



Strasbourg, 14 November 2013

GEC(2013)11 Rev

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
(GEC)**

**REPORTS OF EVENTS ATTENDED BY
GEC MEMBERS, NFPs OR MEMBERS OF THE SECRETARIAT**

Contents

UNFPA and UNECE - ICPD Beyond 2014 in the UNECE region : Thematic Meeting “Inequalities, Social inclusion and Rights” - Belgrade, 15-16 April 2013	3
EU High Level Conference “Gender Equality <i>de facto</i> as a Contribution to Reaching Europe 2020 Targets: the Effectiveness of Institutional Mechanisms” - Vilnius, 13 September 2013	3
4th International Roma Women's Conference: acting now for an equal future - Helsinki, 16-17 September 2013	3
Workshop convened by the Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice of the UN Human Rights Council, Geneva, 1 October 2013.....	10
<i>L'Institut universitaire Kurt Bösch (IUKB), l'Institut international des Droits de l'enfant (IDE) et Le 2e Observatoire de Genève : Colloque sur La socialisation différenciée, un obstacle à la pédagogie de l'égalité ? – Sion, 1 October 2013.....</i>	<i>11</i>
A European Strategy for Gender Equality: Tackling Discrimination in the Workplace and Beyond - Brussels, 9 October 2013	11
OSCE "Enhancing Role of Women in public, Political & Economic Life” - Monaco, 28-29 October 2013.....	12
Turkish Parliamentary and Exchange of Dialogue - Symposium on Gender Equality, Paris, 6 November 2013	16

**UNFPA and UNECE - ICPD Beyond 2014 in the UNECE region :
Thematic Meeting “Inequalities, Social inclusion and Rights”
Belgrade, 15-16 April 2013**

Ms Violeta Neubauer

Member of the Gender Equality Commission

[Report of the meeting - page 18](#)

**EU High Level Conference “Gender Equality *de facto* as a Contribution to
Reaching Europe 2020 Targets: the Effectiveness of Institutional Mechanisms”
Vilnius, 13 September 2013**

Ms Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele

Head of the Gender Equality and Violence Against Women Division

Oral presentation will be made at the meeting.

[Conference Website](#)

[Presentation by Ms Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele](#)

**4th International Roma Women's Conference:
“Acting now for an equal future”
Helsinki, 16-17 September 2013**

Ms Isabel Romão

Member of the Gender Equality Commission

After representing the GEC at the preparatory meeting of the 4th International Conference of Roma Women held in Bucharest on 3 - 4 October 2012, my participation in this Conference was again in the same capacity.

The Fourth International Roma Women's Conference: “Acting now for an equal future” was co-organised by the Council of Europe together with the Advisory Board on Roma Affairs and the Council for Gender Equality of the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, in co-operation with Roma women's associations and took place the 16-17 September 2013 at Hanasaari - the Swedish – Finnish Cultural Centre in Helsinki, Finland. The possibility of remote participation of Roma women at the Conference was available in a selected group of countries.

Among the main aims of this Conference were:

- drawing up of a European Strategy for Roma women containing recommendations addressed to Roma women themselves, governments and international organisations;
- underlining the importance of involving Roma women in the policy processes on Roma as full partners;
- strengthening the Roma women's organisations networking between them and with other gender and equality organisations at the national and international level.

The Council of Europe and the Finnish government played an important role as facilitators of the gathering of the Roma women but the Agenda was set and managed by the Roma women themselves.

The Conference gathered people from 33 countries and over 150 Roma women from across Europe to discuss ways of improving the situation for themselves, their families and their communities. **Main international stakeholders** among them the Council of Europe, including member from the Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma Issues (CAHRM) and from the Gender Equality Commission (GEC); European Commission (EU), European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), European Women's Lobby (EWL); the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR); United Nations (UN), including a representative from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and from CEDAW, had the opportunity to give information about their policy initiatives in this area and to draw on the discussions with participants to improve or modify them.

