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## EDITORIAL

By Isabelle Ioannides

### Bidding for women's rights

Gender equality is, first and foremost, a human right. Both women and men are entitled to live in dignity and in freedom from want and from fear. Empowering women is also an indispensable tool for advancing development and reducing poverty. Over the last few decades, the issue of women's rights has received growing attention, especially following the organisation of the fourth World Conference on women in Beijing in 1995.

Yet, as the articles in this *BEPA Monthly Brief* show, women and girls around the world are still falling victim to numerous forms of discrimination and inequalities, irrespective of their level of professional, family, social, 'civil' or political life. Both in the developed and developing world, women are also the most frequent victims of various criminal phenomena, such as domestic and sexual violence, forced or early marriages, human trafficking, exploitation or slavery, forced prostitution, genital mutilation and forced abortion. In many countries, the law does not give them the same rights as men. In others, their rights tend still not be respected in practice.

Despite the development of UN and EU instruments to end discrimination related to education, employment, social and economic activities, and to ensure that women and men have an equal status in society and in the family, women's rights are still not safeguarded globally. In fact, even in Europe where relevant legislation and ongoing monitoring are in place, we are far from the proclaimed goal for gender equality.

The articles herewith also argue that long-term, sustainable development will only be possible when women and men enjoy an equal opportunity to rise to their potential be it, for instance, as contributors to economic growth or as political actors in decision-making.

Ultimately, to overcome the fundamental structural causes of gender inequality, we need to start with deconstructing the stereotypes that lead to gender-based prejudices. In her bestseller *Lean In*, Sheryl Sandberg talks of the importance of woman-to-woman mentorship in professional settings, a renegotiation of the man-woman workload at home, and of women speaking up so their voices are heard. The exemplary courage of Egyptian women in the continuing protests for real change under extraordinary conditions, which this issue of the BMB addresses, can show us the way forward.

## 1 Boosting equality between women and men in the EU: a necessity

By Daniela Bankier\* and Lucie Davoine\*\*

The European Union has been promoting equality between women and men for the past five decades. With the help of focused policies at EU level, in the form of legislation, objective-setting, monitoring of progress, co-funding and awareness-raising, progress has been achieved in numerous areas. However, important gaps remain.

### Equal economic independence

Employment rate of men in the EU stands at 75 percent – that of women at 63 percent, and this rate is even lower for foreign-born women (at 56 percent). These gaps result in the underutilisation of talent and impose a heavy toll on the economy. Indeed, research conducted by the OECD confirms that closing the gaps in labour force participation between women and men would help sustain welfare systems and increase economic growth, leading to a GDP gain of 12 percent by 2030 – a figure much higher than the estimated gains of many other economic reforms under discussion.

Promoting the employment of women is an integral part of the Europe 2020 Strategy, and thirteen EU member states received a country-specific recommendation on gender equality in 2013, the bulk of recommendations being on childcare facilities that is a key determinant of female employment. To support member states, significant funding is offered. Over the past seven years, an estimated 3.2 billion euro from the Structural Funds was allocated to investing in childcare facilities and promoting gender equality, which has a significant leverage effect. Since 2007, the proportion of young children cared for in formal childcare facilities has increased from 26 percent in 2007 to 30 percent in 2011 for children under the age of three, and from 81 to 86 percent for children from age three to compulsory school age.

Thanks to targeted policies, women have been able to increase their participation in the economy and their contribution to family finances, with an employment rate increasing from 58 percent in 2002 to 63 percent in 2008. More recently, the gap

between female and male employment levels has also shrunk as a direct consequence of the financial and economic crisis, which has particularly affected the male-dominated sectors of the labour market.

### Equal pay for equal work and work of equal value

Women in the EU are still paid on average around 16 percent less than men per hour of work, down from 17 percent four years earlier. At this rate of change, it will take more than 70 years to make equal pay a reality. In other words, if nothing changes, many of us will not live long enough to see pay equality achieved. The gender pay gap is attributed to direct and indirect discrimination, but also to the concentration of women in low paid jobs. Even if younger generations of women are making inroads into some of the higher earning professional occupations, segregation remains. Only 16 percent of all employees work in mixed occupations, that is, where the proportion of men and women is between 40-60 percent.

To make equal pay a reality, the European Commission closely monitors the application of legislation on equal treatment of women and men and raises awareness about the remaining gender pay gap. For instance, it organises an annual European Equal Pay Day. Moreover, the European Commission published in March 2014 a recommendation for the member states to facilitate wage transparency in companies, by allowing employees to obtain information on pay, establishing pay reporting by employers, and ensuring gender neutral job classification systems. Women do not only face lower wages and career interruptions, they are also four times more likely to work part-time. As a consequence, women receive on average 39 percent less in pensions than men and more than a third of all older women have no pension at all in some member states.

