

Report

# WOMEN'S FORUM BRUSSELS 14

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Reshaping trust in Europe with women's vision

**European Parliament Brussels 28 January 2014**

## Jacqueline Franjou, CEO, Women's Forum for the Economy and Society

Dear Friends,

I wish to thank Tokia Saifi and the European Parliament for welcoming Women's Forum Brussels and its participants today.

I am pleased to be here with you all to reflect and exchange views on a major issue that is now at stake in European politics and societies.

Our societies are in crisis. The crisis is one of trust.

As you know, there is a deficit of representation of women in European politics. In every European institution, women are not represented at the level merited by their skills, talents and rights.

I am convinced that the current lack of public confidence in our institutions of leadership is closely linked to their poor representation of women.

To resolve this crisis of confidence, we need a new model of leadership: one that involves every sector of society — not just one gender, one social class, or one region, but everyone. If Europe is to evolve towards greater sustainability, stronger growth and social progress, and if it is to resolve the social inequality that we see today, women must be able to take their rightful place.

We need women's voices to be heard and women's talents to be deployed so that we can construct a vision of the future that is believable and which inspires trust.

I urge you to help us build a Europe that embodies women's rights and gender equality.

Today we are here to help create new confidence in Europe by involving more women in making key economic, political and social decisions. We should not forget that all issues are also women's issues. As half of humanity, women have a right to half the representation, half the space, a half share of the voices raised.

We at the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society are convinced that the active participation of women creates a movement of optimism and energy in the economy and society of a region. In all types of society, from fishing-villages to megacities, it is only when the talents and skills of all citizens are freed from obstacles that a surge of growth and innovation can be unleashed.

That is our job today. It is a big job.

We are committed to help build and consolidate institutions that are more credible because they are more inclusive and more fair.



Chers amis,

Je tiens à remercier Tokia Saifi ainsi que le Parlement européen pour l'accueil qu'ils ont réservé aujourd'hui au Women's Forum Brussels et à ses participants.

Je suis ravie d'être ici à vos côtés afin de réfléchir et d'échanger nos points de vue sur une question essentielle aujourd'hui au cœur des politiques et des sociétés européennes.

Nos sociétés sont en pleine crise. Une crise de confiance.

Comme vous le savez, on observe actuellement un cruel manque de représentation des femmes sur la scène politique européenne. Dans chacune des institutions européennes, les femmes ne sont pas représentées au niveau qu'elles méritent selon leurs compétences, leurs talents, mais aussi leurs droits.

Je suis convaincue que le manque actuel de confiance du grand public en nos institutions de leadership est étroitement lié à la faible représentation des femmes.

Afin d'apporter une solution à cette crise de confiance, nous devons établir un nouveau modèle de leadership : un modèle impliquant chaque secteur de la société, et non uniquement un sexe, une classe sociale, ou encore une région, mais bien tout un chacun. Si l'Europe souhaite évoluer et atteindre une plus grande durabilité, une croissance et une progression sociale plus fortes, et si la question consiste à résoudre les inégalités sociales que nous observons aujourd'hui, les femmes doivent être en mesure de prendre la place qui leur revient.

Nous devons faire entendre la voix des femmes et déployer leurs talents afin de pouvoir créer une vision d'avenir crédible et capable d'inspirer la confiance.

Je vous invite ainsi à nous aider à bâtir une Europe incarnant les droits des femmes et l'égalité des sexes.

Nous sommes réunis aujourd'hui pour instaurer une nouvelle confiance en Europe en encourageant un plus grand nombre de femmes à prendre des décisions économiques, politiques et sociales cruciales. Nous ne devons pas oublier que toutes ces questions constituent également des problématiques liées aux femmes. Puisqu'elles représentent la moitié de l'humanité, les femmes doivent avoir le droit d'être représentées pour moitié, à disposer de la moitié de l'espace et d'une moitié des voix élevées.

Au sein du Women's Forum for the Economy and Society, nous avons l'intime conviction que la participation active de la gent féminine peut créer un élan d'optimisme et de dynamisme au sein de l'économie et de la société d'une région. Quel que le soit le type de société, des villages de pêcheurs aux mégalopoles, un essor de la croissance et de l'innovation ne peut voir le jour que si les talents et les compétences de l'ensemble des citoyens sont totalement libérés du joug des obstacles.

