



ENUT NEWS 2/03

Newsletter of Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Centre No 9

From the Editor

The latter part of 2002 and the beginning of 2003 were a very busy time for ENUT.

This edition of *Enut News* gives an overview of our major activities recently. We also take a look at Estonian women's situation, and provide information about some matters of importance for women's organisations. We were very active with women's organisations across the land in 2002.

The feature article is about the annual conference "Active Estonian Women", held on January 11-12, 2003. At the conference, the third volume of the gender studies journal, *Ariadne's Clew*, was presented. Anne Lill, Editor-in-Chief, writes about the journal in this issue. An analysis of Estonia's political parties and the state of gender equality is made by Ilvi Jõe-Cannon (the Estonian edition contains an analysis by Tiina Raitviir on the same theme, but she looks at the governmental structures. Cannon's article was written originally in English and Raitviir's in Estonian), and Iris Pettai analyses Estonian businesswomen.

We also write about ENUT's major projects in 2002, and activities in 2003. Last year we collaborated with Baltic and Nordic countries women's and gender information centres. We also participated in the Baltic and Nordic countries' campaign against trafficking in humans and held seminars on that subject. We drafted a proposed program of a gender studies minor for the Tallinn Pedagogical University's Sociology Department.

Two articles contain the subject of the European Council Social Charter, because in the winter Estonia must submit her report to the European Council. The women's organisations' role is to examine the correctness of the report and to submit their own comments and recommendation.

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Active Estonian Women

Eha Reitelmann, ENUT project leader

ENUT organised the annual conference of Estonian women's organisations at the Tallinn Pedagogical University January 11-12, 2003. The theme of the conference was "Active Estonian Women".

Despite unusually cold weather, representatives of women's organisations from every county attended. The conference continued the work started at the previous year's conference, which had gathered for the purpose of discussing the major topics for collaboration among women and the question of gender equality. The major theme for this year's conference was gender equality.

The conference was opened by salutations, delivered in clear Estonian by Thomas Hodges, the First Secretary at the American Embassy in Tallinn. Mati Heidmets, the Rector of Tallinn Pedagogical University, delivered a salutary message of encouragement and co-operation. Reet Laja was the Moderator for the first day.

Thereafter, representatives of the major political parties addressed the audience on the development of gender equality in Estonia from their parties' and personal perspectives. Among them was the Minister of Education Mailis Rand from Keskerakond, Member of Parliament Toomas Hendrik Ilves from Rahvaerakond Mõõdukad, Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Tallinn City Council Maret Maripuu from Reformierakond, Res Publica Council Chairman Urmas Reinsalu, and Member of Parliament Kadri Jäätma from Pro Patria. It was encouraging to find out that almost in all the major parties can be found politicians that understand the importance of gender equality to our society.

In the next part, representatives of the country's largest women's organisations and regional women's roundtables told the audience about the activities in their area. Since all of them represented non-profit organisations, the section was introduced by Kristina Mänd, head of the Association of Estonian Non-Profit Organizations and Foundations. She focused on the Estonian Civil Society's Developmental Concept legislation passed by *Riigikogu* (parliament) at the end of last year. Maarit Vabrit spoke for the Estonian Business Women's Association, Marge Tee represented the Estonian Women's Union, Eha Reitelmann reported on Harju Women's Roundtable activities, Astrid

Hindriks told the audience about the Pärnu County Women's Roundtable, Kersti Sirel introduced Valga county women's activities, Lea Saareoks spoke about the Viljandi County Women's Union, and Tiit Soans, chairwoman of the Estonian Rural Women's Association, focused on gender equality in her remarks.

Reet Laja, Chairwoman of ENUT's Board of Trustees, presented an overview of Estonian women's organisations activities in 2002.

Workshops took place latter part of the day. The topics for the workshops: to come up with a message from Estonian women to the Baltic Sea Region Women's Third Conference in Tallinn, and priorities for Estonian women's collaboration in 2003.

The workshops concurred that a priority is adoption of the gender equality law. It was unanimously agreed to send a letter to *Riigikogu* from the conference, urging passage of gender equality legislation in the current session. The gender equality bill has been deliberated sufficiently, considerable time and money has been spent on it, and when the new *Riigikogu* meets the process would have to start from zero. Concerns about Estonian youth emerged in the workshops in the areas of education, pursuit of interests, the spread of narcotics and HIV. These concerns reflect a general feeling of threat to the community's continuity.

In the message to the Baltic Sea Region Conference, it was considered important to emphasise the Estonian women's organisations' long work experience and the desire to work as regional partners in mutual problem solving, in addition to mentioning our own problems.

