



**A Feminist Politics for the European Union
Feminist Initiative 2008**

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A feminist politics for the European Union

In a world where the UN estimates that men own 99% of all property and earn 90% of total income while women constitute two-thirds of all labour, feminism is necessary. Women's lack of influence is visible in their near-total absence from the negotiating tables where men decide on increased military violence, and it is visible in what follows as a result: that women become a battlefield of and through systematic rapes and violations.

Men's dominance in politics shows itself also in the brutal exploitation of women in the growing global sex industry and in the prohibitions of abortion with reference to religious faith.

Feminism is a global democracy movement that is focused on universal human rights and freedom from discrimination. Feminism has nothing to do with nationalist concepts and therefore feminism is especially important in Europe today when racist parties with nationalistic characteristics are again growing all the stronger.

After the referendums in 1994 and 2003, Sweden is a member of the EU and stands outside the EMU. These are political realities that we feminists must make use of and relate pragmatically to. This does not, however, entail that we are uncritical to everything that comes from the Parliament, Council and Commission, but instead that we will use the opportunities for cooperation that the Union provides, as we simultaneously work against patriarchal structures and increased militarisation.

The right to live a life without discrimination is included in the European Convention for Human Rights (ECHR), but it demands hard work, both specifically in gender equality and anti-discrimination policy, and in the integration of a feminist perspective in all political work.

Feminist Initiative (Fi) seeks therefore to actively use the opportunities that the European Union offers for political work in order to increase universal equality and gender equality everywhere in Europe, and the world. Feminist Initiative is needed in international politics.

A. The EU as an institution

With the Union we have as citizens yet another arena with possibilities to influence social progress on a national, international and supranational level. This is in itself positive, because feminism must be carried forward in a larger perspective and not just within nations.

As a feminist organisation, Fi does, however, oppose centralisation of power and deterioration of democratic processes in all imaginable political and citizen-representative contexts. The principle of subsidiarity must be primary in the EU, i.e. decisions must always be made as locally as possible. European political integration must never precede democratic support and representation. Today the Union suffers

from a democratic deficit, and therefore increased and simplified insight into the Union's decision-making processes is important. Yet supranational decisions are needed on certain issues, such as human rights and certain environmental issues. Feminist questions and problem-formulations must get additional footing in the European Parliament. Feminist Initiative seeks to use the EU's institutions to spread and develop feminist perspectives and positions in a European context, for a European public. Feminist solidarity is global, and the European Union is a large arena in which to carry forward feminist core issues, such as the right to abortion, men's violence toward women, anti-racism, questions relating to individual disabilities and HBT rights.

- 1. Fi will work for increased democracy, transparency and accessibility in EU decision-making processes. EU institutions should be further democratised.***

The Constitution

The proposal for a "Constitution" put forward in the EU in 2005 met with "No" majorities that same year in referendums in France and the Netherlands. That entails that the proposal fell but after new discussions an essentially identical proposal was forwarded for a vote in the member states' parliaments in 2007. The British think-tank Open Europe has done a comparison, paragraph by paragraph, between the proposed Constitution from 2005 and the new Reform treaty from 2007, and found that they are 96% identical. The proposal is scheduled to be approved by the member states during 2008 and come into force after the European Parliamentary elections and that a new EU Commission being seated in the summer of 2009.

The Lisbon Treaty involves large transfers of power to the EU and strengthens the development of the EU into a state structure. Referring bodies have earlier expressed doubts on several points in connection to Sweden's current constitution, and the development toward a military alliance demonstrably conflicts with the national security doctrine built on non-alignment that Sweden has had so far. The proposal contains fundamental, sweeping, and very long-term changes in relation to earlier treaties. As the centralisation of power is comprehensive, economic policy assumes legal forms (regulated in the Lisbon strategy), and as the proposal also entails an increased, and nearly constitutionally anchored, militarisation, Feminist Initiative will work in a referendum campaign for a "No" to the new Reform Treaty.

- 2. Fi will work for the Reform Treaty to be put to a popular referendum.***
- 3. Fi will work for a secularised EU, where belief and religious praxis are a private concern and that are not allowed to influence policies. That the Church and religious communities are given an especially privileged status in the constitutional proposal is indefensible.***
- 4. Fi will work for the most important purpose of a shared constitution to always be to guarantee European citizens the right to live a life without discrimination and oppression.***

5. *Fi will work for a European ombudsman where individual citizens can turn if they consider their human rights to be violated in their homeland.*

Council of Ministers

The EU's Council of Ministers is an organisation that is in many ways problematic from a feminist and democratic perspective. The Council's meetings are closed and the decision process itself is not transparent. Those who work for policies that are based on national self-interest, racism, homophobia, or ignorance of equal treatment and gender equality, must be able to be investigated. Feminist Initiative would like to see a development wherein more questions are handled by those who are elected, and where more questions are handled primarily locally; all of this is in the citizens' interests of democracy and influence. At the same time we see the necessity of meeting among countries at such a level, where individual political areas are discussed and handled by those persons who are ultimately responsible for that area in their respective countries. It is an important opportunity for Sweden to influence the European development in many questions and call attention to infractions of human rights and of the EU's common agreements.

For historical reasons, with roots in our world wars, the European Parliament has been located in Strasbourg, and designated Brussels as a working location for committees and political party groups. This entails high economic costs for the organisation as well as for each parliamentary member's administration and is a gigantic burden on the environment. Feminist Initiative does not consider that this large bureaucratic apparatus can be justified longer.

