



European Civil Service Federation Fédération de la Fonction Publique Européenne

International Women's Day 2019



United Nations <http://www.un.org/en/events/womensday/>

The theme of International Women's Day 2019 is **Think equal, build smart, innovate for change**, emphasising the opportunity that education, science and new technologies can give to women and girls to take an equal role in the future.

Innovation provides unprecedented opportunities, yet there is a growing gender digital divide and women are under-represented in the field of science and technology. This prevents them from taking their place in building more inclusive systems, services and infrastructure and achieving gender equality.

The Commission is organising an event^[1] in CHAR from 12:00 to 14:00 on Friday to tie in with this, 'Gender Issues – a fresh scientific perspective' but can do much more throughout the year.

The FFPE has for many years engaged in regular and vigorous defence of the role of women in the Institutions.

One very positive development is that the 40% objective for women in middle and higher management has been attained. Now the target should be raised to 50%. However, this only concerns a small fraction of all of the women working in the institution. There are still areas where the Commission needs to improve conditions for women:

- The teleworking and part-time working rules have developed but remain just as inaccessible to many women;
- Working life has become more stressful for all colleagues but particularly for women since the imposition of the 40-hour working week and their quality of life has suffered badly;
- There is evidence from scientific studies^[2] that open-plan offices result in increased gender bias and stress;
- Office temperatures and air conditioning systems need to be re-designed as they are currently set to comfort levels for the average man and do not take account of women's different metabolic rates^[3];
- Impact assessments should include a gender test: do the proposed measures/products/services have an equal impact on men and women?
- The European Schools should increase collaboration with associations such as "Elles Bougent Belgique"^[4] to encourage more girls into science and technology.

Do you have any further examples of gender bias at the Commission?

Do you have any suggestions for how gender equality at the Commission can be improved?

Let us at FFPE know!

^[1] <https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/EN/NewsPortal/Pages/NewsDetails.aspx?itemid=e437390e-cea1-490b-8b9e-0aaaa9cbda82>

^[2] <https://www.inc.com/geoffrey-james/open-plan-offices-create-extra-stress-for-women-say-scientists.html>

^[3] <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/feb/23/truth-world-built-for-men-car-crashes>

^[4] <http://be.ellesbougent.com/>