The second day of the conference, moderated by Prof. Voldemar Kolga, was dedicated to the presentation of the third volume of *Ariadne Lõng* (Ariadne's Clew), and to papers read by sociologists, which generated general discussion. The day's programme was opened by a message from President Rützel, delivered by his adviser Andra Veidemann. The Netherlands Ambassador sent her message in a letter, for she had to be out of the country. Anne Lill, the editor-in-chief of *Ariadne Lõng*, was the first of the speakers, followed by Tiina Raitviir, Iris Pettai, Marje Pavelson, Leeni Hansson and Mare Ainsaar. Many of the papers read at the conference appear in the present issue of *ENUT News*.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all whose work and contributions helped to make the conference a success, especially the US *Democracy Commission*, the Kingdom of Netherlands' MATRA-KAP Programme, and the Tallinn Pedagogical University.

The attitude of Estonia's political parties toward gender equality legislation*

Ilvi Jõe-Cannon, Political Scientist

The attitude is negative. Although party programs contain references to the concept of equality, in practice it is ignored. I will attempt to give a brief look at the situation presently, almost 12 years into independence – a period that includes a self-image that Estonia is returning to its western roots and belongs among the democratic countries (the self-image is, unfortunately, indistinguishable from self-deception).

Estonia has ratified several international treaties and conventions that contain precepts embraced by democratic societies. Her constitution prohibits gender discrimination. *Riigikogu* (parliament) has adopted laws that are designed to protect the individual, male and female, in the sphere of employment and social wellbeing. While a welcome development, these laws are inadequate for the promotion and protection of gender equality that is an integral part of democracy.

Let us consider the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to which Estonia is a signatory. A year ago, the Government submitted a Report for the first time to the CEDAW Committee meeting in New York. The Report boasts considerably about the gender equality bill, as if it is about to be passed by *Riigikogu*. A year later, the bill languishes because the government does not want it and is advancing, instead, a general all-encompassing anti-discrimination bill that lacks enforcement language.

Such a move is contrary to the stipulations in the CEDAW Convention. CEDAW Committee's evaluation of Estonia's Report states, "Estonian law does not contain specific definition of discrimination against women modelled on article 1 of the Convention, which prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination", and it recommends adoption of such a law. The gender equality bill would bring Estonia closer to compliance with the Convention.

Other concerns and recommendations by the Committee include State support for awareness raising among women about legal remedies that assist them, pursuit of an overall integrated policy of gender mainstreaming, the advancement of women, and the

publicising of the importance of gender equality to the general public.

Several things can be cited to substantiate the assertion that the political parties have a negative attitude toward gender equality legislation.

To start with, the parties themselves do not practice gender equality. An analysis of our major political parties shows that they don't THINK in terms of gender equality. (The following data was obtained in the beginning of January, 2003, either from the political parties' home pages or their offices, and from Prof. Tiina Raitviir's article "Estonian Women and Political Power", which appears in the third volume of ENUT's publication *Ariadne lõng* ["Ariadne's Clew"].) In naming the major parties, I'm including the number of members and the women's percentage. By way of general statistical background, I would mention that 53.9% of Estonia's population consists of women and their share of membership in the political parties is high – approximately 48%. To return to the major parties, they are: Eestimaa Rahvaliid (7070 member, 59.3% women), Eesti Keskerakond (over 6700 members, 47.2% women), Res Publica (3715 members, 41.7% women), Pro Patria (2882 members, 35.2% women), Eesti Reformierakond (over 2200 members, 37.1% women), Rahvaerakond Mõõdukad (3291 members, 41.8% women), and Eestimaa Ühendatud Rahvapartei (1633 predominantly ethnic Russian members, 58.9% women).

Eestimaa Rahvaliid's council consists of 25 members, of whom four are women, including the vice-chairperson (16% women); Eesti Keskerakond's council consists of 18 members, of whom three are women (16,7%), but the three vice-chairmen are men; Reformierakond's council consists of 15 members, of whom three are women (20%), but the two vice-chairmen are men; Res Publica's council is made up of 17 members, including three women (17,6%), but the three vice-chairmen are men; Pro Patria's council consists of 15 members, which includes one woman (0.07%), and the two vice-chairmen are men; Rahvaerakond Mõõdukad has a 21 member council, of whom six are women (35%) and one of the three vice-chairpersons is a woman; Eestimaa Ühendatud Rahvapartei's council consists of 21, but regrettably, information about its gender composition was not possible to obtain. The party's vice-chairman is a man.

It is evident that the composition of the parties' decision-making bodies does not reflect proportionately

the number of women in the party. In a democratic structure, the percentage of women in the party would be reflected in the decision-making organ. In addition, all the above named parties have men as chairmen.

Why is the role of political parties central to the democratic process? Firstly, policy decisions are made by the parties out of power and in power, i.e., setting national priorities, setting fiscal policy, distributing taxpayers' money, etc. If these policies are drafted without equality principles, the interests and concerns of the whole population do not receive equal consideration. The result is a society where the opportunities and resources are not equally distributed, or "kaks Eestit"*. In other words, discrimination prevails.

