



Annual Report 2000

Newsletter

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**1990-2000,
Ten years of activism
for gender equality
in the European Union**



European Women's Lobby

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The voice of women in Europe

The European Women's Lobby brings together over 3000 women's organisations working to promote equality between women and men and 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 integrate the interests of the many women facing multiple discrimination.

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

STRUCTURE

Members of EWL meet each year to monitor the implementation of the organisation's work programme and to decide on future policy developments and campaigns. The General Assembly elects the Board of Administration every two years and the Board then elects an Executive Committee of four members: a President, two Vice Presidents and a Treasurer.

SECRETARIAT

EWL has a secretariat of eight staff based in Brussels.

BUDGET

For the financial year 2000 EWL budget was 812,500 Euro. EWL received 80% of this amount as a grant from the European Community and the remaining 20% is made up of membership fees and other independent sources of funding.

Editorial

by Denise Fuchs,
President of EWL

The EWL is ten years old. This is therefore a wonderful opportunity to review our past activities and highlight our successes as well as to outline the challenges and opportunities ahead. In this special anniversary issue of the newsletter, the founders and those who have been active in the development of EWL have reviewed many of the key moments in our history. Of particular importance is the development of two policy centres, the European Policy Centre on Violence against Women (1997) and more recently the Policy Centre on Enlargement, clear indications of our member's commitment to women's human rights and to European solidarity.

The key challenges for the future concern the "mainstreaming" strategy in European policy and within the European institutions, women's human rights, reproductive rights and bioethics, the process of EU construction, the challenge of enlargement and the interaction of economic and social priorities, the democratic development of the EU, the impact of new communication technologies and the continued globalisation of the economy.

The scale of acts of violence against women, including prostitution and trafficking is becoming increasingly apparent. This represents not only a major violation of women's human rights but also an unprecedented regression in the status of women, which is at the very foundation of our destiny. This violence represents an exercise in "male domination" which must become a thing of the past.

The structure and identity of Europe is undergoing radical change with the enlargement of the EU also just around the corner. Women's organisation and civil society will inevitably have to reconsider their priorities and their responses. In addition to gender equality policies, the development of economy and of social policy needs to be balanced in order to guarantee human rights and democracy for all.



The democratic development of the EU is intensifying with the move towards parity in decision-making and the slow structuring of civil dialogue, which in itself is an indication of the strengthening of representative democracy. The responsibility for this process lies both with public authorities and civil society. It is necessary to bring the European institutions closer to the citizen. Women in particular consider the construction of Europe as male-dominated and elitist.

The construction of Europe itself can be considered from a macroeconomic point of view as part of the process of globalisation. The EWL has begun the work of analysing the impact such major changes are having on our lives, and on the lives of women in particular. This challenge faces all of us, and younger women in particular. The EWL project "Mobilising young women for equality in Europe" can be the starting point for this kind of intergenerational dialogue, which is a prerequisite for democracy. With them, we must take up these challenges and give substance to a gender contract based on equality and partnership, which implies redefining identities and organising society in a different way.

My thanks to the many women, friends and colleagues who have contributed their vision and energy to the success of the European Women's Lobby during the last decade. As women we will continue to shape our own futures and we will I believe increasingly shape the future development of Europe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Denise Fuchs". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Highlights of EWL activities in 2000

The main focus of EWL activity at the beginning of 2000 was the preparation of the United Nations Special Session on the evaluation of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. EWL also contributed to policy developments at EU level, namely the legal proposals related to Article 13, the drafting of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and developments in social policy as well as the revision of Directive 1976/207 and the adoption of the Community Framework Strategy on Equality (2001-2005). The Policy Action Centre against Violence against Women tackled the problem of trafficking in women and launched a campaign on women asylum

seekers. New initiatives were undertaken with women's NGOs in the accession countries and in relation to analysing the impacts of trade liberalisation on women's lives.

EWL continued to focus on the needs of young women through the project "Mobilising young women for equality in Europe". In addition, EWL greatly improved its information and communication service to member organisations, including the launching of a new web site, and continued to provide information and briefings to hundreds of individuals, women's organisations and others interested in the promotion of equality including politicians, government officials, the media and researchers.

Beijing + 5: Women worldwide evaluate progress

Five years ago in Beijing China the United Nations organised the Fourth World Conference on Women, which led to the adoption by governments of the Beijing Platform for Action and was accompanied by an NGO forum, giving women's NGOs around the world the opportunity to network and define common priorities for the future.

In organising its Special "Beijing +5" Session in June 2000, the General Assembly of the UN set itself the task of evaluating the progress made in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action at international level and of setting new challenges.

The 12 objectives of the BPFA are: **poverty**, a growing burden on women; unequal ac-

cess to **education and training**, unequal access to **health care**; **violence** against women; the effect of armed **conflict** on women; the inequality of **economic and political structures**; the unequal division of **power and decision-making responsibility**; the inadequacy of the **mechanisms to promote the advancement of women**; the lack of respect of the **fundamental rights** of women; the stereotypical image of women and unequal access to the **media**; the disparities in the field of natural resources management and **environmental** conservation and finally discrimination against **the girl child**.

