



ROUNDTABLE DEBATE

Recovery for whom?

Austerity policies, gendered impacts and policy alternatives for Europe

Brussels 5th March 2015

Venue: Brussels Press Club Europe, Rue Froissart 95, 1040 Brussels

Current austerity policies could undermine past achievements towards gender equality, as they can negatively impact upon employment and social welfare protection. In particular, these policies could reverse the progress made in the last decade in establishing a fulfilling life for women and men.

Although in several European countries male unemployment has significantly increased as a result of job losses in male-dominated sectors such as the construction and the financial sectors, it is becoming increasingly evident that women are also going to be severely harmed by the implementation of austerity policies and by the credit squeeze. Indeed, women's work in Europe concentrated in those areas more affected by spending cuts such as education, health, and social services.

Austerity policies and cuts in Europe have been particularly harmful to women who in most countries make up the majority of those employed in the public sector. As such women have been more exposed to pay freezes, job cuts and reduced pension entitlements. Second, women use public services more intensively than men to meet their own needs and to manage care responsibilities. Third, women are more likely than men to pick up the extra unpaid work resulting from cuts in public services. Finally, women have a higher dependency on benefits due to their higher participation in unpaid care work and their lower earnings.

In light of this background, the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS), together with TASC, The Economic Council of the Labour Movement (ECLM), the Open University and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and in collaboration with S&D Group at the European Parliament and PES Women, organises a roundtable debate in Brussels on March 5th 2015 with the objective to a) determine and discuss the channels and the extent of the impact of austerity policies on women and men in Europe, particularly in the labour market, and b) define the characteristics of a progressive and gendered equitable macroeconomic framework for Europe.



PROGRAMME

9:00 – 9:15 **Registration**

9:15 – 9:30 **Opening**

Zita Gurmai, Vice-President of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) and President of PES Women

9:30 – 10:00 **Investing in a caring economy for an inclusive and equitable recovery**

Diane Elson, Professor of Sociology, University of Essex and Chair of the UK Women's Budget Group

10:00 – 12:30 **Roundtable 1 – The impact of austerity policy and recovery on women and men in Europe**

Jill Rubery, Professor of Comparative Employment Systems, Head of PMO Division, Manchester University

Veronica Anna-Maria Nilsson, Confederal Secretary, European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

Jerome De Henau, Senior Lecturer, The Open University

Maria Arena, Member of the European Parliament

Brando Benifei, Member of the European Parliament

Chair and introduction: **Signe Dahl**, Senior Economist, Economic Council of the Labour Movement

12:15 – 12:45 Q&A With the audience

12:45 – 13:45 **Lunch**



13.45 – 14.00 **Book launch: *Woman Up 2: A Transatlantic Gender Dialogue*¹**

Zita Gurmai, Vice-President of FEPS, President of PES Women

Monique Halpern, President of the Council of Orientation, Institute Emilie du Châtelet in Paris, and Independent Consultant, Fondation Jean Jaures

Andrea Pető, Professor, Department of Gender Studies, Central European University

14:00 – 14:30 **Keynote Speech**

Maria Joao Rodrigues, Vice Chair S&D Group and former Minister of Employment in Portugal

14:30 – 17:30 **Roundtable 2 – Looking ahead: policy strategies for gendering economic policies and recovery**

Christa Randzio-Plath, Professor at Hamburg University, Lecturer on Gender in European and International Politics

Marcella Corsi, Professor of Economics, Università La Sapienza of Rome

Ipek Ilkkaracan, Associate Professor at Istanbul Technical University

Christa Schlager, AK Wien Abteilung Wirtschaftswissenschaft und Statistik

Javi López, Member of the European Parliament

17:00 – 17:30 Q&A With the audience

Chair and introduction: **Giovanni Cozzi**, Senior Economist, FEPS

17:30 – 17:45 **Closing**

Paula Clancy, Director, TASC

This roundtable debate is also an opportunity to disseminate original policy research work conducted under the project [Beyond Austerity: Towards Employment: a Gender-Aware Framework](#). Here you can find the latest publications on the impact of austerity on women and men in Europe and policy alternatives for Europe.

¹ “**Woman Up 2: A Transatlantic Gender Dialogue**”

This book highlights various aspects that need to be taken into consideration when developing a progressive transatlantic gender agenda. The various spheres touched upon in the publication vary from security to religion, from ICT to civil activism, and more. The publication looks upon issues hindering progressive achievements and ways out of the deadlock.