CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, BEST PRACTICES AND POLICIES – INTRODUCTION BY ZITA GURMAI

The workshop served a double purpose: besides discussing the crucial topic of women’s role in good governance, with a particular focus on the 2014 European Parliament elections, CEE Network members and Board members took stock of the 2013 activities and exchanged views on the priorities to come and actions to implement in 2014 and beyond.

Following the greetings and video messages of high-level progressive politicians, the introductory discussion was centred on the need for a complex and global approach on gender issues and on governance, for both issues represent an area where the scope of national action is limited. It was underlined that there is a need for increased cooperation among progressive women’s rights activists, for identifying common campaign messages – this way the current social crisis can be the origin of a future progressive development.

The first session on Good governance identified opportunities and threats in a globalized world, from a women perspective. It gave an opportunity to socialist women (from various CEE countries and from the USA) for an exchange of good practices from their own countries in order to realize the opportunities to improve the gender aspect of internal party structures in the future. Women play a key role in ensuring quality governance (via their unique skills, qualities and expertise); therefore their participation must be encouraged during the nomination, selection and appointment procedures.

The second session dealt with the initiatives, challenges and strategies for the 2014 European Parliamentary elections. Participants held an exchange over the European and national preparations for the elections and identified common strategies and topics for women’s empowerment in general and inside political parties in particular.
It was established that there is a need for a progressive alliance at all levels and between all players (female and male) of political decision-making, so that gender equality achievements are not only preserved but strengthened in the future. Participants held an exchange on campaign strategies, activism, mobilization, a gender sensitive European Manifesto and Common Candidate for the presidency of the European Commission.

Participants agreed that absenteeism, Euro-scepticism, anti-European attitude, distrust towards political decision-makers make up the legitimacy and credibility crisis that is an outstanding characteristic of the present political landscape. The crisis, its roots, effects (especially the ever-widening social gap) and the proposed solutions will continue to set the tone and main orientations of the public debate. It is a challenge for women’s organizations and the CEE Network to make sure that women’s perspectives are not left out of the “game”, that they and their interests are in the centre of political action, despite the Conservative backlash that is rampant in Europe.

The last part of the meeting set out to evaluate the CEE Network for Gender Issues 2013 activities and to identify 2014-2015 milestones - outstanding issues and roadmap. Participants established that thanks to the work of CEE Network, women organizations are gaining power but the situation is still far from being perfect and further work is necessary, including inside party structures. Participants agreed on a strategy so that CEE Network helps women’s organizations to engender the European progressive forces’ preparation for the 2014 EP elections. Participants agreed that the CEE Network will continue its cooperation with its international partners, political parties and the academic world – geographically beyond EU borders (ex. MENA region, Ukraine) as well.

In the long-term, CEE Network will work on the democratisation of political parties, on removing of the structural barriers for women participation in campaigning and running for office and on contributing to the evaluation and revision of EU approach, strategies and policies with regard to women’s rights and gender equality.
Good and democratic governance is one promoting open, efficient and consistent participation of women on all levels of policy-making – global, European, national, regional and local. Promoting democracy and the rule of law within the EU is a process that cannot go further without the involvement of women and with placing them at a disadvantaged position.

Women of today are fighting for employment, recognition and equality in a Europe of austerity, while doing their best to raise the children of tomorrow. A Europe, who made the wrong turn towards social injustice and turned its back to women.

Over the recent years, the need for more economic and social dimension of gender balance in policy-making and business leadership has become increasingly prominent. However, the various initiatives and actions undertaken are fragmented in terms of coverage and timescale. Given the strong political and economic case for improving gender equality in decision-making, there is a need to ensure that this issue is addressed in a coherent and systematic manner.

The debate on women's underrepresentation in local, national and European governance needs a turning point. Quotas, utilized during different stages of the political nomination and selection process, have been proven as an efficient driver of change in society perceptions and political realities. After all, good governance is a universal responsibility, shared by both women and men.
SESSION 1
GOOD HABITS THE CURE FOR THE WILD, WILD WEST OF POLITICS FOR WOMEN –
CONCLUSIONS BY SIOBHAN “SAM” BENNETT

Elected women leaders of the European Union having achieved powerful benchmarks now aspire to 50% representation for women while the U.S. trails at 18% representation for women in its national legislature. Today the U.S. is 76th in the world and dropping. How did the U.S. fall so far behind? Who knows – maybe U.S. solutions to this entrenched problem provide E.U.’s progressive women leaders a few more tools to help them achieve gender reflective democracies.