The conference was opened by former Finnish President **Tarja Halonen** who recalled that the prohibition of discrimination is a key principle of Human Rights and that the Roma Human Rights are not fully implemented. **Roma women and girls are submitted to multiple discrimination** due to their sex. Although the primary responsibility for addressing this situation lies with the Governments it also requires action at European level. Ms. Halonen highlighted the role of the Council of Europe in advancing the situation of Roma, being a Human Rights organisation with a pan-European identity, and the role of the European Union due to legislation and financial resources (structural funds should be more used to finance action for the Roma and there should also be an increased awareness of the gender dimension of Roma issues).

Aggravating factors are the current context of crisis contributing to the difficulty of Roma to secure their livelihood and the increase of hate speech in Europe which should be of great concern.

Finland published in 2013 its Human Rights Action Plan including the rights of Roma. The enforcement of Human Rights is a process that calls for the participation of Roma experts including Roma women in the definition of policies. Education is a precondition for the enforcement of Human Rights of Roma women.

Opening speakers also included **Paavo Arhinmäki**, Minister for Sports and Culture of Finland, also responsible for Gender Equality. He expressed the importance attached by Finland to the promotion of Human Rights and the fight against multiple discrimination. He recalled the adoption in 2012 of a European Union Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy including a political declaration as well as an Action Plan for putting the strategy into practice. This Strategy will guide the Human Rights policy of the European Union in the coming years not only in international *fora* but also in national territories. He expressed the concern that economic crisis can aggravate discrimination. Nevertheless, the crisis cannot be used as an excuse to drop the promotion of Human Rights. Paavo Arhinmäki recalled that **anti Roma attitudes are present in hate speech and this phenomenon must be identified and addressed. He highlighted the Council of Europe campaign against hate speech** aimed at combating racism and discrimination by mobilizing young people and youth organisations to recognise and act against such Human Rights violations.

Jeroen Schokkenbroek, the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for Roma Issues **expressed the hope that this conference could contribute for Roma women to send a clear message to governments reminding them they are the natural partners in the policy implementation process.**

He reminded that **many ingredients for a successful policy on Roma women are in place:** *“a critical mass of stakeholders is fully engaged to produce changes on the ground; nearly all Council of Europe member states have a policy or integration programme for their Roma population; local authorities are increasingly aware of their vital role in the success of policies; grassroots Roma organisations have proved valid interlocutors in the policy process; International Organisations invest finance and expertise”*. Nevertheless, **the national strategies for Roma tend to forget the important role of the Roma women and girls in the wellbeing of the communities.** Success cannot be achieved without more investment in Roma women and girls and without including them in the policy making process.

Data on the economic and development impact of keeping Roma women and young girls in the margins of society is missing and **Member states should be encouraged to work more on gender disaggregated data collection** as this is necessary for successful policy implementation.

In his statement he informed about the increasing number of policies and projects of the Council of Europe as regards Roma and Roma women. The Council of Europe has worked since the 60s with Roma activists. J. Schokkenbroek sees this debate as the development of a movement which was started by a handful of Roma scholars and activists to become a grassroots struggle attracting the attention of governments and international institutions, but he also expressed the **concerns of the Council of Europe regarding the widespread anti-Gypsyism in the region which has not so far been correctly addressed by Governments at all levels social, political and legal.**

Aasrud Rigmor, Minister of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs from Norway recalled that her country ratified the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. She stressed the **importance of promoting the empowerment of Roma women** and called for the existence of Roma women role models. The minister highlighted the **important role EE-Grants can play in advancing the status of Roma** and informed that Roma are already a horizontal priority and a priority in some specific areas of the EE-Grants.

Erik Ullenhag, Minister of Integration of Sweden informed that his country is working on a **White paper on injustices towards the Roma during the twentieth century** since there is the need to acknowledge the “black history” of Europe as regards Roma before moving forward. The widespread anti-ziganism in many parts of Europe was also highlighted by the Swedish Minister. He **enhanced the important role of Roma women and Roma activists as key players in efforts for Roma inclusion and therefore the importance of highlighting gender equality issues and Roma women's influence in bettering the status of their communities.**

The European Union was represented by **Jan Truscynski**, Director General of the European Commission's Directorate General of Education who participated on behalf of the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, Androulla Vassiliou. J.Truscynski expressed the concern of the E.C. about the situation of Roma women, especially about the **gap existing between the Roma, in particular Roma girls, and the rest of the E.U. population** as regards secondary school and vocational education and training.