6. *Fi will work for the increased openness of the Council of Ministers' programme and for the democratic deficit in the European Parliament to be reduced.*
7. *Fi will work for fewer questions to be handled by the Council of Ministers and more at the parliamentary level.*
8. *Fi will work for the European Parliament to have one seat, in Brussels.*
9. *Fi will work for the EU's working operations to be characterised by cost-effectiveness and respect for the environment.*

Equal representation within the EU organisation

Women and minority groups such as young persons, persons with disabilities, HBT persons, immigrants and ethnic minority groups are still under-represented in all of the European Union's institutions and political decision processes. The EU's measures in this area have primarily been limited to non-binding texts and efforts.

After the 2004 election, the percentage of women among members of parliament is 30.3%. Of 27 commissioners only 8 are women. Since 1958 we have had a total of 12 commissions, all with a man as chairperson. A legitimate commission must reflect the population whose interests it represents, and Feminist Initiative therefore advocates a new model for distribution of these posts.

Currently, ahead of each new commission, each member state's government nominates one person whom is wished to represent that state in the Commission. This is a nomination procedure that can easily lead to a male dominance because the majority of heads of government are white, heterosexual, middle-aged men, and they often prefer to see their countries represented by men who resemble themselves.

10. *Fi will work for power in the Commission to be shared equally between sexes, and that various experiences are represented through the candidates that we as a member state forward.*
11. *Fi will work for binding texts to be adopted to promote women's and men's equal representation in the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions.*
12. *Fi will work for Article 2 in the Commission's decision (of 19 June 2000) on equal gender-representation within committees and expert groups, to be changed, so that the target becomes that women constitute half, as well as decide a final date when this goal will be achieved.*
13. *Fi will work for there to be as many women as men appointed as commissioners, through a process whereby all member states nominate two candidates instead of one for "their" commissioner posts, one women and one man. The Commission's chairperson should thereafter put together as equal and representative a commission as possible, with an equal distribution of power between sexes. All states are also requested or encouraged to also take consideration, in their nominations, of an equal representation with respect to ethnicity, sexuality, and functionality, among else.*
14. *Fi will work for the establishment of an EU commissioner for gender equality, and a commissioner for anti-discrimination, with clear institutional responsibility.*
15. *Fi will work for all European institutions to take positive programmes of action within areas and at levels where women and minorities are under-represented in decision processes.*
16. *Fi will work for a gender equality committee and an anti-discrimination committee to be created in the parliament, to have the same political weight as other committees.*
17. *Fi demands that the Swedish representation adopt gender equality as a policy area. Currently this is missing. Fi demands that the Swedish government promotes work with gender equality significantly more clearly than today.*

Gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting within the organisation

In the Treaty of Nice the principles for gender mainstreaming are set down in the context that gender inequality will be eradicated in all work within the organisation. The Commission has adopted this strategy as its tool for introducing and completing legislation and political measures. But the integration of gender equality from a gender equality perspective requires more powerful institutional methods, because it is a horizontal strategy that is dependent on a shared action by a number of different actors within public institutions. A number of new gender-equality-related mechanisms have admittedly been established within the European Commission since 2000, but the strength of their impact is reduced year by year as a result of inadequate resources, insufficient education, an unclear mandate and the absence of effective political

leadership at the highest level.

There are 23 committees in the European Parliament. All of them are active in areas where a gender perspective is necessary in order to bring about gender equality, such as the labour market, demographic issues, budget, and public health. The majority of committees have stated that they are positive to gender mainstreaming, but until now few committees have signed strategies that give them something to relate to and follow in their work, nor is any such thing included in the planning for future work. This is not only of importance for the work in the committees and for awareness of gender questions in political and juridical work, but even to give all member countries good examples of what should characterise political work if we are to achieve a world without discrimination.

- 18. Fi shall work for the establishment of a special unit for monitoring and development of the gender mainstreaming within all of the European Commission's General Directorates (DGs), with the task to present, every other year, a gender mainstreaming strategy for all political areas covered by the general directorates.***
- 19. Fi will work for obligatory education on gender mainstreaming and anti-discrimination both for Commission delegates and for the highest-ranking employees, as well as within all management education for EU employees.***
- 20. Fi will work for effective gender mainstreaming in European anti-discrimination programmes and measures.***
- 21. Fi will work for the establishment of a working group on gender budgeting within the Commission Directorate-General for Budget, and for this working group to carry out a separate consequence analysis of the EU's budget from a gender perspective every year. This analysis of the budget should serve as a part of the evaluation of its gender mainstreaming, and on which the Parliament Committee on Women's rights and Gender equality (FEMM) can give an opinion.***
- 22. Fi shall work for the establishment of a budget item for gender equality activities for each and every one of the Commission's units.***
- 23. Fi will work for additional resources to be set aside for work with gender equality and anti-discrimination within the Union, available both to NGOs and to the Union's institutions.***
- 24. Fi will work for the prioritisation of gender equality and anti-discrimination at all levels in the EU organisation.***
- 25. Fi will work for the establishment of gender mainstreaming strategies for all committees, consistent with their political areas and working approach.***

The European Economic and Monetary Union EMU

The rules for the EU's economic policies are formulated in the EMU and in the so-called stability pact (an agreement that prevents member countries from expanding public spending to a size that does not stand in proportion to income, all in relation to the average in the EU). In 2003 Sweden held a referendum on membership in the third and final stage of the EMU; that is, on whether the Swedish krona should be replaced by the euro, as a consequence of the decisional authority over currency and monetary

policy being shifted from the Swedish Riksbank (Central Bank) to the European Central Bank. According to current treaties in force (and there are no changes included in the new proposal), a member state shall/must participate in the third stage when the economic requirements (the so-called convergence requirements) are met. Sweden meets the requirements but has declared, unilaterally, and in a manner that is not legally but certainly politically binding, that it seeks to remain outside the EMU going into the future.