### Balancing work and family

When paid working hours and unpaid working hours are combined, women work in total

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60 hours a week, 10 hours more than men: even though men devote more time to paid work, women spend on average 26 hours on unpaid caring and household activities, compared with nine hours spent by men. They also spend on average 26 hours on unpaid caring and household activities, compared with nine hours spent by men. Having said that, in the past five years, men have increased the time they afford to the care of their own children by half an hour per week on average.

The development of paternity and non-transferable parental leave is a lever to promote equality at home, which has been used by a number of EU member states. At the EU level, the directive on parental leave gives each working parent the right to at least four months leave after the birth or adoption of a child and at least one of the four months cannot be transferred to the other parent, which provides an incentive for fathers to take the leave.

### **Equality in decision-making**

Women account for an average of 27 percent of senior government ministers, 27 percent of members of national parliaments, 18 percent of the members of boards of directors in the largest publicly listed companies, and three percent of the CEOs. Even if numbers have been increasing, the rate of progress is slow and uneven. At this rate of change, it will take over 20 years to achieve parity in national parliaments and on the boards of Europe's biggest companies.

Moreover, recent progress has not been evenly spread across the EU and most of the significant improvements took place in countries that have taken or considered legislative action. To quote Vice-President Viviane Reding, "we do not like quotas, but we like what they do." In that light, the European Commission has proposed a directive whose objective is to reach 40 percent of the under-represented sex among non-executive directors of listed companies (that is, women) by 2020. This initiative has already stimulated debate and action across Europe.

### **Dignity, integrity and an end to violence against women**

Violence against women is a brutal manifestation of gender inequality and a violation of human

rights. The results of the first ever EU-wide survey on women's experiences of various forms of violence, carried out by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), and for which 42,000 women were interviewed, showed that: one in three women has experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15. Moreover, one in two women has been confronted with some form of sexual harassment.

The EU protects victims from gender-based violence through legislation and practical measures for victims' rights. For instance, the European Protection Order ensures that victims of violence can still rely on restraint or protection orders issued against the offender in their home country if they travel or move abroad. The EU also acts to stop trafficking in human beings, which occurs mainly for sexual exploitation purposes and affects mostly women. In addition, the Union supports grassroots and national projects against gender-based violence: it has co-funded 14 national government campaigns (with 3.7 million euro) and NGO projects (with 11.4 million euro). Eliminating female genital mutilation is another priority for the European Commission.

### **The EU at the forefront for more gender equality**

Although gender gaps remain at the EU level, they are generally much smaller than in other parts of the world. To promote gender equality around the world, the EU plays a crucial role in international fora, with its development plans and humanitarian actions, and its neighbourhood and enlargement policies. It aims at being at the forefront of progress towards more gender equality.

Well-designed EU policies have contributed to accelerate progress towards genuine equality between women and men in Europe. However, there is still work to do as long as women get paid less for the same work, women's employment rate is lower than that of men, women are still at a disadvantage when it comes to pensions and decision-making positions, and as long as women are exposed to violence. Efforts need to be sustained and results delivered if Europe is to remain an avant-garde actor on gender equality worldwide.

## 2 Business as usual? Promoting women's entrepreneurship

By *Carmen Niethammer\**

There is hardly a day that passes without there being an article in the news focusing on women in the private sector. Public and private sector organisations in developed and developing countries are launching innovative initiatives, not only because it is the right thing to do, but also because the promotion of women entrepreneurs is good for the economy and for business. And this, despite cultural and regulatory constraints to entrepreneurship for women. This article highlights some promising practices that can significantly contribute to women's employment, business returns, and economic growth.

The number of female-owned enterprises is growing at a faster pace than that of male counterparts – with no evidence that women-owned enterprises fail at a faster rate. Internationally comparable data on female entrepreneurship from OECD countries show that the 'birth rates' of women-owned enterprises are higher than those of men-owned ones. Women-owned SMEs represent a significant share of employment generation and economic growth potential: an estimated 31-38 percent (8-10 million) of formal SMEs in emerging markets.

### The employment creation factor

Women-owned companies contribute significantly to development beyond enterprise growth and turnover numbers. In India, the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Agency found that when comparing similar women- and men-owned companies, women-owned ones employ more people. According to Forbes, women-owned enterprises will create more than half of the new jobs in the US small-and-medium size enterprise sector by 2018. New research in Scotland also shows that women-led businesses contribute substantially to the Scottish economy. If rates of women-led businesses were equal to those of men, the contribution to Scotland's GDP at basic prices would increase by 7.6-13 billion GBP, equivalent to 5.3 percent of Scottish economic growth, according to the Enterprise Research Centre. On the other hand, the IMF estimated GDP per capita losses attributable to

gender gaps in the labour market at up to 27 percent in certain regions. If women's overall employment levels were equal to men's, the GDP could increase by as much as 34 percent in Egypt, 9 percent in Japan, 10 percent in South Africa, and 12 percent in the United Arab Emirates.

