

ANNUAL
REPORT 2003

EUROPEAN
WOMEN'S
LOBBY





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The voice of women in Europe

The European Women's lobby brings together over **3,000 women's organisations** working to achieve equality of women and men to ensure that gender equality and women's human rights are taken into consideration in all European Union policies. EWL is a democratic organisation with transparent procedures of communication, decision-making and accountability. EWL recognises the diversity of women's lives and experiences and aims to include the interests of the many women who face multiple discrimination.

EWL has **consultative status** with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and with the Council of Europe.

Budget: for the financial year 2003, the EWL core budget was 812,500 Euro. EWL receives 80% of this amount as a grant from the European Commission and the remaining 20% is made up of membership fees and other independent sources of funding.

Women's lives, women's views

This year again, the visual approach of our Annual Report has been entrusted to women artist. **Jocelyne Mottouille** has very generously put her work "*La Palissade*" at our disposal.

Jocelyne Mottouille is a woman painter, sculptor, philosopher and poet; we have visited her in her house/studio in the Brussels countryside (see p 19. of this Annual Report).





As I look back on the achievements of the European Women's Lobby in 2003, I am struck by the sheer dedication and determination of all of the members of EWL and of the Secretariat in moving forward the agenda of equality between women and men in Europe. During 2003 we extended our network to reach hundreds of women's non-governmental organisations in the accession countries, welcoming **three new national co-ordinations into membership of EWL from Hungary, Latvia, Bulgaria**. We began a major campaign for parity democracy – the equal representation of women and men in political decision-making – in the selection of candidates for election to the European Parliament. As part of our commitment to combating violence against women. Two new National Observatories on Violence Against Women were launched in Greece and in France. At the same time we have worked alongside our NGO colleagues in the Platform of Social NGOs and in the Civil Society Contact Group, to enhance the process of civil dialogue in the EU.

We continued with our day to day business of influencing the decision-makers in Brussels and in the capitals of the Member States to implement their existing commitments to achieving equality of women and men in all areas of life based on the existing EU treaty obligations as well as the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995.

However, looking back over the year, it is not easy to make a positive assessment of the general progress towards the achievement of equality of women and men in the European Union. For the members of EWL, and many other women and activists across Europe, 2003 was a year where the ever-present **potential threat to existing achievements in gender equality became very real**. For example rather than celebrating a breakthrough in strengthening commitments to gender equality in the draft European Constitutional Treaty, we spent much time and effort simply securing a renewed commitment to existing acquis. Rather than finally agreeing a legal base in the draft Constitutional Treaty to deal with violence against women in all its forms, we find that more countries in the EU are legalising the violation of women's human rights through accepting prostitution as a legitimate part of everyday business activity. The final presentation of the Commission's draft directive on gender equality based on Article 13, although seen as a positive first step, was also a significant disappointment to women in Europe, especially given the lack of support shown by many of our governments.

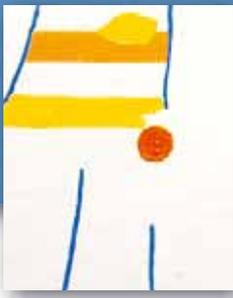
Also looking back at the **European Year of Disabled People** we have to conclude that the positive impact for disabled women was limited, with the human rights framework and gender equality largely absent from the debate. On a more positive note we see an increase in disabled women's organisations within our own membership. Many disabled women are realising that the impact of gender inequality combined with discrimination on the basis of disability demands an integrated strategy of women working together for gender equality combined with actions focused on the wider arena of discrimination against disabled people.

Globally, the **violation of women's security and human rights is a daily occurrence** through the violence of armed conflict, through poverty, malnutrition and the spread of HIV/AIDS, and through the direct oppression of women that results from the resurgence in fundamentalist and patriarchal religions. The members of EWL reaffirmed their commitment to the fight for gender equality and for social justice in Europe and across the world at the General Assembly held in Brussels in October 2003.

As we look to the elections to the European Parliament in June 2004 and the appointment of a new Commission we see new opportunities for advancing equality of women and men. I know that the **many thousands of women** actively involved in EWL will **recommit their energy in 2004**, creating a momentum for change based on our vision of empowerment, gender equality, equal representation, economic justice, security and freedom from violence for all women living in Europe. We will also work to ensure that these values underpin all aspects of the global commitments and actions of the European Union.

Lydia la Rivière-Zijdel, EWL President





New European Parliament and Commission 2004: getting the balance right!

The year 2003 was crucial in terms of mobilising women across Europe in support of an equal representation of women and men in political decision-making, in the next European Parliament and in the renewed European Commission.

EWL has a long-standing commitment to working towards gender equality in political decision-making; therefore European elections and the nomination of new Commissioners are particularly important moments for all of our members.

In 2004, those events are of particular significance, as **for the first time in history, the 15 "old" and the 10 new Member States will be involved.** This also presents women's organisations with the challenge of mobilising to engage in the political process and to vote at a time when many Europeans, especially women, feel marginalized and left out of the debate about European integration.

