



Limassol, Cyprus, 10.10.2009

Embrace the Spirit

CYPRUS DECLARATION

Let's get started!



Compiling the declarations, calls for action and discussions of all major women and sport conferences, starting with the “**Brighton Declaration**” - the first, ground breaking document in 1994 and the basis for all further work - going on with the “**Helsinki Spirit**” (2000), the declaration of Athens 2001), the “**Berlin Memorandum**” (2002), the EU-meeting in Thessaloniki (2003), the “**Paris Call for Action**” (2004), the “**Decisions of Vienna**” (2006) and now the “**Declaration of Cyprus**” (2009) we have to note, that a lot of landmarks have been set!

Visions crafted and clarified, the mission thoroughly discussed and the values defined and refined over the years have clearly shown the strategic direction the EWS is wished to be going.

Brighton gave an all embracing starting point with very concrete examples of how to accelerate the process of change. A stronger participation of women in all fields of sport, an appreciation of their skills and the necessity to capitalize on their talents has been in focus of this conference. But there have also been very concrete examples of how to develop and promote women in sport.

Knowledge management and close links between researchers, trainers/coaches and sport leaders were in the centre of discussion in Stockholm (1996).

The Windhoek “call for action” (1998) was a major international mile-stone, and its conclusions were underlined in the Athens conference (1998). Strategic partnerships, equal media coverage and quota for women in NOCs and governmental committees were two further endorsed issues.

The “Helsinki Spirit” underlined the main objective of the EWS, namely the creation of a sports culture where all girls and boys, women and men shall have equal opportunities to participate, act and make decisions. Attention was drawn on activities which support women’s leadership in sport.

2001 experienced for the first time ever a UNESCO conference in Athens on the position of women in the administration of sport. Major visions like the setting up of an observatory to systematise all existing research and data on women and sport, emanating from governmental and non-governmental sport bodies.

Another mile-stone in the development was set in Berlin, when gender mainstreaming was brought on the agenda, a policy formulated by the European Union and implemented by the EWS.

During the Greek EU-presidency in 2003 the European member states met in Thessaloniki. They discussed and proposed the setting up of a “women and sport” unit within the commission of the European Union. And they welcomed and congratulated the European parliament their report on women and sport. This report specifically stipulated the creation of a legal entity for women and sport.

Paris focussed strongly on the organisational and strategic side, wrapping up the past discussions and leading the way into the future.

In Vienna - the EWS conference organised within the EU-presidency of Austria - “quality through equality”, dual strategies with regard to women’s promotion and gender sensitive thinking and a look into change management were ground breaking work achieved.

Cyprus focussed on “Embrace the spirit – find, develop, promote women in sport”. The break-up of the subculture of gender dominance, the questioning of traditional stereotypes and the paying due respect to women – and above all a “women must say YES to challenges” where it is strongly supported. Strategies discussed reiterated also knowledge management, national and international co-operations, the integration of science and the adoption of practical questions into science and media training.



All this hard work done over the last 15 years led to the formulation of a **vision and mission** as enshrined in the guidelines:

“The network “European Women and Sport” represents the concerns, needs and interests of women and sport in dialogue with national, European and international institutions.

The network’s mission is to promote the empowerment of women in relation to sport in all their diversity; to advance gender equality; to combat all forms of discrimination and violence against women within the world of sport and to ensure full access for all women to their human rights whether elite or recreational athletes, as elected members of sports organisations or to other sport-related sectors through their active involvement in society, the world of sport and in policy development and implementation focussed on sport.”

The **EWS’ values** have thoroughly been discussed, formulated and set forth :

The network, through its members, aims at:

- working within democratic, open and transparent procedures of communication, decision-making and accountability in order to support the involvement and empowerment of all women
- focussing on the promotion of women in sport and sport-related sectors, in order to achieve the ideal of good governance
- achieving gender sensitive thinking and acting, sensitizing women and men in order to set up strategies together to increase the number of women in sport
- increasing in all areas the visibility of women, and helping to increase the number of women in decision-making bodies and in the administration of sport at all levels
- disseminating and intensifying information and strengthen co-operation and the exchange of experience on all levels and between countries
- encouraging, launching and/or supporting educational programs, especially for women, for decision-making positions; encouraging, launching and/or supporting scientific, academic and other relevant projects
- maintaining an archive on women and sport developments and achievements
- providing regular input on all areas of EU policy development, national and international sport policy development and implementation that have an impact on women’s lives in the world of sport and on the promotion of equality between women and men
- monitoring the development and implementation of gender mainstreaming within national, European and international governmental and non-governmental sport structures in order to ensure that mainstreaming entails the full integration of women’s human rights, needs and aspirations
- taking into account the needs and perspective of different groups of women, and the multiple identities of women at all stages of their life cycle

This very important work of dedicated women and men since 1994 can be summarised in the strategic plan that EWS had given itself – a strategic plan that has FINALLY to be filled with live!