### Closing the gender-finance gap

Women entrepreneurs are more likely to cite access to finance as the first or second barrier to developing their business. Indeed, firms managed by women are less likely to receive a loan than those managed by men. Women have a lower formal bank account penetration than men in every region, particularly in developing countries, confirms Global FINDEX, which measures how people in 148 countries save, borrow, make payments and manage risk. A recent IFC report estimates that the total financial requirement for women entrepreneurs in India alone was 158 billion USD in 2012, but that they only had access to around 42 billion USD from formal lenders. Closing this credit gap for women business owners could boost GDP per capita growth by 12 percent in BRIC countries and another 11 emerging countries with high growth potential over the coming decades, confirms Goldman Sachs.

### Actively financing businesswomen

Over the past 10 years, there has been increasing recognition among commercial banks in both developed and developing markets that targeting women's market is profitable. For example, Banque Libanaise pour le Commerce (BLC) launched its Women's Empowerment Initiative in 2012 and offers a range of services tailored to women-owned businesses. The initiative which, in addition to credit, also includes non-financial services (e.g. a dedicated website that enables businesswomen to tackle professional challenges and also provides legal advice), makes it easier for these businesses to access the needed capital to expand. The initiative is already demonstrating promising results: in a year, BLC increased the number of loans to women-owned SMEs by 55 percent and the number of women-owned

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deposit accounts by 17 percent. In Brazil, the largest non-state bank in market value, in 2013 launched a women entrepreneurship programme. With 50 percent of Itaú's client base of 40 million being comprised of women, and half of SMEs served by the bank having at least one woman in their ownership share, Itaú sees this programme as a strong business proposition.

Both BLC and Itaú are members of the Global Banking Alliance for Women (GBA), a 39-member organisation of financial institutions covering 135 countries that recognise the business case for 'banking on women'. Through technical assistance and peer learning, GBA serves as a global clearinghouse for best practices. It also advocates for greater awareness of women's vital economic role as job-creating entrepreneurs.

### **Private sector initiatives for businesswomen**

Private sector companies have also started to target women-owned businesses as part of their supply-chain diversification efforts, opening new markets for women-owned business. According to WEConnect, a NGO that increases opportunities for women-owned businesses in global value chains, there is a good business case for this practice: companies that significantly focus on supplier diversity generate 133 percent greater return on procurement investments than typical businesses. A US Women's Business Enterprise National Council survey confirmed that awareness of a company's commitment to buy from women-owned businesses can enhance consumer loyalty to that brand. This is particularly relevant for companies in the United States, where 51 percent of personal wealth is held by women and 83 percent of consumer decisions are made by women. Over 80 percent of US multinationals now require supplier diversity efforts from their tier one and tier two suppliers.

Recognising that 6 of the 10 fastest-growing economies in the world are in Africa, the Coca-Cola Company has created a programme that empowers women as part of its core business strategy. The innovative initiative "5by20" aims to reach 5 million businesswomen entrepreneurs in Coca-Cola's value chain (fruit growers, distributors, retailers and consumers) globally by 2020. Partnering with NGOs, Coca-Cola provides these women with business skills training and

access to mentors. To tackle the obstacle of (trained) women's access to finance, Coca-Cola and IFC have launched a 100-million USD, three-year joint initiative for thousands of businesswomen in Africa (starting with Access Bank in Nigeria that has successfully targeted women since 2006) and other emerging markets.

### **Where governments can make a difference**

While the private sector is the largest source of job creation, governments also have a key role to play in promoting women's entrepreneurship. Today, only 15 out of 143 economies set out equal legal rights for women and men in key areas (e.g. opening a bank account, getting a job without permission from their spouse, owning and managing property). Where legislation is gender-neutral, governments can help ensure that non-discrimination is actually practiced, especially in times of recession, when backsliding or lack of enforcement may occur. Globally, only the US and South African governments have supplier diversity legislation explicitly focusing on women-owned businesses. India is one of the few governments that ask registered companies to disclose if they are women-owned. According to the IMF, another area where governments can make a big difference is the tax code by "reducing the tax burden for (predominantly female) secondary earners by replacing family taxation with individual taxation."

Today, there are increasing examples of private and public sectors that successfully work together to promote women-owned firms: capacity-building initiatives for businesswomen; linking businesses to finance and markets; 'simply' introducing alternative collateral regulatory requirements; establishing systems to collect and report credit histories that facilitate lending to women.