Achieving parity democracy in the EU

At its 2002 General Assembly, EWL voted to promote **parity democracy**, i.e. the equal representation of women and men in decision-making positions, as the guiding principle behind its strategy to promote women in decision-making.

We agreed that the most effective way to establish parity democracy in all EU decision-making bodies would be through the adoption of a **binding legal clause in EU law**. EWL therefore lobbied for an article on parity democracy to be included in the draft European Constitutional Treaty. Another avenue was to introduce parity democracy in the proposal for a European Directive on gender equality put forward by the European Commission in November 2003 (see p. 8 of this Annual Report). Unfortunately, neither of these two strategies worked.

However, in most EU countries, the right to equality of women and men and / or provisions on parity democracy or positive actions are included in national constitutions or in electoral laws. In other cases, national political parties have their own (legal or internally agreed) quota systems.

In the **absence of any binding instrument at European level** concerning gender equality in decision-making, the only way forward is to **use those existing national instruments and commitments** in order to lobby for an equal number of men and women to be placed in winnable positions on the electoral lists for the European elections. It is also essential to focus directly on national governments reminding them of their commitments to achieve gender equality in the nomination of new Commissioners.

EWL campaign "Put your weight behind equality in Europe!"

EWL initiated a campaign related to the European elections "Put your weight behind equality in Europe!" in the summer 2003. The campaign included a "Lobbying Kit", a poster to support the campaign, an electronic version of which was made available in 8 languages, and a commitment to address many different seminars, conferences and meetings across the 25 Member States.

A major **lobbying action** was launched in December 2003 at both European and national level, focusing on political parties and how they were making the selections to their lists for the European elections. At the same time, an action related to the nomination of women Commissioners by national governments was launched. We are delighted to see that already three women have been nominated among the ten Commissioners from the new EU Member States (Sandra Kalniete from Latvia, Dalia Grybauskaitė from Lithuania and Danuta Hübner from Poland).



Making it happen!

While a system of non-legally binding quotas has proved effective in some political parties and in some countries, these partially successful stories make it all the more necessary to have a clear commitment, at all levels of society, to the achievement

of gender equality through the implementation of parity democracy. The concept of **parity can be seen as the beginning of a broader change in society towards equality and mutual respect**. Our hope is that clear political leadership and a commitment to pro-active policies in the field of gender

equality on the part of the new European Parliament and Commission in 2004, supported by the mobilisation of women across Europe could finally make gender equality a reality.

European Parliament Percentage of women per Member State

Data from: 25.02.2004

Member States	Number of Seats	Women	% Women
France	87	39	44,8 %
Finland	16	7	43,8 %
Sweden	22	9	40,9 %
Belgium	25	10	40,0 %
Austria	21	8	38,1 %
Denmark	16	6	37,5 %
Germany	99	37	37,4 %
Spain	64	22	34,4 %
Ireland	15	5	33,3 %
Luxemburg	6	2	33,3 %
The Netherlands	31	9	29,0 %
United-Kingdom	87	21	24,1 %
Portugal	25	7	28,0 %
Greece	25	4	16,0 %
Italy	87	10	11,5 %
Total	626	196	31,3 %



EWL campaign:
"Put your weight
behind equality in Europe!"

European Parliament Observers from new Member States (May 2003)

Countries	Total	Women	% Women
Slovakia	14	5	35,7 %
Cyprus	6	1	16,6 %
Poland	54	9	16,6 %
Czech Republic	24	3	12,5 %
Hungary	24	3	12,5 %
Latvia	9	1	11,1 %
Lithuania	13	1	7,7 %
Estonia	6	0	0 %
Malta	5	0	0 %
Slovenia	7	0	0 %
Total	162	23	14,2 %



Working together for women's rights in a European Union of 25 Member States

During 2003, EWL further developed its work together with women's NGOs in the new EU Member States and candidate countries. What we have learned is that women's NGOs across the enlarged European Union clearly want to be involved with, and want to have a say in, the development of EU policies affecting their lives.

EWL enlarges its membership

Women's NGOs in the new, enlarged EU and in the candidate countries, recognise that working together to strengthen their voices at national level is essential. It was a historical and moving moment in October 2003 when the EWL General Assembly welcomed **three new national coordinations of women's NGOs from Bulgaria, Hungary, and Latvia** as full voting members. We look forward to welcoming several new national co ordinations and to developing together an even more ambitious programme of work for 2004 and beyond!

EWL capacity building seminars

As part of our commitment to reaching out to women's NGO's during the enlargement process we undertook a range of different capacity building activities with women's NGOs in the new Member States. In the course of 2003, the EWL offered **capacity building training** to over seventy representatives of women's NGOs. The training seminars introduced participants to the relevant European institutional and policy framework in the field of gender equality, as well as introducing participants to different NGO strategies for influencing decision makers, including lobbying methods and the more formal civil dialogue process.

Women's NGOs setting the priorities for the enlarged EU

The EWL seminar "*Capacity building for gender equality in view of European Union enlargement*" was held in May 2003. EWL Board members participated in the seminar in order to encourage greater integration and dialogue among women's NGOs. The seminar provided a space to share and exchange, but also to set priorities for the EU agenda. The **EWL publication** "Women and EU Enlargement" summarises the most important concerns, priorities and strategies for action identified by women's NGOs across Europe.