During the first six months of the year 2000, EWL played a leading role in co-ordinating the European NGOs and provid-

ing a critical analysis of the progress achieved by the Member States of the EU. EWL provided information to its members and to European NGOs at large on the political and practical developments in the assessment process of the Beijing Platform for Action. At the **Beijing + 5 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly** the main task of EWL was to coordinate the interventions of the EU NGOs in the intergovernmental process and liaise with the European Community delegation and with the Presidency of the EU.

In a real "mainstreaming" exercise, EWL analysed progress made in Europe based on the 12 strategic objectives identified in Beijing in its "**Alternative report on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the European Union**".

The European Charter of Fundamental Rights:

The European Women's Lobby welcomed the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union discussed throughout the year 2000 by the institutions and commented on by civil society. It represents progress in recognising the need for a legal instrument which protects the funda-

mental rights of women, men and children in the European Union.

Throughout the year **EWL monitored the work of the Convention**, the body responsible for drafting the Charter and highlighted the under representation of women within the Convention (10 women out of a total of 62 members).

EWL was active in all levels of the **consultation process**: putting forward new wording and direct amendments to the text, participating in civil society activities, and active lobbying at national and European level by the members of EWL.

Anti discrimination and social policy: working towards gender mainstreaming

Developments in social policy and the fight against discrimination, important areas of Community action, are central to the realisation of equality for women, and as such all developments in these field were monitored closely. In 2000, EWL concentrated its lobbying work on the implementation of the non-discrimination clause of the Amsterdam Treaty and on the European Social Policy Agenda.

Women faced with multiple discrimination

EWL welcomed the **measures to implement article 13** of the Treaty aiming to combat all forms of discrimination but was concerned that discrimination based on sex was not fully integrated into these measures. The **work of EWL in this area involved demonstrating the reality of multiple discrimination to political leaders**: women are often exposed to forms of multiple discrimination as women and on account of their ethnic origin, their religion or belief, the colour of their skin, their disability, age, sexual orientation.

Where a global approach is taken, **any measure, which aims to tackle discrimination on the basis of a given ground, must also fully integrate an understanding of the multiple discrimination experienced by women.**

Integrating gender equality in social, economic and employment policies

Women's choices in terms of labour market participation, and thereby women's economic independence, is directly linked to the availability of affordable quality care services. EWL continuously stressed the need to develop childcare provision and care for dependant persons in its work on employment policies. EWL focused attention on the revision of the **European Directive of 1976 on equal treatment for women and men in the workplace**, a process that will continue until autumn 2001.

EWL also contributed to and monitored closely the developments related to the **Fifth Framework Programme for Equality**. Our member organisations were informed and consulted in the drafting of a position paper, which was submitted to the Commission and Parliament as part of the consultation process with NGOs.

One of the highlights of 2000 in the area of social policy was the adoption of the **Social Policy Agenda**, which represented a long-awaited European initiative to establish the necessary links between social policies, economic policies and employment policies in support of social justice, gender equality and solidarity in the EU. EWL engaged in the consultation process at an early stage, once again emphasising the need to integrate and prioritise gender equality in the proposal.

The key recommendations of EWL are that:

- Gender equality must be a **key objective for a European strategy to reform the social welfare system**, including an individualisation of rights relating to social protection and taxation systems, improved regulations for parental leave, and social rights for atypical and part-time workers.
- Measures concerning **childcare and care of dependent persons must be strengthened** to guarantee women and men a real choice in the way they combine their career and family life.

EWL also contributed to the **European strategy to combat social exclusion**, underlining in its contributions that the gender equality perspective should be strengthened in the analysis, policies and measures aiming to combat poverty and social exclusion.

Women's have a more insecure life situation than men. A European strategy for an inclusive society must respond to this reality. An inclusive Europe must explicitly address the **needs of one-parent families, of elderly women, and of women atypical workers. Because of the lack of gender analysis and gender equality indicators, the mainstreaming strategy has not yet proven effective in the this field.**

EWL ensures that women have a voice

EWL focused on the following key issues: the introduction of the principle of **parity democracy**, the prohibition of **violence and gender-related persecution**; the basic right of women to have access to **reproductive rights**; the right of **consultation with NGOs**, an **asylum policy** which takes women into consideration,

the fight against **multiple discrimination** faced by women and the **reconciliation of family and professional life** for women and men.

Despite a number of positive developments, it was clear as the Charter was proclaimed at the Council Meeting in Nice in December 2000, that **a full commitment**

to gender equality was still missing. EWL will continue to lobby for the integration of gender equality into the Charter in order to ensure that the fundamental rights of the women of Europe are fully protected.



Strengthening women's rights in the EU accession process



In order for the EU accession process to respond to the needs and expectations of women in both the candidate countries and in the current Member States, an increased focus on women's rights and equality between women and men is needed. In this process women's organisations are key actors in making sure that the accession process supports gender equality more resolutely.

An increased **involvement and dialogue with NGOs** is also needed in order to make sure that the EU enlargement corresponds to citizen's expectations on political, social, and economic integration. EWL intensified its contacts and exchange with women's NGOs in the candidate countries throughout 2000 and our aim is to strengthen women's involvement in the accession process.

