



LOBBY EUROPEEN DES FEMMES EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY

Gender Equality *Road Map* for the European Community 2006-2010 Presented by the European Women's Lobby

Introduction

The European Women's Lobby (EWL) presents a Gender Equality Road Map for the European Community 2006-2010 as a model for the official Communication on gender equality to be put forward by the European Commission at the end of 2005.

A common vision for gender equality in Europe

Despite existing European and national legislation, numerous political commitments at all levels, and the existence of equality before the law in most EU Member States, equality between women and men is not a reality in Europe in 2005. In every country in the European Union, access to resources, rights and power are unequally distributed between women and men and gender inequality is pervasive at every level and across all groups within society. Supporting this structured inequality are still widespread and related prejudices, stereotypes and cultural patriarchal attitudes that undermine women as independent autonomous actors in all spheres of life.

New challenges and the accumulated experience in tackling inequalities render new and innovative answers necessary in Europe and it is therefore the responsibility and duty of public authorities, including the EU institutions, to continue to take action to fight discrimination against women and to ensure the achievement of equality between women and men.

The aim of gender equality policy is that women and men have the **same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in all areas of life**. The achievement of this aim requires a strategy that sets out how gender equality efforts are to be pursued, the necessary institutional mechanisms that are capable of delivering the strategy, and strong political leadership from the very centre of political power and authority.

Gender equality as a core value underpinning the European Union

Equality between women and men was reinforced in the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe so that in addition to existing EU Treaty provisions on gender equality, **equality** is now mentioned among the Union's **values** and Article I-2 mentions **equality between women and men** as an element characterising our **model of society**. In the model of European society that we aspire to, the achievement of gender equality is not only a matter of social justice or of fairness to women; it is a matter of democracy and human rights and an essential factor for sustainable human development. The Union's values in relation to achieving equality between women and men must be promoted not only within the EU, but also in all aspects of its relations with the rest of the world.

EWL- LEF, 18 rue Hydraulique, B-1210 Bruxelles
Tel. +32 2 217 90 20 – Fax: +32 2 219 84 51 - e-mail: ewl@womenlobby.org
Website: <http://www.womenlobby.org>

The need for a dual approach: Specific actions and gender mainstreaming

The existing articles 2; 3§2; 13 and 141 in the Treaty of the European Community (TEC) define equality between women and men as an objective of the Community and provide a strong legal basis for very broad action at EU level in a wide range of areas.

The previous Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005) initiated a new type of intervention covering all European policies using a dual-track approach of gender equality mainstreaming on the one hand and specific actions in favour of women's rights on the other hand. This dual strategy should be pursued with the new Road Map for Gender Equality 2006-2010, as it acknowledges the fact that inequalities between women and men pertain to all areas of life.

Recognising women's diversity and linking to anti-discrimination policies

EWL welcomes the fact that the EU has developed its **anti-discrimination policies** considerably in the last few years. Such policies are an indispensable complement to specific gender equality policies; as many women face inequality on more than one ground and women often form the majority in all discriminated groups.

Given this, the **Road Map for Gender Equality also needs to fully address the diversity of women** and to integrate strategies to fight multiple discrimination against women.

Internal and global challenges facing women's rights and gender equality

The European Union is facing major demographic challenges, such as an ageing population, low birth rates and challenges linked to immigration. If our societies are to successfully meet these challenges, it is essential that a gender perspective be at the core of policy responses. At the same time current economic transformations and trends (globalisation, privatisation, trade liberalisation etc) impact on the European social model and public services, which in turn strongly affects women's rights and women's economic independence.

Other internal and international political phenomena and trends, such as the increase in trafficking in women for the purposes of sexual exploitation and the growth of religious extremisms pose renewed threats to women's integrity and human rights, notably sexual and reproductive rights. Women are also facing major challenges worldwide related to the high rate of HIV/AIDS infection among women and girls, the prevalence of men's physical and sexual violence against women in all societies, the constant violation of women's human rights in situations of conflicts and war and the large scale of female poverty worldwide. The EU has a responsibility to fulfil its commitments at international level to ensure that the goal of achieving equality between women and men and of safeguarding women's human rights is fully integrated into all relevant EU external policies, actions and programmes.

