



European Committee of the Regions

JDE 51

5 March 2020

(Interpretation EN, FR, DE, IT, PL)

12:30–13:30, Atrium 5: Lunch and Market Place

During lunch, different stands of partner organizations and EU Associations will present their projects and initiatives on enhancing women's participation in politics.

13:30-14:10: Opening "Why gender balance in politics matters for democracy: are we moving forwards?"

To ensure good governance and policy making, the President of the European Commission Ursula Von der Leyen has made a clear commitment to gender equality and parity. A new "European Equality Strategy" to frame the EU's work on gender equality in the period 2020-2024 will be adopted beginning of March. This session would introduce the current work of the EU Institutions and on how to enhance gender parity among elected politicians.

Speakers

- **Mr Apostolos Tzitzikostas**, President of the European Committee of the Regions;
- **Ms Evelyn Regner**, Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, European Parliament.

Moderator: Ms Florence Ranson, Founder at REDComms.

14:15-16:15 "Women in local politics: where we are now, where we go next"

Women make up half of humanity, yet account for only 1/3 of political decision-makers in Europe and around 15% of mayors. During this session, local elected representatives will present the evolution of women representation at all levels of governance - local, regional, national and European – and showcase concrete examples of how they are working to advance equality on the ground.

- **Ms. Sirpa Hertell**, City Councillor of Espoo (FI), Member of the CEMR Standing Committee for Equality: CEMR study "*Women in Local Politics: Local and European Trends*";

Best practices from local level:

- **Ms Klara Geywitz**, State of Brandenburg: "*Act on Gender Parity in Politics*";
- **Ms Nathalie Sarrabezolles**, CoR Member, President of the *Finistère Departmental Council*: "*Women in Cohesion Policy*".

- **Young Elected Politicians (YEPs): Presentations of the key results of the participatory workshops by the group of 30 "[Young Elected Politicians 4 More Women in Politics](#)"**

Which are the measures that should be put in place to eliminate individual, organizational and social obstacles that dissuade women from entering politics?¹

- Q&A.

Moderator: Ms Jaimie Just, Policy Officer – Gender Equality and Diversity, CEMR;

Ms Nathalie Noupadja, Head of Research and Studies, CEMR.

16:30-17:30: CoR Digital Masterclasses "Social Media as a key tool to overcome the issue of women leaders' representation in traditional media"

According to the study "The female political career", conducted by Women Political Leaders (formerly known as Women in Parliaments), "*the representation of women leaders in traditional media represents an obstacle to gender parity*". Social Media, considering their incredible impact with low entry cost, can play as a political equaliser. In fact, "more than 85% of female legislators use social media to communicate with their constituencies". At the same time, Social Media have brought new risks for female politicians. Insulting or threatening comments about women's ability and/or role in life and in particular in politics come every day. The "[#HerNetHerRights project](#)" led by European Womens' Lobby will be presented and the current state of online violence against women, with a focus on women politicians, will be presented.

This session will investigate the potential in using social media for female (and male) politicians as tools to overcome some of the gender barriers. The issue of online violence and its implications will be addressed, presenting innovative solutions and policy recommendations to create a more inclusive web.

- **Mr Rick Zednik**, Managing Director, Women Political Leaders (WPL);

- **Ms Joanna Maycock**, Secretary General of the European Women's Lobby.

Moderator: Ms Florence Ranson, Founder at REDComms.

17:30: Market Place and Networking cocktail

¹The [Young Elected Politicians Programme \(YEPs\)](#) is a network of politicians who are no older than 40 and hold a mandate at regional or local level in the EU. The purpose of this network is to exchange best practice among local and regional politicians, network with fellow young elected politicians from the EU, understand and seize opportunities offered by the European Union for local and regional areas, speak for EU regions and municipalities in the European legislative process, gain visibility in European circles. The YEPs Programme was launched in March 2019 on the occasion of the "[8th European Summit of Regions and Cities](#)" that took place in Bucharest. 100 YEPs were invited by the CoR to discuss the future of the European Union. More information on www.cor.europa.eu/yep.go