An increased emphasis on gender equality becomes even more urgent in the light of reports, which **show that inequalities between women and men have in many areas become more severe during the economic and social transition in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.**

Many countries have seen a decline in women's representation in parliament, a considerable weakening of women's situation in the labour market, childcare facilities have been scaled down etc. Additional problems, all too familiar also in the current Member States, include occupational segregation, low pay, sexual harassment, and lack of effective laws and enforcement mechanisms to combat violence against women. The relative lack of opportunities for young women is closely related to **the increase in trafficking in women – an unacceptable violation of women's human rights.**

In the work of the European Women's Lobby on EU enlargement the following are some of the key areas where action is foreseen: strengthening institutional mechanisms for the promotion of increased gender equality; combating violence against women, especially trafficking and prostitution; women's employment and related care policies and increasing the number of women in decision-making.



Logo of the Portuguese network of young people for equality

Leaders and activists of the future: EWL Young Women's Network

Throughout the year 2000 EWL continued to develop its project "Mobilising young women for equality in Europe". In mobilising young women in each of the Member State the aim was to identify the specific concerns of young women on equality issues and to explore ways that their interests could be better represented in national and European policy developments.

The participants in this project, young women between the ages of 18 and 30 from all the Member States, are organised through a **network of national co-ordinators**, who have been nominated by EWL member organisations.

Activities in 2000:

A "Young Women's Guide for Equality in Europe" was developed as a resource for awareness raising and lobbying for equality of opportunity by and for young women. The themes covered were: **relationships between women and men, young women in education, employment, health, violence, the media, decision-making and European legislation on gender equality.** The guide is now available in all official languages of the EU.

National seminars were organised, in each Member State between January and June 2000, where the different themes were discussed. National networks of young women or young people have been set up in a number of countries. **Two European seminars** were also held. At the end of the second European seminar a "Manifesto of Young Women" was agreed by the participants, in which they claimed their rights as young women in Europe. The 'European Young Women's Network' was also launched on the last day of the seminar, and through this network the dialogue between young European women is continuing.

<http://youngwomen.womenlobby.org>

EWL Policy Action Centre on Violence against Women takes a lead against trafficking in women and in support of a gender sensitive asylum policy

Trafficking in women is becoming more and more acute in Europe and worldwide and EWL followed very closely the process of preparation of the **UN Protocol on Trafficking, additional to the Convention on International Organised Crime**. Consistent lobbying actions were carried out in collaboration with other NGOs in order to ensure the **protection of women victims** of trafficking and the **prosecution of traffickers**.

The results of this work were very fruitful as the definition adopted in the final text of this UN protocol integrates all situations of trafficking, by notably recognising that the consent of the victim is irrelevant. It is also the first international instrument that explicitly mentions the clients that represent the "demand" side of sexual exploitation.

Definition of trafficking in the UN protocol:

'Trafficking in persons' shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability¹ or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

(abis)

The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used.

The drafting of a EWL study on a "**Common European Framework to monitor progress in combating violence against women**", was ongoing in 2000. This work, which is being produced in the form of a guide contains two parts, a set of indicators to measure the outcomes of commitments made to combat violence against women and case studies which represent good practice in addressing violence at grass root level.

The Centre drew up a **Charter of principles of EWL concerning violence against women** and has developed work on criteria of good practices in the fight against different forms of violence. These criteria will be a base for monitoring progress in policies combating violence against women.

Persecution is not gender neutral, European Campaign on women asylum seekers

The EWL European Campaign on women asylum seekers, was launched on 6th December 2000. EWL's **Campaign draws attention to the specific forms of persecution faced by women** in order to influence the governments of the Member States and the European Institutions to develop a European asylum policy that takes women's experiences fully into consideration. Four **postcards** presenting examples of the kinds of persecutions experienced by women were produced and will be distributed widely throughout the countries of the EU until December 2001. A special website with information and an electronic petition have also been created:



The EWL campaign on women asylum seekers

Exposing violence against women

EWL was responsible for the European coordination of the **worldwide "V Day" campaign**, which continues into 2001 and which awards prizes to the best projects combating violence from all over the world.

The **European Women's Lobby's Observatory on Violence**, made up of experts from all the Member States, met twice during 2000. The meetings aimed to exchange information on policies to combat violence against women in the different countries.

The vision and commitment of women in Europe : ten years of activism

The founding sisters speak out: EWL is ten years old!

By Fausta Deshormes, Jacqueline de Groot, Marie-Claude Vayssade and Barbara Helfferich

Fausta Deshormes

contributed to the creation of EWL through her work at the Women's Information Service of the European Commission

I created and took over the management of the department of Information for Women at the European Commission in 1977. The current of exchange that was immediately established between women and their associations on the one hand and the European institutions — Commission and Parliament, and on the other, through the "Women of Europe" newsletter quickly demonstrated to me how much women actually felt the need for information about Community policies and about the situation in the Member States. It was therefore natural for me to begin to think about the need for a European-level coordination of women's associations.

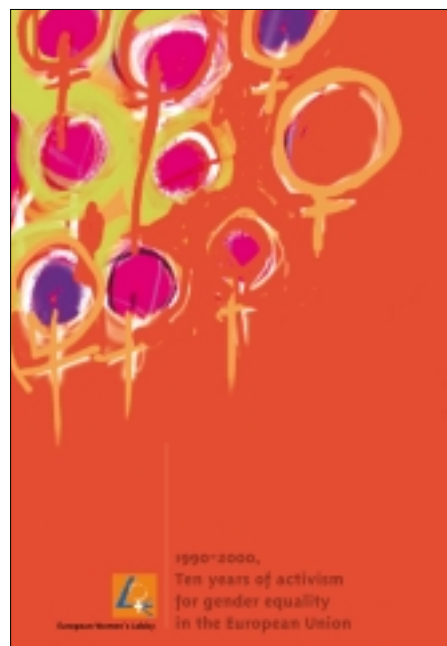
The dream of a "Women's Forum"...

