

European Women's Lobby Lobbying Kit

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EUROPEAN WOMEN'S
LOBBY
EUROPÉEN DES FEMMES

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50/50 Campaign:

No Modern European Democracy without Gender Equality

European Women's Lobby Lobbying Kit ahead of the European Parliament elections in May 2014

Between 22 and 25 May 2014 the election of a new European Parliament will take place. Following this, the European Commission will be renewed and nominations for top jobs at European level, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the President of the European Council, will be taken.

Women are still seriously under-represented in political decision-making in all European countries and in European Union institutions. Only 35% of members of European Parliament and just 24% of members of National Parliaments are women. And only three out of 14 European Parliament Vice Presidents are women.

Action is needed to achieve a real European democracy through implementing Parity Democracy: the equal representation of women and men in decision-making.

Europe is you! Important decisions are made at European level, which affect your everyday life. Social justice, human rights and gender equality need to be at the core of European policy-making and women need to be equally represented when such decisions are made.

This Lobbying Kit produced by the European Women's Lobby will give you accessible tools and arguments to have more women in decision-making and make sure that women's views are represented in European debates and policies.

Act now:

Join the European Women's Lobby
50/50 Campaign: www.womenlobby.org
and www.paritydemocracy.eu

Introduction

The European Women's Lobby (EWL) is the largest umbrella organisation of women's associations in the European Union (EU), working to promote women's rights and equality between women and men.

EWL membership extends to organisations in all of the 28 EU member states and the three candidate countries, as well as to 20 European-wide bodies, representing a total of more than 2000 organisations. The EWL 50/50 Campaign in 2008-2009 gathered the support of more than 300 prominent women and men from all over Europe and all political affiliations: 14 EU commissioners, heads of state, ministers, members of parliaments, leaders of trade unions, writers, a Nobel Prize winner etc. Beyond this wide support, the 50/50 Campaign was also successful in contributing to important progress towards the 50/50 goal, as women's representation rose from 30% to 35% after the 2009 European Parliament elections!

In 2014, European voters will elect the new European Parliament (EP) and the new European Commission (EC) will be nominated. The European Council will also nominate a European High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the President of the European Council for the second time. In order to reach Parity Democracy, it is important that they nominate women for these important positions.

Currently 33% of members of the European Commission are women and the President of the Commission (Jose Manuel Barroso) is a man. While the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security (Lady Catherine Ashton) is a woman, the President of the Council (Herman Van Rompuy) is a man too.

At the moment, there is no binding provision to ensure the equal participation of women and men in any of the EU decision-making bodies. Actions to address the lack of equal participation in European Parliament elections, and in EU political decision-making generally, have not been strong enough despite existing political commitments. The European Women's Lobby has been lobbying for many years for the introduction of binding measures for all European institutions, including in the election of the European Parliament and in the nomination process of the European Commission.

The aim of the EWL 50/50 Campaign is to ensure that social justice, human rights and gender equality are at the core of EU policy-making and that European women

Join our Action NOW!

www.womenlobby.org / www.paritydemocracy.eu

participate on an equal footing to men in the making of all decisions which affect their lives and in shaping the future of Europe. The EWL 50/50 Campaign has already received the vital support and input from a cross-party alliance of members of European Parliament.

The EWL and its 50/50 Campaign is also a partner to a the project **European Campaign for Parity Democracy and Active European Citizenship**, coordinated by the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (Cyprus) in partnership with the Women's Employment Information Centre (Lithuania), Forum 50% (Czech Republic) and the Romanian Women's Lobby (Romania). The overall aim of the project is to promote active democratic citizenship and parity democracy in Europe by adopting a dual approach: direct engagement with all relevant stakeholders in order to ensure their commitment to the development of plans of action for the promotion of women's political participation on a national level; and an awareness raising and lobbying campaign which aims to raise awareness on the importance of equal representation and parity democracy and to mobilize support from key stakeholders including political parties, the media, as well as the public at large.

The project has developed **campaign tools and information material** including a visual identity that captured the spirit and the message of the campaign, a campaign website, print materials, a tv and radio spot, and online banners. All campaign tools are available in Czech, English, French, Greek, and Lithuanian and are available on the campaign website www.paritydemocracy.eu!

The Campaign also comprises a very concrete aspect, the EWL European Political Mentoring Network – promoting and supporting women from ethnic minorities or migrant backgrounds to run for the 2014 European Parliamentary elections, with the help of current members of the European Parliament.

The European Political Mentoring Network

is the first European-wide initiative of its kind and a new, innovative part of our 50/50 campaign. As women from ethnic minorities or diverse backgrounds represent less than 2% of the Members of Parliament, the EWL decided to address this lack of gender and ethnic diversity in European decision-making. To deconstruct stereotypes and in order to create new role models, this Mentoring Network aims at preparing the mentees to stand in the 2014 European elections, by sharing advice and experiences during one-to-one meetings and capacity building workshops.

This **EWL 50/50 Lobbying Kit aims at assisting all interested persons and organisations in actively taking part in shaping the Europe that we want, through the 50/50 Campaign, before the European elections 2014!** The 50/50 Lobbying Kit consists of two sections. In the first section, you will find an Action Kit, which includes all the steps that you can take with us to make our collective voice stronger. The second section provides in-depth information and deconstructs certain myths in relation to Parity Democracy and quotas. The Kit provides women's non-governmental organisations and other interested actors with both the means to put pressure on political parties and decision-makers to introduce measures to advance gender equality and parity in view of the EP elections, as well as for the nominations to be made for EU top jobs in 2014.

part one:

Action Kit



1. Europe is YOU

The decisions made at the European Union (EU) level directly affect the everyday lives of all women and men living in European Union countries.

Although the EU is often seen as an institution concerned mainly about finances and trade, the EU is also an important actor in many other policy fields, which are of immense importance for Europeans and people around the world. These include combating climate change, eradicating poverty worldwide, combating all forms of discrimination (based on sex, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and disability) or establishing a social Europe.

The EU has the power to improve the lives of millions of people, but this requires the active involvement of all women and men through participation in politics at European level and voting in the upcoming European elections between 22 and 25 May 2014. The European Union is not an abstract entity, it is made of people that make decisions and whose election or nomination can be influenced by all of us European citizens.