Therefore, the order of the day is: “Let’s get started”, let’s take what has already been achieved and let’s make our dreams come true!

We all have identified the EWS general policy, innovation and membership orientation as the cornerstones of our existence.

We also know that a sound EWS as organisation means stable finances, which lead to a profound service for our membership/contacts/network and ultimately brings about DEVELOPMENT, the sole reason for existence of the EWS.

The EWS in the focus of international awareness as organisation that promotes gender equality and non-discrimination in the field of sport and sport related sectors is the centrepiece. International awareness is underlined by the fact that the EWS is the main partner for any discussion about women and sport in Europe by all European/international (sport)bodies. A status that has to be gained and proven day after day.



This position enables the EWS to influence the international sport policy on women and sport (e.g. the UNESCO observatory) and to form partnerships and co-operations Europe- and worldwide. As a consequence, the EWS is also able to propose guidelines for national sport policies, helping to frame models of best practices of how to find, develop and promote women for and in the sport.

A very crucial point for the EWS are stable finances and the possibility to access new funds in order to launch programs for women and sport. (e.g. “career after the career”, training, scientific work, subsidies....)

Finances also allow the organisation to meet its obligations towards its members – to launch mentoring programs and to advocate quota in order to guarantee equal participation in decision making.

This all leads to the important strategic point of dual thinking, where the focus is on promotion of women on one hand and gender sensitive thinking and acting on the other, in order to sensitise women and men to set up strategies together to increase the number of women in sport.

Access to funds has an important impact on research, studies and statistics, which all can be initiated and guided. Also the influence on education (in all areas - athletes, coaches, volunteers, officials) is another important aspect. It is necessary to influence education via a review of the curricula for sport science, coaches education and volunteers/officials education, based on the latest research, in order to arrive to a gender sensitive thinking.

Sport and economy also ultimately depend on funds, but also on education and research. Sport and economy also embrace specific initiatives for women in sport, like “career after the career”, seminars, and an introduction to the business world.

Enormous importance can also be attributed to knowledge management, which is a centre piece for the development of women and sport.

Knowledge management is at the core of dual thinking, but is also closely connected with education, research and studies.

With regard to the member orientation, guidelines/policies at national level ultimately lead to funding for women and sport projects and initiatives. This funding is in turn linked to guidelines for projects and initiatives how to find, develop and promote women in sport – and in connection with research and studies will lead to the creation of new open spaces.

More specifically, the specific steps to be taken to fill our strategic plan with life are summarised below. The short version appears on the graphic overleaf, where the bullets are numbered within their specific strategic pathway. The concrete measures are:

on the political and innovation side

- **(6), (11), (13)** be an active member of the Steering Group of the “Observatory on Women, Sport and Physical Education under the auspices of UNESCO”. The EWS will be participating in the decision making of this important tool for the systematisation of existing information and data emanating from governmental and non-governmental sport bodies. Their effective use will further promote the women in sport issues in close cooperation with the academic world, who proves to be a steady partner of the Observatory for specialised scientific research to the benefit of women’s involvement in sport. (Athens 2001, MINEPS IV 2004)
- **(6), (7)** work for the formation of a Women and Sport Unit at the European Union Commission by 2012. (Thessaloniki 2003)
- **(6), (7)** provide this Unit with the framework of a Women and Sport policy which includes the various policy suggestions made at all relevant international fora following the Brighton Declaration. (Thessaloniki 2003)
- **(7)** urge the European Union to adopt a directive concerning the implementation of this policy in all member states and by all relevant non-governmental sport bodies. (Paris 2004, Cyprus 2009)