Women's entrepreneurship will increasingly matter for both business and development. While women still face obstacles to establishing and growing their businesses, the good news is that there are now numerous documented successful approaches to promote women's access to finance, training and markets, inspiring good practice across the world. Building on these practices, both public and private sector players have an opportunity to collaborate to bring these initiatives to scale and increase impact.

### 3 Gender rights in post-revolutionary Egypt

By Hanaa Ebeid\* and Mariam Waheed\*\*

Women's participation in the 'revolutions' and political protests of the Arab Spring has been significant and thought provoking. Arab women defied all stereotypes, occupying the public sphere as full citizens expressing their rights, demands, and aspirations. The question remains, however: if women's activism could amass such backing, enthusiasm, sacrifice and visibility, how would that bear for the future of women's rights and status in the countries in question following the popular uprisings? In the post-revolutionary political processes and transitions, the case for women's rights and gender equality remains mixed at best, and the current moment is laden with huge challenges, but also some windows of hope.

#### Some persisting status quo ante features

Prior to the revolutions, women's rights had been exclusively in the realm of elite activism and top-down politically sponsored 'reform', which nevertheless brought about some advancements in terms of social and personal rights for women. In the aftermath of the revolutionary wave, the case for women's rights and gender inequality has gained new impetus, an agenda that was adopted by wider segments of activists, but which still struggles since structural/institutional obstacles may have even increased.

While the fight for women's rights is distinct in each Arab country, the challenge of political empowerment is almost common to all. The Global Gender Gap Index 2013 shows a persistent gender gap in the Middle East and North Africa region, where the region was ranked at the bottom in the overall index, specifically for the indices of "economic opportunity" and "political empowerment". Most Middle Eastern and North African countries reviewed ranked very poorly on the index: Bahrain came 112<sup>th</sup> among 136 countries; Egypt was 125, Syria came 133<sup>rd</sup>, while Yemen was again – as has been the case for several consecutive years – ranked last at the 136<sup>th</sup> place. Although the Arab Spring has definitely raised awareness as to women's rights in

the region and revolutionised gender equality issues, it has yet to translate awareness into sustained forms of women's political representation and concrete legislation that safeguards (let alone promotes) women's rights.

#### The ebb and flow of women's rights in Egypt

New activism by women and on issues of protection of women's rights, both during the uprisings and in the political processes that have followed, has exploded in the region. Women of different age groups and social backgrounds, many of whom had never previously taken part in politics, have sought with courage and persistence to assume their political rights and change their societies for the better. In established human rights' groups, women activists are making their voices heard during the transition processes, such as the National Dialogue Conference in Yemen and the deliberations on the new political path in Egypt.

Many figures of young revolutionary female activists across the region have assumed public figure status domestically, regionally and even globally. Within the ranks of Islamists, where the overall discourse on women's rights is underdeveloped, women activism is gaining new roles and influence. Nonetheless, the picture is far from rosy: the increasing women's activism has been associated, especially in the case of Egypt, with rising violence and systematic targeting of women.

During the protests in 2011, just like in the ongoing demonstrations, women stepped up and spoke out and expressed their political views, but not without a cost. Women were subject to assaults during protests, ranging from sexual harassment to gang rapes. This has arguably led to a toning down of female participation in protests and popular political dissent until the massive comeback on 30<sup>th</sup> June protests against the Muslim Brotherhood that saw marked women's participation and continued protests by Muslim Brotherhood sympathisers ever since.

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The upsurge in awareness and activism has not, however, translated into women's empowerment politically or the representation of more women in the political sphere. Nor has the rising political participation of women in elections since the revolution led to increased women political empowerment and representation. According to the Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research "Baseera", women's electoral participation following the 25<sup>th</sup> January Egyptian revolution averaged 63 percent, while female participation in the Presidential elections hovered around 83 percent.

### **The long road to women in decision-making**

This persisting institutional gap entails that increased female interest in politics and participation in street and electoral politics have not translated into more women being represented in decision-making and institutionalised politics, or in more women in leadership positions (e.g. ministers, party leaders, union leaders) to match the magnitude of their political engagement. In Egypt, the meagre female representation in the dissolved Islamist-majority Parliament, which had a membership of 12 out of 498 members (four of whom were members of the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party, while three of them were appointed rather than elected members) attested to this state of affairs. Women's representation in Parliament has thus dropped from 12 percent (64 seats) in the legislature that preceded the revolution to 2 percent in the 2012 Egyptian Parliament. The 64-seat quota that had been allocated to women by the ousted Mubarak regime in the last legislative elections was thus abolished.

