

# KARAT NEWS

32(06)2008

Warsaw, 09/05/2008

## Content

### Our News

[“Through their eyes, Through ours”: Photo competition!](#)  
[KARAT Board Meeting](#)  
[New KARAT Members](#)  
[We have a new website !](#)  
[KARAT and ECCJ](#)  
[Street action: respecting women’s labour rights in Poland](#)  
[Procure IT Fair: Fact-finding has started](#)  
[Party in KARAT Secretariat](#)

### Update from members

[Learn more about KARAT members!](#)

### National/Members News

[Women in Development Association: Fighting for a better Gender Equality Law in Albania](#)  
[League of Professional Women: CSR promotion in Ukraine](#)  
[Czech Republic: President vetoes anti-discrimination act](#)  
[Lithuania: backlash in family law](#)  
[Poland: UPR – NGOs not satisfied](#)  
[Poland: New struggle over abortion !](#)  
[Tajikistan: UN examines situation of women](#)

### EU NEWS

[EU-CIS Gender Watch in development aid](#)  
[No democracy without parity](#)  
[Anti-discrimination legal mechanisms](#)

### Other News

[KARAT in the TRIALOG-CONCORD Conference in Prague](#)  
[European Young Feminist Forum in Warsaw](#)  
[Euromed – a region on the move](#)  
[Update on UN Human Rights Council \(UNHRC\)](#)  
[Funding for women’s rights organizations](#)

### Information Sharing

[CaucAsia Magazine, No. 5](#)  
[Aid effectiveness from gender equality perspective](#)  
[Institutional mechanisms for gender equality](#)  
[European Development Aid – New CONCORD’s report](#)

### **“Through their eyes, Through ours”: Photo competition!**

As a part of the project “Through Their Eyes, Through Ours”. KARAT together with its partners announced the call for submission of photographs for an international photography competition. The photographs should address the socio-economic situation of women from: ALBANIA, AZERBAIJAN, ARMENIA, BELARUS, BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA, GEORGIA, KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, MACEDONIA, MOLDOVA, MONTENEGRO, SERBIA, UKRAINE, AND UZBEKISTAN.

For the full text of the call please visit: <http://www.karat.org/> or write to Ewa Pintera at: [ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl](mailto:ewa.pintera@karat.org.pl)

### **KARAT Board Meeting**

Very fruitful Board Meeting was held in the Secretariat's new premises on May 16-17, 2008. The priority was given to discussion on KARAT's program for 2009-2012 and policy of cooperation. Strategic decisions concerning networking/cooperating with members were made and clear framework with 4 thematic priorities - economic gender justice in the context of the CEE & CIS region, women's human rights, gender focused development cooperation and organizational development – was elaborate for 2009-2012.

The MAIN SETTLEMENTS from the Board Meeting: <http://www.karat.org/>  
For more info write to Kasia at: [kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl](mailto:kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl)

### **New KARAT Members**

Five applications recommended by KARAT members were positively reviewed by the Board on May 17, 2008. Thus, NGO Vitebsk Women's Club (Belarus), Political Club of Women – 50/50 (Moldova), Association of Employed Women “Women Today” (Montenegro), Center for Media Studies (Russia) and Slovak Center for Communication and Development (Slovakia) were accepted as new members of KARAT Coalition. Welcome !

KARAT's membership expended to 24 countries and 54 organizations . Full list of KARAT members: <http://www.karat.org/index.php?pagelid=229>

### **We have a new website!**

On the recommendation of the Board the new KARAT website has been developed. It is still under construction but you can already check it on: <http://www.karat.org/>. Additionally to the public communication it contains also a protected section for the use of members only, where all KARAT internal documents will be uploaded. Website will be regularly updated and will serve as a principal information source about KARAT Coalition.

If you have any suggestions concerning the website please write to Magda at: [magda.pochec@karat.org.pl](mailto:magda.pochec@karat.org.pl). To visit old version of our page go to: <http://old.karat.org>.