Key issues for women's rights in the enlarged European Union

Throughout the accession process, women's NGOs have initiated many actions at national level in order to ensure that the legal framework required by accession to the EU to achieve equality between women and men is implemented fully. In addition, a priority for many women's NGOs in the new Member States is the development of additional, pro-active measures, to strengthen women's economic and social rights and to advance women's human rights – which includes combating all forms of violence against women, and strengthening women's sexual and reproductive rights.



EWL Publication:
Women and
EU Enlargement, 2003.





ILIANA STOYCHEVA



JUDIT WIRTH



KARINA JANOVA

Interview with new EWL members EWL has welcomed 3 new national co ordinations from Bulgaria (Bulgarian Coordination of EWL), Hungary (Hungarian Women's Lobby), and Latvia (Latvian Coordination of EWL) in the year 2003. We asked the representatives of those countries to give us their views about gender equality and EWL membership.

What are the main challenges for gender equality in your country?

ILIANA STOYCHEVA (Bulgaria)

Gender stereotypes are the area where Bulgaria still lags behind the required standards. (...) Bulgarian institutions, media, universities and women's organisations should coordinate their efforts in order to increase public awareness about gender equality and gender discrimination. The lack of political will on the part of the institutions and of women in high political positions, the lack of sufficient pressure from the EU on this issue, the cutting of the State budget for public agencies and for women's programmes – all are obstacles to the establishment of mechanisms for gender equality.

JUDIT WIRTH (Hungary)

A systematic lack of appropriate and effective legal provisions, law enforcement and judicial attitudes, as well as the lack of gender-focused services. This is based on a systematic lack of relevant training for professionals in all these fields.

KARINA JANOVA (Latvia)

There are many problems to be solved related to discrimination on the labour market and efficient measures against

violence against women (...). However, the main challenge for gender equality is the low level of awareness of gender equality and women's human rights in the wider society.

What are the characteristics of the women's movement/civil society of your country?

JUDIT WIRTH (Hungary)

The women's movement in Hungary is forming, and we are proud of this. In terms of the civil society, women's NGOs are extremely under-funded and the civil society in general is absolutely unaware of gender-issues.

KARINA JANOVA (Latvia)

The majority of civil society is composed of women's organisations in Latvia. This, however, does not necessarily mean that most of Latvia's NGOs have set themselves the goal of gender equality. Due to the lack of regular funding, existing women organisations are rather weak. In fact, Latvia has not experienced a women's movement for emancipation compared to that experienced in the West.

ILIANA STOYCHEVA (Bulgaria)

The Bulgarian civil society is very young and despite a huge number of

associations, the civil dialogue in Bulgaria is still being created. The Bulgarian women's movement is ambitious but not yet ready to join efforts in order to achieve one aim, we need more coherence, for the moment, our lobbying is only issue-based. There is also a lack of funding and sustainability, an openness to the EU but without a clear vision of contributions and benefits.

Why is it important to be a member of EWL - and what do you expect from the collaboration with other women's organisations in relation to supporting gender equality in your country?

KARINA JANOVA (Latvia)

It is important to be part of a European-wide women's network. This gives us the opportunity to get to know each other better, to share experiences, to exchange views and to form partnerships for common goals. It is important for women's organisations of Latvia to be connected with women's organisations from other countries – this gives us strength, skills and the knowledge to speak up for ourselves and strive for better human development in Latvia and across Europe.

ILIANA STOYCHEVA (Bulgaria)

It will unite the Bulgarian women's movement, give it a focus and a more reliable status for EU projects and for partners from the EU. Knowledge about the EU and especially the funding mechanisms (...) will help exerting pressure and claim support and accountability from the State.

JUDIT WIRTH (Hungary)

Through the (EWL) membership, we hope to learn solidarity and collective work, and we hope to teach our sisters in the West the specific problems that women face in our region. Of course, we also wish to become members of a wide network, and feel and share the strength and power (political and spiritual) that comes from women across Europe.





For the European-wide prohibition of sex-based discrimination in goods and services

After a long process, the European Commission finally put forward its proposal for a European directive combating sex discrimination in the supply of and access to goods and services in November 2003.

The European Women's Lobby has been active since the end of 2000 in support of this first-ever European legislation on gender equality outside employment.

A long and difficult history

The *EWL Shadow directive* issued in March 2002 was the first step in what proved to be a long lobbying process. This *Shadow directive*, drafted following extensive consultation with EWL member organisations, reflected the ideal legislation expected by women's organisations across Europe. It included all the areas, where legislation is still needed in order to achieve *de facto* gender equality such as violence against women, equality in decision-making, the image of women in the media etc.

Political agreement on the feasibility and necessity of such a directive had been reached by the EU Council of Ministers at the **Nice Council in December 2000**. At the time, shortly after the signature of the Amsterdam Treaty, which gave a stronger basis for EU action in achieving gender equality, it seemed to be a natural step forward, given the extensive European legislation on gender equality in employment.