The EU has the competence of making legislation that binds Member States, in many different policy areas. European laws (directives and regulations) are initiated by the European Commission, and amended and approved in general by a joint decision of the European Parliament and national ministers at the Council, who work on the policy field in question. They are then implemented at the

national level, which is why it is important for all people living in EU countries to be informed about and involved as much as possible in European policy-making.

Regarding equality between women and men, **the realization of equality between women and men is an official goal of the EU** and a large body of European policies and legislation has been adopted in this area since the initial stages of the formation of the EU in 1957. In fact, most national legislation on equality between women and men in employment actually comes from the European level. More recently, the European Commission proposed a directive aiming to improve the representation of women on company boards, currently backed by a positive vote of the European Parliament.

While we know that the goal of realising equality between women and men is still far from being attained in most Member States, we need to use the EU and the commitments that have been made in order to: ensure real action to achieve equal pay and equality at work in general; to reach the equal representation of women and men in decision-making, to eliminate all forms of violence against women; or for the EU to play a stronger role in defence of women's human rights in the world.

Europe is you because your participation in the European elections and your action with decision-makers speaking up for more justice and democracy and working for the equal representation of women

and men can help pushing for European policies that will improve the lives of millions of women and men in Europe and worldwide.



2. Take action to advance Parity Democracy in Europe

European Parliament Elections: 22-25 May 2014. Let your vote make the difference

Women's representation within the European Parliament (EP) has been increasing slowly but steadily since the first election in 1979: women now make up 35% of the Member of the European Parliament¹. Even though this means an increase of 5% after the 2009 EP elections, to which the EWL 50/50 Campaign 2008-2009 contributed, this is not enough!

First we need to make sure that the programmes of political parties take into account the needs and situation of women and integrate issues of social justice, human rights and gender equality as priorities.

The number of women elected reflects with the number and ranking² of women on lists

of candidates. Decisions on the composition of the candidate lists for the European Parliament elections are made at national level within each political party and according to national electoral systems. In 18 of the 27 EU Member States one or more of the political parties with seats in the current parliament has some type of voluntary quota for the proportion of women candidates. Eight EU Member States (Belgium, Greece, Spain, Ireland, France, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia) currently have a parity system or legislative quota in place that range from 30% to 50% female candidates applicable to the list of candidates for parliamentary elections.

Action needed:

Contact national political parties!

It is political parties who are making decisions about both the content of political programmes and electoral lists. Therefore, they need to be targeted

1 With considerable differences between Member States, see table 1 p.14

2 This is the case in particular in proportional representation systems with closed lists, in which the voters vote for the party, but where the party has decided over the order of the candidates.

first. Put pressure right now on all national political parties to highlight their responsibility in shaping the political landscape, in ensuring the equal representation and ranking of women and men on their electoral lists and including gender equality as a priority in their programmes for the elections. Please adapt/translate/ send our template letter (A), to your national political parties.

Nomination of the members of the European Commission: summer 2014

Currently nine of the 27 European Commissioners are women (33%). Commissioners are proposed by national governments and then nominated by the designated president of the European Commission (EC). Governments therefore have an individual and collective responsibility in ensuring the equal representation of women and men among members of the European Commission.

Since 2008, the EWL has been proposing a parity system whereby each Member State would put forward a woman and a man as nominate commissioners and the designated President would then be in a position to choose members of the Commission among the persons proposed, with a view

to achieving the equal representation of women and men.

Action needed:

Ask national governments to propose a woman commissioner and support the parity system proposed by the EWL, whereby each Member State would propose a woman and a man as nominated commissioners and the designated President of the EC would choose among them with a view to achieve parity within the European Commission. Please adapt/translate/ send our template letter (B) to your national governments.

EU “Top Jobs”:

The European High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the President of the Commission and the President of the European Council will be nominated for the second time during the Council summit taking place from 26 to 27 of June 2014.

Action needed:

Ask national governments to make sure that women are equally represented at the highest level of European decision-making when nominations are made. Please use our template letter (C), to send to your national governments.

Join the European Women’s Lobby Action:

What	When to act	Who to target	How
European elections 22-25 May 2014	Now, until the date of the elections	Political parties at national level; voters	Approach national political parties and ask them to ensure that 50% women are included in their lists with a zipper system at winnable places and ask them to prioritise gender equality issues in their programmes. You can use the enclosed model lobbying letter A. → Disseminate information and encourage voters to vote for parties that support gender equality.

What	When to act	Who to target	How
Renewal of the European Commission: Nomination of the President of the European Commission on 26-27 June 2014. Individual hearings of Commissioners (selected over the Summer) in the European Parliament during September	Now-Summer 2014	Heads of Governments; Members of the European Parliament	Approach national governments and ask them to propose a woman as commissioner and to ensure an equal representation of women and men in the EC. You can use the enclosed model lobbying letter B. → Ask the MEPs to take the equal representation of women and men into consideration, when the new European Commission is approved by the EP.
Nominations to be made for the European High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the President of the European Council (26-27 June 2014)	Spring-Summer 2014	Heads of Governments of all EU member states	Lobby governments so that they nominate women to these posts. → You can use the enclosed model lobbying letter C.
Mobilise high level support for the 50/50 Campaign	Now until the elections which will take place from 22 to 25 May 2014	Politicians, Heads of Governments, Famous and important people	Approach these people in order to find prominent supporters who will promote the campaign. → You can use the enclosed model lobbying letter D.

3. Model lobbying letters

- A. Model lobbying letter to be sent to national political parties in view of the European elections of May 2014** p 11
- B. Model lobbying letter to be sent to heads of governments of EU Member States in view of the nomination of European Commissioners in 2014** p. 12
- C. Model lobbying letter to be sent to EU governments in view of the nomination of the European High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and of the President of the Council of Minister** p. 13
- D. Model lobbying letter to be sent to prominent supporters (VIPs)** p. 14

(Date)

To: (Head of national political party), Head of (name of national political party)

Dear (Madam / Sir),

Subject: Programmes and candidate lists for the 2014 European Parliamentary elections, and Parity Democracy

I am joining the **50/50 Campaign*** initiated by the European Women's Lobby (EWL) to enquire as to what positive action you are taking to ensure that your programme and candidate lists for the 2014 European Parliamentary elections fully reflect the fact that women, in all their diversity, make up more than 50% of the European population.

