



17 February 2012 (updated 23 March)

Call for action for EWL members and partners to secure future EU funding for gender equality and combating violence against women

WHAT IS AT STAKE: The level and predictability of European Union (EU) funding for gender equality and combating violence against women (VAW), including funding for the EWL itself is at risk. EU and national decision-makers are at the moment debating the EU budget for 2014-2020 and the future EU funding programmes. The proposals of the European Commission for the new funding period integrate EU funding for gender equality and VAW in a general programme. There will be no specific budget lines for gender equality and no independent Daphne Programme to combat violence. This is a serious risk for future EU action on women's rights and gender equality.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO: The European Commission's proposals are now discussed by the EU member states (your governments) and the European Parliament. In the coming months, all EWL members and partners must take action to ensure that, in next EU budgetary period, gender equality, VAW, equality of all, non-discrimination and fundamental rights are a priority and that the EU will allocate predictable and specific funding for these activities.

HOW WILL WE DO IT: Contacts with national governments and the European Parliament will be needed. EWL members and other interested organisations can support the EWL by approaching their national governments (gender equality, justice and finance ministries) and MEPs. **Use the enclosed material: concrete amendments to the Commission's proposals, a model letter (in EN and FR) and a statement.**

WHEN SHOULD WE ACT: The time for action is now! The member states will decide on the overall approach to the programme in June 2012 and continue negotiations in the autumn, and the European Parliament will vote on its position in winter 2012-2013. The final decisions will be made in 2013.

From the current Progress and Daphne programmes to 'Rights and Citizenship' Programme – What has changed?

The European Commission has proposed that within the 2014-2020 EU budget framework, EU activities to promote equality between women and men and fight violence against women will be financed through the so-called '*Rights and Citizenship Programme*'.¹ The programme groups together three current programmes: the gender equality and anti-discrimination sections of the PROGRESS programme, the Daphne III programme to combat violence against women, children and young people and the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship programme. The proposal as it stands may weaken the EU's ability to promote equality between women and men and combat violence against women:

1. **In the new proposal, equality between women and men is not an independent policy objective** but part of the objective to "implement the principle of non-discrimination". This may lead to a loss of visibility and focus. Combating violence against women is not even mentioned among the objectives of the programme.
2. **The new programme implies a decrease in funding for (gender) equality, fundamental rights and combating violence.** Even if the overall amount in the 'Justice' pot from where the funds for the programme are allocated increases, funding for the equality objectives decreases. There is a shift in funding priorities from equality and rights to criminal and civil justice (click [here](#) for graphic visualisation).
3. **No earmarked funding is foreseen** for the different objectives of the programme. Decision about funding priorities will be made annually. This flexibility is a threat to predictability of funding for promoting

¹ Proposal for the Rights and Citizenship Programme (COM(2011) 758); Proposal for the Justice Programme (COM(2011) 759)



gender equality and combating violence against women and means that there is no certainty about the yearly funding for women's rights. We have heard from the Commission that from 2014, the cut may be 30% gender equality and equality compared to now. This includes uncertainty regarding the funding and survival of the EWL itself.

4. **Funding for the activities of small NGOs may not be continued** (Daphne Programme). The proposal does not mention support to the activities of national NGOs.

EWL key messages on the Rights and Citizenship Programme

The forthcoming decision on the overall budget and priorities of the Rights and Citizenship programme that MEPs and member states will make this year is one of the most important issues regarding women's rights and gender equality. The success of EU gender equality policies depends on the funding available. Gender equality, including combating violence against women, must be an investment priority of the EU!

1. **Make (gender) equality and fundamental rights and investment priority - increase the budget of the Rights and Citizenship Programme**

The 2011 public consultation on EU funding instruments in the field of Justice sent a clear message: Europeans want the EU to increase EU funding for gender equality, violence against women, fundamental rights and non-discrimination. The Commission's proposal to cut funding for these objectives goes against the views of citizens. EU institutions and member states have made several commitments regarding gender equality and these commitments must be reflected in decisions about EU budgetary priorities. This could even be done within the current proposed budget through a shift in allocations.

