

Women – Men – Gender

2007 / 2008

Gender and women's policy
in the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung



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Foreword by Anke Fuchs

Chairperson, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

There is a tradition behind this report compiled by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung on its activities and projects in the field of gender and women's policy. We have been reporting on these activities for a few years now, not only in the Foundation's annual report that covers all important fields of activity, but also in a publication dedicated specifically to this subject. In this way, we underline the socio-political importance of gender justice in the Foundation's work.

Gender justice is more than just 'women's advancement', although this remains indispensable. In our education, dialogue and consultancy programmes, we apply the gender relations perspective in all policy fields and all subject areas in an attempt to guarantee that women and men, girls and boys have equal opportunities to participate fully in shaping society. In 2007, we reported on these activities in detail: over a period of several months, all the Foundation's departments provided online information about projects related to gender and women's policy, work lines, publications and events. Several thousand people visited the online portal (Focus) and learned about the thematic blocks, which changed every three weeks; each block encompassed dozens of individual activities.

The focus 'Women-Men-Gender' has also given a new name to this annual report. The title is a

concrete description of the stakeholders, partners and strategies in this policy field and thus conveys something of the mood, enthusiasm and spirit of the conferences and debates organised and promoted by FES worldwide. The following pages provide further information. Of course we must limit ourselves to only a small selection of the events, research projects and publications from Germany and abroad. But however different the themes, places, participants and methods may be, they share the same motives and goals, namely democratic participation, social justice and equal opportunity.

To implement a sustainable policy, it is necessary to draw on the knowledge, insights and experiences of both women and men, while also taking cognisance of their differing interests and needs. We therefore support women in their endeavours to enter politics or to work their way up to management level in institutions.

Women's advancement and gender mainstreaming have long been concrete, practical points of reference within the Foundation itself and in its projects across the world. Gender mainstreaming is a method of integrating aspects of gender in every phase of work, and of evaluating the outcomes from this perspective. This represents an additional and specific form of women's advancement that aims at a more targeted promotion of

genuine equality and equal rights throughout society and in all walks of life. FES understands gender mainstreaming as giving due consideration to the different needs and interests of women and men, analysing gender-specific political impacts, initiating equalising mechanisms and working towards ensuring women's participation at all levels.

In its gender-related work at international level, FES prioritises activities that focus on women's rights and participation. To empower women across the world to be active in political processes and successful in political positions is, after all, one of the Foundation's paramount concerns. All FES offices in Germany organise seminars and dialogue events covering a broad spectrum of themes. They offer information exchange and networking opportunities for the discussion of equal opportunity, social relations between the sexes and action plans.

The reports on the Foundation's work worldwide, the diversity of themes and perspectives and the introductory remarks by influential partners from politics, academia and trade unions that precede the individual chapters are testimony to the broad spectrum of our work on 'Women-Men-Gender'. We hope this publication will continue to arouse interest and further the commitment to this subject.

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Women – Men – Gender



The worlds of women and of men seem gradually to be getting closer. The number of influential women in politics and society is increasing and their presence no longer raises eyebrows but is taken for granted. Conversely, a surprisingly large number of young fathers are opting for statutory parental leave. Migrant women are speaking up against being reduced to headscarves and forced marriages. Particularly in developing and emerging countries there are functioning networks for women in which gender justice is respected. Some of the credit for this can go to FES, which has been actively promoting this kind of grassroots work for many years. Across the world, constitutions, legislation and agreements are now based on the demands for equality and gender justice. Something that men actively opposed for many years because they perceived their positions of power to be under threat is now increasingly becoming a matter of course.



Marie Juchacz, (1879–1956)
Founder of Workers' Welfare
(Arbeiterwohlfahrt)

This is one side of the coin. The other side is not quite so bright, neither in Germany nor elsewhere: women continue to earn less than men, even if the pay gap is not as wide as it once was. The upper echelons of business continue to be almost exclusively a male preserve. As before, the natural desire of young women to combine job satisfaction with a family life translates into an exhausting balancing act. As before, mothers, more than fathers, resign themselves to the incompatibility of family and career. They must curtail or temporarily stop work. Meanwhile, they are superseded by men. A vicious cycle sets in, with familiar consequences: lower income, precarious jobs despite good qualifications, fewer career opportunities, lower old-age pensions and a higher risk of poverty – more so when their relationships with their partners fail. Single mothers and their children continue to fall into the poverty trap, as child care is inadequate and companies still consider it risky to employ a mother. Therefore the subject of discrimination in professional life and patchwork careers with all their material consequences will probably continue to figure on the FES agenda for some time to come. Professor Heide Pfarr, Scientific Director at the Hans Böckler Foundation, makes some vital comments in this regard in the chapter Work and Society (page 14).

Women around the globe have similar complaints and demands when it comes to political involvement and having a say in shaping social life. Journalists in Shanghai are as critical as women in Berlin or Brussels; trade unionists in South Asia are as impatient as politicians in Africa. In many countries, women continue to be oppressed simply because they

are women. As girls, they have less access to education than their brothers. In countries where the Koran is law, the education of girls is actively opposed – and not only in Afghanistan or Iraq. The lack of access to education, however, makes it difficult for women to rally against miserable working conditions or oppression in everyday life. Today, in the era of globalisation, a women's movement advocating international solidarity is as necessary as it was a hundred years ago. At that time a powerful women's movement in Europe rebelled against the slave-like existence of many women who were exploited as agricultural workers, domestic helpers and factory workers. In the face of stiff political resistance, women managed, with the help of the trade unions, to win rights in the work place, access to education and, finally, political equality. The world has grown smaller and the fate of women in Bangladesh, China or Latin America has been brought closer to home. While the exploitation of women who sew for a living in the Far East may provide us with cheap blouses, it puts our own jobs at risk. The link between exploitation, discrimination and women being denied political participation is discussed and highlighted in FES offices around the world. In innumerable seminars women are trained and encouraged to participate in political life at all levels. Yet this is possible only if they have the means to ensure their own survival and that of their children. Development cooperation can take the pragmatic route and set a new course, for instance by granting micro credits to women and so empowering them to take a step towards independence. Ingrid Matthäus-Maier, head of the KfW (German Financial Cooperation), believes that giving women money in hand is a particularly successful model because women, in contrast to men, invest primarily in the health and education of their children.

But there is enough to do on one's own doorstep, which is why gender budgeting is frequently discussed at events and seminars organised by FES offices in different German states. Just distribution can be ensured only if one is familiar with budget planning. Only if one can read a public budget can one successfully counter a male majority when it claims that there is no more money for child-care centres, school renovation or a swimming pool.

Public events with women politicians can be understood as 'be brave and join in' projects that take a stand against depoliticisation and indifference. Some younger women who despair of rigid political structures may therefore be relieved to hear of the struggles of older women and to



Edelgard Bulmahn, Member of the German Parliament, Federal Minister for Education and Research (retired)



RECOMMENDED READING



Taschengeld für Mutter oder Krippenplatz fürs Kind? Eine Genderanalyse zum Betreuungsgeld, Barbara Stiegler/ Katharina Oerder. Bonn FES, 2007, ISBN 978-3-89892-848-9



Iris Radisch in conversation with FES (p. 67)

know that in the end it is all worthwhile, that progress is possible. In this area, too, it is now perfectly normal for gender justice to be the focus of discussion. Women are not alone in feeling that they are unable to fully exploit their options. It is no different with men, as we have seen in FES events at which the father image is analysed. Men would also like to be more involved. While women yearn to break out, many men want to shake off the classic role of the absent family provider. Within these private spheres there is an astonishing receptiveness to change. The chapter Politics and Participation (page 28) deals with this subject in greater detail.

Violence is a multi-faceted theme. It still occurs primarily within families, even behind the facade of respectable bourgeois homes. The childhoods of many boys and girls have been overshadowed by experiences of violence. It is estimated that 25 per cent of all women have been physically and sexually abused by their partners. Violence is an issue in many migrant families in which little regard is paid to wives, daughters or sisters, for whom life is difficult because of the man's traditional sense of honour. Violence against women and children is also a tool used in war-like conflicts and in civil wars with the specific intention of demoralising the opponent. Violence against women is manifested in genital mutilation in Africa, or when a woman is infected with AIDS because of her husband's refusal to use condoms. Violence against women is the targeted abortion of female fetuses. But violence against women is also climate change, caused primarily by industrialised nations. For it is the women who try to raise children in the poorest countries, only to see them die in famines, or because they have drunk contaminated water, or are victims of the increasingly frequent and calamitous natural disasters.

In many of the world's conflict zones, FES support is targeted primarily at women so that they can be integrated more into civil conflict management. The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission and the European Union's (EU) gender mainstreaming concept now boast successful approaches and in future women are to play a more active role in peacekeeping operations, for example in setting up civil organisations. It is equally important, however, that they are involved in conflict prevention. As women in conflict zones are usually responsible for ensuring that daily life is not disrupted, they have a sixth sense for the possibility of new conflicts brewing. Herta Däubler-Gmelin, chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee for Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid, said:

'Women could, if one would only listen to them, be effective early warning systems.' You can read more on violence and conflict behind closed doors and in the crisis regions [on page 42](#).

When immigration and integration are discussed it is usually in terms of key words such as violence, refusal to attend school, ghetto formation, Islamism and archaic cultural behaviour. The fact that most migrants in Germany (a good 15 per cent of the population) keep a low profile, that their working careers are on the rise, that only the names still sound foreign, is often overlooked. Without trying to gloss over the problems, FES repeatedly addresses this side of migration, for instance with questions such as 'Typically Turkish – is there still such a thing?' But the subject of migration is not exclusive to Germany; it is a component of the Foundation's international work. For years the worldwide feminisation of migration has been the subject of discourse – also from the gender perspective – and the role of religions has been analysed. The focal point is always the views of the migrants themselves. For more detailed information on this subject, please refer to Integration and Cohesion [on page 50](#).

Education and training will determine the fate of the Federal Republic of Germany. The country's only valuable 'raw material' is the next generation. A country with an economy dependent on the knowledge of its citizens cannot afford to squander talent or continue to allow children to drop out of school with no prospect of further education. This is as true of children from migrant families as it is of German children with problematic backgrounds. They all need state support in the form of early child care in kindergartens, and in the form of schools that address their special needs. A relatively new subject (and pro-actively addressed by FES) is boys falling behind in the school system.

The situation in developing and emerging countries differs dramatically from that in industrialised nations. Attending school is considered a privilege, especially for girls, which is why it is so important to train multipliers in respect of education for women and girls. FES is active in this field in several countries and has had remarkable success. You can read more about this [on page 58](#).



Herta Däubler-Gmelin,
Member of the German Parliament,
Federal Minister of Justice (retd)



Dr Barbara Stiegler



Dr Barbara Stiegler, head of Women's and Gender Issues, Department of Economic and Social Policy, FES

The year 2007 was the European Year of Equal Opportunity. In Germany, the Federal Equal Treatment Act (*Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz [AGG]*) was just one year old and instrumental in moulding the debate. It often seemed as if the struggle against anti-discrimination was the be-all and end-all of all efforts to achieve equality, and 'managing diversity' was considered the most important strategy of all because it encompassed all aspects of discrimination: sex, ethnic origin, religion or *Weltanschauung*, handicap, age or sexual orientation. There was little talk of gender mainstreaming or women's advancement. Based on the example of gender policy, we will review the potential of the different strategies because gender policy can look back on the longest and most extensive range of experiences. In other words, this provides an opportunity to learn lessons that could be applied to the politics of equality for other discriminated groups.

Anti-discrimination

First hurdle: Sexism as a cause is not considered.

Direct and indirect discrimination are based, inter alia, on prejudice, gender-related role expectations and common beliefs. In the case of gender-based discrimination, the person who discriminates harbours sexist concepts. But while little importance is attached to these concepts, the impact of sexism attracts far more attention. The same applies to racism, youth cultures, hostility towards the disabled, homophobia and religions claiming the right to sole representation. These mindsets are not directly addressed by the anti-discrimination strategy.

Second hurdle: The priority is individual discrimination.

Each anti-discrimination strategy initially targets equal treatment for individuals, particular men or women. After all, one's gender should in no way influence certain decisions. The question here concerns behaviour that leads to marginalisation and inequality. With the legal form of indirect discrimination, anti-discrimination policy sets new priorities: the spotlight is on efficiency control as regards regulations that differentiate between gender-based circumstances. In other words, an anti-discrimination strategy covers the individual as well as the group, but priority is always given to the individual case that is the cause and basis of the complaint.

Strategies for equal opportunity – where do we stand today?

An anti-discrimination policy does not seek to abolish power and authority in gender relations. Nor does it demand that women and men perform the same work. This is also true of other groups: anti-discrimination policies do not imply granting the disabled so many resources that social handicaps are abolished. Such policies do not imply that the elderly have a right to a good life independent of their socio-economic status. They do not imply that migrants would be welcome and given all possible forms of assistance. It is more a matter of ensuring that legal systems, such as labour law or civil law, do not discriminate against people and groups of people with particular traits. Anti-discrimination is therefore only a strategy to prevent unequal treatment; it is reactive and relates primarily to individual cases.

Advancement of women/quotas

Women's advancement starts elsewhere. It attempts to tackle structural deficits through the collective promotion of women and the development of corrective programmes, and is a direct compensatory intervention in the interest of a group of women.

The advancement of women has been legally institutionalised, at least in the German public sector. To start with, women's advancement is based on an analysis and evaluation of the differences between the sexes. What follows is direct action or direct regulation in an effort to overcome discrimination. Activities targeting the advancement of women are strategies that aim to undo existing discrimination and the exclusion of women on the grounds of their sex and gender roles. The consistent advancement of women means that sex is ceasing to play a role as regards employment, work conditions and remuneration. For women to be equal, a direct 'preference' is usually required; on closer examination, this amounts to no more than women 'catching up' with the opportunities they have been deprived of vis-à-vis men. Quotas determine the number of positions reserved for men and women, respectively. Special measures are necessary for women in certain life situations, as long as the different and hierarchical gender relations continue to have a significant impact. In other words, the advancement of women is based on and designed according



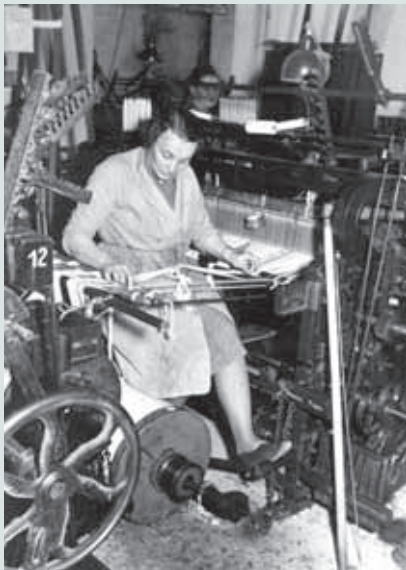
The consistent advancement of women implies that sex is ceasing to play a role as regards employment, work conditions and remuneration.



to the target group; it bears on the planning and implementation of activities. For other discriminated groups similar advancement strategies are still in their infancy.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the most complete instrument for achieving gender-policy goals. Standards are extremely high and as yet are rarely met. Gender mainstreaming is not confined to pilot projects or to introducing check lists. It must be implemented in organisations that are politically involved in the broadest sense – ministries, public authorities, local administrative units, associations, societies and trade unions, as well as schools, colleges or adult education centres. In the wider sense all these organisations are democratically managed and controlled. They shape living conditions and regulate gender relations, whether directly or indirectly. Action can and should be taken by the individuals in leading positions, as well as by female staff members themselves.



Gender mainstreaming is a principle for bringing about change in decision-making processes. It is implemented top-down, but accomplished bottom-up. The goal is to create equal opportunity or gender equality by analysing all fields of work. Gender analysis is the key element and the focus is on culturally and socially determined gender relations that are constantly re-created. One questions the specific reinforcements of gender-based connotations with regard to certain lifestyles and ways of working, which in turn do not necessarily have to be adopted by every man and woman. The differences between the sexes are facilely attributed to biological causes and we mistakenly accept natural causes for existing gender relations. In contrast, gender analyses turn their attention to mechanisms comprising certain culture-based rules for men and women. The change in perspective constitutes the core of gender analysis.

Not only are the differences between groups of men and women studied, but also the manner in which these differences are created and how structures and mechanisms, the effects of which are known, can contribute. In other words, a gender analysis asks about 'doing gender' in an organisation and its output.

Gender mainstreaming is the most far-reaching of strategies as it undertakes socio-political analyses in all fields. In a cross-section, the impacts of all structures are analysed even if there is no concrete example of unequal treatment meted out to a person or of a personal deficit experience. Framework conditions are analysed and modified if they are to the disadvantage of groups or individuals. Mainstreaming strategies have hitherto been applied most frequently to achieve gender-policy objectives but can also be applied to all other discriminated groups.

Since the mid-1980s, the advancement of women at national and international level has been a priority area at FES. The concept of gender mainstreaming was established during the 1990s. To review how this is manifested in the everyday workings of the Foundation, a seminar will be held for interested staff members in September 2008. Subjects such as gender budgeting and diversity management will be on the agenda. Projects will be used to illustrate implementation and exchange experiences.



Michèle Bachelet,
President of Chile:

'If a woman enters politics alone, she changes; if many women enter politics, politics changes and there is no doubt that one of the challenges and needs of democracy is to improve the quality of politics.'



