

European issues

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Towards more women in Europe?[1]

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Abstract :

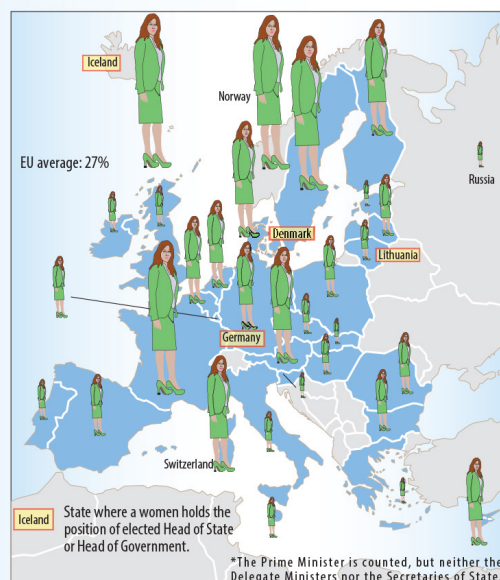
2012 was not an extraordinary year for women in Europe. No women were elected as Head of State or of a government, no women were appointed at the European Central Bank; a multitude of obstacles have been erected to undermine the European Commission's draft directive [2] which aimed to achieve a 40% quota of women on company boards – inequality between men and women has continued to grow [3] : there has been nothing to encourage our optimism.

Europe is still a male universe although the situation is slightly better in this part of the world than elsewhere. Women can only count on themselves if they are to be freed from the "confined" space that they have been granted or in which they have been restricted. They are not mistaken in this. After listening to decision makers' fine speeches, which are rarely followed by action, women have decided to organise.

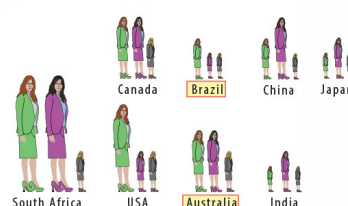
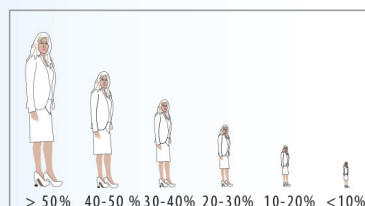
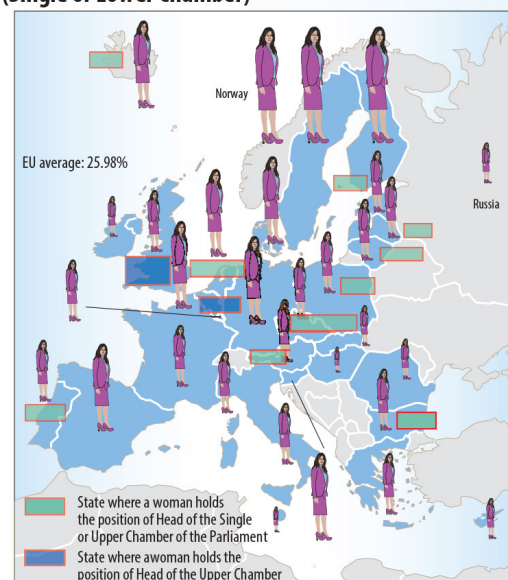
Women's networks have grown. Not to swap interesting recipes or to talk house, but rather to define some strategies to disrupt the order established by men, which the latter guard jealously out of fear of being robbed of something. Women have done this mainly to show they exist, that they are worth as much as men and to let the latter know how to cohabit and share power.

Women's Europe on 1st January 2013

Share of Women in Governments*



Share of Women in National Parliaments (Single or Lower Chamber)



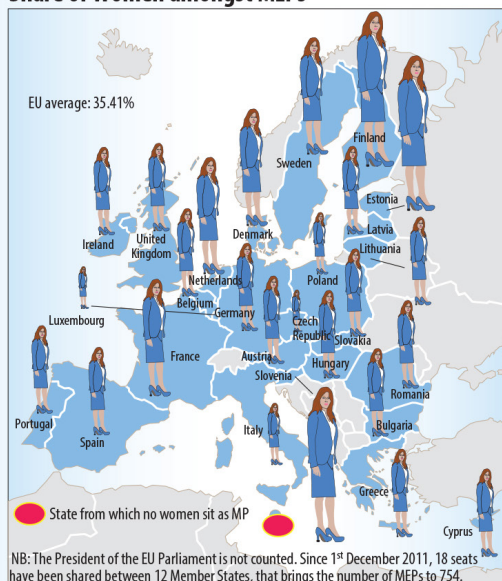
Non-EU States average:
 Women in Governments: 25.49%
 Women in Parliaments: 23.47%
 Women involved in decision making in the biggest companies: 8.97%

1. This text has been published in "The Schuman Report on Europe, the State of the Union 2013", Springer Verlag Editor. The report will be available in March 2013.

