

ENUT News 1/2000

Contents

- Editor's Note
- Congratulations, Tarja Halonen!
- Human Rights, Gender Equality and Adjustment for Estonia's Laws to conform to EU Legal Codes / Julia Vahing
- What is Gender Mainstreaming?
- Equal Rights in Estonia / Marika Linntam
- European Social Charter / Mari-Liis Sepper
- Social Charter and Conditions of EU Membership or Estonians / Iivi Masso
- Estonian Women and European Social Charter / Eda Sepp
- ENUT research on Social Charter / Kati-Hammer Pratkan
- Women's Coin / Kalli Klement
- ENUT's Roundtable / Marika Truumure
- Art Exhibition at ENUT
- Other Events
- Future Plans
- Conference Program

Editor's Note This is the fourth issue of ENUT News, appearing jointly with our conference "Estonian Women as Future Citizens in the European Union". The conference concentrates on the opportunities that will become available to Estonian women as citizens of EU, and the polemics surrounding the ratification of the European Social Charter.

Congratulations Tarja Kaarina Halonen – Finland's Eleventh President! Tarja Halonen, who holds a degree in law, assumed the office of the Presidency on March 1, 2000 by making the solemn affirmation before the Parliament. Ms. Halonen was a Member of Parliament from 1979 until her election. She served as a minister in three governments since 1987, most recently as the Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1995 until her election. She received 1,644,532 votes (51,6% of the total cast) in the second round of the presidential election on February 6, 2000. She joins four other incumbent female presidents – in Ireland, Latvia, Panama, and Sri Lanka. An eminent Finnish political scientist suggests that women may have cast the decisive votes that made Ms. Halonen the President of Finland. When will Estonia have a woman President?

Human Rights, Gender Equality and Adjustment of Estonia's Laws to Conform to EU Legal Codes

Julia Vahing Laffranque, Estonian Justice Ministry

Despite the decision five years ago by the Government of the Republic of Estonia to apply for European Union (EU) membership, we do not pay sufficient attention to concrete questions pertaining to EU and its laws.

EU citizenship does not replace, but complements the citizenship of member countries' citizens. At least, this is the case in the present EU stage of development.

EU citizenship guarantees the following rights:

Freedom of movement, active and passive right to vote in local and European Parliament elections, including in the member state of which one is not a citizen; diplomatic and consular protection in other member states in which one's own country does not have an embassy or consulate; to lodge a complaint or petition to the European Parliament and its ombudsman.

Additionally, all EU institutions must give information to citizens in all official EU languages.

Workers' freedom of movement is guaranteed, which gives them the right to accept employment in any member country. States alone are not obliged to guarantee the workers' freedom of movement, but also all employers have the same obligation. Likewise, all EU citizens have the right to own property within the boundaries of EU territory and to establish businesses freely, and to perform as an individual entrepreneur. Thus, EU citizenship is the basis for essential EU citizens' basic rights and freedoms.

EU recognises and considers these documents as preambles to its basic treaties, or in the articles of certain EU agreements and European Community founding treaties. All of these documents contain the gender equality principle, prohibiting all kinds of gender discrimination. Thus equal rights are a part of human rights, and the non-discrimination principle is a generally acknowledged precept. Gender equality is, in turn, a part of equal rights and it has different aspects – gender equality in politics, gender equality in employment, etc.

A condition for Estonia's entry into EU is respect for freedom, democracy, human rights, fundamental rights and the principles of a just state as contained in Article 6. The basic work on this, the drafting of pertinent laws, is the task of the Social Services Ministry.

Now arises the question: how can we best adopt European laws while trying to preserve our own legal heritage as it has justified itself and proved to be necessary. Public law, mainly the Constitution, is generally the key to equal rights which we, including women, should use more for the protection of our rights. In Sweden, where the equal rights law has been in effect for more than 10 years, the special statute on the right to work has been used analogously in other areas surprisingly little. Therein lies a reason against special statutes – why burden our state's legal structure and legal codes with a law that in real life is seldom used?

According to Swedes, the object of having a special statute on equal rights has been to change the thinking of the society's members. The example of Sweden's equal rights law drives home the point how important is enforcement of laws. If legislators and jurists have been gender sensitive, it does not necessarily follow that law enforcers and judges have similar sensitivities.

One thing is certain, new and present legislation should be examined through the equal rights prism, among other things. That is to say, they should be examined for equal rights guarantees before final adoption.

What is Gender Mainstreaming?

Hjördis Höglund, Sundsvall, Sweden

Gender mainstreaming means integrating a gender perspective into all areas and at all levels of decision-making and management of a society. It means to systematically work for an equal distribution of power, resources and opportunities between women and men.

3R- Tools for gender mainstreaming.

The 3R method was developed by researcher Gertrud Äström and it is an analytical tool. It is used to produce the information needed to gender mainstream an operation in a systematic way. The 3Rs stand for representation, resources and reality.

1R Representation

Answers the question: How many women and how many men?

The answers provide a picture of the proportion of women and men at all levels in the decision-making process and in operations i.e. among decision-makers, the personnel and the users.

2R Resources

Answers the question: How are the resources, in the form of money, space and time, allocated between women and men?

3R Reality

Answers the question: What is actually being done? Why is it done that way? Whose needs and demands are being met? Are the interests and wishes of women and men being met equally? These are qualitative questions, which arise from studies of 1R and 2R.

Equal Rights in Estonia

Marika Linntam, Tartu University

Prospective membership in EU has brought attention to equal rights questions among men and women – it had relative inattention in the context of restored independence and economic development.

Equal rights have begun to be seen as essential socio-political goals and steps have been taken to codify them by legislation. Social Services Ministry has begun to draft “The law on equal rights for men and women”. This reflects the government’s political will to address the problem of gender inequality. The State assumed certain responsibilities in the international arena when it signed human rights conventions and decided to join EU. The draft legislation is a step toward a democratic Estonia and a base for continued development toward gender equality.

