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Editorial



Next to “networking the networks”, the representation of the interests, needs, concerns and aspirations of women scientists in the research policy debate on the European level is one of the core tasks of the European

Platform of Women Scientists. The Platform is designed to act as a ‘structural link’ between women scientists and policy makers.

EPWS has the challenging task to raise the awareness of and bring together the interests of two groups of actors to establish a structured dialogue: women scientists as the stakeholders in EU research policy and EU research policy makers as those who include women scientists’ interests in the respective policies.

This issue of the EPWS Newsletter will give a look behind the scene and explain in some more detail the Platform’s activities in the realm of research policy: what we do, the position

papers we produce, and how the community of women scientists may directly benefit from our activities by making use of EPWS statements.

To this end, the Platform monitors and examines the legislative process at EU level in the fields of science and research and identifies possible points for intervention. It communicates its position in different forms of written statements: general and specific position papers on research policy issues, replies to public consultations, letters as well as, in the future, initiative reports.

The documents we produce are meant to serve a two-fold purpose. (1) They seek to enter the European policy process by bundling the interests of Europe’s women scientists into one voice when engaging into dialogue with policy makers on the European level. (2) They want to encourage the community of women scientists to actively engage in the policy debate themselves.

The documents are available on the EPWS website in the publications section and we very much encourage members and other interested scientists to use these texts, adapt them to their own interests, and to engage in

the debate as well, either in support of the argument at EU level or targeted at the nation-state level.

So far, the Platform's research policy activities focus on three interrelated issues: the forthcoming Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7), the EU's Lisbon Agenda as well as the overall discussion of excellence and innovation. All of them key areas of the current research policy debate.

However, to identify areas of initiative with respect to intervention in the research policy

debate will be one key area of membership collaboration. The Platform needs your suggestions for possible areas of initiative and intervention so that the statements we produce may be the result of a communicative process within the Association.

Let us know what you are interested in, point out the topics you deem important to be taken up. Join the debate!

Maren Jochimsen
EPWS Secretary General

Interested in becoming an EPWS member?

The Membership Application Form is online on the EPWS website:

http://www.epws.org/index.php?option=com_performs&formid=5&Itemid=4603

Please fill it in and send it to Marianne Schwarz da Silva: marianne.dasilva@epws.org

Representing the interests of women scientists at EU level

One of the core tasks of the European Platform of Women Scientists is the representation of the interests, needs, concerns and aspirations of women scientists in the research policy debate on the European level. In carrying out this task, EPWS seeks to influence the decision-making process regarding European research policy through negotiation of interests with decision-makers and other stakeholders.

The Platform's activities in this respect are mainly carried out by the EPWS Project Manager Research Policy, Dr. Irina Michalowitz, and include:

- ✓ monitoring the decision-making process in the area of research and gender equality, by following
 - media coverage,
 - Commission and Parliamentary sessions and reports, and

- oral evidence and background information from professionals in Brussels.
- ✓ examining in detail the legislation at stake and identify points of intervention to address the interests of women scientists
- ✓ drafting written statements on the Platform's position
- ✓ meetings with EU officials, members of Parliamentary Committees and other decision-makers involved in order to reinforce EPWS statements
- ✓ joining forces with fellow organisations representing research or gender interests, when appropriate.

The outcome of the actual state of information gathering is communicated to women scientists through EPWS Position Papers on research policy issues, news alerts and newsletters to raise awareness among the community of women scientists for opportunities to engage themselves in research policy and encourage them to do so by submitting their own position on the European and/or national level.

The Platform is also carrying out additional activities in order to network its way into the Brussels interest representation community and explore the ground for coalition-building:

- ✓ participation and contribution to conferences, seminars, workshops, and exhibitions with an outreach function in and outside Brussels.
- ✓ meetings of the Informal Group of Brussels-based non-profit Research & Development Liaison Offices (IGLO)
- ✓ meetings of the European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research (COST), one of the longest-running instruments supporting co-operation among scientists and researchers across Europe
- ✓ meetings of the Informal group of Brussels-based NGOs promoting the gender dimension in different areas of the society (development, ageing, education, science, health, employment etc.)
- ✓ talks and events (e.g., of foundations, national and regional representations in Brussels, NGOs, public affairs groups).