Although this situation was mainly blamed on the Islamists' discourse and practices that discouraged women's political participation, women's empowerment has still not seen significant breakthroughs in the post-Brotherhood phase in Egypt. The 50-member Constituent Assembly assigned with drafting the new Egyptian Constitution had a female membership of only five. It is also worth noting that no quota on the representation of women in the Egyptian Parliament was enshrined in the new Constitution, unlike in Tunisia. The Egyptian National Council for Women voiced its concern

on the weak representation of women in the process of drafting laws on political rights and demanded equal representation, while lamenting that fact that they did "not receive any feedback on their demands".

While appointments of women in the Cabinet that was formed after the ouster of President Mohammed Morsi did not exceed the usual number of female appointees that existed before the uprisings, there were nuanced changes as to the profile of ministerial posts. The symbolic female representation in service to less significant Ministers was finally shaken with the appointment of women for the first time to the ministerial posts of Health and of Information. These appointments were made in addition to the posts traditionally assumed by women, i.e. the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Social Solidarity.

The low representation of women in the Egyptian Parliament – a feature shared by almost all countries in the region, where women in Parliament average 14 percent – points to the social roots of the problem. This situation is compounded by the lack of political will, which is manifest in the low representation of women in leadership positions by appointment. However, a recent message of hope has come from civil society in Egypt with the voting of a Coptic Christian woman, Dr. Hala Shukrallah, as the leader of the Constitution Party, founded and previously presided over by Mohamed El Baradei. Another precedent was the voting in of the 'revolutionary doctor', another Coptic woman, Dr. Mona Mina, to the prominent leadership position of the Egyptians Doctors Syndicate. These two appointments consolidate the progress of grassroots women's activism.

The significance of these developments, despite the ongoing challenges facing women's equality in Egypt and elsewhere in the region today, lies in the fact that women's rights have no longer become the sole work of a top-down political will, which bestows privileges upon women. Rather, it has become a battle for rights championed by women themselves, coming from all strands of society, and who have set out on a long and thorny road to change.

## 4 Violence against women in armed conflict: a priority for the EU?

By *Marta Martinelli\**

That women and men experience conflict in a different way, has become common, albeit vague, wisdom. However, breaking up this notion into its constituent parts and providing adequate responses to gendered violence in conflict has still some way to go and international organisations, including the EU, struggle to achieve concrete and systematic progress on the ground.

### Women, vulnerable in conflict

Wartime violence against women affects both female combatants and non-combatants and is perpetrated both by hostile and 'friendly' forces. The specificity of the impact on women is due to their biology and social status which in most cases includes a position of subordination to men while having the responsibility of caring for others (including children, the elderly, and those that are injured or traumatised).

Rape, as one form of violence, has captured public attention and has become synonymous with violence against women in war. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), particularly its eastern part, has become known as the world rape capital due to the pervasive and brutal practice of rape as a war tactic. In Ivory Coast and Kenya, rape has been a feature of the political conflict, turned direct confrontation, between allies of the two presidential candidates. In the Central African Republic, rape is a common feature of the communal violence that is shattering the country. And in the ongoing conflict in South Sudan, women from all ethnic groups or religious affiliation are subject to rape from governmental or militia forces.

The establishment of international courts (e.g. the Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Court) has contributed to raising public awareness on this practice used to terrorise civilian populations. Yet other forms of violence and human rights violations against women take place away from the frontline and tend to go unaccounted for and remain invisible. In conflict times, women's access to gynaecological care

decreases dramatically as the health system is damaged or redeployed to serve combatants. Where chemical or biological weapons are used, the damaging long-term impact on women's reproductive capacity long outlives the actual attacks. Pre- and post-natal care for refugee women often puts their lives in danger. They are also subject to miscarriages due to their living conditions in the camps. During war, forced evictions or lack of sanitary supplies in refugee camps force women of menstruating age to remain isolated and unable to perform their daily tasks outside the house. Women exposed to sexual assault are more likely to develop HIV/AIDS than their male counterparts due to the larger presence of soft tissue in the female body.

The subordinate social status of women is exacerbated during conflict when women lose their male protectors. The availability of arms makes them more vulnerable to men in their communities, who take advantage of the lawlessness to settle scores with the women themselves or their husbands, fathers and sons. In Zimbabwe, women have been known to be tortured, beaten or killed because of the political affiliation of their male relatives. The preference accorded to men in accessing food or health facilities means women are discriminated against and less likely to be able to recover from their injuries or health conditions. Moreover, domestic violence is known to increase in conflict time and its aftermath, and is perpetrated by traumatised returning male partners, family members from a different ethnic group, or men that have lost a sense of their status and societal role.

