



Ερευνητικό Κέντρο Ισότητας Φύλου **Cyprus Gender Research Centre**

Promotion of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women – Activities 2004-2010*

The Cyprus Research Centre (EKIF) is a non-profit NGO dedicated to the promotion of gender equality in all spheres of life and the elimination of discrimination against women.

EKIF was officially registered in 2006 (registration number 2874) and is governed by a seven-member Board. It is a Member of the National Machinery of Women (Ministry of Justice and Public Order), a founding Member of the Cyprus Women's Lobby, a partner of the UNESCO CHAIR in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment established at the University of Cyprus in 2009.

In the period 2004-2010, EKIF promoted the following activities:

- Research
- Conferences
- Publications
- Intervention
- Lectures

1. Research. EKIF carried out three major research projects on a national level in areas in which gender stereotyped attitudes and deep-rooted traditional social prejudices exist: politics, education and immigration.

The titles of these projects are:

- *Parliamentary elections 2006: The gender preferences of the Cypriot voters* (2006)
- *Education and gender: The representation of male and female teaching personnel in primary and secondary education and its implications on educational and social outcomes* (2008)
- *Immigrant woman – profile, needs, aspirations* (2010). This project also highlights the major problems that immigrant women face in Cyprus including sexual harassment and other forms of violence, financial and social needs.
- EKIF participates as an associated partner in the European project DAPHNE III proposed by the University of Cyprus entitled "*An indirect harmful effect of violence:*

victimising the child and re-victimising the woman-mother through the child's exposure to violence against herself." This project is on-going.

- The current research project of EKIF is woman and research. This project proposes to map the research landscape in Cyprus through the gender perspective and underpin the obstacles, needs and prospects of women researchers (the disadvantaged sex).

2. Conferences. EKIF organised three conferences at which the results of the three projects set out above were publicly presented and commended on by academics/experts in the field in the presence of a wide audience.

Members of the Board of Directors of EKIF were invited and participated in conferences in Cyprus and abroad on issues of gender equality. For example the President of EKIF presented at an international conference organised at the University of Cyprus 3-4 November 2007 the paper *Breaking through the glass ceiling: the case of high-ranking female administrators in Cyprus*. The paper was based on research data and was among the papers selected for publication in the Conference proceedings. It included a section on sexual harassment.

The President of EKIF participated in the conference *Break gender stereotypes, give talent a chance* in Brussels (23/11/2009) organised by the ILO and the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

EKIF participated in conferences organised by OPEK (14/03/2009), by the Lyceum St. Marks 4/05/2007), by the Cyprus Women Lobby in co-operation with the Office of European Parliament and the Representation of the European Commission in Cyprus on *women in decision-making. Overcoming barriers, creating change* (20/02/2009).

3. Publications. EKIF published the outcomes of all major research projects it undertook. It is the policy of EKIF to distribute the Reports to ministries, policy makers, gender equality organisations, academic institutions and research organisations in order to influence decisions at government and parliamentary level, local government and academia.

4. Intervention. The intervention of EKIF at local and european level takes the form of press releases, letters, petitions, often in co-operation with other organisations like the Cyprus Women Lobby or the European Women Lobby (EWL) as for example in the 50/50 campaign of EWL, the right to abortion or violence against women campaign and the most recent one, a letter addressed to the Ministry of Finance on Integrated guidelines relating to broad guidelines for the economic policies of member states and the Union –EU2020 (dated 2 June 2010). EKIF participated actively in the sessions on Violence against Women held by the Parliamentary Committee of Gender Equality.

EKIF took the initiative and addressed a letter to the President of the Republic protesting against appointing only one woman on the Council of Ministers 1/03/2008). It also issued a press release protesting against any form of violence against women including all forms of female genital mutilation (6 February 2010).

Since 2008, the EKIF website has become a forum of communication, protest and intervention on gender issues at local, national and international level hosting the activities of EKIF Board of Directors, members and partners.

5. Lectures. The President of EKIF in co-operation with the Mediterranean Institute of Management (MIM) and the Pedagogical Institute (PI) organised a series of lectures on gender mainstreaming (March 2006 & 2007) and gender and education (2007). She also gave a lecture to the teaching personnel of 27th Primary School in Lemesos (March 2007).

In the period under review 2004-2010, EKIF focussed attention on five major areas that merit more work in improving or passing new legislation or taking the necessary measures to achieve gender balance in order to demolish gender stereotypes and create a more democratic society with men and women living, working and behaving as equal partners. The areas are: politics, education, immigration, violence against women and research.

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