In the lead-up to the 2003 referendum, several commissions of inquiry were established to spell out the consequences of an EMU membership. The EMU-inquiry showed that it is countries with large public sectors that could have difficulties. It could be seen that the EMU's target-setting demanded that taxation and public spending be made less business-cycle dependent, and therefore that there was "a risk that the welfare state must decrease in its extent." Similar findings were presented by another inquiry, the Stability-inquiry. It concluded that EMU rules are not politically neutral and wrote, "They are not as tough for countries with low taxes and where public assets are also sold off."

In the EU's principles for economic policy, the need for reductions in taxes and in public expenditures are emphasised. For example, Sweden has received comments about the need to increase the effectiveness and improve the conditions for competition within the public sector.

In the event of an EMU-entry, Sweden would deprive itself of the opportunity, through changes in interest rate levels, to counter disturbances in the economy at the macro-level; that is, what has occurred internationally. With a common EU interest rate, disturbances must instead be countered with adjustment of wages and prices, which places increasing demands on the labour market's ability to adjust. Sweden's National Institute for Economic Research (NIER; Konjunkturinstitutet) formulated the view that it can become necessary that wage raises "are adjusted downward in the case of drops in demand."

Wage flexibility and flexible labour markets are central concepts within the EMU. The demand for mobility in the labour force will increase, both inside and between countries.

The basis for economic independence is a job with a wage that one can live on. In the EMU, full employment is not the supreme goal for economic policy. The EMU puts strong pressure on reductions and privatisations in the public sector, which entail worsened social welfare and security for women and in many cases a limiting of women's employment options. The subordination that women live in makes women as a group more dependent on policies that see healthcare and care as a self-evident responsibility of society and that seeks to promote every individual woman's right to economic independence. Reductions in the welfare system impact women more than men. Worsened employment security and demands for geographic flexibility impact women more than men. Any membership in the EMU would have different effects for men than for women, and we see today, within the EU, that the economic policies force

many women to choose between work and children. The result in many countries is a low birth rate.

If the question of Sweden joining in the EMU's third stage were to be actualised, it must be submitted to a referendum before the decision is taken in the Swedish parliament.

- 26. Fi will work for the question of Sweden joining the EMU to be decided through a popular referendum.***
- 27. Fi will work for current EMU rules to be reformed so that social welfare and full employment become supreme goals.***

The EU's internal market

The EU's internal market has as goals the free mobility of goods, services, labour and capital. Free mobility is superior to other rules. This means among other things that an individual state cannot have stricter rules or tougher legislation in any policy area if such were considered to hinder competition or to conflict with free mobility. National laws that for example seek to enhance the environment, strengthen consumer protection or limit alcohol imports are subordinated. The service sector's free mobility is regulated in a service directive. Activities that belong to society's human infrastructure (pre-school, school, education, healthcare, etc.) should, Feminist Initiative holds, be exempted from the service directive. The directive also contains the right of free establishment, which could entail that private concerns would be able to take over activities that today are run according to democratic, municipal/regional decisions. Trade unions have even pointed out the risk for wage-dumping.

Market solutions should in each individual case be analysed so that the consequences with respect to class, ethnicity and gender are made visible, even in other member states, and are included in their entirety in the evaluation of proposals for market adaptation. We wish to make clear that the marketisation of an area does not automatically entail that women's, migrants' and other minority group's situation are improved or worsened.

- 28. Fi will work for regulations concerning consumer protection, environment and alcohol policy to be minimum regulations, with the possibility for individual member states to have stricter demands.***
- 29. Fi will work for the service directive to be limited.***
- 30. Fi will work for the free movement of labour not to lead to the Swedish model – with its free right of negotiation for labour market's parties – being dismantled.***

Human rights requirements for candidate countries

When countries apply for membership in the EU, Sweden should in the application process promote reforms in the candidate state, because it cannot be brought in as an EU member if human rights are not respected. During recent years we have seen how

the most recently joining member countries ignored EU legislation when it related to non-discrimination with respect to gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic and cultural affiliation. It is unacceptable that the EU's member states do not respect human rights.

- 31. Fi will work for democracy, respect for human rights and rule of law to be basic elements when the EU is expanded.*
- 32. Fi will work for the human rights situation in a candidate state to be prioritised at least as highly in the assessment as the economic prerequisites, and that this is also followed up in all member states. This entails that an increased weight is placed on the respect for women's, HBT persons', disabled persons' as well as ethnic, cultural and political minorities' human rights.*
- 33. Fi will work for earlier expansions of the EU to be consolidated and for the new member states not to be permitted to promote forms of discriminatory policies nor to introduce discriminatory legislation. Were this not to be respected there should be possibilities to apply economic and political sanctions and ultimately even exclusion should be able to be used.*

B. Feminist politics in the EU

Gender equality in the EU

The human right not to be discriminated is one of the shared values in the EU's treaties and must be a necessary precondition for the EU to be able to achieve its goals of growth, employment and social cohesion. The EU has made some progress with respect to reaching gender equality in the Union as well as in member states thanks to legislation on equal pay for equal work, equal treatment, integration of the gender equality perspective in all political areas, and special measures to promote the position of women. But the law does not always match what is practised.

