



EUROPEAN WOMEN'S
LOBBY
EUROPEEN DES FEMMES

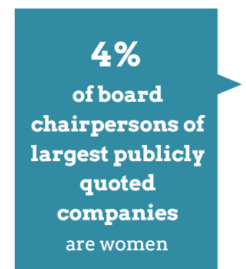


The European Women's Lobby explained to Members of the European Parliament

WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING

Empowering women to take leadership positions is crucial for sustainable economies and democratic and fair societies.

In the European Union...



WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING & THE EUROPEAN UNION

Gender equality in decision-making is mentioned as one of the priorities in the European Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015) as well as in the European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020). However, parity in decision-making positions still remains a significant challenge for all EU Member States, **and the EU has not yet adopted legally-binding instruments providing a comprehensive framework to address the under-representation of women in politics.**

A first important step was made by the European Commission in 2012 by proposing a directive with the aim of attaining a 40% objective of the under-represented sex in non-executive board-member positions in list companies in the EU. However, **the Council of Ministers has not been able yet to find a consensus on this draft directive**, which is therefore still a draft proposal. If the Council endorses the directive, it will represent a clear commitment and leadership by the EU and its Member States to gender equality, justice and democracy.

As a result of the Member States negotiations on the composition of the new Commission in the summer 2014, only 9 women were proposed, out of 28 Commissioners: **a step back compared to the 2009 Commission** (9 women out of 27 Commissioners).



Contact at the European Women's Lobby for questions related to women in power and decision-making
Pierrette Pape, EWL Policy and Campaigns Director – pape@womenlobby.org

PARITY AT ALL LEVELS OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING

The European Women's Lobby Manifesto for the 2014 EP elections "**Act now for her future, commit to gender equality!**" formulates concrete demands for the realisation of gender equality in Europe.

◆ Political groups and parties to be inclusive of women and to work towards achieving parity in elections at all levels

Political parties play a crucial role in enhancing the representation of women in politics. Positive outcomes already exist in several EU Member States. Several EU Member States currently have a parity system or legislative quota in place that ranges from 30% to 50% female candidates applicable to the list of candidates for parliamentary elections. Interestingly, the female representation inside these country's national parliaments increased rapidly since then.

◆ An efficient binding EU-level legislation to reach parity on company boards

The European Commission proposed a directive aiming to improve the representation of women on European company supervisory boards until 2020 with an objective of 40%. Presently it is up to the Council to adopt this measure as the European Parliament approved the proposal in December 2013. If adopted, even though not binding for all companies in Europe, it will be a very good first step in the right direction.

TAKE ACTION: add your footprint to European policies!

Over its last term, the European Parliament has actively supported the Women on Board Directive.

As Member of the European Parliament, **you have the power to make parity democracy a reality.** We need your support in bringing our demands on the EP agenda.

- Work with the Council and its member states to guarantee the endorsement of the **proposed directive on Women on Boards** as a first step to continue to adopt efficient binding EU-level legislation to reach parity on company boards.
- Propose and support **binding texts to ensure parity at all levels** within the European institutions and agencies.
- Prepare the 2019 elections:
 - ✓ Support the introduction of a system whereby **each Member State nominates a woman and a man as candidate Commissioners**, and the adoption of a binding rule ensuring that women and men are equally represented in the European Commission.
 - ✓ Work within your political group and party, at EU and national level, to **implement a parity system or legislative quota.**

EWL TOOLS

- Joint declaration "**No modern democracy without gender equality!**" (2012)
- European Women's Voice "**Women in decision-making, talents at the top**" (2014)
- EWL documentary "**Mentoring for change**" (2014)
- Report "**Women in Board in Europe: Cracks in the glass ceiling or just a trick of the light?**" (2015)

