



EUROPEAN WOMEN'S  
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EUROPÉEN DES FEMMES

# PRESS RELEASE



**European Parliament Elections 2014**  
**No modern European Democracy without Gender Equality!**  
A Political Mentoring Network for Women of Foreign Origin / Ethnic Minorities



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Photo: Susie Bonnen; In partnership with:  With the financial support of:  

## Launch of the 50/50 Mentoring Campaign

European Parliament  
Tuesday 09 April 2013  
10.15- 11.00am

**Room: A5 G305**

The European Women's Lobby is delighted to announce the launch of the **50/50 European Campaign Political Mentoring Network** in the European Parliament on Tuesday 09 April at 10.15am. The event will bring together participants in our ground-breaking mentoring network, current sitting MEPs from all political parties, with future candidates for the 2014 European Parliament elections.

The need for gender parity in modern European democracy is vital if our democracy is to be in any way 'representative'. The **EWL European Political Mentoring Network** aims to empower ethnic minority women and women of foreign origin ahead of the June 2014 European elections and, ideally, to increase their representation in the European Parliament (EP), in order to address the lack of gender parity and ethnic diversity in political decision-making at European level.

### Who are the mentors?

Mentors are current women MEPs willing to share their advice and experience with you from different political parties and countries

- EPP: Edit Bauer (Slovakia)
- ALDE: Marian Harkin (Ireland)
- S&D: Zita Gurmai (Hungary), Mojca Kleva (Slovenia), Pervenche Berés (France), Brita Thomsen (DK)



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- Greens: Marije Cornelissen (NL), Franziska Brantner (DE), Franziska Keller (DE), Ulrike Lunnacek (Austria)
- GUE: Kartirka Liotard (NL)

## Why create this mentoring network?

Figures show that parity democracy (the equal representation of women and men in decision-making) and ethnic diversity is still far from being achieved at all levels and in all areas of decision-making. Women represent less than **35%** of members of the European Parliament and despite the lack of figures, it is estimated that less than 20 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are of foreign origin or belong to an ethnic minority group (such as Roma). This means that there are less than 2% of MEPs of ethnic minorities in the EP and even less ethnic minority women. This lack of representation is problematic from the point of view of democracy, but also because it implies that the needs and situations of this group of women are not sufficiently taken into account. The under-representation of women in political decision-making in general and the absence of women from ethnic minorities/of foreign origin also contributes to the continuation of racist and gender stereotypes among both voters and decision-makers about the role of women, in particular ethnic minority women and their relationship with political power.

## Who are the mentees?

Mentees in EWL's European Political Mentoring Network are:

- Women with migrant background or from an ethnic minority living in the European Union;
- Already involved in politics at local, regional and/or national level;
- Eligible and interested in running for the next European Elections in June 2014;
- Committed to women's rights

**We'd like to you to come along and meet the participants of this ground-breaking program.**

## What is the European Women's Lobby?

With more than 2000 member organisations, represented through 30 national co-ordinations and 21 European member organisations, the EWL is the largest umbrella organisation of women's associations in Europe. The EWL works on a wide range of topics related to women's rights but the promotion of the equal representation of women and men in decision-making has always been amongst the key areas of work of the EWL since its creation in 1990. The EWL led different campaigns and constant advocacy on this issue since 1990 and EWL member organisations have been doing the same in their respective countries.

**Please register by Monday 08 April - via [haynes@womenlobby.org](mailto:haynes@womenlobby.org)**

**For further information contact: [zahi@womenlobby.org](mailto:zahi@womenlobby.org)**