The first exchange on the subject of my "dream" of a Women's Forum, as I called it provisionally, took place with Jacqueline Nonon (who was at the time director of the Commission's Office for Employment and Equality of Women) and with Janine Lansier, President of the Comité Français du Travail Féminin. The next step involved the collaboration of Helga Thieme, President of the Deutscher Frauenrat who proposed to organise in Bonn the first European conference of women's associations. This was in May 1982: by happy coincidence, the first Action Programme on Equal Opportunity for Women for 1982-1985 was before the Council of Ministers. I hoped that this mobilisation would lead to "a network with thousands of links."

But the time was not yet ripe; I therefore committed myself to organising further European colloquia on a regular basis, which took place in Turin in 1984, and in The Hague in 1985. The number of participating associations increased from one Colloquium to the next (there were 60 in The Hague), but the core group remained the same, testifying to the value of regular dialogue with the European institutions and ever-closer consultation.

...Come true thanks to the perseverance of the founding mothers

In London, in November 1987, the dream came closer to reality, as 120 women, members of 85 organisations representing 50 million members, were invited to a Fourth Colloquium organised in cooperation with the Fawcett Society. At the conclusion of discussions, two resolutions were adopted. One called on the Commission to create a media observatory, the other proposed the **"creation of a structure for influence open to all interested women's organisations, to exert pressure on European and national institutions to ensure better defence and representation of women's interests"**. The delegates asked



the Commission to "lend its support for the organisation in early 1988 of a meeting with a view to the implementation of such a structure".

We had to get to work at once.

And today? The success of EWL is a heartening reality. You can be very proud of it, all of you who have contributed with so much conviction, tenacity and imagination over the past ten years, during which lobbying and monitoring of and dialogue with the institutions have been established.

I hope that you will consolidate these positions and take them further, while also:

- consolidating, in so far as possible, the sphere of influence on a national basis in each country
- broadening your commitment to encompass all dimensions of European integration at a time when the debate on the future of Europe is vital to our common future.

Good luck!

Jacqueline de Groot

was Co-ordinator of the European Women's Lobby between 1988 and 1991. She was also a member of EWL Board of Administration and Vice President between June 1998 and September 2000.

When I was contacted by Fausta Deshormes in 1988 to prepare the first General Assembly of this "influencing structure (...)" as requested in London by the representatives of the 85 women's association, I did not have any preconceived vision, but some beliefs:

- 1) Women could no longer be satisfied with protesting - they had to express in clear terms what they wanted: to build together with men a new society.
- 2) The time had come for women to take on an active role in building Europe.

At this time, we did not yet speak of "civil dialogue". The choice of "Lobby" as a name was met with some distrust both inside the European institutions and by the women's organisations themselves. I recall a comment made at a meeting we had with Pres-

ident Delors' office: - "A lobby? - that does not sound very nice". Paradoxically, we were happy. Our interlocutor understood that it was a new structure, which intended to be active and influential.

First of all, women's associations had to be convinced to work together.

I drew up a first draft of the statutes of the association outlining our objectives and working methods and submitted this to a group of women representing women's associative life in Europe. We identified 40 women from different countries and sectors of activity and the group met three times.

Finally, in September 1990, the big day arrived: the first General Assembly adopted the Statutes of the association. The European Women's Lobby was born.

Today, EWL is recognised as the leader of women's NGOs in the European Union. Relations are being strengthened with associations in the candidate countries. The members of the 1997 Intergovernmental Conference spoke of "political harass-

ment", to which they were subjected by EWL, resulting in the inclusion of articles 2 and 3 on equality between women and men into the Treaty. EWL, through its effective defence of women's rights, also positions itself increasingly clearly on institutional issues. I see its future lying in this direction. Women were excluded from direct democracy and had to fight hard for their rights in representative democracy. In my opinion, civil dialogue is the best way to fight for equality. Gender equality implies the end of stereotypes and the recognition of different personalities. It does not imply uniformity but rather the right of each man and woman to fully develop his or her personality.

Marie-Claude Vayssade

is a founding member of EWL, member of the French co-ordination of EWL and former member of the European Parliament

Ten years ago, I was a Member of the European Parliament. As the rapporteur on the budget for the Committee on

Women's Rights, I obtained a budget heading to finance the European Women's Lobby. The word "lobby" shocked some members of the Budgets Committee. I think that we had called it the "European Women's Forum" at time.

Unfortunately, despite the enormous success of EWL, ten years later, this battle for funding has still not been won for good.

The EWL and national co-ordinations must make an effort to bring together a maximum number of women's associations. If we want a new "social contract" between the sexes, we must also reflect on our relations with the entire NGO sector, involving both men and women. The EWL's membership in the Platform of Social NGOs is a step in this direction.

Barbara Helfferich,
former Secretary General of EWL and current member of the Cabinet of Commissioner Diamantopoulou

In my eight years with EWL, I had the privilege of meeting and working with a remarkable number of outstanding women whose energy and commitment made EWL

into what it is today - an effective voice for women at the European level, a most important information channel for women and women's organisations, and a promoter of an inclusive Europe.

