> **"*Woman in Modern Society Internationally and in Cyprus: Personality and Factors of Success*"**

Publication, Nicosia - October 2008

Equal rights include the right to fully participate in all aspects of life: Political, social, financial, cultural. The right to full participation in public life, authority and decision making centres.
Women hold half the stock of talent and ability of humankind. As long as they do not equally participate in public life as men, politics and the society become poorer[1].

Curriculum Vitae for Anna Pilavaki

Anna Pilavaki was born in Limassol in 1960. She studied Public Administration at the Panteio University and followed post-graduate studies on gender equality issues at the Aegean University in Rhodes.

She has been working for DEOK since 1984 and holds the position of Deputy General Secretary since 1997.

She represents DEOK in various tripartite bodies and is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Mechanism for Women's Rights and the Committee on Gender Equality in Employment and Vocational Training.

She furthermore represents DEOK in seminars and congresses in Cyprus and abroad on various issues, including equality among men and women and the lifting of all kinds of discrimination in the workplace.

---

[1] http://www.kethi.gr/greek/ypopsifies_eklogon/kethi_gr/Documents/Filadio_euroekloges.htm)

She has written two guides concerning equal pay for work of equal value between men and women and sexual harassment, titled "Equal pay worldwide and in Cyprus" and "Sexual harassment in the workplace".

In 2003, the Central Council of DEOK appointed her Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of the Cyprus Gender Equality Observatory - CGEO.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

I consider it my obligation and duty to warmly thank the Unit of the European Social Fund in Cyprus for accepting the proposal of the Board of Directors of ELANI of the project "Open Doors" to fund this publication, in the context of implementing Action III of CI EQUAL in Cyprus. A study which, I believe, adds value to the delivered work of this action.

I also express gratitude to the Board of Directors of ELANI, with the coordinating partner being the Cyprus Gender Equality Observatory - CGEO, for their faith in my person and in this study.

The study, recording on a theoretical and research level the course, characteristics and factors of success of classic examples in the public sphere of Cypriot women, highlights the problem of reconciling the family and work as the most important obstacle for the entry, stay and advancement of women in the Cypriot labour market and in the society in general.

I hope that this study, by recording an existing situation that maintains and perpetuates stereotypes and notions for different social roles for men and women within the family, work, politics and the society in general, will provide a reason to improve the current situation that is working against Cypriot women and marginalising them.

In this direction, political parties, trade unions and employers' organisations are involved and can help, but the governments can also play a role, through their policies and by monitoring the results and the consequences these policies have on women.

The time has come and the conditions are right, I believe, to pass from theory into action and from wishes to practical results.

I note that the part of the study recording the methodology followed has been omitted, along with a few annexes that would exhaust the readers.

I finally warmly thank my friend, the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance, Soteroulla Charalambous for the time she spent to write a prologue for this publication, and my colleague and close associate, the General Secretary of DEOK, Diomedis Diomedous for his prologue and for all the support and assistance he offered me to conclude this study.

Anna Pilavaki

Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of CGEO
Deputy General Secretary of DEOK
September 2008

Prologue by Minister of Labour and Social Insurance Mrs. Soteroulla Charalambous

It was with pleasure that I accepted to write a prologue for the diploma project of Anna Pilavaki, which was carried out in the framework of the post-graduate study programme "Genders and New Training and Work Environments in the Information Society".

With her diploma project, Anna Pilavaki is submitting her own contribution to a significant effort, which began a few years ago in Cyprus by university institutions, organisations and individuals to develop a research and written work on the issue of gender discrimination.

This is an especially important and necessary effort to detect the causes of gender discrimination and to record the course of women in Cyprus for equality and emancipation, and for drafting the necessary policies to combat discrimination and especially policies that will overturn inequality in the chapter of women's participation in the public and political life.

Anna's contribution, beyond its scientific and practical importance, has a particularity, which, as an individual who knows the writer for many years, I feel the need to underline.

This diploma project is not the work of a researcher, who is academically dealing with the issue. It is the result of a personal active participation in the trade union movement, and especially in the department dealing with gender discrimination among men and women.

Anna Pilavaki's diploma work combines scientific research and study with on site knowledge and a huge personal effort to combine the roles of a working and socially conscious active woman who is participating in public life, the mother, the wife and the researcher. This is exactly the reason why this study is worth consideration.

The issue Anna Pilavaki is dealing with in her diploma work, i.e. the participation of women in the public and political life, is an issue which, over the past years, is becoming dominant in the action of the women's movement and at the same time is on the front line of policy priorities on a European and local level. The course Anna is following in her project is finding the causes and reasons leading to the under-representation of women in decision making centres, as well as the factors that can reverse the current situation with the carrying out of a quality study, which determines and analyses the course of Cypriot women in key positions.

Concluding this short prologue, I would like to underline that which for years now I have been considering a cornerstone in the effort of the Cypriot society and the components of this society for the equal participation of men and women in all aspects of public and political life.

We need a strong political commitment, an adequate and effective legal framework, coordinated actions to combat the stereotypes and prejudice, and a strong network of services and policies that will address the chapter of reconciling work, family and social participation.

My commitment as Minister of Labour and Social Insurance is that I will continue to work so that the chain I have described above will become reality.

I once again congratulate Anna for her diploma work and I am certain that the scientific knowledge she acquired will make even stronger her personal commitment to the struggle to combat discrimination against women.

PROLOGUE BY GENERAL SECRETARY OF DEOK DIOMEDIS DIOMEDOUS

There are times and developments that give us the feeling and indication that the societies, the fate of the people comprising them, are improving and advancing due to the continuous and tireless efforts of some special people. I consider the new publication of Mrs. Anna Pilavaki Achilleos titled ***"Woman in Modern Society Internationally and in Cyprus: Personality and Factors of Success"*** as such a moment.

The publication is the result of deep investigation of the longstanding course of women to reaffirm their equal role and participation in the Cypriot society. A course characterised by immeasurable challenges and obstacles and which worthy, enlightened and inspired female personalities have taken and are still taken, however, in order to be correct and fair, a whole local, regional and international movement that has fought and is fighting for equality and equal opportunities between men and women.

The particularity and, by my personal assessment, added value of the new written work of Anna Pilavaki is due to the fact that for the first time the sketching of the profile and the personality of the Cypriot woman, who steps forward in the struggle for a fair society, especially a society that respects, supports and implements equality of women and men, has been attempted with success. The study shows the internal psychology and dynamism that led and is leading women to a struggling and demanding life for success in the family, professional, social and political career in a depressingly male dominant world and societies, including the Cypriot society.

Furthermore, this publication deals with and presents important external factors that make up and contribute to the development and creation of a strong personality for a woman. A personality that leads them to decisive self-commitment to want and seek on a daily basis to change the world, to break the establishment, to give the chance to justice and solidarity for every woman and the society in general.

This publication is pursuing a significant first in the fact that its description and conclusions concern Cypriot female classic personalities. Thus it comes to give the necessary importance and value to the need for research and written work on the course of Cypriot women in life and the history of our country from a new dimension, from the dimension and point of view of a woman who, fighting and travelling rough paths, reaches recognition and acknowledgement.

The study and publication of Anna Pilavaki of course contains and expresses, without a conscious or predisposed effort, the dynamism and personality she herself has. Moreover, however, it is obvious that the objective approach of her study does not cover her personal dedication and continuous determination to promote the position of women as equal to that of men in the modern society of Cyprus, inter alia.

I believe that this study is not just a writing pursuit for Anna Pilavaki but aimed and achieved to create yet another tool in the promotion of equality and equal opportunities for women. It is a wholly academic project which I am sure every reader, especially women, to study it will obtain new knowledge. The knowledge of what is needed for a woman to succeed small or great things in life. As well as the knowledge of how things change and roads open up when there is constant determination.

Closing my short prologue, allow me to express the joy and satisfaction of DEOK and all those of us who have the opportunity to have been associates of Anna Pilavaki in this new remarkable project.

CONTENTS

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTORY NOTE

PROLOGUE BY MINISTER OF LABOUR

PROLOGUE BY GENERAL SECRETARY OF DEOK

THANKS

The writing of a diploma work is an interesting but also hard involvement of the author with the subject at hand. This effort demands missing many daily joys, the family and the active physical presence for a long time...

The moral and psychological support both from my husband and my two children was thankfully given, despite their justified discontentment, at times, especially during holidays. I warmly thank them for their understanding and support.

I owe warm thanks to the leadership of my organisation, DEOK, for giving me the opportunity to be away for as long as it took to attend meetings and dedicate myself more to finishing this project.

I admit that in this course I was lucky because I had close, constant and constructive cooperation from the member of the three-member examining committee, Dr. Marios Vryonides, to whom I owe warm thanks for his guidance and assistance. Without his moral, psychological and academic help I would not have this result.

I also owe warm thanks to all my friends and fellow travellers, who gladly accepted to give me interviews and share with me their personal experience, and who with sincerity expressed their positions and views on the subject of the study. It was a unique experience for me and it gave me the opportunity to come closer to them and discuss very personal issues.

Limassol, April 2007

SUMMARY

Equality between men and women is a longstanding demand of women's organisations since the 19th century and, despite the significant progress made in this sector, full gender equality in all sectors of the society has not yet been achieved.

Many studies over the past few years focus on the discrimination against women, for example political, employment, trade union, economic, education, and gender discrimination within the family itself, which are obstacles to the advancement of women in the public life.

This research effort attempts to sketch the profile of Cypriot women who hold key positions in the Cypriot society. At the same time its aims at presenting the causes of the disadvantaged position of Cypriot women compared to men, and their under-representation and presence in the political and public life of Cyprus.

It also aims at recording the prospects to change the current situation and bring to the surface those factors which allowed certain Greek Cypriot women to hold "key positions" and advance in the public sphere equally to men. At the same time there is an in depth investigation of the reasons that led them to become actively involved in their sectors and the obstacles they faced and continue to face in promoting gender equality issues. The opportunities given to them compared to men in work, politics, public life and the society in general are recorded, as well as their differentiation compared to the other (non privileged) women who are at a disadvantaged position.

Furthermore, an effort is made to determine and present the causes and factors that seem to form or adversely affect the equal promotion of women in the Cypriot society.

The results that the specific phenomenon appears to have on the family and professional life, as well as the socioeconomic and political advancement of women, are recorded, as well as comparative results of the Cypriot reality compared to the European and international sphere.

Furthermore, proposals are made to tackle the inequalities and problems in the family and professional life and the advancement of women, and proposals to solve problems and lift barriers with an aim to improve the current situation.

Finally, women friendly policies and measures are proposed in the public and political life of Cyprus, with an aim to encourage the active participation of more women in gender equality issues and the Cypriot society in general.

LIST OF ABBRIEVIATIONS

NGO: Non Governmental Organisation

EU: European Union

UN: United Nations

CEDAW: UN Convention on the Eradication of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women

RCEI: Research Centre for Equality Issues in Greece

MM: Mass media

NAPE: National Action Plan for Equality

CGEO: Cyprus Gender Equality Observatory

ETUC: European Trade Union Confederation

ICFTU: International Confederation of Free Trade Unions

GEM: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor

HSA: United States of America

EHRC: European Human Rights Convention

ILO: International Labour Organization

WLO: World Labour Organisation

OEV: Employers and Industrialists Federation

CWDI: Corporate Women Directors International

SRA: Social Research Association

GLOSSARY OF TERMS CONCERNING THE SOCIAL GENDER[2]

Invisible barriers: The behaviour and underlying traditional notions, rules and values obstructing the strengthening and full participation of women in the society.

Glass ceiling: The invisible barrier which emanates from a complex group of structures in organisations / businesses where men are dominant and resulting in the obstruction of women being appointed to senior positions.

Gender dimension: The dimension of every matter that has to do with the gender / with the differences in the life of men and women.

Wage gap between two genders: The existing differences between the salaries of men and women due to professional separation and direct discrimination due to the gender and not the value of the work.

Evaluation of the consequences of a policy depending on the gender: The examination of the proposals of a policy to determine if it will affect women and men in a different way, with an aim to adapt them in order to eradicate any incidents of discriminatory treatment and promote gender equality.

Control regarding the gender: The analysis and evaluation of policies, programmes and institutions regarding the degree to which they implement certain criteria that have to do with the gender.

Indirect discrimination due to gender: The situation in which a seemingly neutral law, regulation, policy or practice has disproportionate consequences on the members of a gender, unless the different treatment is justified by objective factors (Directive 76/207 of the Council of the 9th of February 1976, EE L 39).

---

[2] Glossary of terms on the social gender based on a relevant publication of the European Commission http://www.kethi.gr/greek/ekpaidefsi/epeaek/askhseis_oktovriou.pdf

Strengthening: The way to obtain access to resources and for the development of the skills of a person aiming at the person's active participation in forming the conditions of his life and the life of the community in which he lives from a financial, social and political point of view.

Eradication of differentiation in the labour market: Policies which aim at reducing or eradicating (vertical/horizontal) professional differentiations due to gender in the labour market.

Professional differentiation: The gathering of men and women in different forms of activities and work, with women being restricted to a narrower choice of professions (horizontal differentiation) than men and in lower positions of the hierarchy (vertical differentiation).

Verification regarding the incorporation of the gender dimension: Checking every policy proposal in order to avoid possible discriminatory treatment which the exercising of a specific policy could lead to and the safeguarding of gender equality.

Positive actions: Measures addressing at a specific group with an aim to eradicate and prevent discrimination of the under-represented gender or balancing the disadvantaged position, in which members of the group could find themselves due to the life stance, the treatment or the structures prevailing (sometimes called positive discrimination).

Equal opportunities for men and women: The equal treatment of men and women and the absence of barriers based on gender regarding economic, political and social participation.

Equal pay for work of equal value: Equal pay for work given equal value without discrimination due to gender or family status, concerning all aspects of the amount and conditions of pay.

Balanced participation of women and men: The allocation of positions of authority and decision making (40-60% representation irrespective of gender) between men and women in all sectors of life, which is a significant precondition for equality between men and women (recommendation 96/694/EC of the Council of the 2nd of December 1996, EE L 319).

Gender equality: This concept expresses the fact that all people are free to develop their personal skills and make choices without the barriers placed by predetermined gender roles and that the different behaviours, pursuits and needs of women and men are considered, appreciated and favoured equally.

Gender parity: The fair treatment of men and women, which can be equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered of equal value regarding rights, obligations and opportunities.

Gender view: The examination and determination of the differences due to gender, which may exist in any given activity/sector of policy implementation.

Quota: Predetermined percentage or share of positions, posts or available resources covered by a specific group or given to it, usually based on certain criteria or regulations and aiming at mending a previous inequality. Usually implemented in decision making positions or access to training or work positions.

Men's roles: A group of stereotypes regarding the activity and behaviour of men and women, recorded and maintained in a manner described in the term "Gender social contract".

Statistics by gender: The gathering and separation of data and statistics by gender in order to make a comparative analysis (the data is sometimes called gender data).

Gender data: The gathering and separation of statistical data and information by gender and their comparative analysis based on the gender.

Combination of professional and family life: The introduction of systems for parental leave of leave for family reasons, regulations for the care of children and the elderly, and the development of a structure and organisation of the work environment, which facilitate the combination of professional obligations and the obligations emanating from the family and the household for women and men.

Planning incorporating the gender dimension: Active approach of planning based on the gender - with a social concept - as a basic parameter or criterion, pursuing the clear incorporation of the gender dimension in every policy or action.

Gender relations: The relation and unequal distribution of authority between women and men, which characterises any specific system based on gender.

Gender (biological): The biological characteristics based on which people are separated into men and women.

Gender (social): Concept which refers to the social differences, in contrast to the biological differences, between women and men, which have been taught and may be transformed over time, presenting broad fluctuations both within and between the various cultural notions cultivated through concepts, prejudices, stereotypes and attitude.

INTRODUCTION

This study is the diploma work of the author, which was carried out in the framework of the Post-Graduate Studies Programme (PGSP) "Gender and New Educational and Working Environments in the Information Society" of 2007. The topic chosen is incorporated in the basic sectors of the specific PGSP and has not been a subject of research in Cypriot society in the past. Furthermore, it is included in the personal scientific interests of the author due to her professional capacity and her continuous dealing with gender equality issues for lifting existing discrimination against women.

Over the past few years, gender equality issues hold a leading position in European strategies and encourage the EU member states to work substantively and practically to promote them. However, the issue of equality between men and women is quite complex, since it appears that it is not enough to adopt a pioneering legal framework, but great effort is also needed to change the attitude, concepts and stereotypes perpetuating the problem and consequently the inequalities between the two genders.

The obstacles women face in their effort to advance and succeed in a traditionally male position, to reconcile their family and professional responsibilities, and to be promoted and become visible in the public life of the society in which they live, have been investigated scientifically with quantitative methods, some of which are included in this part (e.g. Crampton & Mishra, 1999). However, how some women, a small minority of half the population, managed to stand apart in the public life of Cyprus has not yet been examined. Carrying out a qualitative research was ideal to determine and analyse the personal special features of the character of these women, as well as their experience and notions regarding gender equality issues. To this end, ten women holding key position sin the public life of Cyprus were picked, and through personal interviews an effort was made to extract as much information as possible to give an answer to the main question, but also to determine and

record the factors that affect - obstruct or facilitate - the advancement of women in key positions in the Cypriot society, and also to record possible proposals for future research activities.

This project is structured in three parts, separated by subtitles. The first part is separated into four chapters. The first chapter gives a short history of the women's movement and then records the current position of women concerning politics. The second chapter presents the position of women in the trade union movement, the third chapter concerns the entrepreneurship and the fourth work. Through the study of books listed in the bibliography, the problems faced by women in their effort to reconcile family and professional responsibilities are recorded. All the chapters of the first unit, apart from the third, record the status of Cypriot women, women in other European countries and women worldwide. The third chapter focuses on the status of the Cypriot woman through time from the period of British colonial rule to date.

The second part of the study presents the results of the research process. The first chapter gives a short introduction and the second a reference to the demographic characteristics of the sample. The third presents the experiences of the women of the sample since childhood, through all levels of education, their professional career, the leading model they adopt and their family responsibilities. At the same time an evaluation of their contribution is made by the women themselves. The fourth chapter presents the experience of the women through all levels of education concerning the notions and stereotypes on the roles of the two genders, as they experienced it. The fifth chapter presents the position of women and the role of women's organisations, the masters (government and state officers) and the role of the political parties. The sixth chapter records the current reality, as understood by the women participating. The views, convictions and attitudes prevailing in the Cypriot society, according to what the women said, are presented in the fifth chapter. The sixth records the future prospects for gender equality in Cyprus, according to the views of the women. The seventh and last chapter of this unit describes the profile of the women. Which factors and characteristics helped and contributed so that these

women could overcome the problems they faced due to their gender and how they managed to combine family and work.

The third part of the study discusses the findings of the research and determines issues for further study. Also, this part summarises the conclusions of the research.

Finally, the annexes of the study include: a table with the demographic characteristics of the women that participated in the research (Annex I), and a table with the common or similar factors that affected their profile (Annex II).

PART I: A HISTORY OF THE COURSE OF WOMEN IN THE POLITICAL-ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE YESTERDAY AND TODAY

1. Introduction

The course of women for equal presence and participation with men in all sectors of the social, political and financial life was and continues to be a difficult task. Social, political and economic factors seem to be the obstacles women meet in an effort to advance in any sector they wish and feel they can contribute. Through the books listed in the bibliography, the effort of women to exit the private and enter the public sphere is recorded, along with the obstacles they meet in this effort. In all sectors of this part, apart from the last one, a historical presentation of the position of women in Cyprus, Europe and internationally is made, concerning politics, the trade union movement, work and entrepreneurship. The last chapter gives a historical presentation of the status of Cypriot women since British colonial rule to date.

2. Women in the private and public sphere

> "As long as the 'feminine' is contemptuously identified with the private sphere, democracy will have a male gender. And the overturning of this situation includes not just the involvement of more women in positions of authority but mainly the lifting of the contempt of the 'private' and the spherical management of all the social problems by men and women, a development that promises the liberation and richer development of men as well and participation irrespective of gender" (Pantelidou-Malouta (2002).

According to the same author, during the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, women organised movements, demanding rights and to a great degree succeeded. However, they were the so called civil and political rights. At that time, women in most countries, even in the "homelands" of democracy and human rights, could not acquire or manage property, study,

exercise certain professions and have political activity, i.e. they were treated as if they were not citizens or subjects of law. The second important moment of the women's movement came about at the beginning of the 1960s. At that time the mass entry of women into the public sphere had occurred, which was made possible through social restructuring and gradual legislative reforms. Women now work, are active in trade unions and political parties, and enter universities. However, at the same time the legislation of many countries continues to include the so called "theory of separated spheres". It is considered that the public sphere rightfully belongs to men and the constitutionally safeguarded rights are exclusively male. The public activity of women is not banned but it is considered necessary to be harmonised with their obligations in the private sphere, i.e. they should not put the unity of the family at risk, taking the women away from their "main" duties. In the context of this theory, the "natural" position of women is restricted to the private sphere, where they must act as mothers and wives. In the private sphere, men can exercise the "privileges" of the head of the family. Consequently, the legal-state control in the private sphere should be extremely restricted in order to avoid touching the holy and sacred of the privacy associated with male dominance (Pantelidou-Malouta, 2002).

In the 1970s, the feminist theory of radical[3] feminism evolved with the view that the contemporary society and its structures (laws, religion, politics etc) are basic products of men and thus have a patriarchal character. They believed that the best solution to replace patriarchy was a civilisation fair to both genders. Marxist feminists believe the gender inequality is determined by the capitalist way of production and the social class differentiation (Goldstein,2001).

Right after this, Marxist feminism evolved, which believed that capitalism caused the differentiation of the public and private sphere. The examination of women's employment led the Marxists to the conclusion that housework was not so important and that it why it is downgraded by the capitalist system. The idealisation of the family hid the real authority relationship between the private

---

[3] Radical feminism, Taken from "http://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/ on 21/4/07

and public sphere and turned women and children into the property of men (Steans and Pettiford, 2003).

