Working together for women's rights and gender equality in Europe

Coalition building and lobby work around women's issues in East-Central Europe

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Why working together for women's rights? Why Coalitions, Networks and Alliances?

Situation of women in Europe (1)

- Inadequate measures to ensure full participation of women in all areas and at all levels, especially in EU Member states

- Underrepresentation of women in political and economic decision-making

- Men take the the decisions on political priorities, public spending, economic priorities of States and companies - economic crisis and austerity measures

Situation of women in Europe (2)

- Discrimination in employment
- Increase of poverty among women
- Absence of consistent policies to tackle all forms of VAW
- Lack of commitment to address women's sexual and reproductive health and rights
- No legal measures in relation to gender equality in education and the media

Gender Equality in decision-making – a question of Human Rights and Democracy

- Women represent more than half of EU's population
- Gender Equality = condition for modernising our political systems
- Under-representationen of women contributes to the lack of democratic legitimacy of EU and its member states

Coalitions as strength

- ✓ A coalition = a (temporary) network or an alliance among individual or groups aimed to cooperate in joint actions, each in their own interests, joining forces together for a common cause and for common goals
- ✓ Networking means nothing more than making, maintaining and organizing contacts
- ✓ Benefit from the expertise, professional skills and experience of many others

Basic conditions

- External conditions, reason and occasion
- Determination of objectives
- Similar and compatible goals
- Respect, Solidarity & Equality between parties involved; knowledge
- Definition of procedure rules
- Willingness to compromise
- Funding
- Mentoring
- Communication strategy

Examples

1. National Council of German Women's Organisations (NCGWO)
2. European Women's Lobby
3. Alliance in relation to CEDAW reporting / Germany
4. NCGWO's Campaign « Final Whistle – Stop Forced Prostitution »

National Council of German Women‘s Organisations (NCGWO)

- ✓ 1951: Information Service for Women‘s Issues established by 14 Women Organisations representing different women‘s organisations
- ✓ 1958: Information Service & Action Cercle of German Women‘s Organisations and – groups of mixed Associations

National Council of German Women‘s Organisations (NCGWO)

- ✓ Since 1969: National Council of German Women‘s Organisations as Women‘s Lobby
- ✓ Diversity of members: more than 50 traditio-nal women‘s organisations, professional and religious associations, women‘s sections of political parties, women of trade unions and of the German Sports Federation

National Council of German Women‘s Organisations (NCGWO)

- ✓ Since 1969: National Council of German Women‘s Organisations as Women‘s Lobby
- ✓ 1989: Reunification of Germany
- ✓ Diversity of members: more than 50 traditio-nal women‘s organisations, professional and religious associations, women‘s sections of political parties, women of trade unions and of the German Sports Federation

European Women's Lobby

- ✓ London - November 1987 – meeting of 120 women
- ✓ Reason: growing awareness of women's necessary participation in processes at European level and ensuring better defence and representation of women's interests'.

European Women's Lobby

Two resolutions:

1. Call for the ‚creation of a structure for influence, open to all interested women‘s organisations, to exert pressure on European and national institutions to ensure better defence and representation of women‘s interests‘.

European Women's Lobby

Two resolutions:

2. Call upon the European Commission to ‚lend its support for the organisation in early 1988 of a meeting with a view to the implementation of such a structure'

European Women's Lobby

- Formal establishment of the European Women's Lobby in 1990.
- Founding members: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands, United Kingdom and

  17 European-wide organisations
- 2012: 51 member organisations

European Women's Lobby

Lobbying work in main policy areas

✓ European Gender Equality Policies & Legislation
✓ Violence against women
✓ Women in decision-making / Parity Democracy
✓ Women's Diversity and Anti-Discrimination
✓ Women and the Media
✓ Migration, Integration and Asylum
✓ Fundamental Rights within the EU
✓ International Action for Human Rights / United Nations

Alliance - CEDAW reporting

✓September 2007: Germany presented the 6th CEDAW Report to the respective UN Committee

✓December 2007 & February 2008: meeting of 28 women's associations, campaigns and initiatives deciding to write an alternative report: to commend on the official report, subject it to critical review and add further material

✓Cooperation with initiatives of intersexual and transsexual people

Alliance - CEDAW reporting

Important:

- ✓ Internal rules of procedure
- ✓ Setting priorities
- ✓ Fixing responsibilities for each chapter
- ✓ Appointment of a coordinating group

Equality of all persons and organisations involved

Campaign « Final Whistle – Stop Forced Prostitution »

- ✓ Immediate cause for launching the campaign: 2006 Football World Cup in Germany
- ✓ Reason to believe that demand for and supply of sex services would rise
- ✓ Danger of increase in human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation
- ✓ Contacts with leaders of the German Football Association incl. National football players without results

Campaign « Final Whistle – Stop Forced Prostitution

- ✓ Contact to Media – great support
- ✓ Launch of the campaign by the NCGWO and creation of a country-wide campaign network (with participation of amnesty international, ILO, Media Mondiale, German Council of Criminal Detectives, Men against Male Violence)
- ✓ Patronage of Berlin‘s Lord Mayor and the Executive President of the German Football Association

Campaign « Final Whistle – Stop Forced Prostitution

Core of the campaign: a widespread campaign to support a detailed set of urgent policy recommendations to combat human trafficking and prostitution for sexual exploitation

- for the countries of origin
- for the victims of human trafficking in Germany
- for the German Authorities

Campaign « Final Whistle – Stop Forced Prostitution

Positive response at national, European and international level

- ✓ Press Conference on 7th March 2007
- ✓ Campaign material:
- Brochure with background information on human trafficking
- Flyer explaining the background of the campaign
- Flyer with the policy recommendations in six languages

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Conclusion

Leo Tolstoi
(letter to Romain Rolland, October 1887)

“Everything which unites human beings is good and great; everything which divides them is bad and nasty”

Thank you very much for your attention!

www.frauenrat.de
www.womenlobby.org

Brigitte Triems
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