As a result of inequalities, it cannot be said that Estonian society has become democratic. Albeit we hold elections, we have private ownership of property and businesses, the fourth estate exists and religious organizations function unhindered by the State (factors and institutions that are generally considered characteristics of democracy), a fundamental democratic principle is still not practiced and that is gender equality. For example, we think that politics is the sphere for men. Such a concept is hostage to myths and stereotypes, and the political *modus operandi* that existed during the Soviet occupation. It can be argued conclusively that because the country lacks gender equality as a principle and a law, Estonian society has developed into *kaks Eestit*, and that this harmful gulf can be bridged by the adoption of a gender equality law.

What is to be done?

The principal thing, to my mind, is the political will of those individuals who have the decision-making power. The CEDAW Report's basic message to Estonia's political leaders is to invest more in the education of the general public about the fundamental democratic principle of gender equality. The State budget must allocate increased

funds in support of activities that promote equal opportunities, equal rights, and equal responsibilities. In order for the population to think democratically, it has to understand what it means. Understanding comes through education and practice. I sometimes suspect that our political leaders are not interested in advancing democratic thought, because it would lead to their loss of power over the population. As long as current political stereotypes exist, politicians can act with relative impunity, for they know that the democratic practice of holding them accountable via the ballot box has not yet taken root.

We have succeeded in getting 400,000 kroons for women's organizations included in the 2003 State budget. This is not a large sum. Last spring, when I

began to lobby for increased national support for women's organizational work, I suggested a MINIMUM of 1 million kroons, providing justification for the allocation. In a 40 billion kroon budget, 400,000 is like a drop of water in the ocean. One million is not much more significant. It is important that most of this money reaches the grass roots organizations for their activities. Why? The most effective way for citizens to learn about democracy is by practicing it themselves within guidelines. In order to be able to practice democracy, resources are necessary. Therefore I urge all



Ilvi Jõe-Cannon

* *Kaks Eestit* ("Two Estonias") is the interpretation made in 2001 by a group of Estonian sociologists about the socio-economic conditions in the country which have divided the society into haves and have-nots, with vast numbers falling into the latter.

you representatives of women's organizations across the country to lobby for a share of these funds so that they don't stay in Tallinn. In your workshops discuss this topic thoroughly. Lobbying is part of a democratic political system. ENUT introduced to Estonia's political system in 2002 organizational lobbying of political leaders by twice spearheading women's organizations' lobbying for the adoption of the gender equality law.

Allocation of State resources for the purpose of democratic awareness raising is one thing. Another necessary step – and it would not cost the taxpayer – is for democratic practices to be adopted within the political parties. Although the parties have been criticised for not integrating concepts of gender equality into their structures, and they have been encouraged to do so, the efforts have had hardly any effect.

Tangentially, I would like to add that it would be erroneous to assert that only women are capable of thinking in terms of gender equality and, therefore, women's presence in the political parties would guarantee advancement of gender equality in Estonia. Men are just as capable of thinking in terms of gender equality. However, the concept is still strange, and both men and women, for the most part, have stereotypical views of social and political roles. Hence, it cannot be said that the women prominent in the political arena represent gender equality policies (actually, very few of them do). The regrettable fact is that women are advanced in the political system by male politicians, and, consequently, real power remains in men's hands. Thus most of the women politicians are indistinguishable from the men.

The result of the above described situation is that the last two governments have not passed the gender equality bill drafted over a two year period, which included extensive study of how other European societies went about establishing gender equality, and consultations with experts home and abroad in order to come up with a gender equality law suitable for Estonia on the European Union's threshold. I would add that the present coalition government's agreement does not mention adoption of the gender equality bill.

The male dominated party leadership has produced a list of candidates, to date, for the March *Riigikogu* elections that reflects Prof. Raitviir's assessment in *Politikas osalemine* ("Participating in politics"): "To date, principally men have sat in the party councils and leadership, and their voices have been considerably louder than women's."

Keskerakond was the first to submit its list of candidates for *Riigikogu* elections. Two women are

among the first ten candidates; the next ten include four women; the next thirty have six women listed. Altogether 12 out of 50, or 24%. Practically, no increase in the 1999 *Riigikogu* elections list of candidates, which had 23% women.

Rahvaliid's first twenty candidates include only two women – one in the sixth position and the other in the 19th (10%). Rahvaerakond Mõõdukad has five women among the first fifteen, but three of them are located among the last five (33%). Pro Patria has given the ninth and the eighteenth slots to women among the first twenty candidates (10%). The rest of the political parties mentioned in my analysis have yet to compose their lists.

Were one to make a graphic illustration of the figures mentioned in this presentation, one would see that the closer one gets to a political decision-maker position, the percent of women diminishes. A dramatic example of that would be the case of Eestimaa Rahvaliid whose membership is 59.3% women, yet in its list of candidates only 10% are women among the first 20 candidates, and neither of them are among the first five.