Estonia’s Constitution guarantees de jure equal rights to men and women. In reality, inequality exists in the labour market and at the workplace, e.g., decision-making, media, education, and discrimination that ranges from undignified behaviour to violence against women. Most significantly, however, sexual stereotypes are rooted in people’s minds, and prejudiced conduct is reinforced on individual, group and societal levels.

Estonia’s situation does not differ factually from other European countries (excluding the Nordic countries). Principal differences are in the expressions of political will, and the measures that are adopted to achieve equal rights. The European Union Commission has emphasised that for EU membership, it is not sufficient for candidate countries to guarantee equal rights to men and women, but they must create the mechanisms that put them into effect.

The state is obliged to actively seek this goal and, if necessary, implement positive measures, including the dissemination of information on human rights and internationally recognised values and norms. It must be the domestic responsibility of every country to guarantee the people’s well-being and social development. In the process, half of the country’s population cannot be ignored and the inequalities that pervade all areas of life, their reasons and possible ways to eliminate them. Gender equality cannot be an aim in itself – it is a means to achieve general socio-economic development and advancement of rights.

Significant progress has been made in the advancement of gender equality in Estonia in recent years. The strategic goals contained in Estonia’s report at the Peking Convention, 1955, have been largely implemented. Instruction of state officials, who are obliged to promote gender equality by the Amsterdam Treaty, goes on constantly. The media has begun to publicise problems associated with equal rights, aiming to inform the public. It is impossible to know the number of seminars and international contacts that have taken place. In the interest of the public, many non-governmental organisations have been created and gender sensitive statistics have been published. More has been done in the area than this article can cite.

The increased number of people addressing the issue leads one to believe that the desire to work on equal rights will exist in the future. The state is obliged to make it possible for men and women to have equal opportunities in making choices, based on their individual talents and not sex stereotypes, in addition to providing the legal framework for gender equality. The achievement of this goal would improve the conditions for not

only men and women, but it would improve the quality of life for everybody.

The European Social Charter

Mari-Liis Sepper, Law student at Tartu University

Background to the European Social Charter

The European Social Charter (ESC) was signed in Torino, Italy in 1961, and it went into effect in 1965 after five countries had ratified it. The Charter's purpose is to improve citizens' standard of living and to advance social welfare. The Charter contains such basic freedoms as the right to work, the right to a just wage, the right to organise and to negotiate. The Charter was also the first international treaty that recognised the right to strike. But at the same time, the Charter is not a document for the protection of workers' rights. Many of its articles regulate social services, effect general social policy requirements, and so on. The Charter is an active, progressive and dynamic document, which is evidenced by the supplemental protocols, revisions and addendums to the ESC. As the latter, Estonia's parliament plans to ratify the Charter in May.

A country that wants to subscribe to the Charter must ratify at least six of the nine articles in the second part, but a minimum of 16 articles of the complete Charter, or 63 numbered items.

The Implementation of the European Social Charter

Since Estonia plans to adopt the ESC in the near future, I would like to present the responsibilities that will ensue its ratification, and to identify the institutions that will check compliance. Every two years, all Charter member countries must submit a report that includes an overview of the implementation of the articles in the country's legal system, as required by the European Committee of Social Rights. That report includes a summary of the relevant legislation to regulate the stated spheres in the articles, and the statistical evidence, which reflects the real situation.

The organs that check the implementation of the ESC are:

- 1) the Committee of Social Rights, composed of the representatives of the Ministers Committee;
- 2) the Intergovernmental Committee, which prepares the Ministers Committee decisions, taking into account the social, economic and political factors in order to arrive at obligations, as recommended by the Ministers Committee;
- 3) the Ministers Committee makes recommendations to member countries that are not in compliance with the Charter's requirements. The Parliamentary Assembly is partially involved with the mechanism, using the opinions of the Committee of Social Rights in its periodic debates on social policy.

The European Social Charter and Equal Rights

When discussing the articles, which Estonia's government did not want to ratify, I'm including articles that touch women in addition to the question of equal rights. The article prohibiting sexual harassment, for example, protects men as well, but in real life it has greater relevance to women. Equal rights are addressed in the Charter most

directly by Article 4, paragraph 3, on “the right of equal pay for equal work”; Article 20, which provides the right of equal opportunity and the right to be treated equally, regardless of gender, in the areas of employment or profession. In order to guarantee their citizens these rights, the signatories are obliged to recognise them and to take measures to guarantee or to advance their implementation in the different spheres (access to employment, protection against firing, retraining, work conditions, career - including promotion); and Article 26, which provides for dignified treatment at the work place. This means bringing attention to sexual harassment, its prevention at the work place, protection of workers against it, and the implementation of measures that deal with it.

In addition to the previously mentioned articles, the Charter provides for maternity considerations and other tasks unique to a woman in connection with home life, and their accommodation with her employment. Estonia plans to ratify these articles albeit same proviso are already in Estonia’s statutes.

The Commission, appointed in 1997 to prepare for the ratification by the Social Services Ministry of the Republic of Estonia and headed by the former Social Service Minister Tiiu Aro, decided not to recommend the ratification of the previously mentioned articles. The reasons given were:

- 1) the ratification would bring about large expenditures;
- 2) Estonia will be unable to fulfil the requirements by the time of the first report or by the time of possible European Union (EU) membership;
- 3) certain Articles lack case law or form of reporting, and the wording of the Charter precept is such that it is difficult to decide how that precept will be translated in the future.

Referring to these reasons, it has been argued that upon adoption of the Charter, Estonia’s laws should already be in compliance with its precepts, as in the case of the European Human Rights and Basic Freedom Concepts. That is arguable.

I would like to present a couple arguments why ratification of the articles in question would be more beneficial to Estonia than non-ratification.

