

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES CALENDAR

2-3 November

Conference and Summit on Women in Power, Athens

4-5 November

European Parliament: Women's Rights Committee

7 November

"Women in the Wider Europe", 16th annual seminar of the Women's Political Association, Dublin

19 November

Sakharov Prize: homage to the "Mothers of May"

26-27 November

European Parliament: Women's Rights Committee

27 November

Zuzanna Szatmary receives the 1993 Women of Europe Prize

6-8 December

Presidency conference on Equal Opportunities, Birmingham

## COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

### ATHENS SUMMIT: WOMEN IN POWER

The ideals of democracy are no longer compatible with an under-representation of women in the decision-making process. A democratic system requires that all citizens participate equally in public and private life. This was the message published on 3 November 1992 by women meeting at the first European "Women in Power" Summit in Athens.

The Summit, convened on the initiative of Ms Vasso Papandreou, European Commissioner for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, was attended by some 20 women who are past or present holders of high office in public life in their country or in international organizations. It was organized by the European Women's Lobby with funding from the Commission of the European Communities, as part of the Third Action Programme for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men. The Summit followed a conference organized by the Community's



# WOMEN OF EUROPE NEWSLETTER

Dear Readers,

*The Edinburgh Summit on 11 and 12 December has restored our faith in the future. The Council found solutions to many of the questions which are essential to moving ahead in Europe, including Denmark and the Treaty on European Union, financing the Community, subsidiarity and transparency, starting negotiations to enlarge the Community to include a certain number of E.E.A. (European Economic Area) countries, and setting up an action plan to promote growth and combat unemployment. With the Council's decision on the Danish question, Europe will most likely go ahead as a group of twelve, on the basis of the Treaty of Maastricht, whilst respecting the identity and diversity of individual Member States. Edinburgh both consolidates the bases of a 12-Member State European Community and sets the scene for its enlargement to include other E.E.A. countries (Austria, Sweden, Norway), with whom official negotiations begin in early 1993. The Summit also focused on building Europe in closer cooperation with its citizens and a number of decisions were taken regarding subsidiarity, transparency and openness in the Community's decision-making processes. These will guarantee a better provision of information to and greater participation of Europe's citizens. An action plan prepared by the Commission and Member States aimed at combatting unemployment and promoting economic growth — two key target areas for the future of Europe — was also published. These areas are of major importance to the future of women, who are exposed much more than their male counterparts to unemployment, precarious employment and the economic crisis. For these reasons specific measures need to be taken under the Community's equal opportunities policy to meet the new challenges of 1993, to facilitate women's access to employment, to improve the quality of their jobs, to offer women new opportunities and to improve their status in society. All Community-led action must ensure that women benefit just as much as men from the positive effects of the single market and contribute their rich knowledge and experience to the Community. This is my wish for 1993.*

*Anne-Blanche Haritos*

"Women in decision-making" network, which brought together more than 500 women, and which sought to define a global strategy for the future.

Ms Vasso Papandreou stressed the need for women to create a better world which would enable them tackle, at pan-European level, the question of women's participation in decision-making centres. Indeed, one of the goals of the Athens Declaration was to create a public dialogue so to achieve a more equal representation of men and women in political life.

Ms Vasso Papandreou went on to add that, in the current atmosphere of insecurity and economic recession, the political objective of women's participation in decision centres, would be beneficial to society as a whole. This was a fundamental step, firstly for the success of equal opportunities policy and secondly, because full use of women's skills and competence will profit society as a whole. On the one hand, women's specific interests and needs will receive greater attention and on the other, tomorrow's world will have a more human face if power is exercised jointly. Finally, an effective and greater participation of women in policy making will help reduce the general lack of interest in politics and political life.

In other words, every measure which strengthens women's presence in politics strengthens democratic institutions, and bridges the dangerous divide which currently exists between citizens and those in power.

As an expert from the network pointed out, a democracy of equality — where the word citizen is not synonymous with man — is the future of democratic civilization and can no longer be "one distant and optional consequence of democracy". Several round tables highlighted the role of education and the media, as well as women's movements, trade unions, enterprises, political parties and that of men themselves in this process.

Numerous speakers drew attention to the absence of women in decision-making positions, in both political and business arenas, despite women's improved status in society. Though more and more women are entering the labour market, women are still a minority in the decision-making bodies of companies and trade unions. Women represent 9% of all the world's parliamentarians (14% in Europe thanks to the Nordic countries), and the present net reduction in women members of Parliament in the new Eastern European democracies is cause for concern.