Themes covered by the European Gender Equality Road Map

Imbalances between women and men influence all areas of life and in order to achieve gender equality, action needs to be undertaken in the broad spectrum of European policies. The European Women's Lobby has defined **six main themes** with Strategic Objectives and concrete actions to be undertaken by the European Commission between 2006 and 2010. These themes are partly inspired by the Strategic Objectives of the United Nations Beijing Platform for Action (1995), they are:

- 1. Institutional mechanisms for the realisation of gender equality and gender mainstreaming**
- 2. Achieve economic and social justice for women**
- 3. Advance the position of women in decision-making: towards parity democracy in Europe**
- 4. Eradicate violence against women and implement women's human rights**
- 5. Europe's role in advancing women's rights in an international context**
- 6. Eliminate patriarchal gender roles and stereotypes**

The European Commission must put forward a target date for achievement of the Strategic Objectives under each of the six themes. In this way, NGOs will be able to monitor progress towards achieving the stated Strategic Objectives.

1/ Institutional mechanisms for the realisation of gender equality and gender mainstreaming

Specific institutional mechanisms on equality between women and men are indispensable tools for the implementation of legislation and political commitments. In particular the implementation of gender mainstreaming necessitates strong institutional mechanisms, because this horizontal strategy needs coordinated action by a wide variety of actors within public institutions. While some new mechanisms for gender equality have been set up within the European Commission since 2000, their efficiency is hampered by lack of adequate human and financial resources, inadequate training, an unclear mandate and the absence of effective political leadership at the highest level.

Strategic Objective 1.1: Strengthen the existing gender equality institutional mechanisms at EU level

Actions:

- Define a mandate for the **Commissioners Group on Equal Opportunities** providing it with effective, dynamic and visible political leadership above and beyond the yearly gender equality meeting.
- Transform the existing Unit on equal opportunities for women and men into a **Directorate**.
- **Strengthen the mandate as well as the human and financial resources of the future European Commission Directorate on Gender Equality** to give it the ability to influence policy and properly monitor the implementation of legislation.
- Create a **women's information service** within the Directorate to deal with awareness raising activities and public information.

- Allocate more resources to the **Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men** to strengthen the interaction between the European and national levels, in particular to reinforce the impact of **national gender equality bodies** set up in accordance to directives 2004/113/EC and 2002/73/EC.
- Ensure consistency between the work of the EU institutions and the work of the future **European Gender Equality Institute** by integrating the activities of the **European Gender Equality Institute** in the annual work programme of the EU institutions.
- Develop recommendations for the use of gender sensitive language **in all official documents and interpretation in all EU official languages.**

Strategic Objective 1.2: Improve the implementation of gender mainstreaming by the European Commission

Actions:

- Set up of a new specific **gender mainstreaming monitoring unit** within the future Directorate on Gender Equality of the European Commission.
- Establish a **gender mainstreaming unit within each Directorate General** of the Commission, with the task of drawing up a gender mainstreaming strategy every two years for all policies dealt with within the DG.
- Review the mandate, revitalise, strengthen and resource adequately the existing **Commission Inter-Service Group on Gender Mainstreaming**. Make the work and mandate of this Group visible inside and outside the Commission.
- Include a **chapter on gender mainstreaming and its results in each Commission Directorate General** in the Commission's Annual Report on Gender Equality to the Spring Council.
- Set up **mandatory gender mainstreaming and gender awareness training** for Commissioners, for the highest levels of civil servants, and within all management training for European civil servants.
- Ensure **strong gender mainstreaming of European anti-discrimination policies** and actions, in order for them to include the needs and interests of women within all discriminated groups. This applies in particular to all activities foreseen or organised under the **European Year on Equal Opportunities for All and the Equality Summit (2007)**.

Strategic Objective 1.3: Implement gender budgeting methods within the European Commission and the EU budget

Actions:

- Set up a **Gender Budgeting Working Group** within the Budget Directorate General.
- Set up a permanent gender impact assessment procedure for all European **Structural Funds** expenditure.
- Carry out a separate **gender impact assessment of the EU budget each year**, which should be presented as an annexed document. This annex to the budget will serve as a gender mainstreaming monitoring document, on which the EP Women's Rights Committee should adopt an Opinion
- Introduce a **budget heading for activities on gender equality** in the budget of each Commission unit.