First, now is the time to start putting Estonia’s laws in compliance with the ESC even if we haven’t ratified such “critical” articles. If the articles that the Estonian nation is unable to implement were ratified, the process of passing laws in order to comply with the requirements of the EU and the ESC would be expedited. Indeed, EU has a part in this albeit the ESC is a document drafted by the Council of Europe. The Charter has been recognised by the EU as an essential document of social rights by the EU in its 1997 Amsterdam Treaty. For that reason, it is beneficial for Estonia as a future EU member to ratify as much of the Charter as possible.

Secondly, the Charter has never been used, and probably will not be in the future, for punishment of member states for mistakes and non-compliance of requirements. Sanctions mechanisms simply are missing. The situation would be somewhat different if Estonia were to consider joining the Supplementary Protocol, which provides a system for handling complaints, and allows certain international organisations to submit complaints against countries to the Committee of Social Rights. Even in such cases, the

result can be no more than a recommendation by the Ministers Committee. Reports have to be submitted, however, on those articles that were not ratified.

A country should be influenced by the public, i.e.. the political pressure of other member states, to fulfil its obligations after the recommendation. Many EU countries do not comply with certain articles of the Charter as the wording and spirit of the Charter demand. As already mentioned, an ESC supervisory institution exists to handle such cases. Estonia could utilise the opinion of such “experts” to its advantage from the moment of adoption, and use them to bring laws into compliance with the Charter precepts.

In conclusion, Estonia could be assigning a low value to rights in the social and employment spheres by claiming not to be ready to ratify the equal rights articles. The ESC, which has appeared on the agenda primarily due to access negotiations with EU, has created a condition where not even an attempt has been made to change Estonia’s equal rights policies, and thereby, her citizens well-being. One can only hope that the incorporation of equal rights principles into Estonia’s laws will not be delayed into the indefinite future.

The Social Charter and Conditions of EU Membership for Estonians

Iivi Masso, Central-European University

Let’s admit it: Women’s rights are also human rights.

The Social Charter of the European Council is an essential international human rights document. It fixes the Europeans’ social and economic rights without which other human rights and freedoms remain only empty words for many people.

Articles 4.3, 20, and 26 of the Charter, the focus of the present discussion, concern men’s and women’s equality in the labour force. Although rights associated with labour are not high on the list of rights with which all governments must comply unconditionally, equality before law is included in all international human rights conventions, generally speaking, as one of the primary, fundamental rights. Therefore, labour laws have to protect everybody equally.

The whole political culture of the Old World, including the concept of human rights, is based on the principle of equality. Within this cultural framework much struggle has taken place in order for the principle to apply to all individuals. As a result of the work of feminists and other human rights activists, it is now self-evident in the civilised world that human rights apply to all persons, including women. One of the most serious taboos in the European culture is discrimination based on sex, or other reasons based on birth.

By deciding not to ratify the above mentioned articles of the Social Charter, the Government of Estonia has said that we are not yet mature enough to join the civilised political systems. As long as we do not understand the necessity of gender equality, we do not understand the ABCs of Western political culture. While the Social Services Ministry works out the legal codes on gender equality, our society should work on the broader value questions. It seems that there is still in Estonia a lot of confusion and

uncertainty about the values we hold, and the cultural sphere in which we want to belong.

Although we often need to turn to economists with questions about equal wages, Article 20 of the Charter addresses clear and simple discrimination - for example, offering a certain job to only males. Its occurrence, which is still quite common in Estonia, is contrary not only to the stipulations in Estonia's own Constitution, but also with the fundamental principles of equal opportunity. Although anti-discrimination laws do not even remotely guarantee equality, they are an absolutely necessary first step without which one cannot hope for any improvement. Indirectly, Article 26 also refers to equal opportunity. It should be recognised that harassment is a form of sexual violence, which can be a serious barrier to women's advancement in the labour force, and it should be taken as seriously as other forms of sexual violence.

Economic conditions and a general sense of not yet being ready are given as reasons against the adoption of equal opportunity norms. In each case, a lack of political will is behind it. EU could give Estonia the framework and motivation for moving toward a society of equal opportunities. However, EU directives cannot change our society if local will and readiness are missing. We cannot wait to adopt laws until attitudes change. If the question were only about attitudes, then laws would not be necessary. Attitudes and laws are tied to each other, and they influence each other.

On the whole, the Estonian woman does not consider herself a feminist. Studies show, however, that the Estonian woman is far more concerned than the Estonian male about finding a job, despite her level of education and experience. A just, equal opportunity legal code based on European norms would help women to understand their rights and to demand them. Equality in the work place is not an insignificant legal entity. In addition to the daily activities, a woman's position at work affects her free time, and thereby, her involvement in politics, economic and social activities, and her self-esteem.

In order for Estonia to join EU, Estonia must accept not only the minimum required paragraphs and norms allowed by the tastes of the political elite, but she, also, has to acknowledge in substance the basic values of Europe. For membership in the Nordic cultural sphere, Estonia has to assume even greater moral responsibilities for equal opportunities. Gender equality is an indivisible part and requirement of a developing civil society, and not a luxury that can be deferred until other conditions are met.

Estonian Women and the European Social Charter

Eda Sepp, Toronto Women's Issues Project

As an Estonian-born woman living in Canada, I have been following events in the Internet and the Estonian newspapers mailed to me. Estonian government's recommendation not to ratify all of the European Social Charter and its advice to Riigikogu to leave out those articles that deal with human rights and women's equal rights, especially the articles dealing with equal treatment and equal opportunity, shocked me, to say the least. To do this now, ten years after restored independence and at a time when Estonia desires to be admitted into the European Union, is even more

perplexing. The Social Services Minister explained in the daily Postimees (Nov. 11, 1999): "We should not act like peacocks and approve something for which we are not ready ... Estonia can sign only those charter articles which we can fulfil today and about which Riigikogu or the Government has begun to formulate laws." The Minister promised that "we will gradually bring our life into compliance with the Charter", yet he admitted that "without ratifying it we can neither be admitted into the European Union and NATO, nor belong to the family of European nations."