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According to Ms Veil, former President of the European Parliament and French minister, "men holding power, which they are unwilling to share, will concede it to women only when forced to". Ms Veil declared her support for quotas, despite the drawbacks of such a system.

During the round table on "experience as the basis for structural changes", delegates examined the impact of equal opportunities legislation and actions and assessed several examples of positive action in different countries and different spheres of political and business life.

The first round table focused on the principles of and the arguments for the balanced participation of women and men in decision-making. Participants examined the new roles of men and women and the need for a new "contract between the sexes". A proposal was made to define a "parity threshold" for participation in public and political life. During the Summit, women with experience of high political office adopted a solemn declaration. After noting the democratic deficit in European countries and affirming the need to achieve a balanced distribution of public and political power between women and men, they expressed their support for the following principles:

- Formal and informal equality between women and men is a fundamental human right.
- Women make up more than half the population. Equality demands equal representation and equal say in the government of nations.
- Women represent half of the potential talent and skill of the human race. Their under-representation in decision-making is a loss for society as a whole.
- Women's under-representation in decision-making prevents the interests and needs of the population as a whole from being taken into consideration.
- The balanced participation of women and men in decision-making would result in different ideas, values and behavioral styles leading to a more just and balanced world, for women and men alike.

The Declaration calls on "the Commission of the European Communities and all Community and international bodies

to adopt action programmes and measures to guarantee the full participation of women in decision-making within these bodies". It demands that Member States apply these principles and ask political parties "to accept the full consequences of the democratic ideal on which they are based". It calls on trade unions to open up their decision-making bodies to women, on the media to "present a non-stereotyped image of women and men" and on women's organizations to "increase their efforts to ensure that women exercise their full rights as citizens".

Finally, the signatories to the Declaration, which include Vasso Papandreou, ministers and ex-ministers Simone Veil and Edith Cresson (France), Miet Smet (Belgium), Lone Dybkjaer (Denmark), Melina Mercouri (Greece), Hedy D'Ancona (Netherlands), Prijo Rusanen (Finland), Inger Davidson (Sweden), Krisztina Dobos (Hungary), Matilde Fernandez Sanz (Spain), Mary O'Rourke (Ireland), Tina Anselmi (Italy), the presidents of Parliament and parliamentary committees and MEPs Erna Hennicot-Schoepges (Luxembourg), Leonor Belza (Portugal), Rita Süßmuth (Germany), Judith Stamm (Switzerland) as well as a senior official, Chafika Meslem (United Nations), committed themselves to strengthening European democracy, and launched "a campaign to mobilize every part of society involved in this area in order to guarantee the balanced participation of men and women in decision-making at local, regional and national levels, as well as in the European institutions, including the next European Parliament".

*For further information on the Conference and the "Women in decision-making" network, please contact Sabine de Bethune, 33A rue Mercelis, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium Tel: (32.2) 512.77.23.*

- The Spanish National Council for Women has already launched its "Equal Democracy" campaign for 1993-1994, focusing on the forthcoming European Parliament elections. A special "pin brooch" can be obtained from: Maria Luisa Oliveda, Consejo Nacional de Mujeres de España, Rambla Catalunya 45, E-08007 Barcelona.
- The European Women's Lobby has issued a press release calling on political decision-makers in the twelve Member States to appoint women to the European Commission and to make the procedure for selecting

commissioners more transparent. The Lobby points out that, with the departure of Vasso Papandreou, European Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs, there is just one woman Commissioner (Christiane Scrivener) left. This situation is far from ensuring "an equitable representation of women in European institutions". The European Network of Women has also sent a letter in these terms to the President of the EC Council of Ministers. ■

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES: POLICY IN PRACTICE

The Birmingham Conference, organized by the UK Government to mark its presidency of the European Council, set out to study practical ways of making equal opportunities a reality in business life. The conference focused in particular on the needs of the labour market and was attended by senior managers from throughout Europe as well as heads of enterprises, workers' representatives and European experts in the area of equality. A report will be published in the next Women of Europe Newsletter. ■

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

A study day on sexual harassment at work, organized on 29 October by the Belgian Ministry of Employment and Work, with financial support from the European Commission's Equal Opportunities Unit, provided an opportunity to present the new legislative measures introduced by Belgium in this area and to relate them to European policies. The working groups looked at prevention policies, mediation services and legal instruments.