- **(6), (13)** in close **cooperation** with the European Union and the Council of Europe enter in contact with all ministries responsible for Sport and Physical Education in Europe and all non-governmental sport bodies and work for the implementation of this policy. (Cyprus 2009)
- **(6)** present this policy as a flagship project at the Sydney 2010 IWG Conference for adoption at world level. (Cyprus 2009)
- **(6)** extend our **cooperation** and **network** to the International School Sport and International University Sport Federations. (Sweden 1998, Cyprus 2009)
- **(11)** elaborate by 2010 a master in international sport management respecting all ethical and social values as well as all gender equity principles comprised in good governance in sport. (Cyprus 2009)
- **(6), (11)** **cooperate** with all International Sport Federation for the inclusion of the above master in the University curricula. (Cyprus 2009)
- **(13)** assist in the establishment of national women and sport committees and guidelines for national sport policies. (Brighton 1994, Germany 2002, Cyprus 2009)
- **(2), (3), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12)** access new **funds** for specific programs (e.g. “career after the career”, training programs (media training, personality training) mentoring and leadership programs etc.); research programs (specified research, studies, statistics), educational programs (for athletes, coaches, volunteers and officials) and sport and economy (seminars, meetings, platforms sponsors-sport). First actions to start in 2010. (Austria 2006, Cyprus 2009)
- **(5), (10), (11), (12)** set up a systematised **knowledge management** in order to keep and enhance the “memory” of the organisation and to invest in and capitalise from researches, studies, statistics and educational programs for the sport. This will ultimately lead to the goal of “dual thinking”, means the embracement of women’s promotion and gender sensitive thinking. A knowledge management system should be worked on immediately and be in full swing by 2010. (Sweden 1996, Austria 2006, Cyprus 2009)
- **(6), (9)** unite **sport and economy**. On one hand sport and economy enable athletes to combine sport, education/profession and family. This includes the help of economy to spot and enhance the potentials of athletes and to facilitate or enable the transition to a professional life after the sports career. On the other hand, sport is an enormous economic factor. Up to 10% of the jobs in a given country depend directly or indirectly on sport. A stronger network between the partners must therefore be established as soon as possible. This especially in the light of the next chair of the EWS, who will have its conference in 2011, just a year before the Olympic Games in London. (Austria 2006)
- **(11)** engage in the area of education. Universities, **researches, studies and statistics** are the basis for a knowledge based society and thus a general development. EWS must engage as soon as possible and on an ongoing basis in this enormously important field by ordering statistics (e.g. Eurostat) and research, cooperation with universities and educational institutions, or subsidising research or studies on gender topics or topics of specific interest for women. (Sweden 1996, Athens 2001, Austria 2006, Cyprus 2009)
- **(12)** invest in **education** for coaches, sport scientists or for decision making positions and volunteers in the sport. It is very important to influence the curricula for the education of coaches and scientists, and to engage in the establishment of seminars and courses for sports officials, respecting the principles of good governance. (democracy, transparency, openness, fairness, ethical and social values and clear procedures). (Sweden 1996, Austria 2006, Cyprus 2009)



on the membership orientation side

- **(4), (13), (14)** issue recommendations for national sport policies. This will on one hand facilitate the work of women in sport on national level and in many cases expedite and enhance the procedures, on the other it will attract funds for women in sport work. Projects on national and regional level are important to live up to the aim of finding, developing and promoting women in sport. (Brighton 1994, Paris 2004, Cyprus 2009)
- **(15)** assist national organisations to set-up and enshrine national strategies in policies of how to find, develop and promote women and sport. Detailed strategies have been devised by the Cyprus conference and are elaborated in detail below. (Brighton 1994, Cyprus 2009)
- **(16)** support the creation of new sport facilities and open spaces that meet the needs of girls and women in order to enjoy sport as a simple human right. These new and/or reworked facilities are a direct result of initiatives taken to find, develop and promote women in sport. (Brighton 1994, Paris 2004, Cyprus 2009)
- **(8), (12), (15)** break up the subculture of gender dominance, empower women for their roles in sport. Question the traditional stereotypes and run educational (Leadership) programs for women in sport. Support them on their way to self-confidence. (Cyprus 2009)
- **(13), (15)** improve and standardise the recruitment process for women in sport, improve the “asking culture”. (Cyprus 2009)

All the above mentioned targets form part of the overarching strategy, they can easily be measured and need all our attention to be pursued and finally be implemented.

Behind each of the bullet points on the table below, a set of concrete measures was determined during the 8th European Women and Sport Conference in Cyprus. The successful implementation of our strategy can thus now be followed up.

It is the task of the new EWS Steering Group to fine-tune this work, to set time limits for each specific strategic action, to monitor and steer its inception and thus to guide the EWS to new heights.

The well-being – and even the fate – of the EWS is ultimately tied to the implementation of what has been wished, said, dreamed, envisioned since 1994 and filled with emotions, passion, thorough considerations, intellectual women- and men power.