Work and Society

RECOMMENDED READING



The unemployment rate is falling. For the first time in many years, more people are in work. The number of gainfully employed women is rising; people who lived on state welfare for a long time now earn money and pay social security. At first glance, a positive picture; at second glance, no longer, because two thirds of all unpaid work – housework, child care, looking after the elderly and the sick – continues to be done by women. Hence by the time they retire, their untiring work in many areas notwithstanding, they have managed an average of only 42 per cent of a man's earnings – and their pensions are correspondingly low. Women worldwide account for 10 per cent of income, a figure that has remained unchanged over the years; their share of wealth is a mere 1 per cent. Gender inequality is an ongoing theme at FES conferences, workshops and seminars.





In conversation with Professor Heide Pfarr

Scientific Director, Hans Böckler Foundation

FES: Women in work are on the rise. Is this also true of full-time work that requires qualified staff?

Pfarr: No, the figures are deceptive. While it is true that there are more women with jobs, and even more mothers, the volume of paid work done by women has either registered a negligible increase or not increased at all. It is simply spread among more women. Nevertheless, the rise in the number of gainfully employed women should be welcomed as a start because a little gainful employment is better than no employment at all.

FES: Do we find too many women working in mini-jobs or for hand-to-mouth wages?

Pfarr: Exactly. The percentage of women in the group of low earners is far above average, and not because they are less qualified.

FES: Are women who have children and are looking for skilled work with family-friendly working time arrangements still discriminated against?

Pfarr: Yes. In fact they are likely to be hired only if a man cannot be found for the job. Or in the handful of companies that genuinely pursue equality and don't just proclaim it.

FES: Is there still a lack of women role models in business and in trade unions, who have made it right to the top?

Pfarr: There has been a marked increase in the number. But for role models we need many women, also women with different lives and different work.

FES: What about old-age care for women? Experts fear the emergence of a new poverty among old women in the future?

Pfarr: Given the fact that their careers are disrupted, they earn less and there is definite salary discrimination, women will face old-age poverty.

FES: Women continue to be largely responsible for children, the household and caring for the sick and the elderly, even if they work full-time. Is anything changing, improving here? Is there a change in attitude among younger men?

Pfarr: Yes, but much too little and it is extremely class-specific. 'New fathers' are found mainly among the better educated. That gives cause for hope, but there are still too few.

FES: What advice would you give a young woman today who would like to have a family? Can she afford to give up her job for an extended period?

Pfarr: Keep it as short as possible! Never lose touch with paid work! Make use of laws that allow you to adjust work volume and times! And choose partners later, insisting that you expect them to behave as partners and fathers.

Claudia Menne

Head of the Department for Gender Equality and Women's Policy at the German Trade Union Federation



Are we already having to contend with a lack of skilled workers or not yet?

Various institutes are already arguing about this question. There are definitely bottlenecks, above all in electrical engineering, engineering and industrial engineering. Yet even in these sectors a total of 13,000 unemployed people – mainly older people and women – are looking for a job. Unemployment among women engineers is more than twice as high as that of their male colleagues and the shortage of skilled workers currently makes little difference to overall unemployment. The main cause is the discrepancy between the qualifications in demand in the labour market and those that are available. We therefore need to develop and expand education once again.



This includes:

- early basic technical education;
- a solid knowledge base for all citizens, for example, by systematically introducing all young people to technical questions and problems in school and within the framework of their education;
- further technical education in combination with advice on further training and education.

However, high female unemployment in engineering is also explained by the lack of adequate child care, work conditions that do not allow for family time and a male-dominated culture. Giving more publicity to successful women in the field of technology and technical development (in addition to Girls' Day) could be useful in enabling girls and boys to recognise women role models.

To counter the shortage of qualified workers, the government intends to recruit trained foreign workers. Since November 2007, it has been easier for engineers from the 12 new EU countries to acquire a work permit for Germany. But

the fundamental problem of the German educational system – its extremely selective nature – is left untouched.

Furthermore, it is not a matter of course that women will be able to capitalise on the shortage of qualified workers because this shortage gives them a position of strength at the negotiating table, but a political question. After all, besides opportunities for women, demographic change in Germany also means an ageing society that entails higher expenditure for care and support. This can work to the disadvantage of women if, for example, they are thrust into these professions, or if they are stuck with this task in a private capacity. In fact, there is even growing pressure on women academics to have more children.

Whether electrical engineering is as much of a male domain elsewhere can be answered by looking at other European countries. For example, in Portugal, Spain, Italy and even Greece, the percentage of women in this field is much higher than in Germany.

FROM THE WORK OF FES

BERLIN

Women – Technology – Management



Professor Ursula van Rienen, Chair of the faculty association of electrical engineering and information technology, University of Rostock

Electrical engineering and information technology require the skills of female managers, yet men dominate in many companies and in research. Every twelfth woman engineer is without a job – in other words, the unemployment rate among women in this sector is twice as high as that of their male colleagues. Germany lags behind other EU countries in this respect, while the industry bemoans the lack of engineers. The reasons for this scenario and how to change it were analysed by the Forum for Politics and Society at a symposium organised in Berlin. In collaboration with the women electrical engineers' team at the Association for Electrical, Electronic and Information Technologies (VDE) the Forum highlighted the oppor-

tunities and hurdles that still exist for women at the top of this industry. Edelgard Bulmahn, former German education minister and current chairperson of the parliamentary committee for business and technology, pinpointed the fatal connection: as very few women pursue a career in this field, 'the criteria governing professional requirements, evaluation and decision-making are still defined by men'. She highlighted the need to target a human resource development policy for women. Professor Ursula van Rienen drew a depressing picture of practice at universities: women account for only 5.7 per cent of those who obtain a degree in electrical engineering. Only a handful of them go on to pursue a scientific career. The reasons?

Women concentrate on the substance of the work and not on the strategic aspects, without which a career is virtually impossible. They underestimate their own ability and more often than not have no support at home. A change in the corporate culture is therefore necessary – for example, signalling a departure from the corporate ideal of employees being available around the clock. Also important are women's networks and programmes for women mentors in companies – and public role models. Why, it was asked, are women in technical professions, for instance, not a common feature in the ubiquitous television soaps?



from left: Claudia Menne, DGB, Petra Friedrich, engineer, Munich Technical University, Edelgard Bulmahn, MP, Federal minister (retd)

LEIPZIG

Career planning – commitment – lifestyles

Gender issues are cross-cutting tasks. To enhance this awareness is an important goal in the Foundation's work. Two local alliances for families were intensively incorporated into the work and themes of individual forums developed in close coordination with the participants. The issue at stake was career planning and political commitment and the attitude of regional companies to the issue of reconciling career, family and success in the work place.



BONN

It's do or die!

In October, almost 300 women attended the conference in Bonn entitled 'It's do or die!' In collaboration with the Gender Network NRW, a day was spent in discussing the prospects for NRW (North Rhine-Westphalia).

The Gender Network is a countrywide alliance of organisations and institutions working with and for women and girls in Germany. A total of 800 organisations and institutions are represented in the network. The emphasis is on supporting women and girls through different phases and situations in life and on qualitatively refining work that is specific to them.

The participants were divided into four working groups to discuss subjects that today affect women the most:

- Women in the scales – law and justice.
- Not shortage but abundance – the future of education and work for women.
- If you don't dream... – power is the opportunity to act – politics for women.
- Always on the move – faster, better, totally healthy?

The outcomes provoked the following thoughts:

- While much has been achieved with regard to legislation, injustice is still part of women's

everyday experience. To address this problem, the Federal Equal Treatment Act of 2006 (AGG) offers considerable potential to bring more justice into women's daily lives.

- The history of the education of today's generation of women is a history of success, but one not reflected in women's career plans. The education system must open up to different age groups – from elementary education to lifelong learning.
- Women are happy to help bridge the widening gap between the educated elite and educationally disadvantaged groups, through mentoring programmes, for instance. The gender dimension should not

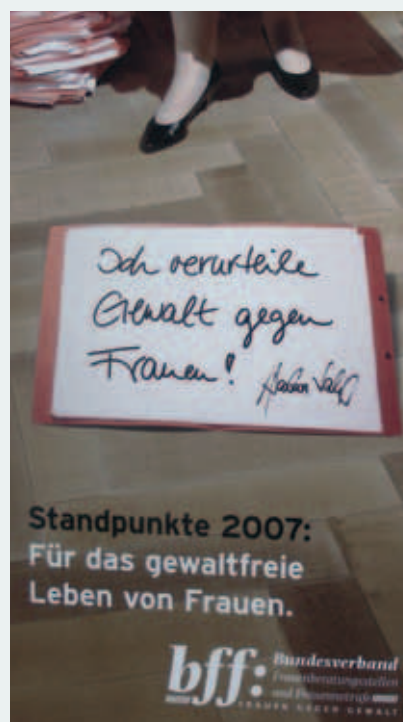




be limited to academic discourse but must be implemented in educational and labour market policies.

- The shortcomings of the health sector are described in detail in the state report produced by the commission of enquiry on the Future of Woman-based Health Care in NRW and by the coordination centre for women and health NRW. The coordination centre was closed in March 2006. Women invest considerable time in health care, which increasingly has to be financed privately. Against the backdrop of growing woman and child poverty, this area of activity calls for an all-out effort.
- Power is the opportunity to act, but this is difficult when the rules of the game and political styles have changed at the expense of women's issues.
- Differences and diversity are prerequisites – not only in women's policy – if one is to create the impetus for joint action.

- We do not need a new feminism, as the right questions have been posed for 40 years and the necessary answers given in the respective contexts. However, they have not been translated into practice and, in the near future, this is where the real work lies.



Elke Ferner, MP, chairperson of the Working Group on Social Democratic Women (ASF)

MAINZ

The caring social state from the gender perspective

Gender still has a considerable impact on life situations in Germany. This was the unanimous opinion expressed at a meeting at the FES Mainz office with the FES gender expert Barbara Stiegler and ASF chairperson Elke Ferner. Women still do far more unpaid work, earn less and have considerably lower pensions. One of the central questions of the discussion was: why are so-called women's jobs in the personal services sector still looked down upon, although it is universally agreed that these jobs are vital for society? The services range from early childhood care to professional care for the elderly. This prompted calls for the development of new models for the organisation and evaluation of the care sector.

Vorsorgender Sozialstaat aus der Geschlechterperspektive. Barbara Stiegler. Bonn FES 2007 <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/fo-wirtschaft/04321.pdf>

ERFURT

Old hats, new hats – getting to the bottom of women's policies



Dr Christine Bergmann, Federal Minister (retired) and FES Board member

Not least because of the 'latest findings' of the study entitled *If Need Be*, concerning the reasons for young women migrating from east Germany, women's policy has moved to the top of the current political agenda. The debate on demographic change and the falling birth rate reached a new high-point with the proposal that young rural women be dissuaded from leaving by providing them with mobile libraries or dial-a-bus services. The FES office in Erfurt was prompted to conduct a thorough

analysis of the situation in Thuringia where even in the Year of Equal Opportunity, women are systematically discriminated against in the labour market. In recent years, gainfully employed women have been hard hit by job cuts. Women are rarely considered when companies recruit staff and 42 per cent of all gainfully employed women in Thuringia are now in precarious employment.

In the first working group Iris Gleicke and Silke Bemann made concrete suggestions concerning how to improve the situation of women in the labour market, while in the second group Christine Bergmann and Bettina Löbl explained why the family campaign

initiated by the Thuringia state government had to be halted instead of being replicated at federal level.

The current problems plaguing equal opportunity were the subject of intense discussion. However, the participants also tried to contemplate the forms of struggle and theories of the 'classic' women's movement and feminism and to compare them with their present-day experiences. An additional outcome was an interesting look at the history of the women's movement, its successes and failures. The participants' concrete demands were submitted to Christoph Matschie, SPD party head in Thuringia.



BERLIN

No family policy without equality policy!

The Forum for Politics and Society is active in two fields – family and gender policies – each with a different presence in the current public debate. While an intense discussion has flared up over family policy, things are comparatively quiet as regards equality policy; wrongly so, as these two fields of policy are partly interdependent. A sustainable family policy cannot lose sight of policy objectives that aim to achieve equality.

‘More men in the family’ and ‘More women in a career’ are the recommendations for implementing an equality-oriented family policy in Germany identified in the FES study Family Policy from the Equality Perspective – A European Comparison. Annelie Rüling and Karsten Kassner undertook a study on behalf of FES to examine the extent to which equality aspects have been integrated into family policies in Great Britain, Sweden, France and Germany.

The study was presented at an international conference in Berlin at which European representatives from politics and academia discussed the strategies and challenges of sustainable family policy. By combining family policy (currently enjoying a political boom in Germany) with equality policy, FES turned the spotlight onto a



hitherto grossly neglected dimension. Christine Bergman, former German MP, believes that the political debates are confined to ‘cushioning the demographic shock’, however, and are in no way linked to gender justice.

Politicians and academics from the countries in question underscored the results of the analysis. In Great Britain, the greatest challenges facing an equality-oriented family policy lie in overcoming the enormous wage disparities between the sexes, expanding the availability of child care and introducing flexible working. In France, family policy is used as an instrument of labour market policy: despite boasting the highest birth rate in Europe and an extremely high number of gainfully employed mothers, family duties

in France remain the domain of the mother. Sweden has the highest number of gainfully employed mothers, a balanced mix of earning men and women and more men sharing the house work than in the other countries studied. The lowest birth rate and the lowest number of gainfully employed mothers are only two indicators that prove that, in terms of family policy, Germany brings up the rear among the four countries.

Bärbel Dieckmann, mayor of Bonn and deputy chairperson of the SPD, warned against reducing the gender justice debate to family policy. Equality aspects must, for instance, be given greater consideration, also in labour market policies, to eliminate existing discrimination.

The study can be downloaded from <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/do/04262.pdf>

POTSDAM / ERFURT / BERLIN

Make opportunities equal!



In 2007, the European Year of Equal Opportunity for All was the umbrella under which numerous gender-policy related events were held. The events included the inaugural meeting of the 17th Brandenburg Women's Week conducted by the FES Potsdam office in collaboration with the Brandenburg Council for Research on Women (Frauenpolitischen Rat).

Under the countrywide motto 'Make Opportunities Equal!' the conference dealt with diversity, equal opportunity and discrimination in Brandenburg. Dagmar Ziegler, state minister for labour, social affairs, health and family and Brandenburg representative for equality, stressed that in almost all sections of society women are still clearly under-represented in leading positions. She also decried the

wide wage discrepancy – at 23 per cent, the discrepancy in Germany is 8 per cent above the European average.

Elisabeth Schroedter MEP emphasised the need to use the European Year of Equal Opportunity to full effect for women and men in Brandenburg. In her contribution, Brunhilde Raiser, chairperson of the German Women's Council, discussed the potential for change with regard to policy on girls and women.

Specific questions were then discussed in greater detail at a World Cafe at which small groups exchanged experiences and elaborated concrete options for the practical promotion of equal opportunity in society. The plethora of outcomes was an inspirational start to the 17th Brandenburg Women's Week during which strategies to eliminate discrimination continued to be developed in more than 300 events and campaigns throughout the country.

At two events, the FES office in Erfurt dealt with the Equal Treatment Act (AGG), which is facing stiff resistance from the business sector. In a seminar geared mainly to women trade unionists and works councils, discrimination at work, as well as in political and voluntary work, was clearly specified. The participants complained that

besides several other cases, discrimination against women was still the classic example. All of them prioritised the need to dispel prejudice, raise awareness and promote tolerance. They believed that only if this is ineffective should the law be called upon to help create awareness and compel employers to monitor possible discrimination.

At a second event, one year after the law had taken effect, a careful attempt was made to take stock. The outcome: there had been no flood of complaints from companies, as anticipated; instead, there was greater sensitivity and, generally speaking, the message had been clearly understood.

The Gender Pay Gap, an FES working paper, provides additional information on this subject. It provides an overview of activities initiated by the EU Commission, the German Government and private institutions related to wage discrepancies between men and women. In July 2007, the EU Commission published a related study. Equal pay for the same work or for work of equal value, as stipulated by the EC Treaty for over 30 years, has yet to become a reality. The working paper provides information about the causes and makes recommendations to help bridge the wage gap between women and men.

RECOMMENDED READING



SAARBRÜCKEN

Old-age poverty is feminine

At an FES conference in Saarbrücken, Gertrud Backes, who researches old age, maintained that ingrained gender relations continue until old age. While many male pensioners are financially well off, things look different for women, who have less money and fewer social contacts. Women often nurse and take care of people until they themselves are old. Yet again it was asked whether these structures could be dismantled in the future, and if so, how. The answers, though obvious, presuppose a different distribution of work between men and women.

BERLIN

Nursing reform – opportunity or trap?



Seventy-three per cent of full-time staff in the 'care sector' are women, over 60 per cent of those in need of care are women and over 90 per cent of domestic care is provided by private individuals, also mainly women. As a person in need of care often requires an average of eight years of intensive care, women are frequently compelled to give up their jobs to look after family members. The FES Forum for Politics and Society, in collaboration with the German Women's Council, called a conference on the new draft bill for care sector reform. According to Elke Ferner, there had been a considerable improvement in the status quo, as hospital care is to be reinforced vis-à-vis home care, involving a gradual increase in benefits and nursing allowance. In future, employers must allow employees up to ten days' leave if they have to make arrangements for a family

member to be looked after; employers are also obliged to provide a one-to-six month 'care period'. However, as no remuneration is envisaged for this period, many employees will be unable to afford such long periods away from work. The example of the Ford plant in Cologne may be cited here. An employee who needs time off to look after someone works out a plan based on his or her individual needs together with the company; should there be problems with superiors, an ombudswoman intervenes. Isolated positive cases like this notwithstanding, Mechthild Rawert MP believes that Germany still lacks a widespread debate on social policy: 'We must ensure that it does not take several decades – as was the case with child care – for men and women to even start showing signs of feeling equally responsible for the care of the elderly.'