As the head of your political party you have the responsibility to promote gender equality and a just European democracy

(name of organisation/individual) is/are calling upon the (name of political party) to:

- Prioritise gender equality issues in your manifesto or political programme
- Ensure appropriate measures are in place to ensure women's equal presence on candidate lists and as elected candidates for the European elections in 2014
- Use the zipper system (1 woman/1man alternating in the candidate list)

WHY?

In order to enhance women's political participation there is a need to address structural barriers that prevent women from participating in politics. Parties need therefore not only to include gender equality in their programmes but also show their commitment to this with their lists of candidates.

Achieving the equal representation of women and men in political decision-making positions is a vital step in the realisation of a more legitimate European democracy, more legitimate political parties and securing greater support from European citizens. The current under-representation of women in most elected parliaments across Europe, including in the European Parliament (EP), is a serious democratic deficit threatening the legitimacy of European institutions and political parties. As the European Union is having more and more competences and is therefore more and more deciding about our lives it is more important than ever that decisions made by European Union institutions, including the EP, take into account the needs, interests and perspectives of every woman and man who is affected by European policy and legislation. The equal representation of women and men in decision making is in addition to this related to the broader question of equality in the EU and genuine representation of the whole of European society.

Political parties play a gate keeper role in the selection of candidates for all elections. The number of women elected to the EP will reflect how many female candidates are encouraged to run, and their position on candidate lists. The action you take as party leader regarding both the programme of your party and the composition of your list will have an enormous impact on achieving greater gender-sensitive representation, more justice and equality.

I/we am/are confident that you will do your utmost to put issues of gender equality and human rights at the core of the priorities of your party and to ensure an equal representation of women and men in the next European Parliament, and I/we look forward to your response outlining the action you are taking to achieve this.

Sincerely,
(Signature)

* See womenlobby.org and paritydemocracy.eu for further information about the EWL and its 50/50 Campaign

(Date)
To: (Head of State)

Dear (Madam / Sir),

Subject: Equal representation of women and men in the new European Commission 2014-2019 -

I am/we are writing to you in support of the **European Women's Lobby (EWL) 50/50 Campaign*** to ensure the equal representation of women and men in the European Commission to be nominated in 2014.

Despite many commitments to achieving gender equality in political decision-making at all levels, women are still under-represented in decision-making at national level in most countries and within the European institutions. If the European Union is to be accepted by all citizens, women and men, the process of ensuring the equal representation of both sexes among commissioners has to be given immediate and serious consideration.

I am / we are conscious that the final number of women in the new Commission will be the result of many negotiations and decisions at different levels. We therefore believe that each government individually, and the EU Member States collectively, have a responsibility to ensure the equal representation of women and men in the EU executive body.

I/We also believe that the current unequal representation of women within European institutions clearly indicates the need for institutional mechanisms that will ensure gender parity within all European decision-making bodies. In this respect, the **EWL has been suggesting for many years an easy nomination system whereby each Member State would propose a woman and a man as nominee Commissioners in 2014 and the designated President of the EC would then choose and ensure "50/50" representation of women and men.** We hope that you will support this idea when discussing European issues at the highest level.

Finally, I/ we would like to add that the nomination of a gender-sensitive woman as President of the European Commission in 2014 would be a first and a very welcome and powerful political decision.

I am/ we are confident that you will do your utmost to ensure an equal representation of women and men in the next European Commission, and look forward to your response detailing how you aim to achieve this.

Sincerely,
(Signature)

* See paritydemocracy.eu for further information about the 50/50 Campaign; and womenlobby.org for further information about the European Women's Lobby, who are leading the campaign.

(Date)
To: (Head of State)

Dear (Madam / Sir),

Re: Representation of women among the highest European decision-makers

I am/we are writing to you in support of the European Women's Lobby* 50/50 Campaign for democracy aiming to ensure the integration of a gender equality perspective and the equal representation of women and men among the highest European decision-makers.

By May 2014 the European Council will again nominate the European High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the President of the European Council. This presents once more an opportunity for the European Union to become more democratic by **ensuring the equal representation of women and men at the highest level of European decision-making when the nominations are made.**

I am/we are aware that the nomination process will be subject to discussions and negotiations among governments' representatives. However, I/we would like to stress that it is the common responsibility of European governments to ensure that the final decisions reflect the fact that women represent half of the European population and that European policies at the highest level need to reflect the needs and aspirations of all Europeans.

In order to gain in legitimacy, European institutions and decision-makers need to mirror the diversity of the population and I therefore hope that you will, in your nomination, make sure that the new face of the European Union will reflect the European values of justice and gender equality.

I am/we are confident that you will do your utmost to ensure the equal representation of women and men in the important nominations to be made.

Sincerely,
(Signature)

* The European Women's Lobby is the largest coalition of women's organisations in the EU present in 28 Member States and accession countries, representing over 2000 member organisations. See: www.womenlobby.org

(Date)

Dear (Madam / Sir),

Re: Support the European Women's Lobby 50/50 Campaign: No modern European Democracy without Gender Equality

I am writing to you on behalf of the European Women's Lobby, representing 2000 women's associations from across the European Union in order to **kindly ask you to become a supporter of the European Women's Lobby (EWL) 50/50 Campaign: No modern European Democracy without Gender Equality**. Ahead of the European elections 2014, the EWL is continuing our very successful European-wide cross-party 50/50 Campaign already supported by more than 100 high level supporters including members of the European Parliament, national parliamentarians across political parties which aims at putting issues of democracy and gender equality high on the European political agenda, during elections' year 2014 and at progressing towards parity democracy in the new European Parliament and Commission 2014-2019 as well as in all European top political posts.

Parity democracy is not an issue for women only, it is a commitment towards a better society and better policies for all, women and men. It is also a step towards **a more legitimate European democracy, securing greater support from European citizens**. The current under-representation of women in most elected parliaments across Europe, including in the European Parliament (EP), is a serious democratic deficit. The average representation of women in European parliaments is 35% and in national governments 24%, increasing only slowly. It is more important than ever that decisions made by European Union institutions, including the EP, take into account the needs, interests and perspectives of every woman and man who is affected by European policy and legislation.