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## THE SITUATION OF WOMEN IN GERMANY'S NEW "LÄNDER"

### The new "Länder"

After the fall of the East German Communist regime in the autumn of 1989, there was widespread support for re-establishing the "Länder". In May 1990, the first democratically elected politicians decided to create five Länder to replace the existing 14 "Bezirke" established by the East German Communist Party in 1952.

With effect from 14 October 1990, the following new "Länder" were created:

Land	Capital of the "Land"
Brandenburg	Potsdam
Mecklenburg-Western	
Pomerania	Schwerin
Saxony-Anhalt	Magdeburg
Saxony	Dresden
Thuringia	Erfurt

### The situation of women in the new "Länder" will become the same as in the west.

The president of the German "Bundesanstalt für Arbeit" (employment institute), Heinrich Franke, declared in an interview given to the "Tagesspiegel" on 11 August 1991 that "in the new "Länder", the proportion of working women is some 90%. Over the next few years this is likely to become the same as in the west."

A study by the German Institute for Economic Research published on 25 July 1991 quantifies this adjustment: A fall in the proportion of working women in east Germany from 89.6% in 1990 to the West German level of 63.4% in 1989 would mean that 1.3 million women would have to leave the east German labour market. Were the entire Federal Republic to have as high a proportion of working women as in the former East Germany, then at least 4.8 million women would have to enter the labour market in west Germany. If the rates were to converge and meet halfway, at approx. 76.5%, this would still mean that 600 000 fewer women would be working in the east and 2.4 million more women in the west.

If, however, one extrapolates the trend in west Germany over recent years (an increase of approximately 1% annually in the number of working women), the

situation in 1995 would be approximately as follows: in the eastern part of Germany 1 million women fewer would be in employment, whereas in the western part 1 million more women would be working.

### The Unification Treaty

Women's and family issues were very largely excluded from the discussions over unification. This is clear, for example, from the catch-all phrase in the State Treaty "the interests of women and the disabled are to be taken into account". Unfortunately neither treaty makes any reference to equal status for mothers and fathers in families nor to equality of opportunity for both sexes in education and training, work and society.

### Equality in the former German Democratic Republic

In the new "Bundesländer" (NBL), women did and do enjoy legal equality but this is not reflected in their actual lives. As in the western part of Germany, women made up some 52% of the population of the former GDR. In recent years, approximately 48% of births were girls, so that males make up more than half of the younger age groups, whereas there are very many more women in the older age groups.

As in the constitution ("Grundgesetz") of the Federal Republic, that of the GDR specifically provided for equality between men and women. Although in the 1960s and 1970s the GDR boasted the highest proportion of working women in the industrialised world, it did not achieve real equality of men and women. There was a gradual evening out of the level of formal vocational qualifications of men and women, so that there is virtually no difference in people under 40 years of age. In 1988, 91% of all women of working age were in employment, of whom 87% had a vocational qualification. These are real successes which cannot now be argued away. The problem lies in the fact that these were described in the politics, ideology, media and official statements of the GDR as being in themselves sufficient proof of the successful achievement of equality. GDR women had apparently "made it". Many women completely accepted the myth of equality, blinding themselves to the real instances of day-to-day discrimination which were not only imposed on them but which had also come to be accepted

by women. Particularly from the beginning of the 1970s onwards, no-one dared mention that formal equality by no means meant that social inequalities between the sexes had been eliminated. There never was any radical change in the respective roles of men and women. Social policies which one-sidedly concentrated on the compatibility of *motherhood* and employment – rather than *parenthood* and one's job – were a constant source of new discrimination against women. These disadvantages now relegate women to the worst starting positions for the leap into a future ruled by the market economy.

Comprehensive and empirical research into the equality of men and women comparing the situation in east and west Germany (February 1992) – yielded the following results.

The majority of Germans are not satisfied with the current level of equality. In both west and east, more than 60% of those interviewed stated that too little had been done to achieve equality. Only a third believed that enough had been done, while only a tiny proportion (east 4%, west 2%) considered that too much had already been done.

An interesting aspect is the extreme difference in how the State's responsibilities are viewed. While in the west a clear majority (73%) assign responsibility to the private sector, 57% of those in the east regarded the achievement of equality as predominantly a State responsibility.

### Education and training for women

In both German states, boys and girls have had equal access to the various kinds of education, girls even achieving better results (from 1970 onwards) the GDR always had more girls than boys in the "Abitur" classes (highest level of schooling). There was also equal opportunity for vocational training and tertiary education. In contrast to the former Federal Republic, every girl in the GDR was guaranteed an apprenticeship or a place in a tertiary institute, while 49% of university graduates (30% in the west) and 70% of technical college graduates were women.