2. **Ensure that women's rights and gender equality is an independent policy priority of the Programme**

The Commission's proposal implies a loss of visibility for the goal of equality between women and men and the fight against violence. Promoting equality for all and promoting equality between women and men are complementary goals that are backed up by different sets of EU legislation and policy responses, and they must both have an independent standing as objectives of the Programme. Combating violence against women must be explicitly mentioned.

3. **Secure dedicated, predictable funding for gender equality within the Programme**

There must be funding **each year** for activities on equality between women and men to ensure progress. The proposal to make funding decisions based on annual priorities and not earmark yearly funding for gender equality makes it impossible to implement long-term strategies. There cannot be serious EU gender equality policies, including implementation of existing legislation and strategies, without yearly dedicated funding.

4. **Ensure women's NGOs at all levels can benefit from the support of the Programme**

The proposed decrease, the lack of specific objectives and the proposals regarding the management of the programme (yearly priorities etc.) endanger the funding for NGOs, including the EWL. Civil society organisations at all levels have proven themselves as indispensable partners of the EU in promoting equality between women and men and in combating violence against women.

What can you do?

1. **Contact your government**

The positions of the member states regarding the details of the programme are probably prepared in Ministries of Justice. Ministries of Finance are responsible for the budget of the programme. The individuals working on gender equality may not be part of the debate, they need to be alerted!



- Contact/write to the minister responsible for gender equality and the gender equality unit of the government in order to alert them and ask them to get involved in developing the position of your country. You can use the enclosed model letter and attach the amendments.
- Contact/write to the [minister responsible](#) for your country's position on the programme. Copy the permanent representation of your country the EU (see a list [here](#)). You can use model letter and amendments enclosed.

2. Contact your members of the European Parliament

The Committee for Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) is responsible for European Parliament's position, and the Women's Rights Committee (FEMM) will contribute. The person responsible for drafting in LIBE is Kinga Göncz (HU) and the responsible in FEMM is Regina Bastos (PT). See [here](#) which MEPs from your country are members of the LIBE committee, see [here](#) which MEPs are members of the FEMM committee:

- Send the model letter and the amendments enclosed to the LIBE and FEMM Committee members from your country.

Timeline – time for action is now!

- **November 2011** European Commission proposal for the Rights and Citizenship Programme (RaC)
- **Spring 2012** European Parliament discusses the RaC Programme, draft position ready in June/July
- **Spring 2012** Member states (Council of Ministers) discuss content of the RaC Programme
- **Spring 2012** Member states discuss the overall EU budget and funding for different budget headings
- **June 2012** Ministers for Justice will make the decision on the general approach to the RaC programme
- **Autumn 2012** Member States will continue negotiations on the content and budget of the programme
- **January/February 2013?** European Parliament will adopt its position on the RaC Programme
- **Spring 2013** EP and Council will agree on the budget and priorities of the RaC programme
- **January 2014** Rights and Citizenship Programme replaces DAPHNE and PROGRESS

Tools: statement, amendments & model letter

EWL statement on EU funding programmes in the field of Justice (Nov 2011) – [download here](#)

Joint amendments to the proposal for the Rights and Citizenship Programme (Feb 2012) – [download here](#)





Model lobbying letter to be translated – Send to equality, justice and finance ministers / ministry officials and members of the European Parliament

Dear xx

RE: Ensure sufficient and predictable EU funding for equality between women and men in the 2014-2020 EU budget

I am writing you in regarding the forthcoming decisions that EU member states and the European Parliament will make on the EU budget 2014-2020 and future EU funding programmes. In particular, I want to draw your attention to the proposed *Rights and Citizenship Programme*, which after 2013 will be the main source of EU funding for activities in the field of equality between women and men and combating violence against women.

The success of EU gender equality policies depends on EU funding made available for implementing them and supporting other actors who work in this field. The budget and priorities of the *Rights and Citizenship Programme* are therefore among the most important decisions related to gender equality that the EU member states and the European Parliament will make this year.

The European Commission's proposal for the *Rights and Citizenship Programme* as it stands may weaken the EU's ability to promote gender equality and combat violence against women. Firstly, the proposal does not foresee gender equality and violence against women as an independent policy priority and does not earmark funding for this purpose. Secondly, the European Commission foresees to decrease the level of EU funding for (gender) equality and fundamental rights as compared to the current funding level.