Women’s Campaign Fund (WCF) is the first organization in the U.S. focused on financially supporting women when they run for office, created in 1974 by a small band of women intent on helping to elect their good friend to U.S. Senate. Back then the U.S. was not so far behind the rest of the world. At 4 % of U.S. Congress, these women were equally divided between Democratic and Republican party officeholders - by and large all supporting women’s reproductive choices and options. Over the past 40 years, every one of these statistics has radically altered - slowing U.S. progress.

What gives? While EU women leaders clamored and fought for their nations to embrace quotas to systemically ensure women’s electoral progress, the U.S. in contrast has become the Wild, Wild West of Politics for women. Women are on their own, often unsupported by their own parties, forced to become lone gun slingers to advance. While increasing numbers of countries have embraced quotas to ensure women’s electoral progress, quotas will never be embraced in the U.S. and no natural significant progress has occurred such has flowered in the Scandinavian nations. In fact, research shows that U.S. women, unwilling to subject themselves to the negative rough and tumble of U.S. politics simply opt not to run for elected office. Despite a rich environment of NGOs focused on encouraging women to do just that - Emily’s List, WCF for example - there are no systems that uniformly ensure women a place on the ballot. Indeed, the only institutional “improvement” made over the past 40 years
inadvertently deepened the problem: “term limits” in some states restricting the number of terms any individual can serve in office. National women leaders believed that if office holders served no longer than two terms it would guarantee more open seats for women. Wrong! Because it is so difficult to get U.S. women to run for office in the first place, term limits disproportionately affect women versus men – once a U.S. woman is term limited, there are no women behind her to run in her place. And so her seat most often reverts to a male officeholder.

Women’s underrepresentation is an issue that transcends the U.S.’s infamous “partisan politics”. In the last forty years, though there has been a slow and steady increase in the number of Democratic women serving in U.S. Congress – now at almost 30%, there has been an equal evisceration in the number of Republican women serving, barely at 6% of their party’s elected leadership. The result? Virtually no overall progress in the percentage of women serving. Plus, an ever increasing avalanche of legislation attacking women’s fundamental reproductive rights at the state and federal level – 1,200 in 2012 alone. Research shows that women are far more likely than their male colleagues to engage in compromise, to “reach across the aisle”, to find legislative solutions that benefit the citizens they were elected to serve, and not engage in the partisan “chest thumping” that is the default switch of men. But it is exactly this partisan in-fighting, the negative attacks of political campaigning that cause women to avoid politics in the first place. The Republican Party, with virtually no women to moderate the proceedings has become a virtual “frat house” of woman-unfriendly legislation especially at the state level. Washington with only 18% of women moderating men’s highly partisan inclinations is gridlocked in partisan politics. But how do we break past women’s concerns and get them on the ballot in a nation like the U.S. that has and never will have quotas?

As a woman, mother, wife and daughter I have weathered the Wild, Wild West of U.S. politics: twice running for Mayor and serving as the first women party chair in battleground Pennsylvania’s third largest city; running for U.S. Congress; leading the top performing swing district in the nation as a 527 regional director; working with hundreds of women running for office and speaking to thousands across the country and the world encouraging them to run for office.

After this decade of work, I’m convinced – if we focused on the fundamental deterrents that keep U.S. women from running for office – and in the absence of
quotas, encouraged voters and NGOs to collectively address these concerns within the scope of their individual values and missions – the problem could be solved.

First – let’s not forget: women aren’t men. Duh. It’s precisely that difference that we need in national legislatures across the globe. Care about education? Elect a woman! Healthcare? Yup, elect a woman. Gosh – think that clean water and clean might be a good idea? Elect a woman. But when it comes to encouraging women to run – we simply forget that essential difference. To solve this problem we must embrace and address the fundamentally different way that women approach politics. **Embrace and address!**

Next - tackle women’s number one concern - work life balance. You tell me - what man avoids politics because he’s worried about juggling work, home and politics? Research shows…..virtually none. A syndicated parenting columnist reminds his readers that “parenting is leadership” not servanthood. As mothers what is more helpful - spending our hours and days cleaning up after our families, or teaching them to how to cook their own food, buy their own groceries, manage their own checking accounts? Our family life doesn’t have to be built around we as mothers waiting on everyone, but rather our families sharing household responsibilities. I like to encourage women to invite their families into the kitchen for a religious experience, gathering everyone around the stove to reverently say together “This is the stove!” Role models like DNC Chair Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz and U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, both who have small children, are essential in showing women what is possible. What could be a more powerful leadership example to our offspring than serving as office holders in our communities, state, nation? **Lead inside and outside!**

