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Editorial

Dear Readers,

Step by step, the European Platform of Women Scientists is materializing. We would like to make you part of this endeavour by informing you about our activities through this Newsletter as well as our web site www.epws.org. We also encourage you to actively partake in the process by joining the Association, supporting us with useful information and getting or keeping in touch with us.

On the 28th of March 2006, the Platform was officially launched to the Brussels community. Since April 2006, the Association's Secretariat is fully staffed and ready to focus on the areas "Networking", "Research Policy", and "Information" in order to:

- reach out to networks of women scientists and networks who promote women scientists as potential full members of the Association
- enter the EU policy debate especially with regard to the Seventh Framework Programme currently under discussion
- promote general awareness-raising of the 'women and science' issue in all its different facets.

Preparations for our Network Event on the 20th of October 2006, bringing together networks of women scientists and networks promoting

women scientists from all disciplines have started.

The Platform will network the networks of women scientists and act as a structural link between women scientists and policymakers, coordinating EU value-added support activities for women scientists. Our aim is to do this in dialogue with the members of the Association as well as in dialogue with European institutions, national representations, research councils, other research-oriented associations and representatives of the private sector and in constructive cooperation with existing institutions, groups and initiatives in the field of gender equality and gender and science in Brussels.

At this stage, it is of crucial importance to the Association to get in touch with as many existing networks of women scientists and networks promoting women scientists from as many disciplines as possible. Now is the time for the community of women scientists to manifest their interest in the Platform as a new strategic instrument for the promotion of women in science by joining the Association. I, therefore, strongly encourage everyone to respond to the mini-survey we sent out, and that is available on the website, and fill in the more elaborate questionnaire which will follow in due time.

I also encourage women scientists and research policy makers to provide us with

information on any networks of women scientists or promoting women scientists that they know of. We need to know you, your networks, your interests, concerns and ideas to successfully make the endeavour of the European Platform of Women Scientists work.

So, please get back to us with information, wishes, projects. And – if you are in Brussels – why not stop by the EPWS office and meet us in person? We are located in Rue d'Arlon 38 on Place du Luxembourg, in sight of the European Parliament and 5 minutes from DG Research.

We are looking forward to meeting you!

Maren Jochimsen,

EPWS Secretary General

EPWS launched in Brussels

On the 28th of March 2006, the European Platform of Women Scientists EPWS was launched in Brussels in the presence of approximately 100 people from the European Institutions, permanent national representations to the EU, research councils, a variety of Brussels-based research oriented associations and representatives of the private sector.

Dr. Adelheid Ehmke, *Vice Rector of the University of Luxembourg and EPWS President*, gave the welcome speech emphasizing that “a strategic instrument like the European Platform of Women Scientists is needed to counter the still significant under representation of women in science”. **Dr. Johannes Klumpers**, *Head of Unit Women and Science, DG Research*, **Dr. Brigitte Mühlenbruch**, *EPWS Vice President, Founding Member of the Association and Former Scientific and Managing Director of the Centre of Excellence Women and Science CEWS in Bonn*, **MEP Erna Hennicot-Schoepges**, *Former Minister for Culture, Higher Education and Research in Luxemburg*, as well as *EPWS Secretary General* **Dr. Maren Jochimsen** presented the situation of women in research and academia, the EU policy in the field and the challenges ahead for the EPWS.

For the full text of the speeches, please visit our website <http://www.epws.org/>.

Initial EPWS team complete

The last member of the initial EPWS Team in the Association's Secretariat joined us on the 3rd of April. The Secretariat in Brussels has been functional since February 2006, when the Secretary General and the Office Manager took up work in the Association's permanent premises in Rue d'Arlon 38 in Brussels. In March, the Project Manager Networking and the Project Manager Information followed.