BELGRADE**Serbian trade unions show little interest in women**

Equal pay, discrimination against women, reconciling family and job are still not important aspects of trade union work in Serbia. FES has therefore been supporting the women's wings in trade unions for many years, for example by hosting the seminar series 'Social Cooperatives' in four Serbian regions. Unemployed women endeavouring to become independent are given practical advice and supported in their efforts to find a job. Strategy workshops are held for different sectors, at which the focus is primarily on the significance of women's work in trade unions and in the world of work. The aim is to enhance the influence of female members on trade union work.

**MACEDONIA****Still a fight for equal rights – a brochure**

Macedonia gained independence in 1991. Despite formal equality, women are still fighting for equal rights in the workplace. They are paid less and are discriminated against. With FES support, the SSM (Macedonian trade union confederation) has compiled a comprehensive brochure that provides information on women's rights. The brochure contains examples of the most frequent cases of discrimination and lists help centres. Other important issues covered include security and health at the work place, the right to maternity leave and strategies against bullying.

RECOMMENDED READING**CAIRO****Media: campaigning for rural women**

A training programme for Egyptian women journalists, organised by FES Cairo in collaboration with the women's studies centre and the media faculty at the University of Cairo, has been under way for five years. Since 2007, some 150 journalists of all political hues have attended the training workshops. After the initial teething problems (professional jealousy and the reluctance to share information), the programme has proved its worth. The long and tedious journeys to far-flung villages fostered an atmosphere of companionship and awareness of the often precarious situation of women in these villages. These experiences forged the will among the women to rally together to address shortcomings. The NGO ENSAF (Justice) came into being towards the end of 2007. Members include media people, human rights experts, FES staff and university faculty. The intention is to initiate programmes in the local media in 2008.

BENIN

Free-trade agreement under the gender dimension

The upcoming free-trade agreement between the EU and the Community of West African States concerns women in particular. They earn their income primarily from small-scale agriculture and informal trade and see subsidised goods from the EU as a threat to their livelihood. Even today, according to an example quoted at a conference organised by FES and partner organisations in Benin, frozen chicken thighs from Europe are offered at lower prices than local produce. The women were at a loss to remain competitive, with their small fields and traditional methods of cultivation. Taking the pragmatic route, they decided to stop resigning themselves to the inevitable and instead to start modernising their means of production and to promote training for stakeholders in the production sector.

SHANGHAI

Gender mainstreaming in trade union policy



Gender justice continues to be virtually an alien concept in the Chinese labour market. However, Chinese trade unions have shown considerable interest in integrating this principle into future work and benefiting from German experiences. China, rural and urban, is undergoing economic and social change at breakneck speed. Traditional family ties and gender relations are falling by the wayside as people migrate to the cities and the urban middle class continues to grow. In comparison to other Asian countries, gender equality is well developed in China, but the problems in the labour market are similar to those in Germany. Gender mainstreaming strategies – that is, reviewing all decisions in terms of their varying impacts on men and women – are largely unknown, but trade unions are

showing heightened interest in this instrument. At the invitation of FES Shanghai, Claudia Menne held a highly acclaimed series of lectures on the subject. She explained the differences between traditional women's policy and gender policy and recalled that equality policy had been re-oriented in 1995 at the World Women's Conference in Beijing. Minimum wages, income discrimination, maternity leave and greater representation of women at all managerial levels were the subject of intense discussion.

Gender Mainstreaming in den
Gewerkschaften
工会工作中的性别意识主流化

BANGKOK**The trade union movement is weak**

One of the FES priority areas in Thailand is support for trade unions. Workers in Thailand – both men and women – do not enjoy high social status, the trade union movement is fragmented and labour law leaves much to be desired. As trade unions are perceived as being opposed to the state, only about 3 per cent of workers are organised. There is virtually no dialogue between the government and trade unions on socio-political and economic policy programmes. Legal regulations, above all the guarantee of fundamental rights for employees and trade unions, are therefore the goal of numerous FES campaigns. The male-dominated trade unions have virtually no female representation. Decision-makers are hardly, if at all, sensitised to gender issues. FES endeavours to bring about change; for example, through information brochures on home-based work. A range of women-specific problems are discussed with trade unionists, the main issues being increased violence, low income, poorer work conditions and poor access for women to social services. And, much like Germany, lack of child care is a cause for complaint in women's networks.

NEPAL/PAKISTAN/INDIA**No social security, child labour, bonded labour**

An FES-organised workshop in Kathmandu dealt with the situation of home-based workers. Strategies were developed to bring about ratification of the ILO Convention on Home-based Workers in all South Asian countries. The focal points of the Convention are safer working conditions, better pay and social security. There is a good chance that Nepal will be one of the first Asian countries to ratify the Convention and thus assume a pioneering role. Pakistan is discussing a national law on social security for home-based workers and, in the run-up to the vote, FES plans to hold a conference in Islamabad.

India and South Asia: 95 per cent of working women in India are in the informal sector and are not entitled to state-guaranteed social security. While there are isolated programmes at regional and national level initiated by public and private stakeholders, women

know nothing about them and have no access to information that could help them secure at least minimal security. In collaboration with trade unions, government organisations and NGOs, FES is endeavouring to make these programmes accessible to women working on the land, street vendors, construction workers and craftswomen.

Throughout South Asia, the number of home-based workers is on the rise. Out of a total of 100 million such workers worldwide, no less than 50 million are in South Asia. Eighty per cent of the workers who weave carpets and fabrics for the textile industry in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan and India are women; the same is true of workers who stitch footballs for the sports goods industry in Pakistan. These are export-oriented, economically important branches of industry and the women who are responsible





WORLD OF HOMEBASED WORKERS

for indispensable work in production are the weakest link in the chain: they are dependent on subcontractors and agents. They have no work protection, nor are their contracts or incomes secure. Illness, floods or a damaged loom or sewing machine can be life-threatening. In case of disaster, they have no option but to go to the local money-lender, who demands high interest rates and, by way of security, often demands that a family member work for him. Bonded labour continues to be widespread. Under these conditions, child labour is on the rise. Like their mothers, many of these children remain illiterate. The products made by mothers and children are often sold by the husband or eldest son, which means that the income earned by women is at the disposal of men. Networks are being formed in all the countries affected that not only engage in political lobbying for better working conditions, but also offer services, such as primary health care or microcredits.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Gender-based social security

A search for pertinent literature on social security systems in Central America promptly leads one to FES. No institution can compare with FES when it comes to providing individual countries with concrete suggestions for a more socially balanced system of health and old-age insurance. Thanks to the Foundation's efforts, the debate has been broadened to include gender mainstreaming. There is a growing willingness in the countries concerned to use this instrument as another building block towards developing a modern concept of basic health care and care for the elderly.

The state of the social security system is depressing in all six Central American countries. The policy of economic liberalism they have pursued has widened social and economic disparities. Gender inequality is becoming more acute. The trend in old-age insurance towards a complete switch from a solidarity-based system to one based on the funding principle is already having an adverse effect, particularly on women, who work largely in the informal sector, with no social security. It is equally alarming that in Honduras, for example, social security contributions are deducted for just 4 per cent of public sector workers. Studies have therefore been under-



taken to find out how single mothers on low incomes might more easily obtain access to a minimum old-age pension.

The public health care system is in no better condition. It is permanently under-financed, offers poor health care and does not cover the entire region. Many rural regions in Honduras or El Salvador are virtually without health care of any kind. Over 50 per cent of patients have to pay for doctors and medicines out of their own pockets, and often at inflated rates. The problem is compounded by the fact that the number of single mothers is on the rise: men leave the country or simply start new relationships. In cases of conflict, the corrupt and 'macho' judiciary often decides in favour of the man.

The social security systems are mired in a difficult structural crisis caused by demographic changes, declining income and poorly invested member contributions. Existing social disparities are being further exacerbated, lending even more importance to the FES-facilitated discussion of gender.

Politics and participation



People living in absolute poverty and dependence cannot participate in political and social life. They are helpless without access to education and work. FES conducts training programmes in numerous countries, especially for women, because democracy entails the participation of both sexes. The needs of women often differ from those of men: they want health care and education for their children; they want to prevent their children from being drawn into gang crime and war. Furthermore, they are far more interested in finding peaceful solutions to conflicts than men and are therefore indispensable when democratic structures are being set up, whether in their villages or in national parliaments.

Gender policy takes account of the needs of both women and men. A successful equality policy is indispensable in sustaining a country. In several countries, women (that is, half the population) are still excluded from the political process. But much is changing: FES makes its own contribution through training programmes, campaigns, skills training and network programmes. This is not confined to the developing and emerging countries; there is work to be done in Germany, too, before legal gender justice is established in everyday life at all levels.



In conversation with Ingrid Matthäus-Maier

Board Spokeswoman, KfW Bankengruppe, and chairperson of the FES Board of Trustees



FES: You once said 'Give the money to the women', referring to certain forms of development cooperation that help people set up businesses. Do you have any examples?

Matthäus-Maier: One KfW micro-finance project catering directly to women involves the promotion of SEWA, the Self-Employed Women's Association in India, which is an all-women's NGO. We have provided this organisation with capital and refinancing funds for micro-credits and given advice on how to expand the business. Another example is our support for BRAC, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee. BRAC is also an NGO, 95 per cent of whose members are women. We assist BRAC in its efforts to navigate modern capital markets. With the help of a guarantee, it is possible for BRAC's credit portfolio to be securitised, which means the individual microcredits are combined in a structured manner and sold as a kind of bond on the international capital market. The organisation can then obtain fresh liquidity for further loans.

FES: Is there a difference between men and women as debtors?

Matthäus-Maier: Yes, women are considered responsible clients who take great care to make their repay-

ments punctually. This is because they know that access to loans is a precious commodity and they cannot afford to gamble it away. A woman who does not pay on time does not get any further credit, while a woman who is punctual with her repayments can benefit from a higher amount in the next 'credit cycle'. Male clients are not always so disciplined; they often present themselves before micro-finance institutions with great visions, but they lack initiative and it is often the women who, with their realism and commitment, set up successful enterprises step by step. Based solely on the risk factor, several microfinance institutions consider women an important client group.

FES: How does it impact on a family when women earn their own money? Do they, for instance, invest more in the education of their children or in health care?

Matthäus-Maier: Yes, no doubt about it. When women earn money, they set aside some for possible medical costs. Their earnings also cover school fees. Nor are girls taken out of school quite so often to augment the family budget. To give you an example: clients of the Ugandan microfinance institution Umu can afford school fees and consequently their children are

more likely to go to school than the daughters of non-clients. Exchanging experiences with other Umu clients has strengthened the women's self-esteem and confidence in their own ability. In Bangladesh, clients' nutrition and health has improved due to BRAC membership; the longer a woman is a BRAC client, the less likely she is to suffer from hunger or malnutrition.

FES: Does a woman's self-confidence increase when she earns her own money? Is this then reflected in greater participation in public life? Does she, for example, get more involved in local politics?

Matthäus-Maier: A woman's self-confidence increases when she handles self-earned money; this actually encourages some women to play an active role in shaping the future of their own village, as may be observed in India, for example. But the greater self-sufficiency and independence that come with savings and credit opportunities do more than just enhance a woman's entrepreneurial spirit. According to BRAC, many clients campaign for local political office and are elected. SEWA is a successful trade union movement that strengthens the rights of women workers and supports them in pushing through their demands

for higher wages. But this is not adopted automatically and access to microcredits is not always the single deciding factor.

FES: And how do the men react who, after all, still tend to be rather patriarchal, particularly in developing and emerging countries?

Matthäus-Maier: Men realise that women's growing and increasingly articulate self-confidence is not necessarily a threat. As they watch their children grow, they understand that the family as a whole stands to benefit. Of course men will not always applaud, but one must give them time to get used to something new.

FES: You have started small banks in countries that need our support. This has created new jobs. Do you give women a chance here too?

Matthäus-Maier: The micro-banks supported by us – for example, the bank of the ProCredit Network – focus on granting micro credits to micro enterprises, many of which are managed by women. There are currently 21 ProCredit banks in various east European countries (10), Africa (5) and Latin America (7). More are planned. They aim directly at micro and small enterprises and strive to come closer to clients. In fact, micro and small enterprises can grow more quickly thanks to their access to loans, which in turn generates additional jobs.

FES: Do men ultimately also benefit from these programmes if, for example, a different image of women is imparted to sons?

Matthäus-Maier: I believe that the greater self-confidence among women that is an offshoot of microfinancing has a positive impact also on longer-term change processes; for instance, women's image in society. However, despite all the justified enthusiasm for the impact of microfinance on women's life situations, I would also like to warn against seeing microfinance as a panacea – social change does not happen overnight and not just because women have access to loans. Nevertheless, it must be noted that microfinancing is one of the most promising development approaches of all, particularly for women.



FROM THE WORK OF FES

BERLIN

100 years of the international women's movement

Is feminism no longer 'in'? Is the women's movement suffering a rollback? Has it run out of major political issues? What can we learn from the first generation of campaigners? Answers to all these questions were sought during a discussion organised by the Forum for Politics and Society to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Socialist Women's International. Mention was made of the women who joined Clara Zetkin and Rosa Luxemburg, who pursued great goals at the start of the twentieth century: female suffrage, the struggle against the imperialist



world war, labour protection laws such as maternity laws and child safety and protection, equal pay for the same work and a stipulated minimum wage. Lissy Gröner, SPD member of the European Parliament, came to a depressing conclusion: 'This list of priorities is still as valid as it ever was.' In the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All she called for the objectives of women's policy, namely a ban on discrimination, zero tolerance against violence and reconciliation of family and career, to be consistently implemented. The question of whether young women, above all, are still attracted to feminism and the women's movement today – whether this is where they rediscover their real lives – was the subject of intense debate. Elke Ferner and Christine Bergmann had different opinions. Elke Ferner took the view that while there are many well-qualified women in the labour market, they still earn less than their equally well-qualified male counterparts and experience severe setbacks in their career if they have children. Christine Bergmann believes that discrimination against women has become more subtle – it is no lon-



ger obvious, but makes itself felt for example in wage and tax policies.

The author Katja Kullmann lamented that the 'daughters of emancipation' are resting on their mothers' laurels. For her the impotence of the women's movement has much to do with modern society's performance principle, which prevents women from rallying in solidarity. What can and must twenty-first century feminism do if it is not to lose what was fought for and achieved with such difficulty? On the 100th anniversary of the women's movement, Lissy Gröner's plea was not without a touch of criticism: 'Let us women continue to be the avant garde for equality and solidarity, for we need all our strength, imagination and creativity to overcome the patriarchal dominance that has prevailed for thousands of years.'

BERLIN/ERFURT/NAMIBIA/INDONESIA

Gender budgeting – democratic household maintenance for both sexes

The subject of gender budgeting plays an important role at different levels of the Foundation's work. A text by Professor Christine Färber (www.fes.de/buergergesellschaft) can serve as the basis for discussions and seminars. Her most important theories regarding the definition and benefits of gender budgeting are outlined below.

'Gender budgeting makes it possible to analyse the budget of the federation, a federal state or a local authority systematically. All income and expenditure in the budgeting process are systematically reviewed when compiling, implementing and accounting for a budget. How does this impact on women and men in economic terms? Are social gender relations affected in any way? The distribution of public services among women and men is reviewed along with the effect of all budget-related activities on the social distribution of resources such as money and time, paid and unpaid work ... Gender budgeting makes the cross-sectoral task of achieving equality in the budget more transparent and controllable and so makes a central contribution to the future viability of our society.'

The Foundation's domestic and international work in the field of political education repeatedly ad-

dresses the issue of how to deal with public money and the effects on men and women. During an event organised by the Forum for Politics and Society, German finance minister Peer Steinbrück also advocated this tool, albeit guardedly: <http://www.fes.de/forumpug/inhalt/documents/GenderBudgeting.pdf>.

Economic promotion and equal opportunity were also themes of an event organised by the FES office in Thuringia that focused on the significance of the EU structural funds and their control effect as regards gender equality. This is particularly relevant in Thuringia, as the budget – especially with regard to investments for economic promotion – is largely covered by the EU structural funds. EU principles stipulate that these funds be granted on condition that the gender principle is taken into account. The extent to which gender budgeting plays a role in everyday political life and in the distribution of funds was examined together with the Thuringia Council for Women and experts from different fields.

Politically active women in several countries have recognised that change occurs by means of prioritising and distributing the funds earmarked in the budget. For

RECOMMENDED READING



example, in Namibia, FES, in collaboration with the NEWF network, offers all female mandate holders, ranging from the municipalities to the national parliament, training sessions in gender budgeting. At a conference in Swakopmund, the Namibian finance minister expressly praised the Foundation's efforts. In her speech she announced her own initiatives to incorporate gender sensitivity into the budget, as well as into sector-specific departments.

In Indonesia, too, the FES office in Jakarta organised a workshop on 'Gender Responsive Budgeting' within the framework of the Foundation's South-East Asia gender programme. A gender focus when drafting the budget leads to greater transparency, democracy and gender justice – and across the world.

FREIBURG

Women politicians in conversation: moderation instead of alpha male behaviour?

