



## **Personal Invitation to the Forum**

### **“Women and Society”**

The Friedrich Ebert Foundation cordially invites you to a round-table discussion of its new programme called "Gender equality in East-Central Europe" on

#### **"Low participation of women in politics: A reality set in stone in the Visegrád countries?"**

The low representation of women in leading positions in politics seems to prevail all over the region since the first democratic Parliamentary elections 1990-91, though in some of the countries there have been some changes. There have been many similarities, but also differences concerning women's ratio in important political functions, effective empowerment measures within parties and electoral laws, the public debate on women in the public sphere and the attempts to change this.

Currently, there have been hot debates in Poland concerning the low representation of women in leading positions in politics. The Women's Congress in Poland managed to launch a broad public debate and generate support for a 50% gender quota for electoral candidates' lists in 2010. The law was passed with a regulation of 35% for party lists, the first parliamentary elections have been held since then with controversial results and further plans and actions of the women's movement are in discussion. And there have been changes in the public debate on women in politics.

Together we would like to discuss the following questions: How far do these debates reach other countries in the region? If they do, how are they perceived, if they do not, why not? Are such debates realistic in Slovakia, Czech Republic and Hungary? Why are the empowerment measures missing or not effective? Which actors can do what in order to (re-) launch, determine and keep such public debates on the agenda – as precondition for political changes?

We kindly invite you to discuss these and other related questions together with representatives and experts of politics, the academia and research institutes, the NGO sector and the media.

**October 29th 2012, 14.00 – 18.00h**

**Venue: Hotel Mercure City Center  
Budapest V., Váci utca 20.**



**"Low participation of women in politics:  
A reality set in stone in the Visegrád countries?"**

**Programme**

**Chair**

**Prof. Andrea Pető**, Associate Professor, Department of Gender Studies, Central European University, Budapest

**Opening remarks**

**Eszter Kováts**, project leader, "Gender Equality in East-Central Europe", FES

**Key-notes**

Different patterns and tendencies in East-Central Europe concerning women's ratio in National Parliaments (Lower Houses) and concerning women's empowerment in parties since 1990

**Prof. Gabriella Ilonszki**, University Corvinus

The state of play in the Czech Republic and the upcoming Women's Congress

**Jana Smiggels Kavková**, Director of the NGO Fórum 50%, Prague

**Q&A**

**Coffee break**

The state of play in Slovakia

**Prof. Darina Malová**, Director of the Department Political Science, University Komensky, Bratislava

The way to and the public debate around the gender quota for electoral candidates' list in Poland and the experiences of the Women's Congress

**PhD. Kazimiera Szczuka**, historian, literary critic, Ministress of Culture in the Shadow Cabinet of the Women's Congress (Kongres Kobiet) and member of the Programme Board

**Q&A**

**Reception**

English-Hungarian interpretation is provided.