Kadi Pärnits, who belonged to the group of experts who decided what articles to ratify, believed that the Government should have anticipated the future more and ratified more articles which would have helped to set the process in motion. She claimed that up to now not a single step has been taken to implement equal salaries for male and female workers nor to guarantee dignity at the work place and improvement of work conditions. According to Pärnits, insults and negative actions are quite common at the work place and women's salaries are 40% less than men's. (Postimees Nov. 11, 1999) Thus, on the one hand, we have the promise of the Minister for a gradual improvement and change, while on the other, the fact that nothing has been done in 10 years. What should we believe? Especially when considering that the Bureau of Equality has existed for four years in the Ministry of Social Services and logically it should have advised the group of experts.

I find it quite interesting that Riigikogu has thus far ratified all agreements and charters pertaining to National Heritage and the Environment, but the Government has suddenly recommended not to ratify articles concerning equality of women, dignity at the workplace and the dignity of the poor. Personally, I think it is extremely insulting and degrading to Estonian women. This proves how much still remains to be done in the area of human rights and the right to dignified and civil working conditions.

International agreements have been signed historically with a view towards the future and many aspects cannot be fully implemented up to this day. Ratification of the agreements shows agreement with their content and a desire to make changes accordingly in the future. The Estonian Government's recommendation not to ratify all articles of the European Social Charter shows that the present government has other interests, respectful and civil treatment at the workplace and equality between men and women are not included within these priorities. The blatant refusal to deal with these issues is insulting and degrading to the Estonian women.

Of interest is also the reaction of Estonian women and women's organisations toward the Government's recommendation not to ratify the articles. In Postimees there were two letters by readers protesting the recommendation and Päävaleht published Iivi Masso's sensible article. Relatively little was written in Estonian newspapers about the Government's recommendation, which brings up the question whether Estonian women lacked interest in the issue or whether the media boycotted the subject in the interest of patriarchy. Only one protest by a women's organisation appeared in the press: Siiri Oviir's well-argued and logical articles on behalf of the Estonian Women's Union (Postimees Nov. 9, 1999 and Jan. 8, 2000). Women who belong to the ruling coalition

(Valve Kirsipuu, Jaana Padrik, etc.), however, challenged this. They attempted to defend the coalition's views. On the other hand the view of the Estonian Free-education Union was quite astonishing (Tiia Kriisa). This organisation felt that there was no point in ratifying any clauses that could not be implemented (Postimees Nov. 20, 1999).

I will analyse these positions from the perspective of academic women's studies on which the resource library of ENUT has many books. Academic women's studies or feminist theory are based on the position that the patriarchal social structure needs to be changed into an egalitarian one. The act of not ratifying the articles on human and equal rights between men and women and the right to a secure, dignified workplace, which is free from harassment, is an indication of an extremely patriarchal, androcentric society. Western Feminists have realised for years that the party system in democratic parliaments often does not facilitate decisions on issues dealing with women's rights and equal treatment, because women tended to vote with their parties and sometimes against women's issues. It seems self-evident that Estonian women would want equal salaries for equal work with the men and a civil workplace that would not tolerate sexual harassment or discrimination. Nevertheless, in this case, the women belonging to the ruling coalition felt they had to defend their party's patriarchal position. Since Siiri Oviir belongs to the opposition party her logical and extremely well developed arguments were initially rejected in press interviews. This is an example of a trap, which keeps women under the influence of the patriarchy. Western feminists have come to the conclusion that they have to agree on issues dealing with women's equality, harassment and dignity at the work place. The co-operation between women belonging to different parties on aspects that improve women's lives is very important and relevant for the future of all women and Estonia. The Women's Round Table, which includes women from all parties, has since sent a protesting petition to Riigikogu (1). This is a step in the right direction. Women members of Riigikogu have also formed a group who meets once every week to discuss common issues.

We are still living in a patriarchal environment where men have more power and decisions are made from the androcentric point of view in the interest of men. Women in politics should refuse to agree with patriarchal rules, which are harmful to women's right to equality and which are discriminating, and even insulting. It is pertinent that women explain these issues to the male members in their parties to influence them instead of agreeing with them. Here the women belonging to the ruling coalition could have demanded full ratification of the European Social Charter even before the Government made its recommendation. This is how Western women have been able to achieve changes. Women's organisations and government committees scrutinise laws before they are passed to make sure they do not harm women's interests or dignity. Estonia already has a precedent on cultural matters. The Reform Party Minister of Finance Siim Kallas wanted to get Kultuurkapital, the institution funding cultural events, under the political jurisdiction of Riigikogu. This drew a lot of protests and the Minister of Culture, who also belongs to the Reform Party, disagreed with the position. Consequently the matter was dropped.

The second position, taken by the Estonian Free-education Women's Union and submissively echoed by officials in the Social Services Ministry, that the clauses of the Charter cannot be immediately implemented, and, therefore, should not be ratified, is a sign of women's resignation to patriarchal issues in an androcentric social structure. Who says that the issues cannot be implemented? Especially when one considers that no steps has been taken in that direction. And in whose interest is it not to ratify the articles? How could the agreements dealing with National Heritage and Environment be ratified? Patriarchy can only survive if it is supported by women as well as men. Women have been conditioned for centuries to be submissive and agreeable with the demands of patriarchy. The so-called "feminine" behaviour includes gentleness, compliance, and submissiveness – characteristics demonstrated by women who agree with the non-ratification. These stereotypes are not applicable to ideal men.

