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Message from the EPWS Vice President



Dear Colleagues and Dear Readers,

We are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the creation of the European Union these days. In 1957, six Western European countries signed the Treaty of Rome. The number has grown to a total of 27 with the beginning of this year, when Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU. 2007 is the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. A new Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development – the seventh – has been successfully launched, and much more could be reported here. The dream of past generations of the unity of Europe has become reality, a hope for many, and a necessity for all!

A few days from now, another dream will come true: female researchers will have a voice in Europe. On 27 and 28 April 2007, the first General Assembly of the European Platform of Women Scientists will take place in Brussels,

with representatives of networks of European female researchers of a vast variety of disciplines. This will turn the European network of women in science into reality. EPWS has been working in Brussels for about one year now; the active involvement of networks of women scientists and of networks promoting women scientists in the work of the Platform is a further, important, step which we have dreamt of since 1999. All those who participated in the conference “Networking the Networks” organised by the Women and Science Unit of the Directorate General Research in Brussels, in July 1999, will remember.

The conference participants recommended *“the creation of a European network of networks on women and science, to be supported on a long-term basis by the European Union, in particular through enabling women scientists to meet on a regular basis and allocating resources for the maintenance of such a network. The European network of networks on women and science should regroup existing networks of women scientists and organisations committed to the improvement of the gender balance in research*

policy from the European Union and from Eastern and Central Europe”.

Upon my proposition, we also included the following sentence in our resolution:

„European Union and Member States, which use networks on a professional basis for advice, expertise and dissemination of information, should recognise and formally support the networks, as well as the establishment of national nodes of existing networks“.

Many of the conference participants followed my desire to link these institutions at national level to provide support and to promote women scientists centrally in Brussels, in order to provide a structural link between women scientists and policy makers. Others were afraid this would mean reaching for the stars.

In September 2003, the call for setting up the European Platform of Women Scientists as an FP6 Specific Support Action was opened. My institute, the Center of Excellence Women and Science CEWS in Germany, obtained the contract for the establishment of EPWS. Reaching for the stars was worth it!

It is now your task, Dear Colleagues, to contribute to the advancement of EPWS. To do so, it is necessary that you become a member of the Platform and that you actively engage in the activities with your proposals, desires and needs. We do not want to predominantly list what has not been reached yet with regard to equal opportunities for women in science: we want to emphasise the successes on the European and the national level, and on this basis, to develop strategies for the future.

To promote the networking of women scientists in Europe, to give female researchers a decisive voice in the planning and design of European research policy, to open up the opportunity to them to live their own culture also on the European level, to facilitate the experience of equal opportunities in science and research, to actively shape excellence in science and research, these are the reasons for a European network of scientists and reasons to join EPWS and to engage in and steer its activities.

I am looking forward to meeting you on 27 and 28 April in Brussels. Together we are stronger, nearly unbeatable!

Brigitte Mühlenbruch
EPWS Vice President

EPWS General Assembly

On 27-28 April 2006, the European Platform of Women Scientists will hold its first General Assembly in Brussels.

This event represents a milestone in the Platform’s development as a membership-based association, the last formal stage in its creation.

The meeting will be the great opportunity to meet the EPWS members, the first networks and individuals who already got engaged in reshaping the future of the EU research landscape, within EPWS.

Up to now, EPWS received formal membership applications from 71 networks and 26 individuals, coming from 29 countries.

CALL FOR MEMBERSHIP

Applications for Full, Associate, Organisations Supporting and Individual Supporting Membership are continuously OPEN.

The formal application forms are available online and must be accompanied by several documents according to the type of membership requested.

For further information, please contact Marianne Schwarz da Silva:
e-mail: Marianne.dasilva@epws.org
tel.: +32 2 234 37 51

A Membership Application Form is included at the end of this newsletter.

NB. There will be no membership fees during the year 2007.

Join EPWS! – Messages from the EPWS Board of Administration

Prof. Ana I. Proykova, Physicist, University of Sofia (Bulgaria):

During the first IUPAP (International Union of Pure and Applied Physics) conference of Women in Physics (Paris, 2002), I realised that there were problems related to a top level academic career of women all over the world. Although women are hired into tenured and tenure-track positions at junior level positions, they rarely reach senior positions. Before the conference I thought that this was specific for my country, Bulgaria. Later, I understood that the problem was common in every scientific area, not only in physics. Realizing that the unfair treatment of women scientists with respect to their male colleagues is not only harmful to women in science but, in the long run, this will be harmful to science as well, I was happy to join the EPWS project and the Board in order to help a bit in searching a solution of this problem.