Regardless of which parties come out victorious in the March elections and form a government, gender equality legislation does not look promising, but it must be passed. It must be passed, because it will help to transform our society into a more egalitarian community, it will help to bring an end to *kaks Eestit* under which we suffer and a 500 kroon dole by politicians will not cure. Gender relations are central to our contemporary way of life.

Only if women's organizations and other citizens' organizations pressure the politicians, will the law be passed. I urge you as citizens and voters to look at the deeds of the politicians, and not their rhetoric. Words are cheap. It does matter whom we elect, because those we elect make decisions that affect you and me. I urge all of you here today to work toward the adoption of the gender equality law. Start asking questions of your political representatives locally, regionally and nationally, and start right now. Women, do not allow yourselves to be second class citizens!

* *The paper was read at ENUT's Estonian women's organizations conference, "Active Women", on January 11, 2003.*

Women's businesses in Estonia*

Iris Pettai, researcher: Estonian Open Society Institute

According to the official employment statistics for 2000, 55% of women were employed. Ten years earlier, in 1990, 70% of women were employed. Employment among women has dropped 24%. Employment among men in 2000 was 63%, while ten years earlier the figure was 82%. Thus men's employment has dropped almost as much as women's - 23%. Due to the changes in the labour market, it is very important to increase women's ability to compete and to develop businesses owned by women.

The potential to establish a business is small in Estonia. Only 10% of Estonia's residents see themselves as potential businessmen. Today, only 6% of the population is engaged in private business. There are only 21 businesses per 1000 residents (excluding FIE, i.e., self-employed) in Estonia, while the figure is 52 businesses per 1000 in the European Union. Consequently, the figure is barely half of European Union's.

Micro businesses with up to nine employees are dominant in Estonia (in 2000, they totalled 22 962), and small businesses with 10-49 employees numbered 6311. Businesses employing more than 250 people in Estonia totalled only 177. According to the experts, every third enterprise in Estonia is owned by a woman. Their niche is the mini or small business.

Women's businesses divide into six categories that are traditional for women, and studies show that 68% of the businesswomen are in those categories:

- mercantilism
- cosmetics and beauty treatment
- education
- health and social service

- hotels and catering
- tourism

Only 5% of women living in Estonia are engaged in business, and there are more than three times as many - 18% - as new, potential businesswomen. Unfortunately, it is quite difficult for women to establish their own business. There are many barriers and obstacles to



Iris Pettai at ENUT's conference 12.01.2003

overcome, starting with the lack of basic knowledge how to start a firm and to operate it, a lack of start-up capital, a lack of a market where to sell one's products (services), and the difficulties of combining work and family. At the same time, the development of women's businesses is a realistic solution to reducing unemployment and improving the quality of life. A study conducted by the Estonian Open Society Institute in 2001 showed that families of businesswomen had incomes 2.5 higher than was the average for women in Estonia. Every businesswoman helps to reduce unemployment by creating income for oneself and providing employment for men and other women.

• The paper was read on January 12, 2003 at ENUT's conference "Active Women".

In your opinion, what helps a person in Estonia to become rich?

(in percentages)

	Business women	All women
Business acumen	51	39
Capacity to think cleverly	51	39
A good job	42	54
Unethical business practices (cheating, stealing)	31	35
Thrifty practices	28	22
Hard work	28	16
Black market involvement (bootleg alcohol, drugs, etc.)	27	32
Skill on the stock market	14	18
Collaborating with organized crime	11	20

Source: Eesti Avatud Ühiskonna Instituut 2001.

Why did you decide to start your own business?

(in percentages)

Sense of accomplishment	59
Opportunity to work and earn money	47
Be my own boss	44
Own firm offers new experiences and skills	44
More flexible working hours	43
Financial independence	36
Put good business ideas into practice	33
Lost my job and started own business	26
Can earn profits and dividends	8
Possess power	5

Women's motivations for starting own business.

Source: Eesti Avatud Ühiskonna Instituut 2001.

In your opinion, what are the causes for Estonians' poverty?

(in percentages)

	Business-women	All women
Incapable of adjusting to the market economy	70	46
Unemployment	63	81
Ineptitude and helplessness	48	25
Social injustice	43	57
Alcoholism	42	51
Inevitable result of changes in society	34	26
Laziness	33	24
Bad luck	13	20
Poor health	12	20

Source: Eesti Avatud Ühiskonna Instituut 2001.

Ariadne's Clew – third year.

Anne Lill, Editor-in-Chief

Ariadne's Clew has been on the scene for three years, which is an indication of the need for women's and gender studies in Estonia. The journal has created favourable reactions and polemics. All of them are welcome, in order for "the silent epoch" in feminist themes to end and for society to relate to them with necessary seriousness. It may appear that an academically slanted journal is too distant for women's activities on a practical level. But I think that the objectivity native to scholarship can form the basis for opinion formulations in society.