We therefore ask you to **speak out loud for gender equality** and to support our campaign, by signing our **Joint Declaration** on <http://paritydemocracy.eu/take-action> and becoming an **ambassador** for the 50/50 campaign. We already have the support of **Ivo Josipović, President** of the Republic of Croatia and of **Shirin Ebadi**, the Iranian Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. "There is no true democracy without equal participation of women in the decision-making process at key positions" said the Croatian President. If you think so, too become the face of gender equality in European politics, spread the word and underline the importance of this claim with your attention to it.

We very much hope that you will be able to become one of the high level supporters of the 50/50 Campaign and join this initiative for a more democratic and equal Europe!

Sincerely yours,
(Signature)

4. Information about the EWL 50/50 Campaign:

No Modern European Democracy Without Gender Equality

In 2012 and 2013, the EWL organised a number of events to continue its successful 50/50 Campaign No modern European Democracy without Gender Equality in Europe that was started for the 2009 European elections.

The overall aim of the 50/50 Campaign is to promote an active democratic citizenship and Parity Democracy in Europe. The specific aims are to promote the inclusion of issues related to social justice, human rights and gender equality in European policy-making, the active participation of women as voters and candidates in the European Parliament elections of 2014, as well as to ensure the equal representation of women and men in the European Parliament to be elected in 2014.

The EWL 50/50 Campaign will be led in EU member States through national EWL member's organisations on the ground. The websites womenlobby.org and paritydemocracy.eu, will be used for the dissemination of information material and for gathering public support from high level personalities from all walks of life and countries for the EWL 50/50 Campaign. The website serves as a tool for decision-makers at European and national level to commit

to concretely act for Parity Democracy to involve all European citizens, women and men, ahead of the elections in 2014.

The EWL 50/50 Campaign on Parity Democracy "No modern European Democracy without Gender Equality" was launched with a **Joint Declaration** and an event on the 25 October 2012 in Strasbourg where more than 50 Members of the European Parliament from five political groups and from all over the EU signed a 50/50 Declaration, calling on Member States, European political parties and the European Institutions to take action in order to achieve equal representation in European decision making. Today, more than 100 MEPs and more than 200 individual supporters signed it. Under these you will find 100 MP's from all over the world, a Nobel peace prize winner, the famous United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights Laureate Denis Mukwege, the President of the European Economic and Social Committee, Henri Malosse and the Croatian President Ivo Josipović. In March 2013, the 50/50 Campaign obtained further support through the presence and backing of Olli Rehn, Vice-President of the European Commission.

The 50/50 Campaign has already received the vital support and input from
a cross-party alliance of current members of European Parliament:

- European People's Party (EPP) – represented by Sirpa Pietikäinen, Finland
- Socialists and Democrats (S&D) – Zita Gurmai, Hungary
- Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in Europe (ALDE) – Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Finland
- Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) – Ulrike Lunacek, Austria
- European United Left (GUE/NGL) – Kartika Liotard, Netherlands

European Women's Lobby 50/50 Campaign: No Modern European Democracy without Gender Equality

It is time for concrete action!

You can sign and disseminate the Joint declaration for parity in all EU institutions and the EU "Top Jobs".

We call for all decision-makers, individuals and organisations interested in the promotion of democracy and justice to support this Campaign at all levels and across the boundaries of countries and political parties.

We call for immediate and long-term measures to ensure gender equality at both European and national levels to improve the functioning and quality of our political systems.

We therefore call upon:

- **All European and national political parties** to act immediately to ensure the realisation of gender equality in their nomination procedure ahead of the election of the European Parliament in May 2014 – for example through their electoral lists and in the drafting of their programmes .
- **Women and men in Europe** to seize the current opportunity to speak up and cast their vote in 2014 with a view to advancing democracy, gender equality and justice.
- **The EU Member States** to fulfil their commitments to democracy and gender equality by ensuring the equal representation of women among the top jobs at EU level to be appointed in 2014.
- **Civil society organisations and trade unions in Europe** to actively support this call within their networks by including a reference to gender equality in their manifestos for the European elections and in their contact with decision-makers.

part two:

Why Parity Democracy is important



1. What is Parity Democracy?

Parity Democracy is a concept aiming at:

- Acknowledging the equal dignity and value of persons of both sexes;
- Making our political system more democratic and just;
- Renewing social organisation in such a way that women and men equally share rights, responsibilities and power.

Parity Democracy implies the equal representation of women and men in decision-making positions. Both sexes should be represented whenever decisions are made that affect their lives. **Today, even if women have the same formal political rights as men, and even if some individual women hold high political positions, women as a group are too often excluded from decision-making positions.** It is mostly men who set the political priorities and decide on the spending of public money, and the political culture, including in Europe continues to be male dominated.

Women's presence in politics is also a standard indicator of the democracy of a society³. If more than half of the population is persistently under-represented in decision-making, the legitimacy and the functioning of the democratic system are put into question. Therefore Parity Democracy is a step towards a modern democracy. Introducing parity needs to be seen in the broader context of initiatives and measures to promote inclusive and participatory democracy and to increase the democratic legitimacy of political institutions, including at European

level. The realisation of Parity Democracy at EU level will underline the European values and Europe's commitment to equality.

A 30% representation of women is considered as the minimum critical mass needed in order for women representatives to be able to change the political culture, bring new issues to the agenda, and to act efficiently for women's rights⁴. But even this critical mass is not enough- we have reached a point where women often actively participate in decisions, but do not have enough counterbalance, to challenge the decisions representing a male dominated world. Therefore we need a balanced decision-making, which also represents Europe's reality.

Parity Democracy is not just about numbers, but also about improving the quality of policies.

Women also account for more than half of the talent and potential capacities of humanity, their under-representation in decision-making is a loss for all of society. The under-representation of women in decision-making also means that the legitimate interests, needs and expectations of society as a whole are not fully taken into account and leads to a waste of the public resources affected to these decisions. Finally, a balanced participation of women and men in decision-making can bring out different ideas, values and behaviors useful for the building of a more just and harmonious world for all, women and men.

³ Institute for democratic and electoral assistance 2002: Handbook on Democracy Assessment, Stockholm; IDEA.

⁴ This 30% threshold was already suggested by the UN Commission on the Status of Women during its 39th session (15 March-4 April 1995).

Why is Parity Democracy different from quotas?