Being a member of the EPWS you will benefit from deep and wide discussions and actions for developing system(s) (probably a unique system will not be possible) for preventing the gender bias in the review processes.

ERC officially launched

On 27-28 February 2007, the European Research Council (ERC) was officially launched in Berlin. However, its Scientific Council has held regular meetings since October 2005.

In Berlin, Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for Science and Research, expressed his strong support that the ERC will be "free from political interference of any kind" and will become a "powerful institution in the future".

For further information:

<http://erc.europa.eu/index.cfm?fuseaction=pag.e.display&topicID=97>

Commission releases two reports on gender equality

On 7 March 2007, the European Commission released a report on the gender pay gap along with the 2007 gender equality report.

According to these reports, 75% of new jobs in the EU are taken by women, and the majority of graduates in every single EU country are women. But they earn on average 15% less than men.

With regard to wage equality, if in the UK women earn on average 30% less than men, this gap varies between 10% and 15% in new member states such as Malta, Hungary and Poland.

According to the reports, job creation is shifting more and more to women and, within the female population, to those groups where rates have been lowest in the past.

The jobs in which women work are generally lower-quality and worse paid than men's, in spite of female workers' high degree of qualification. Women are much more likely to work in part-time jobs, and work-life balance problems such as poor availability of child care in certain member states affect women much more than men.

The Commission highlights the following priorities in gender policies:

- ✓ Address labour market gaps;
- ✓ advance the reconciliation of work and private life;
- ✓ use Structural Funds to address gender equality issues such as promoting childcare and female entrepreneurship, and
- ✓ implement existing legislation (Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy and Spain have not yet implemented the 2002 Gender Equality Directive).

The Report “The gender pay gap – Origins and policy responses. A comparative review of 30 European countries” can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2006/ke7606200_en.pdf

The Report on gender equality (2007) is available at:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2007/com2007_0049en01.pdf

New EPSS service for online submission of FP7 proposals

In March 2007, the new Electronic Proposal Submission Service (EPSS) has been launched to facilitate submitting FP7 proposals online.

The EPSS is in fact the recommended method of preparing and submitting proposals under FP7. It also provides a secure work space for a consortium to prepare and submit a proposal jointly.

The EPSS allows users to propose projects by creating their proposal completely online without having to download or save anything locally on their own personal computer. The service is available via the internet as a web-based application and requires only a standard web browser, with no special software.

Applicants are invited to check whether EPSS is available for the call where they want to submit a proposal.

For further information on EPSS:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_NEWS&ACTION=D&RCN=27352

Ethics committees fall short of gender equality

A study published in the *Journal for Medical Ethics* (March 1 2007, Volume 33, Issue 3) reviewed current practices across Europe regarding ethics committees reviewing research applications and found that not enough is being done to address the gender imbalance among them. In addition to being under-represented in research sanctioning

bodies, sex and gender-specific risk-benefit analysis of project findings is not sufficiently considered.

The study analysed two research ethics committees (RECs) in five different EU Member States: Austria, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands and Sweden.

In examining the track record of individual committees, the study investigated two critical questions relating to gender issues. One was whether or not existing procedures expressly called for women or those with gender expertise be represented, and the second considered how sex and gender issues would be dealt with in evaluating prospective results.

The study team reviewed documents provided by RECs and interviewed their members. They discovered that many committees had informal procedures to ensure that women were represented, yet few had any official rules. Sweden was the only country to have clear national guidelines in place regarding sexes. All committees took gender into account when recruiting new members, but again no formal measures were recorded.

As for subjects of research projects, all RECs made efforts to ensure that pregnant women or women of childbearing age were protected, though further gender issues were not considered. Possible benefits or side-effects of a given study were not assessed with sex-specific variables taken into consideration.

Authors of the study acknowledge that policy is specific when dealing with women participating in health research funded by the EU, but when it came to ethics committees, it “paid only limited attention” to the issue.

They also emphasise that gender issues are left out of the recent EU clinical trials directive intended to harmonise practice across the Community.

The authors of the study recommend that more be done to understand the importance of gender differences in health. They also stress out that EU-wide policy and recommendations are needed to guarantee gender equality on RECs.

Source: Research Information Centre, 6 March 2007

Descartes Prizes for Research & Science Communication

On 7 March 2007, the winners of the Descartes Prizes for Excellence in Scientific Collaborative Research and for Science Communication were announced.