Many women in Europe today have a high level of education, more and more women are in the labour market and are actors in other areas of the public arena. But women in Europe live under very different conditions. In many states, women's situation in the labour market has been weakened and social cut-backs have resulted in increased vulnerability. Gender inequality still prevails, and in the future can increase in step with increasing competition on the global market, demanding a more flexible and mobile workforce. This impacts women harder because they often must choose between children or career as a combined result of insufficiently flexible working conditions, inadequate childcare, stereotypical gender roles, and an unequal division of responsibilities within the family. The progress that women have made in important areas such as education and research are therefore not reflected in their position in the labour market. This is a waste of human resources that the EU cannot afford.

The EU has a responsibility to work for gender equality in the rest of the world as well. Feminist Initiative would like to turn globalisation into something positive; however, with increased mobility and communications technology, crimes such as human trafficking become easier to carry out. For the EU to be able to take this on, the work

for gender equality must be intensified and the gender equality perspective take on a more prominent place in all political areas.

Shared European policy provides the possibility to influence areas that we alone would not have access to: through the EU we can raise the abortion debate in Catholic countries, demand HBT-rights in conservative countries, and demand protection for ethnic minorities in Europe.

Peace and militarism

The EU's common foreign policy, which includes a military component, will be strengthened, according to the new treaty (The Treaty of Lisbon, that is the former proposal for a Constitution), via the establishment of a common "foreign minister" who will speak for the EU in the world. The military cooperation involves among other things a shared rapid reaction force of 60,000 soldiers, ready for missions around the world. In the proposal for a new treaty it is laid down that a common defence will be decided by the Council with unanimity. There is no demand that the EU's military actions require decisions in the UN's Security Council. Formulations about acting in keeping with the principles of the UN Charter exist, but there are also openings for freedom of action. In practice the EU will itself decide what is considered to fall within UN principles. The EU is made into a military alliance with formulations that, "If a Member State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power ..." (Article 27). According to Feminist Initiative it is not possible to reconcile mutual defence guarantees with the Swedish military non-alignment. It is further prescribed that the EU's military force will be expanded. "Member States shall make civilian and military capabilities available to the Union for the implementation of the common security and defence policy, to contribute to the objectives defined by the Council."; "Member States shall undertake progressively to improve their military capabilities." (Article 27). This means in practice that a requirement for obligatory military rearmament in every member state is written into what will in the future be regarded as a constitution. For Feminist Initiative, which has a clearly stated anti-militarist position, this is entirely unacceptable.

The ongoing militarisation of the EU works against the establishment of conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution institutions within the EU, and the tight integration with the military alliance NATO undermines the EU's role as an independent actor. Fi therefore demands that peacekeeping operations must have a UN mandate.

Support of democracy promotion is an essential part of the EU's role as a project of peace. This consequently places large demands for the upholding of democracy within the Union; that is why all member states must be prepared to act vigorously if violations of human rights or democratic principles take place in any of the Union's member states.

34. Fi will work for the EU to support democracy promotion among member states and in the world.

35. *Fi will work for conflict prevention institutions to be established within the frameworks of both European and global security policy.*
36. *Fi will work against the militarisation within the EU and will work for the plans to be ceased for a common army, a defence alliance and an obligatory military capacity enhancement (as the Lisbon Treaty requires).*
37. *Fi will work for the aim that military interventions in conflicts shall only be conducted under the mandate of the UN.*

The EU's foreign policy and crisis response

In an all more unstable and violent world, women's equal access to and full participation in the EU's foreign policy power structures are necessary in order to support and protect a peaceful society. Though women have begun to play a significant role in conflict resolution, they remain under-represented in decision processes. Women within the foreign policy area must have more political and economic power so that they can play an equal role in the work to secure and protect peace.

38. *Fi will work for the integration of a gender equality perspective in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in line with UN Resolution 1325 and the European resolution on women's participation in peaceful conflict resolution from November 2000.*
39. *Fi will work for the guarantee that at least 40% of all posts within mediation, peacekeeping and peace implementation, peace promotion and conflict management, are held by women, including fact-gathering and observer assignments for the EU and its member states.*
40. *Fi will work in the policy of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office for the initiation and development of partnerships with women's NGOs in recipient countries, and for the prioritisation of measures and investments in women, such as specialised help efforts for rape survivors and survivors of traumas resulting from gender-related violence that is unleashed during periods of conflict. When an armed conflict has ceased, women who have been subjected to traumas must be able to seek redress with support of international law.*
41. *Fi will work for the formulation at the EU level of a code of conduct, inspired by the action plan that the UN's permanent general committee proposed on protection against sexual exploitation and sexual assault in humanitarian crises. This is to guarantee that military personnel and aid workers working on behalf of the EU are fully aware of their responsibility and their duties, and to stipulate that sexual exploitation constitutes a serious breach of duty that can lead to dismissal or even penalties.*

Ratification of international agreements

In the procedures for decision-making in the EU there are rules that specify how the procedures shall be between the EU level and the national level. The EU negotiates and approves or rejects an agreement in the Council of Ministers. Thereafter, member states have two years to ratify this agreement. This applies, however, only internally in the

EU, because internationally the individual state is seen as the ratifying party to an international agreement.

Within the EU it has been seen as central that all EU member states sign an agreement that the EU has created, so that it has the same status in all member states. In that way no competitive advantages arise for any member state of the Union, for example in not signing an environmental agreement.