The EWL defines the equal representation of women and men in political decision-making as a 50/50 representation of each sex in any decision-making body⁵. Although Parity Democracy implies setting a minimum for women's representation, it is conceptually different from quotas. Quotas can be seen as a temporary means used to protect the rights of a minority and ensure its participation in decision-making. Quotas are temporary tools to fix a bias, but parity goes a step further and it doesn't have a time limit because:

- 1) Parity concerns the **equal representation and power-sharing between women and men, for which quotas are one possible means**. Parity transforms concepts such as citizenship, equality universality, making political systems more democratic.
- 2) Unlike quotas, the concept of **Parity Democracy does not treat women as a minority** group within the dominant framework. Women represent more than half of the citizens, so they cannot be considered as a minority any more than men.
- 3) **Parity Democracy implies removing structural and cultural impediments for women's entry into decision-making**, such as adapting the working conditions of elected representatives to the demands of modern life, dissolving gender stereotypes, and changing electoral systems which are less favourable to women.

Arguments for Parity Democracy

Parity Democracy can be defended on four different grounds: i) arguments based on equality and justice; ii) arguments based

on democracy; iii) arguments based on the concrete benefits that women's increased participation would bring; and iv) arguments based on the idea of women's interests. Different arguments work in different political and cultural contexts, depending on how the issue of gender equality has been framed in political discussions in a given country.

1) The equal representation of women and men is a question of justice and equality between women and men

- The right to political participation is a fundamental human right for women and men and it needs to be concretely put into practice.
- EU member states have committed themselves to equality between women and men many times at international, European and national level.

2) The equal representation of women and men is an aspect of modern democracy

- Women's under-representation in politics is a serious democratic deficit and a threat to the legitimacy of our democratic systems. Parliaments are not fully inclusive of the opinions and perspectives of the population they represent unless women – more than half of the population – are equally represented.
- To develop policies which affect people's lives without their presence and without taking into account their opinion, perspectives and realities is not in line with the modern idea of democracy.

3) Equal representation improves policy making

- The inclusion of both sexes in policy making leads to more adequate decisions and to an allocation of public resources that better fit the needs of a diverse citizenry, heightening in turn public satisfaction with policy delivery.

⁵ The European Parliament resolution of 13 March 2012 on the equal participation of women and men in decision-making also recommends a 50/50 representation of women and men.

- Women's equal participation may lead to the introduction of new or neglected issues to the political agenda. For example, because women have been the ones most affected by issues of reconciliation of work and private life, and have not been present enough in decision-making, reconciliation has long been seen as a private issue rather than a problem to be tackled by the society.
- Including women to the field of politics may result in a new political culture, which can lead to better government and better conflict resolution.

4) Better representation of women's interests and perspectives

- Women as a group have some common needs and interests, i.e. related to sexual and reproductive rights or violence against women, that do not concern men to the same extent or in the same way.
- Women's and men's interests may conflict because of the gendered division of labour and uneven share of power.

Research on the Swedish example has shown that there is a connection between the sex of the MP and her/his pursuance of women's interests: issues on the agenda in national parliaments changed due to the increasing representation of women and more women were addressing issues of care and social policies as well as gender equality.⁶ Equal representation makes a difference⁷ and this conclusion can not only be found in Sweden, but also in other countries⁸.

The benefits of Parity Democracy

Benefits for the European Union

- Remedying the democratic deficit, the

under-presentation of women undermines the EU initiatives to bring the Union closer to women and men living in European societies and engage them in decision-making processes. It is also an obstacle to more adequate political decisions and a better allocation of the Union's resources.

- Gathering the support of European women for European integration. This requires more women involved at EU level and addressing all issues, including issues that are perceived as important for them and for the improvement of society as a whole.

Benefits for political parties

- Parity Democracy brings a renewal of people within political parties, including women, young people, people from under-represented groups, widening the perspectives and bringing new competences in order for them to be more representative of the citizens they are meant to represent.
- A renewal of the legitimacy of the parties and more specifically, an increase of support from women for their policies and their actions, as women may give more support to political parties that take their preoccupations into account and that ensure their participation and representation.

Benefits for European women

- Ensuring the visibility of women on the political field and thus contributing to the eradication of stereotypes and the realization of women's human rights
- Listening to women's voices on issues that concern society as a whole, such as economics, monetary affairs, foreign affairs, where mostly men's voices are heard in politics, the economic sector and media.
- Putting women's interests, needs and situations on the agenda of the European Union.

6 Marcia Grimes, Lena Wängnerud 2000 :. National Case Study Report Sweden: SEA Gothenburg and PM10, Gothenburg, Gothenburg.

7 Skeije 1993 on Norway, Squires and Wickham-Jones 2001 on Scotland, Stephenson 2001 Scotland.

8 Drude Dahlerup 2006: Women, Quotas and Politics, London, Routledge.

2. Suggested Answers to Arguments against Parity Democracy

Does Parity Democracy violate democratic principles? – No!

Some reject parity in the name of democracy. Measures to introduce parity are said to violate the key democratic principles of equality and universality; of each woman and man having equal value and equal rights in front of law and in politics. However, this idea of universality of democracy is based on abstract individualism, and voters and representatives are seen as deprived from all social attributes such as gender, class and race. This universalistic view of citizenship is also a historically-grounded idea, which emerged in the French revolution and was itself originally based on the exclusion of women. Universal citizenship is therefore a partial concept that under the guise of neutrality has served the purposes of dominant social groups.

This neglect of differences, which is still often understood as the basis of democracy and enshrined in different ways in our political systems means that the voice of women is suppressed by a political world monopolised by men, and women's full access to their political rights is denied. **True equality presupposes acknowledging and accepting difference.** Women and men face different realities and consequently have different problems, needs and interests. To ignore these differences is to favour the current unequal relations of power and thus to perpetuate inequality.

To be universal, **democracy must apply equally to all women and men and to**

members of discriminated or excluded groups. The critique of Parity Democracy in the name of universalism and equality reveals that these are still partial conceptions. Parity Democracy does not abandon the universality of democracy – on the contrary, by exposing its limits, parity extends the frame of the universal and the scope of the democratic principle of equality. As such parity contributes to more justice and democratic progress.

Is Parity Democracy contrary to the principle of freedom? – No!

