

## Membership fees for 2006

WE STILL HAVE MANY UNPAID MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2006.

PLEASE VISIT [WWW.EWLA.ORG](http://WWW.EWLA.ORG) FOR THE MEMBERSHIP FEE FORM.

YOU MAY PAY THE FEE BY BANK TRANSFER OR BY CREDIT CARD.

PLEASE PAY YOUR FEE WITHOUT DELAY

## Greetings from the President

EWLA has been active in a number of issues during our five and half years of existence. We have been especially active in combating gender violence. Already at our founding congress in Berlin in 2000 we had a panel on violence against women. We will certainly continue our work on this issue also in the future.

The urgent need to combat gender violence was once again proved by research as Violence Against Women in Finland research report was published on 15 December 2006. The research was conducted by National Research Institute of Legal Policy and the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations. An equivalent survey was carried out in Finland in 1997. Unfortunately, practically no amelioration has occurred after the previous survey. According to the new survey, 43.5 percent of Finnish woman have at least once experienced a man's physical or sexual violence or the threat of it after having reached 15 years of age. In the 1997 survey the figure was 40 percent, thus the figure is now even worse than it was. According to the new survey, 29.1 percent of women have experienced violence or threats outside partnership, 19.6 percent in



Beautiful Zurich (see above and below), the venue for EWLA's 2007 Congress; more details on Page 2

current partnership and 49 percent in a previous partnership. During the last 12 months 11.6 of women have experienced violence or threats. Violence or threats outside partnership has occurred to 5.3 percent, in a partnership to 7.9 percent and in an ex partnership to 6.1 percent of women during the last 12 months.

It is indeed shocking that almost half of Finnish women have experienced violence or threats since the age of 15. All effort must be taken to reduce these numbers radically. The role of NGO's such as EWLA is essential. We must keep the problem of gender violence visible and suggest solutions to the problem.

Some time ago I chaired a working group at the Finnish Ministry of Justice with the assignment of drafting measures to combat gender violence on the national level. This work was in the context of preparing a Government program for preventing violence. Combating violence against women was one part of this extensive work. Many ideas and measures were proposed. We had to wait two years before the Government finally made a decision and gave the program on 14 December 2006. But better late than never. Now the Finnish Government has decided on concrete measures to combat gender violence. It remains to be seen if violence will be reduced in the future. There certainly is very much to be done to make things better.

One might think why I take up such a sad issue right before Christmas. Unfortunately, holidays such as Christmas are a typical time for violence in a partnership. In spite of this, I wish all EWLA members a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2007!



# EWLA Congress 2007

This will be in Zürich on 11-12 of May, in cooperation with the Swiss Women Lawyers Association. The congress theme will be **Equal Opportunities for All from Women Lawyers' Perspective.**

The "Early Bird" fee for members will be only 190 Euros, including coffee, tea and lunches.

The venue for the Congress will be the beautiful Sorrell Hotel Zuerichberg (see on page one and below) which has excellent facilities and fine views over Zurich.

The programme, is almost finalised. Its theme will be

**"2007: Year of Equal Opportunities"**

There will be workshops on: -

- Competition law
  - Company Law and the Representation of Women
  - Public procurement and the fight against sex discrimination
  - Gender mainstreaming
- Following the Plenary session on Multiple and Intersectional Discrimination, there will also be workshops looking at the following from a woman's perspective

- Age discrimination
- Migration

**Confirmed speakers already include** Lenia Samuel, Deputy Director General of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; and Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe and Honourary member of EWLA:

## Social programme in Zurich

*This excellent programme has been arranged by our Swiss colleagues and we owe them our thanks*

### Friday

Guided tour of Zurich

Gala Dinner at Masaola Hall

### Saturday

Reception

Swiss National Circus

## Address changes

### Address changes

If your mail or e-mail address changes please inform us your new address. Otherwise our letters will not reach you. When we send letters to our members by mail, many letters are returned due to unknown address every time. The most convenient way is to enter your new data via the members' website. EWLA will then receive an email with the changes made.



## Website [www.ewla.org](http://www.ewla.org)

We invite you to write an article, even a short one, for the news section of our website. Our members are interested in varied and diverse areas, so you could write on many subjects! As an example you will find the presentation of Leena Linnainmaa, President of EWLA, given in Zürich on 15 September, 2006.

### For the Board of EWLA

Leena Linnainmaa    Judith Willis    Nicole van Crombrughe  
**PRESIDENT    SECRETARY    TREASURER**

# EWLA Lecture series at the Free University of Berlin

## European Law from Women's Perspectives

In October, EWLA's lecture series on "European Law from Women's Perspectives" started at the Free University of Berlin. It is a cooperation project of EWLA, the Free University, and the German Women Lawyers Association (Deutscher Juristinnenbund, djB). It brings together the views of women legal practitioners and civil servants, as well as junior legal scholars. The lecture series is open to the public not only because the subjects treated are of general interest but also with a view to make EWLA better known among German women lawyers.

The title of the kick-off lecture was "Gender equality as a criterion for accession to the EU." It was given by Ms Gisela Lange, a senior officer at the German Ministry of Health who is both an EWLA and djB member. Mrs. Lange shared the insights she gained between 1995 and 2000, when she served as a temporary agent at the European Commission to prepare the accession of the ten new member states. The animated discussion after her presentation focused on the conditions for Turkey's acceding to the EU, and it was enriched by Mrs. Lange's experience from a two-year stay in Turkey as the leader of an EU sponsored ILO project to promote social dialogue in the Turkish Textile sector.

