



International Conference “Movements, Borders, Rights? Feminist Perspectives on Global Issues in Europe”, 24-25 October, Brussels, Belgium

Programme Overview

Monday 24 October

9.00 – **Introduction to the day and conference**

9.45

Panel 1: “New Topography of Power and the Future of Gender Justice”

Recent global changes of political and economic power relations frame the current backlash for women's rights and gender equality. The rise of authoritarian and nationalistic governments as well as right-wing populist, xenophobic and anti-feminist forces pose a severe threat to liberal democracy, gender and minority rights. Neoliberal and austerity policies download a lot of costs on women and the care economy. Trade and investment agreements ignore social and human rights and shift more power to the corporate sector. Most state institutions, both in Europe and in other regions of the world, fail to address the appalling humanitarian problems of migrants and refugees and the root causes.

9:45 –

11:15

The EU as political and open border project, and as welfare model is being profoundly transformed. All of this is leading to political, social and economic situations where gender justice is at stake and women's rights are being sacrificed. There is a dire need to develop counter-strategies from feminist perspectives.

Christa Wichterich, author, university lecturer and member and part of the WIDE+ caucus (moderator)

Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay, author and senior advisor at KIT Gender (speaker)

Emma Dowling, senior lecturer in Sociology at Middlesex University London (speaker)

11.15-

11.30

Coffee Break

Workshops

Workshop 1: “Right wing populism: a threat to gender equality and women's rights”

Right wing populism is on the rise in western and eastern Europe. The workshop explores the interwovenness of racism and anti-feminism, of nationalistic and xenophobic discourses. What are counter-arguments and counter-strategies? How to overcome the growing polarization of societies?

11.30-

13.00

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Klaus Linsenmeier, director Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung European Union (moderator)
Kinga Lohmann, executive Director Karat Coalition Poland (speaker)
Nuray Ozbay, EWL coordinator in Turkey and deputy secretary of KADIGER (speaker)
Henning von Bargen, director of the Feminist Gunda-Werner-Institut of Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (speaker)

Workshop 2: "Austerity, pressure on public dissent and rising neo-conservatism: shrinking spaces for feminist activism"

The spaces for civil society are shrinking, not only in terms of reducing political and public rights but also shrinking financial resources. At the same time there is an ideological backlash that is in particularly directed towards progressive women's rights advocates. How do the two developments interrelate and what can we do to counter them?

Kathrin Meißner, coordinator of project "political feminism" at Friedrich Ebert Stiftung headquarters (moderator)
Isabel Casimiro, co-founder of WLSA (Women and Law in Southern Africa Research) and member of WLSA Mozambique (speaker)
Alejandra Santillana Ortiz, executive director of the Institute of Ecuadorian Studies and researcher, completing a PhD in Latin American Studies in Mexico (speaker)
Nerea Craviotto, lead advocacy officer at AWID (speaker)

Workshop 3: "Sustainable development goals: a tool for systemic change on feminist principles?"

What are the potentials and constraints of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda to realize women's rights and transform unequal gender relations? The workshop will offer a space for critical reflection, provide elements for systemic change, as well as for strategizing on feminist advocacy at European level.

Marion Sharples, interim coordinator at Gender & Development Network (moderator)
Abigail Hunt, research officer at Overseas Development Institute (speaker)
Krishanti Dharmaraj, executive director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership (speaker)
Tessa Khan, international human rights lawyer, director of the Climate Litigation Network (speaker)

Workshop 4: "Transforming EU's gender blind trade policies"

The current EU trade policy works against goals of achieving gender equality, protection of women's human rights and sustainable development. This workshop will reflect and further strategize on key recommendations proposed by the WIDE+ trade and gender working group that highlight the key entry points towards a new trade policy.

Gea Meijers, Member of WIDE+ Trade and Gender WG, project coordinator WIDE+ (moderator)
Edmé Dominguez, associate professor in the area of Peace and Development Studies at the University of Gothenburg (speaker)
Yorgos Altintzis, officer economic & social policy at International Trade Union Confederation (speaker)
Carina Bos, policy officer WO=MEN, the Dutch Gender Platform (speaker)

13.00-
14.15

Lunch Break

Panel 2: " Migration and women's rights: When refugees cross borders to Europe and within Europe - old reflexes, new fences"

States and the EU have not developed a joint strategy based on a human rights approach to handle migration and refugee flows. Instead they have turned to highly technocratic approaches that strengthen internal and external border regimes. Women's specific needs and rights are either not taken into account due to the male norms around migration and asylum or they are often packed into an approach of only protection and paternalism. The fact that most states ratified CEDAW and signed UNSCR 1325, and that gender mainstreaming policies and toolkits are available, increasingly loses its relevance. There is a need to shed a critical light through a feminist lens at the bigger picture including the roots of migration and its interlinkages with global economic and political injustice. This is what this panel will do.