In the mid 1980s, socialist[4] feminism appeared, which emanated from the Marxist theory with the radical feminist views and at the same time sought the class and female liberation. They believe that the personal is political and dismiss the differentiation public-private. They tried to expand the concept of materialism with the consequences on women of the term "unproductive functions" of women (sexuality, marriage, family) considered to be the fundamental elements of their repression. They argue that the feminist movement should be autonomous, without party or other commitments, and comprise only women. It supported that capitalism and patriarchy are responsible for the repression of women and believed that a "crucial" mass of women in the institutions of authority could lead to the creation of a better world.

Following this, liberal[5] feminism evolved, which supported that the liberation of women could be realised without fundamental changes in the economic and political structure of the capitalist economy. It supported the principle of "equal rights" and sought to expand the principles of freedom, justice and equality to women. They believed that women were judged first by their gender and then as people, in contrast to men who were judged by their work. They believed that discrimination against women would stop with legislative improvements and education, and gave emphasis to positive discrimination and solidarity networks. They pursued the incorporation of women's issues in all sectors and tried to form the public opinion, presenting more women and more positive images of women in the media and schoolbooks.

According to Sabadell (2003), feminism is going through its third historical phase today, characterised by three elements. Firstly the impressive increase of social initiatives dealing with feminist issues (non governmental organisations, self-help groups). Secondly, the institutional adoption and meeting of feminist demands

---

[4] Feminism, http://users.otenet.gr/~scoutari/feminismos.htm
[5] http://users.otenet.gr/~scoutari/feminismos.htm

(state aid programmes for women, ministries and services for gender equality, affirmative actions). Thirdly, the impressive dispersion of feminist problems in the academic sphere ("female studies", even in traditionally conservative areas, such as law and medicine).

The Aristotelian theory[6] on the discrimination of life in two spheres, i.e. the private and public, deeply influenced philosophical discussion, social structures, political thought and analysis on traditional issues and values, such as freedom, equality and justices, through the centuries. Women are absent from the classic texts of political thought, while political analysts until recently did not make references to the inequality between men and women in their analysis.

The equal participation of men and women throughout the management of public affairs is a measure of democratisation of the society. However, the low percentage of women's presence in decision making centres is a reality worldwide. Today's structure of the society, which perpetuates the allocation of authorities and roles based on an existing and outdated notion regarding the genders, makes the access of women to decision making centres difficult. The UN Economic and Social Council had set an aim that by 1995 the percentage of women's participation in decision making centres should reach at least 30%. This aim has still to be met. In 1996, only 10% of the members of the legislative and executive authority were women. Without the active participation of women in all levels of decision making, the aims for equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. Furthermore, despite the fact that today the importance of the balanced participation of women and men in decision making is broadly acknowledged, women are still under-represented in the politics and the public and private institutions, and general in positions were decisions are taken (OKE decision,1999).

---

[6] Report by the Commission on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities (2000), (C5-0219/2000) for the balanced participation of women and men in the decision making process, http://www.karamanou.gr/dir/ep/ektheseis/ekth_041200.htm

2.1 Women and politics

The historical exclusion of women[7] from the political life and their restriction to the private sphere created differences between the two genders in values and interests. In every democratic society, the political decisions must reflect the interests and values of all the citizens. Gender equality is a fundamental[8] right, a common value of the European Union (EU) and a necessary precondition for the achievement of the EU aims for development, employment and social cohesion. The EU has recorded significant progress in achieving gender equality, thanks to the legislation on equal treatment, the incorporation of the gender dimension, the special measures for the advancement of women, the action plans, the social dialogue and the dialogue with the civil society. Despite the fact that many women have conquered the highest levels of education, have entered the labour market and have become important factors of the public life, nevertheless[9] the inequalities remain and may deteriorate, given that the increasing global financial competition demands a more flexible and mobile workforce. Based on the above, the consequences are more severe for women, who are obliged to choose among their children and their career, because there is a lack of flexible work regulations and care services for children and elderly persons, because the stereotypes of the genders remain and the distribution of family obligations with men being unequal. The progress made with the participation of women in fundamental sectors for the Lisbon Strategy, such as research and education, is not reflected fully in the position of women in the labour market. There is a loss of workforce which the EU[10] does not have the luxury to bear. At the same time, the low birth rate and the diminishing workforce threaten the political and financial role of the EU.

---

[7] Press conference at the offices of the European Parliament in Athens titled "Women and Authority", http://www.karamanou.gr/gr/uploads/Documents/ΟΜΙΛΙΕΣ/01/sp01_1502.htm

[8] Course map for equality between women and men 2006-2010, EU,
eur-lex.europa.eu/.../LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:**2006**:0092:FIN:EL:PDF

[9] Announcement of the Committee of European Communities (COM 2000, 335)- http://www.kethi.gr/greek/ekdoseis/stratigiki.htm

[10] Announcement of the European Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Towards a community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005), COM (2000)335 final.

2.1.1 Internationally

The 20th century[11] began with the demand of women for equal access to education, paid employment and political life, and closed with the demand for equal participation of the two genders in democratic institutions and political decision making processes.

Among the most important milestones[12] of the 20th century we must mention the international conventions of 1949, which allowed for the commencement of a course for the legal establishment of gender equality in various sectors, such as education, employment and political rights. Furthermore, the UN conventions on women in Mexico City in 1975, in Nairobi of Kenya in 1985, in Beijing of China in 1995, in New York of the USA in June 2000, established the principle of equal opportunities and proclaimed that the rights of women are human rights. A UN study[13] among 130 states showed that the percentage of women in parliaments was on average 15.4% and demanded at least 30%. Furthermore, among[14] 192 countries, only 12 have a woman leader. Men constitute 95% of the heads of state, 96% of the ministers, 94% of the senior government posts and this is a serious handicap for democracy, (Karamanou, 2005).

Unfortunately, according to Karamanou (2001), women and men still remain, to a great extent, captives of undemocratic notions and outdated social stereotypes, regarding the roles of the genders and the political functions. At the same time, the patriarchal structures of the parties, the electoral measure, the unequal distribution of family obligations between the two genders and many more reasons, indirectly obstruct the lifting of the historical exclusion of women

---

[11] Women in positions of responsibility - New policies - Women in political decision making centres. European congress, Athens http://www.karamanou.gr/gr/contents.aspx?CatId=35&lang=gr 7.5.2003

[12] Report of the Committee on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities (2000). For the balanced participation of women and men in the decision making process, http://www.karamanou.gr/dir/ep/ektheseis/ekth_041200.htm

[13] ILO,(2005). Facts on Women at Work, www.ilo.org/ gender

[14] United Nations, (2005): Women and elections: Guide to Promoting the Participation of Women in Elections

from the public life. On a global level, a new conscience is developing[15], a new political will to expand the front, so that gender equality includes the whole sphere of relations (social, financial and political), breaks through and achieves mainstreaming. Today, emphasis is given on the need to implement the laws in practice, i.e. to pass from the official and formal equality to the substantive and functional equality, i.e. the fair distribution of responsibilities and obligations among the two genders.

The situation existing worldwide is not changed at all compared to the existing situation in Europe, as we will see further down.

2.1.2 In Europe

The human rights of women are a very recent affair. Women in Europe[16] began to emerge from the dark and appear in the forefront of public life in the early 19th century. Oddly, the transition to democracy, which coincided with the industrial revolution and enlightenment in Europe, in reality did not lead to the recognition of women as equal human beings with men. During the French Revolution, Olympe de Gouz was beheaded, because she dared to demand equal rights for women. Only after many years of struggles did women, having overcome their traditional role, achieve finally, at least from a legal point of view, to be recognised fully as civil beings equal to men. The recognition of the human and political rights of women, their massive participation in education and economic activities, the changes in the social roles of the two genders, as well as the structure of the family, are development that constituted the greatest peaceful revolution in the history of mankind.

The EU, over the past few years, has set among its aims of its policy, the "equal participation of women and men in decision making processes". In the

---

[15] European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2006): Quality of work and employment, www.eurofound.eu.int/pubdocs/2006/60/en/1/ef0660en.pdf

[16] "Women and Authority", http://www.karamanou.gr/gr/uploads/Documents/ΟΜΙΛΙΕΣ/01/sp01_1502.htm

Amsterdam Treaty (1997)[17] this aim is further clarified and the principle of gender mainstreaming is adopted in all policies, as a tool for the implementation of equality in practice. The same principle was established in the action platform of the Women's International Conference in Beijing (1995). In the Scandinavian model, which is an example for the rest of Europe, the laws on equality enacted in the 1980s contain provisions for the balanced participation of women and men in public committees with significant results. The regulations on the quotas are one of the tools to promote women in political responsibility positions. A variety of quota systems was adopted initially by Belgium (2000) and France, followed by Italy (1993-1995 with significant results), The Netherlands, Sweden (which proceeded to 50%), and recently Greece. In general, quotas have positive influences in women's candidacies, there is a notably larger representation of women, however only in rare cases are the quotas achieved in political parties and institutions of political representation (Liapi,2004).

In the European Parliament[18] in 1984 the percentage of women was 17.3%, in 2003 it was 31.0 % and in 2004 it was 30.3%. Furthermore, the percentage of women in the European Commission in 2004 was 25%. However, important differences[19] appear among the national parliaments, with Sweden leading where women hold 43.6% of the seats and 57.9% of government posts (ministries, deputy ministries) and Greece last with 10.3% participation of women in the Hellenic Parliament, 12% in government responsibility pos9itions and only four Greek women participating in the European Parliament. The participation of women on a European level in the Regions and the Municipalities is lowest on a national level (except Sweden and Finland, where women constitute 41.2% and 31.5% respectively), which questions the myth that wants women to be more suitable for Local Administration or otherwise Local Administration more friendly to women candidates. In a Council of Europe recommendation[20], it is accepted

---

[17] The Amsterdam Treaty(1997), http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/el/s50000.htm

[18] European women's Lobby (2005): Women in Decision Making in the European Union , http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/Publications/EN_LR.pdf

[19] Women in Politics or the Gender of Politics? Maria Liapi, 2004 .genderissues.org.gr/InfoFemina/CurrentIssue/**.../**filo kai politiki.htm

[20] European charter on gender equality in local societies.   http://www.ccre.org/docs/charte_egalite_el.doc

that the balanced participation of men and women in decision making procedures is a precondition for democracy to function properly and the way in which the equality of the two genders will be promoted, and the member states are called upon to adopt strategies that will promote equal opportunities in political decision making. However, there are still great differences among member states. The average[21] of women's participation is 24.5% for governments and 22.5% for national parliaments, with especially large deflections among member states. It is enough to note the percentage of participation recorded in Greece, which is 10.3% according to the latest elections and compared it with 43.6% participation recorded in Sweden. The best results are achieved in countries with a longstanding tradition in equal opportunity policies, such as Sweden and Finland, where the percentage of women's representation in the government is 52.6% and 44.4% respectively.

Women in National Governments [22] (2003)	
Percentage of female representation in government (2003)	**EU countries**
Over 40%	Sweden, Finland
Over 20 %	Portugal, United Kingdom, Luxembourg, Ireland, France, Italy, Greece
Over 10%	Slovakia, Estonia, Czech Republic, Slovenia,

[21] Report of the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on equality between women and men, 2005/COM/2005/0044 www.parliament.cy/parliamentgr/008_05_05.htm

[22] European women Lobby: ¨Resource paper: Women in Decision-Making,

May 2003,http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/Publications/RA2005EN_LR.pdf

	Romania, Cyprus, Lithuania
Under 10%	Hungary, Malta, Turkey
14.6%	**10 new member state average**
18%	**EU average**

Table I

The percentage of women members of the European Parliament are presented in the next table in more detail (table 2), by political group, as they were in 2003. The conclusions are disappointing, since based on the aim of 40% for women set by the Council of Europe only one group has achieved it. The women in EU institutions are in a more disadvantaged position compared to their male colleagues, despite the recommendations, the directives and the resolutions continuously issued with an aim to promote women in political decision making bodies. It is determined that the political will of the parties is not satisfactory or it is not enough only to include women in the voting papers, but more drastic measures are demanded that will aim at changing the stereotypes, the outdated concepts about the roles of the two genders and the cultivation of a new culture in the political life of the EU member states with respect and recognition of men and women.

Main[23] political groups of the European Parliament

Groups	Seats	Percentage % of seats	Women	Percentage % of women
European Peoples	232	37,1	62	26,7

---

[23] European Women΄s Lobby: "Resource Paper: Women in Decision-making",
Μάιος 2003., http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/Publications/RA2005EN_LR.pdf

Party				
European Socialists Party	**181**	**28,9**	**68**	**37,6**
European Liberals, Democrats and Reformists Party	**52**	**8,3**	**17**	**32,7**
Greens / European Free Alliance	**46**	**7,3**	**20**	**43,5**
European United Left / Left of the Greens of Northern Countries (GUE/NGL)	**42**	**6,7**	**15**	**35,7**
Union for a Europe of the Nations (UEN)	**21**	**3,4**	**4**	**19,0**
Technical Group of Independents (TDI)	**19**	**3,0**	**1**	**5,3**
Group for Europe of Democracy and Difference (EDD)	**19**	**3,0**	**3**	**15,8**
Non Registered	**14**	**2,2**	**4**	**28,6**
Total	**626**	**100**	**194**	**31**

Table 2

2.1.3 In Cyprus

The participation of women in positions where political decisions are taken is limited. The absence of the female gender[24] is totally absent from the 11-member Council of Ministers, while the number of women MPs is eight (14.4%) in a total of 56 MPs. The situation is somewhat balanced in the sector of independent services, with the presence of five women, four of which are at top posts of the hierarchy. Furthermore, there are two women permanent secretaries of ministries out of the eleven ministries, while in all departments of the civil service the total percentage of participation of women is 37%. However, according to a CEDAW[25] report, the representation of Cyprus in the EU is dominated by men. The six Cypriot seats at the European Parliament, as well as the one in the European Commission and the one in the Auditing Council, are covered by representatives of the male gender. The obstacles to the strengthening of women's presence in the government are blamed on[26] political and socioeconomic causes, on issues of ideology and psychological factors. As an excuse for the gap, the theory that the voters do not trust women yet is given. The phenomenon is justified according to the aforementioned report and from the conservative structures that continue to exist in the Cypriot society, and the role of the educational system, the mass media and the family, which do not act in a supportive and encouraging manner towards the efforts of a woman to enter the Cypriot political scene. The measures taken to enhance women's presence in key positions in decision making are declarations for the balanced participation of the two genders, as well as the initiatives of the National Mechanism for Women's Rights, aiming at cultivating the awareness of the public opinion,

---

[24] National Action Plan on Equality in Cyprus - NAPE 2007, www.mjpo.gov.cy

[25] 3rd-5th periodical report (1993-2003), of Cyprus on the implementation of the UN convention for the eradication of all forms of discrimination against women (2004),

http://www.mjpo.gov.cy/mjpo/mjpo.nsf/All/4234CB8499BFBF4EC22570CE004355E9/$file/Rep.%20CEDAW-Part%20I-II.pdf?OpenElement

[26] Report of the Committee on Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities, (C5-0219/2000), on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision making process, http://www.karamanou.gr/dir/ep/ektheseis/ekth_041200.htm

through seminars and specialised information campaigns. Non governmental organisations have also developed similar activities, which are strengthened in this direction (Cyprus Gender Equality Observatory - CGEO). Furthermore, some political parties have already adopted the quota system to cover positions by women by 20%-30%. It is very important to note that women's movements in Cyprus are connected to political parties (Pyrgou,1995). This leads them to "obeying" the decisions of the parties and never opposing, at least not publicly, to express their disagreement with a decision or position of their parties.

Cyprus, as we have seen, is no exception to the European and international disadvantaged position of women in decision making centres. On the contrary, it holds one of the worst positions among the 25 EU member states[27] .

Unfortunately, this image is not restricted to the political life but to others as well, some of which we will see further down, beginning from the status of women in their own trade union organisations.

2.2 Women and the trade union movement

Despite the fact that already since 1856 the weavers of New York had risen up, demanding better working conditions, showing dynamism and militancy proportional to that of men, women workers belonging to trade unions have not yet achieved an equal position in the decision making bodies of these organisations. The reasons for which women are marginalised in this sector too are presented further down.

2.2.1 Internationally

In the trade union movement, according to Vaiou and Stratigakis (2001), apart from the absence of women in the bodies and the well known distribution by

---

[27] See the table on page 24

gender: Men are presidents, women are cashiers. So in the trade union movement as well we see the women themselves (either simple members or participants in bodies) pose the same concerns regarding the percentage of participation, which we have seen in the parties and in general in the public sphere. Few women will say that we do not need the presence of women, but most will resist the institutional establishment of a quota and there will be women trade unionists who will say: "No, we want participation on our own merits."

Worldwide in 1999 women held less than 30% in the decision making bodies. An ICFTU[28] (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) study, concerning central and eastern Europe, showed in 2002 that within trade unions women in the administrative and technical staff were 76%, experts 52.7% and heads of departments 41.5%. It also appeared that women members were 44.8%, in the congress 27.8%, in the parliament 23.8%, in management 15.5% and the percentage of women leading trade union organisations is only 8.7%. Finally, 81% of the organisations have a women's department, 60% of which have their own budget. It is noted that: *"Old and new trade union organisations, the same old story"* regarding the status of women in the bodies of trade union organisations.

As it is noted in a 2000 study by ICFTU/ILO,[29] women across the world still need a long way to go before reaching decision making bodies in trade unions, although there are women presidents, general secretaries, researchers, negotiators and trainers in the various regions. However, much work is still needed because the trade union movement has a man's face.

---

[28] http://www.actu.asn.au/campaigns/icftuwomensconference/ilowomen.html

[29] Kate Holman, 2000. Trade Unions & The Beijing Platform for Action,   Women workers: Reaching for the sky, http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991210226&Language=EN

Furthermore, in another study[30] by ICFTU/ILO, it is noted that in the total number of ICFTU members of 125 million, women are 25 million, i.e. about 35% of the members of the international trade union movement, however they are represented in decision making bodies by about 1%. The same study records the factors obstructing women from become active members of trade union organisations, such as: Opposition from their family, the do not understand that trade union organisations can help them, lack of trust towards the trade unions, family obligations, they fear possible dismissal, the fact that the trade unions are dominated by men and are not sensitive to women's special needs, etc. It is also noted that when some trade unions set a goal or adopted the quota, they managed to increase the percentage of women. For example, Norway set a goal of 40% and Sweden 50%. This was achieved through constitutional amendments, training and the publication of statistical results. Very important figures are extracted from this study regarding the policies that began being adopted by the trade union organisations in some countries on an international level, to increase the participation of women in decision making bodies, such as:

1. Amendment of the constitution for the adoption of quotas, proportions and reserved positions for women (Austria).
2. Positions that are automatically taken by women on the panel on a national level and positions of vice president and some others, making sure that women participate (Austria)
3. The committee of women has reserved places at the Supreme Council (Japan)
4. Quota for women negotiators of collective agreements (Zimbabwe)
5. Adoption of an equality and quota plan for women in the supreme council (Denmark)
6. Decision making bodies that do not manage to have a proportion of women, are obliged to adopt corrective mechanisms to reach the goal (Belgium)

---

[30] Role of Trade Unions in Promoting Gender Equality, Report of the ILO-ICFTU Survey(2000).
http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/download/fin_rep.pdf

7. Promotion of positive models of women workers who manage to lead trade unions. Use of non sexist language in all organisation documents (Malaysia)

8. The trade union organisations publish statistical data on women's participation in the number of their members and their hierarchy (The Netherlands)

9. Encouragement and provision of financial facilities to the Women's Committee to promote the participation of women through educational and training programmes. They also implement a six-month programme for the development of leading skills in women and their encouragement to lead trade union organisations and in general in the society (Bermuda and England)

10. 30% quota for women (Croatia)[31] etc

Women have often been marginalised in the history[32] of the labour movement, possibly because the work of subsidiaries[33] is traditionally considered simply an extension of the traditional female household roles. The subsidiaries organised the distribution of meals in strikes, carried out office work, organised social activities, developed training programmes for women and children, and supported men in their labour struggles. Although it has been acknowledged that these organisations[34] had the capacity to cause and maybe even change the traditional gender roles within the labour movement, in the end women in these organisations stopped suddenly from this radicalism, due to dominant expectations from women at that time.

---

[31] Role of Trade Unions in Promoting Gender Equality, Report of the ILO-ICFTU Survey(2000). http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/download/fin_rep.pdf

[32] Πηγή: Ποτέ ξανά απλά γυναίκα   http://www.femnetsalonica.gr/G_M.htm

[33] Όρος που χρησιμοποιήθηκε για τις γυναίκες που ανέλαβαν δράση να βοηθήσουν τους απεργούς στην απεργία της General motors το 1937

[34] From the *American Socialist* Collection of Sol Dolinger, Never Again Just A Woman:Women of the Auxiliary and Emergency Brigade in the General Motors Sit-Down Strike of 1937,Janice Hassett, Senior Thesis Andrew Workman, Mar 11, 1994, http://www.marx.org/history/etol/newspape/amersocialist/neveragain.htm

As we shall see in the next sub-chapter, this negative status of women in decision making bodies of trade union organisations is no different in Europe.

2.2.2 In Europe

The representation of women in the congresses of trade union organisations and in management differs from place to place in Europe. In the Baltic countries, the percentage of women is 22.3% and 77.7% for men, in Central Europe 83% men and 17% women, and in the Balkan countries 89.6% men and 10% women (Jajma, 2001). According to data presented by Photeni Sianou[35], the participation of women in trade union bodies is declining continuously, while their number in the economically active population and in the force of the trade unions is rising, i.e. there is an absolute non conformity between the participation of women on the base and on the top. Furthermore, the more senior and decisive the body, the smaller the participation of women. "Reasons independent of their will keep them away from the trade unions," the well known trade unionist was explaining. "They cannot cope with the multiple roles of the workers, the mother, the housewife, the teacher of their children, the nurse of their elderly family and the sick. The few women who are active do not have children."

Regarding the percentage of women organised in trade unions in Southeastern Europe, it appears that it is high and shows their interest in being active and their trust in the trade unions. However, discrimination against women exists, which makes them invisible in the decision making bodies of trade unions (Jasna,2002).