Among other excuses and reasons for not ratifying the articles, as stated by the Assistant Manager of the Department for Social Protection of the Social Services Ministry was that the meaning of the articles is not clear in Estonia and there are neither laws nor money to implement them. I would like to know if the different departments of the Ministry communicate with each other? What is the reason for having the Equality Bureau in the Ministry if other departments are not aware of meanings of equal rights, harassment and fair treatment? And finally, there is the resource centre at ENUT where information is available. Why not order studies on specific items from the ENUT library. This is how Ministries get specialised information in many Western countries. Ministries work together with women's resource centres and universities and ask for specific studies and statistical results. This is also why many NGOs are supported by different Ministries. My advice is to have greater communication on gender issues and human rights between the Ministry of Education, the Social Services Ministry and ENUT, which is the only women's resource centre in Estonia with a collection of over 2000 books on all aspects of women's issues and rights. The collection was selected with the help of a donation from the Government of Ontario in Canada specifically in order to help specialists in the ministries and the fields of education to receive information on gender issues. After ten years of independence the explanation that "women are not informed about this problem" does not make sense (Heljo Pikhof, Advisor to the Social Services Minister). If the officials at the Ministry don't know a certain subject, they should learn how to find information and how to order it from specialists. ENUT would be one such source.

Changes will not come if Estonian women do not begin to protest and stand up for their rights. In North America, legal changes and rights for women were effected by the Second Wave Feminists during the sixties and seventies. Their experiences later served as models for legal changes at the European Union (2). Estonian women should abandon their submissiveness and begin to demand rights that others in the EU already have. It is not true that we have to change our laws before signing all articles in the European Social Charter. Changes will never happen if international agreements are not ratified. By ratifying international laws, we can advance the processes for change. This was

taken into consideration when the Environment and the National Heritage agreements were ratified.

All the articles of the European Social Charter should be ratified and, then, we should analyse how and when we can comply with the different stipulations. Article 123 of the Estonian Constitution states: "If Estonian laws or other acts contradict foreign treaties ratified by the Riigikogu, the provisions of the foreign treaty shall be applied." Thus, the ratified European Social Charter can be used as international law having precedence over domestic laws.

Estonian women should begin to stand up for their rights as the women in the Nordic countries already have done, and not wait like Sleeping Beauty for the prince to come and wake her up. This will not happen. We should not rely on men to make legal changes for us, but do it ourselves. My recommendation here is to draw up a petition to demand that all articles be ratified in the European Social Charter and send it to the Government and Riigikogu.

1 Protesting letters were also sent by Dr. Leili Utno on behalf of the Round Table of Harjumaa women's Union, Kaire Mets on behalf of Põlva Women's Union, Erika Salumets on behalf of the women in the Centrist Party and Siiri Oviir on behalf of Tallinn Women's Union.

2 About this see Catherine Hoskins *Integrating Gender: Women, Law and Politics in the European Union*, London: Verso, 1996 and Mariagrazia Rossilli, "The European Community's Policy on the Equality of Women from the Treaty of Rome to the Present" in *The European Journal of Women's Studies*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, Feb. 1997, pp.63-82.

The Position of Estonian Women's Organisations with Respect to the Non-ratification of the Social Charter by the Parliament

Kati Hammer-Pratka, Tallinn Pedagogical University Department of Families and Social Values

In connection with Articles 4 (right to equal wages), 20 (equal opportunity and equal treatment regardless of gender) and 26 (right to dignity at work) not ratified by the parliament, the Estonian Women's Study and Resource Centre wanted to know what the women's organisations know about the Social Charter. In order to find out, Voldemar Kolga and Kadri Josua compiled a questionnaire that was sent to 80 women's organisations across Estonia.

The respondents numbered 40 and due to problems with one completed questionnaire, the compilation is based on 39 responses.

Knowledge about problems associated with the Social Charter

The majority of the respondents, 28 organisations, had heard of the Social Charter.

Nine organisations had not heard of it, and two of them did not answer the question.

Mystifying is the fact that some of those who replied as having no knowledge about the problems associated with the Social Charter, named in subsequent answers the sources from which they had received information about the non-ratification of the Charter's articles.

The questionnaire showed that newspapers and radio are the most frequently mentioned sources of information. After them come television, friends, and the Internet.

Although the organisations' responding representatives had heard of the Charter, they were not at all optimistic about the public and the other members of their organisation. The majority (27 out of 39) did not think the information has reached everybody. Only four respondents thought that everybody had heard of the topic, seven did not know, and one did not respond to the question. A higher opinion was given to the members of their own organisation, but even here, 16 respondents (almost half) believed that the members of their own organisation do not know about the Charter and the polemics it has created. 16 organisations had discussed the Charter.

Opinions on the non-ratification of the Articles of the Social Charter

Thirteen respondents considered the non-ratification of the Articles understandable ("No need to ratify treaties that Estonia cannot keep"), a majority (21 respondents) did not agree with the action, and five organisations were non-committal ("cannot say").

Opinion on Article 20 was researched by the phrase, "Men should receive a higher wage than women for equal work." To my surprise, three women's organisations agreed with that (two were "agree totally", one was "agree"). The majority (24 organisations) did not agree, and one had no opinion.

Seven respondents agreed that sexual harassment (Article 26 related question) is not at all a problem in Estonia, 11 respondents had no opinion, and the majority (21) said that a problem exists. Article 4 of the Social Charter stipulates that "all workers have the right to receive just wages that are sufficient to provide for them and their families a decent standard of living". In response to the statement that the state must do everything possible for the achievement of a decent standard of living and the lessening of poverty, 35 organisations agreed, and only three did not agree at all.

My opinion on why three women's organisations thought that men should receive a higher wage for equal work and that the state should not do anything for the benefit of a decent standard of living can be found at the end of the article among the comments on the questionnaire.

The majority of the organisations (36) felt that the political parties should clearly state to the public their positions on equal rights. Twenty eight out of 39 women's organisations, or a majority, agreed that a network of women's organisations to monitor the ratification of the Social Charter is necessary. Seven organisations did not know to take a position, and four did not feel the need for a monitoring network.

Parliament as the decision-maker and the one to be pressured

The majority (33) of respondents did not agree with the phrase that in the given matter, the Parliament is the decider and, therefore, "it's none of our business". Of the different means to pressure the Parliament (letters of protest, appeal to the Parliament, appeal to international organisations, protest demonstration at Toompea, sending of protest letters got the largest support (26), that was followed by sending an appeal to the Parliament (24), then the writing of an appeal to international organisations (14), and protest demonstration received the least support.