- 42. Fi will work for the EU and its member states to sign and ratify international gender equality documents such as CEDAW, the Beijing Action Plan and the Cairo Protocol.***
- 43. Fi will work for various environmental agreements to be ratified within the Union and nationally. This is especially important in relation to the Bali Agreement (climate change) and what follows it.***
- 44. Fi will work for the ratification in the Union and nationally of international agreements, pre-negotiated in the UN system, on improvements for labour, women's rights, human rights, and the environment.***
- 45. Fi will work for the so-called Yogyakarta Principles, which guarantee HBT-persons' rights in human rights policies, to be applied in the EU and in international conventions.***
- 46. Fi will work for the international negotiation of an agreement on stopping the international slave-trade, and trade of drugs and illegal arms, within the framework of the UN system. The agreement shall be implemented by international police and juridical authorities. These trades institutionalises oppression and slavery for above all women and children.***

Asylum policies and rights for third-country citizens

The EU's asylum policies are regulated in shared and binding treaty texts but each country itself makes an evaluation of reasons to grant asylum. The EU's common rules have limited the right to asylum, and today there are political efforts within the EU to further limit the right to asylum. The current system entails that countries that have the most extreme nationalistic viewpoints in relation to asylum-seekers in essence decide how the rest of the Union will react. In that sense the EU's asylum policies are functioning worse than ever.

Through various kinds of rules the EU attempts to keep people who are in need of protection, and who have the right to asylum under international conventions, away from the EU zone. One rule says that asylum can only be sought from a third country, which means that a person in Sweden can be forced to go back to his or her own country of origin in order to seek asylum and travel permission from there. To enforce this, another rule (carrier liability) says that airlines must pay refugees' tickets out of the EU if the refugees do not have grounds to stay. In that way the company's economic interests are set above persons' rights to protection. This is an unacceptable position.

47. *Fi will work for the abolition of strict visa requirements and rules for transport responsibility.*
48. *Fi will work for a change in the criteria for the right to asylum in the EU.*
49. *Fi will work for the procedure of asylum application to be simplified and de-bureaucratised and for the asylum seeker's rights to be placed paramount.*
50. *Fi will work for the ability of those seeking protection to seek asylum under protected conditions – in the receiving state – and together with their relatives. A child shall never need to be separated from his or her parents during the asylum process.*
51. *Fi will work for gender-related persecution to be recognised and for the EU member states to offer protection to women who are forced to flee their home countries for that reason.*
52. *Fi will work for sexual orientation and gender-identity to be asylum-granting reasons throughout Europe.*
53. *Fi will work for the EU asylum policy harmonisation process to accept the UN guidelines for “International Protection: Gender-related persecution within the context of Article 1A(2),” in order to give civil servants in all EU member countries better insight into gender-related violence and better possibility to identify grounds for deciding in favour of women's asylum applications that are based on gender-related violence.*

Immigration

The population of immigrant women in the EU has increased rapidly during the most recent decade. Many women migrate in order to re-join with a partner who is already resident in the EU for family reunification. Women immigrate also to a larger extent on their own and thereby become the primary family provider. During the most recent decade, many EU states have pursued a restrictive policy of “zero immigration”, in particular in relation to less-educated labour, with the result that the number of undocumented immigrants who work under very insecure conditions has increased. Many of them are women who work in the healthcare and care sectors and they meet an important need in the EU for labour in these sectors.

The Hague Programme, adopted by the European Council and to be carried out in the area “Freedom, Security and Justice” during the period 2005-2010, does not address immigrant women's special situation with even a single word. Women's human rights, experiences and needs are thereby ignored in the EU's current discussions and decisions on immigration policy. To change this trend it is important to recognise that migration has been feminised and that it is necessary for a gender-perspective to be fully integrated into EU policy and measures for each stage of the migration process, in particular entry and integration into the host society.

54. *Fi will work for the adoption of EU guidelines as well as concrete and directed gender-related targets and indicators in the immigration policy area.*
55. *Fi will work for the establishment of a permanent inter-institutional working group at high level that is responsible for supervising the development of European*

immigration policy from a gender perspective, and in particular to prepare tools to evaluate gender-related consequences of immigration-policy measures.

56. *Fi will work to revise and strengthen the Council's directive 2003/86/EC (22 September 2003) on the right to family reunification through the inclusion of rules that give family members the right to independent housing and permission to work during a minimum period of 5 years. This right shall be renewable.*
57. *Fi will work to strengthen the right to residence permits for relatives of third-country citizens.*
58. *Fi will work to create guidelines and rules that address the situation for paperless workers in the EU, including those who work in the healthcare and care sectors, and guarantee them legal status.*

Feminist solidarity work

The EU's foreign policy, and solidarity policy in particular, must build on the insight that women play a decisive role in the process of rising out of poverty, and that women's economic, educational, political and sexual empowerment affects not only them themselves, but also even their families and communities.

59. *Fi will work for the preparation of common gender equality criteria to use in national plans of action that affect solidarity work laid within the framework of EU solidarity policy.*

Terrorism & European agreements with the USA

The international climate that has emerged after the attacks of 11 September 2001 has involved a far harder focus on an understanding of the world that one-sidedly proclaims certain ethnic groups in international conflicts as "terrorists". This happens on a daily basis and can be founding stalking the agreements that the EU makes with the USA. Since July 2007 there is a new PNR agreement (Passenger Name Record) between the USA and the EU. The agreement is even more comprehensive than earlier agreements. This agreement has the purpose of fighting terrorism and lengthens the time that the USA has the right to save passenger information such as name and address, and even ethnicity, religion and in some cases health condition. After this agreement was made, a secrecy condition was placed on all documents touching upon the agreement, lasting 10 years, that is longer than the agreement's own length, which makes insight impossible.