In late Spring 2003, it became clear that a process of consultation in relation to the draft to be proposed by the European Commission had been going on involving "key stake holders" (this did not include the EWL). It appears that many of the **industry stakeholders consulted were opposing any further European action** on gender equality, especially in relation to the image of women in the media and to discrimination for some services, in this case, in the insurance market.

A very unpleasant press campaign began in the summer 2003 involving personal attacks on the Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs, Commissioner Diamantopoulou. At the end of the summer 2003, there was still great uncertainty about the future of the text and most Member States' governments did not indicate much support for the directive.

Around the Public Hearing organised in September 2003 by the European Parliament Women's Rights Committee, the mobilisations of EWL members clearly demonstrated the extent of **women's support for this new European piece of legislation**. However, the Hearing focused only on two themes: the media and the insurance market.

The **proposal for a directive**, finally adopted by the European Commission in November 2003, included only "*equal treatment between women and men in the access to and supply of goods and services*".



A crucial first step

The draft directive touches upon crucial issues that have a direct impact on the lives of all women in Europe: equality in everyday life and the elimination of discrimination for **services that are essential to enable women to live in present-day society**.

The adoption procedure of this proposal foresees only the **consultation of the European Parliament and unanimous adoption in the Council of Ministers**. As the Council will discuss the directive after May 2004, unanimity will have to be reached by the 25 Member States, which may prove to be an additional obstacle.

The main opposition to the directive has come from the **insurance sector** in some countries, because the text, covering the supply of services would **prohibit the use of actuarial factors broken down by sex** in the calculation of insurance premiums. While also engaging in the debate around insurances, EWL maintains that **prohibiting unequal treatment** between women and men in this area is primarily a matter of principle and of **political choice** that women, as both citizens and consumers, expect European governments to uphold.

What is particularly disappointing is that the proposed directive is not as broad as the European "Race Directive" adopted in the year 2000, which also includes social protection, health care and education. Taking into account the strong legal base underpinning gender equality in the European Treaty, which gives the EU the task of "*eliminating inequalities and promoting equality between women and men*" in all areas, the present proposal can only **be seen as the first of a series of European legislative proposals** that will over time address other areas of discrimination against women. In the meantime, EWL will continue to **support the adoption of the current proposal** for a directive "*implementing the principle of equal treatment between women and men in the access to and supply of goods and services*".





EWL keeps up the pressure to have equality of women and men at the heart of the European Constitutional Treaty

Following on from its campaign, launched in 2002, highlighting the under-representation of women in the Convention on the Future of Europe (17% of women) and demanding that parity democracy be introduced in the draft European Constitutional Treaty, EWL continued its intensive lobbying work in 2003, giving a voice to all women living in the EU for a more inclusive Europe.

Monitoring and seeking to influence the Convention on the Future of Europe was a major focus of the work of EWL in 2003. EWL provided regular written inputs to all Convention members and stayed in regular contact with the women members of the Convention. EWL member organisations were informed and consulted about the ongoing work of the Convention on the Future of Europe and relayed actions at national level. The almost daily contact between the EWL office in Brussels and its member organisations proved invaluable in keeping gender equality on the Convention's agenda and in making progress.

The draft European Constitutional Treaty adopted in July 2003 by the Convention did not lead to very enthusiastic reactions from the NGO community. Compared to **EWL's original recommendations**, the Convention result overall is certainly not inspiring, but there are **some positive achievements**, in particular:

> The **extension of the scope of gender mainstreaming** to all policies of the Union, including Foreign and Security Policy as well as Justice and Home Affairs;

> The introduction of **participatory democracy** whereby the EU will have an open, transparent and regular dialogue with civil society.

Equality of women and men as a value of the European Union

Throughout the Convention on the Future of Europe and the Intergovernmental Conference 2003, EWL lobbied – unsuccessfully – for **equality of women and men to be introduced as one of the values of the European Union in article I-2 of the draft European Constitutional Treaty**. Women in Europe see this integration as crucial because the draft Constitution refers to the “values of the Union” as one of the criteria for accession of new countries or as a reason for the suspension of rights of countries in case of violation of these values.

The European Union was created with the ultimate aim of preserving peace and democracy; it is based on the achievement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, solidarity and well being for all. Women's human rights and equality of women and men form part of the core of these European values and this must be clearly reflected into the new Constitutional Treaty.

EWL recommendation on the draft Constitutional Treaty, article I-2: The Union's values

“The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, including equality of women and men, the rule of law and respect for human rights. These values are common to the Member States in a society of pluralism, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination.”

EWL will not give up the fight in 2004!

From the outset, EWL was determined to influence the drafting of the new EU Constitutional Treaty in order to ensure that in the 21st Century, Europe would have a Constitution that respects, upholds and protects the needs and aspirations of both women and men. 2003 ended with the failure of the IGC, but member states hope to find an agreement before the EU enlargement and the European elections in May / June 2004. EWL will certainly maintain the pressure for the achievement of gender equality and the full respect of women's human rights in the future enlarged Europe.