### EU reaction to gendered conflict violence

Gender protection and women's rights are prioritised in the 2008 EU *Guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them* and the *Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security*. The comprehensive

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approach (CA) aims at ensuring that EU external action is shaped to protect women from violence and contributes to greater gender equity during and after armed conflict. CA has several implications: political (gender, peace and security issues are meant to be an integral part of political dialogues and consultations with third countries and regional organisations); operational (the EU commits to mainstreaming gender equality in its policies and programmes); and strategic (it guides relevant EU foreign policy instruments to protect, support and empower disadvantaged women).

The EU Guidelines provide a three-pillar framework to combat violence against women, including prevention, protection and support for victims, and prosecution of perpetrators. The fight against impunity is also a key element of gender protection in the EU human rights policy. Existing forms of justice often discriminate against women and strengthen gender power imbalances. EU initiatives with a gender protection focus span from improving women's access to justice to strengthening local justice system capacities to respond to gendered violence in conflict. EU efforts to restore the judicial system in Eastern Congo, for instance, have included improving women's access to justice and training women magistrates and lawyers.

Equally, gender and human rights issues must be considered throughout the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission cycle (from fact finding to planning and conduct of activities) and across the spectrum of its operations (rule of law, security sector reform, and DDR processes). All CSDP staff are meant to receive training in these areas and mission reporting must include elements of human rights and gender. CSDP missions are required to coordinate with local and international partners and other EU initiatives relating to gender and human rights to ensure coherence and gender protection is included in the lessons learned of CSDP operations.

### **Tackling ongoing EU challenges**

In spite of some undeniable progress, challenges remain and in a global context that is more hostile to women's rights, the EU must step up its commitment. Civil society representatives are excluded from high level political dialogues that

end up shielding authorities from public scrutiny and the responsibility to implement their commitments. Hence, more must be done to focus on the accountability of partner countries in protecting women and girls.

One of the most important obstacles to effective action is the lack of reliable and disaggregated data on all forms of gender-based violence. The EU needs to invest in finding methodologies for data collection to ensure appropriate policy responses based on sound analytical evidence. EU-funded tenders and calls for applications refer to gender and human rights, but more could be done on assessing the proportion of funds dedicated to gender protection and evaluation of impact. Also, across all EU short-, medium- and long-term measures (e.g. humanitarian/emergency response, CSDP missions, long-term development programmes), the EU must deepen its partnerships with local organisations that know better how to work in their cultural and political constraints.

Financial and human resources allocated to implementing the EU gender protection agenda remain inadequate. For example: gender advisors in CSDP missions often lack sufficient budget to develop initiatives on the ground; in EU Headquarters or EU delegations, dedicated/expert staff working full time on gender issues are rare.

The international donor approach also tends to neglect the male component of 'gender programmes'. Projects targeting women's reproductive health issues rarely involve men; male politicians are often left out of the debate on the empowerment of female political candidates; and men that do participate in conferences or meetings that address gender issues are hardly visible.

Ultimately, the difficulty lies in the cultures of masculinity and femininity that prevent a frank negotiation of men and women's respective roles. The absence of women in prominent initiatives on peacebuilding and conflict prevention at high levels of decision-making is not always the result of bad programming, but of deeply held attitudes about the role of women, indicating how long the road to gender protection (and promotion) still is. The EU needs to show the way by promoting more women to higher and more visible positions of authority and giving more prominence to women's protection in its foreign policy.

## 5 Think Tank Twitter

*Think Tank Twitter (TTT) aims to provide regular information and updates on what is produced by think tanks and research centres across Europe (and beyond) on EU policy issues. As an analogy to the original Twitter, each summary – or tweet – does not exceed 140 words, rather than characters. Those who wish to signal new publications for possible inclusion can send them to the email address [bepa-think-tank-twitter@ec.europa.eu](mailto:bepa-think-tank-twitter@ec.europa.eu)*

### **The Power of Political Voice: How women in politics can help tackle gender crime**

The report argues that female political representatives can effectively empower women against gender crime (e.g. in India). Police responsiveness to documenting and dealing with gender crimes and victims' willingness to come forward are higher in areas with female politicians. Women politicians have the biggest impact on giving a voice to female victims when they are present at the local government level. Reporting of crimes against women (especially domestic violence) is also a problem in developed countries, but institutional responses often discourage reporting and do little to reduce crime rates. Political participation rates for women generally are low in both developing and developed countries. Reserved seats, followed by legislative candidate quotas, may be the most effective ways of encouraging more women to enter politics.

