



11 December 2009

European Women's Lobby 12 Priorities for the Spanish Presidency of the European Union

On 01 January 2010, The Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) will pass from Sweden to Spain. The European Women's Lobby (EWL), with more than 2500 member organisations the largest association of women's organisations in the EU, calls on the Spanish Presidency to continue to be a driving force for women's rights in Europe and in particular, to ensure the consistent and effective implementation of European Union legislation guaranteeing equality between women and men, including as regards the new provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon, which came into force on 01 December 2009.

Furthermore, the EWL hereby expresses its hope that the Spanish Presidency will provide during its tenure progressive and ambitious leadership to the Council of the European Union in its policy and legislative tasks, and ensure concrete and significant advances in equality between women and men throughout the EU.

The European Women's Lobby calls on the Spanish Presidency to...

1. Take the lead in ensuring the adoption of a **strong new Strategic Action Plan for Effective Equality between Women and Men** to replace the current Roadmap¹, covering a broad range of areas and including specific measures, targets and a budget and ensure that the **15-year review process of the Beijing Platform for Action** at European and international level results in progress for women's rights in Europe and worldwide.
2. Take concrete steps for the introduction of efficient and binding measures for the **equal representation of women and men within the European Institutions**.
3. Take the lead in ensuring rapid progress towards the swift creation of a **strong composite United Nations entity (combining policy and operational activities) focused on gender equality and women's rights, with adequate resources** and under the direction of an Under Secretary-General.
4. Ensure that the promotion of equality between women and men, quality employment for women and men, social services and sustainable social development are at the core of the **post-Lisbon Strategy**, which will pave the way for the socio-economic political framework of the EU over the next decade (2011-2020). This includes the inclusion of a **specific gender equality priority** and of new targets related notably to closing the gender pay gap and the provision of care services for all dependants.
5. Ensure the adoption of an ambitious **EU maternity leave Directive** to grant to all women in Europe at least 20 weeks maternity-leave paid to the level of the last monthly salary. This Directive should also ensure better legal protection from dismissal and more flexible working-time arrangements for mothers.

¹ For more details, see the EWL response to the EC consultation on the future of European gender equality policies (October 2009) see: http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1abstract.asp?DocID=2617&v1ID=&RevID=&namePage=&pageParent=&DocID_sousmenu=&parentCat=15



6. Ensure the adoption by the Council of the **Directive on self-employed workers** (repealing Directive 86/613 on self-employed workers and assisting spouses).
7. **Take a leadership role in the Council negotiations for the swift adoption of the new anti-discrimination Directive** on grounds of religion or belief, age, disability or sexual orientation building on the European Parliament Resolution² and the proposals made by the EWL and anti-discrimination networks.
8. Ensure that the EU commits to the implementation of the United Nation Security Council Resolutions on **Women, Peace and Security**, including Resolutions 1888 and 1889 adopted in September 2009, through a **European Action Plan**, the use of the indicators contained in Resolution 1889, the nomination of an **EU Special Representative** to liaise with the new UN Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, and the celebration of the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325.
9. Take stock of the two recent European Parliament Resolutions calling for an EU Directive on preventing and combating all forms of **male violence against women**. Further to this, consolidate the legal base within the EU structure to ensure that violence against women is addressed at European level by bringing forward an **EU Action Plan and Directive** to concretely ensure the prevention of violence, the protection of victims and the prosecution of perpetrators.
10. Work on a new proposal for a **Framework Directive** on combating trafficking in human beings making explicit the link between the prostitutional system in Europe and the phenomenon of trafficking, thereby acknowledging that women are disproportionately victims of **trafficking for sexual exploitation**. This Framework Directive should ensure the inclusion of a gender equality perspective in all policies aimed at preventing and combating trafficking, and of the 'Four Ps' approach (Prevention of trafficking and of sexual exploitation; 2. Protection of victims; 3. Prosecution of procurers and prostitute-users; a transversal and integrated Policy).
11. Ensure that health inequalities in Europe are tackled and that all women benefit from the highest standards of **sexual and reproductive health and rights**, in particular women from vulnerable groups who are at risk of discriminatory practices (forced sterilisation, forced genital mutilation, lack of access to safe abortion, lack of access to family planning, etc.).
12. Ensure the firm grounding of the **Action Plan of the Stockholm Programme** in principles of human rights and gender equality. Ensure the full consultation of civil society, including migrants' organisations, throughout the drafting process of the Action Plan and in the discussion on integration to be held at the Ministerial Conference on Integration.

² European Parliament legislative Resolution of 2 April 2009 on the proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (COM(2008)0426 – C6-0291/2008 – 2008/0140(CNS)), available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2009-0211+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>