Beyond this there are recently adopted American legal codes in The Foreign Intelligence Act, FISA, that enable eavesdropping (i.e. spying) on telephone and email communication going from or through the USA. The territorial aspect of this is interesting and alarming. The implications for European citizens can in practice be tangible, because much email traffic goes through the USA, and even some telephone traffic.

- 60. *Fi will work for absolute rule of law and the ending of all arbitrary action within all application of the law. The EU shall not allow arbitrary treatment and deportation of suspects to third countries. To hand someone over to torture and unlawful treatment is not compatible with the Union's principles on human rights.*
- 61. *Fi will work for increased openness between the European Parliament and the Commission.*
- 62. *Fi will work for the development of a principle of public access to official records in the EU organisation.*
- 63. *Fi will work against agreements that violate the integrity of EU citizens.*
- 64. *Fi will work for it to be first and foremost popularly elected representatives in Parliament who make decisions on security and integrity; that is where responsibility can be demanded and reviews conducted.*
- 65. *Fi will work for the EU to give clear protections of every citizen's right to personal integrity.*

The Lisbon strategies

The Lisbon strategies were adopted at the EU summit in Lisbon in 2000. At the European Council's summit in spring 2005 a review was made and the rules currently in force were established then. The strategies contain three parts; social policy (which in the EU in the first place signifies labour market policy); economic policy; and environmental policy. The intention is that the three parts shall support each other but the economic policy is supreme.

In the documents that formulate the policies in these areas there is only one note that economic growth goes hand-in-hand with sustainable development. Quite generally one can say that environment, non-discrimination and gender equality issues are noticeable by their absence in the documents, and consequently risk being forgotten when the policies are implemented.

Because a number of the goals that are identified in the Lisbon strategies fall outside the common legislation, each member state can itself choose how its national policies will be formed in order to achieve the goals. This has unfortunately meant that especially the social aspects of the strategy have dropped out of focus in many member states. In Sweden the previous government chose to prioritise the strategies' reflection of economic, social and environmental sustainable development. We can see that the Swedish interpretation of the strategies was fairly conventional, if not more outspokenly ecological. The focus was on "ecological modernisation", with an expectation that technological progress will give us the tools to fix the crashing environment.

- 66. *Fi will work for a society – as an approaching future vision for the EU – to involve effective limits on emissions of substances that in various ways damage the environment and climate.*
- 67. *Fi will work for a society – as an approaching future vision for the EU – that is ecologically sustainable and is capable of reproducing itself.*

Economic and social justice

That women and men participate to an equal extent in all aspects of economic and social development is a necessary condition for achieving justice between the sexes. For it to be able to fulfil its gender equality undertaking, the EU must develop a consistent policy line that covers macroeconomic policy, employment policy, social protection and care issues. All of these areas must besides be treated with equal value. Therefore the European social model must be protected and developed through the Lisbon strategy.

Macroeconomic policy creates foundational norms both for economic development and for the distribution of the assets that are produced through this development, which in turn affects women's and men's access to resources as individuals, within the family and in the question of social services. The EU's macroeconomic framework therefore plays a decisive role when it comes to creating better conditions for gender equality and to supporting the development of the European social model, including public social insurance, equal access to education, universal health care as well as health and care services for children and other persons who cannot manage without assistance. In addition, the EU should – within its macroeconomic policy – take into account the situation in some of the member states, where rolled back or reduced state investments in social services have had clearly negative consequences for gender equality. Against this background it is demanded that the EU adapt its policy so that it more effectively protects and supports the development of social services.

Women and employment

Women's paid work is still of decisive significance for their possibilities for economic independence, and for increased equality between women and men in society as a whole. In the Lisbon strategy, the goal is stated for women's labour participation to be 60 percent at latest by 2010. In 2006 it was 55.7 percent, and much lower (31.7 percent) among older women (55–64 yrs). Unemployment is besides higher among women than men (9.7 percent versus 7.8 percent). It is therefore necessary that the Lisbon strategy for growth and employment gets a stronger gender equality dimension.

To affect women's situation on labour markets in Europe it requires methods that can counteract the gender-based division of labour within both the public and private sectors; methods that can fight discrimination of women and minorities on labour markets and within social insurance systems; and methods that can support the development of those sectors where women are over-represented. Further methods that can contribute to increasing the rate of employment among women are for legislation on equal treatment to be followed and for rights in the tax and benefits systems to be individualised, so that it becomes as beneficial for women as for men to work and so that no one is made dependent on anyone else. In addition, women's paid work cannot be treated separately from questions of healthcare and care as well as individualisation of tax and social insurance systems.

68. *Fi will work for the employment goals in the Lisbon strategy to be equal for women and men, and for women's possibilities for paid employment in Europe to be promoted.*
69. *Fi will work for there to be developed an action plan for how the EU's macroeconomic policy can contribute to increased investments in social services, in particular in relation to care services.*
70. *Fi will ensure that also an anti-racist and class perspective gets a clear place in the member states' and Union's future employment strategies.*

Wage discrimination

Despite the fact that there is a Council Directive on equal wages for equal work, women earn on average 15 percent less than men in the EU (the gap is up to 33 percent in some countries), and this difference has to a large extent not been changed over the 30 years that the Directive on equal pay has existed. Women are discriminated both directly and structurally through e.g. segregation in various industries, occupational and work patterns, access to education, discriminatory evaluation and wage-setting systems as well as antiquated gender role patterns. To correct this, powerful measures are required at all levels within the Union. The European employment strategy must contain special and directed equality targets within the following areas:

71. *Fi will work for measures to abolish wage discrimination on the ground of gender, and facilitate women's and minorities' participation on the labour market, especially in relation to education, re-integration and pensions.*
72. *Fi will work for the improvement of health care and care services everywhere in the EU.*
73. *Fi will work for measures to improve working conditions and security for atypical, part-time and flexible wage-earners.*
74. *Fi will work for a special emphasis on employment measures in support of women who are subjected to discrimination for several reasons, such as women with functional disabilities, immigrant women and women from ethnic minorities, lesbian women, as well as older or younger women, and for discriminated men in the corresponding groups.*
75. *Fi will work to secure a gender balance in the systems for lifelong learning, occupational education, and educational opportunities in general.*
76. *Fi will work to secure a gender balance in the access to bank loans and bank services in order to be able to compete on the international market.*
77. *Fi will work for a European wage analysis and concrete and definite action plans to overcome wage discrimination.*
78. *Fi will work for an investigation of how people with non-European backgrounds are discriminated against on the employment market in the EU and will work also for measures to be taken at the EU level to overcome this wage discrimination.*
79. *Fi will work for an employment strategy with concrete gender equality goals in all areas.*

The Social security systems, pension and the fight against poverty

Social security systems, that are a precondition for women's equal conditions on the employment market, look very different across the EU member states, and are, to very different degrees, designed to secure equal opportunities for women and men. To create an accessible employment market for all, all rules that make women less inclined to enter and stay in the labour market must be removed, so that the labour market becomes gender-equal and all people can obtain pension rights. It is, however, still more common that women hold paid employment for less time than men, or that they make interruptions in their careers, which gives them lesser pension rights.

Additionally, many pension systems in the EU member states give women only "secondary rights" based on their husbands' paid employment, with the result that the majority of older persons who live in poverty are women. To secure a better life for older women we must remove the structural factors that contribute to inequalities within the pension systems, among them the organisation of healthcare and care, as well as the combination of family life and work life, inequalities on the labour market, wage differences between the genders and direct discrimination in the pension systems.

In the EU the member states' pensions discriminate against even immigrant and refugee women, because these systems often are based on how long one has been present in a certain country. In particular, immigrant and refugee women are more often employed on conditions, e.g. in the informal sector, that give limited possibilities for earning towards pensions, with the result that as elderly they can come to live in deep poverty. Women who as a result of functional disabilities are unable to work are landed in a similar situation, because they only receive a state pension. Even lone parents, older women or women who work in family firms, e.g. in agriculture and fishing, are hit by these pension rules. Therefore it is of great importance that women, through the social security systems, obtain sufficient benefits, especially when they enter retirement. The feminisation of poverty is a chronic trend in today's European society, which shows clearly that the present framework of social security systems and the EU's policies in the social, economic and employment areas have not been designed to meet women's needs.

- 80. *Fi will work for the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to be integrated and that the EU's social security systems to be designed to secure that women and men have the same benefits and obligations.***
- 81. *Fi will work for there to be carried out a broad inquiry on how pension reforms impact women's lives in the EU, with an individualisation of pension benefits (and social security and tax systems in general) in order to encourage women and men to perform wage work, and thereby obtain individual economic security.***
- 82. *Fi will work for the development of strategies to secure full state pensions for immigrants.***
- 83. *Fi will work for the development of strategies to secure a pension system for functionally disabled without (or with part-time based) pensions, that also secures their economic independence in elderly years and avoids forced institutionalisation.***

84. *Fi will work for the development of special equality goals and aims in the EU's strategy for fighting poverty and social marginalisation, including political measures in support of non-traditional families and single-parent families, and special political measures in support of women from groups who run greater risks for poverty and social marginalisation, such as immigrant and refugee women, women from ethnic minorities, older women, women with functional disabilities and homo- and bisexual women.*

Combination of private life and work life, healthcare and care services

The EU has on a number of occasions highlighted the importance of bringing about a balance between private life and work life for women and men. There remains much to do, however, to transform the gender-based distribution of tasks in the home, and reach a point where care work and housework are shared equally. Unpaid housework is done primarily by women because, among other things, there is in many parts of Europe a lack of economically reasonable care services of good quality for taking care of persons who cannot manage alone. It is a given conclusion that there is a positive correlation between public expenditures in the form of social grants (coupled to care of children and other persons who cannot manage alone) and women's participation in paid work.

85. *Fi will work for the development of a shared method of cooperation in the area of care services where member states can formulate recommendations for how the need for subsidised care services in Europe can be satisfied (i.e. through organising and financing childcare and healthcare of other persons who cannot manage alone), including setting up exact targets and indicators, with the purpose of being by 2010 to provide childcare for 90% of all children in the EU from birth through the obligatory school age, as well as reaching a sufficient level of healthcare achievements for other persons who are unable to manage alone.*
86. *Fi will work to secure special rights and guarantees in connection to the possibility to combine private life with work life when there are family members who are dependent (such as children or partner with functional disability).*
87. *Fi will work for a revision of Directive 96/34 on parental leave, so that in all member states a longer, paid parental leave shared equally between parents is created. The revised directive should also be extended to cover other forms of family leave, and to secure that social security benefits can be received during these periods.*
88. *Fi will work for the development in all member states of social security systems that support an equal sharing of private life's and work life's various obligations between women and men.*
89. *Fi will work for an addition to be made to the working directive (2003/88/EC), in order for the organisation of work to be adapted to both women's and men's needs to be able to combine private and work life, including a universal work-time shortening and the creation of work schedules that are possible to combine with family responsibilities.*

Health and gender equality aspects

Even though the public's health has improved significantly during the most recent decade in the EU, there are still many factors that hinder gender equality in the area of health. Gender roles and men's violence combine with other social and economic variables, which lead to divergent and often unjust patterns of health risks, and also to divergent access to and enjoyment of health information, healthcare and health services. Women and men in social groups are subjected to different health risks, diseases and problems and have different habits that impact their health. This applies even to environmental issues such as the use of chemicals, including pesticides, insecticides and herbicides. Medical research and many health and safety norms are based on men and male-dominated areas of work.