Twelve organisations agreed to join in some form of protest action, 13 were sceptical, and 10 did not agree to join. The most frequently mentioned form of protest that the responding organisation would join was letters of protest and the writing of appeal (eight such responses).

Problems with the Questionnaire

In addition to the disqualified completed questionnaire form, I would like to comment on the construction of the questionnaire. First, the 5-choices construction.

The instruction has assigned values on the scale 5-1, but the questions themselves identify the answers on the scale 1-5. This created much confusion. On several questionnaires it is evident, that the respondent initially answered according to the 5-1 scale, and then discovered that the order is reversed, and started to make corrections. It is quite plausible that those respondents who marked "totally in agreement that men should receive a greater wage for equal work" were not in fact of that opinion.

A matter of lesser importance is question 13, which by itself is unclear, but would fit well as d) under question 12.

Conclusion

The author cannot state with certainty that the results of the questionnaire are valid, but they do give a view of the opinion Estonian women's organisations have on the subject of the Social Charter. The women's organisations are better informed than the public (a normal situation, because the subject affects them more), they do not agree with the Parliament's non-ratification of the Social Charter Articles, and in order to influence the decision makers, they consider it important to write protest letters, and appeals to the Parliament and/or international organisations.

A Woman's Coin

Kalli Klement, Director, Nordic Council of Ministers

A Woman's Coin is an ordinary Swedish krona that has a wedge cut out. Compared to a man's coin, a woman's coin is not complete. With this symbol, three Swedish trade unions (total membership 300,000 women) started a campaign before the 1998 parliamentary elections which drew attention to the fact that women's wages are lower than men's.

Although the United Nations named Sweden in 1995 as the country with greatest equal rights in the world, women's average salary in Sweden is 80% of the men's. In Estonia, the differences are greater.

In 1998 women's average wage in Estonia was 74% of men's (this includes public as well as private enterprises)(1). But when examining wage differences in private business, the picture is even bleaker. A study comparing salary differences in old enterprises (established before 1988), and new enterprises (established after 1988) reveals that salary differences between men and women are larger in private business than in the public sector. This is particularly true in new enterprises where men's wages are 44% larger than women's (2).

Several reasons explain why a piece is missing in the Woman's Coin. Differences in wages are often explained as due to age, training, job tasks, experience and competence. Often that is the case. But, in these reasons are also hidden inequalities between men and women. In Estonia, 34% of legislators, top officials, and high positions are held by women, and this is a decline, because in 1989 the percentage was 40. (3) The difference in wages had been constantly at 25%, but it began to widen during the last decade. Women that have reached the top receive a lower compensation than men. Yet, women have a higher education than men.

Women also lose job advancement when they take time off to give birth to a child. Jobs taken by women often have lower wages than jobs taken by men. So called "men's and women's economic branches" have developed whereby men work in primary and secondary sectors, and women work in the service sectors. Albeit unemployment is higher in the "men's branch", the wages in the service sector are below average. Because women more often work a shorter time than men, their wages are lower. Because women's wages are lower, their health benefits and pensions are smaller. What part of women's lower wages is due to gender discrimination? This needs to be investigated. In Sweden, it has been found that a 5% wage difference between men and women is due purely to gender discrimination.

The Women's Coin was created by the Swedish trade unions so that attention can be turned to this situation.

The differences between the wages earned by men and women in Estonia are even greater than in Sweden. Is it time for a Woman's Coin in Estonia?

1. United Nations Development Programme (1999): Estonian Human Development Report 1999. Tallinn.

2. J. Antile, P. Ylöstalo (1999): Working Life Barometer in the Baltic Countries 1999, Ministry of Labor

3. Ministry of Social Affairs and UNDP (2000): Towards a Balanced Society, Tallinn

ENUT Roundtable

Marika Truumure, Roundtable co-ordinator

ENUT's purpose is to disseminate information about problems and directions in the Estonian society. Toward that aim, we have held roundtable discussions since October 28, 1999, for all interested parties. The form is different from the regular lecture. A brief lecture (maximum one hour) is followed by discussion on the same topic. The participants feel free to ask questions and express opinions when the principal speaker sits behind the same table. The usual teacher-student chasm is thereby breached. Every participant brings a piece of his/her own world to the table. This way we also learn what different people think and feel.

At the first two roundtables we examined the ways mass media influences our attitudes and the way we relate to others and ourselves. We watched a video and studied Estonian, Norwegian and US magazines and advertisements. The video was a MTV product that showed extremely stereotypical and one dimensional women and men. According to its presentation, the modern woman is very active sexually, and all of her energy is directed for the attraction and satisfaction of the man desiring her. The man is presented as the conqueror and consumer. For the achievement of his ends, the man often resorts to violence, and the woman succumbs, although at first she feigns resistance. Thus is created a picture of the woman as someone who likes to be subjugated and used. Violence and cruelty against women are thereby permitted, since the woman herself appears to want it.

The pictures from the mass media have an especially strong influence on youth. The influence of TV is harmful on youth and children, because at that age they still lack experiences in human relations. Stereotypical pictures of men and women, and relations between them, tend to be taken for reality. At the end of the instructional video, data was given on 12-16 year old ones' opinion on sex and accepted behaviour. Almost half believed that rape is permissible in several instances.

The roundtable discussion revealed that people do think that mass media has negative influence, but participants did not see themselves as being influenced. Concern was expressed over the practice in the fashion world to use ever younger and younger mannequins. Children in developmental stages are being put into the adult world. Analysing the "Babe culture", the "babes" were seen as phenomena created by the banking and stock market boom. This kind of woman has appeared in Estonia together with a legion of rich men whose external trappings have to include a "babe". In the new consumer society there is less room for spiritual values. A "babe" is a man's tangible evidence of success and wealth. She is an object that lacks her own wishes and goals. The sizeable presence of such females in the Estonian society affects the way the woman as a human being is regarded.