Dorothee Kuon, a doctoral candidate at Free University, made a presentation on "Gender equality in EU development cooperation." Ms Kuon explained the changes in the legal background and the different stages that were necessary to make gender equality a central concept in the agreements of the EU and its member states with developing states, such as the Cotonou Agreement with the ACP (African, Caribbean, Pacific) States. However, the lofty ideals of gender equality and their heightened status under such agreements stand in stark contrast to the reduced budget for the promotion of women's projects under the new financial outlook for 2007. Nevertheless, Ms Kuon's presentation ended with a positive note when she presented some successful development cooperation projects.

"The future of European defence politics" was the topic of the lecture given by Dr. Heike Krieger, the newly appointed holder of the chair in public international law at Free University. Professor Krieger drew a comprehensive picture of the development of European defence cooperation and put particular emphasis on the relevant political situations and factors that influenced the positions in favour of NATO-structures or those favouring greater EU responsibility. Analyzing the Draft Constitutional Treaty, Professor Krieger concluded that its entry into force would not transform the EU into a "super-state."

Alexandra R uth, a Brussels-based lawyer, spoke on "New developments concerning EU citizenship" Ms R uth, who is an expert in European Community law and holds an LL.M. in this field of law from the College of Europe in Bruges, showed how the ECJ gave Union citizenship a broad scope of application. Focussing on the student members in the audience, Ms R uth analysed the development of the case law of the ECJ in this area, thus exemplifying the practical importance of EU citizenship. In the ensuing discussion, questions were raised as to separating EU citizenship from the nationality of a member state in order to include family members or long-time residents from third countries.

Looking beyond EU law, Dr. Julia Platter spoke on "Women's rights within the European Convention on Human Rights." Dr. Platter, who is a lecturer at the Free University, examined leading cases of the European Court of Justice that helped put women's issues, such as rape, abortion, or domestic slavery, on the agenda of the Convention. She showed how the Court, true to its understanding of the Convention as a "living instrument", has gradually adopted a gendered view of the rights enshrined in the Convention. Most notably, the concept of "positive obligations" arising from the Convention rights has proved highly useful in ensuring effective human rights protection for women.

The look beyond EU law was complemented by the presentation on "Women's Rights in the European Social Charter." Mirja Trilsch, who earned an LL.M. at McGill University and recently submitted her doctoral thesis on economic and social rights, explained the particular regime of the European Social Charter and its newly created monitoring mechanism, the Collective Complaints procedure. She criticized the German government's scepticism towards social rights in general and towards the European Social Charter in particular. Drawing on case law of the European Committee on Social Rights, Mrs. Trilsch illustrated the European Social Charter's potential to address rights issues arising in women's professional and family lives.

After the Christmas break, the lecture series will continue, inter alia, with contributions from EWLA members Professor Dr. Christa Tobler, University of Basle, on the EU's fight against gender discrimination and Professor Dr. Beate Rudolf, Free University of Berlin, on the services directive, as well as a lecture by EWLA's past vice-president, Sophia Spiliotopoulos, on "Women's rights and the (future) Fundamental Rights Agency." The lecture series will be concluded by Sabine Overk mping, who is the djB's representative within EWLA, on the debate on a European Constitution from women's perspectives.

The contributions to the lecture series will be published in summer 2007 (in German). For further details of the upcoming lectures, please visit the EWLA website or contact [germany@ewla.org](mailto:germany@ewla.org) (Beate Rudolf).

## COMPANY LAW CONFERENCE IN HELSINKI

EWLA organized a Company Law Conference in cooperation with Naisjuristit – Kvinnliga Jurister ry, Finnish Women Laywyers Association in Helsinki on 24 November, 2006. The new Finnish Companies Act entered into force on 1 September, 2006. Helsinki Takeover Code was scheduled to be given in December. These and many other company law issues including taxation and auditing were presented to the audience by a number of women experts. Women's participation in boards of listed companies was eagerly discussed. Ms. Tiina Astola, Director of Legislation at the Ministry of Justice gave the closing speech of the conference.

The conference was made possible through the generous sponsorship of Deloitte Finland. Thus, there was no conference fee. The conference organizers have received numerous compliments for the successful conference.

## EWLA's Vice President nominated for Equal Rights Award 2006

Professor Herdís Thorgeirsdóttir, Vice President of EWLA, was nominated for the Equal rights award 2006 of the Equal Rights Council in Iceland (the only individual to be nominated). The others were two banks and one NGO. A bank received the award. This is the second time that Dr. Thorgeirsdottir is nominated for the equal rights award for her contribution to equality matters in Iceland.

## Joint Dinner

9 October 2006: Deuxième Dîner Festif des Juristes & Entrepreneures in Paris at Hôtel Sofitel Arc-de-Triomphe. Joint event of EWLA and the Women Interest Group (Paris Group) of the International Bar Association (IBA) and Le Salon des Juristes (a website founded by Odile Lajoix and Nicole van Crombrugge among others).

Odile Lajoix, a French EWLA member, organized the event for EWLA and these other associations. Eighteen representatives of associations of lawyers or entrepreneurs attended with 69 participants altogether. The successful event attracted even more participants than the Dîner Festif of July 11, 2005.

The website [www.lesalondesjuristes.com](http://www.lesalondesjuristes.com) includes many associations' mail addresses in the page "Liens" and announcements of conferences.

## Medical Law Conference

On 19th November, EWLA held a medical law Conference in Brussels, organised by our Treasurer, Nicole van Crombrugge.

The Conference was supported in part by sponsorship from GlaxoSmithKlein and the papers presented are to be compiled into a book that will be published in 2007.

For further details of the papers and the book's publication dates and cost, please go to [www.ewla.org](http://www.ewla.org)



**This newsletter has been sent through the kind sponsorship of BPP Professional Education,  
68-70 Red Lion Street , London WC2R 4NY, providers of QLTT training and testing**