Do women cultivate a political style different from that of men? This question can probably be answered only on an individual basis, as illustrated by a series of events organised by the FES office in Baden-Württemberg. There was a highly interesting dialogue between Professor Gesine Schwan, university president in Frankfurt/Oder, and Anke Fuchs, FES chairperson. Both women have led extraordinary lives: Anke Fuchs has held high political office – for example, Vice President of the Bundestag – as well as positions with considerable social responsibility, such as President of the Mieterbund (Tenants' Association). The political scientist Gesine Schwan is well-known even be-



Anke Fuchs, FES chairperson, Gernot Erler, Minister of State in the German Foreign Office and Professor Gesine Schwan, President, European University Viadrina Frankfurt/Oder

yond Germany as a candidate for the office of Federal German President.

Alpha males go far, but Gesine Schwan is of the opinion that they soon come up against their limits: 'In cock fights vanity comes before a fall and society does not benefit.' She warned against holding this up as a model and appealed to women to work more towards co-operation in networks and quiet moderation. Anke Fuchs, on the other hand, did not want to idealise women in politics but relativised the issue based on her own experiences in political life: 'We women in politics, in contrast to

men, have not learned to put up with rivalry. We rarely show solidarity with each other.'

In Schwetzingen and Ludwigsburg, women politicians from different generations also engaged in discussion. One motivation to engage in politics was common to all, namely the hope that their actions would bring justice closer. Andrea Schwarz, born in 1974 and the youngest in the discussion circle, stated quite pragmatically: 'I would rather get involved than keep whinging. One can't change everything, but one has to start somewhere.'

RECOMMENDED READING

Fritz-Erler-Forum

Zukunft und Gerechtigkeit



Politisches Handeln und Verantwortung

Gesine Schwan und Anke Fuchs im Gespräch
am 26. März 2007 in Freiburg

Veranstaltungsinformation
des Fritz-Erler-Forums Baden-Württemberg
Landesbüro der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung



BERLIN/ROME/RAMALLAH**Cross-border initiatives and roundtables**

Inge Wettig-Danielmeier in conversation with Palestinian women in Ramallah

The new opportunities thrown up by gender mainstreaming are mobilising women around the world. FES is increasingly trying to meet the need for more information and to engage in its practical exchange. Bearing this in mind, the Latin America section organised a conference in Berlin with women politicians from Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay.

At the invitation of the FES office in Rome, German and Italian women politicians discussed prospects for joint initiatives. SPD politicians spoke about the progress made after the introduction of quotas. Italian politicians were far more negative about their situation than their German counterparts, but they both lamented

the fact that top positions in business and society were still occupied primarily by men.

In Ramallah, Palestinian women politicians held talks with Inge Wettig-Danielmeier and complained primarily about the lack of politically trained women. Many women are receptive to national and religious ideologies as represented by, for example, Hamas because Hamas addresses educational and health issues. If further radicalisation in the Palestinian Territories is to be avoided, women must be politically sensitised, and FES is trying to do this through numerous programmes in the area. Hence, within the scope of the project Lead 22 conducted by FES Jerusalem in cooperation with Bierzeit University, 22 selected female multipliers were given the opportunity to improve their leadership qualities. These women from the West Bank and Gaza have led profoundly different lives: some are still studying while others already have several years' professional experience. Many of them are working mothers who are also involved in their communities or in politics. All want to bring about change. In April 2008 six seminar participants will participate in an information programme organised by FES in Germany.

MACEDONIA/BULGARIA**FES helps women break free of patriarchal structures**

Patriarchal family and social structures still prevail in Macedonia's rural north-west. This means, for example, that society circumvents inheritance law under which women have entitlements. Furthermore, in elections the male head of the family votes on their behalf. Every fourth woman has experienced violence. The first shelters for women have just opened. Economic dependence is also seen as a form of violence; even when women have their own income, the man controls the money.

The FES Macedonia office, in collaboration with a partner organisation, has trained women lawyers and social workers who advise rural women in all age groups. It is important first to make them aware of their legal rights. FES deliberately trains women from different ethnic backgrounds, and Macedonian, Albanian and Tur-



kish women are amazingly open when speaking about their experiences in closed all-women seminars. They have built networks on their own initiative, are extremely well informed about political developments in their respective countries and feel the need to be a part of the democratic process. The young women from these villages feel that progress is much too slow, however, and react by fleeing from their villages. They marry men with secure residential status in the EU or USA in the hope of material security but more than anything else in the hope of living a freer and more modern life.

Things seem to have progressed a bit further in Bulgaria. A network of Social Democratic women established by FES in Sofia has lively discussions on equal rights and critically observes the status of gender-specific legislation.

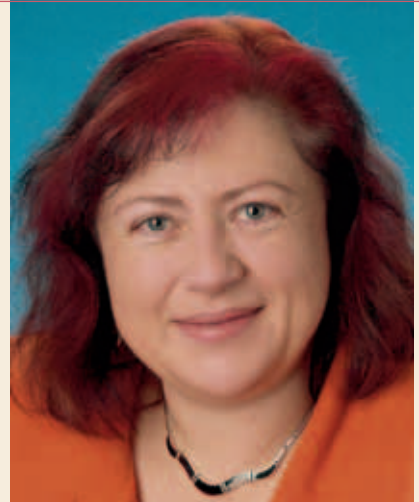


UKRAINE/BELARUS

Gender issues: trade unions more interested than politicians

In the face of the ongoing crisis in domestic politics, little is being done at government level as regards gender issues. As a result, the Foundation's partners are chiefly trade unions from sectors such as nuclear energy, armaments and coal mining. Although these branches of industry are dominated by male workers, women and men together hold constructive talks on gender issues.

At a large FES conference attended by NGOs and national experts, equality laws and their practical implementation was clearly the focus of the public debate. At another FES conference on new political strategies for the implementation of partnership-based models for life, in which Dr Bärbel Kofler MP also participated, hopes concentrated on the EU agreements on equality. Within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy, Ukraine is obliged to review its laws and programmes with reference to gender justice. At present this work is complicated by a new free-for-all capitalism in which sexist gender clichés flourish, particularly in advertising. The partner organisation KRONA was prompted to stage an exhibition – Stop Sexism – at an FES meeting in east Ukraine.



Dr Bärbel Kofler, MP

The Belarusian experience is similar. Here, too, the work with the trade unions has had positive results. Jointly developed educational programmes for NGOs, political parties, trade unions and youth organisations have met with a good response. In not one of the 20 gender seminars did men account for less than 40 per cent of the participants, which is still unusual for countries of the former Soviet Union. Above all, this work with multipliers impacts on the organisations to which the seminar participants belong. Besides issues of journalism, trade unions and local governance, delicate subjects such as gender equality in church-run institutions and democracy in Belarusian society are also on the agenda.

TURKEY

More women in parliament

With a witty and extremely effective public campaign, the women's organisation KA.DER, which is supported by FES, will try to bring more women into parliament. 'Do you have to be a man to enter par-

liament?', asks a poster that portrays a pretty blonde woman with a moustache. KA.DER and FES have established political schools for women in several provinces that not only provide information

about the political system, but also offer motivational training for women who would like to campaign as candidates in the local and national elections.

JAKARTA

Despite all the problems: Muslim women conquer politics

Muslim women politicians in South-East Asia are gaining influence, at least in terms of numbers. At the invitation of the FES regional gender project South-East Asia, women politicians from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines met in Jakarta to discuss their situation, though with mixed results: while the number of Muslim women in politics is on the rise, they are rarely found in leadership positions. They still have to fight against prejudice rooted in religious values and rules. But it is not religion alone that prevents women from moving up. In all four countries political parties are male bastions and women rarely make it to the top, even on the list of candidates. The conference was organised as part of a seminar series on 'Fundamentalism in Politics' and its impact on the political involvement of women. The theme is gaining importance in South-East Asia, as fundamentalist groups have become more powerful in recent

years, not only in Islamic but also in Buddhist and Hindu societies. As a remedy, the politicians suggested developing education for disadvantaged social groups and promoting moderate Islam.

years, not only in Islamic but also in Buddhist and Hindu societies. As a remedy, the politicians suggested developing education for disadvantaged social groups and promoting moderate Islam.



PAKISTAN

The radio offers women a public platform

Since 2001, an extremely successful FES project has been under way in one of the poorest and most remote provinces in Pakistan: 'Radio and Women's Development' has opened up new opportunities for women to play an active role in politics and society. Given the high illiteracy rate in Pakistan (men 70 per cent, women above 90 per cent), the radio is the sole source of information for many people. As a first step, workshops are held in which women are encouraged to speak openly about their problems. The discussions are recorded and broadcast by a local radio station. For many women it was a completely new experience to leave their villages and speak publicly about their problems, also in the presence of men. The problems range from poor health care, bad drinking water and lack of access to education to the traditional and religious views concerning



male and female roles that marginalise women. Speaking in public boosts the participants' self-confidence and their social status. The radio has become more than just a discussion forum.

Workshops and seminars concentrate on providing education on family planning, health care, child education, environmental protection, participation in elec-

tions, as well as civil and equal rights. Everything is documented and then broadcast by Radio Pakistan.

The first women are now being trained in workshops to become media reporters. In future they will make their own radio programmes. This University of Peshawar project is also supported by FES.

ULAN BATOR

Women's quotas in Mongolia

The women's associations of three important parties have increased the women's quota in their parties from 24 per cent to 30 per cent. Now it is a question of getting enough women onto the list of candidates campaigning for election

in Mongolia in 2008, with the aim of increasing the percentage of women in parliament (currently 6.5 per cent).

The FES office in Ulan Bator has actively accompanied women's struggle for more power. For ins-

tance, Heidrun Merk, former Minister of Justice in Lower Saxony, worked together with women to develop strategies for implementation of the women's quota.

TEL AVIV**The women's parliament in Israel**

The women's parliament came into being in 1999 with the support of FES Israel. The intention was to add an explicitly feminine view to the debates dominated by men in the media and in public. In the 48 meetings held to date, the women's parliament has addressed every important political issue. The goal is to give equal attention to the needs of men and women – in other words, gender mainstreaming should become a matter of course. The public meetings held by the women's parliament deal with issues such as educational and social policy, security policy, crime and corruption. By organising events in different places the women's parliament sparks critical feminist discussions outside the cities, too. These debates have given birth to important social initiatives such as the coalition against pornography, a forum against sexual harassment and Anwar, the Jewish-Arab women's group.

IRAQ**Training women election observers**

Crucial elections and referendums are to be held in Iraq in 2008, not only for the regional parliaments but also on the modified Iraqi constitution and the future of the oil-rich city of Kirkuk. These elections can help to reduce conflict and diffuse tensions only if they enjoy both external and internal legitimacy. Besides all the religious and ethnic groups living in Iraq, it is crucial for women to have equal participation rights – an extremely difficult task in Iraq. Hence the focus of the Foundation's work in 2008 is also on training election observers throughout the country. The project promotes the involvement of women, above all, and is to be understood as traditional women's advancement. Women participants are not only trained as election observers, but they train other participants, too. A total of 400 workshops are scheduled, in which 10,000 Iraqi men and women will be prepared for this task. In this way women are not only familiarised with politics, but, in civil society terms, will take on a key role in the country, both before and on election day.

NORTH AFRICA**Maghreb women start to mobilise**

Fifty women from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania spent two days discussing their options for action in patriarchal Arab societies. 'Women's Long March to Equality' was the motto of the FES-supported event held in Tunis. The next milestone is the Maghreb Social Forum in 2008 for which preparations are in full swing and, as so often, it is the women who are showing a special commitment. They see themselves facing a double, contradictory challenge: thanks to globalisation they are being integrated into modern work relations more rapidly than before, but they believe their path to modernity is once again under threat because of the growing social significance of Islam. At the preparatory conference in Tunis, in addition to the 'permanent fixtures' – discrimination at work and violence against women – the programme included other special issues, such as the discrimination against Arab women in inheritance law or the role of art and culture in the development of Maghreb women's identity and image. Each of the individual women's organisations sent a younger and an older representative to the conference, which made for lively debates.

SENEGAL

Will women soon have half the power?



In election year 2007, Senegal's women were united in agreement. They wanted gender justice at all political levels. However, women politicians from 21 parties were afraid that they would yet again

lose out in the elections for the parliament and the senate. Hence, FES supported this women's alliance with a comprehensive package covering training, consultancy and public campaigns.

Leading constitutional lawyers, Islamic scholars and representatives of ethnic traditions jointly drafted a bill that envisages 50:50 parity in parliament and in local councils. The impressive march to the presidential palace by more than a thousand women dressed in white put the project at the top of the political agenda, and for the first time in the history of the country a law on parity was passed! The local elections in 2008 will be a crucial test. But the bill is already bearing fruit. There are more women in the new cabinet and women are expected to account for 40 per cent of the seats in the senate.



SOUTH AFRICA

Gender research – a success story

This is a success story of a kind that is rarely written about. Six years ago, within the scope of its media project in southern Africa, FES promoted a small women's group called Gender Links. The group has now grown into an overwhelmingly successful NGO whose work reaches out to several African countries. After compiling a handbook entitled Gender and Media, the women embarked on an extensive study: 25,000 news reports in 12 southern African countries were reviewed with reference to their gender relevance. The outcome: women had a lot to say but were quoted in only 17 per cent of the reports. The women knew that

things would change only if their data and conclusions culminated in political campaigns. This gave rise to a network that aims to work together with women activists and journalists to translate the research into practice. In the meantime, university curricula are being developed and media institutions scrutinised with regard to their gender politics. Publishers want to know what women are interested in. The problem of HIV/AIDS has also been integrated into the gender approach. Gender Links has a strategy plan for the next three years and an annual budget of EUR 800,000. Besides continuing with three research contracts a year, Gender Links now also offers media regulatory authorities gender training and has set up a Gender and Media Diversity Centre in southern Africa – a virtual market place for exchanges between gender research and gender practice. The secret of this success story? A group of committed, highly disciplined women who target political practice, coupled with the appropriate impetus in the form of financing by FES and others at the right time.



BRAZIL

National Plan on Policies for Women

Despite the tremendous efforts made by President Lula's government to improve the situation of women in politics, and in professional and private life, equal rights can still not be said to exist. FES has therefore come up with several thrust areas for gender and



Ivete Garcia, Isabel Allende, Nilcéa Freire

'The development of a social policy that improves the quality of life and guarantees women's rights will be possible only when one breaks with the traditional idea of fragmented state involvement. And this is why we, from the Special Secretariat for Women's Policies, have the primary goal of leading the activities conducted by different ministries, special secretariats and public enterprises in only one direction – towards strengthening equality among men and women. This is our commitment.'

Minister Nilcéa Freire,
Special Secretariat for Women's Policies



women's policy: first, it is important for women's organisations to network; second, FES organises discussions with female leaders from the left and, in collaboration with CUT, the umbrella trade union organisation, develops projects on 'decent work' for women; and finally, the next generation of women is being trained to take on leading roles in parties, trade unions and NGOs.

The Brazilian National Plan on Policies for Women addresses equal treatment in the labour market, anti-sexist education, health and sexual rights and combating violence against women. The plan was fine-tuned last year. Fundamental questions, such as political participation and the elimination of all forms of discrimination, racism and sexism, are now on the agenda. On the government side,

the Special Secretariat for Women's Policies is the most important political institution in this context.

The undisputed success notwithstanding, much remains to be done. The situation does not differ from that in many other countries: women earn less and are harder hit by unemployment even though they usually have a higher level of school education and better professional qualifications than men. Seventy per cent of the workforce in the informal sector are women, which translates into 28 million women who have no semblance of security. Women politicians are still a dwindling minority: in the last elections they won only 46 of the 513 seats in the House of Representatives and 4 of the 27 seats in the senate. Only three of the 27 states have a woman governor.

COLOMBIA

More women, more politics

With the programme 'More Women, More Politics', FES and its partners in Colombia support political equality between men and women. In addition to academic events on the subject of 'Best Practice – Women in Politics', the campaign includes a handbook with practical tips for elections, aimed at encouraging women to be candidates. In numerous regions across the country, FES organises training in election campaign tactics for women candidates. An election analysis from the gender perspective was published after the last elections. In the 2007 regional and local elections, the number of women elected to public office rose by 7.9 per cent. However, easy electoral success for women does not yet guarantee an end to 'machismo' in politics.

RECOMMENDED READING



Violence and conflict



Violence is omnipresent: behind the closed doors of apartments, in school yards and on the streets. Violence and the inability to resolve conflicts peacefully are a problem in countries and in families. Violence usually stems from men, be it in armed conflicts or in the family. The trauma continues for generations, because, if the spiral of violence is not halted, abused sons become abusive fathers and husbands. And children – or rather sons who have witnessed their father with a weapon in his hand – are more likely to follow this role-model than children who have grown up in a peaceful environment.

It is therefore important to strengthen women through psycho-social counselling, access to shelters and laws that protect them and their children. However, women above all play a vital role in the turbulent regions of the world: women and their children should not only be protected, but women must play an active role in peacekeeping operations and in conflict prevention. FES joins experts in repeatedly seeking ways to curb domestic violence and is also primarily active in the crisis regions of the world and tries to contribute towards restructuring framework conditions that marginalise women. Conflict resolution can be successful only if the gender dimension is taken into account, as we have learned when conflicts have been successfully resolved.



Dr Angelica Schwall-Düren

SPD Member of Parliament and acting chairperson of the SPD parliamentary group in the Bundestag



As acting chairperson of the SPD parliamentary group, SPD MP Dr Angelica Schwall-Düren is responsible for European affairs and a committed activist for equality between men and women in peacekeeping operations.

Women and children are hardest hit by today's wars. Violence against women, particularly rape, is used in several conflicts as a specific tool of warfare. This is particularly true of societies in which equal rights were denied to women even before the outbreak of the conflict. In 2002 the then General Secretary of the United Nations observed that conflicts could be resolved successfully only if the victims, especially women, were involved in the peace efforts.