Three European Research Projects share the €1m Descartes Prize for Excellence in Scientific Collaborative Research: the High Energy Stereoscopic System is a telescope system that has revolutionised existing astronomical observation techniques and increased our knowledge and understanding of the Milky Way and beyond; the Hydrosol project has developed a method of producing hydrogen from water-splitting, using the energy of the sun, which could lead to environmentally friendly production of hydrogen for energy purposes; APOPTOSIS has made great strides in our understanding of apoptosis (programmed cell death), which will lead to new developments in future treatment of cancer and AIDS.

The Descartes Prize for Science Communication went to: Dr. Sheila Donegan and Eoin Gill for the "Eureka" weekly science magazine aimed specifically at children; the documentary series "Europe, A Natural History" co-produced by ÖRF, BBC and ZDF; Prof. Vittore Silverstrini for his Città della Scienza (City of Science) in Naples, a centre which unites an interactive science and technology museum with a business innovation centre; Dr. Odd Askel Bergstad and other scientists of the MAR-ECO network for their work on involving the general public in the project's census of marine life; and Wendy Sadler for her "Science Made Simple" project, which gets teenagers excited about science.

The Descartes Prizes are among the activities supported under the European Commission's Sixth Framework Programme, within the Research Directorate Science and Society.

For further information:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/descartes/news_en.htm

European Celebration of the L'ORÉAL-UNESCO Awards "For Women In Science"



The European Celebration of the L'ORÉAL-UNESCO Awards "For Women In Science" took place in Brussels, on 27 March 2007.

The European celebration was organised in the framework of the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. It celebrated the European laureates of the L'ORÉAL-UNESCO "For Women In Science" awards: the 2006 laureate, Prof. Christine Van Broeckhoven from Belgium, and especially the 2007 laureate, Prof. Dr. Tatiana Birshtein from Russia.

Jean-Paul Agon, L'ORÉAL Chief Executive Officer, and Maciej Nalecz, Director Division of Basic and Engineering Sciences of UNESCO, opened the event.

Viviane Reding, European Commissioner responsible for Information Society and Media, presented the European Commission's views on women's participation in ICT and in science and technology in general, in the context of the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.

Additional contributions came from Members of the European Parliament, Prof. Jerzy Buzek and Dr. Jorgo Chatzimarkakis. They discussed the importance of women scientists in the research community and the need to promote of equal opportunities.

Prof. Dr. Tatiana Birshtein, Physicist, the 2007 L'ORÉAL-UNESCO "For Women In Science" European laureate, presented her long-life work and the Institute of Macromolecular Compounds where she undertakes her activity in St.-Petersburg.

Prof. Christine Van Broeckhoven, the 2006 laureate, outlined the new L'ORÉAL-UNESCO National Fellowships for young women scientists in Belgium. This new national programme forms part of a global programme, which now includes 20 of the 27 EU member states.

Since 1998 the L'ORÉAL and UNESCO joined forces to promote women in scientific research by creating the "For Women In Science" partnership. Each year five remarkable women scientists receive L'ORÉAL-UNESCO Awards and fifteen young women researchers receive UNESCO-L'ORÉAL International Fellowships.

Call for Nominations: European Women Inventor & Innovator of the Year Award



The European Women Inventors and Innovators Network (EUWIIN) is electing the European Women Inventor & Innovator of the Year 2006. The award will be given in Berlin on 16 June 2007, on

the occasion of the conference *Innovation & Research for a better Competitive Europe*.

Therefore, EUWIIN is looking for creative, inventive and innovative women from all sectors and backgrounds, including entrepreneurs, designers, scientists, engineers and lone inventors from across Europe.

The deadline for receipt of an award nomination is 30 April 2007.

For further information on the award and the ceremony:

http://www.euwiin.eu/index.php?option=com_ventlist&Itemid=79&func=details&did=5

Cartier Women's Initiative Awards



Cartier and the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society joined forces in October 2006 to launch the Cartier Women's Initiative Awards. The aim of this initiative is to encourage more women to create their own businesses.

Each year, five laureates, one from each continent, will be coached and rewarded with a US\$ 20 000-grant.

Application deadline: 15 April 2007.

For more information on the awards and application procedures:

<http://www.cartierwomensinitiative.com/en/>

Encouragement to Advance – Training Seminars for Women Scientists

Applications are again welcome for the Training Seminars offered to women scientists by the Center of Excellence Women and Science.