Telle est notre mission actuelle. Une mission de taille.

Nous sommes pleinement engagés à bâtir et à consolider des institutions plus crédibles capables de se montrer plus inclusives et plus justes.

## Tokia Saïfi, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the European People's Party

Hello and welcome everyone!

I am delighted to welcome you here in Brussels for this European staging of the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society.

Within a globalized economy in which Europe acts as an essential link to the states, I thought a European session of this Forum would enable us to spread the knowledge of our institutions, the Parliament, the Commission, and the Economic and Social Committee, which are all represented today.

Jacqueline Franjou was extremely enthusiastic when I offered my support to host this event in Parliament.

After all, what better place than the European Parliament, which gave the name of Simone Veil to the esplanade in Brussels and that of Louise Weiss to the main building of its seat in Strasbourg, to host this first session?

Most of all, 2014 is important for two reasons:

- on a European level, you know that the Parliament and the European Commission will both be largely renewed this year.
- this year is also important for the Women's Forum as it will be celebrating its tenth anniversary.

The topics addressed today will help you gain a better understanding of the European field of action, its procedures, its networks...and its jargon!

However, you won't find a "Euro-miracle" solution here: in most cases, we have the same problems to solve as we do on a national scale, except that they must be addressed with 28 cultures and nearly as many languages in mind!

Our method is based almost exclusively on consensus, and while it doesn't always lead to clear and precise results, most of the time we succeed in emitting innovative solutions accepted by all.

I think this method is particularly suited to increase the representational capacity of women in economics, politics and research, among others.

For what reasons?

First of all, on a global scale, there has been nothing but progress - more or less significant - yet still tangible.

Second, because we still need to work on breaking down "pockets of resistance", fields in which regulations have made no difference to engrained habits.

In these cases, resorting to compromises and comparing the propositions issued by the various countries can be a real solution.



Naturally, we still need to build on our achievements and broadcast and promote them to as many people as possible. I think we will address this matter at the end of the Forum.

One last thing: this first "European" session of the Women's Forum started off as a try. When I see how many of you came here today, I think it's safe to say the try has been converted!

I wish you all a good session!



Bonjour et bienvenue à toutes et à tous !

Je suis très heureuse de vous accueillir ici, à Bruxelles, à l'occasion de cette édition européenne du Women's Forum for the Economy and Society.

Dans une économie mondialisée où l'Europe est un relais indispensable des États, j'ai pensé qu'une session européenne de ce Forum permettrait de mieux faire connaître nos institutions, le Parlement, la Commission, ou le Comité économique et social, qui sont toutes représentées aujourd'hui.

Jacqueline Franjou a tout de suite montré beaucoup d'enthousiasme quand j'ai proposé mon soutien pour accueillir cet évènement au Parlement.

En effet, quel autre lieu que le Parlement européen, qui a donné le nom de Simone Veil à son esplanade à Bruxelles et celui de Louise Weiss au bâtiment principal de son siège strasbourgeois, pouvait accueillir cette première session ?!

Surtout, cette année 2014 est doublement importante :

- côté européen, vous le savez, le Parlement et la Commission européenne seront en grande partie renouvelés cette année.
- Et pour le Women's Forum, cette année est également importante puisqu'elle marquera son dixième anniversaire.

Les thèmes que nous aborderons aujourd'hui vous permettront de mieux appréhender le champ d'action européen, ses procédures, ses réseaux... et son jargon !

En revanche, vous ne trouverez pas ici de solution "euro-miracle" : le plus souvent, nous avons à résoudre les mêmes problèmes qu'au niveau national, et nous devons les traiter au regard de 28 cultures, et dans presque autant de langues !

Notre méthode repose presque exclusivement sur le consensus et si elle n'aboutit pas toujours à des résultats précis et compréhensibles, nous parvenons la plupart du temps à dégager des solutions novatrices et acceptées par tous.

Je pense que cette méthode est particulièrement adaptée pour faire progresser la représentativité des femmes dans l'économie, la politique et le domaine de la recherche notamment.

Pour quelles raisons ?

D'abord, globalement, nous ne pouvons que constater des progrès - plus ou moins sensibles - mais tangibles.

Ensuite, car il nous reste maintenant à faire éclater des "poches de résistance", c'est-à-dire des domaines où aucun règlementation n'a pu faire rompre les habitudes.