14.15-
15.45

Feminist analysis must be made visible within the debates around migration and refugees – on the one hand addressing the women's resources and biographies, on the other hand assessing the gendered realities in Europe in the migration context. It helps to understand the narratives of the different stake holders and the entry points for a provision of support. Furthermore, the panel aims at throwing light on the mechanisms that distort and exploit feminist discourse and thus reproduce the structural racism, sexism and xenophobia reflected in current policies of registration, reception, integration.

Serap Altinisik, programme director at EWL (moderator)

Pierrette Pape, policy & campaigns director at EWL (speaker)

Hibaaq Osman, founder and CEO of El-Karama and among others, founder of "ThinkTank for Arab Women and Dignity Fund" (speaker)

Marianna Karakoulaki, journalist and editor who is currently reporting on the refugee crisis at the Greek borders (speaker)

Ola Aljari, editor at the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom, journalist about (women) refugee issues (speaker)

Video presentation by Marcy Hersh on behalf **Women's Refugee Commission**

15.45 –
16.00

Coffee Break

Workshops

Workshop 5: "Root causes of migration in the Global South and reconfiguration of development cooperation"

16.00-
17.30

This workshop deals with gender dimensions of root causes of voluntary and forced migration, with the intersections between European migration and development politics, and the reconfiguration of development cooperation. Feminist approaches and demands towards migration and development will be highlighted.

Cristina Reyna, after a long career with women's rights NGOs, she is currently an independent communications consultant (moderator)

Hibaaq Osman, founder and CEO of El-Karama and among others, founder of "ThinkTank for Arab Women and Dignity Fund" (speaker)

Céline Mias, EU representative at CARE International (speaker)

Workshop 6: "Who cares for whom? Asylum and refugee rights"

This workshop will discuss different policy opportunities to promote the rights of women refugees such as the Istanbul Convention (articles 59-61), codes of conduct, and strategies to engender asylum policies among others.

Pierrette Pape, policy & campaigns director at EWL (moderator)

Mary Collins, senior policy & advocacy coordinator EWL (speaker)

Milena Wegelin, projectleader Terres des Femmes Switzerland (speaker)

Anna Zobnina, chair of the European Network of Migrant Women (speaker)

Workshop 7: "New security policies, conflict and women's human rights"

Security and peace policies are moving towards protectionist surveillance states. This development is also visible in migration and refugee policies across Europe. The workshop aims to understand the coincidence of these different strings of "security policies" and the threatening potential of undermining gender equality principles and human rights.

Annemarie Sancar senior program officer for gender in the Policy and Platform Program
Swisspeace, KOFF Center for Peacebuilding (moderator)

Alexandra Bousiou, researcher completing a PHD on security issues concerning the movement of refugees (speaker)

Merle Gosewinkel, senior program officer at Women Peacemakers Program (speaker)

Rosabel Agirregomezkorta, director at Centro de estudios e Investigación sobre Mujeres (speaker)

Workshop 8: "Discourses on sexism, xenophobia and racism - the role of media"

The event on new year's eve in Cologne and the debates about burka and burkini are examples how powerful media are in shaping discourses which influence public opinions as well as political decision making. This workshop wants to explore hegemonic media strategies as well as possible counter strategies and the use of media in a way that secures justice, social inclusion, and respect for "others".

Katharina Pühl, scientific expert on feminist analysis at Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation in Berlin (moderator)

Massimo Perrinelli, Referent for migration, Akademie für politische Bildung, Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation, Berlin (speaker)

Aliaksandra Ihnatovich Researcher and practitioner of visual culture including documentary maker in Belarus (speaker)

Emine Aslan, co-founder of #schauhin on racism and sexism in Germany (speaker)

Marianna Karakoulaki, journalist and editor who is currently reporting on the refugee crisis at the Greek borders (speaker)

Evening: Social Gathering, hosted by WIDE+ and EWL

Participants can stay at the Chant d'Oiseau to talk informally with other participants and speakers. There is no evening programme prepared.

