

DEUTSCHER FRAUENRAT

Deutscher Frauenrat e.V. Axel-Springer-Str. 54 A, D-10117 Berlin



Berlin, 13.06.2012

From Berlin to Strasbourg Declaration – For More Gender Equality and Justice in Economy

Dear member of Parliament,

The National Council of German Women's Organization (NCGWO) has been struggling since many years at national level and through its active cooperation with the European Women's Lobby (EWL) at European level for real gender equality and for equal opportunities of women and men in all spheres of life.

Gender equality affects the economy and the labour markets. However, in these sectors the prospects of women's participation are still very poor. This is why all over Europe the situation of women in the labour market is marked by income and pension gaps, precarious labour relations, part time work and "minijobs". Women do interrupt their professional work more often than men do in order to take care of social responsibilities as family workers, e.g. caring for children and increasingly also for elderly people. These interruptions of paid work are a central reason for women's poverty risk at old age. NCGWO therefore supports the call of the EWL for an EU-wide gender indicator in order to point out the gendered pension gaps.

The participation of women in decision-making positions in economy is also marked by gender inequality. Although not all women do have access to such positions or do not have any interest to participate in this sector of economy, it is a question of justice and economic reason, to create equal opportunities for women's access to decision-making positions. As experience over the last years has shown, voluntarily targets are a first step, but do not guarantee sustainable progress for women's access and participation.

This view is shared by the European Commission who is working on a legal initiative to increase the percentage of women in economic decision-making positions, e.g. boards of companies listed on stock exchange. The Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, Viviane Reding, is considering the introduction of a women's quota and has started a public consultation on this issue. The NCGWO welcomes this initiative and has participated in this public consultation.

National Council of German Women's Organizations

Besonderer Beraterstatus beim
Wirtschafts- und Sozialrat der UN
Mitglied der Europäischen Frauenlobby

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Lobby der Frauen

Bundesvereinigung von
Frauenverbänden und Frauen-
gruppen gemischter Verbände
in Deutschland e.V. (DF)

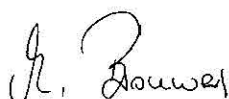
In Germany, women of all political groups in the German Parliament have signed in December 2011 the so called "Berliner Erklärung / Berlin Declaration" calling for gender equality and a legal basis for more women in decisions-making positions in economy: In this declaration a quota of at least 30 % women in all boards of stock exchange, public and compulsory employees' participation in management companies is demanded as a first step. In order to take full effect, accompanying deadlines and perceptible sanctions should be integrated. The Berlin Declaration has been supported by many women and men representing different associations, organizations, trade unions, science, research, culture and media in Germany. Viviane Reding has also mentioned the Berlin Declaration as an outstanding initiative during a conference this year in February in Berlin.

In order to support the legal initiative of the European Commission, the NCGWO would like to invite you as members or the European Parliament to initiate a "Strasbourg Declaration". In the spirit of the "Berlin Declaration", you as Members of the European Parliament, could call for a similar binding legal regulation at European level and thus supporting the Commission's efforts and make sure that you act in concert with the Commission.

We would be pleased if you could realize the idea of a "Strasbourg Declaration" with all of your own EP members and of other political groups in the European Parliament which integrates the above mentioned position of women and gender policy in Europe.

We are looking forward to your answer and to our future cooperation in order to achieve gender equality and gender justice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Brouwers".

Marlies Brouwers
President of National Council of
German Women's Organizations

Attachements:
Letter in German

**National Council of German
Women's Organizations**

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