According to an ETUC[36] (European Trade Union Confederation) study concerning Eastern and Central Europe, legislative equality does not necessarily lead to true equality. Women always worked, however their work was invisible because it was carried out at home. It also says that in 2001 women's unemployment in Europe was 9%, while that of men 7%. The number of women organised in trade unions

---

[35] Female gender time: The gender of the clock - The female trade unionists. www.femnetsalonica.gr/h48.doc

[36] Women in Trade Unions : Making the Difference , http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/genre_an_080403.pdf

is lower than that of men. It also mentions the main factors responsible for the under-representation of women in decision making bodies in trade unions, which are:

1. The existence of prejudices and the negative reactions and efforts to avert them from undertaking responsibilities from the family.
2. The rigidity of some regulations in the procedures of the trade unions themselves
3. Lack of confidence of the women themselves in their abilities
4. The unequal distribution of family responsibilities
5. The dominance of male attitudes and needs in the culture of trade unions (meeting times, meeting tone, vocabulary etc)
6. The large number of women in informal employment
7. The fear of dismissal

In general, according to the aforementioned study, women are under-represented in higher bodies. About 25% of women are represented with the differences varying greatly (Greece has no woman (0%) and Sweden has 70%). From the comparison made, it appears that only three federations among 24 managed to have a representation of women proportional to the number of their female members. In the other 21 confederations there is an average of 18%. IN lower bodies, women's participation reaches 30%.

The same situation, unfortunately, exists in Cyprus, as we shall see in the following sub-chapter.

2.2.3 In Cyprus

The first pancyprian trade union organisation was established in 1932 and the creation of others followed in the same decade, while in the next decade the rest were established. As Pyrgou (1995) mentions, the trade unions did not work for gender equality and the first law on equal pay was passed in 1961, after a report by a female civil servant against the Cypriot government, which was the

employer, that it did not implement the constitutional law on equal treatment for men and women, and she won.

According to a study by the Cyprus Gender Equality Observatory - CGEO (2004), while the participation of women in trade unions[37] is quantitatively satisfactory from 13% to 76%, it is inversely proportional to their participation in decision making bodies. Even in trade unions, where the majority of their members are women, the percentage of participation in decision making bodies was in 2004 from 0% (in one trade union with 76.82% women members) to 26.47%. The combination of family and professional responsibilities is the main obstacle for women, and that is why women friendly policies are necessary for their balanced participation. On average, 31% of working women are members of trade unions and only 15% hold positions of authority. Thus there is only one chairwoman of a trade union, one deputy general secretary and one member in a senior body of a federation.

Furthermore, in the document[38] by EIRO "*Capacity building for social dialogue in Cyprus*" of 2006, the following are mentioned regarding the policies developed by the trade unions of Cyprus to promote equal opportunities for women in their own decision making bodies:

Regarding the qualitative characteristics of women's employment in the staff[39] of trade unions, there is a limited percentage of women employees in comparison with men. Furthermore, there is an intense vertical professional separation and an intense male hierarchy, with women holding lower positions than those of men and being absent from decision making bodies. The following table is included in this document and indicates in the clearest way the disadvantaged status of women within Cyprus' trade unions.

---

[37] Study by the Cyprus Gender Equality Observatory - CGEO: Participation of women in decision making bodies of trade unions (2004). www.pik.org.cy

[38] Soumeli,E. INEK/PEO The report on, *Capacity building for social dialogue in Cyprus,2006,* European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2006/12/studies/tn0612019s.pdf

[39] In Cyprus, the trade unions employ staff (trade unionists, clerks etc) and the system, e.g. of GSEE in Greece, does not work.

Employment in hierarchy positions by gender in 2005			
Trade unions	Hierarchy positions	Women	Men
DEOK	7	1	6
PEO	12	1	11
SEK	21	2	19
Employers organisations			
KEVE	6	0	6
OEV	4	0	4
Total	46	4	46

SOURCE: *Capacity building for social dialogue in Cyprus,2006,* European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

It is mentioned that, despite the disappointing situation within these organisations, all believe that they are promoting career opportunities for women in the following ways:

1. Encouraging working women to pursue posts
2. Some support a quota of 30% in the voting papers but have not adopted it in their constitutions.
3. Training on gender equality issues

Until recently, women have not been encouraged to pursue leadership positions and reconciliation plans have not been adopted by the trade unions themselves E to help women advance. They have not made plans for the obstacles a woman faces in reconciling family and professional responsibilities and more so their involvement in trade unionism, which demands extra hours.

Recently, the Cyprus Gender Equality Observatory - CGEO[40] called on the whole trade union movement of Cyprus to adopt a charter for the incorporation of gender equality in all the policies of the trade union movement. Unfortunately, the majority of trade unions did not concede to such a charter, saying that they have already set gender equality issues in their priorities and that they could

---

[40] The recommendation of the Cyprus Gender Equality Observatory - CGEO, was a pioneering initiative of the Democratic Labour Federation of Cyprus - DEOK in 2003.

adopt some common actions to be agreed upon. Unfortunately, the reality, as we have seen in the previous two sub-chapters, proves that in practice we still have a long way to go, if the trade union movement does not coordinate itself and does not work uniformly to promote gender equality in employment.

Women, either employees or self-employed, are in a more disadvantaged position than men regarding lower participation, lower income and unequal opportunities give for access to employment or self-employment, as we shall see in the next chapter.

2.3 Women and entrepreneurship

2.3.1 Internationally

According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor-GEM[41] index, which researches women's entrepreneurship in 34 countries, despite the fact that women have set up businesses all over the world, their distribution, the conditions of their establishment and their results are not uniform, both for women and the economies of their countries. For example, in Peru women's businesses reach 39.1% of internal entrepreneurship, in contrast to Japan, where only 1.2% of businesses belong to women. It also notes that every effort to understand women's entrepreneurship complies with subjective and objective factors which many times are the same as those of men. In low income countries, the expression of business interest is enhanced since the need to obtain or increase the income is intensified. As the economy progresses and the businesses grow, the business interest is reduced, since there are more possibilities of finding a stable and remunerative job. Also, if the per capita income increases, then more businesses are established, since there is more available capital.

In general, according to the same study, men are active in businesses by 50% more than women, with Greece, France and Spain ahead in the men-women

---

[41](GEM) 2006 Report on Women and Entrepreneurship,
http://www.gemconsortium.org/download/1174724531203/GEMWomens2006V3.pdf

participation percentage in business activities, and Japan, Finland and the USA following. Subsequently, the subjective and objective factors affecting human business activities do not produce the same results for men and women. According to the GEM index in 2004, of the 73 million businesspeople, in the 34 countries under study, 30 million were women. In this total, a very small percentage concerns women who have high education, since it is easier for them they find good positions. On the other hand, the possibilities of taking up business activities are increased for women who mix with businesspeople, since they know, even at an initial stage, the basic steps to start. Especially in countries with a low per capita income, 45.6% of women began their business activity in this way. The knowledge of specific techniques that can be linked to some form of entrepreneurship seems to be very important. In the more developed countries, women feel less insecurity about their abilities to begin some form of business. In Greece[42], 55.6% of women feel confident while the respective percentage of women in Japan is 10%. The percentage rises significantly in countries such as Australia, Canada and the USA. According to Petraki- Kottis (1996), women's businesses tend to be smaller than those of men and the factor given as a reason is the tendency of men to create a strict hierarchy, resulting in them achieving a better distribution and control over the business. On the other hand, women prefer to develop relationships of equality in the business. Also, most men hesitate to cooperate in business with women, so automatically the possibility of expanding a woman's business from a cooperation or merger are limited.

An interesting study was presented by the USA Statistical Service[43] in April 2001, regarding women owners of small businesses, titled "1997 report on businesses belonging to women". As it appears through the study, the businesswomen have proven to be more conservative than their male colleagues in the businesses, a

---

[42] Women's entrepreneurship in Greece ,2002 http://www.unipi.gr/ypires/epeaekIsotitaFulon/files/No_9.pdf

[43] Panayiotis Dounias, ¨Monetary-insurance marketing¨, February 2002 issue, www.morax.gr/mags/02/0202_4.shtml

fact which makes them more attractive as insurance company and bank customers. Based on the figures gathered by the Statistical Service, more and more small businesses belong to women. Indeed, compared to the total increase of businesses over the past few years in the USA, the businesses managed by women have increased even more. Speaking in numbers, women hold 26% of businesses in the USA, which are usually individually run or quite small in size.

Summarising this sub-chapter, it appears that in the poorer countries there are higher percentages of businesswomen and it seems that women either do not dare or due to a weak financial position cannot invest much in their businesses.

In Europe, the situation is not much different than in other countries around the world, although over the past few years efforts have been made by EU member states to increase women's entrepreneurship and possibly we will have better results in a few years.

2.3.2 In Europe

A balanced participation[44] of women and men in the financial sector may contribute to the creation of a more productive and innovative working environment and attitude, as well as other better financial results. It is important to encourage women to participate more in the establishment and management of small and medium sized enterprises and to promote women's entrepreneurship. The absence of women[45] from boards of directors and managerial positions is the largest obstacle to a business career for women and the promotion of women in officer positions in various businesses in the EU resulted in the creation of a new group of talents with experience in many industrial sectors. The numeric increase of women in businesses, both in the boards of directors and managerial responsibility posts, will have to be

---

[44] Women in Decision Making in the E.U ,
http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/Publications/RA2005EN_LR.pdf

[45] Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Growth and Employment Initiative Measures on financial assistance for innovative and job creating Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) As at 31 December 2000. (COM(2002) 347 - 2.7.2002), http://www.lex.unict.it/eurolabor/en/documentation/com/com2002.htm

encouraged mainly by informing women on ways to establish and develop businesses, foresee programmes for financial assistance and facilitate their access to lending and other financial means. Furthermore, in the decision[46] of the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities, it is stressed that the promotion of women's entrepreneurship will enhance the social and environmental responsibility of businesses and will contribute to sustainable development, social cohesion and the respect of human rights, due to the determined sensitivity and the priority women give to issues concerning the quality of life.

Women constitute[47], on average, 30% of businesspeople in the EU. They often face greater difficulties in setting up businesses and in access to financing and training. It is considered[48] very important that the recommendations of the EU action plan for entrepreneurship be further implemented with an aim to increase the businesses established by women through better access to financing and the developing of business networks.

The percentage of businesswomen in Europe and internationally is low but, as we shall see further down, the situation in Cyprus is even worse.

2.3.3 In Cyprus

According to official figures released by the National Statistical Service of Cyprus, as they emerge from the Workforce Research for the years 2001 and 2002, in 2002 from the total of 72,600 self-employed, which was 23% of total employment, 22,000 were women. However, in a society such as that of Cyprus,

---

[46] Decision of the Committee for Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities concerning the partnership social responsibility: a contribution of the businesses to viable development (COM(2002) 347 . C5-0574/2002 . 2002/2261(INI)), http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A5-2002-0159+0+DOC+XML+V0//EL

[47] Course map on equality between women and men 2006-2010,{SEC(2006) 275}, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/.../LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:**2006**:0092:FIN:EL:PDF

[48] *«Women on Leadership»,* 1st International Congress, organised in Piraeus by the Institute for the Development of Women Managers and Businesswomen on 9/3/05. www.naftemporiki.gr/news/story

where based on concepts and stereotypes for both genders and their role, the man remains the head of the household, the phenomenon of finding a second job on behalf of the man is noted. However, it is possible that this tactic, which mainly concerns men workers, leads to widening the pay gap against women, as well as the enhancement of the gender distribution of work in the family against them. Women's entrepreneurship in Cyprus does not exceed 12% of the total. At the same time, 45,000 Cypriot women, aged 25 to 54, are outside the labour market. Many of these may have been active with their own business, possibly, if they had the impulse, the motives, the financial support and guidance, as we will see further down.

As is mentioned in the CEDAW[49] report of Cyprus for 2006, there is an intense accumulation of women's entrepreneurship in "female business sectors", such as the setting up of businesses selling clothes, shoes, the establishment of pharmacies and paramedical professions, kiosks, hair salons, small shops with gifts, and florists. They believe that financial support is the most important factor in developing women's entrepreneurship, reconciliation of family and professional life, and access to information and education.

It seems though that women, in the labour market, are not treated on equal terms regarding access, advancement, salary, education etc, as we shall see further down.

2.4 Women and work

Over the past decades tremendous progress has been made in the participation of women on all public levels, especially in politics and businesses. Although women are under-represented in higher and much sought after positions, there appears in general a disadvantaged position for women's participation in the labour market due to their gender: There is unemployment to the same extent, but the poverty of women is higher than that of men (due to the loser wages,

---

[49] **SHADOW REPORT,** CYPRUS 2006 http://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/pdf/Cyprus%20SR.pdf

the lower support in unemployment, the high percentage of single parent families). Furthermore, housework seems to be a female privilege (Fischer,2005).

No matter how important the progress made is, regarding the social situation of women in the member states, equality between men and women in daily life continues to be undermined by the fact that women and men do not enjoy the same rights in practice. Attention must be given to the development of mechanisms and structures and/or the enhancement of existing structures, in order to improve the current situation, which wants women to follow or even copy men, and give them the opportunity to show their talents and skills.

2.4.1 Internationally

Women constitute 40% of the world workforce, according to a report by the International Labour Office[50], they have higher unemployment indices, lower employment percentages and are lagging behind compared to men's wages. According to the same study, women gather in the so called female jobs, such as nurses and teachers (horizontal professional distinction), while at the same time remain in lower categories of jobs (vertical professional distinction). Women held managerial posts by 20-40% between 2000-2002 in 43 of the 68 countries taken as a sample for this study. At the same time, women are called upon to work much harder than men in order to prove their worth, while sometimes there are called upon to adopt male stereotypes and stances. It is also noted that the problem worsens due to the conviction of certain employers that women cannot dedicate themselves to the job due to their family responsibilities.

Women and men[51] take different positions in the various sectors of employment, in the various professions and in the professional levels. There is an evident tendency for women members of the staff to reach a specific point of

---

[50] Gender equality and businesses, http://www.unipi.gr/ypires/epeaekIsotitaFulon/files/No_2.pdf

[51] European Women's Lobby (2003).Resource paper: Women in Decision making. http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/Publications/EN_LR.pdf

professional advancement, after which they remain there: This point is called "glass ceiling", and refers to the artificial barriers obstructing women from taking top managerial posts. Women in positions of authority continue to be fewer than the men. Recent studies[52], in the area of employment in general, show that although the two genders are now equal regarding their general education, their professional training and their wish to be promoted, women continue to be to a great extent excluded from top positions. An announcement by the World Labour Organisation, based on a study[53], summarises this situation: "Women today represent more than 40% of the international workforce but hold just 3% of the higher managerial positions". According to WLO, some of the factors creating this phenomenon are the prejudices based on gender, the "patriarchal stereotypes", the informal links, the preference for same gender candidates (male bosses usually promote other men), sexual harassment and the sticky floor: Yet another discrimination that should be combatted. However, for the majority of women who never reach higher positions, yet alone the highest positions, the problem is not the "glass ceiling" but the "sticky floor"[54], as the tendency to remain in lower levels of the labour market is called: Women continue to carry out the worst paid jobs with the least responsibilities, and carry out the run-of-the-mill in the world distribution of work. In the services sector, a sector in which tourism falls, more women are employed but hold only 14% of managerial positions and less than 6% of top managerial posts (Karamanou,2005). In America in 1995 women constituted 63% of the total working population. Nevertheless, only 6% held positions of managerial responsibility and only 3% of women managed to reach the highest step of a business and become chairwomen of boards of directors. According to Crampton & Mishra (1999), the glass ceiling held women away from these positions. Negative stances and prejudices obstruct women and minorities from climbing up the hierarchy. One third of women are employees, one quarter

---

[52] *Gender Equality in the Labor Market. Lessons Learned,* Final Report *Evaluation and Data Development, Strategic Policy Human Resources Development Canada,*
http://www..hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/edd-pdf/spah14910_e.pdf

[53] Time for Equality at Work - Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work 2003, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2003. ISBN 92-2-112871-7. Price: 20 Swiss Francs.
http://www.unicz.it/lavoro/ILO_TEW.pdf

[54] Congress: Women high in the hierarchy. Good practices MENTORING
20 & 21 February 2006, TITANIA hotel, http://4653.info/o-mentoring-872096

are in health services, education, house assistants and in food services. Even in these traditionally female jobs, women do not hold key positions proportional to their percentage. The largest obstacle is the imposing of "obligatory" responsibilities by the society, the family and the women themselves. Myths, pre-ideation and unstable concepts, such as they woman is dependent, passive, non aggressive, delicate, non competitive, introvert, orientated, sensitive, objective etc, influence stances, concepts and attitudes. Women are committed to a variety of activities and are trying to tackle their double responsibilities of home and career. As Crampton & Mishra (1999) mention, unfortunately the advancement of women to managerial positions does not comply with the increase of working women. The reasons are many:

- Social factors, where the society itself has its own stereotypes and prejudices against women in managerial positions:
- Women are considered to lack the "quality" that is an advantage in order to be more efficient as a manager and traditional male elements have more value than those of women in managerial positions.
- The posts held by the persons of an organisation sketch the characteristics and behaviour they develop or already have. Women often hold low authority positions.
- Mentoring plays an important role in promoting women in managerial positions. However it does not exist, so it is impossible to have access to information about these positions, since they have no mentors to help them.
- Women face the problem of reconciling professional and family responsibilities.
- Women must cultivate the confidence and the appropriate qualifications and stances necessary to succeed. Women are under-represented in hierarchical positions at a percentage of 30% compared to 70% of men, while their wages are considered to be lower.

Everyday, women should offer more, even if no one sees it. They must prove that they are worthy, something men do not have to do, since they are from the start considered worthy and capable. They are obliged to develop a profile that is neither male nor female, but which men should like. Men do not understand what

it means to be a minority in a place, since they are the majority (Ragins, Townsend & Mattis,1998). Furthermore, women continue to hold the main responsibility for housework and childcare and continue to be those who provide family prosperity (Williams,2002).

The situation in Europe appears to be much better than the international image, as described further down.

2.4.2 In Europe

Women in responsible positions are models for other women. They show that women can manage and it is possible for them to follow the careers they want. The CWDI[55] (Corporate Women Directors International) for the year 2004 says that only 10.4% of managerial posts of fortune global were women. In Africa 17.5%, England 12.5%, Germany 10.3%, The Netherlands 8.6%, Switzerland 7.7%, France 7.2%, Italy 1.8%, Japan 0.7%. The average in EU member states was in 2004 32% of managerial positions held by women (Holst, 2006). The possible reasons for which these low percentages appear are recorded in a study carried out in four countries of Western Europe (Belgium, England, Germany, France) in women who hold managerial positions and have an international career: (Linehan,2002)

- There are difficulties in breaking the glass ceiling due to which the appointment of women in higher posts is hindered and results in the phenomenon of men dominating in leadership positions of organisations or businesses.
- There is a lack of mentors. Women who climbed to leadership positions consider that Mentoring is necessary, since it is the key to develop a successful career. They are given support and this helps them better

---

[55] 2004 CWDI Report: Women Board Directors of the *Fortune* Global 200 Companies ,
http://www.globewomen.com/cwdi/Global200_KeyFindings.htm

understand the organisation in which they are working and have better relations with the management and the staff. (Ragins,Townsend, & Mattis,1998).

- There is a male model in the behaviour and stance of senior staff/managerial staff towards the lower staff, since women were absent from managerial positions.

- There is a lack of female models, since the women were absent from managerial positions.

- There are difficulties in choosing between male and female managerial styles. Women[56] who hold leadership positions said that the fact that successful managerial officers have male features and qualifications in their behaviour acts negatively on their confidence.

- Women must work harder at the offset of their career to prove that they are worthy.

- The reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities is difficult. As Azura & Davidson(2001) mention, women managers are most likely single, divorced or separated and, if they are married, they have fewer or no children. Women with a career add new roles to their lives, without being excused of the roles of wife, mother and housewife.

The following table shows the gap separating women until equality in advancement at work is achieved:

Women and men in managerial positions by country (%)		
COUNTRY	WOMEN	MEN
BELGIUM	33	67
CYPRUS	14	86
CZECH REPUBLIC	30	70
DENMARK	26	74
GREECE	26	74
SPAIN	32	68
FINLAND	30	70
FRANCE	38	62
HUNGARY	34	66

---

[56] overview about glass ceiling ,http:lilt.ilstu.edu/rcringer/MQM402/402 Example.doc

ITALY	32	68
LITUANIA	44	56
LUXEMBOURG	26	74
MALTA	14	86
THE NETHERLANDS	26	74
POLAND	32	68
ENGLAND	34	66

Source[57]: European Commission, Database on women and men in decision making, 2006

According to the European Foundation,[58] women's jobs include care, upbringing, services for people, while men monopolise management, manual work and technical professions linked to machinery or physical production, which are considered to be harder or complex. Men hold 80% of jobs in armed forces, two thirds of qualified jobs in agriculture and fisheries. On the other hand, two thirds of employees of services and salespersons are women. Furthermore, according to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions,[59] the percentage of increase in the employment of women in the EU was only 1.1% in 2006, the employment of women was around 53% and the proportion of women in managerial positions was 32%, while in Cyprus it was 13.6% (the lowest in the EU). The average wage gap was 15% in the EU and 25% in Cyprus. Furthermore, the percentage of part time employment was 32% for women in Europe, a very high percentage, and the unemployment of women in the EU was around 8.8%.

Europe could not be an exception regarding the status of women in the labour market and present an improved situation compared to that of the international

---

[57] http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2006/12/studies/tn0612019s.html

[58] European foundation for the improvement of living and working condition:gender ,jobs and working conditions in the E.U(2001). eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2002/77/en/1/ef0277en.pdf

[59] European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions : Quality of work and employment(2006), **http://eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/surveys/EU0609SR01/EU0609SR01.pdf**

situation. The same results we have seen internationally also appear in Cyprus, as we shall see further down.