He informed that this and other challenges are being addressed by the adoption, in 2011, by the Council of the European Union, of **the EU Framework of National Roma Integration Strategies.** Through this framework, all Member States were expected to present to the European Commission a **strategy for Roma inclusion** or sets of policy measures within their social inclusions policies for improving the situation of Roma people until 2020 **with a focus on four major areas: access to education, employment, healthcare and housing.** The European Commission has already assessed these strategies defined by Members states and published its conclusions in the communication "National Roma Integration Strategies: a first step in the implementation of the EU Framework" and produced a staff working document adopted on 21 May 2012.

Unfortunately, we couldn't find in this Framework an explicit orientation as regards the adoption of gender mainstreaming in this area by Member States. J. Truscynski couldn't also say how many Member States had explicitly targeted Roma women in their national strategies and assessed and considered their specific needs. Personal research has led us to a study document requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) on **the “Empowerment of Roma women within the European Framework of National Roma Inclusion Strategies”.**

J.Truscynski informed that the E.C. launched in June 2013 a Proposal for a Council Recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States.

More funds will be made available from 2014 onwards to improve the situation of the Roma population, including the enlargement of ERASMUS to disadvantaged groups and the creation of a special area of the ESF to support the integration of Roma by financing Roma relevant projects.

The ROMED Programme supported by the Council of Europe and the European Commission, providing Roma and non-Roma with adequate training to operate as mediators in over twenty countries in the fields of education, health and culture will continue in 2014. Priority in 2013 was given to women and mothers's cultural mediators.

In a video message **Lávia Járóka**, Rapporteur of the European Parliament on Roma women and the only Roma Member of the European Parliament, shared her views on the educational situation of Roma children, stressed the lack of Roma women in mainstream organisations and called for the involvement of Roma women NGOs in the definition, monitoring and evaluation of policies concerning them.

After the opening session, the conference hosted policy-oriented discussions in 3 parallel workshops focusing on major Roma women's issues:

- Workshop 1: Education as a precondition for the fulfilment of the Rights of Roma women;
- Workshop 2: Advancement of the Rights and Gender Equality of Roma women in society and community mobilization;
- Workshop 3: Enhancement of active citizenship, participation and networking of Roma women.

These major issues resulted from the replies to the questionnaire addressed to Roma women NGOs in order to define the themes for the 2013 Conference and the discussions followed three transversal perspectives (Human Rights perspective, the empowerment of Roma women perspective, and policy perspective) agreed in the Bucharest preparatory meeting (3-4 October 2012).

My participation was in workshop 2: Advancement of the Rights and Gender Equality of Roma women in society and Community Mobilization who had **Nicoleta Bitu** as key note speaker and rapporteur, a Roma woman feminist, one of the founders of Roma women Human Rights mobilization and a PHD student in political science.

Nicoleta Bitu recalled some of the results of the work of the actors in the area of Roma women at the international level:

At the **UN** level the impact can be noticed since the year 2000 as regards the integration of Roma women concerns in the shadow reports to CEDAW. For instance, in Serbia, Roma women are seldom accepted in shelters for victims of domestic violence, the same happens to victims of other forms of violence such as early and arranged marriages.

Also the Declaration from the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban in 2001 includes a paragraph (para. 69) applying to Roma women and girls on the differentiated way women and girls experience discrimination as a factor that aggravates their situation. *"69. We are convinced that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance reveal themselves in a differentiated manner for women and girls, and can be among the factors leading to a deterioration in their living conditions, poverty, violence, multiple forms of discrimination, and the limitation or denial of their Human Rights. We recognize the need to integrate a gender perspective into relevant policies, strategies and programmes of action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in order to address multiple forms of discrimination"*.

The **OSCE "Action plan on improving the situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE area"** was adopted in 2003. It was the first document on policy making on Roma including many references to

Roma women and calling for the systematic mainstreaming of Roma women's issues in all relevant policies designed for the population as a whole.

The **Council of Europe** Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (2008) focusing mainly on the protection of victims of trafficking, safeguarding their rights and the prosecution of traffickers addresses one of the risks faced by Roma women and children who, due to their extreme poverty and marginalization, are particularly exposed to the dangers of trafficking for sexual exploitation, begging, forced labour, illegal adoption and organ removals.