Current focus of EPWS research policy monitoring and intervention

The Platform's current research policy activities focus on three interrelated issues: the forthcoming Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7), the EU's Lisbon Agenda¹ as well as the overall discussion of excellence and innovation.

FP7 will set the European research agenda for the next seven years and also influence national research programmes, in this respect working towards the goal established in the Lisbon Agenda to make the European Union "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion by 2010". 'Excellence' (FP7) and 'Innovation'

¹ Presidency Conclusions, Lisbon European Council, 23 and 24 March 2000.

(Lisbon Agenda) are the key concepts used in this context respectively to map the direction and way of how to secure Europe's global competitiveness in the future.

In each of these areas it is important that women scientists' interests are represented and enter the debate. Gender balance and gender mainstreaming as well as instruments such as Gender Action Plans are key to enhancing the participation of women researchers in FP7 projects. Europe also needs women scientists to achieve the goals set by the Lisbon Agenda. It is therefore important that regulation and investment be geared towards an inclusive approach of all constructive minds in the EU. Structural inequality will lead to a waste of talent of various groups, including women who represent more than 50% of the EU students but on average only get to 15% of senior academic positions.

Improving the Internal Market is strongly interrelated with the Lisbon Strategy. This is the case as well with general cross-cutting goals of the EU, such as the achievement of gender equality, recently put forward in the Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men (Gender Roadmap)².

Excellence and Innovation are the key words and concepts used by FP7 and the Lisbon Agenda respectively to map the direction of how to secure Europe's global competitiveness in the future. However, how the notions of 'equal qualification' or 'excellence' are understood also influences our interpretation of what will lead to better competitiveness in Europe. A gender sensitive notion of 'excellence' is needed with respect to the projected European Institute of Technology (EIT) and the European Research Council's activities as new instruments of research funding and promotion in Europe. Our last *EPWS Position Paper Third Stakeholders'*

² Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010 (SEC(2006)275).

Meeting on the European Institute of Technology 7 September 2006, European Commission, dated 25.09.2006, takes up this issue.

The way women researchers can contribute to science and economic development and the reasons why they are still underrepresented in key positions have to be addressed across policy areas. This way, the recognition of the decisive role of women and the necessity to create conditions for their inclusion and promotion at EU level may be enhanced.

Entering the policy debate: state the Platform's position

The Platform can use different means to voice the concerns, needs and aspirations of women scientists in the policy debate by producing different forms of written statements. The Platform publishes these statements on its website and encourages members and other interested scientists to use these texts, adapt them to their own interests, and to engage in the debate as well either in support of the argument at EU level or targeted at the nation-state level.

Position Papers

Position Papers at EU level follow a specific logic that decision-makers expect and to which EPWS adapts the structure of its papers. Position Papers are generally of a length of two pages maximum, divided in three parts:

- ✓ an introduction, which sets out the general context in which the position is written and that is deemed of interest to decision-makers
- ✓ the core demands or core positions, but still of general character
- ✓ concrete proposals and the reasoning behind them.

The third part may differ depending on the stage of the decision-making process. Depending on the issue at stake, Position Papers can be more general or more specific.

- *General positions* can be given for general events or when a decision-making process

is already so far advanced that changes of particular wordings are not possible any more, i.e., when the deadline for the acceptance of outside input by Commission or Parliament has already passed. An example of this category is the *EPWS Position Paper on FP7 2007-2013*.

- *Specific positions* can be voiced when a decision-making process is at an initial stage, e.g., when the Commission has produced a Green Paper or a White Paper that will eventually be followed by a draft legislative proposal, or when it has issued an open consultation with the intention to draft a legislative proposal. Positions can also still be specific when such a proposal has been drafted and the European Parliament is starting to collect possible amendments to the draft proposal. When amendments have already been drafted by the European Parliament, it is vital to adapt demands on positions to the overall style of a legislative draft. In specific Position Papers, the third part of a Position Paper contains concrete proposals on how to change the wording of a paragraph in a draft proposal or an amendment of a Parliamentary Committee. These concrete proposals are followed by a justification of the preference for the particular request. An example would be the *EPWS Position Paper on FP7 Rules of Participation*.