In a formal sense, the education and training conditions for women were no worse than those for men. In line with the structure of education and training, and in a process beginning in the 1960s, entire occupational sectors in the GDR



... became increasingly dominated by women.

Occupational sector	Proportion of women
Social security	91.8%
Health	83.0%
Education and training	77.0%
Commerce	72.0%
Post and telecommunications	68.9%

### Women in employment

According to the Communist Party ideology in the GDR, the key prerequisite for full equality for women was the employment of all women, as far as possible throughout their lives and only briefly interrupted by child rearing. At the same time, this would guarantee the GDR's economic development. Leaving aside the associated problems, this meant that to a great extent economic independence for women became a vital prerequisite for their equality.

In general, and despite decades of propaganda about equality, GDR women were more often to be found on the margin of economic development, were more often working in poorly paid occupations and unattractive workplaces and had less chance of promotion. The average wage of women is some 25-30% lower than that of men. Although just a third of those in management positions are women, women primarily occupy lower and middle-management positions: the higher the management level, the lower the proportion of women.

In politics, women were able to make better progress at the middle levels in the GDR than in the Federal Republic. Before the collapse of the Communist regime, 32-44% of elected representatives were women, more than twice as high a proportion as in west Germany. In 1988, for example, some 30% of GDR mayors were women.

Nevertheless, there were clear limits to the political equality of women, comparable to those in the west. The closer one came to the centre of power, the more women were marginalised. This is abundantly clear in a German government select committee report (1991) which found that the average proportion of women in 1 000 committees studied was only 7.2%.

The survey referred to above found that the vast majority of women in the NBL regard having a job as an essential element of their planned lifestyle. 50% of all women want to be employed without a break (only 24% in the west). Even

when they do not need the money, 65% of the women questioned would nevertheless prefer to work. 58% of women are convinced that a working mother can be just as good a mother as one not working outside the home. Moreover, 42% of women in the NBL consider that it is actually good for children to have a working mother. It was also, however, clear from this survey that these women assumed they would have to give up their job and that this simultaneously meant the loss of part of their identity.

### Unemployment among women

Unemployment over the NBL as a whole was 15.2% in April 1992, equivalent to 1.196 million people out of work. Although the unemployment rate fell in April from 16.1% to 15.7% in Thuringia, it remained the second highest unemployment rate in east Germany. The rate for men is 10.4% while for women it is twice as high. This fall was, however, not due to the economy picking up but rather to an increase in training and retraining. In the district of Erfurt alone, almost 13 000 men and women began such courses in the past two months. In Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (the "Land" most affected), the unemployment rate in April was 17.6%. The rate for women was 21.2%, equivalent to no fewer than 99 916 unemployed women. In other words, 58.1% of the unemployed are women. Virtually 60% of all places on retraining and further training courses are taken by women, whereas they comprise only 39.8% of those on job-creation schemes.

Structure of unemployment as a whole, and of unemployment among women, in the entire area of the former East Germany:

An average month in 1991	Total	Women	Proportion
Job seekers	1 743 280	969 753	55.6%
Unemployed	1 063 237	630 545	59.3%
Seeking part-time work	63 381	60 384	95.3%
Unemployed foreigners	15 288	6 127	40.1%
Unemployed young people			
under 20 years	52 259	26 669	51.0%
20 – 25 years	133 858	74 002	55.3%
25 + years	877 120	592 874	60.4%
Severely disabled unemployed	22 862	11 271	49.3%

These figures are only averages and in individual regions the unemployment figures for women are even higher, e.g. 71% in Altenburg and 69% in Zwickau. Moreover, it is already clear that women tend to remain unemployed for longer and to have fewer opportunities to find a job than men. The figures also show, however, that in general women have a different attitude to unemployment and show greater interest in retraining.

### Social-security benefits

Given that the many socio-political measures instituted in the GDR were primarily aimed at women, and thus assigned them a predominant role in the raising and care of children, the loss or limitation of these rights particularly affects women. They have experienced the withdrawal of key factors which had allowed them to reconcile their work and family obligations. For example, GDR labour law gave mothers up to six weeks' leave per child per year to care for sick children. Solo mothers, and married mothers with two or more children, received 60% of their net income during such leave.