The Council of Europe European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) reports from 1993 made already reference to Roma women.

A hearing of Roma/Gypsy women of West, Central and East Europe was promoted in Strasbourg, in September 1995, by the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG). The wish was expressed that the present Gender Equality Commission (GEC) would promote another hearing.

The European Roma and Travellers Forum adopted a quota for Roma women.

Following this introduction, **Nicoleta Bitu** made some statements and launched topics for discussion in Workshop 2:

- The difficulty of integrating Roma women's rights in the political agenda in a context of increasing racism in Europe.
- Roma women's identity or identities? There isn't a single Roma women identity. All over Europe there are different ways of living a Roma woman identity.
- The Roma identity must be recognised but with a gender perspective in it.
- Roma women must change their status from clients to partners of governments and international organizations because of the lack of resources controlled by Roma.
- Some Roma women activists do not believe in Women's Rights but in Human Rights. Need to stop having a hierarchy of rights as Roma and as Women.
- Some Roma women think that work at community level is preferable to work in international organisations. Both types of work are needed because power and resources lie in international and governmental administrations.
- Roma women must have the knowledge and skills to prepare a process by themselves to change this situation. How can they become a real movement?

This Workshop had the participation of a large number of Roma women who had the opportunity to share with each other their experiences from the grassroots level. Many issues were discussed such as: challenging traditional harmful practices; redefining traditional views of Roma women's role in their communities and in society; expressing disappointment over the absence of support by gender equality activists when Human Rights of Roma women are violated; denouncing the experiences of discrimination in everyday life and the need of complaint mechanisms at national and international level; the negative way Roma women are portrayed in the mainstream media and the need to build positive images of Roma women; stressing the need to invest more on Roma girls, particularly on education. International stakeholders also had the chance to participate in the discussion and to provide information about their policy initiatives in this area.

The conclusions drawn by Nicoleta Bitu from Workshop 2 focused on two areas:

I - Identity, culture and women's Human Rights

- Is there a boundary between culture and women's Human Rights? No. Women's Human Rights do not enter in conflict with culture; they contribute to build a new identity.
- Roma and Roma women need to discuss and deepen the understanding of gender equality, equal opportunities, feminism. To fight simultaneously for all Human Rights including Women's Human Rights – economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.
- Roma women need to discuss these issues amongst themselves. Otherwise the right wing groups will do it.
- There are no taboos explicitly attached to the Roma culture. Issues such as early and arranged marriages, gender based violence, are not related to the Roma culture but to a system of patriarchal society. Other cultures have experienced it. Roma are not the first to be confronted with these problems. "Need to get out of the mental Roma ghetto". Because of Roma women the issue of multiple discrimination was included in Romanian law. Addressing Roma women's issues contributes to improve the life in the whole society.
- "Roma assume their own stereotypes when they live in social exclusion". Need to address stereotypes not only from the outside as regards Roma people but also gender based stereotypes from the Roma community as regards Roma women. Need to make the Roma community understand that those Roma activists fighting for women's rights are also fighting for the community. Need to understand the importance of involving men.
- Roma women have an important role as modernisers of their communities but they are also controllers of traditional identities and reproducers of the culture, keepers of the symbols and controllers of other women.
- The diversity of Roma identities must be acknowledged. People have different backgrounds, belong to different social classes. Therefore there are different ways of living and experiencing the Roma identity. But no judgments can be applied to this.
- The enforcement of Human Rights is a duty of States and of the institutions.
- Increase the visibility of Roma women, their social and economic empowerment, their civic and political rights and their participation in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies.
- Resources should be made available to expand community level good practices or projects to the national level.
- Solutions must be found at the local, national and international levels
- Need to construct in the communities the solidarity already existing inside the Roma families. Across the boundaries of big families to act as a support group for each other.

II – Relation with international organisations

At the **UN** level there are resources that can be used such as the CEDAW shadow reports.

The **EU** "Framework of National Roma Integration Strategies" could be suitable for the evaluation of Roma women strategies.

The **European Parliament** Report on the situation of Roma women in the European Union adopted in 2006 recommended providing support for the organisation of an annual Forum for Roma women living in the European Union. So far this forum was never promoted since this recommendation is not legally binding.