Replies to Consultations

Public consultations are surveys issued by the European Commission and its Directorates General on specific topics of interest to EU policy making. These Consultations are publicly accessible; nowadays, many take the form of online surveys and are announced on the European Union's website. In these Consultations, the Commission puts forward questions on various aspects of its activities either as closed questions, with boxes to tick for possible answers, and/or as open questions with space for open answers and comments. In its replies to Public Consultations, the Platform seeks to relate the interests of women scientists to the issue at hand and to draw attention to gender balance and/or gender

mainstreaming by either using the space provided for open answers or by attaching an additional document where the issue can be addressed in more detail.

Examples of EPWS replies to public consultations include, the *Public Consultation on the Future of the Internal Market* and the Consultation on the *Draft Research Agenda for Theme 8 "Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities" in the 7th RTD Framework Programme (2007-2013)*, also available on the EPWS website.

Letters

The Platform may of course also choose to send letters to EU politicians at all levels to express the interests of women scientists and their demands and recommendations. The Platform has used this instrument, for example, addressing Research Commissioner Potočnik on the importance of Gender Action Plans at the proposal and evaluation stage of FP7 in June 2006.

Initiative Reports

In the future, EPWS will also take a more proactive approach on the basis of input received from among its membership. The Platform will complement the instruments mentioned above by Initiative Reports on a wide range of issues relevant to women in science to stimulate the policy debate and policy making in these areas. In identifying such areas of initiative, the support of the members of the Platform is vital. It is by the suggestions of its members that the Platform may take up the issues of interest and concern to the community of women scientists and organise joint intervention and action.

First ERC Secretary General appointed

On 30 August 2006, the Scientific Council of the European Research Council (ERC) announced the appointment of the ERC Secretary General for the first 5 years of its operation. Prof. Ernst-Ludwig Winnacker, President of the German Research Foundation (DFG) and Professor of Biochemistry at the University of Munich, will occupy the position

from January 2007 to June 2009 and Prof. Andreu Mas-Colell, President of the European Economic Association and Professor of Economics at the University of Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, will take over from July 2009 to December 2011.

The Secretary General will have a key role in ensuring the integrated operation of the ERC, based on the strategy and programme of activities prepared by the Scientific Council. He will be a member of the ERC Board, working together with the Chair and two Vice-Chairs of the Scientific Council and the Director of the Dedicated Implementation Structure/Executive Agency to oversee the implementation of the ERC strategy and work programme prepared by the Scientific Council.

For further information on this issue:

http://erc.europa.eu/index_en.cfm

Eurostat statistics on gender differences among Europe's knowledge workers

In August 2006, Eurostat released the statistics on gender differences among Europe's knowledge workers for the year 2004.

These statistics show that 50.4% of human resources in science and technology (HRST) in Europe are female. Three quarters of them (77.3%) work in "knowledge-intensive services", such as financial intermediation, education or health.

In Europe, only 29% of the Scientists and Engineers are female. It is only in the three Baltic States that women count for more than half of these professionals.

Another conclusion of the report is that differences between female and male unemployment are decreasing over the years, even though women are still more likely to be unemployed than men.

For further information on these statistics, please read the Eurostat report:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OF_FPUB/KS-NS-06-012/EN/KS-NS-06-012-EN.PDF

**EPWS and WINNET Europe – partners for a Networking Session at the 2006 IST Event
“Strategies for Leadership”, Helsinki, 21-23 November 2006**

EPWS, in collaboration with WINNET Europe (European Network of Women Resource Centres, <http://www.women.eu.com>), will organise a Networking Session during the 2006 IST Event “Strategies for Leadership” to be held in Helsinki on 21-23 November 2006. Our event will take place on 22 November, from 14h00 to 15h30, in room 217, according to the news we have just received from the organisers.

This year’s edition of the most important European event in the field of Information Society Technologies will coincide with the launch of the EU’s Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development.

Our proposal called “Women in ICT contributing to an innovative Europe” is published online: http://europa.eu.int/information_society/istevent/2006/cf/itemlist.cfm?type=Session&status=Published

We thank all of you who supported the session by expressing their interest on the conference’s website and hope to see you in Helsinki.

For further information please contact:
Marianne Schwarz da Silva, Project Manager Networking
E-mail: marianne.dasilva@epws.org

**Conferences attended by the EPWS
Secretariat**

During the last two months, the Platform was represented at two European conferences on gender issues.