Interview with Lone Dybkjær, MEP,
member of the Convention on the Future of Europe and key advocate
for gender equality in the draft European Constitutional Treaty.

What was your experience as one of the few women members of the Convention on the Future of Europe? What were your main challenges and achievements?

I already knew that it would be very difficult to get gender issues on the agenda of the Convention with so few women members present. We all know that at only 17 % female representation we are near the limit of ensuring a clear gender influence. Another key problem was the Praesidium, where there was only one woman member. I therefore decided to work specifically on gender issues, as I was very concerned that with all the competing demands for political attention gender equality would be marginalized, again!

The main challenge and possible success proved to be the article on the values of the EU. From the outset we did not have gender equality stated and we are still fighting now to insert "equality between women and men" as part of the negotiations of the Intergovernmental Conference.

In your view, what could be done to improve the situation of unequal gender representation in decision-making bodies?

A very simple and effective tool in relation to government's appointments, in particular for the European Commission, would be to require – the nomination of a man and a woman by each country – so that the final college appointed by the future President of the European Commission would be gender-balanced.

In international decision-making bodies the number of persons of each sex should not be lower than 40%. Just imagine what a different and gender-balanced Commission we could have, if each country was to propose not one Commissioner, but two each time – a man and a woman!

How do you see the partnership between NGOs and women decision-makers in the EU institutional framework?

We cannot progress without NGOs in relation to achieving equality because we are under-represented in political decision-making. We need to work on a general level to get more women interested in and involved in politics, and here we need NGO's and the political parties to work together. Apart from that, we should of course also work specifically in our own political parties to get more women involved.

It is especially important that we have this double strategy in relation to the EU right now because we are drafting a new Constitution and I think it would be scandalous not to have a comprehensive legal basis in a European Constitutional Treaty to support the achievement of gender equality in the year 2004. We all have to continue to be active and to work for gender equality. When we are creating a brand new Constitution, at least we could start with a "clean slate" and as a minimum say: women are half of the population they should be represented on an equal basis. That would also create a more positive attitude towards the EU.





An integrated approach to economic, employment and social policies at European level

In 2003, the EU policy process began to make closer links between economic policies, the European Employment Strategy, and social policies. This process is very important to the work of EWL, as gender equality cannot be reached without more coherence and integration between these different policy areas.

Striking a better balance between economic, employment and social policies

For EWL it is clear that EU macro-economic policies must reflect and integrate the objectives set out in the fields of social inclusion and gender equality. In the paper *“Strengthening policies for gender equality: Actions for an integrated approach in economic, employment and social policies at EU level”*, addressed to the Spring Council 2003 EWL highlighted the most urgent issues and guidelines for policy action.

EWL has also lent its voice to the call for **economic justice and gender equality** to be integrated in trade and **globalisation** issues. With this aim, EWL was represented at the European Social Forum and the European Assembly for Women’s Rights that took place in November 2003 in Paris.

Gender equality in European employment policies

The economic autonomy of women, and therefore women’s employment, remain essential to achieve equality between women and men in society as a whole. Following the 2002 review of the European Employment Strategy (EES), 2003 was the year when the new EU strategy was decided. EWL intensified its work to raise awareness about the need to reinforce a range of gender equality actions in order to meet the EU objective of a female employment rate of 60% in 2010. The **key points** addressed by the EWL were:

- > The need to reinforce adequate **childcare provisions**.
- > To take action against the increasing **precariousness** of women’s working conditions.
- > To close the **gender pay gap**.

EWL worked successfully with various actors in the European Parliament, and many of the EWL recommendations were endorsed by the European Parliament in its report on the new European Employment Strategy, including making gender equality a fourth overarching objective of the EES. However, EWL was disappointed to see that most of the very important gender equality provisions in the EP report were not integrated in the final document of the Council of Ministers.

Engendering EU policies for social inclusion

A strong gender perspective in EU policies against social exclusion and poverty is increasingly urgent in a situation where the **feminisation of poverty** is a clear European-wide tendency. Therefore, during the Italian EU presidency, EWL highlighted the need for an increased focus on individual rights, rather than seeing the household or family as the main unit of analysis and action. Moreover, EWL highlighted the **need to**



take actions in the National Action Plans for Social Inclusion, developed by each Member State, to improve the situation of specific groups of women particularly vulnerable to social exclusion, such as migrant and ethnic minority women, single mothers and disabled women.

A gender perspective on immigration is crucial for the future of Europe

Member States' efforts in the field of immigration are **mainly focused on the development of a common policy on "illegal immigration"**, external borders, the return of illegal immigrants, co-operation with third country nationals, and asylum. However, in 2003 immigration was included also as a strategic priority in the framework of social and employment issues as the European Commission adopted a Communication on *'Immigration, Integration and Employment'* in June 2003.

The debate about different aspects of immigration policies has been carried out **without a gender perspective**, with the result that women's human rights and the experiences and needs of women are being ignored. During 2003, the EWL lobbied for the integration of a gender perspective in the EU policies that have a direct impact on immigrant women's social and economic situation.