### **KARAT and ECCJ**

KARAT, as one of the founders, attended the European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ) Conference title “Legislative opportunities for the EU to improve corporate accountability” in Brussels (29<sup>th</sup> May 2008) hosted by the European Socialist Group at European Parliament. The conference review the range of proposals designed to strengthen EU legislation in order to provide grater accountability mechanism for UE companies and thus help EU become a “CSR pole of excellence”. The event was followed by the ECCJ General Assembly \*(May 30<sup>th</sup>), where the Steering Group members

were renewed and the future strategy covering ECCJ European Wide Campaign and Capacity Building Working Group was discussed.

ECCJ brings together national platforms of civil society organizations including NGOs, trade unions, consumers' organizations and academic institutions promoting Corporate Accountability (CA). In ECCJ KARAT is represented by the Board Member Raluca Manaila from ORG. "AUR" member organization (Romania). For more info visit: <http://www.corporatejustice.org/> or write to Raluca at: [org.aur@gmail.com](mailto:org.aur@gmail.com).

### **Street action: respecting women's labour rights in Poland**

On May 26<sup>th</sup> 2008 KARAT Secretariat representatives implementing the project: "Labour rights protection from gender perspective in Super/hiper markets In Poland" joined a street action for respecting women's labour and family rights organized by the partners from Association of People Harmed by the Large Chain of Retails Stores "Biedronka" (Stowarzyszenie Poszkodowanych przez Wielkie Sieci Handlowe "Biedronka" ) and Association for Women and Family Rights. Participants brought a petition to the Polish Ministry of Justice demanding bigger participation of Civil Society Organizations in the investigations addressing violations of important social and individual interests in the context of employment. After the action representatives of trade unions and NGOs met in KARAT's office to discuss the joint activities concerning improvement of the labour right protection.

For more info contact Joanna Pieczyńska at: [joanna.pieczynska@karat.org.pl](mailto:joanna.pieczynska@karat.org.pl)

### **Procure ITfair: Fact-finding has started**

The fact-finding on working conditions in computer industry in Romania and Hungary within the Procure ITfair project has started. The project and the research activities aims to raise awareness about the working conditions and the environmental issues in the global supply chain of computers. As workers employed in the production of IT are predominantly women, KARAT place strong emphasis on gender justice aspect of the project.

ProcureITfair is implemented by a consortium of organisations led by WEED (World Economy, Ecology & Development) from Germany. KARAT is responsible for coordination of fact-finding on working conditions in computer industry in Eastern Europe. More info Monika Matus at: [monika.matus@karat.org.pl](mailto:monika.matus@karat.org.pl)

### **Party in KARAT Secretariat**

Official opening of Karat Secretariat's new premises was held on May 15, 2008. *Women needs a room of her own, if is she is to write*, said Virginia Woolf in one of her books. Similarly, we need a room of our own if we are to work ☺. The party brought together KARAT Board Members as an opening speakers , Karat friends, employees, representatives of the Polish NGO's and government officials. It was a great opportunity to meet and learn little bit more about our work.

## **Update from Members**

### **Learn more about KARAT Members !**

# **VESTA**

We have a great pleasure to introduce VESTA Association working on improving the youth status and promoting citizen participation for social change in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1998. One of the main field of the organization's activities is working with the media in order to influence the reintegration

process and running community radio station serving as a creative dialogue platform for youth and other interest groups. High on the Association agenda one can also find gender budgeting as this is VESTA to produce comprehensive guidelines on introducing gender perspective in preparation, proposal, adoption, and implementation of budgets at local level and during the policy making process. VESTA Association sees networking as the future of its work. That is why Network of Coordinators for Development and Implementation of Campaigns (KIRK) has been developed and is currently working in four BiH municipalities. With that regard one of the strategic VESTA's future steps will be further development and expansion of KIRK and creating the platform advocating for respecting human rights within the country.

