

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES CALENDAR

- 1 March  
Seminar on new trends in feminist studies
- 8 March  
International Women's Day
- 10 March  
Meeting of the Child Care and Reconciliation of Family and Professional Life network
- 12 March  
Forum on "Equal Opportunity in the Media: the Role of Trade Unions"
- 23-24 March  
Meeting of the European Parliament Women's Rights Committee
- 23 March  
Meeting of the Women and Decision-Making network
- 24 March  
Meeting to prepare the new European Network of Women Journalists
- 25 March  
Meeting of the "Women's Employment" working group as part of the social dialogue in the textile/garment sector
- 26 March  
Meeting of the working group on Women's Vocational Training
- 29-30 March  
Danish Presidency seminar on Employment, Aalborg

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

### THE COMMISSION WANTS GREATER EQUALITY

Mr Pdraig Flynn, Commissioner for Social Affairs, marked International Women's Day with a statement emphasizing the challenges still to be met in order to achieve equality. For him, these challenges, both for women and for the European Community, and are on a number of fronts:

"The level and quality of women's employment remain priority items on the Commission's agenda. Questions which affect women are always questions which affect society as a whole". This is why he stressed on the Commission's responsibility to ensure that "society allows its citizens to reconcile the demands of family and working life in a fair and equitable fashion. Therefore, the European Community will con-



# WOMEN OF EUROPE NEWSLETTER

Dear Readers,

8 March 1993 is 83rd International Women's Day. The history of this day goes back to the Second International Conference of Socialist Women held in August 1910 in Copenhagen, during which Clara Zetkin, a co-founder of the German Communist Party, presented a resolution proposing that "socialist women from every country organize a women's day". The date of 8 March also evokes the strike of American women textile workers in 1857, demanding the right to work and more humane working conditions. In 1977, the U.N. General Assembly officialized this celebration by proposing that every country in the world adopt an International Women's Day. In Europe, it is generally celebrated on 8 March.

Does a women's day mean that the other days of the year are dedicated to men? If a "men's day" was suggested, there would be all-round laughter! On the other hand, nobody seems to laugh about 8 March. This day continues to be meaningful. In addition to the commemorative aspect, it provides an opportunity for women to voice their opinions and to remind men and women alike that our society seems powerless to create conditions for women's participation on the basis of equal rights. It also reminds us of the need to continue to work for women's emancipation, liberation and autonomy. Although considerable progress has been made, various barriers in Europe and throughout the world still prevent women from achieving their rightful place in social, economic and political life.

Equality between men and women also means that both men and women are present in centres of decision-making. In the United States, 1992 saw a large increase in the numbers of women in political bodies. The French legislative elections, on the other hand, highlighted women's poor representation in political life, both in France and throughout Europe. The battle is far from won. Women must fight for participation and for an end to the "democratic deficit".

The European Community is also fighting to achieve equality of opportunity between men and women, because equality is a "necessary pre-requisite for economic and social cohesion". For this reason, it is important that the Community maintain and expand its activities in this area.

*Anne-Blanche Haritos*

Anne Blanche Haritos

tinue to work in this area, to enable women and men to contribute equally to society (...)". Another essential objective of the Commission, Mr Flynn continued, is to improve women's representation at all levels of decision-making. Increasing this representation is desirable as a "sign of the health of a democracy", which can serve as encouragement and inspiration to societies outside Europe in the process of introducing the means to better safeguard the rights and conditions of women, and hence of all their citizens. "Creating this solidarity – between men and women and between nations – is a concern we all share", the Commissioner said.

### PROMOTION OF WOMEN AT THE COMMISSION

Mr Karel Van Miert, the Commissioner responsible for personnel policy and administration, in turn sent a message to women Commission officials. "The positive action programme for its female personnel, adopted by the Commission of the European Communities in September 1992, expresses the Community's desire to make equal opportunities a central element of its human resources management", the Commissioner said. This programme sets specific targets: women should occupy 14% of category A management posts – as against 11.5% at the end of 1992 – and 39% of category B positions. A certain rebalancing is needed in category C (administrative and secretarial posts) where women are in a very large majority, whilst the programme seeks to increase the percentage of women in category D (technical) from 23% to 25%. The plan also provides for a series of measures in the areas of recruitment, career planning, training and awareness-raising. An initial evaluation of the plan will be carried out in autumn 1993.

### FOR A GREATER FEMINIZATION

Very few women are to be found in the European institutions today, either as elected representatives or as officials in decision-making posts. According to Mrs Christa Randzio-Plath (Soc., Germany) in an International Women's Day address, we must "feminize" these institutions. In particular, she proposed appointing a woman commissioner in charge of equal

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opportunity and organizing an annual "summit" of European Community women. Recently, women have "lost" one of their two women commissioners, as the new Commission which took up its duties in January includes just one woman, Mrs Christiane Scrivener. Whilst the European Parliament has become a little more open to women than certain national parliaments, women's representation (20% of MEPs) is well below the 40% of mandates and posts which Mrs Randzio-Plath demanded for women.