In the name of freedom, some people criticize parity legislation and quotas on the pretext that it makes the State intervene unnecessarily in an area where free competition on the “best man (sic) wins” basis or voluntary self-regulation would be preferable. Parity Democracy is also accused of curbing the free choice of the electorate.

The problem here is that “natural” progress in the field of gender equality will not be enough to set aside centuries of historical unequal relations of power between women and men and to end the discrimination of women in the political world. Women who aspire to political office face numerous structural and cultural obstacles. In this context, parity legislation therefore creates the conditions for an equal starting point for women and men. In the event of injustice, it is the State who is best placed to implement measures in favour of a more just situation. Rather than waiting more centuries for hypothetical

equality in the political arena, citizens must take their fate into their own hands and take additional and decisive steps towards true equality between women and men.

As regards the “freedom” of the electorate, it is already circumscribed by other factors that are widely accepted as part of the democratic system, such as electoral systems which allow voters to choose the party but often not the representative, or the definition of electoral district which does not always reflect the number of inhabitants. It cannot be said that in a system where political parties choose and rank the candidates, often based on non-transparent and non-democratic procedures, it is the voter who has the freedom to choose. Therefore, a fair representation of women as well as other groups on candidate lists enhances rather than undermines the freedom of the electorate to choose candidates who represent them.

In a democratic society, freedom has to be defended, but it needs to be counterbalanced with promoting justice and equality and looking at whose freedom is actually protected. Freedom and equality sometimes contradict, but this is the very essence of democracy. Only by accepting the confrontation of the two key democratic values can we guarantee that our political system remains democratic.

Does Parity Democracy take into account merit? – Yes!

The argument that politicians should be elected based on their qualifications and not on the basis of their sex, or that it is shameful for women to be elected “because of” their sex, shows how women’s qualifications are downgraded in a male-dominated political world. Parity legislation serves to ensure that qualified women are in a position to

be elected to political (or other) mandates. Even beyond women’s engagement in politics, their engagement within civil society and high level of education, make women ideal candidates for positions of political responsibility. Women often face structural and cultural obstacles such as access to financial and other resources, the traditional division of paid and unpaid labour between men and women, and the prejudices of the political parties and voters, which make women’s political participation much more difficult, even with equal merit.

Merit, while being an essential criterion in the choice of an elected representative, must not be used in an often misleading way questioning the competences of women politicians, to avoid the question of representation and legitimacy. The equal political participation of women and men is a question of representation and is as such no more and no less legitimate as having rules for the number of representatives of each EU Member State in the European Parliament for example. In the same way, civil servants within the European Commission and other international institutions are chosen first on the basis of nationality, and secondly on the basis of their qualifications. Quotas based on nationality have never been seen as a problem for the voters or a cause of shame for those elected or employed, but as something which guarantees the legitimacy of the European institutions. Accordingly, women politicians elected in the framework of a parity system are chosen because they are competent and they have a lot to contribute to the political world, but also because they represent half of the population.

Does Parity Democracy promote a simplified view of women? – No!

Some oppose Parity Democracy as a limited idea that adopts a natural view of women

and their interests, and ignores the diversity of women. To support parity is not to say that women form a unified group with common interests which should be represented. On the contrary, it is only by increasing the number of women representatives that the diversity among women will be truly represented. Parity is therefore the very possibility to get this diversity of perspectives and interests represented

and heard. The EWL underlines this with its Political Mentoring Network, promoting women with a minority background in view of the European elections 2014. The network aims at increasing not only the number of women inside the European Parliament, but leading attention also to their different backgrounds and ethnicities: Europe is diversity and this fact should therefore be represented in its parliament.

3. Women in political decision-making in Europe in numbers

European Parliament: women and men elected by EU Member State⁹

Member State	Seats	Women	Men	Women %	Men %
1. Finland	13	8	5	62%	38%
2. Croatia	12	6	6	50%	50%
2. Slovenia	8	4	4	50%	50%
2. Malta	6	3	3	50%	50%
2. Estonia	6	3	3	50%	50%
3. France	74	34	40	46%	54%
3. Netherlands	26	12	14	46%	54%
3. Denmark	13	6	7	46%	54%
4. Sweden	20	9	11	45%	55%
5. Ireland	12	5	7	42%	58%
6. Portugal	22	9	13	41%	59%
6. Spain	54	22	32	41%	59%
7. Germany	99	38	61	38%	62%
7. Slovakia	13	5	8	38%	62%
8. Hungary	22	8	14	36%	64%
8. Romania	33	12	21	36%	64%
9. Lithuania	12	4	8	33%	67%
9. Bulgaria	18	6	12	33%	67%

⁹ Situation as of June 2013, European Commission 2013: Women and Men in leadership positions in the European Union, A review of the situation and recent progress, Brussels.

Member State	Seats	Women	Men	Women %	Men %
9. Latvia	9	3	6	33%	67%
9. Cyprus	6	2	4	33%	67%
10. UK	73	23	50	32%	68%
10. Belgium	22	7	15	32%	68%
10. Greece	22	7	15	32%	68%
10. Austria	19	6	13	32%	68%
21. Italy	73	17	56	23%	77%
12. Poland	51	11	40	22%	78%
13. Czech Rep.	22	4	18	18%	82%
14. Luxembourg	6	1	5	17%	83%
Total:	766	281	485	36%	64%

Women and men in the European Parliament by political group¹⁰

Political group	Seats	Seats %	Women	Men	Women %	Men %	Women as Chair
Group of the European People's Party (Christian democrats) and European Democrats (EPP-ED)	274	22,57%	92	182	33,57%	66,43%	
Progressive Alliance of Socialist and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D)	195	15,98%	86	109	44,10%	55,9%	
Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)	85	7%	36	49	42,35%	57,65%	
European Conservatives and Reformists Group	56	4,61%	13	43	23,21%	76,79%	
Group of the Greens/EFA	58	4,7%	28	30	48,27%	51,73%	Yes
Confederal Group of the European United Left / Nordic Green Left (GUE/ NGL)	35	2,88%	11	24	31,42%	68,58%	
European of freedom and democracy Group	32	2,64%	2	30	33,57%	66,43%	
Not Affiliated	31	2,55%	7	24	43,81%	56,19%	
Total	766	100 %	275	491	35,73%	64,27%	

¹⁰ Situation as of October 2013, www.europarl.europa.eu

Women in single or lower houses of national parliaments in EU member states and accession countries¹¹