Recent research shows that once a woman decides to run, her number one concern is raising money – in the U.S. public financing for candidates is rare. Logically, one would think she could turn to her fellow women to financially support her. Sadly, though women give the majority of charitable and philanthropic dollars in the U.S., they only give a quarter on every dollar a man gives to political candidates. Studies show that women find politics distasteful, unpleasant and would rather financially support social change making through NGOs. Ironic. Though true sweeping social change is often best accomplished through legislation – desegregation of schools, guaranteeing women reproductive choices, environmental regulation – women opt out of the most powerful way they can financially make the world a better, safer place. The answer?
Research shows that if women donors connect supporting a political candidate to issues they are passionate about — they will open up their purses and write political checks. Though their checks will be smaller than men, they will give more often and over time will give more than men. If every woman habitually gave even small checks to women candidates that supported their values — huge amounts of money would instantly be available to help women advance politically. Give and give again!

What’s next? Polling reveals that women avoid politics because their worries about how negative attack will impact their families. Once again — men on average have no such concern. This is a tough one. We need to prepare our families for the inevitable. We will be attacked. And lies will be told about us. But what better example for our children on how they can triumph over school yard/work place gossip and attack than how we as women overcome such assaults. The attacks that came my way when I ran for U.S. Congress were breathtakingly sexist. Good news? It inspired me to spearhead research showing women how to handle electoral attack. How? Respond. Even just a seemingly ordinary comment about a woman’s appearance is enough to plummet her electoral results by as much as 12 points, but as long as she responds, she regains all the lost votes. “If I were a man, no one would care about my haircut/makeup/lack of makeup/clothes — so let’s talk about what the voters really care about”. Whether it’s responding to sexist or ordinary political attack, it’s almost as if the voters are thinking “if she can stick up for herself, then she can stick up for me!” Withstand and respond!

Losing is just as much a part of politics as winning is. Research shows when a man loses an election — his response? “I just increased my name ID”. Women? “I let everybody down”. No wonder women don’t run again after they lose and men don’t hesitate to run again! This happens to be an area of personal expertise. I’ve run for office three times and lost three times — and plan on running again. When I first ran, my name ID was 0% and my opponent’s, a 30 year political incumbent, was 90%. The world was shocked when I lost by only 42 votes. My next race, lost again! But I came in second and raised the most money — and little old ladies in grocery stores would stop me and say “aren’t you the lady with man’s name?” Third time - I ran for U.S. Congress, lost again, but got a record number of votes and national endorsements while not embarrassing myself when it came to raising money. Now buying gifts for Christmas the saleswoman asks me “aren’t you Sam Bennett?” starting waves of recognition rippling throughout the store. We all need to be the first call women get the day after their race congratulating them on all they’ve achieved — whether they’ve won or not. In truth? We as women only lose when we don’t run!
Now let’s talk about qualifications. Go out of any door of any city in America and ask the first man you meet “hey, we have an opening on our school board would you like to run?” What does he say? “Sure!” Next ask him “just so we know, do you happen to have any qualifications to run for office?” He says “No” You then follow up by asking him “You are still willing to run, right?” and research shows he says “Of course!” Go out of the same door in the same city in America and go up to the first women with a Masters Degree in Education and ask her if she would consider running for School Board. What does research show she’ll say? “I’m not qualified!” Men feel like they are automatically qualified for everything - women don’t feel like they are qualified for anything. Compounding the situation, research shows that voters are part of the problem! They automatically assume that a man is qualified but need to be convinced that a woman has what it “takes”. Women must incessantly remind voters about their qualifications and remember they are far more qualified than they realize! Remind and remember!

Despite that its women, all things being equal, win at equal rates to men and now raise on average more money than men, U.S. women don’t run - the percentage of women encouraged by their parties virtually zero. Men wake up the morning, look in the mirror and say “I see a Senator!” A complete stranger can encourage a man to run – and guess what – he will! Women, no such luck. She must be asked on average six times before she’ll even consider a run for office – and to make it even more difficult – women must be asked by someone they know, respect and trust. Women essentially don’t believe in their own qualifications – so it takes a lot of asking from someone they trust to make them take the plunge! Despite years as a successful small business owner, corporate manager and civic leader I never considered running for office. Always voted in national elections, but not once saw myself as qualified to lead politically. It took Republican business leaders and Democratic office holders who I knew and respected all assertively recruiting me to run – for me to actually do it. We all must become religious about encouraging the talented women we meet at work, at our children’s schools, at our churches over and over and over to run for office. Encourage others to do the same. Ask, Ask and Ask again!