Immigrant women may face **multiple discrimination** as women, due to their situation as immigrants and due to the racism that they experience if they are also members of a particular ethnic group. EWL believes that it is essential to address this situation and to promote policies that combat the multiple discrimination that immigrant women face within the EU.

A gender aware approach to immigration policy introduces a shift from the predominant view of female immigrants as simply the wives and children of male immigrants to incorporating an **understanding of women's human rights** and of the **unique experiences of women immigrants** themselves.





EWL taking a lead in the fight against violence against women

The EWL Policy Action Centre on Violence against Women was set up with the overall mission of achieving equality between women and men by eliminating violence against women, seen as an obstacle to the empowerment of women and to the full achievement of women's human rights. To accomplish this, a number of strategic objectives continue to guide the work of the Centre. A variety of actions were undertaken in 2003 in order to fulfil each specific objective.

Influencing European policy and action on violence against women

EWL set up a "European Union Think Tank on Violence against Women", an informal high-level working group in which representatives of NGOs, European institutions and academics discuss European policies on violence against women. This *Think Tank* has been developed in the framework of an EWL Daphné project and aims at **linking policy and practice**. EWL also monitored the European legislation on trafficking in women and tried to get a **legal base on violence against women** at European level, through lobbying for a reference to combat violence against women in the draft European Constitutional Treaty and in the new gender equality directive, both without success as yet.

Monitoring EU and Member States commitments to women's human rights with particular focus on violence against women and in relation to United Nations mechanisms

UN mechanisms, such as the yearly Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its reporting mechanisms, are very useful instruments that EWL is using, especially considering the absence of European legislation in the area of violence against women.

An EWL delegation participated in the **Commission on the Status of Women** forty-seventh session in March 2003, at the UN New York Headquarters. Violence against women was one of the two themes at the CSW 2003 and EWL called on the EU and the UN to explicitly *recognise in all public statements, policies and programmes that violence against women is the direct result of the unequal power relations between women and men*. EWL organised a seminar during the CSW on the theme "*Trafficking in Women*

and Prostitution", two issues, which are inextricably linked as expressions of the dominance of men over women and the continuous unequal distribution of resources between women and men in society.

Increasingly, the **CEDAW mechanism** is considered very useful for women's NGOs in general and for those working in the area of violence against women in particular, as it provides for the opportunity to present *alternative or parallel reports* to those presented by governments to the CEDAW Committee. The EWL Centre on Violence compiled information concerning violence against women from the CEDAW Committee reports addressed to Member States; this information will be very useful for monitoring Member States commitment to CEDAW.

A member of the CEDAW Committee, Krizstina Morvai was invited to the meeting of the EWL Observatory on Violence against Women in November 2003, the information given and the exchange that took place will be integrated into the work of the EWL in 2004 and beyond.

EWL is also in contact with the **UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women** Ms Yakin Ertürk and have sent her a report on violence against women in the EU.



Monitoring Member States policies and actions on violence against women

The **EWL Observatory on Violence against Women**, which brings together 15 experts, one from each Member State, provides an important link with policy developments at national level and allows for a general overview of the policy and monitoring needs. In 2003, the experts identified a number of **key issues** that are emerging in all countries and that are a **cause for concern**. Examples of these issues can be seen in practices such as:

> Policies that advocate using **mediation** as a means of resolving situations of violence, despite evidence that shows that women's disclosure at such a dangerous time can be extremely risky and can even lead to the woman's death. Concern was also expressed that **mediation** is being promoted and, in many instances, is **replacing criminal justice sanctions** in cases of violence against women, particularly in situations of male domestic violence.

> The promotion of **perpetrator programmes** (for violent men) **outside of a comprehensive policy framework** that includes different and complementary strategies to help keep women safe such as: coordinating police, judiciary, and primary health care services; educating men and boys about equality and respect of women; and sanctions to perpetrators.

> **Joint custody** of children in cases of separation of the parents and where there is a history of violence is also considered a worrying emerging issue that calls for guidelines.

The development of **national observatories** on violence against women, set up to provide an **independent critical voice** to monitor policies and actions, as well as policy gaps continued in 2003 with the support of the Daphné programme. Two new national observatories were officially launched in 2003: **Greece and France**, bringing the total to **four national observatories** (Ireland and Denmark since 2002). Throughout 2003, partners of the project in **Portugal and Spain** continued the process of developing a national observatory.

Supporting NGOs in their work on violence against women

The EWL Centre on Violence against Women drafted a document entitled: **"Violence against women as an obstacle to equality of women and women's full participation in society"**, which highlights all forms of violence against women and compiles a wide range of data and statistics. The document is available in English, French and Hungarian.

Integrate a gender perspective in human rights

Affirming that women's rights are human rights does not mean that women have different rights to men. However, women do face different situations, in which they encounter specific obstacles or are victims of human rights violations when trying to enjoy the same rights as men. For this reason, it is necessary to analyse each article of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in order to make visible the specific discrimination and human rights violations experienced by women, because they are women. This is a very important gender **mainstreaming exercise**. Indeed, the integration of a women's human rights perspective **covers more than**

just **"violence against women"** it also relates to women's sexual and reproductive rights, the right of identity, personal integrity and citizenship (for example the individualisation of rights to social security) and the right to development.

