



Around Europe

Quaker Council for European Affairs

No. 312 May 2009

Breaking News : Women in Prison report voted for unanimously by Council of Europe

See page 3 for more

The European Union's rocky road to Copenhagen

Photo: Hamed Saber

Countdown to Copenhagen

23-24 April 2009: G8 environment ministers meeting in Syracuse

1-12 June: UN climate negotiations in Bonn

18-19 June: EU summit to agree common position in Brussels

8-10 July: G8 summit in La Maddalena

28 September- 9 October: UN climate negotiations in Bangkok

7-18 December: Copenhagen Climate Conference (projected completion of negotiations for UN climate talks on post-2012 framework)

2012: deadline for ratification.

The road to the climate negotiations in Copenhagen is filled with pitfalls and dangers. In the US, President Obama faces opposition from Congress on his climate policy, while economic recession is shifting the priorities of many governments away from environmental issues. The EU, however, has pitched itself as leading the way on climate change and Copenhagen, committing itself to a 20% reduction of emissions by 2020. They went further still by promising to reach a 30% reduction by 2020 if there are comparable reductions by other countries.

The reduction targets were labelled by the Commission as by far the most ambitious commitment by any country or group of countries in the world for the post-2012 period. We should approach this with a feeling of caution for a number of reasons:

- The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) estimates that this 20% equates to around a 4-5% reduction domestically for the EU. 8% of the 20% figure has already been achieved through de-industrialisation in Eastern Europe post-1989.
- The EU is proposing to up the 20% figure to 30% if other actors commit to comparable reductions. This 30% is still below the potential 40% (25-40%) that the International Panel on Climate Change (and the EU) say that we might need to avert disaster.
- The European Parliament has called on the EU to reduce its emissions by at least 80% by 2050.
- The EU has been strongly criticised for not being clear about the policies it plans to put in place to ensure such reductions are met.

Despite these misgivings, the EU still has a major role to play in the lead up to Copenhagen. As well as adopting a legally binding framework to meet its 20% commitment, the EU plays a crucial role in bringing together nation states to bridge opposing interests. The lead up to Copenhagen has taught us that cooperation is essential to bring about the agreement we so badly need.

Steve Hynd

In this Issue:

Equality - there is lots to do

Page 2

Prison should be used as a last resort for convicted women says PACE

Page 3



Equality - there is lots to do

It is not often that I read a book and without hesitation feel gratitude for the fact that I live in Western Europe in the 20th/21st century. Reading the recently published 'Atlas of Women in the World' makes me instantly grateful for these and other coincidences in my life.

Just a few facts:

- There are still a number of countries where women don't have access to safe abortion services (87% of counties in the US don't have them)
- There are still a number of countries where women are legal minors (Swaziland)
- There are still countries where women are not allowed to drive or ride bicycles (Saudi Arabia)
- There are still countries where women have dress restrictions imposed upon them (Brunei)
- There are still countries with staggeringly high levels of domestic violence against women where there are no shelters for such women available (too many to name)
- There are still countries where sons are valued so much more highly than daughters that female infanticide is common.

Joni Seager's 'Atlas of Women in the World', a 2009 publication of Earthscan, has map upon map and graph upon graph to demonstrate vividly the position of women in the world. And it's not all wonderful in the post-feminist societies of Western Europe and the US; but we're still very lucky.

I was particularly interested in the section on 'Power' (pp. 93 -105); there are still some places where women can't vote or their access to voting is restricted. But even in Europe and North America, equality at the ballot box had to be fought for. In Switzerland women gained access to universal suffrage some 123 years after men; in the US it took 50 years; in the UK it took only 10 years, and Denmark is out in front with no gap at all.

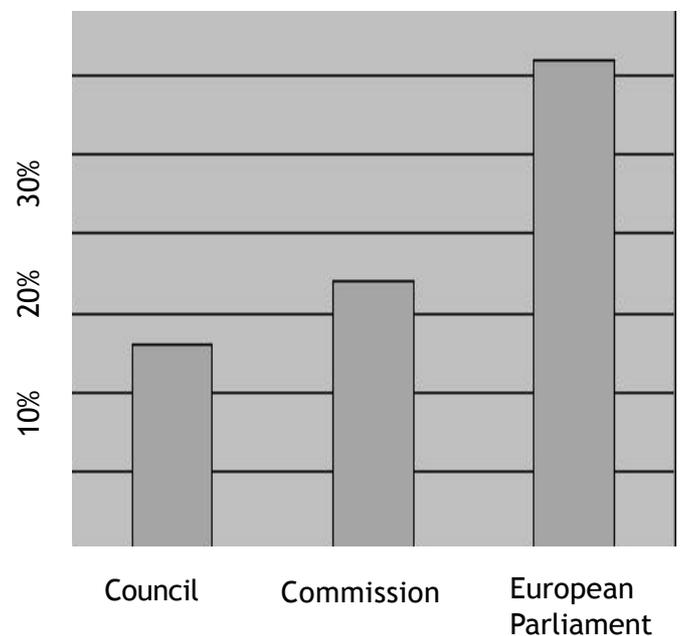
The percentage of women in parliaments worldwide has increased from 3% in 1945 to about 17% in 2007 - but there are increasing numbers of countries where there are more than 25% of women represented in national parliaments. And some of those are in Europe.

Representation of women in the Council of the EU	Men	Women	%Women
Current and former EU Special Representatives	33	0	0.0
Permanent Representatives (Ambassadors)	26	1	3.7
Heads and Deputy Heads of Crisis Management Missions	51	2	3.8
Senior Staff and General Secretariat of the Council	50	7	12.3
Deputy Permanent Representatives (Ambassadors)	19	8	30.0
Ambassadors (EU Foreign Policy Matters)	16	11	40.8

This opens up the question about women and power and influence in the European Union. Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights states clearly that 'equality between women and men must be ensured in all areas...' Equality between men and women is at the heart of what the EU stands for.