Benefits	During GDR period	In unified Germany
Maternity benefits a) Maternity leave	6 weeks before the birth and 20 weeks after	6 weeks before the birth and 8 weeks after
b) Maternity benefit  Pregnancy and child benefit	Monthly net wage  week 27 – 12th month; equal to sickness-insurance payment after six weeks' illness, not less than DM 250	Monthly net wage  week 15 – 6th month, DM 600/month then income-dependent. Leave until 18th month.
c) One-off payments	1 000 marks	DM 100 childbirth payment DM 150 maternity benefit
Child benefit	50 marks for first child  100 marks for second child 150 marks for each subsequent child	DM 70 + DM 48 supplement for first child DM 130 + DM 48 supplement for second child DM 220 + DM 48 supplement for third child DM 240 + DM 48 supplement for each subsequent child.

Although not claiming to be comprehensive, this comparison illustrates that there have been improvements in social-security benefits as well as reductions. In the case of children born after 1 January 1992, for example, mothers are granted child-raising leave until the child turns three. For all children born after 1 January 1993, there has already been a decision to extend by six months the income-independent child-raising benefit i.e. up until the child turns two.

Nevertheless, there is an absence of the social-security benefits which would allow women keep on working or to reenter the labour force after this period. The provision (in force since January) that both mothers and fathers can have ten days' paid leave to care for sick children (maximum of 25 days each per year) is hopefully a sign of more family-friendly legislation applying to both parents.

The extensive incorporation of the Federal Republic's social legislation led to major changes in the GDR's highly developed separate social-security system for women. Surveys show that life as a housewife is an acceptable style of life for only a very small minority of women. This is, of course, because there was previously no real possibility of being a housewife. Although even in the former GDR some women did choose to be home-makers, this was associated not only with material hardship but also with a form of social isolation.

### Rural women

The situation is particularly dramatic for women in the country. In Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, for example, 194 535 people were still working in agriculture in 1989. By December 1990, this had fallen to only 40 000 and the prediction is that there will be only 30 000 such jobs by the end of 1992. Developments to date indicate that it is particularly women who are affected by unemployment in rural areas. Those previously working part-time are now completely without a job and women are the first to be affected by redundancies.

The situation is made worse by the fact that further-education and retraining courses are primarily available in urban areas, so that it is particularly women who are excluded from participation because of their family ties and the inadequate infrastructure. Moreover, the content and structure of these courses takes little account of the future occupations open to rural women. Particularly for women aged over 45, the employment (and hence lifestyle) outlook is very grim. Those working in agriculture have traditionally had a higher average age than in other sectors of the econ-

omy. In addition to the associated financial problems, unemployment also leads to a reduction in social contacts as a result of no longer belonging the working community. It also reduces scope for participation in social events, since leisure time activities are either virtually non-existent or too expensive. Despite an increase in the membership of country-women's organisations, still too few of them are rebelling and refusing to accept their situation.

### The women's movement

This is undoubtedly a decisive historical moment for women in the NBL: will they stand for being increasingly excluded from employment or will they, together with women from the former Federal Republic, achieve the breakthrough to equality at home and at work? During the Communist regime a number of independent women's groups were formed, mostly in association with the Church. Some have been in existence since the beginning of the 1980s. It was particularly these women who in 1989 began a passionate public discussion of women's issues and problems. February 1990 saw the founding of the "Unabhängige Frauenverband (UFV)" (Independent Association of Women) as an umbrella organization for a range of women's groups and initiatives. In comparison to the "Demokratischer Frauenbund Deutschlands (DFD)", which dates back to the GDR days, received aid from the Communist Party and is only slowly undergoing reform, this organization has a much higher public profile and has very rapidly become involved in politics in the form of round-table discussions. This is despite the fact that in comparison to the DFD (with 900 000 members in June 1990), the UFV has only a tiny number of activists (estimated at between 3 000 and 5 000).

Women's chapters were also formed within the existing political parties, e.g. the "Arbeitsgemeinschaft Sozialdemokratischer Frauen (ASF)" in the SPD, the "Frauenunion" in the CDU and the "Linkssozialistische Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Frauen (LISA)" in the PDS.

### Equality units

The local-government regulations adopted by the last GDR government, and still in force in all NBL, require the appointment of full-time officials responsible for women's or equality issues in all municipalities with more



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than 10 000 inhabitants. However, current discussions indicate that inadequate local government financing is endangering the appointment and work of such officials. Even within the committee drafting the new "Länder" constitutions, there is an increasing majority in favour of amending the previous regulations so that it would be up to individual local authorities to determine whether or not to appoint an official specifically for women's issues.