2.4.3 In Cyprus

Despite the progress made regarding the participation of women in the labour market (59% in 2002), according to data released by the National Statistical Service of Cyprus[60], women make up the largest percentage of unemployed persons. Total unemployment in 2000 was 3.4%. The percentage of unemployment for men dropped from 2.7% to 2.3% in 2001 and for women from 4.4% to 3.8% and reached 4.7% in 2005. Also regarding women, the highest percentage of unemployed was within the age group 30-50 (47% of the total of unemployed women), while among the younger age group up to 29 years old the percentage was 27%.

Regarding professional discrimination, according to available data by the National Statistical Service (Labour Statistics 2001), both in 2001 and in the period 1995-2000 there is an intense gathering of women in certain professions and sectors, mainly in services and unskilled work.

Despite the massive entrance of women into the Cypriot labour market and to a degree the overturning of the patriarchal structure of employment, the general situation of women is especially disadvantaged compared to that of men. At the same time, they are still under-represented in low specialisation jobs and in high specialisation jobs, while there are indications that the cover a significant part of jobs in the para-economy.

As Soumeli and Trimikliotis (2004) note, regarding the wage gap between the two genders, men in 2001 were paid 34.9% more than women, just as in 2000, and women were paid lower wages on average than men in all main professional

---

[60] Workforce study for the years 2001-2002 ,
http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument

categories. However, the gap was smaller in jobs demanding higher skills, such as the professional category of managers and senior managerial staff, and higher in groups of handling machinery and the staff in services and sales. In Cyprus no relevant study has been carried out so far regarding the determining factors creating the wage gap between women and men. However, the Statistical Service of Cyprus attributes part of the wage gap to the different qualifications between women and men, the length of previous service, the service/professional duties and the sector of economic activity.

In Cyprus, the prohibition of discrimination[61] and the principle of equality are fundamental legal principles, passed initially by the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960. Specifically, according to Article 28 "*The principle of equality* is the cornerstone of the legal framework" - at least formally, because as is well known what is safeguarded is basically the *formal* right and not necessarily the *substantive.* Furthermore, the European Human Rights Convention (EHRC) holds the same principle, as well as many ratified by the Republic of Cyprus conventions of the World Labour Office, and other UN conventions. But while Article 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cyprus safeguards the principle of equality, it is also incompliant with the adoption of positive actions in favour of women, as the Law on Equal Treatment in Employment and Professional Training says, and four years after the voting and implementation of this Law, its very important article remains inactive.

However, the most important regulations[62] against discrimination appeared recently and concern the passing of the following Laws:

- Law on the Equal Treatment of Men and Women in employment and professional training 2002 (N.205 (1) / 2002).
- Law on Equal Pay between Men and Women for the same work or work given the same value 2002 (N.177/2002).

---

[61] ΕΣΔΙ (2007) , www.mjpo.gov

[62] These regulations were adopted in the framework of Cyprus' harmonisation with the acquis communautaire.

Given[63] that the relevant laws came into force on the 1st of January 2003, an evaluation regarding their effectiveness is not possible, while in the framework of the current discussion it is not possible to make an analytical presentation and critical analysis on the content of the relevant Laws. However, according to indications to date, it is doubtful whether the content of the relevant legislation has been notified to the directly interested so that the necessary improvements are made in the lives of women at the workplace, as is the intention of these laws. In the framework of utilising the new provisions, the responsibilities of the government departments, the trade unions and the employers' organisations, as well as the women's organisations and the organisations for human rights, are great.

Despite the fact that in the Cypriot system[64] the collective agreements traditionally play a leading role in regulating labour relations, with the law being a secondary instrument in regulating them, their content is quite restricted. Regarding the incorporation of the gender dimension, there has been no link to collective bargaining until recently

The position of women in the Cypriot labour market is clearly disadvantaged compared to that of men, both regarding their participation in employment and unemployment, and regarding the qualitative characteristics of their employment. The same image appears regarding the wage gap between women and men. Regarding the improvement of the terms and conditions of employment for women, the role of the legislative framework is important. The delay over the past years in adopting specialised legislation is undoubtedly included in the negative aspects, while the effective or not utilisation of the recent legislative framework will be of determinative importance. However, the legislation itself, however comprehensive, is not enough to eradicate inequalities in the labour market and generally in the society. In this context, the social partners are called upon to play an important role in bridging the gaps, the

---

[63] National Action Plan on Equality , 2007, www.mjpo.gov.cy
[64] Evangelia Soumeli and Nicos Trimikliniotis, INEK/ΠΕΟ,2004 , eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/01/word/cy0401103fcy.doc

weaknesses and the negative provisions of the relevant laws, and to improve them, mainly after the linking of collective bargaining to equal opportunities.

Furthermore, the findings of the 2006 study "Women and jobs in the semi-governmental and banking sector", carried out by the Employers and Industrialists Federation - OEV[65] present the following picture:

♦ The percentage of women holding senior managerial positions from the working women who took part in the study, is limited to 5% in semi-governmental organisations. In banks 27.5% of the women participating in the study hold high positions.

♦ The three main reasons for which women work are financial independence, livelihood reasons and to enhance the family income. The career is listed in fourth place in the semi-governmental organisations and in the third place for banks.

♦ The main reasons restricting women from participating in senior management posts are family obligations, prejudice and stereotypes. Furthermore, 30% list as the most important reason the absence of flexible working times. Consequently, the women asked believe that the main measures that would improve women's participation is the provision of childcare facilities, support from the husband, the neutralisation of prejudice and the introduction of flexible working times.

♦ The main reasons that, while there are women in an organisation or bank that gather the abovementioned characteristics, they do not hold senior management positions, is the dominant culture that favours men, age, family obligations and the lack of appropriate acquaintances. A significant

---

[65] www.oeb.org.cy

percentage of women asked believe that one of the reasons is that women did not apply for these positions.

.

♦ Regarding the issue of imposing quotas for the advancement of women to senior management, a percentage of 40% did not know or did not answer the question, while women in banks agree with the quotas by 42%, while those working in semi-governmental organisations agree only by 28%.

♦ The majority of women disagreed that the lengthening of maternity leave would be a stopper to the increase of women's participation in senior management positions. They also disagree with the view that the fact women are restricted to lower pay positions is the result of their own choices or that they would prefer a position will less responsibility and obligations in order to dedicate more time to their family.

A second study by OEV[66] in 2004, titled "Women's position in the modern Cypriot enterprise" concerned a detailed and in depth study among its members to investigate the status of women in the modern Cypriot business. The aim of the research was to determine the role women play in financial activity in general, the percentage of women's participation in various levels of employment, the reasons restricting the broadening of women's participation in the financial activity and the measures that could be implemented in order to improve the situation. The main findings of the research are summarised as follows: In the businesses of the sample, 60% of workers are men and 40% women. The senior management positions held by women are merely 14.4%, while in positions of a secretarial nature they hold the majority. The percentage of women in the scientific staff is quite high (38%) and in the workforce (43%), while the lowest percentage is in the technical staff (12%). In the agricultural sectors, the semi-governmental organisations, alterations and constructions, men hold the majority of the positions. The opposite happens in trade and services, where women are slightly more than men (52% and 51% respectively). In all sectors, the majority of secretarial positions are held by women. In all other positions,

---

[66] www.oeb.org.cy

women are the minority with lower percentages in senior management positions. The highest percentage of women in these positions is in trade, with women holding 18%. The positive image of the employers for the women they employ is overwhelming (93%), while only 4% gave a negative image. However, women's representation in the Boards of Directors of the sample's companies is very low (just 16%), while few participate in important decision making processes.

3. The women of Cyprus

The Cypriot women, living on the island, that had the misfortune to be governed by many conquerors, were not and still are not the exception to the longstanding position of women in Europe and internationally. Just over the past 30-40 years did the female gender begin to make its presence dynamically in the public life of Cyprus.

3.1 During British colonial rule

From 1878 to 1960 Cyprus was a British colony, having been bought by the Ottoman Empire. An English soldier, serving in Cyprus, says in a study he carried out that in 1920 there was an internal distribution of work within the family, where men were responsible for the heavy agricultural jobs and women, assisted by their older children, did the lighter jobs in the fields and at home. Usually, one of the older daughters stayed at home to take care of the younger children and clean the house (Surridge,1930). As Markides, Nikita & Rangou (1978) note, the traditional role of women was to be responsible for the family, be a good mother, a good housewife and a good wife. There was a separation of the genders in traditional society, especially in rural areas. The woman stayed away from the public sphere, where men dominated. Women never entered coffee shops or sports associations.

As Papademetriou[67] (1995) says, weavers in Cyprus, who dealt with silk professionally, came from very poor families. She also records that after the first decades of the 20th century, a social mobility appeared for these families. Men were usually craftsmen with seasonal jobs, such as silk works and agriculture, and if one takes into consideration the instability of the agricultural income and the low pay of craftsmen, the women weavers had a stable income and managed to send their brothers or children for studies and bought property. Although these professions were held by men, there were women too, although this craft was a family secret that went, with the tools of the trade, to the male children. There were however cases when the work was undertaken by the wife or the daughter of the silk worker, so that the secret did not leave the family. As the author says, this continued after British colonial rule in Cyprus in 1878. The weavers began to take their work to the women's bazaar after 1930, when the road network of Cyprus improved. An important movement of weavers with dowry goods was carried out by women traders, who travelled the villages and took orders. These women learned to create Lefkara lace[68], a lace made by women living in Lefkara village, on silk material with strong soft silk. In this way, the weavers of silk entered the organised workshops and modern craftsmanship.

The roots of modernisation of the Cypriot society, according to Stavrou (1992), began in the beginning of British rule over Cyprus. Thus, according to the author, a gradual change began to take place in the role of the genders outside the family. He believes that the main factors that contributed to this change were the increase of the percentage of women in education and employment.

In 1943 about 80% of girls attended primary school. In 1960 there was an equal number of boys and girls in secondary school. Around 1965 women began to study at universities and in 1980 32% of girls studied abroad. Women mainly dealt with agricultural work. They had equal rights in welfare systems and after

---

[67] Excerpt of a speech based on the publication "Silk work in Cyprus" with references to Lapithos and Karavas (two Turkish occupied municipalities of Cyprus), issued by the Cultural Centre of the Popular Bank in 1995, and is the a doctorate work of Eleni Papademetriou. It was taken on 24/4/07 from the website: http://www.chios.gr/silk/texts/eisigisi-papadimitriou.pdf "A Comparative Criminology Tour of the World", Dr. Robert Winslow.

[68] Lefkara is an area in Cyprus (Larnaca District) well known for its lace, known in Cyprus as Lefkara lace.

1985 had maternity leave. The participation of women in managerial positions in 1970 was minimal. Only one in 15 held a managerial position (Persianis, 1998).

3.2 Today

The status of women in Cyprus, according to a report by CEDAW[69], is comparable to that of the rest of the European Mediterranean countries (Spain, Portugal, Italy). Although equal opportunities for women are guaranteed fully by law, in reality there are causes (patriarchal structure of the family, relatively small and closed society) that hinder the full participation of Cypriot women in the financial and social life of the country. Over the past twenty years a large mobility appeared in Cyprus in the society, which resulted in, inter alia, the activation of women in education and work. The continuously rising percentages[70] of women's employment in Cyprus verify that more and more women are entering the labour market. However, there is till a gap between the two genders regarding the percentage of employment, unemployment and wages. One of the most important reasons for creating this gap is the difficulty to balance professional and family obligations, a dimension that burdens the female gender. According to statistical data, women took two thirds of the new jobs created over the past decade. Despite this increase, according to the Workforce Research[71] for the first quarter of 2005, the employment percentages for women are still lower than those of men. During the first quarter of 2005, the employment percentage of women was 58.1% and the respective percentage for men was 79.3%. It is obvious that the employment percentages of women, although behind compared to the respective percentages of men, are favourably compared to the aims of the EU for 2010, for the increase of women's employment to 60%. A larger

---

[69]CEDAW report (1995). http://www.mjpo.gov.cy/mjpo/mjpo.nsf/dml.progress.gr?open document, http://www.mjpo.gov.cy/mjpo/mjpo.nsf/dmlprogress_gr/dmlprogress_gr?OpenDocument

[70] Presentation of the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance Mrs. Elpiniki Koutouroushi,
12 October 2005
Equality between men and women in employment
mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/All/E1E177CAF39A2E71C225709E002EB686/...

[71] labour market situation in Cyprus
http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/dmlsituation_gr/dmlsituation_gr?OpenDocument

percentage of women than men is part time employed. According to the Workforce Research, during the first quarter of 2005 14.2% of working women were part time employed, while for men the percentage was 5%. Furthermore, the unemployment percentage for women was higher than that of men. According to the same study, the unemployment percentage for women during the first quarter of 2005 was 7.3% and for men 4.1%. Also, analysing the data of registered unemployment per month it appears that the unemployment percentage of women rises faster than that of men in periods of temporary recession. The gap recorded in the income of men and women continues to be quite high and reached 23.8% in 2004 compared to 25.9% in 2000. The most important cause of this gap is the employment of a larger number of men in managerial positions, combined with the gathering of women in unskilled and thus low pay professions.

Regarding the participation of women in decision making centres of public finance policy setting centres, it appears that it is lower compared to that of men. According to Stavrou (1997), in 1991, in a total of 262 governmental positions, only 22 were taken by women. The same low participation of women in senior positions existed in other sectors of the economy, as well as regarding the participation of women in public affairs. This phenomenon, as elsewhere, is due to the prejudice that the role of women as a wife and mother prevails, as well as in the lack of spare time for women due to family obligations. In the other sectors of activity, there are many regulations against discrimination but again full equality is not guaranteed. Thus, especially in the private sector, there is an indirect or concealed discrimination and stereotypes, due to gender, regarding employment, promotions, wages etc. In the public and broader public sector, these discriminations are minimised. Regarding the status of Cypriot women in managerial positions, a study[72] among 80 public companies, in the governmental and semi-governmental sector, in 2006 showed the following results:

---

[72] Kapardis-Grambia, M (2006)Women in the modern business environment- challenges and opportunities. Taken on 25/4/07 from the website:

http://www.pwc.com/extweb/ncpressrelease.nsf/docid/C43335BFF1161F44802571A00027EF93

- Progress was made regarding the status of women during the past decade, which is linked to easier access to knowledge and quality of education.
- Some of the more serious obstacles to reach leadership positions are:

  a. Family responsibilities and responsibility for children

  b. The culture of the work environment, which creates discrimination due to gender

- 37% of managers in the public sector were women and only 12 % of managers in the private sector were women. 22 % of the total number of managers in the private and public sector were women.

- According to the views of the managers of companies that participated in the study, 73% believe that Cypriot enterprises/organisations do not provide opportunities for women to advance, while 78% believe that the family adversely influences the career of women.

The principle of equal pay for work of equal value is not implemented in some sectors of activity, as proven by many sectoral agreements. Regarding the level of education in Cyprus, it is generally high among men and women, who equally participate in all levels. The percentage of illiteracy has been abolished because basic education is obligatory and free since 1960. Problems still exist for rural and elderly women. Despite the fact that in Cyprus there is a high quality of professional orientation, again the phenomenon of girls choosing jobs traditionally destined for women exists (e.g. teachers, nurses, secretaries etc). Also, the percentage of women following technical education is very low compared to that of men (Stavrou,1997).

Based on the results of the bibliographical review and the noted problems faced by Cypriot women in their effort to rise to responsible positions, this research effort aims at presenting the causes of this disadvantaged status of Greek Cypriot women compared to men and their under-represented presence in the civil and public life of Cyprus, and bring to the surface the factors that allowed certain Greek Cypriot women find themselves in "key positions" and be promoted

in the public sphere on an equal basis with men. At the same it the problems and obstacles they faces in this course will be listed. This micro-sociological research aspires to contribute to changing the attitude regarding the public role a woman can play, encouraging and strengthening young women on a short-term and long-term basis to become actively involved in the public life and more specifically:

The in depth study of Greek Cypriot women in "key positions" regarding:

- The reasons that led them to become actively involved in their sector and the obstacles they met and continue to meet in their work.
- The opportunities given to women compared to men in employment, politics, public life and the society in general.
- The degree of exercising women's rights by women themselves, the causes for this exercise or not of their rights and the consequences on them from exercising or not exercising their rights.

PART TWO: EXPERIENTIAL SKETCHING OF THE PROFILE OF WOMEN HOLDING KEY POSITIONS IN THE PUBLIC LIFE OF CYPRUS - CHARACTERISTIS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS.

1. Presentation of results

Before the author proceeds to present the results, she worked to prepare four tables that will help her sketch the profile of women, as follows:

a. Sketching the internal characteristics and factors that influenced their profile.

b. Sketching the external factors that influenced their profile.

c. Recording the total personal characteristics.

d. Recording the hard core of internal and external factors.

e. Recording the common or similar factors that sketch the profile of the successful Cypriot woman, based on the results of the previous annexes ANNEX II.doc.

The presentation of the results of the study is structured in seven chapters. In the first chapter the demographic characteristics of the women that participated in the study are described. The second presents the data that emerged from the interviews regarding their experiences in childhood, their professional course and the experiences and obstacles they met in their effort to reconcile their family and professional responsibilities. This chapter also presents their views on the leadership model of women and the elements that emerged regarding the assessment of their contribution. The third chapter presents the basic results that emerged from the study regarding their experience through the three educational levels. The fourth chapter describes the findings of the study on the role of the political parties, women's organisations and those in charge of determining and implementing policies in the sector of promoting gender equality. The fifth chapter describes the current reality through the positions and

views of the women of the sample as regards existing views, stances, convictions and attitudes, as well as regarding existing gender equality monitoring institutions. The sixth chapter presents the positions and views of the women of the sample on future prospects for gender equality in the Cypriot society. The seventh and last chapter attempts to sketch the profile of the women, describing the common or similar factors and features that have helped them overcome obstacles met by women in their quest for equal opportunities of advancement.

In the specific study, the sample was chosen through the social and professional environment of the researcher and the women participating are ten successful women, who have dealt with the promotion of gender equality issues.

The term successful women includes all the common external factors that these women share, either due to talent or charisma or experience.

2 Demographic characteristics

The sample comprises three women aged 45-50, three women aged 51-60, three women aged 61-65 and one woman aged 83. Four women of the sample were married with two children, three married with two children and grandchildren, one married with one child, one married without children and one single. Those who did not have children acknowledge the fact that this helped them more to become actively involved, without problems and dilemmas for the reconciliation of professional and family responsibilities, in the sector they are engaged in. Five women of the sample are university graduates, two postgraduates, one holds a doctorate, one studied for one year and gave it up due to marriage, and one is a primary school graduate (the eldest). Six women live and work in Nicosia and the other four commute everyday to Nicosia from the town they live in (Limassol and Larnaca). All but one today belong to the middle and higher income class, even though most of them come from low income families. (Only four come from rich families).

In detail, the demographic characteristics of the women who participated in the study are presented in (ANNEX I.doc)

3. Biographical course

3.1 Childhood experiences

All women of the sample have shown dynamism and independence since childhood, characteristics that fitted and were expected from boys. Artemis[73](3) και η Ino(9), reacted so strongly to the boy-girl distinction and in general gender discrimination that was cultivated at school, the father in the case of Artemis was obliged to move his family to another town and in the case of Ino to enroll her at a private school. Iphigenia (7), Rea (6) and Penelope(8) who lived their adolescence during British colonial rule, were actively involved in the struggle for the liberation of Cyprus, as much as the boys. Iphigenia (7) said that at high school not only did she refuse to toast the Queen[74] of England, but threw the glass and broke it, and other classmates followed. Aphrodite (2) said she hung out with boys all the time and could not accept the unwritten rules on morality, despite the fact that she paid the price, since the mothers of her friends told them off and forbid them to hang out with her because she dared to talk to boys. She added that she was the class treasurer (the only girl) and never felt disadvantaged compared to boys. Sophia (4) was class leader throughout school and during her studies was an active member of a student organisation. Artemis (3) was always given the leading role in theatrical plays, poem recitals etc at school events and was president of the student organisation. Athena (1) was politically active since her school years, just like Artemis. Almost all the women said that their role model was their father, who influenced them to a great extent and that they owe much to that loved figure.

---

[73] See annex I

[74] During the period when Cyprus was a British colony (1878-1960), its was customary to celebrate the Queen of England's birthday at schools.

In childhood, the distinction of girls and boys was very intense in families that had children of both genders. As Ino (9) said:

"There was no way and no case in which the brother would be allowed to help in the house. Housework was exclusively a woman's job."

On the contrary, the women from families with just girls did not live this distinction. However, they experienced gender distinction through the roles of the parents. Hera (5) said:

"It was the ¨right¨ model for the father to work outside and the mother in the house."

.

Despite the fact that some of the sample women's families were very progressive, the traditional distinction of roles for men and women existed within the family. Electra said:

"The father did not help around the house at all. The mother had the traditional experiences but did not give us the upbringing that girls should clean etc. There were no stereotypes."

An exception was some cases when the father helped the children with homework, games and discussions. The prejudice and stereotypes existed in every house/family, irrespective of financial status or education level of the parents. Sophia (4), looking back at her childhood, remembers:

"The father helped around the house very much. He helped us with our homework, when we woke up at night our father came to our side and not our mother. He cooked, did jobs around the house, bathed us... He was a very democratic person".

The girls had to help with the housework and at the same time help with some outside jobs with the boys. In the cases where both parents worked, on their

return home the mother had the responsibility to cook and all the housework, and the children. There was discrimination in the treatment of boys and girls, since the boy had more advantages and more freedom of movement. Furthermore, the girls played with dolls and the boys with cars, guns etc, something which continues today, since the notions and stereotypes of boyish and girlish toys are reproduced.

Aphrodite said:

"Our father was very good. He helped us with our homework and talked with us. He did not do any housework but worked very hard to keep his family and many children. Our mother did not make the boys do any housework because that was a job for the women of the house. I remember that every time they gave my brother food to try before we ate because he was a boy. This discrimination annoyed me so much that once, as soon as they gave him food, I slapped him hard and he didn't do anything. I also remember that for the outside jobs (feeding and cleaning the animals etc) I was obliged to go with him."