Since Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed in 2000, the UN has been taking greater note of the fact that women are particularly affected in armed conflicts and of their importance in conflict resolution. Since then, the UN and the EU have undertaken a number of steps within the scope of gender mainstreaming. Their primary goal is to take greater account of women in peacekeeping operations and to sensitise staff to gender-specific questions; secondly, they must implement the rights of women enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979 within the framework of conflict resolution and post-conflict care.

Since 2000, the UN and the EU have made progress in terms of gender mainstreaming, and today all mandates for peacekeeping operations incorporate gender expertise. More than half of all peace operations include a post for gender issues. The UN and several sub-organisations have trained staff involved in peacekeeping operations, have enhanced skills to establish and disseminate good practice and lessons learned and have compiled handbooks, guidelines and standards to be implemented in peacekeeping operations. Women are also increasingly being integrated into work in refugee camps. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda is devoting more and more time to the physical and social rehabilitation of female witnesses, and the UN endeavours to bring national legal systems in line with the international norms and standards of gender equality.

In the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), almost half the positions are filled by women. However, in October 2007 women accounted for only 1,406 out of a total of 71,881 military personnel deployed in these operations. Since February 2007,

however, India has been contributing to peacekeeping operations in Liberia by providing a police contingent made up exclusively of women.

The report by the German EU Council presidency on EU activities related to conflict prevention, including the implementation of the EU programme to prevent violent conflicts, also says that the ongoing consideration of equality issues is integral to the evaluation of conflict situations and the strategic objectives of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) missions.

Accordingly, in 2006 the EU compiled guidelines stipulating that equality must always be taken into account when planning and implementing ESDP operations. In this connection, for example, the post of a consultant for equality issues was created within the framework of the EU police operations EUSEC RD Congo and EUROPOL RD Congo.

Within the framework of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, protecting the rights of women and girls in conflicts and in post-conflict situations is supported as a priority area. To this end, the EU Commission is

currently promoting projects in Colombia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia. Gender equality has also found its way into the EU concept on supporting disarmament, demobilisation and rehabilitation.

Despite these diverse efforts, seven years after the adoption of Resolution 1325, the UN noted that there was still a gap between the international commitments made by countries to accord equal rights to women and their implementation at national level. It was also claimed that the UN's efforts towards gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations are under-financed. Countries are still obliged to realise gender equality in security policies and there is a pressing need to protect women and children in armed conflicts and implement the relevant international agreements.

FROM THE WORK OF FES

SAXONY-ANHALT

Human rights protection for women – in Germany too

To commemorate UN Human Rights Day on 10 December the FES office in Saxony-Anhalt organised an international human rights conference in collaboration with the UNESCO Chair in Human Rights at Otto von Guericke University. The spotlight was on women's rights (or the denial of these rights), not only in distant countries but also in Germany. Migration has made forced marriages and child kidnapping a German issue as a particularly brutal form of inflicting injury on young girls and women. According to experts, in Germany alone up to 19,000 women a year are forced to undergo the excruciating ritual of genital mutilation, without arousing the concern of the general public. The Germany-wide network INTEGRA not only helps victims, but is also



concerned with raising awareness among female migrants concerning their rights. It is of vital importance that male and female doctors, teachers and social workers are provided with the relevant information. The discussion participants agreed that genuine help for tortured women is possible only if the subject is discussed pro-actively and publicly.



BERLIN**The unjust side of justice**

Only 5 per cent of prison inmates in Germany are women. Most of them have been charged with minor offences – for example, around 10 per cent are serving sentences in lieu of payment as they are unable to pay the fine for travelling without a ticket. Imprisonment means that they fall into an even deeper existential crisis; their minor children are often hardest hit. During a meeting organised by the

Forum for Politics and Society and the AWP state association Berlin, experts lamented that the penal system pays little or no attention to the special needs of these women prisoners. The Catholic Women's Social Service was critical of the fact that most women are kept in sections reserved for men, as there is a shortage of detention centres for women. These women are usually unable to benefit from

timely offers of help – that is, prior to coming into conflict with the criminal law – because they are unaware of the social and psychological services on offer, normally learning of them only in prison. All the experts called for specific approaches to dealing with women who have committed an offence; for instance, models can be developed in individual states that could then be adopted by other states.

BERLIN**Domestic violence – a priority area for Dialogue East Germany**

Domestic violence has a massive impact on the working life of the affected women. They are more frequently absent from work than other women and are unable to work to their full potential. It is estimated that 25 per cent of women absent from work are victims of domestic violence. Hence the paramount question at an event organised by FES in collaboration with TERRE DES FEMMES concerned the role that companies can

play in publicly ostracising this form of violence that occurs within the home. Activities included the presentation of the English Workplace Policy model, whereby employers voluntarily pledge to publicly address domestic violence in newsletters and bulletin board notices, and through their own contact persons and information seminars. According to one speaker, this has created a corporate climate in which domestic vio-

lence is no longer a taboo subject, to be discussed only within the private domain. Positive effects are reflected in more productive and happier women workers and fewer disciplinary measures. During the conference, individual companies showed considerable interest in this English model, even if they were sceptical about whether female workers would in fact turn to company liaison officers to talk about their private problems.

BERLIN**Offenders, victims, heroines. Memory and gender**

The working group on gender, made up of FES scholarship holders, deals with questions of equality, attribution of gender roles and practical consequences in universities, careers and everyday life. Current and former FES scholarship holders interested in gender issues work together in an interdisciplinary manner. The gender working group is organised decentrally, the participants constantly exchanged through a forum of their own and via a mailing list on the intranet platform of FES scholarship holders. Once a year, the FES Scholarship Programme in Berlin invites the groups to a joint

event, organised mainly by the gender working group. In 2007 the focus was on gender specifics and the 'culture of memory'. The speaker was Professor Sigrid Jacobeit from the Institute for European Ethnology at the Humboldt University in Berlin. Dr Jacobeit was director of the Ravensbrück Memorial Site (Mahn- und Gedenkstätte, Fürstenberg/Havel) from 1992 to 2005.

No monument highlights gender roles quite as clearly as the central memorial for the victims of war and tyranny – the enlarged version of Käthe Kollwitz's sculpture entitled Mother with Dead

Son, erected in the Neue Wache in Berlin. And yet, whether one considers The Diary of Anne Frank with its almost iconic history, Fritz Cremer's Buchenwald memorial or the film The Downfall (Der Untergang), in which Hitler's end is portrayed from the perspective of his secretary, it becomes obvious that the culture of memory is, to a great extent, conditioned by attributing and portraying gender, manliness and femininity. Betrayal, heroism and resistance are branded by gender, as are perpetration and victimhood.

**THURINGIA****Conflict management for bullying**

The FES office in the state of Erfurt organised a skills seminar, for women only, on the subject of conflict management and how to deal with bullying. The large number of participants proved how much this issue impacts on the everyday life of many women. Women employees are well aware that they have accepted too much for too long, toned down what they wanted to say or not said it at all. The seminar discussed how to bear up in a conflict situation, how to be critical of one's own behaviour when one is offended and how to change one's own behaviour. Due to the great demand, a similar seminar will be offered in 2008 too.

DRESDEN**Does poverty create violence?**

'Does poverty create violence?' was the subject of a podium discussion in Dresden. That poverty can unleash considerable aggression was confirmed by the participants at an FES event to celebrate International Day against Violence against Women. According to the latest Poverty and Wealth Report, there is still a fairly wide discrepancy between rich and poor in Germany. The experts claimed that the material situation of women was particularly alarming. An 'options market' offered information about concrete options for help.

MAGDEBURG**Domestic violence in everyday life**

One of the meetings focused on the question of how affected women can be helped to break free of violent relationships. Taking such a step requires not only courage and an awareness of one's rights, but also professional help to assist women out of their misery.

POTSDAM**The Woman Without Words**

The FES office in Potsdam chose a novel way to process violent experiences: in the one-woman play *The Woman Without Words*, a woman as a dumb shadow of herself tolerates sexual violence, humiliation and indignity at the hands of her husband until one

day she finally reaches breaking point and murders her torturer. The performance was followed by an animated discussion, especially after it was staged for female convicts.

BERLIN/THURINGIA/**MECKLENBURG-WESTERN POMERANIA****Women on the far-right**

The role of women and girls on the far-right is often underestimated. They are not merely accessories or fellow travellers, but are increasingly important for their organisations' strategy because they seem less threatening than men. But the views of these women are just as racist and anti-democratic as those of their male comrades. Women and girls are the civil face of this scene. They stand at the public stalls set up by right-wing extremists, march in the front row in demonstrations or organise children's parties.

Right-wing extremist mothers are active as parent representatives in schools without hiding their ideological leanings. Thanks to them, right-wing ideas are slowly but surely gaining acceptance. The National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) founded the women's organisation Ring of National Women in 2006. The growing number of right-wing women has

resulted in a new problem: hitherto, activists whose partners had different opinions were often inclined to quit. This no longer applies.

In recent years, the FES Thuringia office has conducted a series of seminars on this subject and plans to integrate former activists into its future work. These activists have an insider's view and, given their personal experiences, enjoy considerable credibility.

The office in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania also deals regularly with women who are part of the right-wing extremist scene and organised a seminar entitled 'From the National Socialist Role Model of the Woman to the NPD Model'. With the help of the NPD programme and other documents from the Ring of National Women and the Community of German Women, it was possible to establish similarities and differences.



BONN**The climate is the same for all?!**

Are there any special women- and gender-related aspects for an effective climate protection policy? And what new conflicts does climate change cause in a family, a village or a region? This question was discussed at a conference organised by FES and the Marie Schlei Association.

Women are particularly affected by climate change. Statistics prove that most victims of natural disasters are women. Women own only 1 per cent of agricultural land worldwide but produce half the world's food. If their harvest is destroyed by drought or inclement weather caused by climate change, they and their families are usually

left with nothing. In Africa, women make up the majority of environmental and disaster refugees. 'Climate change is a subject that has been more or less ignored by women's organisations and gender experts. Women are trying to gain more of a foothold in the climate negotiations, but we are still far from integrating the gender perspective into the international debate', believes Ulrike Röhr, head of the genanet section for Gender, Environment and Sustainability. The international network gendero – women for climate justice (set up and coordinated by FES and others) – and genanet have drafted position papers closely oriented to



the negotiating themes of the world climate conference. They analyse the future climate regime, as well as how to finance adjustment and prevent climate change and deforestation. Promoting the integration of gender into climate protection policy was identified as a fundamental step towards sustainable development.

GUATEMALA**Femicide still goes largely unpunished**

The depressing report from the FES office in Guatemala can also apply to other countries with a widespread culture of machismo and violence, where civil society has been brutalised by years of civil war and high levels of corruption in the police force and the judiciary. Statistics on femicide show that Guatemala is one of the worst offenders worldwide. During the last ten years, 5,885 women were murdered and the estimated figure for unreported cases is much higher. The term 'femicide' refers to the targeted mass murder of women,

often tolerated if not supported by the state. In many cases the victims are raped and brutalised before being murdered. Human rights organisations have information that the police and military are always involved; in fact, in some cases there was even proof that they had been party to rape and torture. It therefore comes as no surprise that the government authorities responsible for women's welfare neither offer protection nor investigate the offence. According to Amnesty International, the police have investigated less than

10 per cent of cases. The causes of femicide are many – a negative image of women, few women in political office and the fact that the existing laws are applied almost exclusively in the capital city.

Possible solutions include better training for the police, more media publicity and effective legal protection for women. But according to the report compiled by the FES office, all this will achieve little if society does not overcome the macho culture that treats women with contempt.

COLOMBIA

Victim and offender in one person

The FES office in Colombia supported the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation by organising a seminar. More than 90 per cent of the surviving victims of the decades-long conflict are women and children. Many of the women are not only victims, however, but, as members of illegal armed groups, also offenders. Paradoxical as it may sound, the status of offender is important but is repeatedly denied to women. 'Demobilised' persons have access to certain government services intended to ease the return to a civilian life free of violence. Women victims and offenders have similar problems: they have been sexually

abused and have to look after their families on their own. They have virtually no access to the law and as victims can claim reparations or as offenders benefit from the demobilisation programme only with difficulty. A study has shown that young women tend to join both types of illegal armed groups – guerrilla and paramilitary – in an attempt to secure a source of income for their families or to flee domestic violence. In contrast, young men join primarily in search of recognition. Offender or victim, or both in one person, girls or young women who try to return to civilian life are stigmatised by society.



SUDAN

Despite marginalisation, the backbone of society

The peace agreement that brought an end to decades of civil war between the north and south of the country envisages democratic elections in 2009. The FES in Khartoum is actively involved in the process of drafting the electoral law. The draft stipulates a 25 per cent quota for women in parliament and the parties have pledged to maintain this quota within their own ranks, too. Even today, women's rights in Sudan are restricted in many ways: by the extremely conservative interpretation of Islamic law and a discriminatory civil status law that restricts fun-

damental rights such as the rights to travel, to work and to physical inviolability. This marginalisation notwithstanding, women and their organisations are the backbone of Sudanese society. While a strong women's civil rights movement campaigns for more rights in urban areas, rural women are seen as efficient administrators against widespread poverty. Women are marginalised but they are also the driving force behind reforms and socio-political activities and should be supported. This has hitherto been difficult, as few women in Sudan have access to formal politi-

cal decision-making structures and thus even more hope is pinned on electoral law and free elections. Civil-rights organisations, churches and political parties were all involved in drafting the law. Political participation in the electoral process was openly discussed and ideas developed that extend beyond the bill. One of the subjects for discussion is how rural women can be better integrated into the political process. So far, candidacy has been open mainly to women from respected urban families.

Integration and cohesion



Migration is a worldwide theme. Millions of people are in search of security, economic survival and a future for their children. People seek a new home either temporarily or permanently because poverty has forced them to make a choice – leave home or starve – because natural disasters have forced them to embark on the refugee trail, or because wars and civil wars condemn them to a life in camps, without hope of improvement. Hospitality in the host countries depends on many factors: are the migrants needed for economic reasons, like those who once came and stayed on in Germany as so-called guest workers? Do they share a similar culture and religion, making it easier for them to settle in? Are they accepted or rejected by the majority society? For decades, FES has been dealing with the issue of migration; above all, with the consequences for future generations. In the process, the gender dimension is moving more and more into the forefront, whether in the Foundation's domestic or international work.

SPD MP Dr Lale Akgün, whose parents hail from Istanbul, has spent several years working professionally on the broad issue of integration. In the Bundestag, Dr Akgün is a staunch advocate of an easy-going relationship between the majority society and minorities. She summarises her experiences as an intermediary between different worlds in what follows.





Dr Lale Akgün

SPD Bundestag MP: 'Getting to the heart of the matter!'

The link between women and integration is an emotionally charged subject. After much brouhaha we are invariably left with nothing but the head scarf and honour killing. For a politician who has addressed this issue often in the Bundestag, it is therefore particularly difficult to argue objectively in the midst of an emotional debate – and not to be heard. Yet the challenge of the task spurs me on to continue with the struggle for reason.

Furthermore, the subject of women and migration has two sides: while women and integration have been increasingly discussed in recent years and much has been printed and broadcast in the mass media, politics and, especially, research lag behind. The actual lives of migrant women are still underrepresented in research. What studies there are usually concentrate on distorted images of the 'average' Muslim woman, with her head covered, cooking in the kitchen while waiting for her husband to come home. Or, and this is the second option, they focus on deconstructing this image. Both options lead to the same goal, namely that young migrant women are still faced with stereotypes which doubtless influence their own self-image and how they view their position in society. Male migrants have a similar struggle. Nevertheless, the attempt to reduce the image to the cliché of the Mus-

lim woman with a head scarf, disenfranchised, so to speak, seems to be particularly resistant to change.

Contrary to this perception, however, women have been an integral part of labour migration ever since Germany started recruiting foreign workers. And this is not all: in 1972, for instance, the proportion of foreign women in work stood at 70 per cent in comparison with 47 per cent of German women, an indication of the unacknowledged potential that exists among the group of migrant women.

We will not delve deeper into the matter, but it should be noted that even today migrant women do not have it easy. Setting aside all the arguments concerning a fundamental cultural difference between Muslim migrant women and their native counterparts in Germany, one soon encounters social and educational aspects that are a stumbling block in the lives of many young women. According to a recent study, 57 per cent of Germans who apply for a teaching position are successful (even this figure is too low) but, in the case of young people with a foreign background and returning German resettlers, the figure is only 38 per cent! These figures further prove that young women in search of admission to an educational institute are even worse off, despite the fact that their average grades in school are better than those of

their German counterparts. How does one explain the relative lack of participation opportunities available to young migrant women in comparison to young Germans? This must be studied! This is the key issue!

Based on the example of admission to establishments of further education, it is obvious that much remains to be done. There must be better opportunities for women if they opt for further training once they have completed school, and vocational education must be improved. These details apart, it is vital that young women should have the same opportunities and prospects as young men and here we have made considerable progress. Young women with a migrant background should have the same opportunities and prospects as their German counterparts. This is the benchmark for political decisions, this is where politicians should dare to tread without getting entangled in head scarf debates that, all things considered, do not achieve very much.