Ici, le recours au compromis, à la comparaison des propositions des différents pays, peut constituer une véritable solution.

Et il nous reste bien sûr à consolider nos acquis et les diffuser, les promouvoir, auprès du plus grand nombre et nous en parlerons je pense, en clôture du Forum.

Un dernier mot : cette première session "européenne" du Women's Forum était au départ conçue comme un essai. À vous voir aussi nombreuses et nombreux aujourd'hui, nous pouvons dire qu'il est transformé !

Une bonne session à tous !

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## Program

**14:00-14:05**

### Forum welcome

Speakers:

**Jacqueline Franjou**, CEO, Women's Forum for the Economy and Society

**Tokia Saïfi**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the European People's Party

**14:05-15:30**

### European tools to build a competitive economy

European Union economic policy is geared towards steady growth and more jobs in the EU. While aiming to stabilize the economy in the short term and increase potential growth in the medium term, it also addresses different longer-term challenges, such as population ageing and globalization. Which tools (political, technical, and legal) exist within the European Union which help foster the economy? Do they correspond to the current economic situation in Europe and its many challenges?

Welcome Speech:

**Isabelle Durant**, Vice-President of the European Parliament

Moderator:

**Matina Stevis**, EU Correspondent, The Wall Street Journal

Speakers:

**Silvana Koch-Mehrin**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe

**Sharon Leclercq-Spooner**, Partner, EPPA and Member of the Board, EurActiv.com

**Maria Francesca Spadolisano**, European Union Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the OECD

**Saskia Van Uffelen**, CEO, SA BULL NV

**15:30-16:00 Networking break**

**16:00-17:00**

### Advance women's participation in politics and government

Equitable participation of women in politics and government is essential to building and sustaining democracy. Comprising over 50% of the world's population, women continue to be under-represented as voters, political leaders and elected officials. Which tools can women use to participate successfully in all aspects of the political process? When elected, which different contributions can they bring to the political debate?

Moderator:

**Caroline de Camaret**, Europe Editor-in-Chief, France 24

Speakers:

**Claire Annesley**, Professor of Politics and Director of Research in the School of Social Sciences, University of Manchester

**Marta Dassù**, Deputy Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy

**Mariya Gabriel**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the European People's Party

**16:00-17:00**

### Women of influence: Making the connections between business and politics

Women pursue different paths to power in business and politics, yet in both areas there is a leaky leadership pipeline. What can the two spheres learn from each other about how to better promote women's leadership? And how might the public and private sectors work together more effectively on this goal which both share?

Moderator:

**Julia Harrison**, SMD - Managing Partner Brussels, FTI Consulting

Speakers:

**Inés Ayala Sender**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament

**Elisabeth Kelan**, Associate Professor, Department of Management, King's College London

**Muriel de Saint-Sauveur**, International Marketing and Communications Agency Director, Group Diversity Director, Mazars

**17:00-17:15 Networking break**

**17:15-17:45**

### Closing keynote: Women's rights as an essential cooperation

Keynote speaker:

Irene Khan, Director-General, International Development Law Organization (IDLO)

17:45-18:30

**Closing cocktail**

## Speakers

- **Inés Ayala Sender**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament
- **Claire Annesley**, Professor of Politics and Director of Research in the School of Social Sciences, University of Manchester
- **Caroline de Camaret**, Europe Editor-in-Chief, France 24
- **Marta Dassù**, Deputy Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy
- **Isabelle Durant**, Vice-President of the European Parliament
- **Jacqueline Franjou**, CEO, Women's Forum for the Economy and Society
- **Mariya Gabriel**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the European People's Party
- **Julia Harrison**, SMD - Managing Partner Brussels, FTI Consulting
- **Irene Khan**, Director-General, International Development Law Organization (IDLO)
- **Elisabeth Kelan**, Associate Professor, Department of Management, King's College London
- **Silvana Koch-Mehrin**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
- **Sharon Leclercq-Spooner**, Partner, EPPA and Member of the Board, EurActiv.com
- **Tokia Saïfi**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the European People's Party
- **Muriel de Saint-Sauveur**, International Marketing and Communications Agency Director, Group Diversity Director, Mazars
- **Maria Francesca Spatolisano**, European Union: Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the OECD
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For Isabelle Durant, we always turn to women in times of crisis because we think women hold part of the answer, both in terms of politics and legal matters. We need to re-create sustainable jobs for everyone, including women. Why don't women set up more businesses? We need to stand by them when they do so, successfully, building on diversity. We all have a responsibility to push women to become entrepreneurs.