Most mothers of women of the sample did not work. However, in two cases that the mother worked, the father did not help around the house but the mother had a serious say about everything.

As Electra[75] (10) said:

"My mother worked from home and was financially independent. Even though my father did not help around the house at all, he took into consideration my mother's opinion. One of the serious reasons of anchylosis and dependence of women was the financial one. The absence of negative stereotypes at home helps towards the intolerance of such behaviour in future life."

Through the results of this study, it appeared that in two cases where the father was involved in a political party, the acceptance of girls becoming involved in politics was much easier. Several women of the sample said the models they

---

[75] See annex III

received from their parents helped them very much, especially that of the father. Artemis (3) said:

> "Because my mother was ill for three years, my father played the role of the mother as well. He baked, cooked, left from work and came home at lunchtime to see how we were. We were not given the impression that all the things my father did were my mother's jobs...the woman's jobs, but that it was his responsibility".

So we see that necessity with the absence of the mother led the father to divert from the social models for the time's gender roles and adopt behaviour that fitted to the family environment, where different models for the father and mother were not cultivated, they did not adopt the existing social concepts, but adopted new concepts about the two genders and were not alienated by behaviour that was not dominant in the society they lived in. On the contrary, Artemis (3) saw the situation in their home as natural. The women of the sample that lived in a patriarchal family where the role of the mother and the girls was at home and the boy's outside, said that the patriarchal structure of the family determined the social roles of men/boys and women/girls. So, as Hera said:

> "It was the right model for the father to work and the mother to be at home and make a social contribution".

So the role of the family is very important, since it can reproduce or reverse notions existing at the given period of time on the role of the two genders.

> "You must be ready for reversals. What kept me going is my faith in women since the model of my mother was a determined, dynamic, perceptive woman",

Electra (10) said.

The girls did not circulate easily and freely at the time we are reviewing (1930-1970) and must be accompanied by a related boy or their parents while taking a

stroll or going to the cinema. On the other hand, boys circulated without any restrictions. As Rea (6)remembers:

"The girls did not circulate easily and freely. We must be accompanied by a male relative or our parents on a stroll or to the cinema. The boys circulated without any restrictions. Boys and girls should circulate outside the house in school uniform. In general, however, the people were must stricter regarding the attire of girls and their behaviour. I remember how obedient girls learnt to be."

From a young age, children learned that girls were the weak gender and should not circulate alone, while the boys were strong, independent and the protectors of the family. Furthermore, a lot of attention was given to the morality of women, which demanded that they be shut in the house or be with a male chaperone of the family environment to protect them. At home the mother was responsible for the children and the cleanliness of the house. The father worked to support the family financially. The woman, whether she worked or not, was responsible for the family responsibilities, which were her responsibility and she was judged by the society for being a good housewife, mother or not.

3.2 Professional career

The restless character, the non passive acceptance of social concepts and models, the rebellious nature, the development of critical thought, the respect of differences and dynamism, were the elements of the character of the sample's women of this qualitative study. Furthermore, the will to succeed and the determination, the support from the family and work environment, helped them to persevere. It also appeared that the family businesses helped them become involved and the female members of the families in the business, and in this way develop women's entrepreneurship. Several women of the sample in this qualitative study followed a "male" profession first in the town they lived in and succeeded. Some were the first lawyers, others the first trade unionists, businesswomen and state officers. All the women said that, despite the initial dubitation and suspiciousness of men and even women, they managed to gain

everyone's respect and this continues to date in their everyday life. All said that it is very difficult for a woman to advance, she is very strictly judged by her colleagues, her employer and the mass media. Electra (10) said:

> "*A woman is not allowed to make a mistake. In general, a woman who lives a public life is under stress not to make a mistake. Men may make the biggest mistakes and no one will bat an eyelid. Women live with the stress of the home and the strict criticism they receive from the mass media and the public opinion.*"

Some of the sample's women said that a woman's professional success makes her feel that she lacks nothing compared to her male colleagues and this fact makes her confident and this feeling helps her move forward. Most women stressed how important it is to strengthen, through seminars, the confidence of women. As Aphrodite (2) said:

> "At first I hesitated to pursue a position, I felt that I was not good enough and, although I was given opportunities, I dismissed them. After pressure I accepted and I remember that my resignation was always in my mind. I was under a lot of stress, while in reality my workload was the same. I was afraid that I would not make it and I wanted to succeed for prestige and dignity reasons. But I had the support and respect of my colleagues, who, it seems, believed in me more than I believed in myself, and this gave me courage and strength."

Most women of the sample did not seek to lead the organisations they are leading today or the positions they hold. They took the opportunities they were given and managed. They all stress the many benefits they received regarding knowledge, skills and experience. Regarding their personal life, almost all said their spare time lessened. The advancement of a woman is accompanied by positive and negative elements. She gains experience, knowledge and acquaintances from the public and political life, but at the same time sacrifices her personal life and her personal spare time.

As Athena (1) said:

> "You have much to combine, house... children... involvement in the public sphere... But you adopt a way of thinking that makes you prioritise certain things and not become hysterical. There are negative aspects, because you may be under so much pressure and not give the attention you should to your own people and create problems with the children or husband. But you are certain to leave something behind and it will not be at work but at home. Especially the children and often you feel... much guilt."

The will and insistence of the study's women to break through the establishment seems to help establish the female gender in male-dominant professions with success and open up new paths for other women in an easier way. In their professional career, most women of the sample faced unequal pay and mistrust during their fist steps. Ino (9) says:

> "I found myself in 1974 managing a small business belonging to my father. I felt the doubt from the social environment, the workers and my father himself, who thought it was an embarrassment for me to work. After five years I demanded from my father to manage a large family business. My father wanted to bring a man to manage it and I did not agree, I insisted and in the end my father gave in."

The doubt towards a young woman managing a business - which at that time only men managed - was very intense both from the social and family environment in the 1970s. Electra (10) said:

> "I did not pursue to bee where I am. When I was studying I said that I wanted the degree for me and I did not want to work. Circumstances helped me when Cyprus had to choose some women to show a good face to the European Union. This fact annoys me and I believe that in similar posts to mine there should be more women."

Sophia's (4) words were very characteristic:

"I experienced discrimination to a great extent. The warehouse of the offices was my office and I believe it was not by chance, I received a much lower salary than my male colleagues who most likely did less work than me. I was full time employed with about half the pay."

Electra (10) also says:

"He did not want me to defend them because of the fact that I was a woman lawyer. I remember in the 80s - in a court procedure - a man I was defending as a public defendant said I embarrassed him in the village because they were making fun at him for having a woman lawyer. Even when he won the trial, he said to me: We are friends, I love you and appreciate you, but I will not have you as my lawyer again because you are a woman."

Iphigenia (7) had the same experience:

"I remember characteristically a case when an old man came to my law office and was looking for a lawyer and as soon as he saw me he shouted that he wanted a lawyer and not a woman".

Summarising, we can say that of course today, especially as regards the profession of the lawyer, woman constitute a significant percentage and are accepted by the society. The society needs time to change attitudes, concepts and stereotypes, and this is apparent from the position in which women were a few years ago and the improvement we see today.

The unequal treatment of these women in their first steps in areas where men had absolute dominance is recorded, as is the insistence and patience of women to succeed and change the concepts, attitudes of centuries and negative social stereotypes regarding the roles of the two genders.

i. Leading model

Several women of our study faced problems in their effort to enter and advance in the then men's positions. As they admitted, they were obliged to adopt some male behaviour in order to cope.

Sophia's (4) words are characteristic:

> "My different behaviour from that of my male colleagues in the political sphere where I had become involved resulted in my immobility at a certain point. Men, by placing their personal benefit and personal ambitions above everything else, overtook me. I understood very late that I had to adopt this male behaviour to ¨survive¨ in the male dominant political party arena."

Women are obliged to adopt male behaviour to "survive" in the political life. Aphrodite (2) had the same experience, and said:

> "I tried to remain myself and without orders and icy behaviour to cooperated with my colleagues. I was disappointed because I found that the different approach was being exploited instead of appreciated and I was obliged to adopt some of the behaviours of my male predecessors."

Sophia (4) agreeing said:

> "I have the impression that for the time being we are mimicking male models and this is in order to survive. It is not in women's nature but the pressure not to be left behind obliges you to copy in order to feel and prove that you are the same. At meetings if you are the chairwoman of a committee of men and women you must be the iron lady to impose yourself and become established."

On the other hand, Artemis (3) disagrees and says:

"No, it is a mistake and I disagree with the slogan that there are women copying men and others who are developing their own style. There are male models and there are no female models due to the recent incorporation of women in the labour market and leadership positions. Certainly they will be influenced by the male style that they are used to seeing and experiencing until another style is established that will characterise the majority of women and will express their sensitivities and characteristics."

Justifiably women are mimicking male models and behaviours, since these models were dominant for centuries. It is for this reason that the number of women in responsible positions must increase, female models and female behaviour that suits them must be developed.

The question concerning the leadership model and whether there are male and female models seems to have caused the most disagreements among the women of our study. Electra (10) said:

"We are all equal but we are not the same. Everyone must maintain their own qualities, their own identity and abilities. However, we are functioning according to models. At the same time women must leave their own mark and not try to copy male models and behaviours. It is only in this manner that she will show that she is different."

While Iphigenia commented:

"Some women mimic men and other adopt a subtle style, different, without the wooden language of men, such as Thatcher. Today we have Diamantopoulou, Bakoyiannis with another style that satisfies me. They are not tough and aggressive and do not remind you of men. However, there is not yet an established female model. Some adopt the male model and some try to maintain their female charismas and sensitivities, and develop their own leadership style."

Due to the lack of a female model, women are seeking the model that will establish them but may not suit them.

Artemis (3) strongly disagreed that there is a female model, saying:

> "I do not agree that women are more peace-loving etc. I disagree with the results of various scientific research/studies and I do not believe that there exists a specific leadership style for women."

The women are divided in their views with the majority agreeing that they were obliged to adopt some male behaviours, some elements from the male model that is more aggressive, but seems to work. The more women that manage to climb to leadership positions the more the existing image on the model of leadership that must be adopted will change.

3.3 Family responsibilities

All the women agreed that the men will benefit if they become involved with their children. They added that the younger generation seems to be making a supererogation, some compromises and sharing the housework, not as they were taught, but in the manner they feel they will reconcile their family and professional responsibilities. Although the husbands of the sample's women did not take on their share of the family responsibilities, the women believe that even their moral support and encouragement helped them carry on. The exclusive care of family responsibilities was on their shoulders. They all said that women's entry into the public sphere was not accompanied by proportional policies to help them reconcile their family and professional responsibilities. They also believe that as long as women are burdened with multiple duties as working women, mothers, housewives and wives, the men will be more privileged, since they have the luxury to leave work and return home to rest, where their working wife will take care of them. Another common view was that the role of the family is equally important to school and in this environment everyone has a say and a role to play. (More details on each woman are given in annexes VI and VII).

As Sophia (4) said:

> "When you do not experience the discrimination it is difficult to conceive and understand the problem and struggle to lift it. It is only when you experience it that you want to change things. Men do not face these discriminations and that is why they cannot understand the burden of women."

To the question how they managed to share the responsibilities in their family, Aphrodite's (2) answer was:

> "They were not shared. I just took on everything since I got tired of nagging and pleading for him to undertake part of the responsibilities and that was exhausting, tiring and pestiferous."

Sophia (4), who married while she was studying, gave her own experience:

> "We were abroad with my husband after our graduation from the university where my husband did his postgraduate studies. We already had two children and the responsibility of the house and the childcare was mine. However no one thought that I also had a right in this process and that I could follow postgraduate studies. Even I had not seen it from this point of view. I considered that my husband should advance. It was a process that sweeps you along... the woman at home... and the man proceeding. It did not bother me then, but today it does... and it hurts me. I was not experiencing discrimination in the home environment as long as we were studying. On returning to Cyprus, he stopped helping me. He adapted to the facts of the Cypriot society, he was embarrassed to do things he did abroad, e.g. hanging out and taking in the washing. His answer was "Don't even think about it, we are in Cyprus now and someone will see us and laugh and make fun of me.""

Several of the sample's women said that there was financial prosperity and this gave them free time and the opportunity to choose whether to become involved or not, arranging the care of the children and the cleanliness of the house. Sophia (4) said:

> "I had to turn 45 years old to run for a parliamentary seat. When I was a candidate I felt that I was far from my children. I did not seek any office previously, apart from my work at the party. When I see my colleagues, with whom we started together or that came after me, I see that they have advanced much further than I have, because I had an extra role to play and they only had their job and politics. But I never regretted giving birth to my children because I became a mother and lost a fast climb up the ladder. Of course men don't know what they are missing. We women know what we are gaining. That is why the proper facilities must be established. Men do not have these dilemmas and thus pass women even if the women are much more capable than them. Men, without stress or guilt, carry out their pre-election campaign and, on returning home in the evening, will find it clean, will find cooked food, if not served, the children will have finished their homework and will have been bathed."

All agreed that the existence of childcare structures gives more time and energy to the parents and especially the women and gives them the opportunity to become involved in the public sphere. They also said that the family significantly contributes to the reproduction or abolition of negative concepts and stereotypes against women and sets sound foundations.

Hera (5) said with disappointment:

> "Whatever the husband does he does by chance and sporadically. I had to fight. Even my in-laws did not want me to work, since we did not have any financial need. I had to

struggle. I belong to the transition generation. I myself believed a lot in what I am doing. Other women I studied with chose to stay at home. Of course I have help at home. I do not demand from my daughter to do housework because she is a girl. If I didn't have any help everything would be on me and I want my house clean. No matter how high women climb, they carry with them the negative stereotypes of the society regarding the roles of the two genders. The responsibility of the house is on their shoulders."

The reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities is the greatest obstacle of women either to enter the labour market or advance in any sector they are involved in. The European Union in this sector, apart from funding European programmes on this issue, has not adopted any directive that would be binding for member states. In this manner, the governments would be obliged to adopt some drastic measures. The development of childcare structures, which is one of the aims of the Lisbon Strategy, has not yet become reality in the member states.

However, it appears that the women themselves can help in this sector, by avoiding reproducing concepts on the roles of the two genders in their own family. Of course the contribution of the father is necessary so as not to create incorrect models for his children.

Iphigenia (7) said:

"I did not separate boyish and girlish behaviour in my house, but I tried to bring them up the same and for both children to help. However, the model of the father influenced the son, who got the impression that men do not do housework. Furthermore, through friends and nursery school, the children began to separate games into boyish and girlish."

All the women of the sample agreed that this effort must be collective in order to bring about results and not isolated cases. The stereotype concepts, even if they

are not cultivated within the home, unavoidably seem to affect all which is being promoted and adopted through other families and the school environment.

Electra (10) said:

> "The role of the family is a key to the future course of the two genders. The parents must not separate the roles according to gender, either between themselves or between the children. On the contrary, they must cultivate equality and equal treatment."

They also believe that the support of the close family is a precondition for a woman to become actively involved either in politics or anywhere else she may be of service. Furthermore, the provision of help in cleaning the house and childcare helps career women greatly. As Sophia (4) said:

> "The stress of women regarding family responsibilities does not substantively begin when they come home but while they are at work thinking about what they have to do when they get home. For a woman, a career and extra hours of voluntary work is a personal and family cost."

Moreover, as Electra (10) said:

> "The woman manages with personal sacrifices, as long as she wants to and dares to. She has unbelievable strength, patience and endurance."

Summarising what the women said, we record the fact that the consequences on the women who decide to become active in the public sphere are adverse, since the put yet another burden on their shoulders, without receiving the relative help from the husband or the state. However, it is important for the choice of women to be approved by their social environment, irrespective if it will help them in practice. However, even in the case that there is a reaction from the close family sphere, unfortunately women face the problem of reconciling professional and

family responsibilities. It is a very difficult task to reconcile family and professional responsibilities for working women. It is even more difficult for women who do not have a set working time, if they are working for and providing services to an organisation. However, the support of the partner, even moral, is very important and acts as a catalyst. Most women of the sample believe that most men are more privileged, since they do not have the exclusive responsibility of the house and the children, even some specific responsibilities of the house and the children.

3.4 Assessment of contribution

Each of the women of the sample feels that she made her own contribution to the course for gender equality in the Cypriot society, either in the political/trade union/women's sphere they belong to or collectively in the Cypriot society. Rea (6), the eldest of the women, pioneered in creating the first women's organisation in a time when there were no political party or trade union organisations in the sector of the protection of working women's rights. As she characteristically said:

> "Teachers in my time (circa 1940) must be single in order to be allowed to work. I knew a teacher who was engaged for 15 years and would not marry so that she could continue to exercise her vocation. Also, their salary was less than the male teachers. As an organisation of democratic women, we demanded equal pay and the right to marry and work, and we obtained this from the government of the British colonial rule. Furthermore, nurses had unequal salaries and we put them on strike and they won equal pay with the men."

All the women with great modesty (it is difficult for them to speak about this issue) said they contributed to the sector of promoting gender equality, either by promoting legislation or with information and education for women about their rights. They left their own mark and made their own positive contribution to gender equality issues in the Cypriot society in very tough conditions. Artemis (3) commented:

"I think I placed my own little pebble so that we could make five steps forward. We are a tired generation of women of the invasion. We violently entered a male dominated labour market with low wages, no maternity leave etc, after the Turkish invasion, as a reserve workforce, and later we struggled to achieve equal rights. We were not given time to prepare the ground. We took the burden to make legislation, modernise legislation and it is not due to Europe, it just happened faster due to our accession. Our struggles helped very much. Before I close my cycle, I would like to see the practical implementation of the laws. I hope that over the next ten years we will see it."

Many of the sample's women believe that the gain of their whole contribution was the upgrading of equality issues within their own organisation or political sphere. Others believe that a positive fact is the reversal of the image of male professions they have conquered. Athena (1) said characteristically:

"Things also changed in Parliament, this issue is being promoted there as well, while it wasn't before. Without having reached the longed for aim. We see... that male MPs have begun to change their stance, concepts and attitude. The insistence and continuous struggle are bearing fruit. You should not give up but insist and not be disheartened. In any position, you must try methodically and with persistence."

Iphigenia's (7) words are also very characteristic:

"Along with my old and new friends who are involved, we followed the tactic that power is in unity. We brought a new ethos of cooperation and communication. Men did not manage so well in this sector. We worked undefended with the other organisations of other political parties and we had a single voice in our common demands for the promotion of gender equality."

Artemis (3) feels that:

> "I placed my own little pebble in improving the status of women, even though we have not yet reached the longed for result. Women's rights today are given but in the 30s women were shut at home, dependent on the word of the brother, the father, the husband, and could not have her own say. No one could imagine that by 1960 she would obtain the right to vote, be voted, study etc. I feel very satisfied because I gave much to women with my example. Today she has the same constitutional rights as men. The woman's problem needs men to cooperate. Woman today is a financial factor etc."

Ino (9) full of confidence said:

> "I offered the model of what you can be when you are a woman, do your own things without this meaning that you are competing against men. I have advised many women to change, not to be embarrassed and dare. In the associations I participate in I have brought down the establishment of men and let them know that I was not a competitor... and I did not wish to grab their positions. Every successful woman is a model for some others and this is a positive step. They can have their own successful professional life, as possibly their husbands, without diminishing the brilliance of the husbands."

However, at the same time the working mothers of the sample feel they deprived their family of their physical presence.

> "I didn't give my children the attention I wanted to, even if I was the invisible eye and I watched them in my own way and gave them foundations, I believe."

Iphigenia (7) said full of guild.

Athena (1) said with sorrow and regret that:

"Some things you dreamt about doing and didn't. I could have been closer to my children and there is my deficit. That is why I support the all-day school. So that the parents have a creative activity for their children and can utilise their time elsewhere as well."

In conclusion, it appears that these women have struggled and achieved much for gender equality in the Cypriot society. At the same time, these active women feel guilty for not given all that they wished to their children due to lack of time. The price paid by women who decide to have a family and become involved in politics and have a career is double. On the one hand, what they have struggled for within the home, the family or party sphere, and at the same time the psychological stress, the regret and guilt for the little time they dedicate to their children.

4 School environment experiences

The distinction of boys and girls in school books was intense, as well as through the behaviour of the teachers, who maintained and reproduced gender discrimination.

4.1 Primary education

Several women of the sample did not go to school with boys, not even in primary school, since there were boy and girl schools. Generally the society was stricter regarding the dress code for girls and their behaviour. The girls learned to be obedient, polite, to know what they should about caring for the home (cleanliness, cooking etc). As Iphigenia (7) said very characteristically:

"There was a girls' school and a boys' school which were next door to each other with a common playground and a division ¨a sort of green line".

All women agreed that the predetermined social roles for the two genders are reproduced from childhood within the home and at school, through schoolbooks. The children, boys and girls, by entering the school environment, are taught through schoolbooks and by the teachers themselves the social differences of the two genders and the roles they have in the house. The separation of girls and boys itself determined may different roles due to gender. The schoolbooks not only equipped the children with knowledge but also determined the social roles of the two genders, describing the everyday life of men providers and women housewives and mothers. The school environment of primary school maintained and sustained the concepts on the roles of the two genders. They boys did not attend housekeeping class, since it was a woman's duty, and studied gardening, a job many women did for free in their own gardens or fields. Until recently, the prolonging of the discrimination with the distinction of professions into female and male and the exclusion of one of the two genders from some professions, was implemented. As Artemis (3) said:

> "There was discrimination, different seats for boys and other seats for girls. Their punishment was to sit with the opposite sex and be laughed at".

As Sophia (4) also said:

> "I characteristically remember the girls cooking in housekeeping to host our male classmates" .

While Electra (10) added:

> "Through the schoolbooks in primary school women were prepared with the traditional form of the mother, without wishing to underestimate this form. These stereotypes are recycled and reproduced in school."

The school environment of primary education cultivated and reproduced the given social roles for the two genders. Despite efforts made over the past few years to change the schoolbooks, in order to promote men and women on an

equal basis, the attitudes and concepts of the teachers themselves do not help to reverse this situation.