Ideally, women should vote for women. Obama’s presidential victory revealed the degree to which U.S. African Americans religiously vote for African-American candidates. No such loyalty exists among women. If I had a dollar for every time a woman said to me – “I’m not going to vote for a woman just because she is a woman” – my house would be paid off by now. My response? Why not! As long as a woman
shares your values – you should vote for her over a man every time. If research shows that women run for office because they want to change the world and men run because they see it as a pathway to power – why on earth wouldn’t I always vote for the woman on the ballot? If international research demonstrates that women in elected office is a vitally important indicator of economic growth – of course voting for women makes sense. If history proves that on average men, not women, will engage in sexual antics/corruption/anti-woman legislation writing – doesn’t it just make good sense for me as a woman to vote for the woman every time? **Vote for women!**

In the words of Aristotle, “we are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act, but a habit.” The world is transformed if, with women who share our values, we habitually 1) tell them not to worry about work/life balance (men don’t!) 2) writing checks to them when they run for office (even small ones help!) 3) making sure they respond when negative/sexist attack comes their way (coming to their defense ourselves!) 4) encouraging them to run again/run for higher office (women only lose when they don’t run!) 5) remind them to talk about their qualifications incessantly (with us doing the same!) 6) asking them to for office (over and over and over again!) 7) vote for any woman who shares our values over any man on the ballot (we’ll never get anywhere unless we do!). With practices like these, E.U. women leaders can set the pace, achieving 50% women in its national legislatures. With those same good habits and a bit of luck, the U.S. can catch up to its E.U. sisters across the water!

Sam Bennett, Zita Gurmai, Sonja Lokar, Gabriella Cseh
SESSION 2
INITIATIVES, CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 2014 – CONCLUSIONS BY GABRIELLA CSEH

This second session of the CEE Network workshop was dedicated to the European Parliamentary elections of 2014. Participants discussed a wide range of issues related to the preparation for and challenges surrounding said elections, mostly from a gender perspective.

Two lead speakers introduced the over-arching topics: Zita Gurmai (President, PES Women, MEP, CEE Network for Gender Issues Board Member) held a presentation on the main topics, strategies and timeline of the PES’ preparation for the European elections and introduced the scheme of target groups, with a particular focus on women. She continued by introducing next year’s PES Women campaign on the fight against the Gender Pay Gap and the challenges and strategic goals surrounding it.

Katalin Tüttő (Hungarian Socialist Party, Representative of Council of Budapest, Hungary) gave an overview of the HSP preparations for the three elections (local, European, national) that are to take place in Hungary in 2014, underlining the alarming tendency of absenteeism and the importance of the legal framework for the elections and for party structures.

Participants could benefit from a clear outline of the main topics and target groups of the Hungarian campaign, at all levels. This presentation highlighted the necessity of a complex (European, national, regional and local) approach when addressing the topic of the 2014 European Parliamentary elections.

A lively debate among all participants present was followed by the closing remarks of the rapporteur (Gabriella Cseh, Coordinator (PES) Democratic societies, party statutes and inter-institutional Affairs, Hungary) who summarized the discussion and main conclusions in five points.

1. Next year’s European elections will take place in a new European political climate, which is largely due to two outstanding factors.
First, this will be the first European election under the Lisbon Treaty. In practical terms, it means that in addition to national campaigns and party actions, European political parties will select and campaign for a common candidate who is their nominee for the position of President of the European Commission. The role of the European Parliament is becoming more pronounced; therefore its composition will be crucial.

It is essential that these candidates (and especially the PES candidate) are aware of the currently existing gender equality issues and ready to fight for women’s rights and empowerment. Women’s organizations shall work to achieve this goal.

Second, this will be the first European election after the outbreak of the financial and economic crisis. Absenteeism, Euro-scepticism, anti-European attitude, distrust towards political decision-makers make up the legitimacy and credibility crisis that is an outstanding characteristic of the present political landscape. The crisis, its roots, effects and the proposed solutions will set the tone and main orientations of the campaign – political parties will have to address the issue one way or another. It is a challenge for women’s organizations and the CEE Network to make sure that women’s perspectives are not left out of the “game”, that they are in the centre of political action, despite the Conservative backlash that is rampant in Europe.