*« Women working within all the hierarchical levels of companies increase economic competitiveness and productivity. Europe must encourage the full participation of women in professional life. The glass ceiling is one of the barriers which we must break. » Isabelle Durant*

For Silvana Koch-Mehrin, it is essential to revitalize growth by revitalizing its power. Today, we risk losing the battle if the European Union doesn't succeed in integrating part of its workforce into the active market. These are the structural schemas which need to be tackled. In terms of social legislation, these are the legislations issued by the Member States. Europe should be able to adopt such legislations to guarantee gender equality.

For Sharon Leclercq-Spooner, it's important for the European Union to be competitive on a global scale. We need to change our legislative approach and the way we negotiate with non-EU countries to create a world that suits us, rather than having an unsuitable world forced upon us. We must reshape our approach in order to improve competitiveness and promote superior standards.

« Dans une démocratie, la coopération est le secret de la réussite. »

**Silvana Koch-Mehrin**



managers there are. What measures could the European Union take to boost female economic involvement in terms of entrepreneurship, among other things?

« We need to change our legislative approach and the way we negotiate with non-EU countries to create a world that suits us, rather than having an unsuitable world forced upon us. »

**Sharon Leclercq-Spooner**

For Maria Francesca Spadolisano, there is a European framework for this, and the implementation of measures will take time. Regarding matters of child care, etc., these are the competencies of the member states.

These measures are taken into account, we are trying to pressure the member states into applying them. There are also tax-related measures that enable us to encourage the promotion of women on the job market. Within the EU's strategy for 2020, the goal is to make sure 75% of the population is able to find work. Today, 75% of men and 62% of women have a job.

Over the last few years, the OECD has often addressed the topic of Europe's economic competitiveness and has acquired a good understanding of the situation. For Maria Francesca Spadolisano, the European Union must act as a whole. Five years ago, the European Union was deemed responsible for the crisis. In fact, the opposite is true. The European Union fought with limited power, using the only tools at its disposal.

The aim of the panel is to ascertain the ways in which we can count on women to create a more competitive economy. Female entrepreneurship suffers from a lack of statistics. In Europe, an average of one in three women has independent worker status. We don't know how many female company





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**Maria Francesca Spadolisano**

away with the culture of rules in Europe that don't allow bankruptcy. We need to adopt measures that enable the making of mistakes.

Silvana Koch-Mehrin emphasizes that the European Parliament has already adopted many resolutions and legislations on this matter. But mentalities need to change and the EU can play a part. We need to think about what we want to achieve. It is important to change mentalities and to stop thinking only of mistakes, problems, etc. We need to show examples of best practices and successes. The main priority is to adopt legislations, such as those on quotas, on a European level.



*« It is necessary to create an environment in which all people are free to take advantage of their skills and receive support in doing so. We must rethink the business model. We need to act now, and more importantly, we each need to contribute to changing society. »*

**Saskia Van Uffelen**

*Pour Isabelle Durant, quand c'est la crise on se tourne toujours vers les femmes, car nous pensons que les femmes détiennent en politique et en juridique une partie des clés. Il faut recréer des emplois durables pour tous, et donc aussi pour les femmes. Pourquoi est-ce que les femmes ne créent-elles pas plus d'entreprises ? Il faut être à leur côté car quand elles le font, avec succès, en s'appuyant sur la multidisciplinarité. Nous avons tous la responsabilité de pousser les femmes à devenir entrepreneur.*

*Pour Silvana Koch-Mehrin, il est important de relancer la croissance européenne en relançant ses pouvoirs. On risque aujourd'hui de perdre la bataille si l'Union Européenne n'arrive pas à intégrer une partie de sa main d'œuvre sur le marché actif. Ce sont là des schémas structurels auxquels il faudra s'attaquer. En ce qui concerne la législation sociale, ce sont des législations qui ressortent de la législation des Etats membres. L'Europe devrait pouvoir adopter de telles législations pour assurer l'égalité de genre.*