UNDP announced a forthcoming research on Roma women as a tool for advocacy that should be

used to push Roma women's agenda at national and international level. To be published soon as part of a set of nine thematic working papers covering major areas and challenges of Roma inclusion published under the title "Roma Inclusion Working Papers", among them on "Equality between men and women".

Finally, the discussion was very much focused on the creation of a Roma women network at a Pan European level. This was viewed as a good political moment for creating such a network since there is international support. International organisations need Roma partners because of fear and political pressure. The discussion evolved around the following questions:

- What is the Roma women activists' strategy? How do they see the Roma communities in twenty years? How do they want them to be?
- Need a common idea of the achievement goals for this network.
- What should be the focus of such a network? (Roma Human Rights, Roma women Human Rights, fight against racism?)
- Roma women are not yet a movement. This Conference was viewed as an opportunity to start the process of organising this movement.
- Since Roma are a discriminated and excluded community this movement will need to be initiated by the elites and go top down until there is a mobilisation of the community. Without grassroots level activism and political mobilisation nothing can be achieved.
- What can be the benefits of a Roma women network at a Pan European level? Would it lead to more power? Share experience between the communities. Share information and improve communication between Roma women associations. A database of women activists and associations is needed. Transnational cooperation should not be perceived on a confrontational perspective but as a means to exchange experiences and practices. Networking –use the colleagues professionally. There are resources among Roma women who have the experience and expertise and can help each other.
- Need to ensure this new movement is independent of national governments and international organisations for they have their own agendas. Keeping their mental autonomy – how to promote Roma interests when promoting the UN or the Council of Europe agendas.

A Position paper from the European Roma and Travellers Forum and the International Roma women's Network on the 4th International Conference of Roma women was presented focusing on the role of Roma women in improving their status in society and the welfare of their communities.

Workshop reports were not presented by the keynote speakers, instead a **Statement, the "Helsinki Statement"** was put forward proposing the establishment of an **Initiative Group of Roma Women Activists** in order to help to steer the process of preparing the policy document and boosting the communication among women in order to create a platform for exchange that will lead to a strong Roma women's movement.

Roma women also agreed **this Group would prepare a strategic document on Roma women policies** based on the conclusions of the workshops and of the document presented by the General Rapporteur of the Conference, Mrs Rita Izsak. So far this Document containing challenges and recommendations addressed to the main stakeholders, the Roma women themselves, governments and International Organizations was not yet uploaded in the Conference website.

<http://hub.coe.int/web/coe-portal/roma/>

Documents for the 4th International Roma women's Conference can be found in the Roma women website: <http://hub.coe.int/en/roma-women>

- Agenda
- Strategic Document
- Note to the participants
- List of participants
- Livestreaming of the Conference
- Questionnaire
- Video message from Ms Livia Jaroka, Member of the European Parliament
- Report of the Technical Meeting: The way forward to the International Roma women's Conference (15 June 2012)
- Position paper on the 4th International Conference of Roma women "Acting now for an equal future"

Links to Working documents

- Recommendations adopted by the committee of ministers of the Council of Europe on roma and travellers
- Recommendations of the Forum on Minority Issues at its fourth session: guaranteeing the rights of minority women and girls
- Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1927 (2013)1 Final version: Ending discrimination against Roma children
- Parliamentary Assembly report: Ending discrimination against Roma children
- Council of Europe High Level Meeting on Roma (Strasbourg, 20 October 2010): "The Strasbourg Declaration on Roma"
- Declaration of Roma women networks "I am a european roma woman" Conference Athens, January 11-12 2010)
- European Women's Lobby Position Paper
- Declaration of the Committee of Ministers on the Rise of Anti-Gypsyism and Racist Violence against Roma in Europe
- Declaration of the Third International Roma women's Conference/ First World Congress of Roma women (Granada (Spain) / 23-25 October 2011)

Statement by Mr Jeroen Schokkenbroek

http://hub.coe.int/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ed3078af-bd87-43f9-a047-70af79daea5e&groupId=10227

**Workshop convened by the Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice of the UN Human Rights Council
Geneva, 1 October 2013**