2. The PES Common candidate and the process leading up to his/her selection has the potential to help the fight for women’s rights – if women’s organizations across member parties and at European level are ready to use this occasion wisely. The presence of the candidate will not only boost voters’ participation (including women voters) but will also politicize the European debate which will give a chance for Progressives to prove once again that they are the party of and for women. The method of his/her selection will also play a crucial role and women’s organizations shall aim to make sure that their demands are heard and their questions are answered – if their support is solicited.
3. The electoral message of the Progressives, or Manifesto, needs to be concrete, precise, engaging for citizens (including women), all the while reflecting the fact that gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment are among our fundamental principles. This shall be done by an optimal combination of gender mainstreaming among all political priorities and a specific chapter/point dedicated to women’s issues. Politics need to be re-valued in the work of political parties, and in this process, gender issues need to enjoy a preferential treatment: this is a matter for all party members and leadership, not only the women’s organization.

4. There is no one-size-fits-all solution in Europe and certainly not in the case of gender issues. European-level priorities need to be underpinned by national efforts and national priorities need the support coming from European-level. An efficient, tailor-made campaign is necessary at all levels across Europe, under the umbrella of European goals and strategies. Certain gender equality-related issues are more sensitive in one part of Europe than in others and this must be respected. It is up to each party and women’s organization to determine the optimal course of action – which shall be coordinated with colleagues all over Europe.

5. Mobilization will be of key importance for next year’s campaign and it will represent the biggest challenge as well. Progressives have traditionally good working relationships with NGOs, trade unions and women’s movements – this must be strengthened in the run-up to the campaign and shall be preserved also after.

During all activities, including reaching target groups such as women, political parties and women’s organizations must establish and build upon a good relationship with the media. In this light, social media and modern communication techniques represent an opportunity and a threat at the same time, which shall be addressed by proper communication strategies and tools.
To sum up I have put down some issues that have been raised during these two days; starting by quoting some superb thoughts that came up and for which I believe should be highlighted:

- We need to make a deal before we run the show
- We as women only lose when we do not run
- If she can stick up for herself, she will stand up for me as well.

Nataša Milojević commented that politics does not live here anymore and bearing this in mind it came down to the following conclusions:

Men in our parties need to understand that they should not forget women and vice versa. If we do not change this, let us face it – we will all lose – lose as progressive left in Europe, but not only that, we will lose as a society as a whole.

There is still a very long way to go; a way in which we need to work hand in hand with women who run for office if we want our countries to advance – we all have to have the same chances and access to power.

As one could observe, in our region, there was a shift from an EU inclined, optimistic mood to euro scepticism due to the financial crisis and recession after 2008. New EU member states instead of getting some support in these crisis moments we only got austerity measures from a conservative Europe. This has been strengthening the far right on the one hand and worsened a »frozen conflict« in our region on the other hand.

Overall state of play is that there are two Europe – the rich one, and the poor one, or in Wallerstein´s words, a centre and a periphery. It is only fair to highlight that the forthcoming PES campaign is excellent when saying »when nothing goes right, go left«.
Nevertheless, the PES electoral programme and Manifesto on the EU level has established a broad framework and it will be on us, sister parties in our member states, to adopt it to the national circumstances. Bearing this in mind, women activists should identify three priority issues we need to focus on during our electoral campaigns for EP elections and place them in this broader PES and PES W elaborated framework.

At the same time we have to demand from PES and Schulz as our candidate for future EU Commission to present solutions also for the so called countries from the periphery. For instance, there is a great example from Slovenia connected to European Commission active labour market policy measures for youth, called Youth guarantee and youth employment initiative for which Slovenia gained additional funds – thanks to two SD ministers, dr. Anja Kopač Mrak, Minister of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and dr. Jernej Pikalo, Minister of Education, Science and Sport. Due to the ability of EU to take into consideration specific needs of member states, youth guarantee in Slovenia is covering young people till 30 years of age, while for the rest of EU only ill 24.