*Pour Sharon Leclercq-Spooner, il est important que l'Union Européenne ait une compétitivité mondiale. Il faut changer l'approche législative et notre façon de négocier avec les pays tiers pour pouvoir mettre en place un monde qui nous convient plutôt que de nous voir imposer un monde qui ne nous convient pas. Il faut refaçonner l'approche pour améliorer la compétitivité et promouvoir les normes supérieures.*

*Au cours de ces dernières années, l'OCDE a traité souvent le sujet de la compétitivité économique de l'Europe et elle a pu bien comprendre la situation. Pour Maria Francesca Spadolisano, l'Union Européenne doit agir dans son ensemble. Il y a cinq ans, l'Union Européenne était désignée comme responsable de la crise. C'est l'inverse. l'Union Européenne s'est battue avec les instruments dont elle disposait et avec des pouvoirs limités.*

*Le but du panel est de déterminer comment compter sur les femmes pour avoir une économie plus compétitive. L'entreprenariat féminin souffre d'un manque de statistique. En Europe, il y a environ une femme sur trois qui a un statut d'indépendante. On ne sait pas combien de femmes chefs d'entreprise il y a. Quels sont les mesures que pourraient prendre l'Union Européenne pour booster la participation économique des femmes en termes d'entreprenariat féminin mais pas uniquement ?*

*Pour Maria Francesca Spadolisano, un cadre existe au niveau européen et la mise en place de mesures requiert du temps. Si l'on parle de garde d'enfant et d'autres thèmes, il s'agit de compétences d'Etats membres. Ces mesures sont prises en compte, nous essayons d'exercer des pressions sur les Etats membres pour les appliquer. Il y a aussi les mesures fiscales qui permettent d'encourager la promotion des femmes sur le marché du travail. Dans la stratégie de l'UE pour 2020, l'objectif est de veiller à ce que 75% de la population puisse trouver un emploi. Aujourd'hui, 75% des hommes et 62% des femmes ont un emploi.*

*Saskia Van Uffelen a deux souhaits : stimuler le recrutement, car les conditions sont assez lourdes et conséquentes ; et en finir avec la culture et les règles en Europe qui ne permettent pas la faillite. Il faut prendre des mesures qui permettent de faire des erreurs.*

*Silvana Koch-Mehrin souligne que le Parlement européen a déjà adopté de nombreuses résolutions et législations à ce sujet. Mais il est nécessaire de changer les mentalités et l'UE peut agir dans ce domaine. Nous devons réfléchir à ce que nous voulons réaliser et il est important de changer les mentalités et arrêter de penser aux erreurs, aux problèmes etc. Il faut montrer des exemples de bonne pratique et de bonne réussite. Ce qui est important est d'adopter au niveau européen des législations comme celles sur les quotas.*

## Advance women's participation in politics and government

Moderator:

**Caroline de Camaret**, Europe Editor-in-Chief, France 24

Speakers:

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Europe is still a masculine world. The fair representation of women is one of the key components of a democratic aspect, yet they are still under-represented. Currently, only five of the heads of state within the European Union are women. For Marta Dassù, this ratio is weak, but Angela Merkel is the strongest and toughest European leader, of this we can be satisfied. For the ECB, the battle was a hard one because there were no women within its governing body. Could we envision creating a European transnational women's lobby? Currently difficult, as European elections are threatened by national campaigns. But it would be a first step towards change. In Italy, women aren't very well represented, even though the situation is changing (specially left of centre).

Claire Annesley points out that there are many discrepancies between UE members regarding the place of women in politics. Progress is hardly noticeable, but over the last 20 to 30 years there has been a positive growth tendency. However, ceaseless

efforts must be made. In Sweden, the share of women has decreased, and this is a shock.

*« This absence of female representation facilitates a strong representational and legitimacy crisis. »*

**Claire Annesley**

Concerning the opposition between Northern and Southern countries, according to Claire Annesley, we can't use Scandinavia as an example anymore when we look at the Spanish case. Mariya Gabriel points out that in Bulgaria, there are 22% of women in government. We must erase the North/South and East/West divide. We need a consensus on female participation. We also need women to take various responsibilities.