2. Commission Communication "The balance of men/women in business management positions: helping towards intelligent, sustainable, inclusive growth" COM(2012) 615 final, 14th November 2012 http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/womenonboards/communication_quotas_fr.pdf

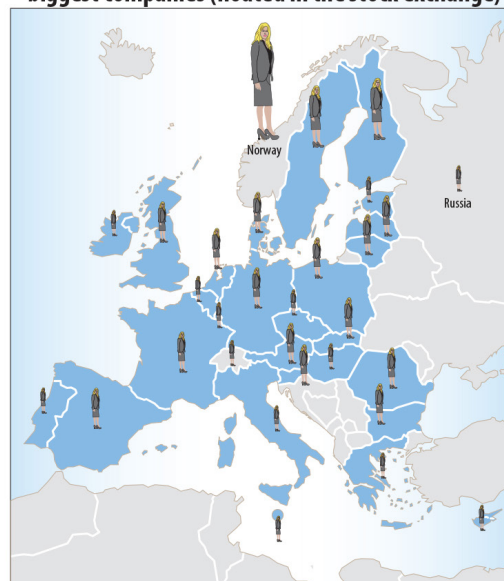
3. OECD report, "Male/Female Inequalities. It is time to act", 17th December 2012 <http://www.oecd.org/fr/parite/agir.htm>

Share of Women amongst MEPs



Source: Compiled by the Robert Schuman Foundation.

Share of Women involved in decision making in the biggest companies (floated in the stock exchange)



Pascal Orcier for the Robert Schuman Foundation, January 2013. © FRS.

WOMEN AND POWER: TOWARDS NEW GOVERNANCE?

All of women's major victories have never happened by chance. No one has ever given them anything. Whatever they have achieved is owed to their perseverance and tenacity. That was true in the past, as it still is and will be in the future. Progress has been so slow that it will still take time before things really change. And these necessary developments cannot occur naturally, because impediments of all kinds are there to prevent progress being made. Sometimes destiny needs a helping hand... If we are to change the existing imbalance between men and women the idea is gradually gaining ground that more restrictive measures are needed to overcome reticence and to "boost" the female profile in society. Women are more qualified than men but too few of them rise to leading positions. How can this situation be corrected? By quotas. But this word alone is enough to make some faint, annoy other or they lose their temper – it leaves no one indifferent.

Ten years ago quotas were introduced to remedy an evident under-representation of women in Parliamentary Assemblies. Several countries implemented them. It has to be admitted that this has boosted parity.

Just one example – there are more French women elected to the European Parliament (45.95%), where electoral law makes quotas obligatory, than to the National Assembly (26.34%) where the law is still just an incentive delivered to the political parties.

In spite of all the shouting about the introduction of

quotas in several European States it seems difficult to go backwards on this. Firstly because the place of women is still relatively weak both in Parliaments (25.98% in the Union, 20.8% in the world) as well as within governments (26.06% in the Union) and that back-pedalling would be the worst thing that could happen and therefore detrimental to the instigator. It would also be bad because the method has been established in economic life.

In the face of the sorry lack of women in the management structures of major companies several European countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Slovenia) decided to transpose the rule into the economic domain which now appears to producing results in the political sphere too. They have adopted laws to progressively make it obligatory via a quota system to have women on administrative boards. These laws only apply to companies that are floated on the stock exchange and do not concern the executive committees.

However in very little time the countries which introduced these measures have witnessed significant changes in their situation. As an example French companies floated on the stock exchange only had between 4 and 6% of women on their boards in the 1990's. The law of 27th January 2011 stipulated that companies had to open their boards to 20% of women within three years and to 40% within the next six years. In just two years these companies now have 16.6% of women on their boards [4]. This is not the only country that has achieved this. It is but a beginning.

Furthermore the European Commission is now addressing this issue. Basing itself on the fact that *"over the last decade, in spite of intense public debate and several pro-active initiatives, the male/female balance on company boards has barely developed in Europe,"* on 14th December 2012 it put forward a directive that set a minimum goal of 40% of the under-represented sex amongst non-executive administrators on company boards floated on the stock exchange in Europe by 2020 or by 2018 as far as public companies are concerned. European Commission Vice-President Viviane Reding recalls that *"the boards of the biggest European companies remain dominated by men and a glass ceiling is preventing talented women from rising to the highest positions. Women only comprise 15% of non-executive boards and 8.9% of executive boards."*

This proposal led to lively response and Ms Reding was even obliged to answer on two occasions to crush resistance both within the Commission and on the part of 9 Member States who opposed the quotas on principle [5].