19.00 Dinner

There is dinner for invited speakers and guests.

Other participants can register for the dinner before 19 October (see practical information, registration at conference@wideplus.info)

17.45-18.45 WIDE+ General Assembly

WIDE+ will organize its annual member's meeting; the meeting is for WIDE+ members, people interested to join WIDE+ or network with WIDE+.

Tuesday 25 October

8.45-
9.00

Introduction to the day

Panel 3: "Challenging Europe's austerity politics and trade regimes from a feminist and development perspective"

Among the challenges faced by Europe today, the increasing inequality and lack of economic justice are crucial. This panel will reflect on the dominant European economic politics and their implications for gender relations and women's livelihoods within and outside Europe. Highlighted will be the impact of austerity for women in Europe and the effects of neoliberal European trade policies on women's human rights in the Global South. These aspects will be connected to development policy and discourses, such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

9.00-
10.30

The panel will also focus on feminist visions, alternative proposals, ongoing struggles and women's strategies to counter current mainstream neoliberal economics. How to regain policy space and strengthen democracy? What can we learn from social movements in different countries, especially in the Global South?

Mariama Williams, Senior Programme Officer at the South Centre (moderator)

Rania Antonopoulou, alternate minister of Labour Social Security and Social Solidarity in Greece (speaker)

Tessa Khan, international human rights lawyer, director of the Climate Litigation Network (speaker)

Susan Himmelweit, emeritus professor and feminist economist (discussant)

10.30-
10.45

Coffee Break

Workshops

10.45-
12.15

Workshop 9: "EU-Africa trade agreements: drivers for development or more poverty?"

This workshop will discuss the impact of EU-Africa trade agreements, namely EPAs, that have been negotiated over the past years on women's livelihoods and poverty in Africa. Approaches of grassroots resistance against neoliberal free trade regimes in Africa and Europe will be explored,

and feminist demands highlighted.

Janice G. Foerde, director at gender and development network KULU Denmark (moderator)
Akua Britwum, professor Cape Coast University Ghana Her research and publications cover among others: the economics of violence against women, gender and land rights, gender and leadership in trade unions, organizing informal economy workers (speaker)

Workshop 10: "Building alternatives to policy of austerity and current economic model in Europe from a feminist perspective"

This workshop will address the need for a new economic framework that centres wellbeing and redresses structural power imbalances, in line with feminist economic principles. While gender concerns are often touched on only peripherally in alternative economic models, this workshop will examine ways to move beyond the business-as-usual approach and build a feminist economic agenda.

Mary Collins senior policy & advocacy coordinator EWL (moderator)
Susan Himmelweit, emeritus professor and feminist economist (speaker)
Eszter Kovats Project leader, Friedrich Ebert Foundation Budapest, Programme "Gender equality in East-Central Europe". (speaker)
Megan Daigle, Research Officer, Gender & Development Network "Feminist Development Alternatives" (speaker)
Emma Ritch, Executive Director of Engender, EWL member.

Workshop 11: "Self-organization of migrants and refugees; who speaks for whom?"

Migrants started to organize themselves, and raise their voice instead of being represented by others. In this workshop we want to explore diverse forms of struggles, visible and invisible, and protests against exclusion, violence and discrimination. Listening to their ideas of self-representation and their claims we want to find out ways of strategic solidarity.

Evgenia Ivanova, is a researcher, lecturer and activist. She among others editor-in-chief of a new Russian-speaking feminist journal "Women in Politics (moderator)
Arlene Cruz, Migration, Gender and Development Network, Spain (speaker)
Amel Yacef, Amel has been working in the youth and community sector in Ireland for over 15 years chair of the European Network Against Racism (speaker)
Napuli Paul-Langa, organises resistance of refugees in Berlin and surroundings, known media spokesperson (speaker)

Workshop 12: Open space for feminist strategizing

Chaired by CWGL, USA: **Krishanti Dharmaraj**, executive director and Preeti Shekar, communications consultant for the Post 2015 Coalition.

Closing Session: Pulling threads together and plenary reflection on agenda to move forward

12.15

13.00

moderated by **Joanna Maycock**, Secretary General EWL and with slam poet **Amina Abdulkadir**