But the European Women's Lobby is not about individuals. I believe that the most important part of EWL is its members, their contribution and their commitment. EWL

was and is above all a co-ordinating body. Its views are those of its members. The next phase of the development of this organisation is to concentrate on how best to articulate the views of its members - and they are growing and will be growing with enlargement.

EWL Beijing 1995: a milestone in the fight for women's human rights

The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995 was the last in a series of international conferences organised under the auspices of the United Nations. At all of the international conferences which took place in the latter part of the 20th century – Environment, Human Rights, Population and Development, Social Summit – the issue of equality for women emerged as the predominant and recurrent theme. In Beijing, the international community agreed that women must be promoted and given recognition for the role they play in all areas and policies.

EWL stepped up its activities before and during the Beijing Conference. This was the first large-scale international event in which EWL played a central role by facilitating a close collaboration between European NGOs and the European Union political representatives.

Before the official start of the conference, EWL organised an **internal seminar to define common strategies** and positions and to address practical aspects aiming to guarantee the participation of, and provision of information to, the NGOs who could not attend the official conference. During the conference itself, EWL set up a **permanent information centre**, which was open throughout the NGO Forum and organised **daily workshop**. A **"Guide for the Fourth World Conference of Women and the NGO Forum"** and other information documents in several languages were published and distributed during these three weeks. The caucus meetings were set up throughout the official conference. Six months after the conference in China, we organised a **Post Beijing conference in Brussels on the "New Gender Contract"**.



*"Beijing presented the face of women across time, culture and national identity and demonstrated before the world that women are a force, not a footnote (...) the century of their empowerment has made women excellent synthesisers, out of their understanding that there is no time left to lose. Women are not interested in anniversaries for the sake of celebration alone, but for the passage of time that is marked, and because the coin of good intention is fast being spent."*¹

The Fourth World Conference on Women helped to strengthen a European identity for women from different Member States. In this respect, EWL played a leading role by providing a continuous flow of information in what was a complex process, and by developing links with the different interlocutors in the EU Institutions.

¹ Quote from Journalist Paula Diperna in the Earth Times issue of August 31- September 14, 1996, commemorating the first anniversary of Beijing.

² Commissioner Padraig Flynn addressing the EWL plenary in Huairou, NGO Forum.

*"Partnership between women and men is a prerequisite and an issue of human rights whereby the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable and indivisible part of universal human rights. Partnership and equality are also issues for men particularly in sharing power and responsibilities in the public and private areas. Finally, partnership also refers to policy-making and NGOs; as the European Community is committed to implementing the Beijing Platform for Action, NGOs will be key partners in this process."*²

Amsterdam Treaty June 1997: EWL champions gender equality and mainstreaming

Forty years after the signature of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, lobbying in favour of the integration of gender equality in the treaty was made a priority for EWL in 1996-1997. The contribution of EWL to the work of the governments meeting at the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to revise the treaties was considerable, both as far as its active lobbying was concerned, but also through the information provided to its member organisations and to the women of Europe in general.

The work achieved by EWL, and especially by the hundreds of women active in Europe during the 2 years of negotiation, was a decisive factor in the progress achieved in the text of the Treaty.

An important implication for women's organisations...

At this stage in the construction of Europe, it was unacceptable to the members of EWL that the European Union continued to legislate without a legal obligation in the Treaty proclaiming the equality of women and men as one of its guiding principles. EWL therefore needed to follow the work of the governments, informing women's organisations in the Member States so that they could take action at a national level.



EWL members in Amsterdam in 1997.

...and successful lobbying

At European level, EWL exerted pressure at all meetings, with representatives from the Ministries. EWL submitted lobbying texts for consideration at each negotiation including remarks and amendments on the draft positions prepared by the Irish and Dutch Presidencies, open letters on the key problems and main issues of concern. In spring 1997, EWL organised a European-wide petition with more than 30,000 signatures.

The meetings of civil society organisations in Amsterdam proved the interest of European citizens for a Europe based on solidarity and justice. EWL was strongly represented in these demonstrations.

The inclusion of gender equality between women and men and of "mainstreaming" as objectives of the European Union in the Amsterdam Treaty was a major step forward for democracy, progress that is partly due to the lobbying work of EWL. Four years later the application of these principles is unfortunately not yet fully a reality but EWL intends to continue to influence the process at the next Intergovernmental Conference, in particular by lobbying for the introduction of the principle of parity democracy into the Treaty.

Treaty establishing the European Communities (as amended by the Amsterdam Treaty)

Article 2

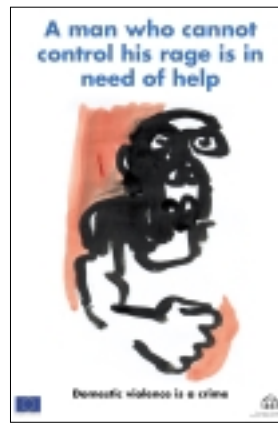
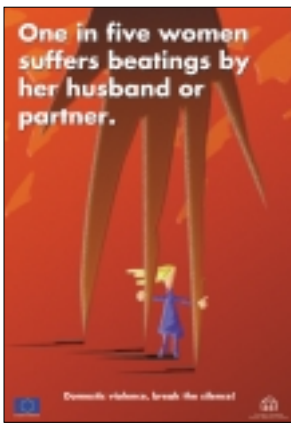
The Community shall have as its task, by establishing a common market and an economic and monetary union and by implementing common policies or activities referred to in Articles 3 and 3a, to promote throughout the Community a harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of economic activities, a high level of employment and of social protection, equality between men and women, sustainable and non-inflationary growth, a high degree of competitiveness and convergence of economic performance, a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, the raising of the standard of living and quality of life, and economic and social cohesion and solidarity among Member States.