Since the unification of Germany, there has been rapid development of local authority equality policies in what was the GDR. In all NBL, there are officials working at "Länder" level on issues concerning the women of that "Land". In Brandenburg, there is even a Ministry for Labour and for Social, Health and Women's Issues. Within less than a year, some 450 "equality units" ("Gleichstellungsstellen") have been established at the various levels of local government (municipality, "Landkreis" and "Kreisstadt").

"Land"	Equality units (April 92)
Brandenburg	135
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania	98
Saxony-Anhalt	68
Saxony	93
Thuringia	58

The work carried out in these areas by the equality officials is described as follows by the researcher Dr Christine Waltenberg from East Berlin's "Akademie der Wissenschaften". "The women's issues officials have shown enormous enthusiasm in tackling their extremely difficult work of gradually achieving equality. Full of ideas and commitment, and in a permanent quest for new approaches, they protect and fight for the interests of women in a multifaceted battle with established patriarchal structures".

On the other hand, these officials encounter major difficulties in their work in that they are confronted every day by a mass of problems threatening the very livelihood of women, while themselves operating under completely inadequate material, technical and financial conditions.

Local-authority equality units can take a wide range of forms. Within local government, these units may be: at the head of the local government structure; at department or deputy level; at district level.

However, it is only where the official responsible for women's issues forms part of the peak of the hierarchy (the so-called classical model) that work on a supra-departmental basis is possible, something which is extremely important for a unit with such a "cross-the-board" remit.

### Women's affairs

A new social and political culture is forming in the NBL. Political action on behalf of women is central to social policy, which also covers men and children. Dr Angelika Merkel, Federal Minister for Women and Youth and one of the few ministers from east Germany, noted that "women's affairs are not a matter for charity but for tough political bargaining requiring one to tread on the psychological toes of a great many people. Accordingly, they are often subject to the twin misconceptions that women's affairs are gender politics and group-based politics. Both these prejudices must be done away with.

While negative comments are made about what one is trying to achieve for the advancement of women, virtually no-one refers to the long-standing "quotas" for men. Where there is reference to the oppressive problem of violence against women and children, the parallel reference is to the violence practised by men. This is yet another reason for the partnership between men and women to be made an actual living reality.

This trend can be assisted by a simultaneous change in the position of women in the family and in the labour market by giving preference to women, promoting women and establishing quotas for women in employment and by rejecting a situation in which women bear sole responsibility for the family. Nevertheless, demands are no substitute for tackling the relevant issues of changes in attitudes and behaviour. Research carried out last year by the East Berlin "Institut für Soziologie und Sozialpolitik" found that men classified the unemployment of their wives mainly as "not too serious" because, after all, it was the man who was the breadwinner.

"One day our women will realise that they have to fight for their rights." This sigh from a woman activist is justified given that outstandingly few women yet fight against the role change to which they have been condemned. The involuntary change to being a housewife is, though, more than just a matter of an individual choice of lifestyle. There are consequences in terms of pension

rights, pre-programming female poverty in old age.

Policy measures over the next few years will give priority to providing advice and information for women. The Federal Ministry for Women and Youth has already set up a number of programmes for the establishment of structures and groups for women's associations. The programme to give initial funding for women's shelters in the NBL gave rise to a huge demand for such shelters, although under the Communist regime the topic of violence against women, particularly in the family, had been completely taboo. In cooperation with the "Länder", the funding of women's shelters is to be placed on a more solid footing and given a statutory basis. Before the end of the year, the government intends to submit the draft of a "Gleichberechtigungsgesetz" (Equality Act) which includes provisions to improve the vocational advancement of women, make it easier to work part-time and reshape the way worker representatives are involved in the advancement of women. There are also plans to use this legislation to remodel the legislation on harmonisation with EC legislation and to pass legislation on political bodies making it compulsory for women to participate in important socio-political decisions taken by such bodies. ■

### WOMEN OF EUROPE PRIZE

The 1993 "Women of Europe" prize has been awarded to Zuzanna Szatmary, the Slovak candidate. Ms Szatmary received the prize in London on 27 November from Sir Tristan Garel-Jones, British Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The European panel of judges, co-chaired by MEP Ms Simone Veil and Ms Angèle Verdin, President of the Women of Europe Prize Foundation, wanted to "salute the courage and commitment of exceptional women who have, by their actions, promoted the return of their countries to democratic Europe".

