

Dear UWE-members,

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

1. UWE event 2008 and General Assembly 2008
2. Organisational messages
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Inspirational Quote

“Gender and women’s empowerment is at the core of what we need to do in the field of development, and gender equality is also smart economics.”

– Mr. Robert Zoellick, World Bank Group President

1. UWE event 2008 and General Assembly 2008

Just 6 weeks left and over 160 members from 20 different NFAs will meet each other in Kyrenia, North Cyprus for the UWE event 2008.

The Turkish Cypriot Association of University Women (TCAUW) is offering us a programme with a lot of variety, a cocktail at Bellapais Abbey, two lectures on the theme: “Women’s role in Creating Peace”, an Open Space meeting on the UWE Strategy, the General Assembly and a cultural visit to Famagusta.

The registration is still open. You will find the registration form on our homepage.

The majority of the papers for the Strategic Session and the General Assembly are put on our website (www.ifuw.org/uwe/history.htm)

2. Organisational messages

- a) The Bulgarian Association has elected a new board. The new CER is Kornelia Slavova and the President is Milena Kirova.
- b) The Dutch Association has elected a new President, Anneke van Doorne-Huiskes.

3. News on the Council of Europe

The UWE Vice-President attended the Summer Session of the INGO Conference.

During this June session, the whole Conference of INGO met to discuss and to vote about the restructuring of the Conference in the process since two years.

The main changes at stake with a Bureau, a permanent Commission (replacing le Comité de liaison, less people more and more responsibilities given to the members) and a drastic change of the groupings. Instead of ten groupings there will be Five Committees and two Transversal groups (Cross Issues): One of the two will be the one on Gender Equality.

You can read the entire report on www.ifuw.org/uwe/reports.htm

4. News on the European Women’s Lobby

The European Women’s Lobby published its **Annual Report for 2007**. It contains articles on issues such as reconciliation of work and private life, the European Roadmap for equality between women and men, violence against women and trafficking, migration etc. The report is available in English and in French on www.womenlobby.org.

EWL participates in European Network of **Women in Decision-making in Politics and the Economy**. The Network was launched on 2 June and aims to provide a platform at EU level for successful strategies to improve gender balance in decision-making positions across Europe. The group currently consists of 15 existing networks.

In October, the next General Assembly of EWL will be held in Lyon under the French presidency. The theme will be “Local authorities as actors in promoting equality between women and men in Europe- (realities and perspectives)”.

In the perspective of the elections to the European Parliament in 2009, EWL is starting a campaign to give more weight to women in European political life. It means encouraging women to get involved and to be more active in this election, standing as candidates, supporting women candidates and male

candidates who are in favour of women's advancement. EWL issues a statement: NO DEMOCRACY without PARITY.

5. European projects and best practices

a. Another best practices in the field of "How can we keep our membership vital and growing"

Romania (Julieta Mirea CIR- ANFDUR): "Usually, each of us brings a friend to be member in our association (with or without success). These days, by telephone or letters, we seek our former members and we seek to vigour all our branches. On 24th May we have met to find out "with whom we dance" on the future."

b. A best practice in the field of politics is: The Turkish Association of University Women (TÜKD) has been working with other NGOs to increase the number of women in the National Assembly through quota assignment by political parties. The end of recent elections showed a 50% increase, from 4.5% to 9%. Turkish women are determined to fight for their rights and to reach even higher participation rates in politics and have positive discrimination in all areas.

6. Books on gender

a. Researching Gender Democracy in the European Union

Challenges and Prospects by Yvonne Galligan and Sara Clavero

Abstract: This paper outlines a research programme for the study of democracy in the European Union (EU) from a gender perspective. It takes as its point of departure the recent turn to deliberative democracy in the field of EU studies, and more particularly, the claim that these theories can provide a response to current debates on the problem of the democratic deficit within this complex polity. The paper then discusses the relevance of deliberative democracy to research on gender in the EU and the main challenges that arise in trying to operationalise its main theoretical tenets. Drawing on feminist revisions of deliberative democracy theory, as well as on previous applications of these theories to empirical research, the paper proposes a set of indicators that can be used for an assessment of gender and democratic deliberation in this supranational arena.

b. The return of childhood innocence: Conservative backlash and gender politics, published in 2007 by Založba Sophia, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Pages 205, author: Lilijana Burcar, Ph.D (member of the Slovenia Association of University Women)

The beginning of the 21st century has witnessed a revival of the romantic trope of innocent child, which has staged its massive comeback through the backdoor of such bestselling mainstream children's literature as the Harry Potter books and Pullman's trilogy His Dark Materials. The book argues that the return of the innocent child is informed by the re-inscription and re-naturalization of rigid constructs of masculinity and femininity, which makes seemingly universal and simple field of innocent childhood in fact gender stratified and hierarchically organized. In this respect, the return of the trope of innocent child in bestselling children's literature is heavily underlined by the conservative backlash and comes at a crucial moment in history marked by a reorganisation of world economies, social structures and a turn to the ideological right.

7. Upcoming Events and Special Days

- 11-14 September UWE event 2008, Kyrenia, North Cyprus
- 1-3 October Autumn INGO Conference Council of Europe in Strasbourg
- 18-19 October Friendships meeting of the German Speaking NFAs; Germany, Switzerland and Austria in Solothurn, Switzerland
- 24-26 October EWL General Assembly 2008 / Assemblée générale du LEF 2008

Arielle Wagenknecht is taking care of the French translation of this newsletter. Arielle thanks a lot!

Warm regards,

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