On the occasion of 8 March, the Socialist Group in the European Parliament published statistics on the numbers of women in national parliaments, condemning women's under-representation. To improve this situation, which she said was a cause for serious concern, Karin Junker, MEP and President of the SPD, has just created a new women's organization within the European Socialist Party, a sister organization to the International Organization of Socialist Women.

Table

Women's representation in national parliaments (% of members):

Denmark:	33%
Netherlands:	25%
Germany:	20.7%
Belgium:	19%
Luxembourg:	14.6%
Spain:	14.6%
Ireland:	12%
U.K.:	9%
Italy:	8.7%
Portugal:	7.6%
France:	5.7%
Greece:	4.3%

Source: Women's Information Unit, Commission of the European Communities.

A call for a States General for women and policy in France and Europe to be held in 1994 was launched in Paris during a meeting organized by the Women's Assembly (Assemblée des Femmes) in collaboration with more than 20 other associations. This call underlined the extent to which politics remains a male monopoly and urged the creation of large numbers of groups or clubs to prepare a States General. These clubs would collect accounts of exclusion and discrimination towards women and make proposals with a view to drawing up "Bills of Criticisms and Innovations".

Information: L'Assemblée des Femmes, B.P.15, F-75960 Paris Cedex 20.

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY DAY

8 March was also marked by a number of special events. Solidarity with the women of ex-Yugoslavia, condemnation of violence and defence of human rights were some of the major topics of Women's Day 1993. In Paris, at a manifestation called by Women's Alliance, women met to express their horror at the rapes perpetrated during the war. Their example was followed in Brussels and many other Community cities.

International Women's Day was also marked by a conference in Brussels on "The Sex Trade and Human Rights", co-organized by UNESCO, the International Federation for Human Rights, the Women's International Council and the French-speaking Community of Belgium. In preparation for the U.N.'s World Women's Conference to be held in Beijing in 1995, the meeting examined the "Penn State Report" drawn up by UNESCO experts and organizations belonging to the "Coalition against Trafficking in Women". The discussions were based on the underlying concept of the 1949 UN Convention against the traffic in human beings, which outlaws all forms of procuring. The original effect of the Convention was a certain deregulation and depenalization, which have been overtaken today by the massive increase in prostitution. The objective is to develop an action plan focusing towards the provision of information, the preparation of a new convention on the sexual exploitation of women or human beings and to support organizations and networks set up to combat this exploitation.

Information: Mrs Marie-Thérèse Destercke, Service pour la promotion culturelle et professionnelle des femmes, Communauté française de Belgique, Brussels - Tel. (32.2) 413.32.25, or Mrs Wassyla Tamzali, Human Rights and Peace Division, UNESCO, Paris - Tel. (33.1) 45.68.38.24.

## COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

### RECONCILING FAMILY AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

The "Child Care" network, set up in 1986 by the Equal Opportunities Unit, is one of the groups of experts and representatives of Member States which work with the Commission

on priority problems in the equal opportunities field. Last year, the network's name and mandate were changed to include other activities permitting a reconciliation of family and working life, reflecting the fact that workers - both women and men - may have to look after not only children but also aged, sick and disabled family members. During the meeting of the network held on 10 March in Brussels, participants exchanged views and information on a series of publications, research work and surveys undertaken by this very active network.

Currently the network is working on:

- preparing a guide of good practice to supplement the Council recommendation on child care (92/241/EEC);
- updating the 1990 statistical survey on "Mothers, Fathers and Employment" for the 1985-91 period;
- preparing a new study on the European Community Structural Funds and child care, in particular on aspects relating to rural regions;
- drawing up its annual report, consisting of reports from each Member State;
- preparing a technical seminar on men with responsibility for care. A sub-working party is examining this increasingly important subject.
- following up last October's very successful seminar on the combat against racism;
- analysing the initial results of a survey on the type of information available on child care in Member States;
- a survey of reactions to the document on the quality of services for small children;
- a survey on the role of parental leave and the reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities.

Coordinator: Peter Moss, Thomas Coram Research Unit, University of London, Institute of Education, 22 Woburn Square, GB-London WC1H 0AA.

## WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

### Trade unions in the audiovisual sector and equal opportunities

On 12 March, a seminar on equal opportunities in the media and the role of trade unions brought together in Brussels representatives of national trade unions in the audiovisual sector and representatives of European trade unions. This seminar, organized jointly by the Steering Committee for Equal Opportunities in Broadcasting and by the European Committee of Entertainment and Media Unions (CEMS), examined the conclu-

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sions of a survey carried out by the Commission and CEMS.

According to the responses received in this survey carried out in 1992 among trade unions in Member States, the Nordic countries, Switzerland and Austria, half the trade unions in this sector have their own equal opportunities policy. One third of them have organized specific training courses for women during the last two years. Two thirds have taken measures to make their male trade union members more aware of equal opportunities and the sharing of family responsibilities.

Policies implemented and negotiations undertaken by trade unions cover in particular working hours, maternity and adoption leave, child care and family allowances, equal treatment for part-time women workers, retirement pay for piece-rate workers, the establishment of employment targets and non-discriminatory recruitment procedures.

Seminar participants stressed the importance of such a meeting, and proposed a recommendation concerning measures to be taken at both Community and individual Member State level.

Recommendations include greater efforts to make people more aware of women's problems in the media professions by providing information and organizing campaigns and seminars, by implementing equal opportunity plans, by improving vocational training and career possibilities, by opening up technical sectors to women and providing better protection against the development of atypical work.

*Coordinators: Kate Holman, Geneesheersstraat 9, B-1560 Hoeilaart, tel.: (32.2) 657.37.26 and Solange Ortiz, 49 rue Cambonne, F-75015 Paris, tel.: (33.1) 47.34.46.67.*

### European Network of Women Journalists

On 24 March, the Women's Information Unit of DG X of the Commission of the European Communities organized a working day with press and broadcasting journalists from the 12 Member States with a view to setting up a new European Network of Women Journalists. The essential goal of this network is to prepare female public opinion for the forthcoming European elections in 1994. The Women's Information Unit highlighted the importance of sensitizing women electors to the political problems which concern them and to promoting women's candidatures.

*Information: Women's Information Unit, Directorate-General Audiovisual, Information, Communication, Culture, Commission of the European Communities, 120 Rue de Trèves, B-1049 Brussels, tel.: (32.2) 299.94.11/299.94.16/299.94.18.*

## REFORM OF THE STRUCTURAL FUNDS

The promotion of equal opportunities between women and men in the area of employment, including the establishment of child care systems and other accompanying measures, should become a new objective to be vigorously pursued by the European Social Fund (ESF). This was decided by the European Commission on 24 March, following the proposal made by Mr P. Flynn, the Commissioner for Social Affairs. This proposal supplements those relating to "framework" and "coordination" regulations which were adopted on 24 February, establishing the operational framework of the funds for the 1994-1999 period. The proposed changes do not call into question the 1988 reform, a "system which has proved its worth" according to the Commission. They do however adapt policies of the European Social Fund to the priorities of economic cohesion and employment defined in the protocol of the Maastricht Treaty.

The proposals include expanding the list of Objective 1 regions to include the new German Länder and East Berlin, as well as new regions in the United Kingdom, Belgium and Spain.

In order to ensure a better continuity of development activities, the Commission is proposing to extend the planning period to 6 years for measures relating to less-favoured regions (Objective 1), rural zones (Objective 3) and agriculture (Objective 5a). The scope of Objective 3 will be enlarged to include social exclusion: in this way it will cover not only the unemployed but also persons denied access to the labour market due to poverty, handicap or immigrant status. The Commission is also proposing to clarify and simplify the decision-making process, as well as improve the monitoring and evaluation of actions undertaken.

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

### PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION ON RAPE IN EX-YUGOSLAVIA

On 11 March, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the rape of women in ex-Yugoslavia, demanding that the systematic rape of women be treated as a war crime and as a crime against humanity, and

calling for the rapid setting-up of an international tribunal to judge and punish those who have committed or ordered such atrocities in ex-Yugoslavia.

This resolution followed the public hearing organized by the Parliament's Women's Rights Committee on 18 February in Brussels to examine the situation and to promote actions to support women.

Parliament cannot stop the war its chairperson, Mrs Christine Crawley said, but could help in seeking political solutions and in publishing the accounts of the victims throughout the world.

The report by the Parliamentary delegation led by Dame Warburton which investigated this problem puts the number of victims between 20,000 and 70,000. Opening the hearing, the President of the European Parliament, Mr Egon Klepsch, said that words were not strong enough to express the horror that has been taking place everyday in ex-Yugoslavia. "We must close these death camps, assist victims and punish those responsible", he said.

Several women representatives of Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian organizations travelled to present their accounts to the Committee. They recalled that it was women who had alerted European public opinion right from the start of the conflict and launched an appeal for European assistance in resolving the conflict. Despite the complex nature of the conflict, MEPs and the women from ex-Yugoslavia expressed a common sentiment: the overriding importance of ending the violence and fighting, in which the first victims are women and children. The women told not only of rape in combat zones but also of the rising climate of domestic violence and an increase in prostitution.