FROM THE WORK OF FES

BERLIN/HAMBURG

The feminisation of migration



Lissy Gröner MEP at the international FES Congress on the Feminisation of Migration

Berlin: Almost 95 million women are on the move today, accounting for almost half the world's refugees. The Forum for Politics and Society dealt with the reasons for this and the risks taken by these women. It was a colourful event with many young foreigners who were celebrating one hundred years of the Socialist Youth International. While, once upon a time, women migrated essentially because their husbands or parents were migrating, today they often leave their countries on their own, with the intention of finding work in the affluent industrialised nations and earning money for the family back home. The sociologist Christa Wichterich weighed the advantages and disadvantages for women: on the one hand, their work is recognised and they experience freedom and autonomy;

on the other, they must reckon on violence, even sexual violence; being illegal, they have to fend for themselves when they fall ill and they are poorly paid. Lissy Gröner, Member of the European Parliament and spokesperson for the European Social Democratic Parliamentary Party on the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, lamented that these women are often denied even existing rights. As an example she cited the independent right of residence for the victims of traf-



ficking. Many participants demanded a right to mobility for women and an acceptance policy based on human rights. In the words of the Secretary General of the Socialist Women's International, only if there is more distributive justice can there be a halt to the growing number of migrant women.

Fair working conditions and a labour market policy that supports migrant women in their search for legal work are factors that can effectively counter human trafficking and forced labour in Europe. Trafficking is particularly severe on women. All the participants from ten European countries agreed that human trafficking can be effectively countered only if Europeans address the problem jointly.

Hamburg: The FES office in Hamburg has also been working on the feminisation of migration. With about 100 million women who are unable to continue living in their own countries, the share of women among work migrants has virtually doubled in the last 50 years. More often than not women migrate because they face gender discrimination.

NEUWIED / LEIPZIG**Illness is invariably a problem**

Migrant families pay fewer visits to the doctor than Germans who have health insurance, even though migrants often do work that is far more damaging to health. This is true not only of illegal migrants, but also of migrant families who have been living in Germany for a long time. Two FES

events in Neuwied and Leipzig, respectively, discussed the barriers and how to overcome them. Migrants go for check-ups less frequently and avoid medical consultation and treatment. In the case of illegal migrants this is simply because they are illegal, but the situation is compounded by language

barriers and by the fact that women from certain cultural backgrounds are reluctant to be examined by male medical practitioners. Networks to support women have been established in some communities. Interpreters are of paramount importance as they help both the patient and the doctor.

BERLIN**Young migrants and violence**

‘We are in this together’ was the motto of an event organised jointly by the FES Forum for Politics and Society and the Berlin State Commission against Violence, held in the Rotes Rathaus in Berlin. The experts presented some depressing figures: 79 per cent of habitual offenders are youngsters of foreign origin, mainly young men from the former Yugoslavia, Turkey and Lebanon. Since 2005, an interdepartmental working group set up by the State Commission against Violence, which includes migrant organisations, has been analysing the causes of and strategies for prevention of violence. Besides failure at school and the consequent high youth unemployment, the main reasons are violence within families and an authoritarian upbringing. Norms



Hasso Lieber, Undersecretary of State in the Senate Department of Justice, Berlin, and Eren Ünsal, moderator

of masculinity legitimising violence hinder young men from engaging in public life beyond their own small group. This is compounded by the fact that the disturbing experiences undergone by children and youngsters during civil wars and their escape from war have yet to be addressed. While there was no lack of recommendations about how to handle violent young offenders, more importantly there were many suggestions for

meaningful prevention. Participants realised, however, that there are still no conclusive implementation strategies. It was positive to note that the representatives of migrant organisations agreed that they too had to assume responsibility for efforts to combat the high levels of youth crime. It was decided that future communication between all the institutions involved should be improved.

BERLIN

**View across the River Oder:
women journalists join hands to investigate**



Women journalists in conversation with Bascha Mika, Editor-in-Chief, Taz

On the initiative of the Association of Women Journalists, an interesting project was launched in 2007: German and Polish women journalists researched freely chosen issues that were then published in the media in their respective countries. The conditions of the study were worked out during an inaugural seminar at FES in Berlin. The topics should be important for both countries, describe the situation of women and take the gender angle into ac-

count. For instance, the scholarship holders wrote about 'Children and a career' and about 'Women entrepreneurs in rural areas'. One journalist and her partner tried to trace the women in her family from the River Weichsel region in Poland.

Ulrike Meitzner, who went in search of her family in Pottulitz/Potulice, wrote down her reminiscences, which are reproduced below.

Apple peel and barbed wire

The English language has a lovely expression for words that are a part of our everyday lives: 'household words'. As a child, Pottulitz was a household word for me, 'household' because most of the stories of Potulice – the Polish name that was, however, never used – were narrated in my grandparents' kitchen, while peeling potatoes, washing up, making coffee.

The favourite memories were of how laid-back my grandmother was. In 1947, at the age of 41, she and her daughters were sent to a concentration camp. At the Straßappell (punishment roll call) the women were required to do the 'Up, Down' on the roll call square, a pseudo-military exercise that involved throwing oneself quickly onto the ground and standing up again. Despite the hard work and terrible food, family legend has it that my grandmother still had the energy to laugh, and once laughed at a woman who looked funny when doing the exercise. She paid for this with an extra hour on the square supervised by a militiaman who kicked her in the back with his boots.



A German–Polish search

My mother has other memories. She was six years old when she entered the camp; in 1947, children of that age tended to die in camps. Perhaps that explains why food is ingrained in her mind. She threw up the stinking beet soup. My grandmother toasted some bread on the oven in the camp laundry and she passed it through the fence to my mother. The sight of the heavy, dark, stringy bread in the camp would

also make my mother's stomach churn. My grandmother used to take the bread from old women who could no longer eat, because they lay dying. This detail was usually not mentioned.

Potulice in north-east Poland (also called Lebrechtsdorf by the Germans) is not a particularly well-known concentration camp. It was built in 1941 as the field office of the concentration camp Stutthof, as a resettlement and work camp

for Polish civilians. After 1945, it was used for Germans, mainly women and children. The approximately 30,000 inmates who passed through the camp until 1949/1950 included my mother's family: Olga Krüger, my grandmother, born in 1906, with the children Danita, Irmgard and Herta, as well as Olga's younger sister Gertrud. My grandfather was a prisoner of war. The family did not flee because of a string of unlucky coincidences and perhaps also due to a certain obstinacy. After all, they came from an old German settler village on the River Weichsel with the prophetic name of Bógpomóz Stary – Althelfgott (literally, Old Helpgod).

Excerpts from Apfelschalen und Stacheldraht – die Suche nach Potulice by Ulrike Meitzner, printed in Frauen-Rat 6/2007

COLOGNE

Women in Islam between oppression and self-empowerment



At the invitation of the Academy for Political Education and the Department for International Development Cooperation, 200 Muslim women from Africa, Asia, the US and Europe gathered in Cologne in March. Against the backdrop of International Women's Day and under the aegis of Dr Lale Akgün, SPD Member of Parliament in charge of Islamic affairs, the women spent two days reporting on and discussing different issues. These women are often economically exploited and subjected to social, cultural and religious discrimination, as well as political repression in their countries. They seek to tackle these issues through practical self-help projects. Conservative-orthodox groups and Islamists frequently use Islam as a tool to legitimise and support discrimination against women, making it even more important to highlight alternative ways of read-

ing the 'sacred sources' of Islam, the Koran and the Sunna. The women, led by critical 'feminists' Nahed Selim, from the Netherlands, and Asma Barlas, from the US, argued convincingly that patriarchal traditions have determined interpretations of the Koran and the Sunna for centuries and continue to dominate in the Islamic world, as well as in many



Muslim communities in Europe. Nahed Selim, Asma Barlas, Nahide Bozkurt (Ankara) and representatives from the Cologne Centre for Islamic Women's Research were able to prove that there are new 'feminine' hermeneutic approaches that can lead to a fresh interpretation of the notorious Sura 4,34, which is still advanced by legal scholars as justification for a husband beating his wife. But the meeting was not only about a new Koran hermeneutics. The women from Sudan, Nigeria, Malaysia, Indonesia and Europe fascinated the audience with informative and lively presentations of a plethora of both creative and pro-active self-help projects that ranged from the analysis of anti-women shariah courts in Nigeria to the publication of an English-language magazine – Arab Life Style – for the Arab-Islamic community in Great Britain. The commitment and courage with which these women address the frequently stressful and adverse economic, social, political and cultural conditions in their countries was inspiring. They need our ongoing support and the debate will be taken further at another conference in June 2008.

WÜRZBURG**'I am only a head scarf'**

'Why don't people look at what is under my head scarf? I am, after all, a person in my own right and that is how I would like to be perceived', said a participant at a women's seminar held at the Frankenwarte Academy. The highly committed women, aged between 21 and 74, with and without migrant backgrounds, from virtually all the German states, conducted spirited and often vociferous discussions. The controversial debates repeatedly proved how difficult it is to accept statements that do not conform to what, in one's own culture, is considered a successful life as a woman. During the three-day seminar, the experts gave well-argued talks on issues such as Islam in the Koran, migrant women and the media, and everyday experiences.

**INDIA****Forced resettlement hits women particularly hard**

The phenomenon of migration is not restricted to the traditional industrialised countries or emerging and developing countries. Even within a country, people may be persecuted, forced to resettle elsewhere and deprived of their livelihoods. India's rapid economic development, for instance, is creating new social distortions in rural areas. Especially in the east of the country, many villagers are being forced to leave their homes to make way for large projects, such as dams, mines and power plants. Although over 20 million people have been resettled in India since the 1950s, most states lack the legal regulations governing compen-

sation for affected families. The effects are dramatic, as became apparent during an FES conference on resettlement and compensation practices. The situation of women was the focal point. Women are particularly affected by the destruction of social ties and by financial insecurity. Even though a woman is responsible for the survival of the family, the government-run compensation programmes are directed at the male head of the household. At the conference, NGOs from badly affected parts of the country had the opportunity to network and to develop new forms of assistance.

Education and training



Finally, the German education system is once again the subject of controversy, and questions are being raised about the three-tier school system. The fact that students from underprivileged backgrounds have less and less access to university is a matter of concern for politicians, even those who are not education experts. Yet one of the issues in this debate has already been on the agenda for decades without much hope of change: the discrimination against women in science and research – especially in top positions – and their lack of interest in scientific and technical careers. What is new, however, is that education policy is addressing the situation of boys in schools: they get lower grades and tend to drop out of school earlier, especially boys from migrant families. FES has been dealing intensively with this subject for some years and is conducting research into pupils' backgrounds.

In developing and emerging countries there are other causes of concern: for example, girls are still not allowed to attend school as readily as boys. With the support of networks, several seminars focus on training women because experience has shown that self-confident, competent women act as role models, and at the local political level, for instance, they make a special effort to fight on behalf of girls and ensure that they have equal access to school education.



In its scholarship programme, the Foundation can look back on an impressive record: the promotion of educational opportunities in general, and for young women in particular, is a key element of social justice.



Professor Christine Färber

Faculty member, Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, and former FES scholarship holder

FES SCHOLARSHIPS

A chance for young women from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds

A woman from an educationally disadvantaged background does not have it easy. I myself grew up as a working-class child in rural Germany in a Catholic region. My mother was not from the area. Nobody thought that I would teach at university, least of all myself.

I had always intended to study, but that was difficult to finance. In the third semester I applied to the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung for a scholarship. The application procedure itself taught me a great deal. I thought about my motivation to study and had some extremely interesting conversations about the available options.

With the scholarship fresh in my pocket, I studied in the US for a year. In terms of women's equality and integration policies, my eyes were opened to a completely new world.

Thanks to the scholarship, I had no financial worries – a liberating experience for somebody who comes from a family in which every last penny counted. I was no longer haunted by the fact that I would have to pay back my student loan. I no longer had to take on backbreaking jobs as a

chambermaid. I was also free to engage in politics – that had always been 'my thing'.

The FES seminars gave me much in terms of special skills, practice in intellectual discussions and a viable network; they also provided me with my closest friends. Women were not in the majority at seminars, but as participants we were taken seriously, challenged and supported. It gave me the confidence to choose my subjects freely at university and to assert myself and my opinions – even if it meant going against my lecturers.

As a faculty member in a technical college, I observe my female students, many talented young women who believe that scholarships are not for them. When I talk to them because I think they are gifted, they tell me about their remarkable achievements, about being socially involved (after all, not everyone has to be like me and engage in politics). From the very outset, students from the lower classes or those who are migrants do not think that scholarships could be something for them and do not have the confidence to sub-

mit an application. This is not just my subjective impression. I conduct college and university research and the scholarship-related data confirm this pattern.

I would like to encourage women to apply for scholarships. If successful, a grant opens up an entirely new dimension in higher education and provides a unique opportunity to realise one's potential without constraints.

My scholarship enabled me to study political science, philosophy and American studies in Tübingen, the US and Mainz. After graduating, I was in charge of women's issues for eight years at the Free University, Berlin. I am married, have two children and did my doctorate alongside my career. Today I teach at the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (HAW) and manage Competence Consulting in Potsdam.

Women and the women's movement in India

FES: Zubaan is a publishing house exclusively centred around development issues and, especially, gender concerns; in your view as a woman entrepreneur in India, how different is it from other publishers?

Urvashi Butalia: Zubaan is different from other publishers in many ways: it is set up on a non-profit basis – this does not mean we do not make a profit, we do, but that is not our prime motive, and whatever profits we make go right back into our books, as for us, publishing books about and by women is like a mission. So, in many ways, we are publishers who are not frightened of being political, and feminist. This is also what makes us different as entrepreneurs: you know, entrepreneurs are only supposed to think about money, but we maintain a fine balance between our politics and sustainability, which means earning enough to keep going.

There are now many women entrepreneurs in India; they head large corporations and businesses and are very successful. We are small but, we hope, significant. When we started there were fewer women in business, and the struggle was to be taken seriously, to be seen as a professional and to fight off men who thought you were always sexually available! But now, things are much better, and for us the real challenge is not that we are not taken seriously, we are, but to learn – still after 23 years! – how to be a feminist and an entrepreneur, and for me personally, how to be a feminist boss!

FES: How are India's changing realities reflected in the kind of books you publish?

Urvashi Butalia: We try always to keep track of the changing realities of women in India and to reflect them in our books. It is because of





Urvashi Butalia

Feminist, author and Director of Zubaan, a publishing house for women's books in New Delhi

this that we have started to publish books for and by young women, which was, until recently, a huge gap in publishing in India. Because we are so closely connected with the women's movement, we are aware of issues as they develop on the ground. So, for example, we were the first publishers to bring out a book on the Hindu right-wing and women; we were the first (and are still the only) publishers to bring out a book on women in Kashmir; we have done books on gender and architecture (again a new issue), as well as on conflict, the north east of India, disaster management and so on. It is very important for us to be in touch with issues on the ground; otherwise there is no reason for us to exist.

FES: Where does the women's movement in India currently stand? What have been its major achievements and setbacks in the last decade or so?

Urvashi Butalia: Well, feminism and the women's movement have changed a great deal in recent years. For the new generation of women, the battles fought by their mothers have opened up spaces that they now take for granted. For 'old world' feminists, this is a time to reflect on their history, their

strategies and their successes and failures. In India, at least, it has become very important – it always was but there is an increased awareness of this now – for feminists and women activists to ally with other civil rights movements, such as the environmental movement and the movement against caste discrimination. There is also a greater awareness of the need to involve men. Issues that earlier seemed straightforward are now seen to be much more complex – for example, the debate on censorship and freedom of expression, or on law or on 'choice' in marriage and relationships. There is, as everywhere, a greater institutionalisation of the movement. Furthermore, the modes of resistance have begun to change – the street level protest, the placard, the strategy of 'shaming' the offenders, or blockading them in their homes or offices, all these have begun to change. But I think it's a change for the better – we may have lost something, but we have also gained (for example, in India no policy or planning document, no party manifesto can ignore women), and I think the only way now is forward. You asked about setbacks – there have been some, but there have also been many challenges, for example the rise of the

militant, fundamentalist, extremist woman (particularly Hindu and Muslim women) has thrown up many questions for feminism, which has always celebrated women's agency as something positive.

FES: It is said that India is positioned to be a global player by 2020. Do you see this happening, and what effect will this have for men and women in India?

Urvashi Butalia: I think India is already well on its way to becoming a global player and undoubtedly, this will have an impact on men and women in India; in some cases it will open up job opportunities for women in areas that they have not had access to before. For example, in Indian cities these days you see many more young women from lower middle class homes working as, say, salesgirls, petrol pump attendants, and so on. This would not have happened ten or fifteen years ago – not only would there not have been jobs, but their families would have been much more conservative. At the same time, I think it is best to be cautious about this business of India as a global player – there's a lot of excitement among rich or middle class Indians about this,

because they can see the benefits. But go a little way out of the main cities, and you see a very different India, poor, illiterate, with no facilities, with rampant hunger. How can we forget all this in the glitter of becoming a global player? Surely the benefits must be shared by everyone in this country, and truly, my feeling is that until we can say that we have removed poverty, that everyone in India now has a chance to live a life of dignity and a life free from hunger, we will not become a true global player. In

many ways, we have set an example to the world in the way we have dealt with democracy. To really make this deep and meaningful, we need to be willing and able to deal with poverty. Then we can stand up before the world and be proud of being Indian, but not before.

FES: Which recent book has particularly impressed you?