So let us have a look at the reality of this in the current institutions:

Percentage of Women in Key Positions



The figures shown in this graph are based on an analysis of the current (late 2008/early 2009) position in so far as it can be extracted from information available on the website of the three institutions.

For the Council of the European Union, the groups of people included in these figures are:



For the European Commission, the groups of people included in these figures are:

Representation of women in the European Commission	Men	Women	%Women
Heads of Delegations to third countries	108	7	6.1
Directors of Directorates General (DGs)	34	5	12.8
Heads of Cabinets	23	4	14.8
Deputy Directors of DGs	31	10	24.4
Commissioners	18	9	22.3
Deputy Heads of Cabinets	15	12	44.4

For the European Parliament, only Members of the European Parliament have been included in the figures. Looking at this in terms of representation by Member State, Cyprus and Malta with no women MEPs bring up the rear, and Bulgaria, Estonia and

Luxembourg at 50% are on the right track. In terms of the political groups, none comes up to the 50% mark, the Greens top the list at nearly 47 per cent, followed by the Socialist and Liberal groups with 40+ per cent each.

The verdict, then, on the European Institutions, (and the Member States who often determine who takes senior positions) and the political parties throughout Europe, is 'could do significantly better'.

Martina Weitsch

Prison should be used as a last resort for convicted women says PACE

On 28 April 2009 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) passed Resolution 1663 (2009)* which calls on the 47 member states of the Council of Europe to implement without delay the provisions of the revised European Prison Rules. Many women prisoners are the sole or main carers of children and the adopted text underlined the fact that given the disruption and emotional costs which may ensue to both mother and child(ren), 'prison should be used as a last resort only if no other options are available and alternative forms of sentencing, including community service orders and restorative justice approaches should be considered first'.

The Assembly also formulated specific recommendations for the member states as regards the detention of mothers or pregnant women in prison, the health and educational needs of women prisoners, the organisation of visits, the respect for the human dignity of women prisoners and their social reintegration.

Liz Scurfield, Joint Representative at QCEA, was present in the PACE chamber when the unanimous



Liz Scurfield with PACE and QCEA reports

vote was recorded. 'It was incredibly exciting being there as QCEA had helped prepare the report and recommendations' she said. Of the 41 recommendations in the report, 32 take up recommendations from QCEA's groundbreaking Women in Prison report published in early 2007. 'We now need to encourage all member states of the Council of Europe to implement the recommendations in the report' Liz said. 'We can build on this and the report on the situation of women in prison and the impact of imprisonment of parents on social and family life (also taking up many of QCEA's recommendations) passed in plenary by the European Parliament in March last year; the whole issue of women prisoners, neglected for many years, has become quite high profile and this is in no small measure due to the work done by QCEA, QUNO-Geneva and other Quaker agencies and groups.'

Advocacy on these issues done by Friends in their Meetings at national level now has serious chances of success.

Liz Scurfield

* http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/ATListing_E.asp



Quaker MEP Candidates

You may be interested to know that there are several Quakers standing as MEPs at the next European Parliament Election this June. With apologies to those Quakers we have not spotted on the candidate lists, here is the list of those we have spotted. They are all standing in the UK:

Greens

Rupert Reid (Eastern Region - List place 1)

Barney Smith (East Midlands Region - List place 5)

Liberals

Jonathan Fryer (London Region - List place 2)

Rebecca Taylor (Yorkshire and the Humber Region - List place 3)

If you are a Quaker, standing for election for the European Parliament, please let us know.

Friends and Copenhagen...

We often feel disconnected and unengaged with the policy process surrounding climate negotiations. But Quakers are doing work in the lead up to the Copenhagen climate negotiations and welcome your involvement. For more information and ideas on how to get involved see:

www.quaker.org.uk/copenhagen

For more information on **EU involvement** in Copenhagen see:

Time to lead campaign

<http://www.timetolead.eu/>

For any other information or questions contact Steve Hynd at QCEA on shynd@qcea.org

Subscriptions, Associate and Supporting Membership

Renewal date:

Please check month/year printed on address label.

Cost per year:

- **Around Europe:** post - £16/22 euros (30 euros outside Europe). e-mail - £10/15 euros (please ask for more details)
- **Associate Membership** (includes **Around Europe**, Annual Report, other publications and invitations to conferences) : £32/40 euros (50 euros outside Europe).
- **Supporting Membership:** 95 euros/£65 (please ask for more details)

Payment (*receipts will only be issued if requested*):

Europe (except Nederland and UK): in euros, to IBAN: BE68 0001 4998 4834, BIC: BPOTBEB1, or by credit card (quote number, name, expiry date, address; we acknowledge; you are billed in your home currency. Recommended method for those outside Europe.)

Nederland: via de Vereniging Vrienden v.d. Quakerraad voor Europese Aangelegenheden: Giro 2538685 VVQREA Helmond.

UK: by cheque payable to 'QCEA British Committee' sent to Marilyn Miles, Roseleigh, Northfield Road, Nailsworth, GL6 0NB, Glos., UK.

Rest of World: credit card (quote number, name, expiry date, address; we acknowledge; you are billed in your home currency.)



Around Europe

Quaker Council for European Affairs aisbt
Square Ambiorix 50, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

Editeur responsable : Elizabeth Scurfield

N° entreprise 0420.346.728

www.quaker.org/qcea - info@qcea.org

Périodique mensuel. Bureau de dépôt : Bruxelles X

Belgique-België
P.P.-P.B.
Bruxelles X
BC 8843