The knowledge on inequalities in the area of healthcare must be better, and statistics and indicators must be further developed.

- 90. Fi will work for special equality and gender equality targets for the EU in the open cooperative method in the areas of healthcare, including the strengthening of preventive programs that promote equal health, the financing of equal access to healthcare services, and the improvement of healthcare personnel's capabilities to meet individuals' healthcare needs.*
- 91. Fi will work to intensify the work against sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, and for sexual and reproductive health. All of these initiatives must clearly call attention to every woman's absolute right to decide herself if she wishes to have children and, if so, how many and when she would wish to have them.*

Prostitution and human trafficking

Under the Union's third pillar are human trafficking and organised crime. This entails that these are first seen as a judicial and domestic question and handled at a supranational level. Several measures against human trafficking have been taken by the Parliament and the Commission, but the work is troubled for several reasons. Among other things, the work against human trafficking for sexual purposes is conducted without focus on the consumption of sexual services and the action of national prostitution legislation.

The link between prostitution and human trafficking is the sex-buyer, the man who consumes women and children in prostitution. This entails that the human trafficking issue will never be solved without taking on the demand.

Maria Robsahm (formerly Carlshamre) ordered a study of different national prostitution legislations and their connection to human trafficking for sexual purposes. The results of this are many, and Sweden is lifted up in particular as an example that we need to know more about, as a result of our unique legislation. Thus far, however, it has been difficult in the European Parliament to move for learning more about the effects our sex-buying legislation has had.

The definition of human trafficking was established by the Palermo Protocol, where it

is emphasised that a person is counted as a child if under 18 years of age, and that human trafficking includes recruiting, transporting, and receiving of adults or children, through violence, threat of violence, abduction, fraud, exploitation of people in a vulnerable position or misuse of authority, with the purpose of exploiting someone. In the case of children, there does not need to be violence or threat of violence included, for it to be a case of human trafficking. Worth noting here also is that the trafficking does not need to be transnational but can even be constituted by trafficking within a state, between regions or cities.

The ILO estimates that 80 percent of all persons who are subjected to human trafficking are women and children. Altogether 40–50 percent of all victims are children, and 98 percent of all who are subjected to human trafficking for sexual purposes are women and children. This is a fast-growing global slave trade that we must fight.

Studies that compare the attitude to buying sex among young men from various states in Europe show large differences that can clearly be connected to the national legislation on sex-trade. Swedish men, compared to men in several European states, had another attitude to the right to buy women's bodies, distinct from the majority of the rest. This indicates that the Swedish sex-trade law has had a norm-creating affect, and this is something that needs to be researched further to provide knowledge on how national legislation impacts norms and attitudes among men.

92. *Fi will work for all efforts against human trafficking to be coordinated with efforts against prostitution.*
93. *Fi will work for the focus to be on the buyer, so that demand for sexual services is counteracted, at the same time that strategies to give women other choices are developed and given greater resources.*
94. *Fi will work for every member state to have national legislation against the buying of sexual services.*
95. *Fi will work for the Commission to carry out its long-promised study of national prostitution legislations' effects on the European transnational sex trade.*

Agricultural policy

The EU's agricultural policy stands before a comprehensive change. For decades the EU has been forced to manage overproduction within the Union. Production quotas, protections such as import tariffs and import quotas, as well as export subsidies, have been used. The world market for agricultural products has, however, taken a dramatic turn. The global demand for basic commodities such as cereal crops, corn and oilseed crops exceeds access today, with steeply rising prices as a result. It is thus not necessary to protect large parts of the EU's agricultural products in the way done so far. The cause of the change is an improved economy and thereby increased demand in large countries such as India and China. A new competitor for agricultural land and products is also the energy sector. The new conditions on the market must necessarily lead to a change in the EU's agricultural policy in the direction of more open borders and less regulation. The policy has always had a goal of structural transformation,

where small units would be put together to be larger and more effective. Agricultural policy in the EU has thus begun from large-scale capitalistic farming norms that disadvantage ecological farming and small farmers, as much in Europe as in the rest of the world. For diversity and for social reasons it should in the future be possible to carry on small-scale agriculture.

96. *Fi will work for a faster dismantling of the agricultural support but with special consideration for the less developed and less competitive agricultural sectors especially in the new EU countries.*
97. *Fi will work for an adaptation of EU agricultural policy to the new market conditions, which involve lower import protections and export subsidies and dismantling of production quotas.*
98. *Fi will work for the aim that the EU, which is an important actor on the global agricultural market, acts to secure countries' food sovereignty and biological diversity.*
99. *Fi will work for agricultural production wherein public health is put in focus.*
100. *Fi will work for the EU to develop more tools for a changeover to ecological agricultural production.*
101. *Fi will work for animal welfare such that animals can live their lives in a manner as close as possible to what is natural to the species.*
102. *Fi will work for an agricultural policy that takes into consideration agriculture's significance for an open and varied landscape with a diversity of natural plant and animal species.*