We strongly encourage you to learn more about the organization and visit the website which is also available in English: [www.vesta.ba](http://www.vesta.ba). If you have any questions you can also contact Hukić Selma at: [selma@vesta.ba](mailto:selma@vesta.ba)

**Gender Studies (GS), o.p.s.**, is Czech NGO that has performed the function of an information, consultation and education centre in the area of relations between women and men and their position in society. The goal of the organization is to gather, analyze, work with and disseminate further information related to gender-relevant issues. Currently GS focuses on promotion and implementation of equal opportunities on the labour market by *Fifty fifty*, *About equality with companies* and *Best Company with Equal Opportunities in the Czech* projects implementation. During the last two years GS managed to conduct pioneer research on the position of women and men in the context of labour market, run *Summer Legal School* for law faculty students and organize a Competition for the Best Company with Equal Opportunities in the country.

We strongly encourage you to learn more about the organization and visit the website which also has its English section: [www.genderstudies.cz](http://www.genderstudies.cz). In case of any question you can also contact Linda Sokačová at: [linda.sokacova@genderstudies.cz](mailto:linda.sokacova@genderstudies.cz)

## National/Member's News

### **Women in Development Association: Fighting for a better Gender Equality Law in Albania**

Women in Development Association (WDA, KARAT member from Albania) held a successful parliamentary hearing with the Albanian Parliamentary Commission of Health and Social Affairs on the new Gender Equality Law with the quota bill included on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Albania already has a Gender Equality Law but, as Jeta Katro from WAD claims, it is not good enough as it does not address the issue of the women participation in the decision making process. WDA, which has been working with the Gender Equality Law issues since 2004, collected signatures from politicians (2 ex-presidents included), academics, well known artists, scientist and other NGOs supporting the quotas and the new Gender Equality Law proposal. Parliamentary Commission of Health and Social Affairs welcomed the idea which will be further discussed in the other commission of Albanian parliament. We cross fingers for the success. Good Luck !

To know more write to Jeta Katro at: [jkatro@albmail.com](mailto:jkatro@albmail.com)

### **League of Professional Women: CSR promotion in Ukraine**

KARAT Member from Ukraine League of Professional Women (KARAT Member from Ukraine) has just developed a CSR Guide: "Basic information on Corporate Social Responsibility" targeted to all interested in the concept of CSR and cooperation between business, civil society and government. The publication is in Ukrainian and is one of the first of its kind in the country. It will be launched on 19 June

in the Kiev Alumni Resource Center. League of Professional Women invites all KARAT News readers, who will be in Kiev in that time, to attend the event.

For more information and on-line version of the Guide please write to Olena Lazorenko at: [lpw@voliacable.com](mailto:lpw@voliacable.com)

### **Czech Republic: President vetoes anti-discrimination act**

Czech parliament has passed the law that bans all forms of discrimination but this provision has been vetoed by the President, Vaclav Klaus. Although the European Commission calls upon member state to incorporate anti-discrimination provisions into national laws, Klaus claims the proposed act is unnecessary and counter-productive.

The vetoed bill will now come back to the lower house of Parliament.

Full text

[http://stopvaw.org/President\\_Vetoes\\_Anti-discrimination\\_Bill.html](http://stopvaw.org/President_Vetoes_Anti-discrimination_Bill.html)

### **Lithuania: backlash in family law**

Lithuanian Parliament has adopted highly conservative and regressive family law which redefines concept of family and limits it exclusively to married woman and a man and their children. As a result, family policies will no longer be relevant and applicable to single mothers, grandparents raising grandchildren as well as other alternative family models which will be relegated to second-class status. Before the passing of the State Family Policy Concept, there has been an outstanding international mobilization of civil society organizations against the proposed law but unfortunately ultra-right wing politicians do not acknowledge alternative voices.

As Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic from Center for Equality Advancement is saying, very soon women in Lithuania will have to face another struggle as the legal act to ban abortion will be voted on. International support will be urgently needed again.