Let us not forget – if we do not like how things are, we have to change it! We are not trees. Let me conclude by saying that we need to say a clear, loud NO to the measures which are pushing women only to the private sphere against their own will, to say a clear no to not personally chosen 3Ks – Küche, Kirche und Kinder.
SESSION 4
PES MANIFESTO: FOR A STRONG GENDER PERSPECTIVE – CONCLUSIONS BY ANNA LENDVÁI

Session 4 of the workshop was about the evolving PES Manifesto. The Manifesto process is launched in June 2013 in the PES Council in Sofia, where the Fundamental Programme, the long-term vision was adopted.

The lead speaker Ania Skrzypek (Senior research fellow, FEPS) showed the process of the preparation of the Manifesto. She referred back to the last one for the EU Election in 2009. She strengthened that the present Manifesto is formulating with another perspective, with new approaches. A big difference compared to the previous elections is that PES presents a common top candidate who is going to lead the campaign. And PES will show how we, socialists and social democrats, and our programme, values etc. differ that of the conservatives (it is against austerity-only strategy, neo-liberal financial capitalism, etc.)

The Manifesto gives a progressive alternative for the future of Europe focusing on restoring sustainable economic growth, international solidarity, building a Social Europe. Ania mentioned that it is not an easy job to agree on social issues among the Member States, because some of the proposals constitute a step backwards for certain member states while for other states all these would cause competitive disadvantages.

PES Member Parties will use the Manifesto for creating their own national election programmes in different ways. Some of them will use it entirely; others will use only elements, or collect ideas from it; and still others will use it only for the preparation of the preamble of their own election programmes.

Ania also mentioned that it is also a matter of the debate if the Manifesto should be a strong value-based position paper or proposed concrete measures should be included. Other requests were about the size of the document. Some believe to be much shorter (one or two pages), others think that in a very short document PES cannot present every important matters which should be emphasized.
Anna Lendvai (Hungarian Socialist Party, Representative of Council of Budapest, Hungary) as a rapporteur spoke about her concerns which are based on that impression that gender issues are hidden in this Manifesto. It has a gender-mainstreaming approach, but she also expressed the need to have a separate chapter on the principle of gender equality.

She mentioned that PES have been talking about ‘people first’ for many years, but PES would be able to express this approach if social democrats talked to specific target groups. She gave the example of the Hungarian Socialist Party which has five pillars, five target groups for the next national election, and she referred back to one of the previous day’s discussions when we talked about reaching target groups which can have key importance of mobilization.

Anna talked about the need that women’s independence through combating gender pay gap must be strengthened and she missed three important topics from the document. Fighting against gender based violence is still crucial to be prioritised and she thought it is a fundamental point for example to promote the Member States to sign and follow the Istanbul Convention. Another point is sexual and reproductive health and rights, and she has spoken in more detail about the demographic challenge which is one of the biggest challenges which Europe is facing. She emphasized that socialists and social democrats cannot allow the conservatives to monopolize this issue, because it’s a gender equality issue. Studies show that fertility rate is enough high in societies where the governments make gender equality policies, where the proportion of women in the labour market is high, and where childcare institutions are available. That is why it would be important to promote the Member States to achieve the goal of 33% child care coverage for under 3 years of age, or promote to share parental leave also and encourage men to participate at child upbringing.

It is crucial to pay attention to the care sector which is a feminine sector with many problems: it’s an undervalued sector with very low salaries. Ania Skrzypek drew attention to the fact that the need to improve care sector is an opportunity to create jobs. Ania also mentioned that it’s an important point when we are talking about demographic challenges, that women without children are also valuable and productive members of the society.
Anna Lendvai talked about the huge gap among regions and countries in the European Union which gap is not only an economic or financial but a thinking one. It is related to the lack of problem awareness. It can be compared to the term of disease awareness which is essential and indispensable to recover the problem. In the European Union there are some countries where raising awareness is much important than in other countries especially on gender inequalities.

PES Member States should take out from the Manifesto what they can use for their societies during the campaign. And Anna also suggested to use numbers, researches and results, for example Gender Equality Index (made by European Institute for Gender Equality) or from our own public opinion polls. We should address what are the main problems within our societies and how can we articulate our common solutions. Our messages will be effective if these are compatible with the current public discourse. Messages of PES must be specialized for each country.
Key issues

- The upcoming 2014 EP elections are an opportunity to strengthen political work at national level, establish cooperation and mutual support frameworks and undertake joint initiatives;
- 50/50 parity should be enforced by SP/SDPs and women candidates need to be supported by their male colleagues, but also by women within the parties and women candidates;
- There is a political vacuum in the countries in the region as politics is marginalised, ideological confusion has seeped in and euro scepticism is on the rise, last but not least since there is a feeling that the new EU member states were not adequately supported in the aftermath of the European financial crisis of 2008, that there is a tiered Europe of the “rich” and the “poor” and that the “rich” Europe is exploiting its “poor” neighbours. In this context it is commendable that the PES campaign is stating that “when things go right, go left”. The PES and Martin Schultz, himself, need to be clear on what political, economic and social solutions should be undertaken to address the situation in the EU “periphery”.
- The 2014 EP elections are an opportunity to change the situation and among other things say a loud NO to pushing women only into the private sphere against their own will through the concept of the 3Ks – kuche, kirche und kinder.