Dr. Maren Jochimsen, EPWS Secretary General, holds a PhD in Ecological Economics. For the past 15 years she has done research on gender issues in science, networking for the representation of women scientists and in academia and its decision-making bodies, as well as for the incorporation of gender research interest in national research programmes. Before joining EPWS, she was employed at the Guaranteebank for Social Economy in Cologne, specialising in the financing of social enterprises and organizations.

Geneviève Saussé, Office Manager, previously worked at the European Commission and thereafter she was the Director's Secretary/Office Manager at the Wales European Centre, for more than eight years.

Dr. Marianne Schwarz da Silva, Project Manager Networking, holds a PhD in Organic Chemistry, in the field of Natural Product Synthesis, from the Imperial College London. Before joining EPWS, she undertook a traineeship in the European Commission, working for the New and Emerging Science and Technology Unit (NEST) of the DG RTD, where she primarily worked on the development of a new call for proposals entitled “Transmission of Culture” as part of the PATHFINDER project.

Adelina Huminic-Orzu, Project Manager Information, holds a MA in Political Science and a MA in European Integration and Development. She has professional experience in Eastern Europe, where she mainly worked in the media, in Bucharest. In Brussels, she was a researcher and an expert in several European projects on women's rights in the

European Union and in Eastern and Central Europe. Before joining EPWS she was a Policy Officer at the European Federation of Regional Energy and Environment Agencies (FEDARENE).

Dr. Irina Michalowitz, Project Manager Research Policy, is a political scientist specialized in European integration studies. Prior to joining the European Platform of Women Scientists, she was Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Vienna, Austria. She is author of the book "EU Lobbying - Principals, Agents and Targets".

A Project Manager Fundraising is expected to join the team later this year.

Networking event and membership: online mini-survey

After the success of the launch event on March 28th 2006, the Secretariat is now working in preparation of the Network Event on the 20th of October 2006.

In light of this event, EPWS is gathering preliminary information on the existing networks of women in science, based on the 2003 DG Research Network Guide on Women Scientists, and on any newly created networks since.

The Secretariat has developed two different types of mini-surveys, for networks of women scientists and for individuals, asking them to check or provide their current contact data and to manifest their interest in attending the event in October. We also encourage people to forward the documentation to any eventually interested networks or individuals.

Any input will allow us to prepare a stimulating and interesting Network Event.

For more information, please contact Marianne Schwarz da Silva:

marianne.dasilva@epws.org.

Link to Network Guide on Women Scientists:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/pdf/women-sc-net-guide_en.pdf

The EPWS Board of Administration

The Board of Administration represents the executive body of the Association. The first Board of Administration was constituted in November 2005 and emerged from the Founding Board of the Association. The mandate of the Board of Administration Members is until the first General Assembly, due to take place in January 2007. Then, a new Board will be elected for a 2-year period.

The current members of the EPWS Board of Administration are:

President: Dr. Adelheid Ehmke, PhD in Biology and former Vice Rector of the University of Luxembourg (Luxembourg). As President of the Trier University of Applied Sciences (1998-2004) she implemented the "Ada Lovelace Projekt", encouraging girls and young women in studying engineering and sciences, and transferred it to Luxembourg.

Vice-President: Dr. Brigitte Mühlenbruch, PhD in Pharmaceutical Chemistry and former Director of the Centre of Excellence Women and Science CEWS in Bonn (Germany). She was a member of the Steering Committee for the Study on Networks of Women Scientists in Brussels.

Treasurer: Prof. Mineke Bosch, PhD in History and Associate Professor at the Centre for Gender and Diversity at the University of Maastricht (The Netherlands). She was member of the ETAN expert group 'Women and Science' and currently is project leader of an ESF-Equal Project "Bridging the Gender Gap at Universities".

Prof. Gillian Gehring, Professor of Solid State Physics at the University of Sheffield (UK). She is member of the British Association Physics Committee and was the first ever woman President of the Physics Section in 2002.

Prof. Claudine Hermann, Professor of Physics at the Ecole Polytechnique Paris (France). She was the first woman ever appointed Professor at Ecole Polytechnique in 1992. She is a co-founder and the first President of the French association "Femmes

et Science" (Women and Science) and currently its Vice President.