Strategic Objective 1.4: Good governance and civil dialogue

Actions:

- Establish mechanisms for **dialogue and consultation with women's organisations** and civil society within the Gender Equality Directorate.
- Ensure **access for national women's NGOs to the gender equality funding programme** within the PROGRESS programme (2007-2013) and government provided co-financing for women's NGOs within EU programmes and projects.

2/ Economic and social justice for women

The equal participation by women and men in all aspects of economic and social development is a prerequisite for achieving gender justice. In order to realise its commitment to gender equality, the European Union must develop a coherent policy response that includes macro-economic policy, employment policy, social protection, and issues of care as equally important.

2.1 Safeguarding and developing the European social model

Macro-economic policies set the basic rules for economic development and for the distribution of the wealth created through this development, which in turn influences how women and men access resources as individuals, within families and in the domain of public services. The EU macro-economic framework therefore plays a crucial role in promoting better conditions for gender equality and in supporting the development of the European social model, including public social security provisions, equal access to education, universal healthcare systems, and care services for children and other dependants.

Furthermore, EU macro-economic policies should take into account the specific situation in some of the new Member States, where state withdrawal and reduced investment in public services, has had a negative impact on gender equality. In this context, there is a need to adapt EU policies to more effectively support the safeguarding and development of public services.

Strategic Objective 2.1: Develop EU macro-economic policies to ensure that these support greater gender equality and the further development of the European social model, including public services and civil society participation

Actions:

- **Develop a Spring Council reporting mechanism**, which includes a gender analysis of the European Broad Economic Policy Guidelines, and the EU Finance and Trade policies.
- Develop an Action Plan outlining how EU macro-economic policies can contribute to **increased investment in public services**, in particular care services, as an essential part of the European social model.
- Adopt an EU Strategy to introduce **gender equality regulations in the World Trade Organisation and international financial institutions**.
- Adopt an EU Strategy to **promote, implement and facilitate civil society** and specifically **women's organisations input** into the European debate as an essential part of the European social model.

2.2 Women's employment

Women's employment remains key to their economic autonomy and to greater equality between women and men in society as a whole. Addressing women's situation in relation to the labour market in Europe demands a multifaceted approach that counteracts the gender division of work in both the public and private sphere, combats discrimination against women in the labour market and in social security systems, and supports the development of sectors where women work. Moreover, women's employment cannot be dealt with separately from issues of care and of individualisation of tax and social security systems.

Strategic Objective 2.2: Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment and decent working conditions

Actions:

- The **European Employment Strategy** must include specific and targeted gender equality objectives and targets addressing:
 - Measures to eliminate pay discrimination based on sex and workforce participation, notably with regard to access to training, reintegration and pensions;
 - Measures for increased provision of care services;
 - Measures to improve working conditions and security for atypical, part-time and flexible workers;
 - A specific focus on employment measures in support of groups of women who face multiple discrimination, such as disabled women, migrant and ethnic minority women, lesbians, older or young women;
 - Ensure gender balance in lifelong learning schemes, vocational training, and in training opportunities.
 - Incentives for **social partners** and enterprises to promote the access of women to posts at all levels.
- Develop an **EU Strategy on how to increase the support to women's economic initiatives** through promoting women's entrepreneurship in all areas and at all levels and developing policies that support the potential of a social and solidarity based economy.
- **Give greater visibility to what is at stake for women in the development of mixed economic solutions and to women's participation in the setting up of innovative initiatives in this area.**
- Develop EU strategies and work with Social Partners on ensuring **parity within companies' boards**.
- Recognise the economic, **social and educative value of un-remunerated family work** and work done within associations and recognise the benefits of unremunerated caring work with dependant persons both in families and in associations.
- Ensure gender balance in **access to bank credits and bank services** in order to compete on the international market.

