

## Newsflash January 2009

### New European Legislation Related to Equality between Women and Men

There are many ingredients that will make 2009 an important year for gender equality in the European Union. Three proposals for EU legislation (directives) are currently being negotiated by the Member States and the European institutions – one Directive proposes significant improvements in the right to maternity leave throughout the EU, the second should introduce improvements to the situation of self-employed workers and assisting spouses/lifepartners and another Directive will introduce an EU wide ban on discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in media, education, social protection, and in access to goods and services. Another negotiation process between social partners aims at revising the existing European legislation on parental leave. The European Women's Lobby is committed to follow these legislative processes to make sure their outcome will have a significant positive impact on the lives of women throughout Europe, in particular in relation to giving real opportunities to reconcile work and private life for both women and men.

#### New Initiatives

The EWL will input to the activities and initiatives of the Czech EU presidency during this first part of 2009, and the Swedish EU presidency during the second part of the year, raising the core issues of our member organisations in areas such as women's employment and economic independence, violence against women, women's sexual and reproductive rights, women and media, and women and migration.

#### A Year of International Mobilisation

This year, women's groups throughout the world will continue to work towards the strengthening of the United Nations mechanisms for gender equality in the framework of the Gender Equality Architecture Reform Campaign (GEAR Campaign). 2009 will also be the year when women's groups and movements all over the world prepare for the 15-year follow up to the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women's Rights. The EWL will be preparing an alternative report assessing the performance of the EU in achieving the objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action, and will be calling on policy-makers to use the BPFA follow-up process as an opportunity to define a new and ambitious agenda for gender equality at EU level.

We look forward to work in solidarity with policy-makers, partners, and allies to make 2009 an thriving year for gender equality in Europe and beyond!

#### Read more :

[http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1abstract.asp?DocID=2448&v1ID=&RevID=&namePage=&pageParent=&DocID\\_sousmenu=](http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1abstract.asp?DocID=2448&v1ID=&RevID=&namePage=&pageParent=&DocID_sousmenu=)

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