Urvashi Butalia: I'm never impressed by only one book. I read a

lot, and all the time, professionally, personally – reading is my job, and my relaxation. I read in Hindi and English and occasionally in French! But I do want to mention one book that has really impressed me, more for what it stands for than for its literary merit (although it has that too). It is the autobiography of a young woman, a domestic worker who was married at the age of 12 and became a mother at the age of 13. She went through a violent marriage, had three children, and then, finally,



when she could stand it no longer, she decided to leave her husband. She took her children with her and boarded a train to Delhi where, after much difficulty, she found a job as a domestic worker. Her employer, a retired professor, noticed that she spent a lot of time in the room with books and one day he asked her if she could read. She then told him of her desire to study, and described how she had been pulled out of school at a young age. This man then started to lend her books and encouraged her to read. One day he gave her a notebook and a pen, and she wrote her life story. The book that resulted is called *A Life Less Ordinary*, and it has now been translated into 23 languages. I translated this book (the author's name is Baby Halder) from Hindi into English, and now it has become an international bestseller! It will soon appear in German from Draupadi Verlag. I love this book because it is the story of someone who would not normally have a voice, a marginalised person, and



because it tells the story of thousands of other women like her, and because it is a book about books and reading, and it is written by a woman! What could be better?

*Interviewed by Renate Tenbusch
and Damyanty Sridharan,
FES India*

FROM THE WORK OF FES

BERLIN

Women in science and research: the glass ceiling frustrates careers

What about equal opportunities in the German research landscape? A meeting with and for scientists in Berlin concluded that the picture is still rather grim, despite efforts to professionalise women in research and teaching, as well as career training for prospective women university teachers. The glass ceiling remains intact. There is also the eternal complaint of antiquated ideas harboured by researchers that impede women from making



a concerted effort to move up the career ladder. Consequently, Ger-

many lags far behind by international comparison.

BONN / BERLIN

Public speaking for women

Women and men have different styles of communication and they are not always compatible. In public discourse, academic and political, young women find it more difficult to prove themselves in a male-dominated discussion climate. Hence many FES offices, including the Forum NRW in Bonn

and FES Berlin, offer seminars on public speaking for young women in an attempt to train them for discussions and to study their behaviour in academic and political debate. It is important to make women aware of their strengths, and the focus is therefore on dealing with one's own 'feminine' style of communication in a self-confident and pro-active manner. As women are often more consensus-oriented and open to discussion than men, there is an opportunity here for genuine exchange. Making women aware of this skill is one of the goals of these seminars.



BONN

Teachers: exude confidence, be pro-active when representing interests

Twenty-eight young women but only two young men seized the opportunity offered by a professional development project for prospective teachers in Bonn to which they had been invited by the Forum NRW. They were trained above all to exude confidence. Only if you can argue convincingly can you assert yourself in political discourse. And precisely these skills are required by young women and men, as good teachers, if they want to succeed in representing the interests of the children and young people entrusted to them in politics and in public debate.

HAMBURG / KOCHERL / ERFURT**Boys are the losers**

To some extent, girls outshine boys in school today. Boys get poorer grades and are often obliged to repeat a year. Two thirds of all school drop-outs and three quarters of special needs children are boys, whose social behaviour in class poses a constant challenge to the teachers. For decades, girls from conservative rural families were education's problem children, but they have been replaced by city boys from migrant or underprivileged families with little or no educational background. This was the conclusion drawn in 2007 by Ute Erdsiek-Rave, President of the Education Ministers Conference, and education minister for Schleswig-Holstein, during an FES education forum in Hamburg. The theme of the forum was the 'Gendered Development of Boys and Girls in Society and School'.

This subject was also spotlighted at a seminar organised by the Georg von Vollmar Academy in Kochel am See with the provocative title 'Construction Site School – Open for Renovation'. In the participants' view, the construction site that needs urgent attention is current pedagogy for boys and girls, with boys as the losers. The Erfurt office has also dealt with the subject of 'School Today, School of the Future', wherein concepts



from seven German states for extended periods of co-educational learning were compiled in a study. It was striking that the first experiences with the new community schools were positive across the board. Other interesting results showed that the number of students finishing the Hauptschule (general secondary school, compulsory for all pupils who do not transfer to other secondary schools) is declining, while the number of students obtaining an Abitur (high school diploma) is on the rise. Experts believe that this is explained exclusively by the need for young girls to prove themselves.

FREIBURG**Sons need fathers**

'What does today's man want?' was the rather desperate question posed at an event organised by the Fritz Erler Forum, Baden-Württemberg, in Freiburg. The subject was gender justice from men's point of view, a subject in the spotlight of many notable events the previous year. The participants in the panel discussion warned that if men do not change for themselves and their partners, they should do so at least for their sons who, like many of their fathers, are also caught in a crisis.

Drug abuse, a propensity to violence, failure at school – all this affects sons far more than daughters. At particular risk are the sons of authoritarian or absentee fathers. Boys need male role models, which can be provided only by a father who is physically present and helps with the house work. The men among the panellists were understanding and pointed out that although top positions in business and politics continue to be distributed largely among men, today's man suffers more than before because he is an outsider in his family. Work-life balance was a key word in the discussion.

BERLIN**Vocational education at a time of change: a study**

Forty per cent of all students who finish school in Germany and would like to go on to higher education are no longer able to obtain regular admission and end up in transitional systems. This is the outcome of an alarming study conducted by professors Martin Baethge and Heike Solga at the University of Göttingen. The study analysed the dire situation of the German education system. Dual higher education structures are increasingly losing importance, and the assurance that dual systems can serve as a model to be replicated is being questioned as supply continues to fall. Consequently, the majority of school leavers have colossal problems when starting their professional lives, end up in long queues and, instead of proper further education, are offered various measures to prepare them for working life.

Berufsbildung im Umbruch: Signale eines überfälligen Aufbruchs, Martin Baethge, Heike Solga and Markus Wieck; Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2007. <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/stabsabteilung/04258/index.html>

BERLIN / SCHWERIN**Muss Familie neu erfunden werden?**

Iris Radisch in conversation with Dr Erik Gurgsdies, FES Schwerin

More time for children, more time for family life, is what the literary editor Iris Radisch demands in her book *Die Schule der Frauen – Wie wir die Familie neu erfinden* [The School of Women – How to Re-invent the Family]. The Forum for Politics and Society discussed the theory with the author. For her, the crux lies in the ‘lack of examples of successful love in modern life’. However, even the rhythm of modern working life is incompatible with the time demanded by family life. Fathers feel growing pressure to fulfil their role as breadwinners besides meeting the de-

mands placed on them as fathers. What is needed is a corporate culture that does not disregard the family and is willing to finance family time.

At another event, treading a fine balance between career and family was discussed from a woman’s perspective. In contrast to other European countries, it is still not normal in Germany for mothers to want to pursue a career and to have a family. The model of a self-sacrificing super-mum – for many, a typically German myth of motherhood – remains deep-rooted.

Iris Radisch

Literary editor



Protected time zones for a threatened species: the family

FES: In your book you depict a family destroyed by divorce and separation, now a species on the brink of extinction. [...] What must be done to save the family from extinction?

Iris Radisch: One must create protected areas, or, to be more precise, protected time zones for the family. The family needs time more than anything else. Of course it also has material needs, but in my view the central problem is that we have far too little time for each other. The 30- to 60-minute family that we have when father and mother are working is really suicide for the family, a kamikaze mission.

What we need instead is a flexible work culture that enables father and mother to spend a few afternoons looking after their children. If, for example, the father's and mother's working time was reduced by 20 per cent, respectively, this would result in 40 per cent more family time for the children. I believe this would be an ideal solution.

FES: But why is that so terribly difficult? Everybody is born in a family and should be aware of the problems.

Iris Radisch: Because we have a completely obsolete and rigid work culture. It is based on the pattern of a man's working life in which a man could always rely on the support of a housewife or somebody else if he had children. But this is no longer the case. [...] One must give families the option of choosing from a range of part-time models according to the lives they live; in other words, to choose a model for the decisive years and be free to switch to something else later.

It is therefore unacceptable that most women have to take part-time jobs and are not re-integrated into the work process later on. In other words, they continue with part-time work even when the children have grown up. This is an extremely rigid and immobile system; for a start, one must loosen the screws in one's head, the mentality must change, followed by the work culture. Otherwise families will continue to be destroyed. One can set up as many child-care centres as one wants and offer financial assistance, but without these protected time zones, the family has no chance of survival.

FES: In your book you write that our understanding of happiness is materialistic and therefore utterly shallow – reduced to a simple formula: happiness equals pleasure. How does this materialistic understanding of happiness impact on the family?

Radisch: In my observation, efficiency-oriented thinking – in other words, economic thinking – has considerably corroded the family structure. Even in families, maximum results must be attained in the minimum possible time. This leaves one with less and less time for natural processes, for experiences that set in only with time. The increasing pace of working life has now entered family life too. Hence, in your free time you try to create a perfectly-timed programme packed with experiences, either with the children or on your own, because you can no longer free yourself of the thought that everything must be worth it, must have added value, and therefore even pleasure should have added value. But genuine happiness cannot be based on this. This is why I say that we need to take a critical look at the concept of happiness, if we are to rediscover a deeper hap-

piness; after all: happiness based purely on efficiency – that's not what it's all about.

FES: To conclude: what do you think of the sentence, 'To bring about a human society you must first overcome the male society?'

Iris Radisch: [smiling] Yes, but male only in the sense of the old, traditional understanding of strong man, weak woman, superior man, inferior woman. I believe that a new manliness, and especially a new fatherliness, can be extremely rewarding for men too. If more and more men are discovering their softer side, it in no way means a loss of manliness – although some people may interpret it that way – but an increase in humanity.

*Interviewed by
Dr Erik Gurgsdies,
FES Schwerin*



NEW ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

Women in history in the FES archives



The FES Archives of Social Democracy preserve, maintain and present the historical legacy of the social democratic movement. In addition to files, there are also photographs, posters and leaflets, as well as film and audio clips. The

Archive webpage carries information and visual material on Women in History.

Centre for Historical Research –
Archive of Social Democracy: www.fes.de/archiv/_projekte/projektset.htm



COURAGE digitised

The Berlin women's magazine COURAGE was published for nine years from 1976 to 1984. Women wrote for women on hitherto taboo subjects, initially every month and then every week: violence against women, women's medicine, women's history, women's politics, sexuality, women's art, discrimination against women at work, the abortion law in Germany, discovering one's own body, trade union work, rape, women in opposition in Eastern Europe, female genital mutilation in Africa, women's literature. The autonomous, left-wing feminist COURAGE and EMMA (Germany's flagship feminist magazine) were the most prominent platforms for the

new women's movement in the early 1980s. Then the magazines and special editions disappeared into libraries and archives. The FES library, with financial assistance from the Centre for Historical Research, has now made the diverse articles accessible, digitised the texts for the internet and put them into readable form. The visitor can conduct a search using key words or the name of the author; it is also possible to enter a particular period in time. COURAGE can be accessed at: <http://library.fes.de/courage/>

A brochure entitled When the Women's Movement still had COURAGE is available free of charge from Doris.Fassbender@fes.de

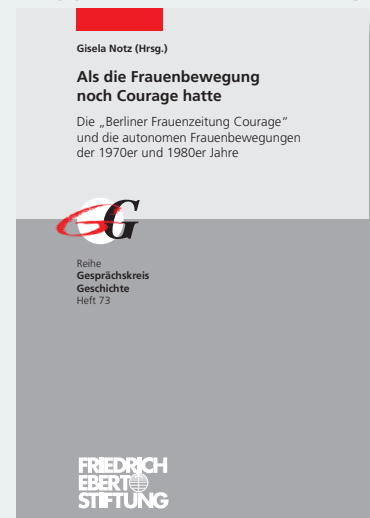
Women and gender in the library

Gender equality is a priority area in the Foundation's work in Germany and abroad. Thanks to an online catalogue, the digital library and theme-based offerings from the library, the results of the work, in the form of print and online publications, can reach a very wide national and international public.

Library and research networks help to significantly expand the reach of publications on this central social issue.

FES net source: History and politics: <http://library.fes.de/library/netzquelle/frauen/index.html>

RECOMMENDED READING



RECOMMENDED READING



A conversation between generations

with Elke Ferner, MP and chairperson ASF

and Franziska Drohsel, Federal chairperson of the Young Socialists (Jusos)

Pulling together in the same direction

FES: A hundred years ago the first international socialist women's conference was held in Stuttgart, which gave birth to the Socialist Women's International. This anniversary was the focus of the FES event organised to celebrate International Women's Day 2007. Ninety years ago, women in Germany were granted the active and passive right to vote. Keeping these two dates in mind, Elke, how did you experience the active years of the women's movement in the 1970s and 1980s – the time of 'lilac dungarees'? Is there still a women's movement today, or are we witnessing a rollback?

Elke Ferner: There was one event that made a particular impression on me. That was the campaign by women in Stern in which they stated, 'I have aborted'. A taboo subject at the time, even for us young women. However, we weren't completely new to the subject because, after all, someone we knew would have been in such a situation and had to find a way out, despite the stringent abortion law of the time. The women of the 1970s and 1980s are largely responsible for the subsequent quantum leap in the women's movement.

I do believe that we are seeing a rollback today. Unfortunately, in all areas, and not just politics, we feel that we were once much further ahead. This is also true of a number of discussions in which one thinks: after 30 years of women's policies, do we still have to go over that again? First and foremost, my generation must ensure that it does not squander the successes of the previous generation; at the same time we must make the younger generation aware that nothing happens by itself. The party conference in Hamburg was encouraging. Together with Jusos, we succeeded in taking equality a bit further. Perhaps not as much as we would have liked, but nevertheless, we got quite a long way. To this end, the Jusos initiative 'A New Chapter in Equality' was of course extremely helpful.

FES: Franziska, you are a member of the next generation. What do you and your peers associate with 'emancipation' and 'feminism'? What should the women's movement do today to prevent a rollback?

Franziska Drohsel: The reason that women of my age, or even younger women, are engaging less with feminist issues, or at least are aligning themselves less with the women's movement, than was earlier the case, is because we did not discover how society discriminated against us until later. I joined Jusos when I was 15. Until then I hadn't cared much for



From left: Anne Seyfferth, Franziska Drohsel, Elke Ferner and Alina Fuchs

feminism. The party and Jusos made me a feminist. For the first time, I felt there was a difference when one goes to find work as a woman or a man. The feeling of being discriminated against begins when, for example, a working woman is fired because she is pregnant. One realises that while about half the students at university are women, there are fewer in business and they are rare at management level. And then there is still the tiresome question of combining a family and a career. When starting a family, it is obvious that we do not yet live in an equal society.

FES: Today we no longer speak only of women's policy, but consciously also of gender policy, aware that gender stereotypes must change. Does successful gender mainstreaming render women's policy superfluous?

Elke Ferner: Gender mainstreaming can only complement what has gone before. If handled properly, it starts with the existing structures. Unfortunately, gender policy does not necessarily imply gender mainstreaming! As before, we need active women's advancement policies, otherwise dispelling prejudice will be a slow process. Take the example of women in leading positions: German business ranks bottom among industrialised nations. This is not because women in Germany are less intelligent, less qualified, less motivated or less committed, but because men's networks still function better than women's networks, which unfortunately are still in their infancy. Second, recruiting a potential mother is still considered risky. This is not true of potential fathers. Male managers have more children than their female counterparts. Across the board, the partners of women managers are also gainfully employed and often occupy higher positions, while this is more of an exception when it comes to the partners of male managers. This classic role allocation is still extant and means that more men are represented in working life. Hence, we need not only a law governing equal rights, but several building blocks in terms of affirmative action for women – building blocks that cannot be replaced by gender policy.

FES: Franziska, do we need more active men's policies?

Franziska Drohsel: From a gender standpoint, both sexes should be taken into account and such an approach is worth supporting. Of course one has to start with the men, so that they spend more time bringing up their

A conversation between generations

children. Socialisation plays a crucial role here. Therefore, one should start thinking about fighting for equal co-existence in the education sector. However, I also have the impression that gender mainstreaming is expected to serve as a panacea, as a consequence of which nothing much is likely to happen. One must beware of losing the original women's advancement policies and feminist policies in the process.

FES: In 2008, it will be 20 years since the decision taken at the SPD party conference to introduce a quota for women. The representation of neither men nor women may fall below 40 per cent in all functions and mandates. The quota ruling was not uncontroversial at the time. Elke, how do you feel today about the quota? Did you ever see yourself as a 'quota woman', as 'Quothilda'?

Elke Ferner: At the outset, it should be mentioned that the time limitation on quotas in the Constitution was abolished at the last party conference. This was the best time at which to do this. Whether one could still do it today is questionable. At my first Jusos women's conference, I was vehemently opposed to quotas because I did not see the necessity – which is probably true of many younger women today. If you are good, you succeed. That was what I believed at the time. Real life showed me that one very good woman after another fails against an utterly useless man. I would also like to be allowed to choose among women and not just have to elect women so that they are well represented in the committees. Secondly, as long as we can afford to have so many bad men, I am also prepared to put up with one or two bad women. As a rule, women have more than proved themselves, have surpassed themselves in their jobs and have achieved much in office. In my case, I would probably never have been in the Bundestag without the quota system, as, at the time, the second place on the party list from my sub-district would certainly never have been occupied by a woman. I stand by quotas, as long as women ultimately also prove what they are capable of, and that they are at least as good as men. Then I have absolutely no problem with wearing the 'quota woman' badge in my lapel.

FES: Franziska, in your opinion, do we still need a quota today? How do you judge the political participation of women and what can be done to fan the enthusiasm of young women for politics and taking up political positions?

Franziska Drohsel: I think quotas are still indispensable. Even in Jusos, and that means the young generation, women make up just 30 per cent of the members. We therefore definitely need instruments such as the



quota system to increase the percentage of women in important positions. When I started to be politically active, I was sceptical, too. However, reality within the party and in politics showed me exactly how deeply entrenched male culture is. Far too often, politics does not work according to objective and qualitative criteria, but is conducted over a glass of beer by men who have their own style of communication. As a woman, one feels out of place and has no desire to be politically active in such conditions. Therefore, I believe it is right and important to have the quota system. As more and more women assume top positions, it serves as an example and motivates other women to be more politically engaged. In my case, I would possibly not have been given certain positions had there been no quotas. But I have always been pro-active in my position and never perceived the quota as demeaning.