2.3 Reforming social protection systems in Europe

Women's work and life choices/opportunities still differ from those of men, and social protection systems are oftentimes not structured to meet women's needs and provide women with individual access to social security. A specific analysis and reform of social

protection systems from a gender equality perspective is needed in order to ensure that social protection systems better counteract women's precarious situation and meet the needs of the most vulnerable groups of women.

Strategic Objective 2.3: Adapt and develop EU policies in the field of social protection to support gender equality in all areas of life

Action:

- Within the context of the Open Method of Coordination in the social protection field, **deliver an analysis and strategic action plan on reform of social protection systems in support of gender equality**, including a plan for an individualisation of rights to social security, together with an individualisation of tax and benefit systems.

2.4 Combating social exclusion and poverty among women in Europe

Women's poverty and social exclusion in Europe is a multifaceted problem, which demands specific and gendered policy responses. The persistent trend of the feminisation of poverty in European societies today demonstrates that the current framework of social protection systems, and the wide range of EU social, economic, and employment policies are not designed to meet women's needs.

Strategic Objective 2.4: Develop EU policies in the economic, employment, and social policy fields, in order to decrease the feminisation of poverty in Europe

Action:

- Develop **specific gender equality objectives and targets within the EU Strategy to combat poverty and social exclusion**, including a set of policy actions to support non-traditional and one-parent families, and specific policy actions in support of groups of women which face higher risk of poverty and social exclusion such as migrant, refugee, and ethnic minority women, older women, disabled women, and lesbians.

2.5 Pensions

Many pension schemes in the EU Member States still leave many women with only "derived rights" based on their husband's employment record, with the consequence that the majority of older people living in poverty are women. Ensuring a better life for older women requires addressing the structural factors contributing to inequality in pension schemes, including the organisation of care and combining family and work life, inequalities in the labour market, the gender pay gap and direct discrimination in second and third pillar pensions.

Member State (first pillar) pensions discriminate against migrant and refugee women throughout the EU, as the basis of such pension schemes is based on the length of residence in a certain country. As particularly black women, migrant and refugee women are more often employed in the informal sector; they have limited opportunities to build pensions in the 2nd or 3rd pillar, leaving them in poverty in their older age. Disabled women who are unable to work will face similar poverty, as they too will only be able to rely on the state pension.

Strategic Objective 2.5: Ensure that reforms of pension systems in Member States contribute to equality between women and men

Actions:

- Regarding pensions of the second and third pillars, which are still based on actuarial factors based on sex, adopt a **European directive prohibiting direct discrimination** in pensions of second and third pillars and in the private insurance sector.
- In the context of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) on pensions, to undertake a **full study on the impact of pension reforms on women's lives** in the EU with the following objectives in mind:
 - The individualisation of pension rights (and social security and taxation systems overall) to encourage women and men to engage in paid work, and thus earn individual economic security;
 - The development of mechanisms accommodating the employment patterns linked to society's need for the care of children and other dependant persons so that career-breaks or part-time work are considered as full-time work in the calculation of pension benefits.
- On the basis of the above study, **formulate concrete recommendations** to strengthen the gender equality dimension of the Open Method of Coordination.
- Develop strategies to ensure a **full state pension to migrant and refugee women** and enable migrant women to **transfer their 1st pillar pension entitlements**.
- Develop strategies to ensure a **pension scheme for disabled women** with no (or only part-time) 2nd or 3rd pillar pensions that will ensure their financial independence in later years and thus avoid involuntary institutionalisation.

2.6 Conciliation of private and working lives, care services

The EU has recognised on several occasions the importance of achieving a balance in private and working life for women and men (for example in Council Resolution 2000/C 218/02 on the balanced participation of women and men in family and working life). However, much remains to be done in order to change the gendered division of tasks in the home and to achieve an equal sharing of domestic and care work. This work is still carried out mostly by women due to the absence of affordable and good quality care services for dependent persons. Evidence shows that there is a positive relationship between the public expenditure allocated to social benefits (linked to the care of children and other dependent people) and women's participation in paid work. The importance of childcare provision is recognised in the Council Recommendation of 31 March 1992 on child care (92/241/EEC), and in the recent Commission's Green Paper on demographic change (COM 2005 (94) final).