4.2 Secondary education

At high school (six classes for all) things were better, it appears through the statements of the women, especially if they were fortunate enough to have progressive teachers, with whom they could speak freely. The following words of Electra (10) are very characteristic, who offered very much to gender equality from all the posts of responsibility she passed:

> "I received the prize at high school for supporting the non involvement of women in the political life and won it with convincing arguments. That women should stay at home in order to balance the two roles. I did not believe that women were being excluded, but I doubted how they would manage with so many responsibilities."

Penelope said very sternly:

> "A woman needs faith, will and to be open to change and reversals, which she should see positively and build on them. A very important role is played by the models of the teachers, the professors, outside the family. The school recycles and reproduces stereotypes that affect the life of children in a negative manner regarding the social roles of men and women."

Furthermore, those who had graduated from mixed schools described in a very intense way the distinction of boys and girls at high school.

> "I had intense objections to what we were being taught. Not to talk to boys, dress modestly... and it annoyed me. They didn't allow you to discuss or disagree. You did not have the right to have your own opinion," Ino (9) said.

Hera (5) stated with emphasis:

> "I was very shocked by our sheer separation from the boys when I went to high school. My group of friends was boys and suddenly I had to stay away from them and not even greet them when I went to high school. The school plays a very important role and I am not sure that it Plays the role it should. The teachers need to be informed and educated on equality issues."

There were different courses of study, almost prohibitive for girls, since at that time those who decided to follow them had to attend a boys' school and this fact averted parents from sending their girls to a male school environment. This situation, although more concealed, continued until recently and for example in their majority men did not choose to become nursery school teachers or beauticians and women did not choose professions such as plumbers, builders, electricians etc.

The distance the two genders had to keep, friendship only with their own genders, and the severe punishment imposed created "internal disputes", since the children did not dare protest. Iphigenia (7) very characteristically said:

> "You couldn't even talk to your brother out of fear of punishment. Next to my school was the school my brother attended and during the breaks just a fence separated us and I must not talk to him if I met him. "

All the women agreed that the massive entrance of girls into secondary education opened up horizons for the following changes in these unjustified distinctions between boys and girls. Of course other phenomena continued which reproduced the stereotypes of the two genders, such as the fact that boys took the practical direction and the girls classical.

Several women of the sample that studied at mixed schools pursued positions even that of class leader, and managed to get elected. As Sophia (4) characteristically said:

> ¨I may have been a ¨bad example¨ for that time, since in all high school classes I was elected class leader.¨

Also Penelope (8) said:

> "Through the directions followed by the two genders, the results of their given roles became apparent. However, no one talked about something different. Everything was considered given and normal."

While Athena (1) said characteristically:

> "The courses of study had their gender for many years, some even to date."

All the women agreed that the role of the teaching environment and the teachers is tremendous in forming the character of the children and in achieving gender equality, and even not the necessary attention and priority should be given to this issue. The school environment determines after the family the acquired social characteristics of people and that is why stereotypes, prejudice and concepts on the role of men and women should not be cultivated, but equality should be promoted and equal opportunities given.

4.3 Higher education

In the environment of higher education - which however few women reached - there were no apparent, at least, different roles. Higher education did not cultivate and did not reproduce concepts and stereotypes regarding the role of the two genders. All women of the sample said that the felt equal in this school environment and did not experience discrimination against them due to their gender. Sophia (4) very characteristically said:

"When I was a student I was against women's organisations because I did not see the reason for their existence."

Electra (10) described her student life in a very colourful manner as follows:

"The university was one of the most important stops of my life. Law teaches you to place a comma and continue, not a full stop. A woman should never put a full stop in her course, only a comma and... start again, continue. The university is a very important stop in people's lives and especially women's. "

As some of the women of the sample said, at law school in 1965-1970 there were few women and there was still a dominance of men in the number of students, while in the philosophical school there were many women. As Penelope (8) also characteristically said:

"In education women proceed possibly because, determining the roles for women, they follow. The concepts cultivated in education led to different choices for course studies. Philosophy was a woman's sector and law a man's, mostly."

Closing this chapter, we can say that the school environment in almost all its levels played and plays until today a catalyst role regarding gender equality. The teachers themselves must be educated on gender equality issues, so that they do not prolong stereotypes and concepts, and every kind of direct or indirect discrimination against women should be removed from the schoolbooks.

5. The role of political parties/women's organisations and masters

From the facts of the research it appears that the role of the political parties, the women's organisations and those in charge of drafting policies is very important.

5.1 The role of women's organisations

The views of the women on the role of women's organisations differ quite a bit, since the women who are not members of women's organisations or are must members feel that some things should change. so that they are not so intensely linked to the political parties and can exercise public criticism. But even the women who lead women's organisations admitted that they could function better if they were more independent.

As Electra (10) said:

> "I am afraid that they are incorporated in the context of a party and function in a party framework. We could have better results. They could function more effectively. We could become unpleasant but shed light on the ugly sides We must begin from the real facts and try within the party to see their right basis. To function substantively and not beautify things. The majority of women's organisations of Cyprus are incorporated in the framework of a party and function in a party context. They do not exercise the criticism they should and do not gather to publicly protest situations that occur in almost all parties and are marginalised and exploited, while they constitute 51% of the population."

Aphrodite (2) had the same opinion, which she mentioned with disappointment:

> "They tolerate and undertake clearly women's traditional roles within the parties and in this way help men to advance and be elected than women. Within the party sphere they do not speak words that would change situations in their favour. In their effort to help the party and unintentionally, they continue to prolong the reproduction of concepts and stereotypes instead of changing the situation. The involved women must develop critical speech in order to awaken the conscience and change situations and attitudes. Otherwise, the results will be to the detriment of the women themselves. Their role should be double. on the One hand their advancement and on the other hand helping women

to enter advance on an equal basis as men in party decision making bodies and in the political life in general. Women need mentoring and this was never demanded by any party, any organisation. It must become a demand and be understood by the political parties if they really want a substantive/active role to be played by women and not just the vote of 52% of the population of Cyprus. "

Electra (10), agreeing with Aphrodite (2), said:

"For men politics were considered a related issue, while women still proceed, taking on additional responsibilities. In the family equality does not function and this means that whatever women do is extra and counts as a decision. Women themselves must be ready to promote her own positions and she must see that she has a role to play. Women are burdened with multiple duties and their active involvement means additional responsibilities. Steps are being made in given frameworks. Women must be supported more since they were absent. It has not become a conviction, we have yet to believe in women. We do not vote for women. The competitiveness of women functions and must be overcome. Those in charge have not believed in women. They do not support or promote the women. They cannot conceive that their longstanding absence from public life has made them secondary, and that they should support and trust them. "

So the views differ from those of the majority that it is time to change tactics in the women's movement regarding the tolerance they show to the political parties.

5.2 Masters

In this study the term masters refers to government departments and state institutions with a responsibility to promote gender equality in the Cypriot society, and within the government itself, which determines the policies it will implement.

Electra (10) very characteristically and bitterly said:

> "There is no political will and proof of this is the fact that there is no woman Minister, no woman was every president of the Educational Service Committee and the Public Service Committee. Women must be tried in order to show that they are worthy. Is it from birth... are her genes to blame that she is not capable or maybe she was made that way? Inequality is different from discrimination. It exists in the real space and we are talking about outdated concepts and stereotypes. There is prejudice. At some point women were just a sample. I don't know how much we have advanced. The critical mass of women has not passed into public office. Let alone that which is not evident at first sight. Women should be tried. Women are half the sky and earth and are not a vulnerable group or a minority and that is how we should see it, it is not feministic, it is real. I was chosen because I am a woman, it suited them. The majority of women is in the margin and it is not foreseen that things will change any time soon."

Aphrodite's (2) statements were along the same lines:

> "There is no political will on behalf of the government. It is an issue of attitude and this cannot be. The government itself does not give a good example by appointing women Ministers and more women in male dominated positions. They tolerate the under-representation of women, while on the other hand Cyprus did its duty and harmonised its legislation with the acquis communautaire."

The sample's women are disappointed by the role those in charge of policy are playing in the sector of gender equality and with anxiety acknowledge that this European aim will unfortunately take a long time to become reality in Cyprus.

5.3 The role of the parties

Through the same data we collected it appears that women that have become actively involved in politics have to face men as associates and competitors at the same time, as well as the concepts of women themselves, who bear attitudes and stereotypes of past centuries, and do not trust women in politics. Sophia (4) said with bitterness and also satisfaction, and expresses all women of the sample:

"I fought within the party. I was the first woman member of the political bureau and I swore that by the next term I would not be alone. I achieved the adoption of the quota and the elected women increased in decision making bodies in my party. Of course the men still advance faster than the women. Today I am an MP and this occurred through hardship. Today I live the experience that I must work twice as hard to prove that I was worthy to enter the parliament, although I had a course of 32 years behind me. My involvement in the public sphere was a mixture of circumstances. But it is something that fulfills me, pleases me. For what women are doing in the party, I gave a battle. I remember there were 20 men and one woman (me) members of the political bureau and they wanted me to make them coffees because I am a woman. I became unpleasant with my behaviour in order to prove to them that I am here, an equal, and not to make you coffee. There are such hubs and we must fight them. Also, teas were organised for men to come and talk to us so we would vote for them. Even the tea gives off an air of discrimination, since they linked women to tea and men to lectures. It annoys me that we are the bad side of the company, we must argue with them and make men say ok take it and leave us alone, be quite. Women give a hard struggle to advance in male dominant parties. They are not fighting just to advance but to change the establishment and longstanding stereotypes. Even the quotas that are helpful in the advancement of women are faced negatively by the women themselves and the men, who believe that enough have joined and it is time to withdraw this measure.

Furthermore, it appeared that it acts negatively, since women do not vote for them because a percentage will be elected anyway with the quota. Men advance much faster and they do not need to prove that they are worthy. Women also have to struggle for other women in order to enhance their voice. But determination is necessary and one must not give up but continue to struggle. Refusing to see the establishment and not allowing to be exploited for work men believe suit women, e.g. make coffee or clean up etc."

Also Iphigenia (7) who experienced the competition of election processes and indeed between men and women when women started demanding either party or state offices, said:

"I experienced first hand the reservation and lack of trust of women voters towards women candidates when I was president of a women's organisation. I acknowledge however and justify women because that is how they grew up, that is what they learned, but I do not forgive the men who do not wish to share the pie."

The road to achieving gender equality in political life was and will not be easy. The absence of balanced participation of women in the country's political life is and remains the aim of women's organisations until the reversal of this unequal situation.

6. Current reality

As several women of the sample said, men and women in the Cypriot society have learned to see men in the public and political life and this perpetuates the attitude that exists. Thus mostly men are voted for and some women who have proven that they are worthy and are considered to be equal to men. Indeed the consider the absence of social infrastructure that would reconcile family and professional responsibilities on the one hand and the absence of bodies offering training and seminars to boost their confidence as non helpful in achieving gender equality, since an degraded status of women is maintained in all sectors.

They also believe that women hesitate to demand due to increased family responsibilities. Even though it is acknowledged that progress has been made and things are much better now, they say that the figures show that there are equal opportunities but they are not given. Several said that there was never political will, that is why they believe that struggles are necessary and important until the full achievement of gender equality. As Sophia (4) said:

> "Their refusal is justified because an active woman feels she has struggled but understands that it is very hard to be justified and elected. They are anxious about their image after the elections. We see worthy women not elected even municipal councilors and other persons elected who are not as worthy. Thus they will not tolerate their image crumpled again. They submit their candidacy once and do not dare again. They know beforehand that they have lost. Unfortunately there is no mechanism to help worthy people to be elected. Furthermore, the number of well known women is very small. It is imperative that the establishment is changed, and especially the attitude within the political parties. They must find mechanisms to encourage women and help them. They must cultivate awareness and not just feel that they will seem modern parties if they have women candidates. "

Iphigenia (7) said with disappointment:

"They must believe in themselves. They must not fight each other. We are competitive and envious. Women prefer a male boss. They have insecurities and do not trust women. Women are competitive and very strict with women. The situation is disappointing. It is a matter of attitude and low self confidence. This cannot be corrected by any legislation. It is an issue of experiences, it needs time. They want to be perfect, infallible and are very strict with themselves even when they are better qualified. At meetings, in order to open our mouths and not be laughed at, we must be 1000% sure that we know the subject. We must learn to help each other, support each other. Seminars don't help. Everything must be examined to change attitude. Low esteem is a women's trait. Changing attitudes will

help men undertake their share of the house and child upbringing and women to gain more self confidence."

Aphrodite (2) noted:

"Women's interest in becoming involved in public life is low, since the party structures are based on male models and make women's entrance difficult. The days and times of meetings are prohibitive for most women and especially for those with children."

Most women of the sample agreed that the more women involved in public life, the more the concept that politics and responsible posts belong to men will change. All women said that today women's status is clearly better than a few years ago, since the legislative framework has been improved, but much more has to be done yet on this issue. They referred to the inequality of pay and other inequalities in the labour market and the absence of facilities for working mothers. The latter is considered by all women of the sample to be the largest obstacle to the course of a working mother, who wants to become involved in the political life. As Sophia (4) mentioned:

"We have made many steps, women are entering the labour market at higher rates. I am disturbed by the link of the low birth rate with the entrance of women into the labour market. Measures must be taken to assist women in reconciling family and professional responsibilities. We still have a long way to go to change the attitude, the education, because we should form the new generation properly. They are like putty and we must give attention to the way we influence and enlighten the new generation. E.g. lectures at schools, in the army etc. We need much work, the decision making centres. The figures are not fit for rejoicing but we have entered a procedure that can change things. We on the inside must teach women not to push the ladder away but to want it near them. They must learn to demand equal treatment. Laws are a tool in our

hands. But we will be at a crucial stage until what we have achieved is accepted by all."

Iphigenia *(7)* said:

"Much has been done in the participation of women in employment, their participation in political parties. The people have begun to accept women politicians and women in work due to financial problems. The society accepts every arrangement that is made to the benefit of women, as long as the interests of men are not harmed, otherwise they tense up and turn against them."

All women agreed that nothing is given free and that continuous struggles are necessary to achieve things and, as Artemis (3) characteristically said:

"The situation has improved greatly and this is due to the progressive movement and the struggles of women themselves. Nothing is given free and nothing occurs by chance. Everything is gained through struggles. The new order says wait and you shall receive. You get everything through battle. The women's movement has offered much to Cyprus and other countries of the world. Nothing is given away. The struggles bear fruit and you must not give up. Only with the struggles of the women's movement and the gradual change of concepts and attitudes is the promotion of gender equality achieved. "

Ino (9) said:

"Women have progressed, they demand but I am not sure if they demand correctly because they become competitors and adopt the male form of thought. They must adopt a new culture and not be pleased just because they have a man's position. Many times women proceed but do not follow a new culture to show their diversity, their skills and their sensitivities. In the private sector, they are given but the women themselves request exemptions from shifts, extra hours

etc. Due to the difficult task of combining family and professional responsibilities, they refuse to work additional hours or try to find a replacement etc and this leads to the picture that women do not wish to work for personal and not family reasons".

The majority of women also agreed that the public opinion is influenced by the mass media which many times do not show positive female models or women who truly contribute. They believe that their role is very important and that they must revise their policy in order to help achieve equality. The mass media agree that they were rightly called the fourth authority, since they manage to influence the public opinion, but unfortunately they do not always promote the worthy people but for their own reasons and interests many times promote persons who have not worked hard but manage to stay on the surface. They also agree that measures are not taken and policies are not implemented that are friendly and encouraging to women, and that women who have succeeded and in general positive female models in all sectors must be promoted, so that another image of women is established and gradually the existing concepts will change.

It is also acknowledged that the situation is clearly improved compared to previous years and that much more is necessary before achieving the full equality between men and women. So there is today an improved legislative framework, which allows for demands for its practical implementation. However, at the same time it also demands awareness campaigns for men and women regarding the existence of these laws and their rights emanating from them. The improved image of the Cypriot woman regarding her educational level will facilitate the faster implementation of this aim.

6.1 Views, stances, convictions, attitudes

All women of the sample agree that the family responsibilities are almost totally a woman's job and this is the greatest obstacle to women demanding as men. They also agree that measures to reconcile the family and work and the adoption of positive actions will greatly improve the current situation. They believe that

the existing attitudes on the social roles of men and women as a serious obstacle and that talking reconciliation measures would help free time for women. Furthermore, regarding the existing notion that politics are a man's affair, since they have been dominating the public sphere for a series of centuries, while women recently began to shyly come out of the private sphere. Electra (10) said:

> "It must become a common conviction that concerns both. It does not mean that they will share everything but they will make an arrangement. Apart from the change of the existing attitude, an internal arrangement within the family is needed."

Artemis (3) had a different opinion:

> "Participation for me is involvement in the public life, the daily battle of people for higher wages, the daily battles, and women are not absent from these and are not lacking. They are absent however from decision making bodies. There are fewer positive female models and if they are not increased the problems will persist. Woman was always present in all struggles. She is only behind in the political life and positions of responsibility. The positive female models must increase so that the problems begin to lessen. The culture existing in the Cypriot society must change. Things will change to the better for certain but time is needed."

There is also agreement in the fact that the concepts and stereotypes are so established in the Cypriot society that it is difficult to change them from one day to another and enough time is needed to change them and great effort from the women's organisations, the political parties and in general all those responsible. Their assessment on the participation of women in the country's political life is that the representation of women is very poor. They believe that as the number of active women in the political life grows, so it will help banish the negative concepts and stereotypes that exist. They also agree that more women are needed in key positions and must be promoted equally to men and that proper enlightenment is necessary from the family and school.

Sophia (4) said characteristically:

> "Politics was always considered a male "job". It is a concept that will slowly break over time. As it happened with the male dominant professions that are slowly being conquered by women. It is an area clearly male dominant. "

As Electra (10) said:

> "Women do not have the support of either men or women. There are no sectors where a woman cannot manage. Men do not face opposition and doubts about whether they will manage or not. The necessary structures must be created for the care of children and the elderly. Furthermore, women must trust their powers and capabilities and trust other women. They easily accept a non capable man rather than a capable woman. Women must firstly prove that they are worthy, that they are capable and then be trusted."

Summarising the points that most women agreed on, the following are the most prevailing axles that the problem is based on:

a. The concepts and attitudes on women's status
b. The lack of self confidence
c. Family responsibilities
d. The absence of family friendly policies
e. The non promotion of positive female models

They agree that the society is missing a source that can enrich public speech and that talents and skills are being left unexploited, and that the society is being deprived. They also believe that the cultivation of a culture in men that they will have a persona gain by becoming involved in the care of their children will

change the forming of roles within the family and the society in general. It is also imperative to promote many positive female models.

6.2 Monitoring mechanisms

All women agreed that the ineffectiveness of existing monitoring mechanisms and promotion of women's rights in Cyprus leads to disappointment and the non practical implementation of legislation. All women consider the effectiveness of existing monitoring mechanisms and promotion of women's rights as average. They believe that its is necessary to staff them and train the inspectors appointed with an aim to monitor and promote the practical implementation of the legislation so that they can help and be effective and be trusted by those persons who are discriminated against due to their gender. However, they acknowledge as a positive step the fact that these institutions exist, but believe that it is necessary to strengthen them with staff that is conscious about gender equality issues and is fully trained to handle complaints. All agreed that the institution of the Ombudsman can carry out its role correctly and has proved it. Ino (9) said:

"These mechanisms must be within the same business, each one separately".

Athena (1) added:

"Security valves visible to the society and that protect women are necessary. It is not enough to say your problem but the mechanisms must act preventatively. They must carry out checks themselves and women must not be at risk if they make a complaint."

Aphrodite said:

"The monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the law need political will in order to be effective. From the moment that we as a

society tolerate the existence of discrimination and the non effective functioning of the mechanisms Europe obliged us to adopt, it is proven that it does not exist."

Also, the majority of the women agreed that the mechanisms must be reevaluated in order to adapt and become more effective and that the Cypriot society has not established their effectiveness. They also suggest the assessment of the mechanisms at regular intervals and to correct their gaps or weaknesses.

7. Future prospects

All women expressed disappointment since they feel that many years are still needed to fully achieve the aim of gender equality. This disappointment emanates from the experiences and struggles the women's movement is giving and the small and slow but important and steady steps made in this direction. As Penelope (8) said:

> "We need a lot of work and there is a long way ahead. The laws must become the property of the women, they must be encouraged to demand and the state must develop policies that will help women and the family. The prospects for the immediate future are not optimistic. However, there is hope for the future. There is ignorance in many women about their rights emanating from the harmonisation legislation. The state has not developed policies in this direction and has not shown political will. Women need more than laws and theories, they need to strengthen their self confidence, encouragement and the state must show in practice that it truly seeks to achieve gender equality in all sectors."

Sophia (4) said:

> "The struggle must turn to the information of women to convince them to demand and create the security valves so that they are not afraid to

demand. They must be helped to open a new window to society. Women who demand are 25-30 years old without any family obligations and there is a gap between 30-40 when they do not demand and then after 40 they demand".

The promotion of issues of gender equality depends on the political circumstances, as many women said. They believe that some governments see them in theory and others promote them in practice, and that the women's movement is not far from the sociopolitical environment. They agree that the ideological approach of each government affects the promotion of equality issues.

Electra (10) said strongly:

"Women should be rid of her own stereotypes. The price may be loneliness. She must not pretend in roles that don's suit her. She must seek her own identity. We want new policies, new judgement, a new view that must form and promote correctly. That which for a man is given for a woman is a daily struggle. Europe gives us many opportunities. Quality in equality. Her own identity. We do not want numerical equality. We want roles that suit them. We must convince and give proof. Equality does not end, it is conquered every day, we must not stop, we must continue. We must not fear confrontation, we must try to show our capacities. Women themselves must be helped to abolish concepts and stereotypes that were cultivated in them by the family and school environment. They must leave their own mark and not mimic men. They must convince that they have and can give something different. They must not be afraid of confrontation and try and show their capabilities."

Women need strengthening of their self confidence and they will become more daring and decisive. They must realise that nothing is granted and that

family responsibilities belong to both parents. They can change attitudes and concepts, beginning from within their own family.