Ariadne's Clew looks at women's and gender questions from social, ecological, and humanitarian perspectives. We can enhance society's understanding of itself by presenting an aspect which has received very little attention to date. The subject of women has appeared in a variety of studies earlier, but a systematic and comprehensive discourse on feminism is only in a formative stage in Estonia. *Ariadne's Clew* wants to contribute to a balanced and creative acceptance of the subject by society. We have taken the development of a feminist scholarly "language" as our assignment, and we want to make sure that as a discipline it exists in the Estonian language. This is important especially in those areas that are important for society's vitality and existence.

By bringing together people from different disciplines, we have tried to join theoretical analysis with life's practical issues in the journal. The connecting of diverse disciplines occurs by looking at the issues from the feminist perspective. Inevitably, legal and political aspects become tied with social questions, which in turn lead us to more complex philosophical problems. By the same token, we can arrive at the borders of social science, jurisprudence or even medicine by analysing historic or literary themes. We strive to maintain a balance between the humanities and social science disciplines, while including new authors from other disciplines (theology, medicine).

Ariadne's Clew's subjects are numerous in the third volume. The historic, socio-psychological, juridical and

political aspects of women's issues are looked at from the moral and ideological perspectives. Philosophy,



Professor Anne Lill

which was strongly represented in the second volume, is in the background this time. Art, theatre and literature are already traditional themes for *Ariadne's Clew*.

The journal has "Foorum" as a new section. It includes commentaries and reviews. We find here commentaries on women's and men's roles in school textbooks (Jaan Mikk). We learn that Estonian society's conservative separation of gender roles starts already in the textbooks. The same section contains Jaak Kangilaski's commentary on the article about Estonian women artists in the previous volume. We are pleased that such discussion has commenced and hope that it

will grow. I invite all readers to let us know their opinions and criticisms about our journal and articles. The more

comments we receive, the more will discussions on these issues take root in society.

The examination of women's studies and gender relations from different disciplinary viewpoints creates a stronger stage on which society's members can discuss common problems. Despite declarations of liberalism and equality, there exist areas which men and women see and experience differently. The conviction that it is necessary to discuss these problems, thus improving the whole social environment, encourages the people involved with the journal to continue. The journal is open to everybody that has an interest and desire to look at problems from the gender studies perspective.



Volume three of *Ariadne's Clew* became a reality thanks to the support of many, and I would especially like to name the Kingdom of Netherlands'

MATRA-KAP Programme, facilitated by the Netherlands Embassy in Tallinn, the *Democracy Commission* funding, facilitated by the American Embassy in Tallinn, and the Estonian Cultural Endowment Fund. We are also grateful to the Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Centre, Ilvi Jõe-Cannon, Tallinn Pedagogical University, Estonian Literary Museum and everybody else that has given time and energy toward the preparation of *Ariadne's Clew*. I would like to add Eda Sepp to the list, for she was the initiator of the journal, and, of course, all the editors, translators and advisers.

Gender Studies Minor for the Tallinn Pedagogical University

Liina Järviste, Project leader

Women's and gender studies have become a minor field of study in academia world-wide in the past 30 years. Estonian universities have included the theme in some courses in the past five years. However, no regular programme has been offered to date. Due to increased interest, ENUT began to explore the possibility in the spring 2002 of creating a gender studies minor to be offered at the Tallinn Pedagogical University.

ENUT would be a logical party for initiating such a programme. ENUT has the only library of women's and gender literature in Estonia. ENUT has published

the scholarly gender studies journal, *Ariadne's Clew*, for the past three years. ENUT's activities have developed a strong network of interested parties, including collaboration with most of the people involved with women's and gender studies in Estonia.

A draft proposal for a gender studies minor was presented in the summer, 2002, to Mati Heidmets, the university rector, and he reacted positively. In the fall, more detailed discussions were started with the university. Also, a group of scholars working in that field were brought together, and they have formed an "academic collegium" which functions in an advisory capacity.

The gender studies minor would be especially useful for future governmental officials, politicians, educators, and social workers. It would consist of four



Sociologist Leeni Hansson, literature scholar Tiina Aunin, psychologist Voldemar Kolga, gender studies scholar Barbi Pilvre, philosophy student Kadri Simm

mandatory courses and one elective. The mandatory courses would include Introduction, state/society relations, gender in psychology and education, and different humanities/science themes. Among the electives would be feminist media, political theory, violence and human rights, and questions touching health and gender.

The lecturers would be recognised teachers in their field and the gender students that have done advanced studies abroad.

The program will be presented at the end of January for acceptance by the university's sociology department. By March, we should know whether the university will include it in its curriculum.