Strategic Objective 2.6.1: Develop measures ensuring the affordability and accessibility of care services across the EU

Actions:

- Develop an **Open Method of Coordination in the field of care services** in order to formulate recommendations on how to meet the need for provision of care services in Europe (i.e. the organizing and financing of care for children and other dependent persons), including setting precise targets and indicators with the aim of providing childcare facilities for 90% of children from birth until mandatory school age across

the EU and a sufficient level of care provision for other dependent persons by 2015. All services should meet the criteria of affordability, accessibility and good quality.

- Ensure, through a new EU Directive, or through revision of existing directives, specific rights and safeguards in relation to conciliation of private and working life where there are dependent family members (such as disabled children or partners).

Strategic Objective 2.6.2: Achieve equality in the sharing of family responsibilities of women and men across the EU

Actions:

- Develop social security schemes favourable to an equal sharing of private life and professional responsibilities between women and men, including a **revision of the Directive 79/7** on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security in order to extend the right to gender equality to the whole sector of social security, including paid family leaves.
- **Revise Directive 96/34 on parental leave** in order to establish a lengthier and paid parental leave **to be shared equally between parents**. The revised directive should also be extended to include **other forms of family leave**, and ensure the ability to obtain social security rights during these periods.
- If necessary, amend the existing Working Time Directive (2003/88/EC) in order for the **organisation of work** to be adapted to the need to combine private life and work for both women and men, including a general shortening of the working time, and establishing working timetables, which are socially compatible with family responsibilities.

2.7 Health

Although women's health in the EU has improved significantly over the past decade, there are still many factors hindering gender equality in relation to health. Gender roles and unequal gender relations interact with other social and economic variables, resulting in different and often inequitable patterns of exposure to health risk, and in differential access to and utilisation of health information, care and services.

Strategic Objective 2.7: Integrating a gender equality focus in all fields of EU Public Health Policies.

Actions:

- Incorporate specific **EU gender equality objectives** within the Open Method of Coordination in the field of health care, including strengthening preventive programmes that promote women's health, carrying out more research on health and ill health of women, financing for equal access to healthcare services, and developing the capacity for health professionals to properly respond to women's health care needs and illnesses.
- **Intensify gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues**. All of these initiatives must clearly state every woman's absolute right to decide the number and spacing of her children.
- Analyse the **effects of gender inequality on women's health including the effects of the gendered division of household tasks** and the unequal sharing of domestic and care work.

3/ Advance the position of women in decision-making: towards parity democracy in Europe

Women are still under-represented in all European Union decision-making bodies, in political decision-making in EU Member States and in economic and social decision-making. Some women such as young, disabled, lesbian, migrant and ethnic minority women are represented even less. EU action in this area has been mostly limited to unbinding texts and commitments. Therefore, more needs to be done in order to advance towards parity democracy in Europe.

Strategic Objective 3.1: Achieve parity democracy in political decision-making at EU level

Actions:

- Adopt **binding texts** to ensure the equal representation of women and men in the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.
- **Support the involvement of women in politics**, in view of the European elections 2009 in particular, through encouraging networking and providing specific resources for women candidates and lead campaigns in such a way as to encourage the participation of women, especially women from discriminated groups.
- **Amend Article 2 of Commission "Decision relating to Gender Balance** within the Committees and Expert Groups established by it of 19/06/00, to set a 50% women target and a deadline for achieving targets.
- Promote the active participation of women in politics through public campaigns that encourage political parties to place women candidates in winnable seats on the electoral lists.

Strategic Objective 3.2: Promote an equal participation of women and men in decision-making in the economic and social sector

Actions:

- Monitor the **full implementation of the European directives on gender equality in employment** and organise information and visibility campaigns.
- Gather **European-wide comparable statistics** on the participation of women and men in decision-making in all areas.

Strategic Objective 3.3: Achieve equality between women and men in decision-making among European civil servants

Actions:

- All European institutions should implement **positive action measures** for areas and at levels where women are under-represented in decision-making, in accordance with Article 1d(77) 96 of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities of 1.1.2005.¹
- Develop and support **mentoring programmes, as well as confidence building, leadership and media relations training for women** within the European civil service.