Penelope (8) said with emphasis:

> "A flexible timetable adapted to the needs of working women is necessary, in order to help them become active in other sectors as well, apart from work and family".

As Sophia (4) said:

> "The immediate future is not so optimistic, even if the necessary political decisions are taken today. Optimism must take the place of pessimism with the appropriate policies from all involved sides and institutions/parties. The society is to blame and not men, because they grew up with negative concepts, models in the family etc. Things must change at school regarding the culture adopted and reproduced and the models they present to children. Also the press and generally the mass media. I am not in favour of slogans but indirectly they can change things, promoting positive models."

There is a pessimism regarding the future prospects of gender equality, mainly as regards time. Most women of the sample are sure that the situation will improve but at a very slow rate.

8. The profile of women in the research who hold key positions in the public life of Cyprus

In ANNEX II.doc a summarised sketch of the women's profile is made, based on their external and internal characteristics, based on their experience and other factors that helped develop the specific profile, and we observe that:

During their childhood until primary school, most experienced gender discrimination both within their close family environment and at school. These

discriminations concerned the gender distribution of family responsibilities with the mother lifting their greatest load, and the cultivation, maintenance and reproduction of these stereotypes through schoolbooks, and the teachings. At the same time, they were active, dynamic and reacted to certain situations that were unfair either to themselves or to other children. For most their ideal was their beloved father. In the period from high school to university, the gender division is recorded both in the family and the school environment. At this age, most women became active in student councils and organisations. The older women who studied in lyceums during British colonial rule were actively involved in the national liberation struggle, participating in protests etc.

Most women are university graduates, married with children. After the creation of their own family and giving birth to children, none has shared her family duties with the husband, due to existing concepts in the Cypriot society regarding the role of the two genders in the family, despite their efforts. Most have help at home from a third person and this has greatly helped them reconcile the responsibilities emanating from the family, the work and the sector in which they are active and demands extra working hours. They note that their own children did not separate roles depending on their gender. It is also recorded in the positive elements that the family and the husband were not obstacles to their advancement and at least had the moral support of the husband and his encouragement.

Their professional career was accompanied by doubt, discrimination in pay and all faced the problem of reconciling family and professional responsibilities, but managed to progress and manage. Most brought down the myth/establishment of male and female studies and dared to follow a course of study where men dominated and then exercise a profession that was until them exclusively male. Their common feature is that they pioneered in working in a male dominant profession and managed to succeed and work equally with men in the sector they chose. Some chose this position out of love for their ideological political party, in an effort to help as much as they could in the position the party called them to undertake and to create something new from the beginning. Others were given impetus by professional establishment paired with the interest for

106

something new. Finally, some were helped by family financial prosperity or family tradition in politics or business. Also, their will and determination to succeed and prove that they can make it just like men, helped them abandon the struggle and open ways not just for themselves but for other women as well.

The result of their active involvement was the fact that the managed to build a career in professions that were recently male and to change attitudes and concepts in the Cypriot society, at the same time opening new horizons for other women lawyers, legal advisors, trade unionists, politicians and businesswomen. They also managed to change attitudes and concepts within political parties, trade unions and in general wherever they worked and struggled to coexist with their male colleagues.

All are very dynamic and very punctual with their obligations. They are characterised by an intensive activity, determination and will to succeed in anything they undertake to do. They work very hard and with passion and believe in what they do. They are active citizens with a rich social and political action. They have a rich involvement in various non governmental organisations and volunteer organisations. They are interested in their fellow beings and especially women's rights and the promotion of gender equality. They are punctual, have much will and determination to succeed. They have opinions, ideas and suggestions to improve the status of women. They have much confidence in themselves and in their power. They set goals, have leadership abilities, coordinate and guide other persons. They believe that they have the ability to advance further. They are full of confidence, active, pioneering, smart, stubborn, studious and ambitious.

A negative element in this course of the women is the absence of or inadequate infrastructure friendly to working mothers, such as nursery stations, all day schools, clubs for the creative occupation of children, places for the care of the elderly etc. Neither the state nor their own family helped them reconcile their family and professional responsibilities, without taking on more responsibilities. However, they continue, despite the difficulties they met in reconciling family and work and despite the guilt and regret they felt many a time because they were

far from their children for many hours and very often. The results of the struggle of these women are obvious in the Cypriot society, despite the fact that much more work is still needed for the full achievement of gender equality. The fact is that, without their contribution, the existing situation would be much worse and the struggle would be longer.

PART THREE: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

1. Introduction

In this part we discuss the results that emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data in the previous part. At the same time an effort is made to correlate the findings that emerged from the specific research with the existing theories and theoretical models, as well as the results of previous research on the specific issue. Furthermore, issues that seem to need further research are pointed out and this part is concluded with a synopsis of the conclusions of this research attempt.

2. Discussion of results/issues for further research

The current research had set as its main research topic to sketch the profile of women holding key positions in Cyprus. The question demanded answers to many questions with the most important being the obstacles they met in their course and how they overcame them. Both through the books listed in the bibliography and the results of this research, it became apparent that, despite the continuously increasing participation of women in paid labour, the distribution of roles between spouses remains to a great extent traditional, with men lacking in undertaking their share of responsibility in family obligations.(Fischer, 2005).[76] Thus, women are burdened with a double and triple role, with minimal help from their partners, even when the latter (at least in theory) have progressive concepts regarding the distribution of family/house burdens.

The legislation[77] on gender equality, while unquestionably progressive, has not managed to change the behaviour and attitude of the society in its whole. It

---

[76] See page 20
[77] See page 34

would be useful and very helpful to undertake a coordinated effort[78] to reverse the traditional concepts on gender roles and change the attitude of men, through awareness campaigns with children and adults, the investigation of principles leading men to participate in family and house care responsibilities, and the organising of discussions. Countries such as The Netherlands, Spain, France and Portugal managed to implement this pioneering effort, through the implementation of the Alkistis Project of the Community Initiative EQUAL.

The findings of this research showed that the most important factors deterring and averting the progress of women are:

a. The existing concepts and attitudes regarding the roles of the two genders in the family and the society in general,

b. The reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities,

c. The school environment,

d. The absence of the balanced participation of women in public life, and

e. The ineffectiveness of gender equality monitoring mechanisms.

a. The existing concepts and attitudes regarding the roles of the two genders in the family and the society in general:

Regarding this factor it appears that preserving and reproducing traditional models and concepts regarding the distribution of roles between the two genders, mainly within the family, hinder or delay achieving gender equality. The existing concepts on the social roles of men and women are a serious obstacle. The difficulties women face, especially mothers, in finding and maintaining paid work, the deeply rooted prejudice, according to which women are responsible for the care of the family, and the cultural traditions, which want men to be the main providers, are factors that worsen the inequalities. The intervention of the state can be decisive in the coordination of the effort, which is the comprehensive responsibility of the society, and not the obligation of isolated organisations, groups or people. Gender mainstreaming continues to be non

---

[78] Social Policy Institute - National Centre of Social Research - Alkistis Project - CI EQUAL, September 2006

systematic, while assessments of the impact the existing systems have and the new policy proposals on the two genders are not carried out. It is worth noting that, despite the significant progress[79] achieved in the EU - especially in the field of institutions and legislation - regarding gender equality and equal opportunities, the issue of changing collecting social stances, dominant stereotypical concepts and prejudice connected to the genders remains. These concepts affect the social/personal way of thinking and behaviour and maintains the "gender limit", that is the characteristic behaviour of each gender (the welcome/socially recognised), which by rule either overstress any differences between the genders or create other "false" ones that are based on the biological characteristics of people (e.g. reproductive capacity of women). The women stressed that much work is necessary to change the existing attitude and this must be done along with a coordinated effort within the family, the school environment, the businesses, the political parties, the trade unions, and other public organisations.

b. The reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities:

It clearly appeared in the study that the family reproduced the distinction of girls and boys very intensely, especially in families which had children of both genders. These inequalities are expressed through the distinction of house jobs into male and female, irrespective of whether both parents work or not. The main responsibility remains to day with the mother for cooking, cleaning the house, washing, hanging out and gathering of washing, ironing, shopping, children's homework, and mostly the transportation of the children to and from school, private lessons and possibly the care of the elderly that live close by.

It becomes obvious that the entry of women into the public sphere was not accompanied by relative policies to help them reconcile their family and professional responsibilities. As long as women are burdened with multiple duties as working women, mothers, housewives and wives, men will of course be

---

[79] "Living to work – working to live: tomorrow's work-life balance in Europe". Background paper for the Foundation Forum 2004, Dublin, 3-4 November

considered more privileged since they have the luxury to leave work and return home to rest and be taken care of by their wives. The multiple roles with which the women are burdened tire them and scare them and as a result force them to restrict themselves to their family responsibilities, without seeking any advancement in their work.

The deficient (to inexistent) incorporation of the dimension reconciling family and work in the agenda of collective bargaining (Jajma,2001),[80] and the business culture as well as the society in general lead to the continued marginalisation of women in many sectors of the Cypriot society. On the other hand, the decline of the model of the traditional extended family and the derogation of informal support networks leave a significant gap which must be covered by other structures. The securing of adequate and quality family care will thus depend more and more on public organisations, local administration and the social sector of the economy. It was also determined through the books listed in the bibliography and the statements of the women that the family status negatively affects the decision of women to become involved in public life. The women who dared to become involved took on a tremendous load of responsibility in order to manage to reconcile their family and professional responsibilities on the one hand and to succeed in what they undertook on the other hand, in order to disperse the myths about the female gender and its capacities. The model both of the father and the mother in the house influences the concepts and the stance of the children and it is very important for the parents to be informed on issues concerning gender equality and, having gradually changed the concepts and attitudes, not reproduce them, no matter how many negative experiences they had due to their gender. In this way, the gradual promotion of gender equality in the family and consequently the society as a whole will be achieved. It also appeared that the support of the husband is very important for a woman to continue to be active in the sector she selected, even it this is restricted to moral support in the form of encouragement and avoiding to create disputes because the wife is absent for many hours, dedicating time to the sector she chose to become involved in.

---

[80] Βλέπε σελ.27

Efforts need to be speeded up in order to reconcile professional and family responsibilities and the society and state must pass from words to action. The existence of childcare structures will free time for parents and especially women and will give them the opportunity to become involved in the public sphere. So the family[81] (Karamanou, 2001), contributes significantly to the reproduction or abolition of the negative concepts and stereotypes against women and lays sound foundations. The family responsibilities are the primary cause and the main obstacle women face in their advancement, a problem that the majority of men does not face and its indivisibly linked to the problem of century-old stereotypes, concepts and attitudes. Of course measures for reconciliation would help free time for women. However important the progress made regarding the social status of women in the member states, equality between men and women in daily life continues to be undermined by the fact that women and men do not enjoy the same rights in practice. The reconciliation[82] does not only concern women in the traditional sense of distributing the social roles, but equally for men, the workers in their whole and the businesses. Only with the acceptance and establishment of reconciliation practices will women with family obligations be able to join paid employment and men to participate equally in undertaking family burdens, especially the care of children and the elderly.

At the same time, the further strengthening of maternity - a social mission with specific measures such as investigating an increase in the time given for maternity leave and the other parental leaves, will help women. Unfortunately, parental leave is not utilised by the Cypriot workers because it is unpaid and motives must be given to encourage working parents to take the leave, since it significantly contributes to the redistribution of social roles in the family and especially regarding men. Today, it is becoming more and more acceptable that the redistribution of social roles within the family, the transformation of the biological maternity to social maternity, with the participation of both parents in the upbringing of children, is an historical social necessity. This new dynamic[83] in

---

[81] See page 25
[82] Social Policy Institute - National Centre of Social Research Alkistis Project - CI EQUAL, September 2006

[83] Social Policy Institute - National Centre of Social Research - Alkistis Project - CI EQUAL, September 2006

the father-child relationship, the substantive and expanded participation of men in family obligations and their involvement with children especially, must constitute the modern socio-family reality. In this direction, social acceptance and support is needed for this father role, which goes beyond the stereotypes and the prejudice linked to the genders, as it significantly contributes to communication and contact between the spouses and the better upbringing of the children. The introduction of paternity leave in Cyprus with full pay will be a motive for fathers to exercise their fatherly role, expanding and upgrading it. Consequently, the manner in which the state contributes and enhances the new family relationships, at the same time securing the smooth and equal incorporation of women in the labour market, is linked both to the legislative framework and the existence of the necessary supportive social structures and motives. The deficient (to inexistent) incorporation of the dimension of reconciling family and work, both in the agenda of collective bargaining and business culture, as well as the society in general, lead to the continued marginalisation of women in many sectors of the Cypriot society.

There are still many facts that indicate that, while the institutional-legislative framework has been significantly altered, the family and marriage in practice hinder the professional and personal advancement of women. Even though, for clearly financial reasons, the necessity to complement the family income with women's work has been acknowledged, the participation of men in the distribution of house responsibilities as a self evident obligation has not been secured. Nor have the necessary social changes been made in order to recognise and assist in practice the redistribution of roles.

According to a study by Plantenga & Remery (2005) the weekly work of men is about 40 hours, while the respective employment hours of the working woman along with the household continue to be 60-80, whether in urban or rural areas. The same study indicates that married men are less involved in housework than bachelors, while married women work twice as hard as single women, because

they cover housework, maternity, care of the nuclear or extended family (grandparents).

Awareness, information and action on issues of equal opportunities and reconciliation are very important, since it is necessary for all to understand that these issues are the right and obligation of everyone, but also the duty of the state, and not just a European strategy that is imposed by the EU and which we as good students must adopt.

c. The school environment:

The school environment appeared as an important factor that plays a very large role in changing attitudes, negative stereotypes and concepts on the status of the two genders in the family, in education and in the society in general, since the predetermined social roles of the two genders are reproduces from childhood in the home and the school as well, through schoolbooks and the stance of teachers, male and female. The school environment of primary school maintained and preserved the concepts on the roles of the two genders. The situation improved in comparison with the period of most of the sample's women 1950-1965 and today's. However, it is regarded very useful by the women of the study to train and cultivate awareness among teachers of primary and secondary education regarding gender equality issues the soonest possible. The role of the educational environment and the teachers is huge in forming the character of the children and is very important in achieving gender equality and even now this issue must be given the appropriate attention and priority.

d. The absence of balanced participation of women in public life:

Another factor that has been recorded as a serious deficiency is the absence of balanced participation of women (Liapi,2004)[84] in the political life and this applies for Cyprus as well. This fact must be examined seriously by the political parties and decisions must be taken with an aim to reverse this situation. It also appeared through the research that the absence of the female gender leadership

---

[84] See page 22

style leads to the adoption of male models and this does not allow a woman to show her own sensitivity, her own talents and in general her own identity and image. However, the contribution and struggles of these women who today managed to gain a male dominated position leaves better preconditions and living conditions for the next generations. No matter how slowly the concepts and attitudes change in a society, something changes. As (Linehan,2002)[85] notes, women and the society as a whole learned to see men in the public and political life and this attitude continues to exist. Thus the paradox phenomenon of voting mostly men and some women who were given the opportunity to prove that they are worthy and equal in value to men, continues. The voice of women is not loud since they are the minority in decision making bodies of political parties. Their percentage needs to rise so that they can pass their messages more easily, in a painless and immediate manner. The more women involved in public affairs, the more this concept will change. Politics are male dominated and not friendly to women, who have all the qualifications and interest to become involved. The women who participated in this research said it was necessary to promote women who succeeded more and in general successful women models in all sectors, so as to establish another image of women and gradually change the existing concepts. The larges participating of women in trade union bodies (Jasna,2002)[86] is considered necessary, so that reconciling family and work issues are incorporated in the agenda of collective bargaining, as well as decision taking bodies of political parties, and the government itself.

e. The ineffectiveness of gender equality monitoring mechanisms:

Another important hindering factor recorded in this study is the ineffectiveness of existing monitoring mechanisms and mechanisms to promote women's rights in Cyprus, and this leads, as we have seen, to disappointment and the preservation of inequalities through the non practical implementation of legislation. The women consider the fact that these institutions exist as positive, but note that they need to be strengthened in human resources sensitive to gender equality issues and trained to handle complaints. Anyway, for their establishment to

---

[85] See page 38
[86] See page 26

make sense they must be effective. Also necessary is the reevaluation of these mechanisms so that they adapt and can become effective and be assessed at regular intervals and the gaps and weaknesses corrected, in order for them to be more effective.

Through the recorded course of improving the status of women in Cyprus, it appears that the prospects are favourable but much time will be needed to fully achieve gender equality. Actions by women themselves and the provision of assistance to them in order to enhance their self confidence and recognise their abilities and capabilities is a fundamental precondition. Equal opportunities for men and women do not seem to be an aim closely monitored and checked in every sector and action. The result is for them to be carried out sporadically and randomly. A systematic campaign to monitor and record the improvement of the situation in the sector of equal opportunities for men and women is necessary and this takes time, daring political decisions and much work on behalf of women's organisations and other NGOs that have been established to defend and support gender equality issues. The adoption of policies (Liapi,2004)[87] and the implementation of gender mainstreaming in state policies, political parties, businesses, trade unions and in general all sectors, will help improve the current situation. A fundamental precondition for the success and effectiveness of equality policies is the adoption of a comprehensive approach to the problem with an aim to promote actions and measures that address all the special needs of women both on a short-term and long-term basis.

In conclusion, the deficient status of women, both in the family and the society in general, is due to:

a) The unequal distribution of authority among the genders and the predetermination of social roles for the genders, which is the main factor of discrimination.

b) The inadequate development of social infrastructure which enhances the harmonisation of professional and family responsibilities of men and women.

---

[87] See page 22

c) The existing attitude and the stereotypical concepts regarding the social roles of the genders.

Priority should be given to lifting discrimination and inequalities based on gender, with emphasis on the wage gap, the promotion of women in managerial positions of responsibility, the abolition of the phenomenon of the "glass ceiling", the reconciliation of the professional and family life (with the simultaneous redistribution of the social roles of the genders within the family), the reduction of women's unemployment and the improvement and development of women's businesses etc. However, all this must be combined with the development of structures and services for children, the elderly and invalids, that will allow the access of women to the labour market on equal terms, and the redistribution of the social roles within the family. Today there is an improved legislative framework (ΕΣΔΙ,2007),[88] which allows for demands for their practical implementation. At the same time the precondition is awareness campaigns for men and women regarding the existence of these laws and the rights emanating from them. The improved image of the Cypriot woman regarding her education level will help achieve this aim faster. However, it is necessary to strengthen the self confidence of the women and their activity and involvement in the women's movement. The public opinion is influenced by the mass media which many times do not promote positive female models or the women who truly contribute. Their role is very important and it would be to the benefit of the society to review their policy so that they help achieve equality.

Based on what emerged through the research and the study of the books listed in the bibliography regarding the existing situation, the adoption of the following measures is proposed for the gradual achievement of gender equality:

- Mobilisation of the government mechanism so that incorporates equality in all its policies and programmes (gender mainstreaming),

- Promotion of women in economic and business decision making centres, as well as being appointed to some of the responsible posts,

---

[88] See page 34

- Encouragement and support of businesses to develop actions and plans that will take into consideration the gender dimension and the necessity to reconcile family and professional life.

Regarding the profile of women who participated in the current study, it is noted that although the majority of the women did not seek the positions they hold, it appears however that the intense personality of the sample's women, their accountability, power and dynamism, their non passive acceptance of social concepts and models, their rebelliousness, the development of critical thought and the respect of diversity, were elements of their character. Furthermore, the will for success and their determination, the moral support of the family and work environment (for some) helped them not give up and proceed. Several of the women from the sample of this qualitative study were the first to exercise a "male" profession in the town they lived in and succeeded. They proved in this way that the profession does not have a gender and managed to reverse concepts and stereotypes.

It became apparent through this study that the advancement of the women is accompanied by positive and negative elements. They gain experience, knowledge and acquaintances with persons of the public and political life but at the same time sacrifice their personal life and private spare time. The women must struggle against century-old concepts and attitudes and manage to gain the respect of men and women in order to proceed. They must work hard to prove first that they are worthy and then become accepted on an equal basis with men. That which was very intensely recorded through the conclusions of this study is that the women who managed to advance, apart from the strong external and internal factors that helped them, also developed an additional strong advantage/talent, which men lack: To be able to combine many things at once. It seems that these women do not have two arms but eight legs, like an octopus, which they use to cope with their multiple responsibilities emanating from work, family and their general contribution in the sector they chose to become involved in.

3. CONCLUSIONS

According to the books listed in the bibliography, women face many problems and the need to overcome multiple obstacles in their effort to join and climb in the labour market or trade unions or political parties or businesses. The findings of this study reveal that the women who dared and advanced face these problems and overcome the obstacles with their strategic weapon being their insistence and patience to change the establishment, taking on of course additional duties and multiple roles. The relationships they create in the fields in which they are involved are not based only on the work they offer but their different concepts regarding gender equality, which they promote.

Some of these women hesitated to accept the duties they are carrying out today and their first reaction was negative. Their socialisation and their experience were such that kept them away from positions of responsibility and male dominated professions. However, these women and all the others in positions of responsibility opened paths for other women to reassess their concepts on the status and role of women in Cypriot society. The women, utilising all the internal end external factors that formed their profile, break through the establishment and, as successful as their male colleagues, proceed with a view to get the best possible result from what they are doing.

The more women that manage to climb to positions of responsibility and take parliamentary seats, the more the concepts of the society on the role of women will be influenced and changed in a positive manner. The concepts and stereotypes of the society seem to be constantly questioned with the increased presence of women in positions that were until recently considered being clearly male. The success of these women is decisive in this process, since they have to convince that they are worthy of these positions. This correlation of success, that is of women with the change of concepts, makes the position of women even more burdened, since they have the stress of possible failure. Furthermore, this process is not steady, but passes through various stages of maturity, which may be the reason for the slow steps in changing the attitudes and concepts.