EWL made several contributions to European Parliament hearings on human rights in the EU and began cooperation with EU networks and international NGOs, like the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the Commission's network of independent experts on fundamental rights, in order to promote this women's human rights approach.





Mobilising across Europe for gender equality: EWL membership

EWL Executive Committee

President: Lydia la Rivière-Zijdel
Vice President: Ana Coucello
Vice President: Denise Fuchs
Treasurer: Kirsti Kolthoff

EWL Board of Administration

Board of Administration: members representing national co-ordinations

Austria: Eva Salomon
Belgium: Michèle Bribosia
Bulgaria: Iliana Stoycheva (observer)
Denmark: Lene Bertelsen
Finland: Pauliina Murto-Lehtinen
France: Denise Fuchs
Germany: Inge von Bönninghausen
Greece: Eftimia Ioannidou
Hungary: Judit Wirth (observer)
Ireland: Mary Kelly
Italy: Ludovica Botarelli-Tranquilli Leali
Latvia: Karina Janova (observer)
Luxembourg: Mady Molitor
The Netherlands: Jet Brummelhuis
Portugal: Ana Coucello
Spain: Teresa Blat
Sweden: Kirsti Kolthoff
United Kingdom: Annette Lawson

Board of Administration: members representing European organisations

• **Matilda Casa** Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the EU • **Laura Finne-Elonen** European Centre of the International Council of Women • **Karine Henrotte-Forsberg** University Women of Europe • **Eufemia Ippolito** European federation of Business and Professional Women • **June Jacobs** International Council of Jewish Women • **Lucy Jones Hazlett** European Women's Network for Intercultural Action and Exchange • **Lydia la Rivière-Zijdel** European Disability Forum • **Marilyn La Tona** International Alliance of Women • **Nuala Ryan** European Network of Women • **Sinead Tiernan** European Trade Union Confederation

EWL Secretariat 2003

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Staff: Uribarri Alberdi Fernandez, Malin Björk, Mary Collins, Clarisse Delorme, Colette De Troy, Cécile Gréboval, Juliette Kamper, Marie-Anne Leunis, Virginie Niyonzima, Mary Ann Struthers, Gabrielle Tzelepis (accountant)



EWL member organisations

National co-ordinations of EWL

Austria: Bund Österreichischer Frauenvereine; Österreichischer Frauenring
Belgium: Conseil des Femmes Francophones de Belgique (CFFB); Nederlandstalige Vrouwenraad; Comité de Liaison des Femmes (Coordination belge du Lobby européen des femmes)
Bulgaria: Bulgarian Coordination of EWL
Denmark: National Council of Women in Denmark
Finland: NYTKIS Coalition of Finnish Women
France: Coordination Française du Lobby Européen des Femmes (CLEF)
Germany: Deutscher Frauenrat
Greece: Coordination of Greek Women's NGOs for the EWL
Hungary: Hungarian Women's Lobby
Ireland: National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCII)
Italy: Coordinamento Italiano della Lobby Europea delle Donne (LEF Italia)
Latvia: Latvian Coordination of EWL
Luxembourg: Commission Féminine Internationale du Mouvement Européen; Fédération Nationale des Femmes Luxembourgeoises; Conseil National des Femmes du Luxembourg
The Netherlands: Vrouwen Alliantie; Nederlandse Vrouwen Raad
Portugal: Coordinação Portuguesa para o Lobby Europeu de Mulheres (CPEM)
Spain: Coordinadora Española del Lobby Europeo de Mujeres (CELEM)
Sweden: Swedish Women's Lobby
United Kingdom: National Alliance of Women's Organisations (NAWO); Northern Ireland Women's European Platform (NIWEP); Engender (Scotland); Wales Women's Euro Network.



European member organisations of EWL

Committee of Agricultural Organisations in the EU (COPA)
Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CCRE)
European Centre of the International Council of Women (CECIF)
European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
European Council of WIZO Federations
European Disability Forum (EDF)
European Federation of Business & Professional Women (EFBPW)
European Federation of Women Working in the Home (FEFAF)
European Forum of Left Feminists
European Network of Women (ENOW)
European Network of Women Entrepreneurs (FEMVISION)
European Women's Network for Intercultural Action and Exchange
International Federation of Women in Legal Careers (IFWLC)
International Alliance of Women (IAW)
International Council of Jewish Women (ICJW)
Medical Women's International Association (MWIA)
Soroptimist International Europe
Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland
University Women of Europe (UWE)
Women's Committee of the International European Movement
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO)
Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)

Associate member organisations of EWL

EWL has 65 Associate member organisations in Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Morocco, Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, The Netherlands, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Individual supporting members

Over 135 individuals across Europe are supporting members of EWL.