Dr. Liisa Husu, PhD in Sociology and a Research Fellow in the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, University of Helsinki (Finland). She is a member of the Board of the International Sociological Association Research Committee "Women in Society".

Prof. Hagit Messer-Yaron, Professor of Electrical Engineering at Tel Aviv University (Israel). She was responsible for establishing and leading a National Council for Women in Science. She led the negotiation for Israel's participation in the 6th European R&D Framework Program (FP6).

Prof. Ana Proykova, Associate Professor for Atomic Physics at the University of Sofia (Bulgaria). She acts as National Contact Point for the European Community Scientific Program FP6 - Priority 3: Nano Materials.

Dr. Isa Schön, PhD in Biology and a Research Fellow at the Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences (Belgium). She is founder of BeWiSe, the Belgian Network for Women in Science, and its current President.

Dr. Flavia Zucco, Biologist, Institute of Neurobiology and Molecular Medicine. She has founded the Association "Donne e Scienza" (Italy) of which she is currently President. Expert in *in vitro* toxicology.

Apart from the current Board of Administration Members, Mag.a Gabriele Gerhardtter, from the Coordination Office FEMtech, Vienna (Austria), and Begoña Sanchez, Head of European Union and Regional Development Unit at Fundación LABEIN, Bilbao (Spain), actively supported the EPWS in the Founding Board.

EPWS is entering EU research policy debate on FP7 and on the Lisbon Agenda

EPWS has now issued its first position papers to call for more attention to gender balance and gender mainstreaming in the EU's 7th Framework Programme.

The core message to EU decision-makers is that there is a need to specifically promote the

participation of women scientists and create better conditions for women scientists if the goal to make the EU "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy by 2010" and build a European Research Area, as declared in Lisbon in 2000, is to be achieved.

In a similar vein, EPWS will call for specific reference to women scientists in the EU's Integrated Lisbon Guidelines. These guidelines serve the EU Member States to establish action plans for the fulfilment of the Lisbon goals. These guidelines, as well as first reports of the EU Member States on their implementation achievements, are currently under review and may be altered if necessary.

EU R&D budget increased by 40%

On the 4th of April 2006, the European Parliament and the Austrian Council Presidency reached a compromise on the financial perspective 2007-2013, at the end of a seven-hour meeting. Following this compromise, an extra 300 million euros will be allocated to FP7 compared to the amount decided by the European Council in December 2005. This brings the total FP7 budget to little over 48 billion euro.

In their meeting on the 21st of April 2006, the EU's Science and Research Ministers agreed on this increase and focused on the distribution of funds between the FP's four individual sub-programmes: *Co-operation*, *Ideas*, *People* and *Capacities*. Some member states have expressed their wish to see, for example, more funds allocated to supporting SMEs (part of *Capacities* programme), at the expense of the European Research Council (part of the *Ideas* programme). However, an agreement is expected to be reached at the next meeting of Research Ministers on the 29th-30th of May 2006.

The Commission proposes allocating 32 billion euro to the sub-programme entitled "Co-operation", 7.5 billion to "Ideas", 5 billion to "People" and 4.2 billion to "Capacities".

According to the EU budget procedure, after the Council's approval, the budget needs to be

voted in the Parliament plenary (mid-May 2006). Then, the Commission will come up with a renewed proposal. Finally, the Finnish Presidency has to insure the adoption of FP7 in due time for its start on the 1st of January 2007.

Launch of the ERC and recruitment of ERC Secretary General

On the 26th and 27th of April 2006, the 22-member Scientific Council of the European Research Council (ERC) gathered for their third meeting in Vienna.

Following this meeting, the Council published its outline strategy for the launch of the ERC and provided details of how talented starting young researchers will receive funding in its start-up phase. Two strategy notes are published on the new Scientific Council website launched with the same occasion, which is designed to provide early and effective communication with the scientific community.