The Women of Europe Prize is financed by the European Community and is awarded annually by a European panel of judges to one of the candidates selected by national panels in every Member State. The winner keeps her title for a year. This year, for the first time, the prize was opened up to include Poland and Czechoslovakia.



A poet and journalist, Ms Szatmary is the director of the Charter 77 Foundation in Slovakia, where she has been the driving force behind the implementation of democratic principles and the protection of human rights. In the words of the panel, "her tremendous energy... her communication talents and her language skills would make her an excellent politician". She has founded a legal defence fund to protect human, political, cultural and minority rights.

Ms Ewa Letowska, a Professor of Law in Poland, and the first "mediator" of Polish history between 1987 and 1991 and a militant supporter of human rights, received the special homage of the panel.

The panel also awarded a special mention to Kay Barry from Ireland for her work in helping the populations of the former state of Yugoslavia. The other national candidates were: Joke van Elzlander (Belgium), Rena Lampsa (Greece), Michèle Lecomte (France), Araceli Mangas (Spain), Agnès Rausch (Luxembourg), Valerie Strachan (United Kingdom), Susanne Tiemann (Germany), Ana-Marie Vicente (Portugal) and Tullia Zevi (Italy).

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## DEVELOPMENT: POPULATION POLICY IS NOT AN END IN ITSELF

The European Commission is currently finalizing a Communication on development policy and the funding of family planning projects in developing countries. The report recommends tripling to 225 million ECU the funds dedicated to family planning programmes between now and the year 2000. Whilst acknowledging that galloping demographic growth is a serious obstacle to development, the Commission warns against confusing population control and economic and social growth. Help with family planning programmes should be viewed as a contribution to the provision of basic social services in the poorest countries. The basic idea should not be to lower the birth rate; rather family planning should become an integral part of national health and educational pro-

grammes within a broader and more generous European policy of solving development problems.

## DISTRIBUTION OF WORK AND WEALTH

"The distribution of work and wealth; an alternative to unemployment and work, prospects for women". This was the theme of a discussion seminar organized by the European Network of Women in Paris on 24-25 October, with support from the Commission of the European Communities. Participants looked at measures to reverse the current crisis, characterized by rising unemployment and poverty despite productivity gains achieved by new technology. For participants, the concept of work as "any socially useful activity", which, as such, needs to be remunerated is one idea to be developed. This new "arrangement" of work involves economic independence for women, entitlement to child care, paid training for women and an educational system which encourages equal distribution of roles between productive work and family work. The meeting also looked at the topic of solidarity, and adopted a series of declarations against nationalism and racism, as well as violence towards women – demanding in particular that rape within the context of armed conflict be recognized as a war crime.

*Information: CEF-ENOW, 29 rue Blanche, B-1050 Brussels. ■*

## COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

The Council of European Social Affairs Ministers adopted a resolution on 3 December on the need to take steps to combat unemployment. The resolution highlights, among other things, the importance of providing high quality services to job-seekers and employers alike, training and education measures and the conditions for modernizing the labour market, including in particular the need to "break away from outdated

stereotypes regarding women, disadvantaged groups and older workers". The Council called on the European Commission to incorporate the terms of the resolution, in particular those relating to training and services for unemployed persons, in their proposals for the reform of the Structural Funds, and more especially the European Social Fund. It further called on Member States to disseminate information and promote discussion, in particular with the social partners, and to take the resolution into account when developing national labour market policies and measures. ■

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

### THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S SAKHAROV PRIZE

The 1992 Sakharov Prize for freedom of spirit has been awarded by the extended Bureau of the European Parliament to the "Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo" whose action helped bring down the dictatorship in Argentina. In awarding them this prize, the Parliament wishes to reward their courageous resistance to oppression, their defence of human rights and their example to future generations.

The women, once labelled "the mad women of Mayo" for daring to defy the military dictatorship by demanding to know the fate of their children, victims of repression, have never given up their action, even when they themselves have become victims of this repression. Other nominees for this prize (a symbolic sum of ECU 15,000) were the President of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mr Izetbegovic for his action in support of peaceful co-existence in the face of "ethnic purification", and Ms Maria Elena Cruz Varela, a woman poet still in prison in Cuba. The first woman to sign the Declaration of Cuban Intellectuals demanding the introduction of democracy in the country, Ms Cruz Varela continues to turn down a pardon from President Castro in return for exile to Spain or the United States. ■



## WOMEN'S RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Concerned by the case of a young German woman who was clinically dead but whom doctors attempted to keep alive artificially in order to bring her pregnancy to fullterm, Lissy Gröner (Soc., Germany), Vice-President of the European Parliament's Women Rights Committee, demanded that a European code of conduct be drawn up to cover scientific experiments on human beings. Extending the boundaries of science this far, she stressed, deprives human beings of their dignity and makes them the subject of manipulation.

