
11. Sponsorship Manchester
12. Belgian Law on Gender
13. Communication
14. Upcoming Events and Special Days

1. Reminder: Bid UWE Meeting 2008

Organising the yearly UWE meeting is quite a lot of work I would like to receive bids from the countries that are prepared to organise the UWE meeting 2008. Please enter your bid in before June 1st. (uwepresident@ifuw.org)

2. Round- table Women in Decision-making positions by the EU

The European Union organised a seminar to celebrate the International Women's Day. I attended this interesting seminar. It started with a roundtable with 4 business ladies who told us their successful ways of overcoming barriers for women in management positions. In the evening 5 Women EU Commissioners discussed progress and challenges for women in politics. (more than three-quarters of the Members of national Parliaments are men, leaving just 23% of seat to women (30% in the European Parliament) whilst 14 Member States have less than 20% of women Members of the Parliament. For more facts and do's and don'ts to break the glass ceiling see: www.ifuw.org/uwe/reports.htm.)

3. March 8th The future of Women in Europe

A lot of countries organised all sorts off activities on Women's Day. I participated in a debate organised for the European Parliament in the Netherlands. The theme was: The emancipation of the women in Europe the coming 50 years. The evening was split in three sub themes: Work-life Balance, Women in decision-making positions and Emancipation in a European Context. I was one of the speakers on women in decision-making positions. We discussed on selection processes that are women-unfriendly and if there should be quota to get more women at decision-making positions (amongst others: Will the New Norwegian law -a minimum of 40 % of each sexes in the management of companies- succeed?).

4. CSW New York

As every year the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women took place in New York. This year's topic was: "Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and Violence Against the Girl Child". Renée Gerard has attended this CSW together with other UWE and IFUW members. What an awesome responsibility we as educated women have! Without

exception, in the many panels, workshops, and seminars, education was a key element in best practices and interventions for eliminating discrimination and violence against the girl child. See www.ifuw.org/uwe/reports.htm for more details.

5. Turkish Cyprus

From 10 till 14 March Griselda Kenyon and I visited our brand new full IFUW-member, Turkish Cyprus. We were warmly welcomed and visited a lot of Universities; there are five Universities in Turkish Cyprus. Higher education is a major sector in Northern Cyprus, but the accreditation of their diplomas in the ongoing Bologna process is far away.

To read more about their problems and our visit see: www.ifuw.org/uwe/reports.htm

6. General Assembly AFFDU in Montpellier

Renée Gerard and I have attended the General Assembly of the French Association of University Women (AFFDU). As I have a history with Montpellier (my Amsterdam branch is a sister of the Montpellier branch) it was a chance to see a lot of friends. Montpellier has a female mayor who told us in her speech that Montpellier got 4 more women in important decision-making positions. Montpellier is the eighth largest city of France. I also held a speech and stressed the fact that the French Association is always playing an active role in UWE and IFUW. In the evening there was a mouth-watering dinner at the oldest Faculty of Medicine of the Mediterranean. For my entire speech and more see:

www.ifuw.org/uwe/reports.htm

7. European Day BFWG in London

The British Federation of Women Graduates organises a European Day every year. The theme they selected for 2007 is: Who Cares? It is in line with the Who Cares Campaign that The European Women's Lobby launched last year May.

Care policies and the provision of care services are intrinsically related to the achievement of equality between women and men. The lack of affordable, accessible and high quality care services in most European Union countries and the fact that care work is not equally shared between women and men have a direct negative impact on women's ability to participate in all aspects of social, economic, cultural and political life. I was one of the speakers.

For my presentation and the programme see: www.ifuw.org/uwe/reports.htm

8. EWL New Secretary General

The European Women's Lobby has appointed a new Secretary General, Myria Vassiliadou. Myria has an impressive long-term commitment for women's rights and equality between women and men. She is from Cyprus. She holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in sociology from the University of Kent, UK where she also completed her doctoral degree in the Sociology of Gender. She is a founding member of the Board and currently holds the position of Executive Director of the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies in Nicosia, Cyprus.

9. European Mentoring Project

One of the UWE European Projects is Mentoring. I am delighted to announce that Sonya Höstman (Finland) is going to arrange a workshop on mentoring during the IFUW in Manchester. Together with members from Turkey and Slovenia they have applied for European funding for the project.

10. Workshops and seminars at Manchester

Happily the IFUW conference is organised in Europe this time, so we do not need to travel far. I hope that a lot of our members use this opportunity to experience an IFUW Conference,

either for the first time or to meet old friends and discuss topics that we are interested in and make ourselves strong for women's rights.

As the UWE General Assembly is scheduled during this conference, we will not have a separate registration procedure.

To get an idea of the number of members that are coming, but also to have an impression of the kind of subjects we are most interested in, I would like each CER or President to inform me about the number of members that have registered for Manchester and which workshops and/or seminars are prepared by your members.

11. Sponsorship Manchester

The total costs involved in joining the IFUW Conference in Manchester is a huge burden especially for the women from the less developed countries.

Therefore the organising committee has set up a sponsorship programme.

A. Would any of the national associations be ready to join some of the British local associations and sponsor one of the Interdisciplinary Seminars? (Minimum donation £100 to gain sponsorship acknowledgement in the conference papers.)

B. Would any of our members be willing to join our select band of generous members who have already made individual donations? (Payment can be made on arrival at Conference - all we need is a written offer of the donation.)

12. Belgian Law on gender

Belgium is one of the first countries that has voted for a law that is particularly monitoring that all new legislation and amendments to laws should be checked on the following two points:

A. Are men and women touched in the same way by this law?

B. Will this law contribute to correct the inequality between men and women?

For more information about the law in French go to www.ifuw.org/uwe/EWL.

13. Communication

Communication is a two-way process. Some of you already gave reactions on my newsletters. I really would love more people to react on my newsletter. To keep the website up-to-date and have a variety of activities mentioned I also need your input. I would like to receive reports on the activities your national affiliation is organizing, if available.

So please don't hesitate to email me (uwepresident@ifuw.org).

14. Upcoming Events and Special Days

14-17 June Women in Development in Europe Annual Conference:

New aid, old trade: What do women have to say?

in Madrid, for more info see: www.eurosur.org/wide

19 June Gender Equality Day. Further information on see:

<http://www.ifuw.org/uwe/conferences.htm>

25-28 June Quarterly INGO Conference Council of Europe in Strasbourg

10-16 August IFUW Conference

12 August Brainstorm evening UWE in Manchester

15 August UWE General Assembly in Manchester

The French translation of the newsletter is done by Audrey Kühler-Oostra. Audrey, thanks a lot!

Warm regards,

Willemijn van der Meer
President UWE/GEFDU