The answer to the question whether women are less capable than men or if their position is just in the private sector and not in the public sector, according to the data of this research, is negative. The specific concept, according to this study, is a myth that has prevailed in the concepts of the society. The findings of this study show that women not only can manage, but can pioneer and be innovative in difficult situations, tackling many negative social factors that are due to incorrect notions. The utilisation of the internal and external factors helps them cope and become stronger. As it appears in annexes VI and VII, the internal factors of success begin and end in the women themselves, the characteristics of their personality and the utilisation of their own personal skills and reserves. These factors help them correctly handle problems and the obstacles they face due to their gender and the existing concepts on the roles of the two genders. These factors equip them with perseverance, patience, methodical approach, flexibility, dedication and faith in themselves. The external factors concern their academic qualifications, their professional career, their family life, the reconciliation of family and work, their participation in non governmental organisations, their talents and interests.

For most women of the study, the position the hold was not the result of an internal need for social establishment and completion or to improve their social status. They developed all the positive elements of their success after taking their position they hold and this possibly indicates a tremendous internal power that helps them to face and overcome all the adverse conditions they meet in their course for advancement, success and excellence. The problems they meet seem to help them develop an unbelievable power and will for success, instead of withdrawing, as would reasonably be expected.

It would be interesting to carry out a mixed research focused on women who hold key positions to show the qualitative and quantitative factors influencing their profile and their advancement and its results could be generalised on a population level. The findings of the current study, as we have previously mentioned, cannot be generalised and concern a group of women who participated in the study, despite the fact that several of the findings agree with the results of other quantitative studies.

Nevertheless, this study tried to sketch the profile of the specific women, first recording the problems the women met and meet on leaving the private sphere and entering the public sphere. Although the sought after result has not yet been achieved, women have placed their own little pebble in this effort.

Bibliography

Greek language

Vaiou,N.& Stratigakis,M.(2001). *Feminism and women's work: Coincidences and deflections* , Political Consideration Seminars, February-March 2001, Political Consideration Agency ¨Nicos Poulantzas¨, Taken on 20/7/2006 from the website http://www.eppnp.gr/index/Drastiriotites/Docs/femin.doc

Vaiou, N. & Stratigakis, M. "The work of women: between two worlds", *Contemporary Issues*, December 1989, 16–24.

Vryonides, M. (2006). Quantitative and qualitative research methods and techniques. (University notes. Rhodes: Aegean University).

Pantelidou-Malouta,M. (2002). The gender of democracy - The capacity of the citizen and gender subjects. Athens: Savvallas publications

Foreign language

Berent, **P.H.** (**1966**). "The Depth Interview", Journal of Advertising Research, Vol. 6 No.2, pp.32-9.

Borgatti,S.(1996). Introduction to Grounded Theory, Taken on 20/4/2006 from the website
http://www.analytictech.com/mb870/introGT.htm

Bryman, A. (2001). Social Research Methods, Oxford: Oxford University Press

 Burke, J.& Onwuegbuzie.A. (2004). Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come , Educational Researcher, Vol. 33, No. 7, pp.4–26

British Sociological Association – Statement of Ethical Practice – March 2002. 1. British Sociological Association. A Company Limited by Guarantee. Taken on 20/01/2007 from the website. http://www.sociology.org.uk/as4bsoce.pdf

Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). Methodology of Educational Research, Athens: Metehmio

Crampton, Suzanne , Mishra & Jitendra. (1999). Women in Management [J]. Public Personnel Management, Vol.28 Issue 1,pp 87-107

Fischer, L.(2005). Cultural Roots of the Economy crisis in Germany and its consequences for gendered realities: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 'Changing Gender! Research, Theory and Policy for Gendered Realities of the 21st century', June 2-3, 2005, Panteion University -Athens, Greece.

Glaser & Strauss (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Aldine, pp. 271. [HM48 Gla CLMS, ISBN 0-2977-6318-0]

Holst,E.(2006). Women in Managerial Position in Europe: Focus on Germany – Discussion Papers 557, Berlin

Jajma, P. (2001).*Promotion of Gender Specific Policy Within Trade Unions in central and Eastern Europe*: ICFTU / FNV, Gender project, Taken on 20/07/2006 from the website www.**icftu**.org/www/pdf/cee-invisiblewomen.pdf

Jasna, P.(2002). The Position of Women in Trade Unions: Male Leaders and Invisible Female Assistants. 2/2002 South-East Europe Review S. 59 – 86. Taken on 15/7/2007 from the website
 www.boeckler.de/pdf/South-East_Europe_Review-2002-02-s59.pdf

Faulkner, D., Swann, J., Baker, S., Bird, M. & Carty, J. (1999). Development of the child in the social environment. Methodology handbook. Patra: Greek Open University.

Goldstein, S.J.(2001). "War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System & Vice Versa", Cambridge University Press

Linehan, M. (2002). Senior female international managers: Empirical evidence from Western Europe. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 13, 802-814.

Markides, Nikita, & Rangou. (1978). *Lysi: Social Change in a Cypriot Villag*e. Nicosia.

Maykut, P. & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning Qualitative Research, A Philosophic and Practical Guide*. London, Philadelphia: The Falmer Press.

Maykut & Morehouse. (2000) .*Beginning Qualitative Research.* Chapter 9 pp. 134. Ministry of Education: Social Research Centre.

Myers, M. (2000, March). Qualitative research and the generalizability question: Standing firm with Proteus the Qualitative Report [On-line serial], 4(3/4). Taken on 17/12/2006 from the website

http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR4-1/myers.html

Persianis, P. (1998). *Istoria tis ekpedefsis koritsion stin Kipro* [*History of the education of girls in Cyprus*]. Nicosia, Cyprus: Author.

Petraki- Kottis,A. (1996*). Women in management and the glass ceiling in Greece: An empirical investigation*. **Source:** Women in Management Review, Volume 11, Number 2, 1996, pp. 30-38(9)

Plantenga J & Remery Ch., (2005) . Reconciliation of work and private life: A comparative review of thirty European Countries-Synthesis report prepared by the Group of Experts on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment for the Unit Equality for women and men. Taken on 20/5/2005 from the website 10/02/07 http//ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2005/ke6905828_en.pdf

Pyrgos, M. (1995). *The Cypriot woman at a glance*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Author.

Ragins, Townsend, & Mattis. (1998). Gender gap in the executive suite: CEO's and female executives report on breaking the glass ceiling. *Academy of Management Executive*, 12, 28-42.

Silverman, D.(1998). *Qualitative Research, Theory, method and practice*, London: Sage.

Silverman, D. (2000). Doings Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Social Research Association, SRA (2003). *Ethical guidelines, http://www.the-sra.org.uk/ethical.htm*

Stavrou, S. (1992). Social Changes and the Position of Women in Cyprus. *The Cyprus Review*, *4*:2. Nicosia, Cyprus: Intercollege.

Stavrou, S. (1997). Cypriot Women at Work. *The Cyprus Review*, *9*:2. Nicosia, Cyprus: Intercollege.

Steans, J. (2003). "Engaging from the Margins: Feminist Encounters with the «Mainstream» of International Relations", British Journal of Politics, Vol.5, No 3, August 2003, pp. 428-454

Surridge, B. (1930). *A Survey of Rural Life in Cyprus*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Printing Office of the Government of Cyprus.

Thorne, S.(2000). Data Analysis in Qualitative Research. Evidence Based Nursing, 3, 68-70

Williams,M.(2002). Gender Mainstreaming in the Multilateral Trading System: A Handbook for Policy Makers and Other Stakeholders (Paperback), Taken on 13/09/2006 from the website http://www.thecommonwealth.org/shared_asp_files/uploadedfiles/0A004542-1151-47B4-B85D-C65B6FB41085_Tradedoclowres.pdf

Omar,A and Davidson,M. (2001).Women in Management: A Comparative Cross-Cultural Overview, Volume 8 Number 3/4 2001, Barmarick Publications

From websites on the internet

Greek language

Announcement of the Committee of European Communities to the European Parliament, the Financial and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Towards a community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005) (COM 2000, 335)- Taken on 17/08/2006 from the website http://www.kethi.gr/greek/ekdoseis/stratigiki.htm

OKE decision: **"The role of women in the financial and social life of countries of the Southeast Mediterranean and especially their integrati9on in the labour market "**, Athens, 22 June 1999, The text is no. 32, Decision of the Financial and Social Committee. Taken on 16/08/2006 from the website. http://www.oke.gr/greek/oke32.htm

Decision of the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities regarding the partnership social responsibility: a contribution of businesses in viable growthη ανάπτυξη (COM(2002) 347 . C5-0574/2002 . 2002/2261(INI)), http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A5-2002-0159+0+DOC+XML+V0//EL

Female entrepreneurship in Greece, 2002 Taken on 10/9/2006 from the website http://www.unipi.gr/ypires/epeaekIsotitaFulon/files/No_9.pdf

Women in responsible positions - New policies - Women in political decision making centres. European congress, Athens http://www.karamanou.gr/gr/contents.aspx?CatId=35&lang=gr 7.5.2003

Women high in hierarchy. Good practice MENTORING Congress: 20 & 21 February 2006, TITANIA hotel, http://4653.info/o-mentoring-872096

Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities Committee report (2000), (C5-0219/2000) on the balanced participation of women and men in the decision making process, http://www.karamanou.gr/dir/ep/ektheseis/ekth_041200.htm

Report of the Commission to the Council, to the European Parliament, to the European Financial and Social Committee and to the Committee of the Regions on equality between women and men, 2005/COM/2005/0044 www.parliament.cy/parliamentgr/008_05_05.htm

3rd-5th periodical report for Cyprus, (1993-2003) on the implementation of the UN Convention for the eradication of every form of discrimination against women. Taken on 18/8/2006 from the website http://www.mjpo.gov.cy/mjpo/mjpo.nsf/All/4234CB8499BFBF4EC22570CE004355E9/$file/Rep.%20CEDAW-Part%20I-II.pdf?OpenElement

CEDAW report (1995). Taken on 18/8/2006 from the website **http://www.mjpo.gov.cy/mjpo/mjpo.nsf/dml.progress.gr?open document**

Workforce research for the years 2001-2002 , http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument

Cyprus Gender Equality Observatory research - CGEO, 2004. The position of women in decision making bodies of trade unions. Taken on 13/8/2006 from the website www.pik.org.cy

OEV research ,(2006) : The position of women in the modern Cypriot business, Taken on 20/8/2006 from the website www.oeb.org.cy -

OEV research, (2006) : "Women and positions in the semi-governmental and banking sector". Taken on 20/8/2006 from the website www.oeb.org.cy

NAPE, 2007. National Action Plan on Gender Equality in Cyprus, Taken on 22/3/2006 from the website www.mjpo.gov.cy

European charter on gender equality in local societies. Taken on 20/3/2006 from the website

http://www.ccre.org/docs/charte_egalite_el.doc

Social Policy Institute - National Centre of Social Research - Alkistis project - CI EQUAL, September 2006, Taken on 20/1/2007 from the website http://www.alkistis-equal.gr/default.aspx?lang=el-GR&loc=1&&page=532&studyid=8

Equality between men and women in employment mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/All/E1E177CAF39A2E71C225709E002EB686/**...**

Gender equality and businesses, (2005). http://www.unipi.gr/ypires/epeaekIsotitaFulon/files/No_2.pdf

Kapardis-Grambia,M.(2006. Women in the modern business environment-challenges and opportunities. Taken on στις 25/4/07 from the website: http://www.pwc.com/extweb/ncpressrelease.nsf/docid/C43335BFF1161F44802571A00027EF93

Labour market situation in Cyprus http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dl/dl.nsf/dmlsituation_gr/dmlsituation_gr?OpenDocument

Karamanou ,A. (2001). Press conference at the offices of the European Parliament in Athens titled "Women and Authority". Taken on 10/08/2006 from the website http://www.karamanou.gr/gr/uploads/Documents/ΟΜΙΛΙΕΣ/01/sp01_1502.htm

Karamanou,A.(2003). *Women in positions of responsibility - New policies - Women in political decision making centres*. European congress, Athens. Taken on 13/9/2006 from the website http://www.karamanou.gr/gr/contents.aspx?CatId=35&lang =gr 7.5.2003

Karamanou, A.(2005). Alternative approaches to international politics with a gender dimension. Project at ΠΜΣ: "European and International Studies" of the University of Athens. Taken on 13/9/2006 from the website http://www.karamanou.gr/gr/contents.aspx?CatId=68&lang=gr

Glossary of terms on the social gender, based on a relative publication of the European Commission. Taken on 1/4/2007 from the website http://www.kethi.gr/greek/ekpaidefsi/epeaek/askhseis_oktovriou.pdf

Liapi,M.(2004). *Women in politics or the gender of politics?* Taken on 17/08/2006 from the website: http//genderissues.org.gr/InfoFemina/CurrentIssue/**...**/filo kai politiki.htm

Omar,A., Davidson,M, Fielden,Σ., Hunt,C., & Dawe,A.(2004).A Pilot Study to Investigate the Problems, Experiences and Barriers faced by a Cross Section of Black and Minority Ethnic Female Entrepreneurs in the North West (Co-funded by European Social Fund and UMIST)

Dounias,P.(2002). Monetary-insurance marketing, February 2002 issue, Taken on 20/10/2006 from the website, www.morax.gr/mags/02/0202_4.shtml

Monetary-Insurance marketing , February 2002 issue, Taken on 20/10/2006 from the website http//**www.morax.gr/mags 02.02.02_4** 5 html

Radical feminism, Taken from "http://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/ on 21/4/07

Press conference at the offices of the European Parliament in Athens titled "Women and Authority", http://www.karamanou.gr/gr/uploads/Documents/ΟΜΙΛΙΕΣ/01/sp01_1502.htm

Soumeli.E & Trimikliotis.N (2004). Equal opportunities and labour relations in Cyprus, Taken on 10/8/2006 from the website: **http//** eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/01/word/cy 0401103 fcy.doc

Cyprus Statistical Service, Taken on 20/7/2006 from the website http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument

Amsterdam Treaty (1997), Taken on 20/1/2007 from the website
http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/el/s50000.htm

Feminism, http://users.otenet.gr/~scoutari/feminismos.htm
http://users.otenet.gr/~scoutari/feminismos.htm

Course map on equality between women and men 2006-2010, EU,
 eur-lex.europa.eu/**.../**LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:**2006**:0092:FIN:EL:PDF

Hasset ,T.(1994). Never again simply a woman. Taken on 20/9/2006 from the website **http**://www.femnetsalonica.gr/G_M.htm

Christianou Stephania, (2006). Article: The role of fathers in balancing professional and family personal life. Taken on 20/1/2007 from the website, http://www.energy966.com/emag/

Female gender time: The gender of the clock - The female trade unionists. www.femnetsalonica.gr/h48.doc, Taken on 20/9/2006

«Women on Leadership», 1st World Congress, which was organised in Piraeus by the Institute of Developing Women Managers and Businesswomen on 9/3/05. Taken on 20/8/2006 from the website:

http//www.naftemporiki.gr/news/story

Foreign language

Capacity building for social dialogue in Cyprus, 2006. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, taken on στις 12.2.07 from the website
http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/docs/events/bucharest150905.pdf

CWDI Report (2004): Women Board Directors of the Fortune global 200 companies, Taken on 10/9/2006 from the website

www.globewomen.com/cwdi/global200_keyfindings.htm

Database on women and men in decision making, *(2006). European Commission. Taken from the website* *http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/women_men_stats/measures_in4_en.htm*

European foundation for the improvement of living and working condition: gender, jobs and working conditions in the E.U (2001) eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2002/77/en/1/ef0277en.pdf

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Condition.(2001)._Gender, Jobs and Working Conditions in the European Union_ , Taken on 10/1/2007 from the website

eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2002/77/en/1/ef0277en.pdf

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Condition, (2006). Quality of work and employment,   Taken on 10/3/2007 from the website **http://eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/surveys/EU0609SR01/EU0609SR01. pdf**

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2006): Quality of work and employment, Taken on 10/3/2007 fromthe website www.eurofound.eu.int/pubdocs/2006/60/en/1/ef0660en.pdf

European Trade Union Confederation-ETUC (2002): Women in Trade Unions: Making the Difference, Taken on 10/1/2007 from the website http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/genre_an_080403.pdf

European Women's Lobby (2003). Resource paper: Women in Decision making http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/Publications/EN_ LR.pdf

Facts on Women at Work, **(2005).** www.ilo.org/ gender

Holman,K. (2000). Trade Unions & The Beijing Platform for Action, Women workers: Reaching for the sky,
http://www.icftu.org/displaydocument.asp?Index=991210226&Language=EN

Human Resources Development,.(**2002).** *Gender Equality in the Labor Market. Lessons Learned,* Final Report *Evaluation and Data Development, Strategic Policy*

Human Resources Development Canada, Taken on 20/2/2007 from the website

http://www..hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/edd-pdf/spah14910_e.pdf

European Women's Lobby (2003). Resource paper: Women in Decision making, Taken on 12/2/2006 from the website

http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/Publications/EN_LR.pdf

Never Again Just A Woman: Women of the Auxiliary and Emergency Brigade in the General Motors Sit-Down Strike of 1937,Janice Hassett**,** Senior Thesis Andrew Workman, Mar 11, 1994, From the *American Socialist* Collection of Sol Dolinger
http://www.marx.org/history/etol/newspape/amersocialist/neveragain.htm

Gender Equality in the Labor Market.*Lessons Learned,* Final Report *Evaluation and Data Development, Strategic Policy*
Human Resources Development Canada, http://www..hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/edd-pdf/spah14910_e.pdf

Gender and career development
http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2006/12/studies/tn0612019s.html

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (**GEM) 2006 . Report on Women and Entrepreneurship**, Ανακλήθηκε 20/8/2006 από τον ιστοτόπο http://www.gemconsortium.org/download/1174724531203/GEMWomens2006V3.pdf

"Living to work – working to live: tomorrow's work-life balance in Europe". Background paper for the Foundation Forum 2004, Dublin, 3-4 November, Taken on 17/08/2006 from the website:

http://eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2004/121/en/1/ef04121en.pdf

Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Growth and Employment Initiative Measures on financial assistance for innovative and job creating Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) As at 31 December 2000. (COM(2002),3472.7.2002),
http://www.lex.unict.it/eurolabor/en/documentation/com/com2002.htm

Role of Trade Unions in Promoting Gender Equality, Report of the ILO-ICFTU Survey(2000).
http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/download/fin_rep.pdf

Sabadell, A.(2002). "Woman-object" in contemporary capitalism. Speech at the congress on the 20 years of "Theseon". (Athens, ΕΜΠ, 29.9.2002). Translation from Portuguese: Demetris Demoulis. Taken on 20/8/2006 from the website http://www.theseis.com/76-/theseis/t85/t85.htm

SHADOW REPORT, CYPRUS,(2006). http://www.iwraw-ap.org/resources/pdf/Cyprus%20SR.pdf

Social Research Association., Ethical guidelines (2003). Taken on 20/1/2006 from the website http://www.the-sra.org.uk/documents/pdfs/ethidf

Soumeli,E. INEK/PEO The report on, *Capacity building for social dialogue in Cyprus,2006,* European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2006/12/studies/tn0612019s.pdf

The Class Ceiling: Impacts of Class Culture on Professional Mobility, taken on 20.4.07 from the website
http:
http://courses.missouristate.edu/GaryBrinker/SOC498/Sample%20Papers/Class Ceiling.doc

Time for Equality at Work - Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work 2003, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2003. ISBN 92-2-112871-7. Price: 20 Swiss Francs.
http://www.unicz.it/lavoro/ILO_TEW.pdf

Papademetriou,E. (1995). Silk work in Cyprus, taken on 25/4/06 from the
website

http://www.chios.gr/silk/texts/eisigisi-papadimitriou.pdf

Women & Elections : Guide to Promoting the Participation of Women in
Elections. New York : UN, 2005.
http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/e65237.pdf

Women in Trade Unions,(2002): Making the Difference,
http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf/genre_an_080403.pdf

Women in Decision Making in the E.U,2005).
http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/Publications/RA2
005EN_LR.pdf

ANNEX I : Demographic characteristics of the women who participated in the study

No.	Alias	Activity area	Age	Family status	Level of education	Place of origin / residence	Years of service
1	Athena	MP	43	Married 3 children	Degree	Town	22
2	Aphrodite	Trade Unionist	47	Married 2 children	Postgraduate	Rural area and then town	23
3	Artemis	Chairwoman of women's organisation	62	Married 1 child	Degree	Rural area and then town	37
4	Sophia	MP	50	Married 2 children	Degree	Town	18
5	Hera	Political officer	55	Married 1 child	Postgraduate	Town	5
6	Rea	Trade Unionist	83	Married 2 children	Primary school	Town	40
7	Iphigenia	Chairwoman of women's organisation	63	Married 2 children	Degree	Town	28
8	Penelope	Businesswoman	65	Married No children	Degree	Town	32
9	Ino	Businesswoman	56	Married 2 children	1 year higher education studies	Town	33
10	Electra	Political officer	59	Single No children	Doctorate	Rural area and then town	20

ANNEX II: COMMON/ SIMILAR FACTORS - PROFILE SKETCH

COMMON/SIMILAR FACTORS
PROFILE SKETCH /DEFINITION
Most are higher education graduates, married, with children. None have shared family responsibilities with the husband, due to existing notions in the Cypriot society regarding the role of the two genders in the family. Most have help at home from a third person and this has significantly helped them to reconcile the responsibilities emanating from the family, work and the sector in which they are active and demands extra working hours. Their characteristics are dynamism, intense activity, determination and will for success in anything they undertake to do. They are active citizens with rich social and political activity. They are greatly involved in various NGOs and volunteer organisations. They are interested in their fellow beings and especially the rights of women and in promoting gender equality. They are consistent, have much will and determination to succeed. Dynamic, with opinions, ideas and suggestions. They all face difficulties in reconciling family and professional responsibilities but they have managed to advance and manage. They are dynamic and very formal in their obligations. Their family has not been an obstacle to their advancement. They at least had the support of the husband and his encouragement. They set goals, have leading abilities, coordinate and guide other people. They believe they have the abilities to advance further. They are full of confidence. Most brought down the myth/establishment of male and female studies and dared to follow a career in which men were dominant. They had their father as their model. They are active, pioneering, smart, determined, studious and ambitious.