Conclusions and Actions

Engendering the process of preparation of PES EP electoral campaign

While the PES electoral programme and Manifesto on the EU level has established a broad framework it needs to be adapted for use at national level with appropriate priorities. PES Women and the CEE Network will work together, and in coordination with and support from the PES, on:

- Identifying national priorities (three key priorities) to be formulated by SD/SDPs in Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia as they prepare for 2014 EP elections.
• Reviewing upcoming PES documents and the Manifesto drafts to identify gaps and suggested gender sensitive language and priorities and channelling them forward to the PES leadership, i.e. expressing readiness to provide concrete language and have a consultative meeting at the PES and with PESW as the next draft is prepared
• Preparing an electoral publication that would spell out national and pan-European priorities, to be ready for the PES Council in Rome (28 February-1 March 2014)
• Preparing, in cooperation with PES W, a common strategy for promoting 50/50 parity and overall gender equality strategy of PES campaign in among the above countries region, and present this strategy also at the PES W, and PES Council Meeting in Rome.
• Lobbying to include at least one visible feminist women leader in the party delegations from SD/SDPs to the Rome meeting

CEE Network Programme in 2014

CEE Network for Gender Issues conclusion, based on the work and activities to date, is that gender equality in the region is not a given, while progress has been made there are either setbacks or slippages that need to be addressed within SP/SDP parties and the society as a whole. It is therefore necessary to maintain focus on the following:

• Democratisation of political parties, including our sister parties from the prospective of a meaningful participation of male and female citizens, women and young people.
• Removal of the structural barriers for women participation in campaigning and running for all sorts of elected posts
• Evaluation and revision of EU approach, strategies and policies with regard women human rights and gender equality

In 2014 The CEE Network will, therefore, continue:

• Olof Palme supported programme in its third year, by organising Gender Equality Think Tank - Korčula School in 2014 (dates tbd: 1st week of June 2014, or August 2014) in Rijeka. It will be however branded as the Korčula School 2014. The School will also be partnered with FEPS. 2014 topics are violence against women, dealing not only with domestic violence, but also SD policies regarding implementation of CoE Istanbul Convention, and UN Security Councils Resolutions 1325, 1820;
• follow-up on the Korčula School and continue with SD/SDP leadership visits and consultations to support the implementation of Korčula School conclusions;
• LP WF supported project and will, with its Ukrainian partner - Institute for Democracy and Social Progress- focus building a new SD platform and support to the empowerment of women in Ukraine;
• enlarge and strengthen cooperation with LP WF in MENA region, supporting and consulting Tha’era – SD Women’s Network for Parity and Solidarity. In 2014 there will be 5 party national TOT seminars and 100 local seminars in four countries (Lebanon, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, in five sister parties;
• traditionally good cooperation with PES W, European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, with FEPS, and deepen our direct cooperation and pressure on the PES leadership;
• cooperation with OSCE missions in Kosovo and Serbia on the project of reconciliation led by women MPs from both countries;
• strengthen and build synergies of CEE Network cooperation with crucial other partners in the Balkans: other projects of Olof Plamme Centre, cooperation with the projects of Solidar, and cooperation with other political foundations working on gender equality in the region (FES, NDI)
• work on the regional initiative for engendering the process of EU enlargement, started by the TAIEX seminar in Podgorica in December 2014 with Podgorica Joint statement – looking for the support from UNDP Montenegro, Montenegrin government, TAIEX as well as Regional Co-operation Centre in Sarajevo.
• explore the possibility to establish a network of progressive left Women in Black Sea region on the explicit initiative and proposal coming from MEP Marusia Ljubčeva, and PES president Stanishev.
FEPS is THE progressive think tank at the European level, aiming to tackle the challenges that Europe and the world currently face. It offers new concepts and thought-provoking ideas on the progressive scene in Europe and works towards giving the left a more coherent voice. Its main partners are national progressive political foundations and think tanks from different EU Member States. Its research and activities are guided by the conviction that gender issues play a significant role in the creation of a fairer and more solidarity-based society, hence the establishment of a separate research programme on this issue.