Sociologists Tiina Raitviir, Marion Pajumets, Iris Pettai and literary scholar Mirjam Hinrikus

ENUT's Major Projects in 2002

Leen Kadakas and Marion Pajumets, project leaders

ENUT's work in 2002 consisted of three major projects. The first one, which began in January, was the Baltic Women's Information Centres Cooperation Project, funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The project was led by the Women's Issues Centre located in Lithuania, and partners were Coalition for Gender Equality in Latvia and ENUT.

Baltic Women's Information Centres Cooperation Project

The aim of the project was to establish and develop collaboration among women's information centres in the

If accepted, the minor would be offered in the fall. Questionnaires completed by students give cause to believe that interest in a gender studies minor is sufficiently great.

The creation of such a minor shows that the Estonian society and academic life are beginning to catch up with the thinking in much of the rest of the world. ENUT thanks everybody that has helped with the drafting of the programme. Also, we are grateful to the UN Population Programme, which helped finance the development of the gender studies minor programme.

Baltic states, to strengthen networking among women's organisations, and to start different collective activities with the Nordic countries. In that context, ENUT pursued several activities: IT training for women, working with women's organisations, holding roundtable discussions, enhancing ENUT's website.

Women's organisations e-mail list

An important activity was the establishment of the women's organisations e-mail list, its administration and introduction to potentially interested parties. It was set up at the end of 2001 and the initial, broader introduction occurred at the ENUT organised seminar "From global to local, local to global" on January 12-13, 2002. The list acts as a forum in which women

living in different regions of the country can quickly exchange views and opinions on common problems. Also, women's organisations receive through the list information about training possibilities, seminars and roundtables on women's and gender topics.

Within the framework of this project, three of our staff members visited, in October, two women's and gender information centres in Sweden, the Women's History Collection at Gothenburg University and the Swedish government funded Swedish Secretariat for Gender Studies.

Gender Information via Internet

The budget for the Baltic Information Centre Cooperation Project was quite limited and in the summer, ENUT applied for another grant in order to continue with the activities started at the beginning of the year and expand on others.

The second project basically emphasised introduction and dissemination of gender topics via Internet. Thanks to the Norwegian Foreign Ministry's Plan of Action for Candidate Countries to the EU, ENUT received project funding under that programme.

All of ENUT's activities within the framework of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry funded project were for the purpose of making information concerning women's condition and their activities more accessible.

Computer training

Estonia is a changing society in which possession and distribution of information determine a person's ability to influence social development. In order for Estonian women to influence decisions that affect them, it is necessary to increase their opportunity of access to information. It enhances their self-confidence and belief in managing for themselves. Unfortunately, there are many middle-aged women in Estonia and those that live in outlying districts who have had to date very little opportunity to come into contact with a necessary instrument in today's workplace - the computer. In order to improve the situation as much as it can, ENUT held,

within the Norwegian Foreign Ministry funded project framework, as a continuation of the Baltic Information Centre Cooperative Project, monthly intensive training courses on the fundamentals of computer use for such women.



Berith Backlund introduces the electronic information services of Swedish Women's History Collection

ENUT library books in ELNET electronic catalogue

The other important step in improving access to women's and gender subject sources is the reorganisation of ENUT library. In the process, our books will be listed in the all-Estonia electronic library catalogue ELNET. The catalogue can be found at www.elnet.ee

To date, about a fifth of our books, of which there are over 2,500, have been posted in the ELNET catalogue. When the process is completed in March 2003, ENUT's books can be found in all the larger Estonian libraries' catalogues. On one hand, it increases ENUT's public profile, but on the other, it gives recognition to gender questions as a serious topic. *ENUT News*, which is issued in Estonian and English, aims to do the same.

ENUT continued the administration of the women's organizations e-mail list within the framework of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry's grant.

Gender Studies Database

To date, an overview of academic gender research in Estonia is lacking. At the same time, interest in such research being done in Estonia has been increasing in recent years. To fill the void, ENUT began, under the Norwegian Foreign Ministry's grant, to collect research done on women's and gender topics in Estonian universities. The collected material will be posted in an electronic database, accessible to all via ENUT's home page.

In connection with the creation of this database, ENUT asks for information about women's and gender related research done by university graduates, and master's and doctoral dissertations in Estonia.

Home page

Under the Norwegian Foreign Ministry's grant, ENUT updated its home page in order to serve more effectively those that seek information about women, and to enlarge



ENUT staff at seminar in October 2002.

its audience. The aim of the home page is to inform the public of ENUT's activities and the developments around it. Development of the home page is a continuous process that has as its aim to meet the needs of its readers. Comments by our home page users are very important to us. With that in mind, we welcome the opinions and



Nina Kristiansen from gender information centre Kilden from Norway, Leen Kadakas from ENUT and Berith Backlund from Swedish Women's History Collection at the seminar in October 2002.

requests of all our home page users by e-mailing to us at: enut@tpu.ee

For the improvement and increased use of our website, ENUT staff and their Baltic colleagues in the Baltic Information Centre Cooperation Project were trained in the fall by Nina Kirstiansen, director of KILDEN, the Norwegian information centre, and by Berith Backlund, staff member of Women's History Collection.

