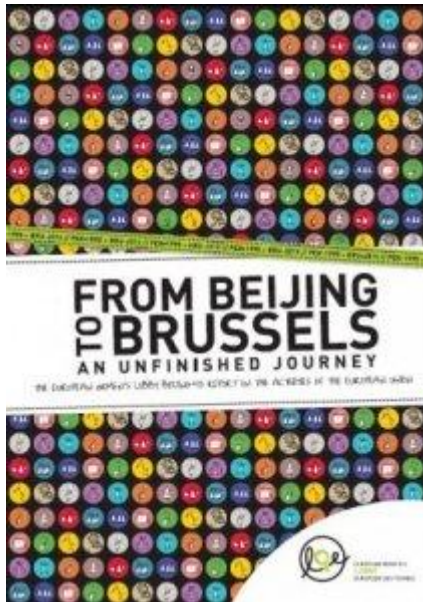


# Flawed Roadmap for Gender Equality criticised by European Women's Lobby

Posted on March 15, 2010 by maryhoneyballmep



The success of the Roadmap for gender equality has been marred by a lack of comparable data across the EU, a lack of targeted financial resources, and difficulties of coordination at national and EU level with gender mainstreaming.

This is the hard-hitting conclusion of a report entitled, [‘From Beijing to Brussels: An Unfinished Journey’](#), which evaluates the progress made at European level towards the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA). It is the third Alternative Report that the European Women’s Lobby, the Brussels umbrella group for women’s organisations, has produced, following their earlier Beijing +5 and Beijing +10 reports.

Adopted at the United Nations’ Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, the Beijing Platform for Action is an agenda aimed at empowering women by speeding up national governments’ implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking

Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Twelve areas were identified in Beijing in 1995 as being most critical, including women’s economic empowerment, women’s human rights, the girl child, and violence against women.

Sadly, some areas, such as women and the media, education and the training of young women, and women and health, have been all-but neglected at EU level, even though the achievement of full equality between women and men is one of the main goals of the EU and all 27 Member States are signatories to Beijing Platform for Action. However, despite the problems with the equality Roadmap, the EU has taken a number of important steps in recent years to comply with the BPfA. One of the most significant of these, in addition to the Roadmap, was the founding of a European Institute for Gender Equality which I worked on as a member of the Women’s Committee. I was therefore pleased to see that the Institute began operating at the end of last year.

The EWL report particularly draws on the need to apply more rigorously, at both EU and national level, a policy of gender mainstreaming to all the areas of concern that are not uniquely ‘women’s’ issues. Note that in the field of education, where the perpetuation of gender stereotypes is leading to a lack of uptake in certain subjects by both girls and boys, this is having a hugely limiting impact upon their subsequent life choices. It is crucial we acknowledge and address demographic trends such as these in order to promote



lifelong learning and ensure that potential future skills shortages are avoided.

This EWL report is extremely comprehensive, offering a critical assessment of the EU's record in implementing the commitments that it made in Beijing 15 years ago. It highlights that positive changes have been made, particularly in the areas of violence against women and women in decision-making, but notes that there is still a long way to go. Only when all 12 areas of concern identified in Beijing have been fully addressed can the EU be satisfied that it has had a significant impact on the progression towards a truly equal society.

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