“Woman up! Political, business and academic perspectives on women’s representation” was the latest publication in this research, as a result of the fourth Transatlantic dialogue on gender issues. In 2013, FEPS focused on the issue of how to make the campaigning for the European Parliamentary elections more gender sensitive and organised its activities around this issue.

In 2014, it will concentrate on collecting initiatives and setting up strategies that can strengthen progressives’ position and can influence the new European Commission’s objectives on gender equality. With this objective, under the title “Woman up! For a new progressive agenda”, together with the Fondation Jean Jaurès and the Boston University, FEPS organises the fifth Transatlantic dialogue with outstanding experts on the following issues:

- The (in)visibility of women in the left: A historical perspective
- Revisiting the core policy: Gendered analysis of the new welfare state
- Addressing current challenges: Gender and new forms of political activism
- Sharing effective strategies: Mobilising women for the progressive cause

Since its establishment, FEPS works closely with PES Women and the CEE Network for Gender Issues, which dialogue has been inspirational for all actors and advocates for gender equality.
PES WOMEN
EQUAL PAY, IT’S ABOUT TIME!

PES Women launched its campaign in June 2013 on closing the gender pay gap under the motto “Gender Pay Gap, it’s about time!”, re-activating its successful campaign of 2007 “Gender Pay Gap, shut it!”. Together with the PES and its member parties, this campaign is an integral part of the PES 2014 European Elections Campaign.

With this campaign, PES Women wants focus on three demands to finally ensure equal pay for women and men:

- The introduction of a Gender Pay Gap Audit to check that all Member States engage on reducing the gender pay gap for all age groups by 2% per year and per Member States until equality in wages has been reached.
- In parallel, the EU should improve the monitoring of the implementation of anti discrimination and gender equality legislation, including through the application of clear and dissuasive sanctions, both at national and at European level.
- PES Women urges the EU to appoint a specific Commissioner for Gender Equality and Women’s Rights to engage on this as of 2014.

The PES and PES Women are highlighting the issue of the gender pay gap because still today, women have to work two months extra to earn the same salary as their male counterparts! And the current crisis is only aggravating this trend.

Austerity policies by the Conservatives have not only led to job-cutting in the public sector but also regarding wages. Moreover, we should not neglect the closely linked issue of the pension gap. The average pension gap of 39% in Europe is more than twice as large as the
gender pay gap. Other underlying issues, such as the need for free, accessible and affordable care services, breaking the glass-ceiling and ending precarious work, need to be tackled without delay to put a final end to the gender pay gap in Europe.

It is thus time for women and men to stand up and make the right choice for their future. If European women want to keep their economic independence, their active role in the labour market, progress socially and politically, ensure that the future European societies promote and defend gender equality, we cannot longer let right-wing governance decide on our future. Women have been actors of change and should remain so.

That’s why from now on and until the European elections in May, the PES and PES Women will co-host events on this issue in different Member States, in order to mobilise voters and fight together for a fairer Europe.
Women's role in good governance

Challenges, opportunities, best practices and policies

PROGRAMME OF THE WORKSHOP

Day 1, Saturday, 14 December 2013

Opening
Zita Gurmai (MEP, PES Women President, Hungary)
Zuzana Brzobohatá (MEP, Czech Republic – video message)
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (MEP, PES Women Executive Member, Slovenia – video message)

Session 1: Good governance – opportunities and threats in a globalized world (women perspectives)
Siobhan “Sam” Bennett (President, Women’s Campaign Fund – She should run Foundation, United States)
Marusya Lyubcheva (MEP, PES Women Executive Member, Bulgaria)
Rapporteur: Sanja Major (SDP, Croatia)

Day 2, Sunday, 15 December 2013

Sonja Lokar (Executive Director CEE Network, Slovenia)
Rapporteur: Mija Javornik (coordinator CEE Network, Slovenia)

Session 4: PES Manifesto: for a strong gender perspective
Ania Skrzypek (Senior research fellow, FEPS, Poland)
Rapporteur: Anna Lendvai (MSZP, Representative of Council of Budapest, Hungary)

Closure and concluding remarks
Sonja Lokar (Executive Director CEE Network, Slovenia)