The Baltic Information Centre Cooperation Project ended in 2002, but it was continued for 2003, having the Coalition for Gender Equality in Latvia as its leader and the Women's Issues Information Centre in Lithuania and ENUT as the partners.

The project funded by the Norwegian Foreign Ministry runs until March of this year.

Ariadne's Clew,

III volume

The third major project for the year was the publication of the interdisciplinary gender studies journal, *Ariadne Lõng* (Ariadne's Clew). Please see the separate article on this topic on page 8.

ENUT participates in international women's training project

Katri Eespere, Project leader

Since 2002, ENUT has participated in the international project "European Network of Adult Education Organisations Working on Women's Employment Issues", funded by the European Commission's *Socrates* programme.

The project aims to establish, over a three-year period, the European Network of Adult Education Organisations for the purpose of providing non-formal education for unemployed and economically disadvantaged women. It is designed to promote better co-operation and understanding among the adult education organisations in Europe working with women's employment issues, and to develop a Mobility Training Programme with lifelong learning perspective to foster active citizenship, increase self-esteem and enhance employability for women.

During its first year, eight partner organisations from six countries (Lithuania, Finland, Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland) created the activities programme for the network, exchanged practical experiences, and developed an Open Distance learning model for the women. The project's emphasis during the year was on identifying individual needs, offering training activities, developing services, and advising network members of the project's results. Also, the website was set up: www.women-employment.lt

During the second year, the network expanded by including adult education organisations in Spain and Hungary. The Mobility Training Programme was translated into member countries' languages, and the English language Open Distance Learning was created, which includes CD-ROMs and a video collection.

ENUT and the Estonian organisation, Women's Training Centre (WTC), joined the project during its third year, by which time most of the methodological materials had been readied. During the year, ENUT and WTC translated all the training literature into Estonian. Now the information is easily available and accessible for Estonia's unemployed and economically disadvantaged women. Seminars were held for instructors, using the translated literature, and its strong or weak aspects were pointed out.

Same year, a brochure on women's rights was produced. It addressed many areas, ranging from

discrimination in the workplace to stereotypes prevalent about gender. ENUT compiled the section on women in politics that included an overview of the difficulties that prevent women from being more active in politics and, also, it introduced recognised women in politics.



Katri Eespere

In the project, ENUT collaborates with WTC in Tallinn as well as the project's co-ordinating organisation, Social Innovation Fund (SIF), located in Vilnius. WTC is a non-profit organisation engaged chiefly in organising training and seminars in different subject areas, and during its ten years of operation more than 7000 women across Estonia have participated.

SIF is a non-governmental organisation whose main area of activity is to assist unemployed and economically disadvantaged women. SIF assists them by providing information, training opportunities and counselling. In addition, SIF promotes gender equality and human rights, combats discrimination against women and unequal pay.

Besides the two mentioned organisations, ENUT has developed good contacts with the other organisations participating in the project and this gives reason to hope for continued collaboration in the future.

Estonia has to submit a Social Charter Report

Merle Malvet, Director of the Social Security and Benefits Department, Social Affairs Ministry

Estonia ratified the revised and expanded European Social Charter in May 2000. The first Report on Compliance with the Social Charter has to be submitted to the European Council by June 30, 2003. The Report covers the years 2001-2002. The independent experts assessment of the Report will show whether Estonia has complied with the international obligations to which she has agreed.

In significance, the Social Charter is next to the European Council Convention on Human Rights and Basic Freedoms for its spectrum of economic and social rights. In many respects it is comparable to the UN pact on economic, social and cultural rights, but the latter contains more limited rights (a total of nine) and lower standards (gradual implementation is permitted).

The revised and expanded European Social Charter contains 31 rights. For most of the rights, gradual implementation is missing; they have to be guaranteed already from the start of the reporting period. In case of noncompliance, albeit movement toward it is occurring, the country is rated as being not in compliance. In this respect, the Social Charter articles on gender equality differ from the other international ones agreed to by Estonia - the articles have to be implemented, it is not enough to promote them.

It was important for Estonia for reasons of internal and foreign policies to ratify the revised and

expanded Social Charter. Internally, it meant, on one hand, that the named rights are guaranteed to all, and on the other hand, the State cannot lower the existing standards (often higher). The protected rights are extensive and their implementation guarantees the individual rather high standards of social protection. In isolated cases, compliance may not protect everybody sufficiently. From the perspective of internal policies, it was also important to show that meeting of standards is within our capacity.