At the roundtable on prostitution, the results of a questionnaire answered by almost 500 sex workers were introduced. The condition of sex workers does not coincide with the public perception of them as high-income earners and people that are happy with themselves. Prostitutes are often victims who find it difficult to get out of the situation.

They risk getting sexually transmitted diseases and the HIV virus. They cannot manage to follow safe sex requirements.

The roundtable on anorexia presented the history, culture and social factors of this eating disorder. "The ideal body" gets thinner every year. Marilyn Monroe, the former sex symbol, is by today's standards hopelessly out of shape. The annual profits of different diet product manufacturers reach billions of dollars. Mass media tells us constantly that we are not happy with our appearance and body. According to different data, 2.5-5% of the population is anorexic. It is a real illness whose diagnosis has become more and more difficult, because the body weight that requires hospitalisation has been lowered year after year. Relating to one's body negatively and preoccupation with the "ideal appearance" affect a person's self-esteem, and constant dieting leaves enough energy to cope only with that.

An exact and single terminology of gender is still lacking in Estonia. Even researchers in the field of gender studies use different terms in different situations. The roundtable on gender concept and terms used to describe it analysed the meaning of feminism, women's studies, gender research, men's studies, and their historic backgrounds. It was learned that it is extremely difficult to create a single terminology of gender sociology. For example, the border between gender (social concept) and sex (biological concept) is unclear. It is not possible to say whether they are completely separate concepts. A meeting with Swedish secondary school students also occurred within the roundtable framework. The Swedes conducted a questionnaire on gender equality in one of Tallinn's secondary schools. A similar questionnaire is planned among the Swedes. The results will be analysed and compared.

Roundtables will continue to take place at ENUT on the second and fourth Thursday of each month, starting at 6 PM usually.

Art Exhibition at ENUT Three artists' works exhibited at the Centre during the March conference belong to Jarõna Ilo, Alice Kask and Tuuli Lepik.

Jarõna Ilo (1955) was graduated in 1981 from the Estonian National Art Institute as a print maker. She has also studied photography at Prague. In recent years, Jarõna Ilo has concentrated on drawing. Presently, she is preparing for a large exhibition and three of the pictures are exhibited. The subject of the works is childhood memories in which light, yearning for freedom and play have special significance

Alice Kask (1976) graduated as a painter from the Estonian Art Academy and is pursuing a Master's Degree. She has had personal exhibits since 1992, and she has participated in group exhibitions in Estonia and abroad. One of the four major works she submitted for her academic degree is shown at the Centre. The third artist, Tuuli Lepik (1975) is finishing her studies this academic year at the Tallinn Pedagogical University. Women's themes are central to her artistic works. The

three pictures exhibited at the Centre reflect teenage experiences. Her project for an academic degree will be research on plastic surgery.

Other Events Tiina Kirss, Associated Professor at Toronto University gave a lecture at ENUT on October 11th, "Women's Life Stories". The lecture was followed by a meeting to plan an anthology of Estonian women's life stories in English. Ilvi Cannon, Rutt Hinrikus (Estonian Museum of Literature), Tiina Kirss and Suzanne Lie discussed the application of the project.

On October 22-23 was the Femina Baltica theme meeting "Minorities and Mixed Families" in Paldiski, Estonia. Women and the Military Industrial Complex, Women and National Identity were topics of discussion. Kristiina Luht, Eed Hõimoja, Kadri Josua, Selve Ringmaa and Suzanne Lie attended.

The librarian Maie Gross attended a seminar "Professional Ethics of Librarians" October 28-29.

On October 28 the first Roundtable "Gender and Youth" was held at ENUT. The video "Dream Worlds" which portrayed images of women in music videos was shown. Eleven participants joined the discussion, expressing interesting thoughts.

Meeting of the Roundtable "Gender and Youth" on November 11th – Suzanne Lie gave a talk on "Images of Women in Fashion Magazines".

Lecture "Do You Think of AIDS When You Fall in Love?" was held at ENUT on November 15th by Nelli Kalikova, Director of AIDS Prevention Centre.

On November 25 Julia Šamarina, lecturer at the Tallinn Pedagogical University, gave a talk on "A New Cultural Phenomenon in Estonia: Babes, Rich Men's Toys".

On November 26 ENUT, in co-operation with the Finnish Institute in Tallinn, presented "Women's November". It included lectures, a theatre performance at the Finnish Institute, and the opening of Tiina Pystynen's art exhibition at ENUT.

Ilvi Cannon, ENUT's Board member, represented the Centre at the EU Conference on NGOs in Tampere, Finland, December 3-5.

Kristiina Luht attended with Board member Ülle-Marike Papp a CEE workshop on December 6-8 in preparation for Beijing+5 in Budapest, Hungary.

The Administrative Director Selve Ringmaa had a one-week training session in Luleå, Sweden, Dec. 6-13. The training consisted primarily of meeting with different types of women's organisations, learning about activities, administration and accountancy of the Gender and Technology Department.

Meeting of the Roundtable “What is Feminism? What is Gender?” by Katrin Kivimaa, M.A., Gender Studies, was held on December 9th.

January 13, 2000, meeting of the Roundtable: “Anorexia and Adolescent Girls” by lecturer Tiina Aunin, Prof. at Tallinn Pedagogical University, Board member of ENUT.

January 27-29: Selve Ringmaa attended in Vilnius the seminar on the development of NGO activities, sponsored by the Association of Norwegian Women’s and Families Organizations.

February 2-9: Selve Ringmaa attended in Amsterdam, Holland, the La Strada seminar on “Trafficking in Women”.

March 9-11: Eed Hõimoja, Kristiina Luht, and Suzanne Lie attended in Helsinki the II conference of the Baltic Sea Women, entitled “Gender Equality and the Future”.

March 9: Roundtable discussion on “Sexual Exploitation of Children”.

March 16: Roundtable discussion, led by Toulouse University professor Eric Millard, on “Gender and Equality in French Law”.