It will be extremely difficult to go backwards now.

"FORCE FORTUNE, HOLD ON TO YOUR HAPPINESS AND RISE TO THE CHALLENGE. BY WATCHING YOU THEY WILL GET USED TO IT." - RENÉ CHAR

But we have to go further. Indeed more and more women are working: 62.5% in the European Union. They are more qualified than men: 58.9% of European university graduates are women. Slowly they have entered all professional sectors. But they still struggle to enter the highest spheres. Although they are not an answer to everything quotas have been useful. Without them women's progress would have been even slower.

Opening the doors to administrative boards is all very well but why should we limit this to companies on the stock exchange? Administrators' posts are also there to be taken in midcap or in small to medium sized companies (SMEs). And these companies need to be managed by men and women. A study [6] shows that administrative boards in France comprised 17.3% of the women in 2010 amongst SMEs, in comparison with 10.5% in big companies and 10.3% in intermediate-sized businesses. The average number was higher for women in family companies than amongst the others. Hence a great deal of work still has to be done.

Without expecting everything from quotas, women have decided to roll up their shirt sleeves and show what they are capable of. Initiatives had been taken everywhere

across the world; from the Women's Forum, which in just a few years has become symbolic of women's "networking" worldwide, to hundreds of think-tanks run by women who have understood the very interest of this type of activity. It will be impossible continue now as we have done in the past. Laws, debates, chats – the will is there to take matters forward, to help towards breaking the "glass ceiling". The Nordic countries are no longer alone in terms of showing off good figures, like Norway for example (36.3%) which launched the issue of women's participation on company boards in 2004. All of Europe is joining in ... And the movement is spreading further afield. We simply have to look at the situation in South Africa (17.4%).

Women no longer want to be intimidated and are rejecting unacceptable situations. During the renewal of the members of its board the European Central Bank [7], MEPs wondered why it had only appointed an exclusively male board until 2018 since it already has women on its Council. In the European Parliament they fought to win – in vain this time round, but everyone has now understood that in the future the institutions of Europe will have to respect the rules they have set themselves at least in order to achieve *"balance between men and women in the decision making process in economic and political life and in both public and private sectors."* It is time that this goal finally became a reality. For example the next time the Commission is renewed in 2014, it might be totally equal and have 14 women out of the 28 Member States which the European Union will then comprise.

Furthermore women are organising to counter fallacious arguments which state that there are no competent women available. Several initiatives have been launched to spot capable women and to promote them amongst those circulating untruths like this. Training schemes have been introduced to prepare women for administrators' posts, consultancies have developed activities to select women, thereby responding to the demand on the part of some businesses who want to appoint women to their boards. These initiatives are now being copied. European business schools launched a database on 12th December 2012 "Global Board Ready Women" [8]. This list of 8000 members reveals that there are easily enough qualified women to contribute towards managing businesses in the 21st century and that it is time to break the glass ceiling which is preventing them from accessing managerial posts. This initiative has been supported by Viviane Reding.

Governance, be it European, national, political or economic has to be re-designed. It has to adapt permanently to global challenges that are set to the established order

4. GMI Ratings' 2012 Women on Boards Survey, March 2012 http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1102561686275-86/GMIRatings_WOB_032012.pdf
5. Nine Member States reject quotas for women 17th September 2012 <http://www.europolitics.info/business-competitiveness/nine-member-states-reject-quotas-for-women-artb342961-4.html>
6. 20 years of board development in France 1992-2010, Cahiers «Preuves à l'appui», October 2012 http://www.middlenext.com/IMG/pdf/Preuves_a_l_Appui_No3_vdef.pdf
7. Composition of the ECB's governing council since November 2012 : <http://www.ecb.int/ecb/orga/decisions/govc/html/index.fr.html>
8. Launch of the Global Board Ready Women http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1358_en.htm?locale=FR

Towards more women in Europe?

and our points of reference. From an international point of view China and other emerging countries are challenging the American and European positions; from an economic point of view the crisis is shaking certainty and the way we think about solutions to settle our problems. Finally from a professional and social point of view the presence of more women is making people think differently. Each of these phenomena is a vector for change.

Establishing a culture of equality implies changing mentalities and countering persistent stereotypes. This means mutual determination to succeed in this transformation: women are preparing for it by training, by putting themselves into question, by defining their relationship with power and by daring to assert what they believe in, their motivations and their ambitions. Men have to do the same and some are already working towards it; because we shall only be able to face future challenges together.