Country	Seats	Women	Men	Women %	Men %
1. Sweden	349	197	152	44%	56%
2. Finland	200	86	114	43%	57%
3. Denmark	182	72	110	40%	60%
4. Spain	350	140	210	40%	60%
5. Netherlands	150	58	92	39%	61%
6. Belgium	149	58	91	39%	61%
7. FYR of Macedonia	123	42	81	34%	66%
8. Slovenia	90	31	59	34%	66%
9. Germany	620	206	414	33%	67%
10. Serbia	250	83	167	33%	67%
11. Italy	630	198	432	31%	69%
12. Portugal	230	69	161	30%	70%
13. Austria	183	53	130	29%	71%
14. France	574	150	424	26%	74%
15. Croatia	150	39	111	26%	74%
16. Poland	460	110	350	24%	76%
17. Lithuania	141	34	107	24%	76%
18. UK	650	147	503	23%	77%
19. Bulgaria	240	55	185	23%	77%
20. Latvia	100	23	77	23%	77%
21. Czech Rep.	200	43	157	22%	78%
22. Luxembourg	60	13	47	22%	78%
23. Greece	300	63	237	21%	79%
24. Estonia	101	21	80	21%	79%
25. Slovakia	150	28	122	19%	81%
26. Ireland	166	26	140	16%	84%
27. Turkey	548	79	469	14%	86%
28. Malta	70	10	60	14%	86%
29. Romania	412	55	357	13%	87%
30. Cyprus	56	7	49	13%	87%
31. Hungary	386	36	350	9%	91%
Total				27%	73%

¹¹ EU accession countries in italics, situation as of June 2013, European Commission 2013: Women and Men in leadership positions in the European Union, A review of the situation and recent progress, Brussels.

4. Existing provisions and measures for the promotion of gender equality in decision-making

Provisions at the International and European level

At the international level, the equal participation of women and men in decision is seen as a fundamental basis of democracy and social justice and has been strongly promoted. Equal representation in politics is one of the twelve critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and is referred to in articles 7 and 8 of the 1979 legally binding United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The Council of Europe has done some interesting work on women in decision-making and Parity Democracy. A Recommendation on the equal participation of women and men in political and public decision making was adopted in 2003¹². The recommendation on gender equality standards and mechanisms adopted in November 2007¹³ lists elements which can be used to evaluate whether governments are committed in achieving equal participation of women and men. In Recommendation 1899(2010), called 'Increasing women's representation in politics through the electoral system', the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe encourages its member states

to increase women's representation by introducing quotas. These are not binding pieces of legislation but **are strong political recommendations self-endorsed by all Member States of the Council of Europe.**

At the European Union level, there is no binding provision for the realisation of equality between women and men in political decision-making.

On the issue of women in economic decision-making, this could change soon. The European Commission proposed a directive to improve the gender balance on European company boards until 2020 with an objective of 40%. Figures show that currently women account for just 16.6%, or one in six, of board members of the largest publicly listed companies in the EU-27 and that this number increases only slowly. Presently it is up to the European Parliament and the European Council to adopt this measure. If adopted, even though not binding for all companies in Europe, it will be a very good first step in the right direction, showing the commitment of the EU and its Member States to gender equality, justice and democracy.

The EU institutions have also adopted non-binding texts relative to gender equality in decision-making notably for example:

- The European Parliament resolution on

¹² REC (2003) 3

¹³ CM/Rec (2007) 17

women in decision-making of 2 March 2000 endorses the use of transitional quotas as a measure to bring more women into decision-making.

- The Lisbon Treaty is not only giving legislative force to the Charter of Fundamental Rights, including one whole Chapter on Equality, but is also reaffirming the aim for equality between women and men in its article 2 and 3 in all areas.
- The Women's Charter, adopted in 2010 by the European Commission, underlines the need for equal representation in decision making in order to shape more effective policies, develop a gender-aware knowledge-based society, and create a stronger and more prosperous democracy.
- The EU Strategy for Equality between Women (2010-2015) states as one of its priorities equality between women and men in decision-making, but concentrates foremost on economic decision-making.

National commitments to advance women in decision making

The analysis of the constitutions of the Member States of the European Union shows that the great majority of the countries which have a written constitution have either a non-discrimination provision which includes discrimination on the grounds of sex, or specific provision on gender equality. The Treaty of Lisbon defines equality between women and men as a value and an objective of the EU, defines gender mainstreaming in all areas as a horizontal principle, but gives in article 157¹⁴ the possibility of the EU and Member State to establish equality between women and men with the means of positive action.

In most EU Member States some political parties have adopted voluntary party

quotas¹⁴. However, while a system of non-legally binding quotas has proved effective in some political parties and in some countries, their partial success makes it all the more necessary that the EU member states would prove their commitment to combat inequalities between women and men through introducing binding legislation. Only legally binding quotas can be efficiently enforced and ensure continuity.

But a growing number of countries in Europe and beyond have adopted parity legislation or quotas for political decision making. In the European Union Belgium, Greece, Spain, Ireland, France, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia adopted also legal ones. The female representation inside their national parliament increased rapidly since then¹⁵. Two accession candidate countries, Serbia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, have adopted 30-33% quotas, too.

A number of European countries in Europe have also taken measures to ensure more equality in economic decision-making. Italy, France, Iceland, Belgium, The Netherlands, Spain and Norway do have quota legislation in place. Other countries only have corporate governance codes, like Germany, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Austria, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom and Poland. While in countries with these codes increased the percentage of women on company boards between 2003 and 2012 by 7%, the countries having a quota in place did during the same time increase by 16%. Countries without any of these systems increased by only 1%.¹⁶ We can therefore conclude that

14 See Global Database for Quotas for Women with information on voluntary party quotas in each country. www.quotaproject.org

15 Drude Dahlerup 2006: Women, Quotas and Politics, London, Routledge.

16 http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/factsheet-general-2_en.pdf

the most significant progress with regard to equality over recent years has occurred in countries where binding legislation has been adopted, such as France, the Netherlands and Italy, or where there has been an extensive public and media debate due to corporate governance codes, such as Germany and the UK.

