

**By E-mail**

TO: Philippe Loew

FROM: Valence Borgia – President of the Promotion and Equalities Committee

DATE: March 12, 2021

OBJECT: Activity Report of the Promotion and Equalities Committee

Dear Philippe,

1. Further to your request, I am pleased to provide you with a written report of the work conducted by the Promotion and Equalities Committee I have the honour to chair.
2. In October 2020, we appointed our new Secretary of the Committee, Mme Solenne Brugère, replacing Alice Remy our former colleague who became in-house counsel.
3. On 6 January 2021, we proposed different topics for the basis of our work within the Committee as follows:
  - a. to compare national regulations applicable to women's lawyer in each bar and collect the best practices in a report. The comparison would cover all aspects of a professional career (parental leave, salary, recruitment process, working conditions, *etc.*) as well as private life (political representation, abortion, divorce, *etc.*);
  - b. to draft a list of concrete actions to carry out immediately to promote diversity in law firms. We noted in that respect the launching of the *Legal Women* magazine by our British colleague Coral Hill, which focuses on the business case for diversity ([www.LegalWomen.org.uk](http://www.LegalWomen.org.uk)). As the magazine reflects the philosophy we intend to promote in this Committee, we suggested to select some of the initiatives for women addressed in the magazine and the practical steps to create real change;
  - c. Based on the "*Pledge for professional equality*" of the Paris bar, to draft a guide for practical actions for individuals to start developing gender equality within the legal profession (see Appendix 1);
  - d. To discuss any other proposition members of the Committee would submit.
4. On 8 January 2021, the Committee had a general meeting where the above propositions were discussed. We eventually agreed to launch the great project to identify and point out all

discrepancies in terms of professional gender equality within the various bar members of the FBE.

5. In this context, drafted a questionnaire on professional equality covering a broad number of topics such as parity, parenting, revenues, recruitment process, *etc.* (see Appendix 2).
6. The aim of this questionnaire is to get a fair picture of all applicable rules in force and concrete situations within our bars. Based on the answers provided, we will be able to diagnose the current state of gender discrepancies per bar organization. On this basis, we would propose a consolidated report, collecting the best practices regarding gender equality and promotion for women lawyers within our federation. We will then present this report at the Congress of Paris and propose its publication as model of reference for the FBE.
7. This idea follows the preliminary work of our former colleague Gisele Halimi regarding “*the most favoured European women provision*” with the aim to compare and eventually harmonize women rights within Europe by always referring to the most favourable national practice.
8. On 26 January 2021, we circulated a first draft of list of questions to members of the Committee for individual comments and input until 17 February 2021.
9. On 10 March 2021, we sent the consolidated questionnaire to you for further transmission to a wider distribution list in order to reach the maximum participants of different bars.
10. The next steps of our project are now broken-down as follows:
  - a. 17 April 2021: Collecting answers, comparing and selecting the best practices within our federation;
  - b. June 2021: Issuing guidelines of best practices and publishing them in a report;
  - c. Congress of Paris: Presenting the report and proposing it as model of reference for the FBE;
  - d. To be decided: Presenting the report to our respective bars for publication.

Appendix 1 – Pledge for professional equality of the Paris bar

Appendix 2 – Questionnaire of the Promotion and Equalities Committee to be returned by 17/03/2021