In answer to a question from the audience about the role of women in the Arab Spring countries, Mariya Gabriel recommends that women participate in the peace process. If women aren't part of the negotiations from the beginning, it will be very difficult for them to occupy any given function. For Marta Dassù, women are most certainly among the first victims of civil wars. This is the case in Syria. The under-representation of women is one of the reasons for the absence of economic development in these countries. Efforts need to be made on a national scale to fight this situation.

*« In terms of economic development, the fact that women aren't represented is one of the reasons why there is no development in these countries. »*

**Marta Dassù**

Caroline de Camaret points out that the European Union strongly recommends gender equity but that when you look closer, at the European Commission for instance, progress is slow and weak. Should we therefore impose quotas? For Mariya Gabriel, quotas are in fact a necessary evil. The only argument in favour of quotas is the sluggishness of progress. We need to find a way of triggering increased participation. But they must remain a transitional tool. Marta Dassù sees quotas as a temporary way of speeding up progress. For Claire Annesley, there are ways of avoiding quotas. In the United Kingdom, the liberal party has lists for women for certain constituencies. This system has worked well and has increased the number of women in Parliament. But it only concerns one party. In France, there is a parity system within the political parties that includes sanctions. This enables women to occupy key functions.



*« Deep down, I am against quotas. The only argument in favour of quotas is the sluggishness of progress. Quotas are in fact a necessary evil. »*

**Mariya Gabriel**



In conclusion, Claire Annesley highlights that there are many reasons why more women are needed in the political world. But we must not think that just because there are more women, everything will be different. We must not put that weight on their shoulders. We mustn't have too many expectations for women. For Mariya Gabriel, once we reach 50% of women, this will mean that men will become the first defenders of women's rights. We will have reached our goal.

L'Europe est toujours un monde masculin. Une juste représentation des femmes est une composante essentielle pour un aspect démocratique, cependant elles sont toujours sous-représentées. A l'heure actuelle, il y a cinq chefs d'Etats qui sont des femmes au sein de l'Union Européenne. Pour Marta Dassù, cette proportion est en effet légère mais Angela Merkel est la dirigeante la plus solide et la plus forte de l'Europe et nous pouvons donc être satisfaites. Pour la BCE, la bataille a été très rude car il n'y avait aucune femme représentée dans ses instances dirigeantes. Peut-on envisager de créer un lobby européen, transnational des femmes ? Très difficile car à ce jour, les élections européennes étant menées par des campagnes nationales. Mais ce serait déjà un premier changement. En Italie, les femmes ne sont pas très bien représentées, même si la situation change (notamment au centre gauche).

Claire Annesley souligne qu'il y a beaucoup d'écart entre les pays membres de l'Union Européenne sur le place des femmes en politique. Les avancées ne sont pas très visibles, mais au cours de ces 20 à 30 dernières années, la tendance est positive. Cependant, les efforts doivent rester constants. En Suède, la proportion des femmes a reculé et c'est un choc.

Sur l'opposition entre les pays du Nord et les pays du Sud, pour Claire Annesley, on ne peut plus parler de l'exemple des pays scandinaves quand on voit le cas de l'Espagne. Mariya Gabriel souligne qu'en Bulgarie, il y a 22% de femmes au gouvernement. Il faut effacer le clivage Nord/Sud ou Est/Ouest. Il faut un consensus pour la participation des femmes. Il faut aussi que des femmes prennent différentes responsabilités.

Répondant à une question de la salle sur le rôle des femmes dans les pays du printemps arabe, Mariya Gabriel prône que les femmes doivent participer au processus de paix. Si les femmes ne sont pas dès le début dans la négociation, ce sera très difficile pour elles d'occuper tel ou tel poste. Pour Marta Dassù, les femmes sont certainement parmi les premières victimes des guerres civiles. C'est le cas en Syrie. La sous-représentation des femmes est une cause d'absence de développement économique de ces pays. Il y a donc des efforts qui doivent être consentis au niveau national pour combattre cette situation.