The programme "Encouragement to Advance - Training Seminars for Women Scientists" intends to empower women scientists within the European Research Area (ERA), offering training on appointment procedures for professorships in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany and the Czech Republic. Trainings encourage mobility and supranational careers in research and higher education.

Seminars are available for women scientists from all disciplines, who do not yet hold a position as a tenure professor but are qualified for appointments. Women scientists from countries participating in the 7th European RTD framework programme can take part in the programme. Participants must hold a PhD or equivalent degree for a minimum of four years, speak English or German fluently and preferably have an understanding of the general landscape of academia in the country they are aiming at.

Each four-day-long seminar provides a surplus of knowledge according to

- ✓ international appointment procedures
- ✓ training of how to conduct negotiations at universities committees
- ✓ examination of application documents
- ✓ individual support in career strategies development and career-objectives.

Participants enter a Europe-wide network of women scientists with the seminar. On the fourth day of training information focuses on European dimensions of science and research. Experts give insights on European research policy, European Commission's 7th Framework

Programme and the European Platform of Women Scientist.

An overall of 16 seminars, of 14 participants each, are held in Brussels from April 2007 until January 2008. Trainings are held in English or German, due to participants needs. A charge of €250 covers training, overnight costs, access to communication platform and relevant documents given.

Applications are welcome and processed on an ongoing basis. Your latest chance to apply is by the end of June 2007. Seminars start in April 2007. Successful matching and participation in the project is enhanced by early application.

To apply to the programme, please send (1) Application Form; (2) Letter of Motivation (maximum of 1000 words) to the project coordinator: anke.lipinsky@cews.org.

Incomplete applications will not be taken into account.

Please send printed records to:
Center of Excellence Women and Science
CEWS, Encouragement to Advance,
Poppelsdorfer Allee 15, D-53115 Bonn,
Germany.

Find more Information on <http://www.cews.org>

Call for Papers: Women's World 2008



**mundos de mujeres
women's worlds 08**

Women's Worlds 2008, the 10th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, is open to proposals in *all* fields and themes related to

women, gender and sexuality in contemporary societies. This event will take place in Madrid (Spain), on 3-9 July 2008.

The aim of the congress *Women's Worlds* is to address both academic research on gender and women and feminist social movements. Feminist researchers, specialists, activists and internationally known public figures will attend this event and reflect on important contemporary issues that affect women in specific ways.

For more information on the event and on the calls for papers:

<http://www.mmww08.org/index.cfm>

Upcoming events

1. *18th Sustainable Energy Marie Curie Research Fellowships Conference*, Rungsted (Denmark), 21-25 April 2007

http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp6/mariecurie-actions/news/events_en.html

2. *Sustainable Neighbourhood – from Lisbon to Leipzig through Research (L2L)*. A conference on research for sustainable development in Europe, Leipzig (Germany), 8-10 May 2007

<http://www.fona.de/L2L>

3. *EUR Future European Researchers of Tomorrow – Crossing the Borders of Academia and Industry*, 13-15 May 2007, Stuttgart (Germany)

<http://www.eur-future.eu/html/english/home/home.php>

4. *Gender and Participation in the Light of the Enlargement*, Budapest (Hungary), 21-22 May 2007

http://www.tetalap.hu/index_e.html

5. EUWIIN Conference *Innovation & Research for a better Competitive Europe*, Berlin (Germany), 14-16 June 2007

http://www.euwiin.eu/index.php?option=com_eventlist&Itemid=79&func=details&did=5

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References

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

Membership Application Form

Please fill in this form in CAPITAL LETTERS and READ all necessary documents on <http://www.epws.org>

Name of Association:
Name(s) and position(s) of the person(s) authorised to represent:
1.
2.
Address:
Telephone Number/ Fax Number:
E-mail:
Website:
Research Area(s) Covered:
Membership Type Requested
Full Member
Associate Member
Individual Supporting Member
Professor
Researcher (please specify)
Other (please specify)
Supporting Organisation
Choice of Standing Committee
Monitoring the Policy Debate
Gender Dimension in Science
Promotion of Women Scientists
Information and Public Relations
Structural Reinforcement
Is your organisation/are you a member of any other network(s)?
I accept EPWS' Terms and Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> (online at www.epws.org)
Date, Place, Signature :

Your personal data are for EPWS internal use only and will not be transmitted to third parties.