Also, in terms of foreign policy the ratification was important. With it we sent a clear message abroad that the social situation in Estonia meets at least the minimum European social protection standards. It was possible to ratify an earlier version of the Social Charter, which many central and eastern European countries did - Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Latvia. By ratifying the revised and expanded Social Charter we indicated that the building of Estonia's social security system followed contemporary and more demanding social protection standards. Although the document is European Council's, the European Union considered its ratification essential - one can surmise that it was one of the reasons why the social policy chapter met rapid closing.

It should be mentioned that few years ago it was debated whether to ratify the articles on gender equality. In my opinion, the occasion brought gender equality issues to the public attention and that was more significant that the issue of ratifying more articles than the government initially suggested. That prepared the ground for more steps toward guaranteeing gender equality. Whether we have kept our word with our ratification becomes clear in the near future.

The European Council Social Charter and Gender Equality

Käthlin Sander, Legal counsel to the Equal Rights Bureau of the Social Affairs Ministry

Estonia ratified several of the articles directly concerned with gender equality in the the revised and expanded Social Charter of the European Council. Herein, I will give a brief overview of them.

For example, Article 4.3 of the Social Charter obliges the State to recognise the right of men and women

workers to receive equal pay for equal work. Article 8 addresses the maternity rights of working women. Under Article 10.2, Estonia is obliged to create or promote a training system on the work site for young men and women, in addition to other systematic training. Article 20 addresses the individual's right, regardless of gender, to equal opportunity and to equal treatment at the workplace and profession. Article 27 is also important, for it protects the rights of workers with family obligations to have equal opportunity and treatment with other workers.

It should be noted that a general prohibition of discrimination against all the rights mentioned in the

Charter is included. Concerning gender equality, the most basic, and in some respects, also the most important is Article 20. Concerning that Article, many questions will have to be answered at the Report presentation. They concern, among other things, access to employment, protection against being fired, reintegration

vocationally, availability of vocational counselling, vocational training, retraining and rehabilitation, work relations and conditions, opportunities for careers and promotion.

The Social Charter compliance report requires answers to the questions whether an employee has defence available against an employer in cases where an

employee decides to insist on his rights. The State is also expected to answer questions regarding the assistance available to an individual in advance of his seeking recourse to his grievances in court. It is also necessary to submit information on the state legal system's verification system, or to put it another way, who determines that discrimination occurred, or did not occur. The Charter's oversight bodies consider the

measures implemented by the State to prevent discrimination against women very important (especially, when pregnancy is involved) and whether the adoption of positive measures for the benefit of one gender exists, in order to end prevailing inequality.

ACTIVITIES

Third Baltic Sea Women's Conference on WoMen and Democracy

The conference will be held on 13-14 February 2003 Tallinn in the Sakala Centre. The main organiser of the Conference is the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia. ENUT also takes part in the organisational work.

About 600 representatives of the public institutions, the research community and non-governmental organisations of the Baltic States, Nordic countries, Russia, Poland, Germany and the USA are expected to attend the conference. The patron of the Conference is the First Lady of Estonia Mrs Ingrid Rüütel.

The conference is conceived as a follow-up to the 2nd Conference on WoMen and Democracy, held in Vilnius, June 2001, and the 2nd Baltic Sea Women's Conference, held in Helsinki, March 2000.

The aim of the Conference is to encourage the dialogue between politicians, researchers, civil servants, NGOs and other experts in the field of gender equality. The Conference will lead to closer cooperation between the participants and facilitate new important initiatives to empower women and to increasingly bring them into the mainstream of development.

The Conference will discuss key issues related to the full voiced participation of women and men in the democratic processes addressing the following four main topics:

1. women in power and decision-making
2. women and the economy
3. violence against women
4. women and the media

The Conference will be held in three languages - Estonian, English and Russian.

Final seminar on trafficking topic

The final seminar of the Nordic and Baltic countries' campaign in Estonia against trafficking in women and children will be held in Tallinn on March 10. The seminar is organised by ENUT. The different sociological studies and educational projects carried out since June 2002 will be presented at the seminar. The aims of the projects, how they were conducted and their results, will be discussed. The readiness of those studied and educated to collaborate in the fight against prostitution and trafficking in human beings and to have new, gender sensitive views will be assessed.

The relevance of the trafficking in human beings and prostitution issue in the Nordic and Baltic countries is underlined by the prominent speakers at the seminar. Thomas Christensen, Director of the Nordic Council of

Minister, and Siiri Oviir, Estonia's Social Affairs Minister, are among the speakers. Representatives from Estonia's coalition government and county governments, foreign embassies and the press are also invited.

In addition to the analysis of what has been done during the Nordic and Baltic countries' campaign, the seminar will lay out the directions for the course to follow hereafter in the fight against trafficking in women and children.

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