Ms Carolina Lasen-Diaz

Programme Officer

Oral presentation

***L'Institut universitaire Kurt Bösch (IUKB), l'Institut international des Droits de l'enfant (IDE)
et Le 2e Observatoire de Genève : Colloque sur La socialisation différenciée, un obstacle à la
pédagogie de l'égalité ?
Sion, 1 October 2013***

Ms Sonia Parayre Programme Officer

Oral presentation

[Colloquy concept](#)

**A European Strategy for Gender Equality:
Tackling Discrimination in the Workplace and Beyond
Brussels, 9 October 2013**

Ms Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele Head of the Gender Equality and Violence Against Women Division

Oral presentation

[Conference website](#)

[Conference report](#)

[Presentations](#)

OSCE "Enhancing Role of Women in public, Political & Economic life
Monaco, 28-29 October 2013

Ms Brigitte Boccone-Pages National Focal Point, Monaco

[Event website](#)

Speech of Ms Boccone-Pages (French)

Mesdames, Messieurs,

J'aimerais tout d'abord souligner l'excellente coopération entre l'OSCE et le Conseil de l'Europe, notamment sur les questions d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et la lutte contre la violence à l'égard des femmes.

L'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes implique plusieurs critères indispensables, comme des statuts égaux, des opportunités et responsabilités égales, mais aussi une participation égale dans tous les domaines de la vie publique et privée. La majorité des pays européens est confrontée à une persistance des inégalités entre les femmes et les hommes. Par exemple, les femmes constituent plus de la moitié de la population et du corps électoral dans la plupart de ces pays, mais elles sont toujours sous-représentées à tous les niveaux de la vie publique et politique, même dans les pays les plus engagés pour l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes. Le Conseil de l'Europe considère que la représentation de chacun des deux sexes au sein d'un organe de décision ne peut être inférieure à 40%¹ pour atteindre une participation équilibrée. Je rappelle aussi que la participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes, à tous les niveaux de la société, fait partie intégrante des droits humains, qu'elle est essentielle pour la justice sociale et qu'elle est une condition nécessaire pour un meilleur fonctionnement d'une société démocratique et pluraliste.

1. Le Conseil de l'Europe et son action pour la participation des femmes à la prise de décision politique et publique :

Le Conseil a été créé pour protéger et promouvoir les droits humains, les valeurs démocratiques et la justice sociale, et travaille depuis des décennies pour que l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes devienne réalité. Depuis la 1^{ère} Conférence ministérielle du Conseil en 1986 qui avait pour thème général « L'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans la vie politique », la participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes dans la vie publique et politique des Etats membres du Conseil constitue un des piliers majeurs de sa stratégie dans le domaine de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes.

Recommandation (2003)3 du Comité de Ministres du Conseil de l'Europe sur la participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique².

*Cette Recommandation contient un ensemble d'objectifs, lignes directrices et mesures afin de corriger les inégalités de représentation dans la vie politique et d'assurer une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes. La Recommandation propose **deux types de mesures** :*

¹ Recommandation(2003)3 :

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2251&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogo=F5D383>

² <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2251&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogo=F5D383>

- a. de nature législative et administrative (concernant les mandats électifs et les nominations et s'adressant à différents acteurs de la vie politique et sociale) et
- b. d'accompagnement (portant sur un ensemble de secteurs, de groupes et d'organisations, et proposant plusieurs moyens d'action : sensibilisation, activités de recherche, renforcement des capacités des acteurs sociaux, etc.)

Le suivi de la mise en œuvre de cette Recommandation:

Deux cycles de suivi de la Recommandation ont été publiés en 2006³ et 2009⁴, ainsi qu'une étude comparative sur les résultats de ces analyses de suivi⁵, publiée en 2009, qui conclut que **malgré certains progrès, un déficit démocratique persiste dans le domaine de l'égalité des droits de participation et représentation.**

Les enquêtes et les analyses sur la participation politique des femmes ont montré que les obstacles à cette participation peuvent être **liés aux systèmes électoraux**, mais aussi au **fonctionnement de la vie politique, à ses coutumes et ses calendriers**, dont les modèles d'organisation sociale restent marqués par la suprématie masculine ; les obstacles peuvent aussi être liés aux **règles traditionnelles implicites des partis politiques** qui, trop souvent encore, fonctionnent comme des « clubs de vieux camarades ». Enfin, ces analyses ont aussi montré que les obstacles les plus tenaces sont liés **aux facteurs éducatifs, sociaux et culturels**, qui perpétuent la vision d'un domaine public et politique essentiellement masculin.