[http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/home/chatham/public\\_html/sites/default/files/20140300CAGEGenderCrimeMani.pdf](http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/home/chatham/public_html/sites/default/files/20140300CAGEGenderCrimeMani.pdf)

### **Intolerance in Western Europe: Analysis of trends and associated factor**

Intolerance in Europe, support for extremist and populist political parties, and manifestations of intolerant attitudes (in national policy and individual behaviour), are widely perceived as having risen in recent years. This study explores if intolerance in Western Europe has risen more in some countries than others, if it has risen more against particular groups, if such attitudes are particularly prevalent among subgroups, and if there are clear patterns of association with trends in wider political, social, economic and cultural factors. Important conclusions include: the absence of consistent trends within/across countries highlights the need for a more nuanced and targeted approach on intolerance; extremist voting appears not strongly correlated with wider public attitudes; young people are an important target for policy interventions (though perhaps impressionable, they are broadly the most tolerant).

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR334.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR334.html)

### **The Unhappy State of the Union: Europe needs a new grand bargain**

Whereas many Europeans perceive integration as a negative-sum game, the majority remains convinced that the costs of disintegration would be higher. Divisions between and within European countries run deep. Forced austerity on debtor countries has devastated their economy, society and political system. A new grand bargain for Europe is needed: a broad coalition of EU countries to recognise the European project's value and the need to reshape it in a fast-changing environment. This project must regain its inclusiveness, catering for the needs of those on the losing end of a long economic transformation. Measures to boost demand and stimulate growth must match supply-side economics and the goal of long-term fiscal consolidation. More integration where needed and more national/local responsibility where possible: this could be the motto for Europe.

<http://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/The-Unhappy-State-of-the-Union.pdf>

### **Shifting EU Institutional Reform into High Gear**

The report aims to contribute to the debate on EU institutional reform in the run-up to the European Parliament elections and the start of a new Commission. It focuses on reforms that could be taken within the framework of the current treaties to build a more responsive and accountable Union. It analyses the main inter- and intra-institutional weaknesses in terms of efficiency, democracy and differentiation and puts forward a number of recommendations addressing issues such as the reorganisation of the College of Commissioners, the promotion of strategic legislative planning, the enhancement of the role of the European Parliament and the rotating Presidency of the Council, the improvement of the democratic accountability of the European Council, and the adequate engagement of the national parliaments.

<http://www.ceps.eu/book/shifting-eu-institutional-reform-high-gear-report-ceps-high-level-group>

## Security and Defence – An Issue for the European Citizen?

In the face of aggressions on our borders (Russia's action in Crimea and policy towards Ukraine), Europeans need to know what democracy means and feel included in EU policy-making. They must participate at national and European levels, rather than leave the scene to extremist/populist voices. The issue in security (and beyond) is democracy and the future of the EU. The EU has for some time seen a rift between elite groups: the generally well-informed and mainly positive towards the European cause; and those who feel left with no influence and having "lost" on integration. If the challenge of including citizens is not met, the EU scene and the important European Parliament role will fall to those willing to capitalise on this rift to use it for their own purposes.

<http://www.tepsa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Gunilla-Herolf-TEPSA-Policy-Paper-March-2014-Final.pdf>

## Outline for a Common Western Policy Pivot on BiH

Popular unrest in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), driven by absence of political accountability and socio-economic difficulties, requires a policy shift which could include: strict application of EU conditionality; a clear message on BiH's future (no change of borders, no secession of Republika Srpska, no centralised state, no third entity); re-establishing respect for the basic Dayton rules circumventing politicians who leverage fear; use available tools to confront elites who block/undermine reforms; build a popular constituency in support of this approach. A recalibrated EU policy toward BiH would develop: immediate measures to prevent post-unrest violence and pre-election destabilisation; a division of labour between EU institutions and Dayton instruments; a new approach to using EU integration tools; a more prudent financial assistance policy; a real partnership between the EU and citizens for a functional BiH.

<http://democratizationpolicy.org/a-common-western-policy-pivot>

## Crises and Elections: What are the consequences for Turkey's EU bid?

The economic crisis in Europe and political tensions in Turkey compromise EU-Turkey relations. The EU crisis has weakened Turkey's traditional allies, dissuaded European citizens on EU enlargement, deteriorated the EU's image in Turkey, and affected conflict resolution in the Eastern Mediterranean. Turkey has entered a zone of political turbulence that has raised serious EU concerns. The European Parliament election results will show how the economic crisis has impacted on Europeans' views of the EU project and its policies, including enlargement. While the rise of populist forces in the EP will mean more opposition to Turkey's EU membership, EU institutions and member states will support or reward the Turkish government only if there is a consistent effort to reduce domestic political polarisation and to bring the reform process back on track.