¹ See: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/personnel_administration/statut/tocen100.pdf

4/ Eradicate violence against women and implement women's human rights

Violence against women is a continuum - a continuous series of physical, verbal and sexual assaults and acts committed in different ways by men against women with the explicit aim of hurting, degrading, intimidating and silencing women. Violence against women is a fundamental barrier to the achievement of gender equality and a violation of women's human rights. For example, as in the case of forced marriages, which should no longer be ignored or accepted in European countries. Violence should always be defined in accordance with the definition in Article 1 in the Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women, which includes all forms of physical, sexual and psychological threat, damage or harassment.

The overall objective of this section is to take all necessary measures to address and eradicate violence against women as an inherent part of gender equality strategy, policies and actions.

Strategic Objective 4.1: Develop EU strategies, policies, and resources based on the current EU Treaties to eradicate all forms of violence against women

Actions:

- Identify a **legal base within the current EU structure** to ensure that all forms of violence against women are addressed.
- Bring forward a **Directive on Violence against Women (VAW)** that ensures protection and support for women and sanctions for the perpetrators of violence.
- Develop a **European Action Plan on VAW**, with specific funding, which expresses an enhanced holistic understanding of violence against women and its link to issues relating to gender (in)equality.
- Within the European Action Plan on VAW, recognise and support the **role of women's NGOs** working with victim support services, and set precise targets for service provision to victims.

Strategic Objective 4.2: Ensure ongoing and systematic monitoring to measure progress in relation to the fight against violence against women

Action:

- Set up a **European Monitoring Centre** on violence against women.

Strategic Objective 4.3: Prevent and protect women victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation

Actions:

- **Set up mechanisms** to ensure that the **gender dimension** of trafficking in human beings is part of all policies aimed at preventing and combating trafficking, as described in the Brussels Declaration.

- **Critically review the implementation of and revise Directive 2004/81/EC²**, in order to grant women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation increased rights and support, including strengthened rights and possibilities to acquire a residence permit in the country of destination, regardless of their cooperation with the competent authorities.
- **Address the reduction of demand for sexual services** by supporting actions targeting education for equal and respectful relationships between women and men, and awareness campaigns especially targeting clients.
- **Support networking** of organisations, especially NGOs, involved in the provision of assistance to victims, rehabilitation and repatriation of women victims of trafficking.

5. Europe's role in advancing women's rights in an international context

5.1 Development Aid

EU external policies, and development policies in particular, must integrate the recognition that women play a key role in the transition out of poverty and that their economic, educational, political and sexual empowerment affects not only themselves but also whole families and communities.

Strategic Objective 5.1.1: Guarantee that women's needs and perspectives are mainstreamed and monitored in EU Development Aid Policy³

Action:

- Develop common **criteria on gender equality for the drafting of national action plans** on development aid in the context of EU Development Aid Policy. Develop common indicators for monitoring the implementation of a gender dimension in national action plans. Ensure consistency with the actions developed by the Women's Working Group of the Development Aid Committee of OECD.

Strategic Objective 5.1.2: Maintain and monitor the implementation of a gender perspective in the follow-up to the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly in relation to the EU's commitments

Actions:

- The EU commitments in the **follow-up to attaining MDGs must target women** as the key beneficiaries of aid to assist them in developing adequate social and economic infrastructures that will benefit everybody.
- Ensure a gender perspective and the full participation of women in **debt management strategies**, in particular to ensure a positive impact on gender equality on reducing external debt.

5.2. Convention on the protection and promotion of the Rights and Dignity of women (and men) with disabilities⁴.

² Council Directive 2004/81/EC of 29 April 2004 on the residence permit issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings or who have been the subject of an action to facilitate illegal immigration, who cooperate with the competent authorities.