EWL reviews its membership policy

With the entry into force of the new Statutes of the European Women's Lobby in April 2003, **new membership criteria are now applying to current and future full member organisations**. An internal **Membership Committee** was set up with the general task of supervising the implementation of these criteria. One of its crucial missions is to monitor the **membership review process** launched during the summer 2003, in order to ensure that all existing full members fulfil the new membership criteria. The Committee provides support to those existing full member organisations that may need guidance as to how they can meet the new criteria.

This membership review process is part of a very important exercise, aiming at improving and reinforcing the **transparent and democratic** work of EWL and its member organisations as well as their **representativity**. Member organisations have 3 years to comply with the new statutes, that is until **April 2006**. The Membership Committee also assesses all new applications for full membership and provides advice to those organisations that do not meet the criteria in their first application, so that they have clear guidance as to how they can reach the criteria.

EWL structure





Different membership categories within EWL

In order for the organisation to be as open as possible, there are 4 categories of members within the European Women's Lobby:

1. Full member organisations

The status of full member is open to:

> **National co ordinations** of non-governmental organisations, which have to be representative of a broad range of women's organisations across the whole of the Member State/country (**one national coordination per country**).

> **European wide non-Governmental organisations** which are represented in at least 50% + 1 of the countries in membership of the EU, the European Economic Area and countries in the formal process of acceding to the European Union.

2. Associate member organisations

EWL Associate members are non-governmental women's organisations or the women's sections of NGOs that are committed to the purpose and aims of the association.

3. Individual supporting members

Individual supporting members are individuals who accept EWL's purpose and aims.

4. Supporting organisations

Supporting organisations are organisations, which accept EWL's purpose and aims.

To find out more about becoming a member of the European Women's Lobby, please consult our website for the appropriate membership application, or contact the EWL Secretariat.

EWL mission statement Article 3 of the EWL Statutes

The European Women's Lobby represents the concerns, needs and interests of women in dialogue with national, European and international institutions.

The mission of EWL is to promote the empowerment of women; to advance gender equality; to combat all forms of discrimination and violence against women and to ensure full access for all women to their human rights through their active involvement in society and in policy development and implementation.

EWL, through its member organisations, aims:

> To work within democratic, open and transparent procedures of communication, decision-making and accountability in order to support the involvement and empowerment of all women.

> To provide regular input on all areas of EU policy development and implementation that have an impact on women's lives and on the promotion of equality between women and men.

> To monitor the development and implementation of gender mainstreaming in order to ensure that mainstreaming entails the full integration of women's human rights, needs and aspirations in all areas of EU policy.

> To take into account the needs and perspective of different groups of women, at all stages of their life cycle.





Portrait

Jocelyne Mottoulle

Painter, sculptor, philosopher and poet, Jocelyne Mottoulle lives and works in Belgium and in France. She has been exhibiting her works since 1989 in Belgium, France, the United States and Italy. She is currently preparing an exhibition in the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt.

The work that Jocelyne Mottoulle has generously put at our disposal is entitled “*La Palissade*”. It is a frieze composed of 20 independent paintings where colours, primary and of luminous intensity play a central role. The structure of the work is absolutely original, composed of sequences of paintings that find a unity of meaning in the themes and the colours. Each painting reflects the other in a continuity that captures the eye.

All pictorial rights reserved to Jocelyne Mottoulle – 8, rue des Catamouriaux – B-1410 Waterloo

Women artists

“Women and men are above all individuals with their potential will for power. A will for power, to affirm their own values. The difficulty for women is that the rules that have been set for these values to emerge have been shaped around a behavioural profile that in many ways is not theirs. And this is relevant for all areas of life, including art.”

Being an artist is already a big lesson in courage. It demands a huge amount of physical, mental and emotional energy, you stir up matters, feelings, knowledge and imagination, in order to deliver to the world a supplement of being and of understanding. (...) So for men or women, the struggle through art is a tough one. Women are emerging from such a long period of silence that their huge creative potential, which has been for a long time constrained or exercised in very limited areas, can only explode in the end. What has to be avoided though is to break through open doors, as there are so many other doors, to which we have the key and which are still unexplored. Art also offers these doors to us, it is for us to open them in our own way and with passion.”

Credits Production

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The Beijing Platform for Action
was unanimously adopted by 189 countries
in 1995...
10 YEARS AGO!

Where are we now?

The **Beijing Platform for Action**
calls upon governments and
all actors to take action in
the following critical areas
of concern :

- 1 The persistent and increasing burden of **POVERTY** on women
- 2 Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to **EDUCATION** and training
- 3 Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to **HEALTH** care and related services
- 4 **VIOLENCE** against women
- 5 The effects of **ARMED** or other kinds of **CONFLICT** on women, including those living under foreign occupation
- 6 Inequality in **ECONOMIC STRUCTURES AND POLICIES**, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources
- 7 Inequality between men and women in the sharing of **POWER** and **DECISION-MAKING** at all levels
- 8 Insufficient **MECHANISMS** at all levels to promote the advancement of women
- 9 Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the **HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN**
- 10 Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the **MEDIA**
- 11 Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the **ENVIRONMENT**
- 12 Persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the **GIRL CHILD**

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With the support of
the European Commission