It is in the hands of the European Parliament and the EU member states to ensure that gender equality will be one of the investment priorities of the EU in the new funding period. **I/We urge you to ensure that the European Parliament (if you write to MEP)/name of the country (if you are writing to member state) will amend the Commission's proposal in following ways:**

- Increase the overall budget of the Rights and Citizenship Programme – Equality and fundamental rights must be priorities of EU spending.
- Make gender equality, including combating violence against women, an independent policy priority of the Programme – the goal of equality between women and men and the fight against violence are invisible in the current Commission's proposal.
- Ensure that funding for promoting gender equality will be available every year and not dependant on separate decisions each year– Coherent gender equality policies require coherent, predictable funding.
- Ensure the NGOs will have an access to the Programme each year in a predictable way – European networks and NGOs working in the field of gender equality, combating violence against women and non-discrimination are crucial partners in implementing the objectives of the EU in this field.

We/I hope that you will take these considerations into account.

Yours sincerely,



Lettre type – A envoyer aux ministres de l'égalité, de la justice et des finances / fonctionnaires responsables dans les ministères et aux députés européens

Chère Madame XX, Cher Monsieur XX

RE: S'assurer de financements européens suffisants et réguliers pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans le cadre du budget 2014-2020

Je vous écris concernant le budget 2014-2020 et l'avenir des programmes de financement de l'UE, au sujet desquels les Etats membres de l'UE et le Parlement Européen vont prochainement se prononcer. Je souhaite attirer tout particulièrement votre attention sur la proposition d'un *Programme Droits et Citoyenneté*, qui après 2013 sera la principale source de financement européen pour les activités en relation avec l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et la lutte contre les violences envers les femmes.

La réussite des politiques d'égalité des genres dépend des financements que l'UE met à disposition pour leur mise en œuvre et pour soutenir les acteurs travaillant sur ces thématiques. Le budget et les priorités du *Programme Droit et Citoyenneté* sont de ce fait parmi les décisions les plus importantes que les Etats membres et le Parlement auront à prendre cette année en matière d'égalité des genres.

La proposition de la Commission relative au *Programme Droits et Citoyenneté* telle quelle est formulée actuellement pourrait diminuer la capacité de l'UE à promouvoir l'égalité des genres et à lutter contre les violences envers les femmes. Tout d'abord, la proposition ne définit pas l'égalité des genres et la lutte contre les violences envers les femmes comme une priorité politique à part entière et de ce fait ne prévoit pas de financement spécifique. De plus, la Commission Européenne prévoit de diminuer les financements pour l'égalité (des genres) et les droits fondamentaux en comparaison avec les financements actuels.

C'est aux Etats membres et au Parlement européen de s'assurer que l'égalité des genres sera une des priorités de l'UE pour la nouvelle période budgétaire. Je/Nous vous encourage(ons) à vous assurer que le Parlement Européen (si vous écrivez à un députés européen)/nom du pays (si vous écrivez à un Etat membre) proposera les amendements suivants au texte de la Commission :

- Augmentation du budget total du Programme Droits et Citoyenneté – l'égalité et les droits fondamentaux doivent être une priorité des financements européens.
- Faire de l'égalité des genres (en prenant en compte les violences envers les femmes) une priorité indépendante et à part entière du Programme – l'objectif "égalité entre les femmes et les hommes" et "lutte contre les violences envers les femmes" n'apparaît pas dans la proposition actuelle de la Commission.
- S'assurer que les financements pour promouvoir l'égalité des genres seront disponibles chaque année et non dépendants de négociations et décisions annuelles – des politiques cohérentes et durables en matière d'égalité des genres demandent des financements cohérents et réguliers.
- S'assurer que les ONG recevront des financements du Programme de manière prévisible – les réseaux européens et les ONG travaillant dans le domaine de l'égalité des genres, de la lutte contre les violences envers les femmes et de la non discrimination sont des partenaires essentiels pour la mise en œuvre des objectifs de l'UE dans ce domaine.

Je/nous espère/ons que vous prendrez ces éléments en considération.

Veuillez croire Madame, Monsieur en l'expression de mes salutations les meilleures,