³ Commission Communication, 13.07.2005 COM(2005) 311

⁴ Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities

Strategic Objective 5.2: Ensure the implementation of a gender twin track approach in the UN convention on 'disability' particularly in relation to the EU's commitments to gender equality

Actions:

- The EU should seek to ensure the United Nations adopts a **twin track approach to gender equality**: creating gender mainstreaming throughout the various articles of the Convention and specific actions in favour of disabled women's rights and advancement.
- The EU should develop **strategies to guarantee gender equality during the implementation and monitoring process** resulting from the Convention

5.3 Foreign policy and crisis intervention

In a world of increasing instability and violence the equal access and full participation of women in EU Foreign Policy power structures is essential to the promotion and maintenance of a peaceful society. Although women have begun to play an important role in conflict resolution their under-representation in decision-making persists. The political and economic empowerment of women in the area of foreign policy must occur in order to allow women to play an equal part in securing and maintaining peace.

Strategic Objective 5.3: Mainstream a gender perspective into the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in line with UN Resolution 1325⁵ and the European Resolution on the participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution of November 2000

Actions:

- Ensure that at least **40% of women are included in all reconciliation, peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, peace-building and conflict prevention posts**, including fact finding and observer missions acting on behalf of the EU and its Member States.
- Within the **European Commission Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) policy**, seek out and develop partnerships with women's NGOs in countries of intervention, and prioritise aid and investments for women such as specialised services for the victims of rape and trauma in the wake of gender-based violence perpetrated during conflict periods, and to seek redress through the mechanisms of international law in the aftermath of armed conflict.
- With particular reference to the future **EU Rapid Intervention Force**, the following actions must be guaranteed:
 - Draft clear gender focused "**Regulations and Rules**" similar to the "Code of Conduct" issued by the United Nations⁶ and to those of national EU Member States on the standards of conduct of military and civilian peacekeeping and humanitarian staff while on mission in areas of armed conflict. Such regulations and rules should clearly stipulate the consequences of breaching the high

⁵ Resolution adopted in October 2000.

⁶ United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules. Article 101, paragraph 3 of the Charter of the United Nations places an affirmative obligation on staff to uphold the highest standards of integrity. Cited in "Women, Peace and Security", study submitted by the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1325, 2002.

standards of conduct especially in relation to any form of gender-based violence⁷;

- Draft a **Code of Conduct**, inspired by the Plan of Action proposed by the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee on **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises**⁸, to ensure that military personnel and humanitarian aid workers acting on behalf of the EU are fully aware of their responsibilities and duties stipulating that sexual exploitation constitutes acts of gross misconduct that can lead to the termination of their employment as well as sanctions.
- **Support non-governmental organisations** and research institutes to research women's participation in the area of foreign policy at national and international levels.

5.4. EU External Policy

5.4.1. Immigration

The number of migrant women in the European Union has been increasing rapidly over the last decade. Many women migrate to join their partners already residing in the EU for family reunification and increasingly, migrant women are coming to the EU independently to become the principal wage-earners for their families. Over the last years, many EU Member States have implemented a restrictive “zero immigration” policy, in particular concerning lower skilled workers, with the direct result of increasing the number of undocumented migrants working in very precarious conditions. Many of them are women working in the care service sector meeting important care needs in the EU. The Hague Objectives, adopted by the European Council to be implemented in the area of Freedom, Security and Justice in the period 2005-2010, do not address the specific situation of migrant women. Women's human rights, experiences and needs are therefore being ignored in the current EU debates and policies concerning immigration.

Strategic Objective 5.4.1: Acknowledge the phenomenon of feminisation of migration and fully mainstream gender into EU policy and actions at each stage of the migration process, in particular at the stage of admission and integration into host societies

Actions:

- Adopt EU guidelines and concrete and targeted **gender objectives and indicators in the field of immigration policy**, including awareness raising actions at national level, ensuring the integration of a gender perspective into immigration policy and a regular assessment of policies from a gender perspective.
- Propose the setting up of a permanent and high level **inter-institutional taskforce** in charge of monitoring the development of European immigration policy from a gender perspective, in particular to develop **gender impact assessment** tools before the adoption of any measures in the field of immigration policy and to apply **gender budgeting** in consequence.
- Revise and reinforce **Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on family reunification** in order to include provisions granting an independent

⁷ The Peacekeepers Code of Conduct explicitly states peacekeepers should not “indulge in immoral acts of sexual, physical or psychological abuse or exploitation of the local population or United Nations staff, especially women and children.” Cited in “Women, Peace and Security”

⁸ See Plan of Action proposed by the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee – Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises.

residence and work permit of a minimum period of 5 years (renewable) to the family members.