Article 3

1. For the purposes set out in Article 2, the activities of the Community shall include, as provided in this Treaty and in accordance with the timetable set out therein:

- a) the prohibition, as between Member States, of customs duties and quantitative restrictions on the import and export of goods, and of all other measures having equivalent effect;
- b) a common commercial policy;
- c) an internal market characterized by the abolition, as between Member States, of obstacles to the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital;
- d) measures concerning the entry and movement of persons as provided for in Title IV;
- e) a common policy in the sphere of agriculture and fisheries;
- f) a common policy in the sphere of transport;
- g) a system ensuring that competition in the internal market is not distorted;
- h) the approximation of the laws of Member States to the extent required for the functioning of the common market;
- i) the promotion of coordination between employment policies of the Member States with a view to enhancing their effectiveness by developing a coordinated strategy for employment;
- j) a policy in the social sphere comprising a European Social Fund;
- k) the strengthening of economic and social cohesion;
- l) a policy in the sphere of the environment;
- m) the strengthening of the competitiveness of Community industry;
- n) the promotion of research and technological development;
- o) encouragement for the establishment and development of trans-European networks;
- p) a contribution to the attainment of a high level of health protection;
- q) a contribution to education and training of quality and to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States;
- r) a policy in the sphere of development cooperation;
- s) the association of the overseas countries and territories in order to increase trade and promote jointly economic and social development;
- t) a contribution to the strengthening of consumer protection;
- u) measures in the spheres of energy, civil protection and tourism.

2. In all the activities referred to in this Article, the Community shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women.



European campaign against domestic violence against women

Combating violence against women, EWL leads the way toward co-ordinated European action

" (...) The real measure of equality is the commitment of a State to combat violence against women – in all its forms and in all areas of life. As long as violence against women continues and is tolerated, real equality will not be achieved. This is the real challenge facing us for this third Millennium."

D. Fuchs, EWL President at a conference in Cologne in 1999.

To meet the above challenge, EWL created its **European Policy Action Centre against Violence against Women** in 1997, as a follow-up to the World Conference in Beijing. The Centre aimed to enable women's NGOs to play a leadership role in the definition of policies and to urge decision-makers to take on responsibility in this field.

While grassroots NGOs have been working in the field for many years and are aware of the suffering of women victims of violence, the general image of violence in Europe remains unclear. The EWL therefore also works on data and statistical evidence of violence against women.

EWL study "Unveiling the hidden data on domestic violence against women" has shown that between 20 and 25% of all women have been subjected to physical violence by a partner and also shows "the gap between legislation, which recognises forms of abuse, which constitute domestic violence and the recording of data in official statistics".

EWL created an original structure: **The European Observatory on Violence against Women** which brings together experts from all Member States to advise EWL on the actions and strategies that should be implemented to combat all forms of violence against women. In light of these proposals, EWL concentrated on the issues of trafficking and prostitution and, after many debates amongst its member associations, adopted an agreed position at the General Assembly condemning, prostitution as a form of sexual exploitation, which violates women's human rights.

EWL Policy Action Centre against Violence against Women **supports its action of asserting pressure and lobbying by developing a network of national observatories** on violence in the Member States and by consolidating the European dimension. It will continue to request increased resources for NGOs combating violence at grassroots level, and to support all initiatives in favour of the development of European policies to combat violence.



EWL study "Unveiling the hidden data on domestic violence against women"

EWL monitors closely the international and European developments on issues such as trafficking in women; women asylum seekers, sexual harassment or domestic violence, It lobbies so that the scale of violence against women, whether in the home, in society at large, in the media or institutions, is acknowledged.

EWL has come a long way: EC Director General Odile Quentin

Odile Quintin, Director General at the Directorate General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs at the European Commission

Ten years ago, we were in a very important phase of European integration and in particular concerning the policy of equality between women and men; a series of Directives had been adopted and two action programmes completed; the first woman Commissioner was appointed, and on her proposal the Commission adopted the Third Programme for Equality, which shifted the emphasis from equality under the law to de facto equality; the Council, on a proposal by the Commission, adopted a major Community initiative reserved exclusively for measures to support the vocational integration of women (NOW).

This policy was broadly inspired by a strong movement of associations of women and of civil society. Ten years ago, the movement was fragmented and sometimes wracked by conflict. It seemed important, to consolidate both solidarity and women's role in the development of European policy, to turn this necessary and creative diversity into a stronger and more structured whole, with an articulate voice that could constitute a preferred interlocutor of European-level bodies.

After ten years, I can say that our vision of things was accurate. EWL has undergone major developments and has become a key actor in this area. It participates, as an observer, in all committees where the issue of equality is defended at the level of the Commission and its opinions and proposals are taken seriously into account in the establishment of Community policy in this area. The Lobby has taken a series of initiatives and developed projects that have confirmed its role as a catalyst for better cooperation among the many NGOs in the Member States. It meets regularly with the

Community institutions: the European Parliament, the Commission (group of Commissioners for equal opportunity).

