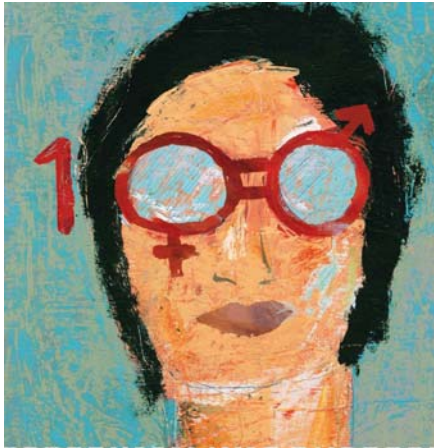


NOTES FROM THE CHAIR ON THE OCCASION OF THE 100th INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The first International Women's Day was held in 1911. 2011 is the global centenary celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women in the past, present and future. This day is special to



1911 WOMEN'S DAY 2011



but what happened on the other areas?

The unfortunate fact is that women are still not paid equally to their male counterparts. We have a gender pay gap of 17.8% in the EU. Globally the situation concerning women's education, health and the violence against them is worse than that of men. We are witnessing a feminisation of poverty, where single mothers and their children, elderly and migrant women are particularly vulnerable. Women are still not present in equal numbers in business or politics. Women account for approximately only 24% of members of national parliaments and governments in Europe. This year the FEMM committee decided to highlight Women in Politics in the EU as its main topic of the [IWD event](#). We are delighted of having the opportunity to consider this issue with international specialists like Mary Robinson and Nicole Fontaine and exchange views with representatives from national parliaments. While struggling for the full integration of women's rights and of a gender equality perspective in European social and economic policies, we should definitely not forget the promotion of gender equality outside the EU. In the latest liberalization movements in Egypt and Tunisia we have

acknowledged the brave presence of female democracy defenders raising the need of gender equality in their new constitutions. I believe we have to extend our full support for such gender-aware movements, wherever they appear, focusing on: promoting women's political participation; integrating gender dimensions of climate change; promoting the rule of law and access to justice for women and girls, in order to create societies based on justice and equality. We look forward to continue our collaboration with all women and men, gender activists and experts from all around the world working for gender justice!

Eva-Britt Svensson

WOMEN IN POLITICS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION Interparliamentary Committee Meeting

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the first International Women's Day, FEMM committee organises a meeting with the participation of national parliaments on the topic of Women in politics in the EU. President Jerzy Buzek will open the event, followed by speeches from Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and Nicole Fontaine, former EP President. Please click for the [programme](#) and [registration info](#).

Date: Thursday, 3 March, 9.00-12.30

Venue: Hemicycle, Brussels

Live web streaming of the meeting [here](#).

WORKSHOP FOR JOURNALISTS - WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

The Press service of the EP is organising a networking workshop with journalists on 8 March. The aim of the event is to exchange views on why there are still so few women in top positions in the public and private sectors. It also provides an opportunity to ask MEPs about their different views on this issue and on what the options are on a European level.

Date: 8 March, 14.00-18.15

Venue: Room SDM-S7, European Parliament, Strasbourg

Contact info: Press Service: +32 2 28 43017

FEMM COMMITTEE ON FACEBOOK

FEMM committee launches its facebook page in order to establish a close and interactive link with those interested in the work of the committee. To connect, please click on the picture.



Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality is responsible for:

- Definition, promotion and protection of women's rights in the Union and related Community measures;
- The promotion of women's rights in third countries;
- Equal opportunities policy, including equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work;
- The removal of all forms of discrimination based on sex;
- The implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming in all policy sectors;
- The follow-up and implementation of international agreements and conventions involving the rights of women;
- Information policy on women.