La mise en œuvre de cette Recommandation doit donc être particulièrement attentive aux informations et aux données qualitatives relatives à l'image des femmes et des hommes dans la société et aux changements éventuels dans ce domaine. De telles informations pourraient contribuer à expliquer les raisons sous-jacentes des difficultés croissantes que rencontrent les femmes aux niveaux national, régional et local, surtout pour accéder aux fonctions supérieures.

Les ministres responsables de l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans les États du Conseil de l'Europe, réunis à la 7e Conférence ministérielle sur l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes (Bakou, 2010) visaient à réaliser l'égalité de jure et de facto entre les femmes et les hommes dans toutes les sphères de la société. Le Plan d'action adopté lors de cette Conférence⁶ insiste sur le suivi de la Recommandation de 2003, afin de favoriser la participation des femmes en développant des activités pour encourager les femmes et les hommes à partager de façon égale les responsabilités et les bénéfices du travail payé et non payé, notamment les responsabilités domestiques et familiales. Un nouveau cycle de suivi de la Recommandation de 2003 est prévu en 2014.

2. Défis et Stratégie du Conseil de l'Europe:

L'action dans ce domaine doit encore s'intensifier. Malgré les normes et mécanismes institués, et malgré les engagements des états, les femmes restent en marge des processus de décision. De même, malgré des progrès évidents mais qui restent faibles, les femmes doivent toujours s'adapter à des structures principalement masculines, aux niveaux public, politique ou économique.

Le Conseil recommande différents types de mesures, dont des **mesures d'action positive** ainsi que des mesures permettant aux femmes et aux hommes de concilier vie professionnelle et publique avec la vie familiale et privée.

³ [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG\(2006\)15_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG(2006)15_en.pdf)

⁴ [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG\(2009\)1final_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG(2009)1final_en.pdf)

⁵ Parity Democracy, A Far Cry from Reality – Council of Europe Report, 2009

[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG%20\(2009\)17_en_corrected.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG%20(2009)17_en_corrected.pdf)

⁶ [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/05conferences/ministerial-conferences/7th-Ministerial%20Conference/MEG-7\(2010\)2_ActionPlan_fr.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/05conferences/ministerial-conferences/7th-Ministerial%20Conference/MEG-7(2010)2_ActionPlan_fr.pdf)

*Les mécanismes du Conseil encouragent également à **combattre les stéréotypes et le sexisme** à tous les niveaux de la société car ils renforcent les perceptions que les femmes ne sont pas capables ou ne veulent pas participer autant que les hommes à la vie publique et politique.*

3. Conclusion

Le Conseil de l'Europe a créé des bases solides, avec un cadre juridique et politique, pour la construction d'une société plus juste et pour atteindre l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, mais il faut maintenant que les Etats membres agissent à tous les niveaux afin de combler les lacunes législatives et de pratique et avoir, enfin, des démocraties pluralistes et respectant les droits humains.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF STATEMENT

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I first wish to underline that co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe is excellent, especially with regard to gender equality and the efforts to combat violence against women.

Gender equality entails a number of fundamental criteria such as equal status, equal opportunities and responsibilities, and also equal participation in all areas of public and private life. The majority of European countries have to contend with persistent gender inequality. For example, in most of these countries women represent over half of the population and the electorate but continue to be under-represented at all levels of public and political life, even in countries with the strongest commitment to equality between men and women. The Council of Europe considers that balanced participation means that the representation of either women or men in any decision-making body should not fall below 40%.⁷ I would also point out that balanced participation of women and men in all levels of society is part and parcel of human rights, essential to social justice and a necessary condition for the improved functioning of a democratic, pluralist society.