Caroline de Camaret souligne que l'Union Européenne recommande vivement l'équité mais si on regarde de plus près, au sein de la Commission européenne par exemple, les progrès sont assez faibles et lents. Donc faut-il imposer des quotas ? Pour Mariya Gabriel, les quotas sont en réalité un mal nécessaire. Le seul argument des quotas est la lenteur des progrès. Il faut réfléchir à comment instrumentaliser une participation accrue. Mais ils doivent rester une transition. Marta Dassù voient les quotas comme un instrument temporaire, provisoire qui peuvent amener un progrès plus rapide. Pour Claire Annesley, il existe des moyens pour éviter les quotas. Au Royaume-Uni, le parti libéral a des listes pour les femmes pour certaines circonscriptions. Ce système a bien fonctionné et a permis d'augmenter le nombre de femmes au Parlement. Mais cela ne concerne qu'un parti. En France, il y a un système de parité dans les partis politiques avec des sanctions, ce qui permet aux femmes d'avoir des postes clés.

En conclusion, Claire Annesley souligne qu'il y a beaucoup de raisons pour laquelle il faut avoir plus de femmes dans l'univers politique. Mais il ne faut pas penser que s'il y a plus de femmes, cela va tout transformer. Il ne faut pas leur mettre ceci sur les épaules. Il ne faut pas non plus avoir trop d'attentes de la part des femmes. Pour Mariya Gabriel, une fois que l'on sera arrivé à 50% de femmes, cela signifiera que les hommes deviendront les premiers défenseurs du droit des femmes. L'objectif sera alors atteint.

## Women of influence: Making the connections between business and politics

Moderator:

**Julia Harrison**, SMD - Managing Partner Brussels, FTI Consulting

Speakers:

**Inés Ayala Sender**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament

**Elisabeth Kelan**, Associate Professor, Department of Management, King's College London

**Muriel de Saint-Sauveur**, International Marketing and Communications Agency Director, Group Diversity Director, Mazars



What are the challenges faced by women who want to become leaders? How can we help them achieve this goal in the world of business and politics?

Muriel de Saint-Sauveur highlights that social change is occurring on an international level. The wants and expectations of women have changed: they want to bridge careers and family lives and be financially independent. These wants and expectations are found in Generation Y, among both men and women.

There is a difference between women in business (selected to solve a problem) and women in politics (elected for their values and their program). In both cases, there is a lot to be learned from them.



*« There is a difference between women in business (selected to solve a problem) and women in politics (elected for their values and their program). Their behaviour is therefore different depending on their position, and in both cases there is a lot to be learned. »*

**Muriel de Saint-Sauveur**

The political journey of Inès Ayala Sender began with the battle for women's right to vote. She observes the reality of equal opportunities between men and women, but disparities still exist. Women nowadays think that women's rights have always existed and don't realize what a struggle it has been to get this far. In the business world, she sees two different

readings depending on whether a company is big (the road to equality being very long) or small. The latter tend to call upon women more and more. As a politician, she is optimistic.



*« The former generation of feminists must serve as a role model while supporting the current generation to show them the way. This model is completed by that of current female leaders, who are committed to proving what they, as women, provide; not from a social point of view but from a professional one. »*

**Elisabeth Kelan**

In her book, "Women can succeed while remaining anonymous", Elisabeth Kelan sums up the situation: there is a real difference depending on the field and the political arena, but on the whole, the place of women is getting bigger. Nowadays, women are as ambitious as men if not more, and most of them support a sustainable movement to guarantee

their positive place in society, politics and business. Yet paradoxically, some women see discrimination as normal, systemic, and sometimes even something they are responsible for.

Has the situation improved or worsened over the last 10 years? For Inès Ayala Sender, it is difficult to provide a global answer because national cultures are still very dominant. At the same time, the family and social policies of all countries have contracted due to the crisis, which has diminished the budgets granted for family allowance, childcare, education. That's why we need to remain vigilant regarding this issue. For Muriel de Saint-Sauveur, the generation factor is added to the cultural factor: more and more "older" women want to be able to work longer and stay independent.

*« The body of legislation on the place of women has changed. Women nowadays think that women's rights have always existed and don't realise what a struggle it has been to get this far. »*

**Inès Ayala Sender**

How can we improve the situation and adopt equality measures? Elisabeth Kelan encourages best practice workshops: mentoring, sponsoring, changes to the legal framework (quotas in France)... For Inès Ayala Sender, the regulatory framework is a prerequisite but not a guarantee of success. Cooperation between women of all generations as well as the integration of men into this global approach for equality are also important.