In general, of course, we must fight to encourage more young women to take up politics. Katrin Münch, Jusos President, and I hope that two women at the top will bring in more women. We must also develop new concepts to appeal to women, such as the mentoring programme for women and must fundamentally change the culture of political associations so that young women are not discouraged. In any case, there is still much to be accomplished.

FES: The world of work is a core area as regards an equal society. The General Law on Equal Treatment has been in force since August 2006, and 2007 was the European Year of Equal Opportunity. Elke, how do you judge the year 2007 in terms of gender justice at the workplace? What additional measures do we need?

Elke Ferner: In brief, the instruments mentioned have not taken us very far. There is still no law governing equality in the private sector.

With regard to Europe, it is extremely unfortunate that the German contribution to the European Year of Equality was, quite honestly, embodied solely in the person of Ursula von der Leyen (German Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth). In substantive terms, she did absolutely nothing for the politics of equality. We need more measures! Much will depend on how the Equal Treatment Law is applied and the extent to which the authorities responsible for equality manage to have an impact on the public and sensitise it to discrimination. The initial impact of the law is already apparent in job advertisements. The critical question, however, is whether women who apply for a job actually stand a chance. In cases of discrimination, we need more support for the women affected. Women must be given more self-confidence so that they can actively fight against discrimination. Above all, we must make



it clear in politics that we no longer accept the inactivity of the business sector in the fight against discrimination. After all, the voluntary agreement of 2001 has by no means been adhered to.

I would call on the minister not just to bear the title but also to fulfil the task. Likewise, the authorities responsible for equality must make gender discrimination a priority.

FES: Franziska, discrimination is often perpetuated by set patterns of behaviour. For instance, many young women still choose 'classic' women's jobs. How do you explain this? How can one give women the confidence to take up jobs often considered male domains?

Franziska Drohsel: This stereotypical behaviour when choosing a job can be explained by the fact that, in German society, certain kinds of work continue to be gender-specific, a phenomenon that is transferred to the younger generation through socialisation. Stereotypes, such as the woman as a caring housewife and the man as the one who repairs the car, still exist, at least under the surface. This puts the onus on education policy, from kindergarten to school. The curriculum, textbooks and other teaching material must always be consistent with gender justice. The gender dimension must be an integral part of instruction as a whole and students encouraged to reflect on it. There are also concrete instruments that support girls and young women in choosing a different job. An example is the annual Girl's Day, when girl students accompany a working woman for a day and obtain a first-hand impression of all that young women can do. The job consultancy service has the responsibility of informing young women that all sectors are open to them.

FES: To conclude, we would like to look ahead: Franziska, what is your vision for 2020 in terms of women's policy and what do you expect from the generation of pioneers?

Franziska Drohsel: I hope that we can continue to work closely and exchange experiences with the generation of pioneers. We young women can learn much from the debates conducted by the women before us. I also find it encouraging that generations of women have fought before us and that we, as young women, continue this struggle today. For 2020,

A conversation between generations

I would of course wish that we make substantial progress in the matter of equality; that it becomes natural for women and men to divide family and professional work equally. And my vision in terms of political work is that more women should participate in politics, that we have a genuinely balanced relationship between the sexes in politics and that women no longer have to fight against that annoying male culture.

FES: Elke, what is your vision for 2020 and what do you expect of the current young generation as regards the continuation of the women's movement?

Elke Ferner: For 2020, I would like to see far more women in management positions in the German business sector – even in large companies. When hiring staff, I would like the skills that are acquired in bringing up children and in family work to be regarded as solid qualifications, for men too. Because if you can manage the ‘family business’, as the advertisements put it, you certainly have some management skills. And I would also wish that the structural discrimination that still exists in our society be greatly reduced.

My expectations of the younger generation are clear: do not give up, don't let go, keep going, always be aware that nothing comes from nothing and what has been achieved is never secure. You must defend what has been achieved and press forward at the same time. I am sure that the younger women will meet these challenges with flying colours. In contrast to my generation, young women today become aware of this issue perhaps a little later because conditions are not quite as bad as they once were, thank God. But the hurdles remain as high and the situation demands committed action across the generations. I therefore hope we continue to work well together, not only to exchange experiences, but also in substantive terms to pull together in the same direction.

Interviewed by Anne Seyffert and Alina Fuchs

The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung worldwide





Political education

Political education is the core of the Foundation's work. It is the thread that runs through all areas of activity. There are three departments dedicated exclusively to educational work, with the goal of intervening in and influencing the socio-political debate in Germany, training people to be involved in political and social change and playing an active role in shaping reality creatively: the Politische Akademie (Academy of Political Education), Gesellschaftspolitische Information (Department for Socio-Political Information) and Dialog Ostdeutschland (Dialogue East Germany).

Political education is primarily concerned with providing information. The objective is not only to keep people informed about the latest developments and to generate debate, but also to reflect on future developments. This means identifying emerging trends and foreseeable developments, and providing the most accurate description possible of the logic underlying such prognoses, even if it means elaborating on assumptions that have yet to be fully proven. But political education can also set trends, and the process of gender mainstreaming is, without doubt, an example of this.

The **Academy of Political Education** has identified 14 subject or target-group-specific projects with strategic objectives for 2008–2010; this will apply to the entire depart-



Dr Roland Schmidt, Executive Director, FES, Günter Verheugen, EU Commissioner and Bärbel Dieckmann, Mayor of Bonn

ment. Various work units will run a total of about 70 projects to achieve these goals. The work line 'Justice, Participation and Social Cohesion' will expressly address the gender dimension. Given the economic, social and demographic challenges, influential social stakeholders have institutionalised equity, equal opportunity and social cohesion as the guidelines for policy reform. The potential for social innovation in education and family policy, as well as in gender and cross-generational relationships is being intensely discussed and further refined. The international conference 'Women in Islam – Between Oppression and (Self-)Empowerment' (page 56), with participants from Africa, Asia, America and Europe, analysed the approaches being pursued by Muslim women's movements in the conflict between religion, political systems and legislation.

As part of the work of the **Department for Socio-political Informa-**

tion, the gender dimension is integrated in the key area 'An Equitable Society and Social Cohesion'. As the regional focus of the department's work is North Rhine-Westphalia, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate and Lower Saxony, and the work is essentially demand-driven, the issue of gender is also addressed at regional level. To this end, a conference on gender issues is held annually in all three states. Of special importance in 2007 was a conference organised throughout the state in collaboration with the Gender Network NRW (North Rhine-Westphalia), which took stock of the women's movement and its activities.

The political education programmes offered by **Dialogue East Germany**, which is active in the eastern states of Germany and in Berlin, have priority areas: on the one hand, work in east German states is largely determined by the specific situation that determines their respective life situations, in-



terests and attitudes. In 2007, the state offices of Dialogue East Germany therefore focused once again on a range of political education programmes dealing with the promotion of democracy, as well as social and political involvement. Gender and women's policy are well established as a cross-sectoral theme in the work of all the offices and are the topic of discussion at numerous events. The second priority area is the work of the Berlin sections of Dialogue East Germany, which is targeted at themes at federal level. Gender and women's policy is institutionalised as a work line in its own right in the 'Forum for Politics and Society'. Across the country, the section supports discussions and decision-making processes on gender and women's policy by holding public conferences and background talks and by issuing publications. A highpoint was the event to commemorate International Women's Day 2007, which coincided with the 100th anniversary of the Socialist Women's International.

The FES political education programme also offers a broad palette of themes that can be worked on in different ways, including seminars, public dialogue events, learning projects, skills training, expert talks, policy papers or studies that support the work or offer suggestions and invite discussion. The thematic catalogue covers more than 40 individual themes, including the issue of women/gender.

The assignment of the gender aspect to the field of women is symptomatic of the status of the debate within the Foundation, too. True, gender mainstreaming is a product of the women's movement and women's policy, but its aim is to integrate the gender dimension in all fields and so promote gender justice in all walks of life.

Gender mainstreaming is often equated with affirmative action for women. However, this is not the case. The German Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Young People defines gender as the

societal, social and cultural stereotypes of women and men. Accordingly, the EU authorities use concepts such as 'equality-oriented policy' or 'equality policy'. In other words, gender mainstreaming refers to 'a strategy with which one can systematically take account of different life situations of women and men and possibly the different ways in which measures impact on men and women.'

The gender mainstreaming process, understood as a cross-sectoral task in all spheres and areas of life, continues to be a pivotal task, all the more so because the new generation, with different role models, will increasingly shape social affairs. Against this background, the paramount goal of political education must be to reinforce and guide.

RECOMMENDED READING



International Work

To promote democracy and development across the world, to contribute to peace and security, to join hands in shaping globalisation and to support EU enlargement and consolidation: these are the guiding principles of the Foundation's international work. With projects in more than 100 countries, the Foundation actively supports the development and re-

inforcement of civil society and government structures that promote democracy, human rights and social justice, as well as strong and free trade unions. We understand gender equality to be a constituent element of democracy and social justice and therefore integral to the task of promoting democracy, to which the Foundation contributes with political education, political development and political consulting, through seminars, conferences and research studies.

Dialogue between different social stakeholders, different cultures and societal models, between North and South, EU countries and accession candidates and international institutions is indispensable if fragile social and governmental structures are to be stabilised and overarching regional and global problems resolved. In their activities, the **departments of International Development Cooperation (IEZ)** and **International Dialogue (ID)** are guided by the principle of the equal participation of women and men in shaping democratic and equitable structures.

In most project countries, discrimination against women persists in all social sectors and there is therefore a wide discrepancy in terms of access to resources and political participation. Women work considerably longer but earn and own considerably less than men. They play virtually no role in

political or economic policymaking. Top positions are held almost exclusively by men.

Gender mainstreaming, which integrates the gender dimension in each phase of project management and reviews the results, supplements specific affirmative action for women.

In the context of the international work undertaken by FES, gender mainstreaming entails:

- identifying the different needs and interests of women and men;
- analysing the gender-specific implications of a policy, for example economic, social or security policy;
- putting mechanisms in place to ensure equity;
- promoting the participation of women in institutions, particularly in management positions.

In **IEZ** projects, there are two aspects to gender mainstreaming: equal opportunity (I) as a political goal and (II) as a methodological approach, differentiating target groups in project work according to sex and incorporating different interests and needs into project management. With the introduction of the gender approach, the department appointed its own gender team to oversee the process. The team is responsible for monitoring, conceptual development and advising colleagues in projects worldwide. A series of in-



Matilde Ribeiro, Brazil's Minister of the Special Secretariat for Racial Equality Policies.



Anke Fuchs, FES chairperson on a visit to Africa

struments have since been developed and tested in order to integrate the gender dimension in the project management process and to evaluate the results. This structure is supplemented by local officers responsible for gender issues in several state offices. They ensure that gender policy activities are adapted to the regional and cultural environment.

In recent years, deliberations on gender integration have thrown up many questions about quality management in general that are currently being discussed and compiled at different levels within the department. Discussions on the quality of our work, evaluation of the output and the management of knowledge as regards different themes and methods will continue to play an important role in the future. The experience gained in the

field of gender could be used to improve the instruments and methods specific to the department; however, if required, other departments can also draw on the IEZ's vast experience in the institutional integration of the gender dimension.

In the **ID** department, women's advancement and gender mainstreaming are the core themes in the bilateral dialogue with leaders from the socio-political sphere in the Foundation's Central and East European offices. The projects vary in form and content depending on the situation and conditions in the partner country. For instance, many Central and East European countries rarely apply gender mainstreaming. With our partners in the host country and with the support of experts from Germany, we help to discuss and publicise

the concept. We also enable qualified personnel from Central and Eastern Europe to undertake study tours to Brussels, with the aim of acquiring in-depth knowledge of the EU's gender equality policy and to familiarise themselves with the debate at the European level. FES also uses its network of offices to discuss women's issues at regional level, to promote networking among the various stakeholders and to facilitate a cross-country learning process. In terms of content, the work concentrates on training and further education for women in top political positions, sensitisation to discrimination and sexism in different sectors of society, and support and advice for women in precarious economic and social situations.

Research

FES conducts its own research besides actively promoting academic research. For example, studies and policy papers for academics and decision-makers are produced internally and externally, and important research projects within the framework of the Foundation's graduate development programme receive financial and specialist support. Competent policy framing and consultancy are essential in all the Foundation's areas of activity and are introduced in podium discussions, seminars and training sessions, for instance. Research at FES is conducted primarily by the Centre for Historical Research and the department of Economic and Social Policy. The work of young researchers and politicians is supported by the FES scholarship programme. All three departments contribute to the advancement of women and research into women's issues or impart and support gender mainstreaming.

The **FES Centre for Historical Research** comprises the **Department of Social and Contemporary History**, the **Karl Marx House** in Trier and the **library** and **Archives of Social Democracy (AdsD)**. It is here that FES preserves, maintains, presents and analyses the historical legacy of the entire social democratic movement (SPD, trade unions, workers' cultural movement).

The **AdsD** currently houses files that would stretch for 40 kilome-

tres if laid end to end. There are also photographs, posters, leaflets, films and audio material that are also available in digital form for research. Last year, holdings (post-humous papers and deposits) of politically active women could be newly acquired and/or expanded: for example, those of the lawyer Barbara Degen, the journalist Sybille Plogstedt and Monika Wulf-Mathies, former member of the European Commission. The historical photographs in this annual report are from the AdsD collection.

With over 800,000 volumes, the **FES library** is considered the largest specialist library on the history of both the German and the international workers' movement. A large specialist collection on the proletarian women's movement is also available for purposes of research into women's and gender issues, in addition to diverse literature of and about the middle-class women's movement, as well as all the publications of parties and trade unions in Germany and Europe on family, women and gender policy. The catalogue can be accessed online at <http://library.fes.de>; it also includes the latest publication on Anke Fuchs (Anke Fuchs. Ein politisches Leben in Bildern). New FES publications are available in full text from the digital library <http://library.fes.de/library/fr-digbib.html>, for example, all FES publications on gender budgeting.

LEKTÜRETIPP



Women's studies has traditionally been a priority area of the department of Social and Contemporary History. Besides publications, the **Centre for Historical Research** organises exhibitions, for example on women who paved the way for social democracy or the introduction of voting rights, specialist lectures, seminar concepts and tours for an interested public. With a series of events, the **Karl Marx House** in Trier attracted attention to the role of women in the life of Karl Marx.

In the **department of Economic and Social Policy**, the focus on gender and women's policy (director: Dr Barbara Stiegler) is at the interface between research and policy: drawing on the knowledge gleaned from research into women's and gender issues, arguments, concepts and solutions are elaborated that support the (women) stakeholders who advocate gender equality and also shape gender

policy discourse. Political consultancy is offered in lectures, workshops and at podium discussions, book discussions and through contributions in civil society media in Germany and abroad. In 2007, the importance of diversity and the question of utilising gender-policy strategies such as affirmative action for women and gender mainstreaming were repeatedly discussed. Experts' reports on the falling birth rate were the subject of frequent discussion from the gender perspective. Gender analyses were generated on the 'caring social state' and on child-care concepts for children under three. Care work was identified as a new priority area, that is, person-related work that involves looking after people, bringing up children and nursing. The analyses of this subject not only highlight the particular involvement of women, but also study care work in economic terms. Work in this area of activity includes collaborating in networks in NRW, in Germany and at international level.

The **FES scholarship programme** awards grants to especially talented young people who are also involved in socio-political activities to pursue post-graduate and doctoral programmes of study. In 2007, just under 2,000 German and foreign students were given grants. Thanks to additional funds from the German Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) and the



German Foreign Office (AA), it was possible to take on 800 new students in our programme for 2007. The scholarship programmes were also opened up especially for first-semester and two-semester courses. To increase the percentage of students from low-income families and/or migrants in the development programme, a new programme was initiated in the form of the 'scholarship on probation'. As several high school leavers from low-income families in Germany are prevented from going to university for financial reasons, this programme should make it easier for them to decide in favour of university because it offers financial and academic support from the first semester itself. The first students were admitted in December 2007, and outstanding applicants from the identified target groups were accepted. The proportion of women was well above 50 per cent.

The scholarship department offers its scholars comprehensive

support through a successful course of studies. This includes the personal support of FES staff, over 400 tutors in universities, the active university group work of FES scholars and mentors across the country. The scholarship programme's internal online platform also facilitates networking between current and former scholarship holders. They interact during exchange programmes for students doing a practical year, as they do at the numerous reunions organised by the department throughout Germany. Of particular help for FES scholars is a parallel seminar programme on important socio-political themes that challenges the students in terms of their subjects, while also fostering their social and political involvement. The students play a major role in planning the programme and implementing these seminars.

The latest FES publications

A selection of FES publications on women's and gender policy 2007

- 5 Jahre Gender Mainstreaming in NRW: eine Zwischenbilanz. Hg. Abteilung Gesellschaftspolitische Information, Ursula Clauditz. Bonn, 2007. ISBN 978-3-89892-658-4
<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/gpi/04392-20070615.pdf>
- Anke Fuchs: ein politisches Leben in Bildern. Hg. von Dieter Dowe. Bonn, 2007. ISBN 978-3-89892-699-7
- Background: Mona Sahlin – Swedish social democrats elect a woman leader. Hg. von Roger Hällhag und Uwe Optenhögel. Electronic ed. Stockholm: 2007.
<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/stockholm/04390.pdf>
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