Across the world Europe is considered a model for women's rights. We cannot disappoint those who are watching us by failing to achieve true male/female equality.

This imperative should also be an integral part of the external policy which Europe undertakes to support democratisation and development movements. The example of the countries in the southern Mediterranean which experienced the Arab Spring in 2011 is immediately evident: Europe should condition its aid, which is the most important in the world, to the full respect of women's rights by these new regimes. It is a question of principle which serves the interests of these countries: without women reform will be more difficult.

Undoubtedly the battle is not as hard in Europe for

women as it is for our neighbours on the other side of the Mediterranean. But it is of symbolic value. The progress we achieve serves as a model for them. Europe has to be exemplary. In sum, we have to dare.

Women are also daring to do more and more. They are convinced that to adapt to new world requirements businesses and society have to call on all types of talent including their own. They are complementary to men and can provide added value in terms of management and leadership. Their specificity can be an asset. Again we have to dare to rise to the challenge of placing women in all types of positions of responsibility. Modernity lies in an equal society: courage, diversity, adaptability, a better balance in governance between men and women are vital for the success of societies in the 21st century.



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General Manager of the Robert Schuman Foundation, Pascale Joannin is a Lecturer at the Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA), former auditor of the Institute for Higher National Defence Studies (IHEDN), she is the author of "L'Europe, une chance pour la femme", Note by the Robert Schuman Foundation No22, 2004. She co-directed with J-D. Giuliani "L'Atlas permanent de l'Union européenne", Lignes de repères, 2012.

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Publishing Director: Pascale JOANNIN

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ANNEXES

05

Women managers in companies

	Country	% managers
	Norway	40,1
	Sweden	27,3
	Finland	26,4
	France	16,6
	Denmark	15,6
	UK	15
	The Netherlands	14
	Poland	13
	Germany	12,9
	Austria	10,8
	Spain	10,2
	Ireland	9,5
	Belgium	9,4
	Greece	8,8
	Czech Republic	8,6
	Hungary	5,9
	Italy	4,5
	Portugal	2,3
	Latvia*	28
	Slovenia*	19
	Lithuania*	18
	Slovakia*	14
	Romania*	12
	Bulgaria*	12
	Luxembourg*	10
	Estonia*	8

Towards more women in Europe?

	Cyprus*	8
	Malta*	4
	EU AVERAGE	13,46

Source : GovernanceMetrics International, Catalyst, European Commission* [9]

In the assemblies which are supposed to represent the entire population women are still under represented: according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) [10] on 31st October 2012, of the 46 048 members of the parliaments in the world (lower and upper chambers together), there are only 9 939 women i.e. 20.8%.

The European Union (25.98%) is ahead of the Americas (23.8%), other European countries (21.9%),

Sub-Saharan Africa (20.8%), Asia (18.5%), the Arab countries (14.9%) and the Pacific States (12.7%).

In terms of the number of women chairing one of the chambers of Parliament of the 39 women observed by the IPU, 14 are European, 11 of whom are from Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, UK). Women only represent 14.2% of the leaders of parliament.

Women within the 27 national parliaments (lower or single chambers)

Rank	Member State	Parliament	Date of election	Total seats	Number of women	%
1	FINLAND	Eduskunta	2011	200	86	43,00
2	SWEDEN	Riksdag	2010	349	150	42,98
3	SPAIN	Congreso	2011	350	139	39,71
4	BELGIUM	La Chambre	2010	150	59	39,33
5	DENMARK	Folketinget	2011	179	70	39,11
6	THE NETHERLANDS	Tweede Kamer	2012	150	58	38,67
7	SLOVENIA	Zbor	2011	90	34	37,78
8	GERMANY	Bundestag	2009	620	204	32,90
9	PORTUGAL	Assembleia da Republica	2011	230	68	29,57
10	AUSTRIA	Nationalrat	2006	183	52	28,42
11	FRANCE	Assemblée Nationale	2012	577	152	26,34
12	LITHUANIA	Seimas	2012	139	34	24,46
13	POLAND	Sejm	2011	460	110	23,91
14	LATVIA	Saeima	2011	100	23	23,00
15	BULGARIA	Narodno Sabranie	2009	240	55	22,92
16	UK	House of Commons	2010	650	146	22,46
17	CZECH REPUBLIC	Poslanecka Snemovna	2010	200	44	22,00
18	LUXEMBOURG	Chambre des Députés	2009	60	13	21,67
19	ITALY	Camera dei Deputati	2008	630	134	21,27
20	GREECE	Vouli	2012	300	63	21,00
21	ESTONIA	Riigikogu	2011	101	21	20,79
22	SLOVAKIA	Narodna Rada	2012	150	28	18,67

9. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-decision-making/database/business-finance/quoted-companies/index_en.htm

10. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-f/world.htm>

23	IRELAND	<i>Dáil Éireann</i>	2011	166	25	15,06
24	ROMANIA	<i>Camera Deputaţilor</i>	2012	412	54	13,11
25	CYPRUS	<i>House of Representatives</i>	2006	56	6	10,71
26	HUNGARY	<i>Az Ország Haza</i>	2010	386	35	9,07
27	MALTA	<i>Kamra Tad Deputati</i>	2008	69	6	8,70
	TOTAL			7197	1870	25,98

Source : Fondation Robert Schuman ©

In the EU countries' governments women represent on average 26.06% of ministers. Only one government does not include any woman, i.e. the Cypriot government, which has just been appointed on 1st March 2013.

On 1st January 2013, 7 women are the Prime Minister

of their country 3 of whom are in Europe – 2 in the EU (Germany, Denmark) and Iceland -, Australia, Bangladesh, Thailand and Trinidad and Tobago.

8 women are Presidents of their country, two of whom are in Europe - Lithuania, Kosovo-, Argentina, Brazil, Liberia, Costa Rica, Malawi and South Korea.

Women ministers* within the 27 governments

Rank	Member State	Date of the election	Ministers members of government*	Number of women	%
1	SWEDEN	2010	24	13	54,17
2	FRANCE	2012	21	11	52,38
3	DENMARK	2011	23	11	47,83
4	FINLAND	2011	19	9	47,37
5	AUSTRIA	2008	14	6	42,86
6	BELGIUM	2010	13	5	38,46
	THE NETHERLANDS	2012	13	5	38,46
8	GERMANY	2009	16	6	37,50
9	SPAIN	2011	14	4	28,57
	LATVIA	2011	14	4	28,57
11	LUXEMBOURG	2009	15	4	26,67
12	BULGARIA	2009	16	4	25,00
13	POLAND	2011	20	4	20,00
14	CZECH REPUBLIC	2010	16	3	18,75
15	UK	2010	22	4	18,18
16	MALTA	2008	12	2	16,67
	PORTUGAL	2011	12	2	16,67
18	ROMANIA	2012	19	3	15,79

Towards more women in Europe?

Rank	Member State	Date of the election	Ministers members of government*	Number of women	%
19	ITALY	2008	13	2	15,38
20	IRELAND	2011	15	2	13,33
	LITHUANIA	2012	15	2	13,33
22	HUNGARY	2010	10	1	10,00
23	ESTONIA	2011	13	1	7,69
	SLOVENIA	2012	13	1	7,69
25	SLOVAKIA	2012	14	1	7,14
26	GREECE	2012	18	1	5,56
27	CYPRUS	2013	12	0	0.00
	TOTAL		426	111	26,06

Source : Robert Schuman Foundation©

* N.B.: The Prime Minister is counted but nor the delegate ministers nor the Secretaries of State.

There are more women in the European Parliament women (35.41%) than in the National Parliaments (25.98%).

Women in the European Parliament

Rank	Member State	Number of European Deputies	Number of Women	%
1	Finland	13	8	61,54
2	Estonia	6	3	50,00
	Slovenia	8	4	50,00
4	Denmark	13	6	46,15
	Netherlands	26	12	46,15
6	France	74	34	45,95
7	Sweden	20	9	45,00
8	Ireland	12	5	41,67
9	Portugal	22	9	40,91
10	Spain	54	22	40,74
11	Slovakia	13	5	38,46
12	Germany	99	38	38,38
13	Belgium	22	8	36,36
	Hungary	22	8	36,36
	Romania	33	12	36,36
16	Latvia	9	3	33,33
	Bulgaria	6	2	33,33
	Cyprus	18	6	38,89
	Lithuania	12	4	33,33
20	Greece	22	7	31,82

21	Austria	19	6	31,58
22	United Kingdom	73	23	31,51
23	Italy	73	17	23,29
24	Poland	51	11	21,57
25	Czech Republic	22	4	18,18
26	Luxembourg	6	1	16,67
27	Malta	6	0	0,00
	TOTAL	754	267	35,41

Source : Robert Schuman Foundation ©

*NB: The leader of the Parliament is not counted. Since 1st December 2011 18 seats are distributed amongst 12 Member States bringing the number of MEPs up to 754 until 2014.