



European Women Lawyers Association

The Voice of Women Lawyers Across Europe

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PRESS RELEASE

EWLA congratulates the delegations of Women20 Japan for their communiqué

Last Saturday, the delegation of Women20 Japan handed over its communiqué to Japanese Prime Minister Abe. The communiqué includes recommendations for the G20 leaders.

Women20 (W20) is an official G20 engagement group forming a transnational network of women's organisations, female entrepreneurs associations and think tanks. The main goal of Women20 is to promote women's economic empowerment as an integral part of the G20 process. In a broad dialogue facilitated by digital tools, expert meetings, roundtables and the final W20 Summit, W20 jointly formulates specific recommendations to advance gender equality in G20 negotiations.

EWLA especially supports actions ensuring that women can exercise their digital rights and the introduction of "Arts" within STEAM, which had been introduced at the W20 communiqué in Argentina. EWLA is in favour of this approach, as we consider arts (including liberal arts, fine arts, music, design-thinking and language arts) to be critical components of innovation and thought processes related to student-learning in STEAM.

EWLA shares the worries of the W20 delegates who emphasise the importance of women's inclusion in the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Biased algorithms have to be avoided while creating them, so the participation of women has to already be established in this process.

EWLA considers the wording around public procurement to be a bit vague ("create conditions for public procurement contracts awarded to women-owned businesses"). The fact that women-led businesses are also included can be easily misused and does not necessarily have an impact on the assets and wealth of women. Furthermore, the request to increase the share of women-owned companies by 10 % is not much, considering that women-owned businesses only receive approximately 1 % of contracts within public procurement procedures worldwide. EWLA is also a bit disappointed by the failure to mention the supply chain. EWLA thinks that private companies could have an enormous positive impact on women owned businesses within the European Union.

President of EWLA, Katharina Miller states: "EWLA knows it is not easy to agree on important issues such as gender equality within even one EU Member State. We therefore understand the delegates from the G20 countries and Spain as permanent guest, that all voices have to be heard and every country is different. However, for the EU we will be very critical and, with our gender lenses, we shall request the European Commission to provide a mid-term report on the 2014 Brisbane commitment to reduce the gender gap in labour force participation by 25 % by 2025 during the 2020 G20".

The European Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) is registered in Belgium as an international non-governmental, non-profit, association (Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif). It is a federation of national women lawyers associations from amongst the European Union countries and those of EFTA countries. Members of EWLA are also individual women lawyers and academics from these countries. EWLA pursues the co-operation of European women lawyers, in order to combine their specific expertise in monitoring law and politics seen from the angle of fundamental rights, and in particular gender equality.

The European Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) is registered in Belgium as an International Non-profit Association (AISBL)

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