Source: *ASTRA Network*, [www.astra.org.pl](http://www.astra.org.pl). For more information please write to Vilana Pilinkaite-Sotirovic at: [vilana@gap.lt](mailto:vilana@gap.lt)

### **Poland: UPR – NGOs not satisfied**

In response to the joint appeal of Human Rights NGOs (including KARAT) to the Polish government, the government's officials met with NGOs' representatives in relation to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process that Poland is just undergoing. The meeting did not fulfill the expectations of human rights NGOs who requested the information about the governments position on the conclusions and recommendations addressed to Poland after the State's presentation in April 2008. The meeting had been held before the draft position was approved by the government. Therefore the NGOs were denied access to the official statement of the State. Further, it was also too late for them to influence the document since the meeting was organized only four days before the relevant session of Human Rights Council.

To know more contact Aleksandra: [aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl](mailto:aleksandra.solik@karat.org.pl)

### **Poland: New struggle over abortion**

With the case of 14-year old girl who failed to obtain a legal termination Poland is currently facing a new struggle over the right to abortion. Abortion law in Poland is extremely strict, however, it accepts three exceptions including . when the pregnancy results from an illegal act such as sex with the person under age of 16. Nevertheless, when the girl and her mother requested the procedure they were refused, exposed to the harassment of the pro-life activists and isolated from each other on the basis of

accusation of family to "incite to abortion". On June 13<sup>th</sup> KARAT joined the women's groups protest in front of the Polish Parliament demanding the girl's right to choose be respected. Despite the protest and the liberal media indignation, it seems unlikely that the girl will obtain the abortion she and her family want.

For more info write to Kasia: [kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl](mailto:kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl).

You can also express your indignation about not respecting the girl right to termination and appeal for legalizing abortion law in Poland by writing to Donald Tusk, Polish Prime Minister at: : [cirinfo@kprm.gov.pl](mailto:cirinfo@kprm.gov.pl) or Al. Ujazdowskie 1/3, 00-583 Warsaw, tel: 0048 22 6946000, fax: 0048 22 6252637.

### **Tajikistan: UN examines situation of women**

The country has been visited by the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Human Rights Council on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences. The main purpose of the visit was to examine the problem of sex-based violence and to prepare report for the UN Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur drew attention to problem of poverty and unemployment that has devastating effect on women. High rate of unemployment forces women to accept highly unfavourable working conditions and leads to seasonal migration, mainly to Russian Federation.

Full statement :

[http://stopvaw.org/UN\\_Special\\_Rapporteur\\_on\\_Violence\\_Against\\_Women\\_Concludes\\_Visit\\_to\\_Tajikistan.html](http://stopvaw.org/UN_Special_Rapporteur_on_Violence_Against_Women_Concludes_Visit_to_Tajikistan.html)

## **EU News**

### **EU-CIS Gender Watch in development aid**

Network of East-West Women (NEWW – Polska) in cooperation with Eurostep and EEPA (European External Policy Advisor) is organizing a roundtable in Brussels to discuss the European Commission's gender strategies in six countries of the Eastern Europe: Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Hungary. The aim of the roundtable is to review the findings of reports that have been prepared in each of the above countries. The meeting will also create a room for of different stakeholders. For more info contact Ann-Charlotte Sallmann at: [asallmann@eepea.be](mailto:asallmann@eepea.be) or Zofia Lapniewska at: [zofia@neww.org](mailto:zofia@neww.org)

### **No democracy without parity**

European Women's Lobby (EWL) is launching a campaign on women's participation in decision-making bodies in the context of the upcoming elections to the European Parliament (EP) in 2009. Other important appointments within the EU are also coming up: top positions as the European High Representative for Foreign Affairs, the Presidents of the European Council and of the European Commission. The key message of the campaign is that there could not be modern European democracy unless there is an equal representation of women and men in politics and decision-making fora.