More information about parity legislation / quotas in the world

A database provides information on the various types of quotas in existence today, detailing the percentages and targets in countries worldwide, see: <http://www.quotaproject.org/>



5. Measures recommended by the EWL to improve the situation

General measures to increase the representation of women in politics

Increasing women's representation in political decision-making is linked to **promoting better policies for the reconciliation of work and private life for both women and men** and encouraging men to do more unpaid care work at home. Women still carry a disproportionate share of domestic and care work, and many may prefer not to run for an office considering that being an MP for example might turn the double work burden to a triple one. The working schedules in most elected assemblies are a proof of the assumption that those who participate in politics do not have family responsibilities, which is an obvious disadvantage for women. It would be therefore also important to **change the internal rules of the parliamentary assemblies** in order to make the schedules friendlier for those with caring responsibilities. This would help to change stereotypes, too, and lead to more men taking over care work and caring responsibilities.

Women as a group also have fewer **financial and other resources** as demonstrated by the persistent gender pay gap (16.2% in the EU on average) and gender pension gaps (39% in the EU on average) in Europe. Political parties can help to break some of these socio-economic obstacles by actively supporting and encouraging women aspirants and candidates, giving them financial resources, training, and equal access to media and political networks.

Introduction of parity legislation/quotas

The most common and effective way to implement the commitments to parity in practice has been the **introduction of electoral quotas for women**. These may be constitutional, legislative or a take the form of a voluntary political party quota. They may apply to the number of women candidates proposed by a party for election (nomination), or may take the form of reserved seats in the legislature (results-based quota).

Eight member states of the European Union have stipulations in the **electoral law or in the constitution** which introduce parity measure in order to increase women's representation or to attain Parity Democracy (Belgium, Greece, Spain, Ireland, France, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia).

When introducing parity legislation it is essential to assess which type of system is most adapted to the political system in the country¹⁷ and to introduce effective sanctions for non-compliance.

Reforms of the electoral system can have a significant effect on women's representation. Proportional representation systems are in general more favourable for women as well as for other discriminated social groups than plurality/majority systems. Also the size of the political parties and the size of the electoral districts have an impact on women's access to elected assemblies. The bigger the parties and the bigger the electoral districts, the more women are generally elected. Open lists are more favourable for women, but closed lists are better for the efficient introduction of rank order quotas (zipper system).¹⁸

How to implement effective quota/parity provisions?

The success of a quota system depends first of all on **the combination of the electoral system and the type of quota**. Result-based quotas work in all electoral systems, but quotas applied in the nomination process are most likely to have a positive outcome in proportional representation systems. Also

the size of the electoral district, the size of the party, the general attitude of the voters towards women, and the ballot structure (whether the party or the voters decide the order of the candidates within the party list) have impact on the representation of women.¹⁹ The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) has put together a useful country table on best-fit quota systems according to the national electoral system²⁰.

Secondly whether a quota/parity system reaches its objective **depends largely on implementation, monitoring and effective sanctions**. Constitutional amendments and electoral laws providing gender quotas may not be more productive than voluntary political party quotas in increasing the number of women in parliament, if there are no effective **sanctions for non-compliance**. For example, the French election law only imposes a financial penalty in case of non-compliance of the parity principle for elections to the national assembly: the public funding that a party receives from the state will be reduced if the deviation from parity reaches 2% among electoral candidates and political parties often choose to receive less funding rather than implement parity - after 13 years of parity law in France, men still represent 74% of MPs! On the other hand, for municipal and European elections in France, the parity system has obtained better results (46% women among French members of the European Parliament), because lists which do not comply with the parity requirements cannot be registered.²¹

17 Stina Larren & Rita Taphorn 2007: Designing for Equality. Best-fit, medium fit and non-favourable combinations of electoral systems and gender quotas. International Institute for Democracy and electoral assistance

18 European Parliament Directorate-General for Internal Policies 2013: Electoral gender Quota Systems and their Implementation in Europe, Update 2013, Brussels.

19 Stina Larren & Rita Taphorn 2007: Designing for Equality. Best-fit, medium fit and non-favourable combinations of electoral systems and gender quotas. International Institute for Democracy and electoral assistance, p.27

20 http://www.idea.int/publications/designing_for_equality/dyntable.cfm

21 Global Database of Quotas for Women, www.quotaproject.org

If the quota or parity provision is adopted voluntarily by the political party, no sanctions will apply. In these cases it is of importance that there is high level political will within the party to reach the goal and that **active policies to increase women's representation are implemented and the results monitored.**

Crucial for the effectiveness of both legislative and voluntary quotas and parity provisions in countries which use closed lists is the introduction of **rules concerning the rank order on the candidate list.** A requirement of 50 percent women on the lists may not result in any women elected, if all women candidates are placed at the bottom of the list. The women nominated as candidates should be placed in positions with a real chance to get elected, using the zipper system (one woman/one man).

Other measures to reach parity

Quotas and other above mentioned measures to increase women's participation may leave the elected women relatively powerless, unless other factors are changed. Indeed, such measures may increase women's political presence in quantitative terms, but other measures are needed to ensure that women have a voice and that they are considered as representatives of equal status than their male colleagues within the parties as well as within the elected assemblies. As standards and

ways of working of political parties and elected assemblies have been organised around the male model, they need to be changed - this is something that can be achieved only by increasing women's presence.

The European Political Mentoring Network- a measure to reach diversity

Women from ethnic minorities are an underrepresented group in European political assemblies, and they often suffer from a combination of gendered and ethnic forms of political exclusion. Special measures are needed to redress this problem. To better promote young women's participation in political and public life in the EWL decided to start a mentoring programme which provides adequate training and exchanges as an effective and innovative method.

From January 2013 to the European elections in May 2014, the EPMN will connect 9 women MEPs (the mentors) with 9 women from a migrant or ethnic minority background and different political parties, who are interested in running for the 2014 European elections (the mentees).

The mentoring network is the first of its kind at European level and it is inspired by a political mentoring programme developed by our project partner KVINFO in Denmark.



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BE PART OF THE CHANGE!

from left to right: Dr. Denis Mukwege, UN Human Rights Prize Laureate; Isabelle Durant, Member of European Parliament; Shirin Ebadi, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; Henri Malosse, President of the European Economic and Social Committee; Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, Former Prime Minister of Iceland; Pascal Lamy, Former Director General of the World Trade Organization; Louis Michel, Member of the European Parliament





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