- Revise **Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003 concerning the status of third-country nationals** notably in order to grant to the family members of the long-term resident an **independent** long-term residence permit.
- Bring forward guidelines and regulations addressing the situation of **undocumented workers in the EU**, including those working in the care sector, by guaranteeing them legal status.

5.4.2 Asylum

Strategic Objective 5.4.2: Recognise the nature of gender-based persecution and grant protection to women who flee their countries for this reason

Action:

- Adopt within the process of EU harmonisation of asylum policies, the UN Guidelines on “International Protection – Gender Related Persecution within the context of Article 1A(2)”⁹ to assist officials throughout all of the EU Member States in understanding the nature and determining the **legitimacy of asylum claims by women on the basis of gender-based violence**.

6. Eliminate patriarchal gender roles and stereotypes

Damaging stereotypes of gender roles are still widely accepted in European cultures. Portrayal of women include traditional clichés about women's role in domestic and caring tasks or about their submissiveness to men or as sex objects for example in order to promote sales. These stereotypes, conveyed through the media as well as education, constitute strong obstacles to the achievement of equality between women and men.

6.1 Education

Imbalances in power, outright sex discrimination and gender stereotypes in education materials, schools, universities and on the labour market still act as barriers preventing women from making certain career choices, from progressing at the same speed as men in their careers and from earning the same income for the same job. Inequalities in access to education and significant gender differences in subject areas persist, hindering women and girls' education and life chances. Women's key role as carers for family needs represents a major structural barrier to adult women's education and training.

Strategic Objective 6.1: Promote non-discriminatory education and training about non-discrimination throughout the EU

Action:

- Adopt a **directive on women and education** (based on article 13 TEC) covering equal access to education and life-long learning, including measures promoting gender equality in schools towards pupils, teachers and parents as well as in

⁹ UNHCR: Guidelines on International Protection: Gender-Related Persecution within the context of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or its Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, HCR/GIP/02/01, 7 May 2002

educational materials and methodology and integrating equality between women and men as a crosscutting theme in all compulsory academic curricula. The diversity among women should be taken into account when designing educational and training programmes.

6.2 The Media

The continued projection of negative and degrading images of women in media communication, in particular with the development of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as Internet or mobile phone networks distributing violent **pornography**, must be stopped. **Access and power** are also important issues in relation to gender equality and the media. Despite a stronger presence of women in the media profession, access to decision-making in this field is difficult and sex-based discrimination is pronounced. Moreover, changes in the world's communication systems, including the concentration of ownership of the media; lesser influence of public service broadcasting; and the commercialisation of information in general, also make the implementation of gender equality policies more difficult.

Strategic Objective 6.2: Mainstream gender equality into all European policies and programmes related to the information society

Actions:

- **Monitor** the implementation of existing provisions in **European law on sex discrimination and incitement to hatred on the grounds of sex**.
- Develop **awareness actions on Zero-tolerance across the EU for sexist insults** or degrading images of women in the media.
- Propose a **directive on gender equality and the media** establishing a European legal framework to complete the existing legislation clearly setting up the necessary balance between individual freedom of expression/freedom of the press and the right to gender equality and human dignity; introducing compulsory gender training in media training institutions; developing strong mechanisms aimed at gender balance at all decision-making levels within the media industry (positive actions and quota systems and the development of positive action committees within media organisations).

Strategic objective 6.2.2: Increase women's participation and access to expression and decision-making in media and new technologies, and achieve a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media

Actions:

- Safeguard and develop **public broadcasting as an independent media tool** with a public service mission, which includes acting in support of equality, democracy, and human rights, including gender equality.
- Create policies that contribute to **increased equality in participation to policymaking, development and design of and access to new information and communication technologies**, including support to public (free access) software, as well as particular measures to ensure increased access for women to new technologies.

Y:\POLICY\Gender equality policy and legislation\New framework strategy\Final EWL strategy with amendments_EN.doc