The future of the European Women's Lobby and gender equality at European level

The principle of equality and its mainstreaming into all Community policies is now a given, and is even enshrined in the Treaties; equal access to employment is no longer considered only a fundamental right but also a positive factor. In order to prosper, our economy needs women and this recognition at the highest political level has made it possible and will continue to make it possible to improve the status of women in a substantive manner.

The European Council of Lisbon in March 2000, which set the new economic and social strategic objectives for the Union, adopted as one of its major objectives in promoting a policy of full employment and social cohesion an increase in the rate of employment of women which is currently at an average of 61% and is to reach 70% in 2010. The employment guidelines adopted by the Council of Ministers on a yearly basis also focus on measures to be implemented by the Member States and social partners to reach this objective.

The new European framework strategy as concerns equality of the sexes for 2001-2005, adopted by the Commission in June on a proposal by Commissioner Diamantopoulou, is very ambitious. Over the next five years, our concern will be to fight inequalities in economic, political, civil and social life, as well as to change roles and eliminate stereotypes in this area; to help the applicant countries to progress; to strengthen Europe's active role in promoting women at global level, in particular in the poorest countries.

In this new Community strategy where equality has become a political priority,

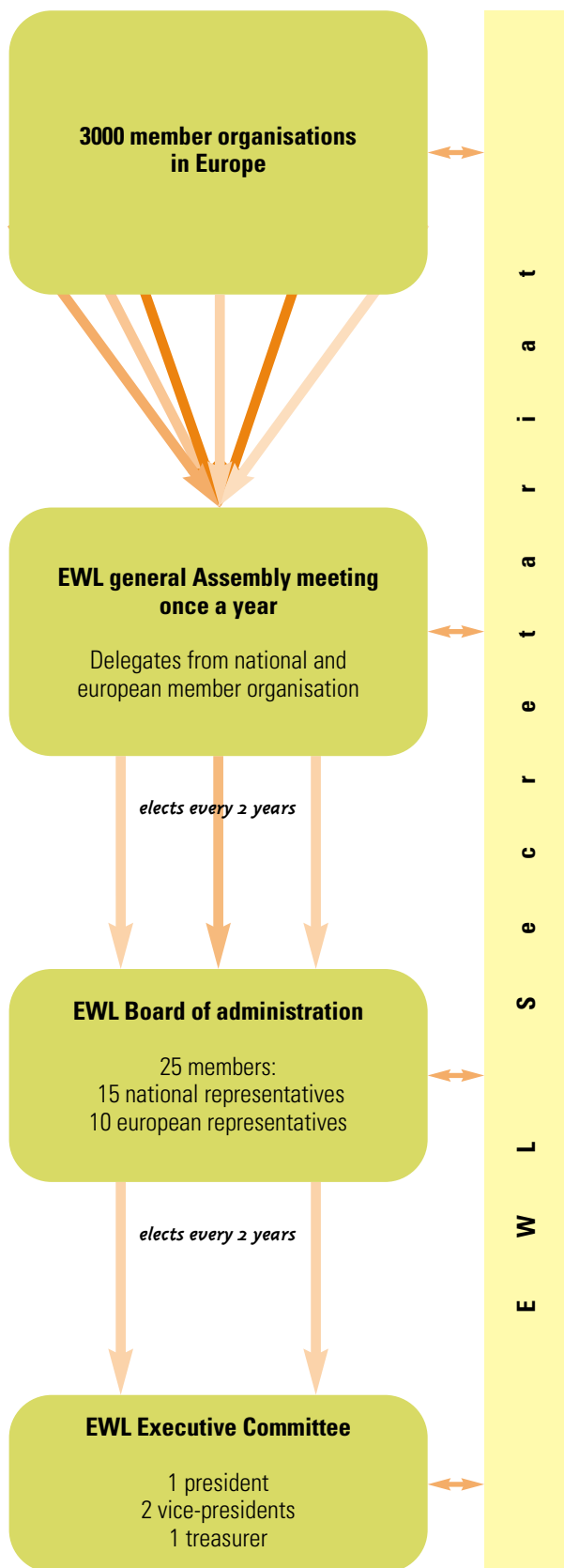
the role of the Lobby, which has acquired substantial expertise in its ten years of existence, can only become more important. The Lobby will contribute to the success of this new European strategy as a platform in which all NGOs in Europe come together to stimulate and lend dynamism to the debate in the Member States; it is also certain that the exchange of experiences and the creation of a network linking the Lobby and its members with NGOs in the candidate countries could improve women's situation, in particular in the areas of violence and their increased participation in power structures. Finally, beyond the Community level and that of the candidate countries, organisations of European women and the Lobby itself will surely play an important role in advising and exchanging experiences with NGOs in less prosperous countries to improve the status of women around the world.

I put my faith in the Lobby to mobilise its nearly 3,000 associations of women in Europe effectively and I am pleased to observe the reinforcement of positive cooperation between the Lobby and the Commission.



