

Civil Society Meeting (13-03-2019)

Thank you for your invitation and the opportunity to discuss in an open and direct way, expressing our views on the Commission's as it is the first time after ten years of severe social, economic and fiscal crisis and austerity measures.

My name is E. IOANNIDOU, I am lawyer, ex General Secretary of the Ministry on Labor and elected of the Coordination of Greek Women NGO's for the EWL, the largest umbrella organization of the European Women NGO's.

In Greece we represent more than 40 women organizations working voluntarily including historical organizations with more than one century feminist history and work in gender issues.

Across our broad membership, in all parts of Greece, we testify the dramatical effects of the austerity measures during the last ten years and the gendered impacts on women's everyday life at all levels.

Our opinion is that this must be taken into account and to be translated into concrete and specific measures to support women full participation in the labor market. In order to overcome obstacles and neutral policies, we need to promote a new economic and social model based on gender equality, well-being and social justice.

Regarding the very important and detailed report and recommendations, we acknowledge that there is a progress on integrating a gender perspective in the report and the recommendations, although gender equality is still framed in a quantitative way, without stressing enough the multiple discrimination women are facing and their role in the labor market in the growth and the reforms for the social inclusion. The risk of poverty and the absence of motivating policies is not enough stressed in our opinion, as women form the great majority in all at risk of poverty categories, and this has to be mentioned concretely.

The gender pay gap and the pensions gap are not clearly mentioned. The absence of sufficient all day child care services or services for family dependents is directly connected with women low employment rate and work and reconciliation obstacles. The women's law representation in decision making consists a demographic deficit, for Greece and for Europe. We have predicated for years that without a gender perspective in the European and country's policies the crisis will only deepen.

Women Unemployment rate: There is a very negative effect, compared with the pro crisis period, not only because women have to come back home because of their family responsibilities and the lack of care public infrastructures, but also because of the close of many enterprises especially small and medium firms with a very negative result.

Measures against violence of women: (page 73). It is critical to be concretely mentioned as they affect all categories but especially refugees and migrant women and recommendations must include concrete measures to be taken the Istanbul Convention Ratification in Greece recommends changes in the penal code and practical measures and funding to protect victims.

Taxation System: Individualization of the taxation system is not enough. There are very heavy taxes for all. A new fair and stable system is necessary, including allowances and incentives for families with children or families with very low income. Recommendations for measures addressing single parent families is very important to be included.

Gender Budgeting: is necessary as a tool of gender mainstreaming.

Target women in entrepreneurial and self employed policies: Support mechanisms and access to not banking loans, state supported.

Accessible Child Care Services: and speed up of Barcelona targets is urgently. Care is a collective responsibility. Valuing the care sector as a quality work sector is urgently needed and must be mentioned in the recommendations.

Parity Democracy

Legally binding measures and quotas are needed to increase women participation in decision making. The EWL 50/50 campaign and the Manifesto “Europe For Women – Women For Europe” is very important for the Greece’s triple elections.

Strengthen consultation with women organizations at national and European level is very important and gender mainstreaming must be strengthened an all macroeconomic and socioeconomic procedures and policies.

Concluding, we have to understand that Gender Equality is not a luxury of better times and must be placed into the heart of the revival of a new model for the present and the future for our country and for Europe.