More info:

[http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1abstract.asp?DocID=2239&v1ID=&RevID=&namePage=&pageParent=&DocID\\_sousmenu=](http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1abstract.asp?DocID=2239&v1ID=&RevID=&namePage=&pageParent=&DocID_sousmenu=)

Online petition called *Females in front* going on that calls for supporting women's in decision-making. We strongly encourage you to support this action by signing up at:

<http://www.femalesinfront.eu/default.asp?view=front&lang=gb>

### **Anti-discrimination legal mechanisms**

European Women's Lobby (EWL) urges the European Commission (EC) to ensure uniform protection for all grounds of discrimination. In 2004, the president of the EC, Manuel Barroso, declared commitment to scale up the existing anti-discrimination law (Article 13 of the EC Treaty) to all forms of discrimination. EWL calls upon EC to follow up on that pledge. EWL highlights that the protection against sex-based discrimination is not yet adequate.

More info:

[http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1abstract.asp?DocID=2246&v1ID=&RevID=&namePage=&pageParent=&DocID\\_sousmenu=](http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1abstract.asp?DocID=2246&v1ID=&RevID=&namePage=&pageParent=&DocID_sousmenu=)

## **Other News**

### **KARAT in the TRIALOG-CONCORD Conference in Prague**

Representative of KARAT Secretariat attended the joint TRIALOG-CONCORD Conference entitled "Are we on the right track ? Paradigm review by Civil Society Organizations (SCOs) as development actors" held in Prague on May 14-16, 2008. The conference was the first EU wide meeting of CSOs working in the international development cooperation which brought together participants from UE, Global South, and Eastern European Neighbourhood Countries. Its aim was to challenge the development paradigms and give an insight into specific context of CSO work in development. One of the main issues examined within the event was the impact of the UE enlargement.

For more info write Kasia at: [kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl](mailto:kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl)

### **European Young Feminist Forum in Warsaw**

International Meeting on European Young Feminists' Network was held in Warsaw on 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> of June 2008. Following up the Affinity Groups process working for European Feminist Forum that was to be held in Poland in June 2008, women from many European countries came together in order to discuss the need for networking among youth. Some basic structural / antistructural framework was elaborate and thematic content was developed. KARAT wishes all the very best to the new network and is going to observe the process.

To know more Joanna Semeniuk at: [joanna.semeniuk@gmail.com](mailto:joanna.semeniuk@gmail.com) or Kasia at: [kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl](mailto:kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl)

### **Euromed – a region on the move**

On June, 2 – 3, a conference on *Strengthening Civil Society and Gender Equality in the Euromed Region* took place. The event was convened by Womnet. It was a great opportunity for different stakeholders: women's groups, decision-makers, scholars and activists, to network and exchange perspectives on the status of women in the Euromed region and to build alliances. The main focus of the conference was Istanbul conclusions that are commitments on ensuring gender equality and empowerment made by Ministers of the EU states and the Mediterranean neighbouring countries at the meeting held in Istanbul in November 2006. The progress of implementation will be officially reviewed in 2009. The main outcome of the conference are recommendations for the European Commission and national governments in reference to European neighbourhood policy (ENP) elaborated by women from the Euromed region.

Once again it appeared obvious that there is a need for women's cooperation and joint lobbying efforts on regional level. KARAT which is a partner of Womnet was represented at the conference by Magda Pohec.

For more info write to Magda at: [magda.pochec@karat.org.pl](mailto:magda.pochec@karat.org.pl) or to Johanna Florek from Womnet at: [johanna.florek@womnet.de](mailto:johanna.florek@womnet.de)

### **Update on UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC)**

The first round of Universal Periodic Review (UPR), new UN mechanism for human rights monitoring in member states, started in April. Poland and Czech Republic has been among the first countries that submitted country reports for examination. This is also an opportunity for civil society organizations, including women's groups, to prepare alternative/shadow reports. In case of Poland, the UNHRC urged the government to take further action to eliminate domestic violence, social exclusion and poverty and gender discrimination. Until now Polish government has failed to adopt anti-discrimination act.