On 31 August-3 September 2006, Adelina Humnic-Orzu attended the 6th *European Gender Research Conference - Gender and Citizenship in a Multicultural Context*, held in Łódź (Poland). She presented the Platform in the workshop “Cross-Border Networking and Global Civil Society”, coordinated by Marina Calloni and Ewa Gabryelak.

Irina Michalowitz and Adelina Humnic-Orzu participated at the conference *Equal is not Enough. Equal Opportunities in a Diverse Society*, held at the University of Antwerp (Belgium) on 13-15 September 2006.

For more information on the two events:

<http://www.gender2006.pl/>
<http://www.equalisnotenough.org/>

NATO grants to scientists

A less known research funding opportunity in Europe is the *Security through Science* Programme, which offers grants to scientists from the member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), as well as from Partner and Mediterranean Dialogue countries.

For further information on the priority research topics and eligible countries please read the Guide to the NATO *Security through Science* Programme:

<http://www.nato.int/science/guide/pdf/guide.pdf>

For more information on the NATO *Security through Science* Programme:

<http://www.nato.int/science/>

ESF Call for Proposals for new Research Networking Programmes

The European Science Foundation (ESF) has launched a call for proposals for new Research Networking Programmes, which represent networking activities bringing together nationally funded research activities for four to five years. Their aim is to address a major scientific issue or a science-driven topic of research infrastructure at the European level, with the aim of advancing the frontiers of science.

Key objectives include:

- ✓ creating interdisciplinary fora;
- ✓ sharing knowledge and expertise;
- ✓ developing new techniques;
- ✓ training young scientists.

Proposals may be submitted in any or across several of the following broad scientific fields:

- ✓ Biomedical Sciences
- ✓ Life, Earth and Environmental Sciences
- ✓ Physical and Engineering Sciences
- ✓ Humanities
- ✓ Social Sciences
- ✓ Science driven issues of Research Infrastructures in any of the above fields

For further information please visit:

http://www.esf.org/esf_genericpage.php?language=0§ion=2&domain=0&genericpage=2309

Athena Survey of Science Engineering and Technology

ASSET 2006 – the third Athena Survey of Science, Engineering and Technology – runs from 5 September to 20 October 2006, with the purpose of providing a firm basis in understanding and addressing the barriers to women's progression in scientific careers.

The survey is open to all male and female UK based scientists, engineers and medics, whether in industry, public or private sector research, research and development organisations, in education including higher

and further education, the National Health Service or other public sector employment.

If you would like to support the survey please contact Athena directly:

athena@royalsoc.ac.uk

Further information on ASSET 2006 is available the Athena website:

www.athenaproject.org.uk

Gender Equality Directory for the Mediterranean Region

The Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS), a non-profit organisation based in Cyprus, is currently developing a directory of organizations and academic institutions working on gender related issues in the Mediterranean region. This directory is geared towards researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and potential students in order to facilitate the gathering of up-to-date information on gender in the Mediterranean area, as well as the networking and exchange of material and ideas.

The directory will be available on the new MIGS website that will be launched in autumn 2006.

If you are interested in being included in this directory, please contact Josie Christodoulou from MIGS: josie@medinstgenderstudies.org

Running a Science, Engineering or Technology based business?

Prowess wants to get in contact with women running a Science, Engineering or Technology based business. This is an UK association of organisations and individuals, which works with the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) to raise the profile of women business owners in this sector.

For more information contact Alice Kent at a.kent@prowess.org.uk, <http://www.prowess.org.uk>

Events: occasions to meet EPWS

At least one member of the EPWS Secretariat and/or the EPWS Board of Administration will be present at the following events:

1. OECD Workshop on “Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET): Strategies for a Global Workforce”, Ottawa (Canada), 28-29 September 2006
2. “Excellence in the Life Science Area - adding the gender dimension”, Karolinska Institutet Stockholm (Sweden), 5-6 October 2006
<http://ki.se/elsa>
3. 2006 Women and ICT Taskforce: Re-Engineering Development: Engendering ICTs, UNESCO, Paris (France), 12-15 November 2006
<http://www.angelfire.com/blog/cwit/>
4. 2006 IST Event “Strategies for Leadership”, Networking Session together with WINNET Europe “Women in ICT contributing to an innovative Europe”, Helsinki (Finland), 21-23 November 2006
http://europa.eu.int/information_society/istevent/2006/conference/index_en.htm

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References

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