The Scientific Council also started the recruitment process for the Secretary General of the European Research Council by launching an open call for applications, with a deadline for applications and nominations on the 31st of May 2006. Candidates must be senior persons with a recognised scientific profile and proven experience in science policy, and an acknowledged successful leadership record in scientific funding organisations.

The two strategy notes are available on the website of the ERC Scientific Council, along with the call for the recruitment of the Secretary General of the ERC, at <http://erc.europa.eu>

New European award for science and computing

The UK's Royal Society and France's Académie des Sciences, with support from Microsoft, have launched a new award recognising European scientists who have

made a major contribution to the advancement of biological science through the use of computing. The prize is a trophy and 250,000 euro, of which 7,500 will be prize money, with the rest earmarked for research.

The award is open to researchers working at the interface of biological sciences and computing. For its initial three years, the award will alternate in terms of who it rewards, between physical and biological scientists.

For further information, please visit:

<http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/microsoft>

Events

1. Re-searching women in science and technology

A conference entitled "Re-searching women in science and technology" will take place in Vienna, Austria, on the 15th and 16th of May.

The event is intended to give a new impetus to increasing the percentage of women in industrial research. Strategies for equal opportunities will be presented, and new action plans will be drawn up and discussed.

EU Science and Research Commissioner Janez Potocnik will be attending the event.

For further information, please consult the following web address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/women/wir/news_en.html

2. Conference "Improving research policies in Europe through the Open Method of Coordination"

On the 18th of May 2006, the DG Research of the European Commission organizes in Brussels the conference "Improving research policies in Europe through the Open Method of Coordination", under the auspices and in collaboration with the Austrian Presidency. The aim is to raise awareness and discuss the application of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) to increase investment in research: benefits of improved coherence of national R&D policies in Europe, impact of OMC in

national policy making so far, ways to strengthen its application and integration of national R&D policies in the National Lisbon Strategies.

The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) was introduced by the European Council of Lisbon in March 2000. It was a method designed to help Member States progress jointly in the reforms they needed to undertake in order to reach the Lisbon goals.

The programme can be downloaded at the following link:

http://www.eu2006.at/includes/Download_Dokumente/Agendas/1805ProgrammeResearch.pdf

3. Euroscience Open Forum 2006

ESOF 2006 is the second pan-European General Science Meeting to be held in Munich at the Forum am Deutschen Museum and the Deutsches Museum from July 15th to 19th, 2006.

ESOF brings together all groups involved in the scientific endeavour. This includes researchers from different disciplines, policy-makers, representatives of industrial R&D, science journalists and the general public. It fosters debate about science and society, presents science and the humanities at the cutting edge and stimulates scientific awareness.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.esof2006.org/>

4. Women engineers in industrial research

A workshop on the careers of women engineers in industrial research will take place in Paris, France, on the 22nd of May.

Sessions on 'good practices in the recruitment process of women engineers' and 'good practices during the evolution of the career' will take place. Examples will be presented by Schlumberger, PSA Peugeot Citroen, Gaz de France and the European Space Agency (ESA).

The event is organised within the framework of the Prometea project, funded under the Science and Society section of the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6).

For further information, please visit:

<http://www.prometea.info>

5. A Researchers' labour market: Europe a pole of attraction?

This conference, organized in Vienna on the 1st and 2nd of June 2006, will explore under which conditions the European researchers' labour market can be a pole for attraction. It also seeks to find out to what extent the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of researchers represent a driving force for enhancing career prospects.

The event will serve as an opportunity to evaluate progress made in the implementation of these instruments, to identify models of implementation and explore the difference between the public and the private sector for attracting and managing human resources.

For further information, please visit:

<http://www.era-careersaustria.at/conference/programme.htm>

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References

The articles published in the EPWS Newsletter are based on articles featured in different EU publications and information portals, booklets, advertising, seminars, conferences, etc.