[http://www.iai.it/pdf/GTE/GTE\\_PB\\_13.pdf](http://www.iai.it/pdf/GTE/GTE_PB_13.pdf)

## Capital Markets and Economic Imbalances: From one crisis to another

Debate on the eurozone management has highlighted a lack of understanding of the status of debt in modern, financialised economies. The idea that financial markets are rational vigilantes on the debt front is far from reality. The main principles structuring capital markets, especially those focusing on liquidity, are consubstantial to ebbs and flows, bubbles and crises, which affect major economic zones. The three successive crises (USA, eurozone, emerging markets) reveal how this structure functions, in a context of world imbalances. Financial trends influence greatly the orientation of economic strategies. The appetite for southern eurozone debt seems to be a risk bearer. Understanding the logic behind the capital markets and the status of debt would provide governments with the necessary room for manoeuvre to return to genuine growth.

<http://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/doc/questions-d-europe/qe-306-en.pdf>

## 6 BEPA News

### Arrivées

Sofie Vanthournout, des Royal Academies for Science and the Arts of Belgium, intègre l'équipe de la Conseillère Scientifique en Chef en tant qu'expert national en formation professionnelle.

Le BEPA accueille un nouveau stagiaire au sein de l'équipe Analyse, Wijnand Stoefs, titulaire d'un diplôme en sciences économiques et d'un autre en sciences politiques internationales et comparées.

### Evénements

Le 1<sup>er</sup> mars, le Président Barroso, en compagnie de la Chancelière Merkel, a assisté à la présentation de la déclaration « The Mind and Body of Europe », rédigée par le comité culturel du « Nouveau récit pour l'Europe ». La déclaration des artistes et intellectuels impliqués dans ce projet, lancé sous l'impulsion du Président Barroso, est disponible en ligne : [http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/new-narrative/pdf/declaration\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/new-narrative/pdf/declaration_en.pdf)

Le 4 mars, le Président Barroso a reçu la médaille commémorative de la Fondation Internationale Raoul Wallenberg – un diplomate suédois qui sauva des milliers de Juifs de Hongrie lors de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale – des mains de son président, Eduardo Eurnekian. Dans son discours, le Président Barroso a rappelé les valeurs de paix et de tolérance qui animent le projet européen, ainsi que l'engagement de l'Union européenne à lutter contre l'anti-sémitisme ou toute autre forme de discrimination.

Le 18 et 19 mars, le Groupe Européen d'Ethique des Sciences et des Nouvelles Technologies s'est réuni afin de poursuivre l'élaboration de son Opinion sur les Technologies de Sécurité et de Surveillance.

Le 28 mars, à l'occasion du 40<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du Rubik Cube, devenu un symbole de l'innovation et de la créativité européenne, le Président Barroso reçoit à déjeuner son inventeur, le Professeur hongrois Ernő Rubik. Les Commissaires Andor, Vassiliou et Geoghegan-Quinn, la Conseillère Scientifique en chef Glover, plusieurs figures importantes du monde des sciences et de l'entreprise en Europe, y participeront pour discuter de l'importance de la sensibilisation et de

l'éducation en matière de sciences afin d'inciter les jeunes à choisir une carrière dans les sciences, la technologie, l'ingénierie et les mathématiques.

Les 27 et 28 mars ainsi que le 1<sup>er</sup> et le 2 avril, le BEPA a tenu deux séminaires de prospective en collaboration avec le JRC. Des experts externes et des membres du Foresight Network de la Commission ont abordé six thèmes: les ressources naturelles, la production et la consommation, le cadre de vie, l'interaction, la participation de la société et la santé. Ces discussions permettront de développer le prochain rapport du Conseil Consultatif pour les Sciences et les Technologies (STAC) sur la prospective. Les débats ont notamment traités des valeurs et besoins sociétaux, des technologies potentiellement perturbatrices et des risques et des opportunités entre aujourd'hui et 2030.

### Evénements à venir

Le 7 avril, le BEPA organise en collaboration avec le Center for Transatlantic Relations de la School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) de l'Université John Hopkins, un déjeuner de travail suivi d'une conférence pour débattre de la déclaration « A new Atlantic Community : Generating Growth, Human Development and Security in the Atlantic Hemisphere », rédigée par le Groupe de Personnalités Eminentes, rassemblant des figures politiques importantes d'Europe, d'Amérique du Nord et du Sud et d'Afrique. Des personnalités de haut niveau venant de tout le bassin atlantique y participeront.

Le 14 avril, le STAC tiendra sa septième réunion. Les membres discuteront du prochain rapport – qui se concentrera sur la prospective et les six thèmes abordés lors des séminaires du Foresight Network les 27 et 28 mars et 1<sup>er</sup> et 2 avril – et la prochaine enquête de l'Eurobaromètre sur les aspirations des citoyens en matière de sciences et de technologie. Ils rencontreront également le Président pour lui présenter les conclusions des séminaires. Toutes ces activités alimenteront l'événement « Le futur de la science en Europe », organisé conjointement par le BEPA, l'équipe de la Conseillère Scientifique en chef et le JRC, en octobre, pour le Président Barroso.