March 21: A group of students and teachers from the Oslo Teachers College, Norway, visited ENUT.

Future plans The spring agenda is a full one. A follow-up seminar to the conference “Estonian Women as Future Citizens of the EU” will be held in May. The seminar’s topic: “Women, Minority Rights and the EU”. The issues and the date of the seminar will be decided during the conference in the workshop bearing the name of the seminar. Those interested in attending or finding out more information about the seminar, please contact ENUT – phone # 640 9173. Also, as a follow-up to the conference, a second, smaller seminar devoted to discussing pertinent issues to be taken up in ENUT’s programs for the coming years will be held. Representatives of different organisations will participate.

May 2: Carol Kahn, Clinical Sexologist and a founder of the Women’s Resource Center in Modesto, California, will lecture at ENUT, 4:00 p.m., on “‘Normal’ Male and Female Sexuality and its Effect on Gender Roles”. On the following day, at ENUT’s Roundtable, 5:00 p.m., she will speak on “Youth and Sex”. Anonymous questions can be submitted before both programs, and they will be answered during the discussions.

May 5: The Estonian Institute in Finland and ENUT will sponsor at the Scientific Hall (Tieteiden talo) in Helsinki, a seminar “On the Situation for Estonian and Finnish Women”.

Estonian Women as Future Citizens in the European Union March 24-25, 2000
Tallinn Pedagogical University, Auditorium, 3rd floor

Friday, March 24

9:00 Registration

10:00 Welcome by TPU Rector Mait Arvisto

Opening remarks: Arhi Palosuo, Ambassador of EU Delegation of the European Commission

Jean-Jacques Subrenat, Ambassador of the Republic of France

10.15 Plenum I (Discussion during each plenum) – Integration, EU Policy on Equality and the European Social Charter of the Council of Europe - Chairwoman: Suzanne Lie, Academic Director of ENUT

What is EU's Policy on Equality? - Jacqueline de Groot-Wigny, Vice-President, European Women's Lobby, Brussels

What Will Be the Tasks for Estonia if the Social Charter is Ratified? – Siiri Oviir, Deputy Speaker of Parliament

Human Rights, Gender Equality and Adjustment of Estonian Law in Light of EU

Legislation - Julia Vahing -Laffranque, Justice Ministry of Estonia

11.45-12.00 Coffee break

12.00 Plenum II – What is Gender Equality?

Chairwoman: TPU Vice Rector Larissa Jõgi

Gender (In)equality in Estonia - Marika Linntam, Tartu University

Does Estonia Need Gender Equality? - Reet Valing, Estonian Radio

13.00-14.00 Lunch (Press Conference)

14.00 Plenum III - The Social Charter and Women's Organisations Influence on Social Policy

Chairwoman: Ilvi Jõe-Cannon, Member of ENUT Board

The Social Charter and Conditions for Estonia to Enter the EU – Iivi Masso, Central European University, Budapest

Equal Pay for Equal Work - Petra Lantz, UN Resident Co-ordinator in Estonia

A Woman's Coin – Kalli Klement, Nordic Council of Ministers

Estonian Women's Organizations' Attitudes Toward Influencing Social Policy – Kati Hammer-Pratka, Institute for International and Social Studies

Women and the European Social Charter - Eda Sepp, Women's Project in Toronto, Canada

Women and Regional Development Policies of EU – Mari Pedak, Director of the Migration Office

16.20-16.40 Coffee break

16.40 Workshops (Chairperson underlined)

1) Women, Minority Rights and EU- Anne Taklaja, Paldiski City Council; Suzanne Lie, ENUT

2) How Can Estonia Implement Equal Pay for Equal Work? - Janek Laidvee, Ministry of Social Services; Peter Andersen Hove, Danish Equal Status Council; Petra Lanz, UNDP; Kalli Klement, Nordic Council of Ministers

3) Human Rights and Gender Equality - Reet Valing, Estonian Radio; Ene-Eha Urbala, Estonian Institute for Human Rights, Jõhvi; Merle Haruoja, Estonian Institute for Human Rights; Liina Tõnisson, Parliamentarian; Mari-Liis Sepper, Tartu University

- 4) Women and Regional Development Policies in EU – Priidu Ristkok, Interior Ministry; Laine Tarvis, Parliamentarian; Ene Padrik, Interior Ministry; Aado Keskpaik, Interior Ministry;
- 5) How Can Women’s Organizations Lobby to Affect Social Policy? – Eda Sepp, Women’s Project in Toronto; Jacqueline de Groot-Wigny, European Women’s Lobby
- 6) Gender Aspects in Science and Educational Policies of the EU - Tiia Raudma, Advisor to the Estonian Minister of Education; Larissa Jõgi, TPÜ
- 18.30 Reception and Art Exhibition at the Centre (4th floor)

Saturday, March 25

10.00 Plenum IV – EU Policies on Minority Rights, Employment and Social Policy

Chairwoman: Selve Ringmaa, Administrative Director of ENUT

Women, Minority Rights and the EU – Katrin Saks, Minister of Population

Access to Employment for Women According to Regulations and Recommendations of the EU- Reet Laja, Ministry of Social Services

Paternity Leave: A Possibility for Both Men and Women - Peter Andersen Hove, Danish Equal Status Council

Equality in Social Policy - Ülle-Marike Papp, Bureau of Equality, Estonian Social Services Ministry

12.15-12.30 Coffee break

12.30 Summaries of workshops and discussion

13.30 Panel discussion I: What are the Advantages/Disadvantages of Being Part of the EU?

Chairwoman: Professor Talvi Märja, Professor Emeritus of Tallinn Pedagogical University

Speakers: Andrus Saar, Saar Poll; Iivi Masso, Central European University; Liia Hänni, Parliamentarian; Margo Kikas, Lecturer at Tallinn Pedagogical University

15.00 Summation of the conference and recommendations - Reet Laja, Social Services Ministry