EWL Structure and Membership

EWL Structure



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Member organisations of EWL

National co-ordinations

AUSTRIA

Bund Österreichischer Frauenvereine; -
Österreichischer Frauenring

BELGIUM

Conseil des Femmes Francophones de Belgique
(CFFB);Nederlandstalige Vrouwenraad; Vrouwen
Vrouwen Overleg Komitee; Comité de Liaison des
Femmes

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 EWL

IRELAND

National Women's Council of Ireland (NWC)

ITALY

Coordinamento Italiano della Lobby Europea delle
Donne (LEF Italia)

LUXEMBOURG

Union des Soroptimistes Luxembourg; Commission
Féminine Internationale du Mouvement Européen;
Fédération Nationale des Femmes Luxembourgeoises;
Conseil National des Femmes Luxembourgeoises

THE NETHERLANDS

Vrouwen Alliantie; Nederlandse Vrouwen Raad

PORTUGAL

ONG Portuguesas de Direitos das Mulheres (ONG do
CC da CIDM)

SPAIN

Coordinadora Espanola del Lobby Europeo de Mujeres
(CELEM); Comision consultiva de seguimiento del
plan para la igualdad de oportunidades de las
mujeres (CCSPIOM)

SWEDEN

Forum for the Cooperation for Women in Sweden
(SAMS)

UNITED KINGDOM

National Alliance of Women's Organisations (NAWO);
Northern Ireland Women's European Platform
(NIWEP); Women's Forum Scotland; Wales Women's
Euro Network

European member organisations

- European Centre of the International Council
of Women (CECIF)
- European Confederation of Trade Unions
(CES – ETUC)
- Commission Féminine Internationale
du Mouvement Européen
- Conseil des Communes et Régions d'Europe (CCRE)
- Conseil Européen des Fédérations (WIZO – CEFW)
- International Council of Jewish Women
- Comité des Organisations Professionnelles
Agricoles (COPA)
- Union Européenne des Classes Moyennes: EMSU
- European Disability Forum (EDF)
- European Federation of Business
& Professional Women (EFBPW)
- European Forum of Left Feminists
- European Network of Women (ENOW)
- European Women's Management
Development Network (EWMD)
- European Women's Network
for Intercultural Action and Exchange
- Fédération Européenne des Femmes Actives
au Foyer (FEFAF)
- Fédération Internationale
des Femmes de Carrières Juridiques
- European Network of Women Entrepreneurs
(FEMVISION)
- International Alliance of Women
- Medical Women's International Association (MWIA)
- Soroptimist International Europe
- Soroptimist International of Great Britain
and Ireland
- Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)
- Union Mondiale des Organisations Féminines
Catholiques
- University Women of Europe (UWE)
- Women's International League
for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

Corresponding members of EWL

National corresponding member organisations

GERMANY

BAG Büro der Frauenbeauftragten; BAG Frauen e.V.;
Deutscher Akademikerinnenbund e.V.; Terre des
Femmes; Business & Professional Women Germany

ARMENIA

Centre de Recherche Psychologiques "Meknoutune"

BELGIUM

Union Belge des Soroptimistes; Centre Féminin
d'Education Permanente; Fédération Belge des
Femmes Diplômées des Universités a.s.b.l.

DENMARK

KVINFO – Danish Centre for Information on Women
and Gender

SPAIN

Consell Nacional de Dones de Catalunya; FEDEPE –
Federaci6n Espanola de Mujeres Directivas,
ejecutivas, profesionales y empresarias

FINLAND

The Central Association of Women Entrepreneurs in
Finland; National Council of Women in Finland

GREECE

Conseil National des Femmes Hélénes; Mediterranean
Women's Studies Institute; The Greek YWCA

IRELAND

The Well Woman Centre

LUXEMBOURG

Centre d'Information et de Documentation
"Thers Bode"

THE NETHERLANDS

Vrouwenbelangen; TIYE International

SLOVENIA

Lesbian Group SKUC-LL

SWEDEN

West Sweden Women's Lobby; SMKL – The Stockholm
Mälars Region Women's Lobby; WOCAD – Women's
Organisations Committee on Alcohol and Drug Issues

UNITED KINGDOM

British Federation of Women Graduates; National
Council of Women of GB; Royal College of Nursing of
the United Kingdom; RWRP – Refugee Women's
Resource Project; WITEC – Women in Technology –
Student Services

European corresponding member organisations

Mental Health Europe/Santé Mentale Europe
CLUB L International;
AFEM – Association des Femmes de l'Europe
Mériidionale
Association Internationale des Charités
ACLI – Associazione Christiane Lavoratori Italiani

EWL General Assembly
2000 in Delfi



Why a European Women's Lobby?

- In the EU, the **employment rate of women** in 1999 was at 52.6%, whereas the male rate was at 71.6%
- The **pay gap** remains considerable across the EU: women are paid on average 83% of men's hourly wages.
- The greater commitment of women to paid work has not been accompanied by any significant redistribution of household labour, with **women performing more than 80% of households tasks.**
- Women in the EU: an average of **18;7% in political decision making**
 - 26,8% of the members of the European Parliament.
 - 25% of members of the European Commission
 - 17.1% of members of the Economic and Social Committee
 - 14.9% of the members of the Committee of the Regions
 - 6.5% of the members of the European Council
- Women represent 21.4% of the members in **national Parliaments**
- At least **1 in 5 women in the EU have experienced violence** by their intimate male partner. 95% of all acts of violence take place within the home.
- In 1997, an estimated **175.000 women and girls were trafficked** from States in the east of the OSCE region primarily to states in central and western Europe and in most cases for the purpose of sexual exploitation.



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European Women's Lobby
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