During November, the Women's Rights Committee met twice in Brussels. At its first meeting on 4 and 5 November, it adopted the advisory report by Mathilde Van den Brink (Soc., Netherlands) on the Protection of Young People at Work, and welcomed the General Secretary of the European Women's Lobby, Barbara Helfferich. Ms Helfferich presented the history of the Lobby and underlined its importance as a body which, through its 45 member organizations, represents around 100 million women throughout Europe. The Lobby is hoping to establish a permanent dialogue with the European Parliament and the Commission. "Women in the European Parliament in the 1994 elections" is one of the topics proposed for joint working parties. Recognizing the inadequacy of available resources, the Women's Rights Committee has increased the Lobby's budget.

The European Commission reported on the Athens Women in Power seminar, highlighting the importance of women's participation in decision-making. Women MEPs declared that they were ready to sign the Summit declaration and also invited the European "Women and decision-making" network to present its work at a forthcoming meeting.

At the Committee's 26 November meeting, Monique Lenz (Germany) presented her report on the Situation of Women in Central and Eastern Europe. The report places particular emphasis on the reduction in women's employment and the difficulties faced by women who have lost their jobs or are working part-time. During the discussion, the Committee insisted on the

need to start up a dialogue with women from Central and Eastern Europe and on the importance of maintaining contact with the growing number of associations in these countries. MEPs also demanded equal participation for women in Community programmes such as PHARE and TEMPUS.

### Public hearing on women's training

On 27 November, the Committee organized a public hearing on the IRIS Network of Vocational Training Programmes for Women. Vocational training can and ought to give women access to jobs from which they have traditionally been excluded, Committee President Christine Crawley (Soc. UK) explained in her introduction. This requires, however, a large-scale commitment of resources, which we have constantly called for, she added. Raymonde Dury (Soc. Belgium), in charge of the report on IRIS which will soon be presented to Parliament, stated that she wanted IRIS to be extended beyond 1993. At the same time she emphasized the need for greater trade union involvement in the future. This wish was also expressed by Catherine Byrne, representing the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). Ms Byrne highlighted the need to reinforce existing measures and to adapt structural funds (in particular eligibility criteria) to enable women to participate equally in training. "Employers and trade unions are currently preparing a joint opinion on women's vocational training", she explained, which should advance practice and policy in this area.

A Commission representative told the Committee that the European Commission is at present examining the possibility of extending IRIS. She added that the network "has become a solid tool, generating both public and private activities". Joanna Foster, Chairwoman of the EC Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities, also called for maintaining the network, insisting that its impact on national training policy can be maximized only if governments, employers and trade unions alike are closely involved in the pursuit of IRIS' objectives.

In her conclusions, the rapporteur, Raymonde Dury, stressed the importance of the Maastricht Treaty, which should permit the development of a real European-level vocational training policy,

with greater participation by the European Parliament.

*Useful address: European Parliament, 97-113 rue Belliard, B-1047 Brussels or: Plateau du Kirchberg, L-1919 Luxembourg.*

## PUBLICATIONS

**Bulletin on Women and Employment in the EC**, no. 1, October 1992: first bulletin of the European Network of Experts on Women's Position on the Labour Market. Available in French and English from the network coordinator: *Jill Rubery, School of Management, UMIST, P.O. Box 88, Sackville Street, GB-Manchester M60 1QD.*

**On the road to equality:** brochure on equal opportunities in teaching, published by ETTUC (European Teachers Trade Union Committee) with support from the EC Equal Opportunities Unit. Available in the 9 official Community languages from: *ETTUC Secretariat, 33 rue de Trèves, B-1040 Brussels.*

**Guide to Export – Better Business for Women.** First practical guide from the EC Network of Women's Local Employment Initiatives (LEI). This document aims to help women entrepreneurs meet the challenge of the single market and explore the option of exporting. Available in French and English from the network coordinator: *Caroline Turner, Breakthrough Consultants, 36 Vas. Georgiou Street, GR-54640 Thessaloniki.*

**Evaluation of Women's Participation in Actions Co-financed by the European Social Fund in 1990.** M. C. Lefebvre, final report prepared for the Commission of the European Communities, DG V, 1992. This report is available in French and English from the *European Social Fund, Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General, Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.*

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