Changes in society, economic and demographic pressure, the expectations of Generation Y were mentioned. This is an indicator of the diversity of the challenges and the complexity of the question. But how do you create influential women? Inès Ayala Sender answers that it begins with equal pay. Elisabeth Kelan encourages us to overcome stereotypes by raising awareness on an individual basis. For Muriel de Saint-Sauveur, women need to change their mentality. We also need to build on Europe and the action of the European Union to make significant progress regarding the feminine and feminist cause.



*Quels sont les défis pour les femmes souhaitant devenir leader? Comment les y aider dans le monde des affaires et le monde politique?*

*Muriel de Saint-Sauveur constate qu'un changement social est en cours au niveau international. Les désirs et attentes des femmes ont changé : elles veulent concilier vie professionnelle et vie familiale et être indépendante financièrement. Ces désirs et attentes se retrouvent chez la génération Y, hommes et femmes confondus.*

*Il y a une différence entre les femmes dans le monde des affaires (choisies pour régler un problème) et les femmes dans le monde politique (élues pour leurs valeurs et leur programme). Il y a beaucoup à apprendre de part et d'autre.*

*Le parcours politique d'Inès Ayala Sender a commencé avec le droit de vote des femmes. Elle constate la réalité de l'égalité des chances entre les hommes et les femmes mais les disparités sont toujours présentes. Les femmes d'aujourd'hui pensent que les droits des femmes ont toujours existé et ne réalisent pas la lutte qu'il a fallu mener pour en arriver là. Dans le monde des affaires, elle voit deux lectures différentes selon qu'il s'agisse de grandes entreprises (où le chemin vers l'égalité est très lent) ou de petites entreprises où l'on constate qu'on fait de plus en plus souvent appel aux femmes. En tant que femme politique, elle est optimiste.*

*Dans son livre "Les femmes peuvent réussir en restant anonymes", Elisabeth Kelan résume la situation : il y a une réelle différence de situation selon le secteur, le milieu politique, mais globalement, la place des femmes s'étend. Les femmes ont aujourd'hui autant, voire plus, d'ambitions que les hommes et la plupart soutiennent un mouvement pérenne pour garantir leur bonne place dans la société, dans le milieu politique et celui des affaires. Mais paradoxalement, certaines considèrent les discriminations comme normales, systémiques, voire comme étant de leur responsabilité.*

*La situation s'est-elle aggravée ou améliorée ces 10 dernières années ? Pour Inès Ayala Sender, il est difficile d'apporter une réponse globale, car les cultures nationales sont encore très prégnantes. En parallèle, les politiques familiale et sociale de chaque pays se sont crispées du fait de la crise, ce qui a diminué les crédits alloués aux allocations familiales, aux crèches, à l'éducation. Il faut donc maintenir la vigilance par rapport à cette problématique. Pour Muriel de Saint-Sauveur, le facteur générationnel s'ajoute au facteur culturel : les femmes « âgées » veulent de plus en plus pouvoir travailler longtemps et rester indépendantes.*

*Comment améliorer la situation et prendre des mesures pour l'égalité ? Elisabeth Kelan encourage les échanges de bonnes pratiques : mentorat, sponsoring, changement du cadre juridique (les quotas en France)... Pour Inès Ayala Sender, le cadre réglementaire est un prérequis mais pas une garantie de succès. La collaboration entre les femmes, toute génération confondue, et l'intégration des hommes dans cette démarche globale pour l'égalité sont aussi importants.*

*Changements sociétaux, pressions économique et démographie, attentes de la génération Y ont été évoqués. Cela est révélateur de la diversité des enjeux et de la complexité de la question. Mais comment créer des femmes d'influence ? Inès Ayala Sender répond que c'est par l'égalité salariale que cela passe. Elisabeth Kelan encourage à dépasser les stéréotypes en sensibilisant individuellement. Pour Muriel de Saint-Sauveur, il faut que les femmes changent leur mentalité. Il faut également miser sur l'Europe et l'action de l'Union Européenne pour avoir des avancées significatives pour la cause féminine et féministe.*

## Closing keynote: Women's rights as an essential cooperation

Keynote speaker:  
**Irene Khan**, Director-General, International Development Law Organization (IDLO)



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Reshaping trust in Europe with women's vision  
**European Parliament Brussels 28 January 2014**

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Supporting the Women's Forum for 8 consecutive years, Mazars is pleased to be part of the first Women's Forum in Brussels, bringing together women from the public and business spheres to better promote women's leadership.



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