According to Mrs Doris Pack (EPP, Germany), only rapid military intervention can put an end to the atrocities and the deliberate plan of attack by the Serbs. Several MEPs called for these regions to be protected by UN forces.

Speaking on behalf of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Ann Howarth explained that assistance to victims should be provided by local teams, specially trained to support women. It was also important to improve "the terrible conditions" under which women are living in refugee camps, according to Dr Gunilla Leiverda, a Dutch gynaecologist and a member of the Warburton delegation.

The European Commission is organizing aid and support for victims through its emergency aid and Human Rights services. According to a responsible official, the Commission is collaborating in situ and in Member States with the United Nations and with non-gov-

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environmental organizations to coordinate aid. The Commission now has a special unit at Zagreb which, whilst not specifically targeted at women rape victims, will take account of their special needs. The Commission is financing pilot aid projects and the training of medical and social service teams in collaboration with local organizations.

During the hearing, the President of the United Nations Commission on War Crimes, Mr Prits Kalshoven, highlighted the difficulties of establishing facts when presenting cases in front of an international court.

In its resolution, Parliament called, among other things, for a revision of military codes and for the setting up of independent documentation centres to collect proof of these crimes and identify those responsible. It also demanded a series of measures to support women, such as financing reception centres for victims, organizing medical aid and accelerating visa procedures for victims to be evacuated to Member States.

Throughout the Community, women's associations, and in particular the European Women's Lobby, have condemned this violence and have organized solidarity actions, meetings, humanitarian aid, resolutions etc.

### 1994 Elections

The Council of Ministers has approved the dates for the next European Parliamentary elections. These will be held between Thursday 9 and Sunday 12 June 1994. The exact date will be set in each country by the national authorities. In certain Member States (United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands and Denmark), elections traditionally take place on Thursday. In other countries they are held on Sunday.

### The European Social Fund

On 9 March, during its plenary session in Strasbourg, the European Parliament adopted a resolution relating to the reform of the European Social Funds (ESF). Underlining the "particular importance" of equal opportunities for women and men in the Community's social policy, Parliament affirmed the need to give priority to training women in future-oriented professions, in particular to introducing women to technical

professions. The resolution called for eligibility criteria for ESF assistance to be made more flexible, in particular as regards age limits and access for women job-seekers who are not registered as unemployed. The resolution was generally supportive of regrouping Objectives 3 and 4 under a new objective targeted at combatting unemployment, in particular by actions to facilitate the entry/re-entry into working life of young people, women and the long-term unemployed.

For Parliament, the ESF offers a potential instrument for combating women's unemployment, which has become disproportionately large.

### Seminars

"Democracy and the Rights of the Person: Women's Role in an Inter-dependent World": Lisbon, 5 to 7 April 1993. Meeting organized by the North-South Centre. Four working groups are planned: culture/modern life, environment/development, economic independence/solidarity, health and the right of reproduction.

"Euro Businesswoman": Madrid, 26-27 April. This conference will look at a series of topics, in particular women and structural changes in Europe, equal opportunities in Spain, positive actions, and technical training for women.

Information from: Peter Emery, Emery Associates, 42 Downlands Road, Purley, CR8 4JE, United Kingdom.

### Publications:

"1492: Women's Role", **Women of Europe Supplement n° 37**, currently available in English and Spanish.

"Women and Development", **Women of Europe Supplement n° 38**. The French version is available, other language versions are being prepared.

"Women in Poland (1991-1992)", **Women of Europe Supplement n° 39**. The French version is available, other language versions are being prepared.

To obtain these publications, please contact the Women's Information Unit,

*Commission of the European Communities, DG X, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels, tel.: (32.2) 299.94.11 or the Commission's Representative Offices.*

### Women in the European Community, Eurostat.

The Statistical Office of the European Communities has just published the results of a survey on the situation of women in Europe. The report provides a series of data on the female population, on birth and fertility rates and on household composition in the European Community. It also looks at social protection and child care, women's employment and unemployment, activity by sector, education, the situation of foreign women etc.

Available in the 9 official Community languages from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, L-2985 Luxembourg.

"Equal Pay Protection in Industrialized Market Economies: in search of greater effectiveness" ILO, by a group of international experts.

"Equality for Women in Employment: an inter-departmental project - Women Workers and Unions in Europe: an Analysis by Industrial Sector", by Sue Hastings and Martha Coleman (December 1992). Two publications by the International Labour Office (ILO), available from local ILO offices or ILO publications, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22.



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