The Council of Europe's action to promote women's participation in political and public decision-making

The Council of Europe was established to protect and promote human rights, democratic values and social justice. For decades it has been working to make gender equality a reality. Since the first ministerial conference organised by the Council in 1986, on the general theme of "Equality between women and men in political life", balanced participation of women and men in the public and political life of its member states has been a key pillar of the organisation's gender equality strategy.

- **Recommendation (2003)3 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making**⁸

This Recommendation sets out objectives, guidelines and measures aimed at remedying inequalities of representation in political life and ensuring the balanced participation of women and men. The recommendation proposes **two types of measures**:

- a. Legislative and administrative measures (concerning elected offices and appointments and targeting various political and social players) and
- b. Support measures (covering a range of sectors, groups and organisations and offering a number of means of action: awareness-raising, research activities, capacity-building for social players, and so on)

⁷ Recommendation (2003)3: [Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making](#)

⁸ <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2251&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogged=F5D383>

Monitoring of the recommendation's implementation

The results of two rounds of monitoring were published in 2006⁹ and 2009,¹⁰ along with a comparative study analysing these results,¹¹ which was published in 2009 and concluded that **despite some positive developments the democratic deficit as regards equal rights to participation and representation subsisted**.

The surveys and analyses of women's political participation showed that obstacles to such participation could be **related to electoral systems**, and also to the **functioning of political life, its rites and its rhythms**, which still follow dominant male patterns of social organisation. Obstacles could also be linked to the **unwritten, traditional rules of political parties** which, still too often, tend to function as "old boys' networks". Lastly, the analyses also showed that the most stubborn obstacles were linked to **educational, social and cultural factors**, which sustained the perception of political and public life as a primarily male domain.

The recommendation's implementation must therefore pay particular heed to qualitative information and data regarding social perceptions of women and men and any changes taking place in this area. This kind of information might help to explain the reasons underlying the growing difficulties encountered by women at the national, regional and local levels, especially in accessing senior posts.

The Ministers responsible for Equality between Women and Men, gathered together at the 7th Council of Europe Conference (Baku, 2010), aimed to promote *de jure* and *de facto* equality in all spheres of society. The Action Plan adopted at this conference¹² stressed the need to follow up the recommendation of 2003, so as to promote women's participation by developing activities aimed at encouraging women and men to take an equal share in the responsibilities and benefits of paid and unpaid work, in particular home and family responsibilities. A further round to monitor the implementation of the recommendation is scheduled in 2014.

4. The challenges and strategy for the Council of Europe

Action in this field must be further intensified. Despite the standards and mechanisms introduced, and despite the governments' commitments, women continue to be side-lined in decision making. Similarly, despite clear, albeit still weak, progress, women are still required to adapt to essentially male-dominated public, political and economic structures.

The Council recommends different kinds of measures, such as **positive action measures** and measures enabling both women and men to reconcile their working and public lives with family and private life.

The mechanisms established by the Council also seek to help **combat stereotyping and sexism** at all levels of society, since the latter reinforce the view that women are unable or unwilling to participate as much as men in public life and politics.

5. Conclusion

With its legal and policy framework, the Council of Europe has laid sound foundations for building a fairer society and achieving gender equality, but it is now for the member states to take action on all levels so as to address the legislative and practical problems and, at last, ensure the existence of pluralist democracies respectful of human rights.

⁹ [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG\(2006\)15_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG(2006)15_en.pdf)

¹⁰ [http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG\(2009\)1final_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG(2009)1final_en.pdf)

¹¹ Parity Democracy, A Far Cry from Reality – Council of Europe Report, 2009
[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG%20\(2009\)17_en_corrected.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/equality/03themes/women-decisionmaking/CDEG%20(2009)17_en_corrected.pdf)

¹² [http://www.coe.int/t/DGHL/STANDARDSETTING/EQUALITY/05conferences/ministerial-conferences/7th-Ministerial%20Conference/MEG-7\(2010\)2_ActionPlan_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/DGHL/STANDARDSETTING/EQUALITY/05conferences/ministerial-conferences/7th-Ministerial%20Conference/MEG-7(2010)2_ActionPlan_en.pdf)

**Turkish Parliamentary and Exchange of Dialogue - Symposium on Gender Equality,
Paris, 6 November 2013**

Sonia Parayre Programme Officer

Oral Presentation

[Website](#)