At the second session scheduled for May, 5 – 16, Romania and Ukraine were reviewed (among others). The next session will take place in December 2008. Four countries from the CEE region will be reviewed: Montenegro, Serbia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

We are very much interested in your experiences and looking forward to receiving updates on your country's situation. Please write to us at: [magda.pochec@karat.org.pl](mailto:magda.pochec@karat.org.pl) or

[kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl](mailto:kasia.staszewska@karat.org.pl)

To learn more about UNHRC go to: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/>

### **Funding for women's rights organizations**

AWID, Association for Women's Rights in Development is now dealing with the topic of funding for women's rights organizations. As a part of *Where is the money for women's rights* initiative, AWID has published a report that is available at: [http://www.awid.org/go.php?pg=fundher\\_2](http://www.awid.org/go.php?pg=fundher_2)

The main problem identified by AWID is only limited access of small organizations to funding from large, most influential donor agencies. AWID also collects data on that problem based on the online survey addressed to women's groups.

More info: [fundher@awid.org](mailto:fundher@awid.org)

## **Information Shraing**

### **CaucAsia Magazine, No. 5**

The new issue of CaucAsia Magazine is now available online. THave a nice reading! You can download it at:

<http://www.gmc.ge/images/PDF/Kavkazia2008-5E.pdf>

### **Aid effectiveness from gender equality perspective**

Mapping studies focusing on gender in the context of aid effectiveness have been conducted in 7 countries, including Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. The objective of this research was to assess the mainstreaming of gender into national priorities and the project is linked to the EC/UN Partnership on Gender Equality for Development and Peace.

Report on Kyrgyz republic:

[http://www.gendermatters.eu/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=196&Itemid=87](http://www.gendermatters.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=196&Itemid=87)

Study of Ukraine:

[http://www.gendermatters.eu/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=195&Itemid=87](http://www.gendermatters.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=195&Itemid=87)

### **Institutional mechanisms for gender equality**

European Women's Lobby (EWL) has just released an electronic version of *Resource Kit on Institutional Mechanisms for the Promotion of Equality between Women and Men*.

Kit is available on:

[http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/policies/gender%20equality/EWL%20Lobbying%20kit%20institutional%20mechanisms%20final\\_EN.pdf](http://www.womenlobby.org/SiteResources/data/MediaArchive/policies/gender%20equality/EWL%20Lobbying%20kit%20institutional%20mechanisms%20final_EN.pdf)

### **European Development Aid – new CONCORD's report**

In its new report *No time to waste*, CONCORD reveals alarming facts about the real impact and efficiency of the European Development Aid. The main conclusion is that European governments entirely fail to provide funding that they committed to allocate.

The electronic version of the report:

<http://www.concordeurope.org/Public/Page.php?ID=4&language=eng>

### **WIDE Annual Conference 2008, the Hague, the Netherlands**

Scheduled for upcoming October, 9 – 11, this year's conference is titled "Feminist visions for a just Europe". It will be hosted by the WO=MEN, which is a Dutch Gender Platform; and it will bring together at least 200 women's rights activists from West, East and South.

More info: <http://www.wide-network.org/index.jsp?id=243> or [wideconference2008@wo-men.nl](mailto:wideconference2008@wo-men.nl)

### **[www.imow.org](http://www.imow.org) – International Museum of Women (I.M.O.W)**

This is an online museum that publishes exhibitions capturing various women's experiences in order to trigger discussion. The current display deals with the topic *Women, Power and Politics*.

---

### **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS**

KARAT Secretariat would like to sincerely thank the following for their contributions to the News (forwarding information and providing us with 'original' information): WIDE, WUNRN, CONCORD, ASTRA, VAW Monitor, NEWW

**Edited by Magdalena Pocheć and Kasia Staszewska**