

# Annual Report 2008

Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies



## **Annual Report 2008**

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# Contents

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- p1 Editorial
  
- p2 MIGS 2009 Diary
  
- p3 Violence against Women
  - p3 Gender Violence among Young Women and Adolescents
  - p4 Trafficking in Women for Sexual Exploitation
  
- p5 Women and Migration: Integrating Female Migrant Domestic Workers
  
- p6 Linking the Local to the Global: MIGS Representation in Europe
  - p6 Cyprus Women's Lobby
  - p7 Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network
  - p8 European Policy Action Centre on Violence against Women
  - p9 Women against Violence in Europe
  
- p10 MIGS Team 2008
  
- p11 Acknowledgements

# Who we are

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The Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) is a non-profit feminist organisation born in the year 2000 out of the passionate belief of a few friends who happened to be gender researchers and activists and who wanted to make a difference in Cyprus, the Mediterranean, and, following Cyprus's accession, the European Union.

MIGS main aim is to promote and contribute to projects of social, political, and economic themes relating to gender with an emphasis on the Mediterranean region. The Institute recognizes the multilayered levels of discrimination against women and accepts that this discrimination takes different forms. It is committed to the elimination of this discrimination using a combination of research, advocacy and lobbying, as well as trainings, conferences, and other activities.

MIGS is closely affiliated to the University of Nicosia ([www.unic.ac.cy](http://www.unic.ac.cy)), the largest academic institution in Cyprus. The Institute has been actively involved, both as a coordinating institution and as a partner, in the administration and implementation of a number of projects related to issues of gender including the media, violence against women and girls, migration, leadership and decision making, employment and economic life, among others.



# Editorial

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It is with great pleasure that I introduce the Annual Report of the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies highlighting our main projects and activities in 2008.

In 2008, MIGS continued its important work on the elimination of violence against women focusing our activities on gender-based violence among young women and adolescents with the conclusion of two large-scale projects funded by the Daphne II Programme. Also crucial has been our continued work on combating trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation that has had a significant impact on policy making on a national level. MIGS's lobbying and advocacy activities have been key during the year, with our team taking a strong stand on a number of issues affecting Cyprus and the region, including migrant women's rights. In this area, we focused its activities on promoting integration policies and strategies specific to the needs of female migrant domestic workers in Europe, through the implementation of a transnational project with partners in five European countries.

The year was highlighted by the successful conclusion of a number of projects coordinated by MIGS, including two large transnational projects funded by the European Commission. Further, MIGS was awarded an operating grant from the European Commission - Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 'Europe for Citizens' Programme 2008. This gave us the opportunity to effectively carry out its annual work programme and gave new impetus to our lobbying and advocacy work on a national and European level.

I am delighted to announce that, as of August 2008, MIGS has a new Board of Administration with the addition of two new colleagues Dr. Zelia Gregoriou, Assistant Professor at the University of Cyprus and Alexandra Attalidou, Press Attachée at the European Parliament Office in Cyprus. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome them on board and I look forward to our working together in the coming years to sustain, strengthen, and expand the Institute's work.

Finally, on behalf of MIGS, I would like to thank all the dedicated and hard working MIGS team who make this work possible. In particular, I would like to thank our excellent partners throughout the year, as well as the European Commission, the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between the Cultures, and the Cyprus National Machinery for Women's Rights, Ministry of Justice and Public Order, for supporting our work and, in doing so, contributing towards gender equality and the promotion of women's rights on a national and European level.

**Myria Vassiliadou**

Chair

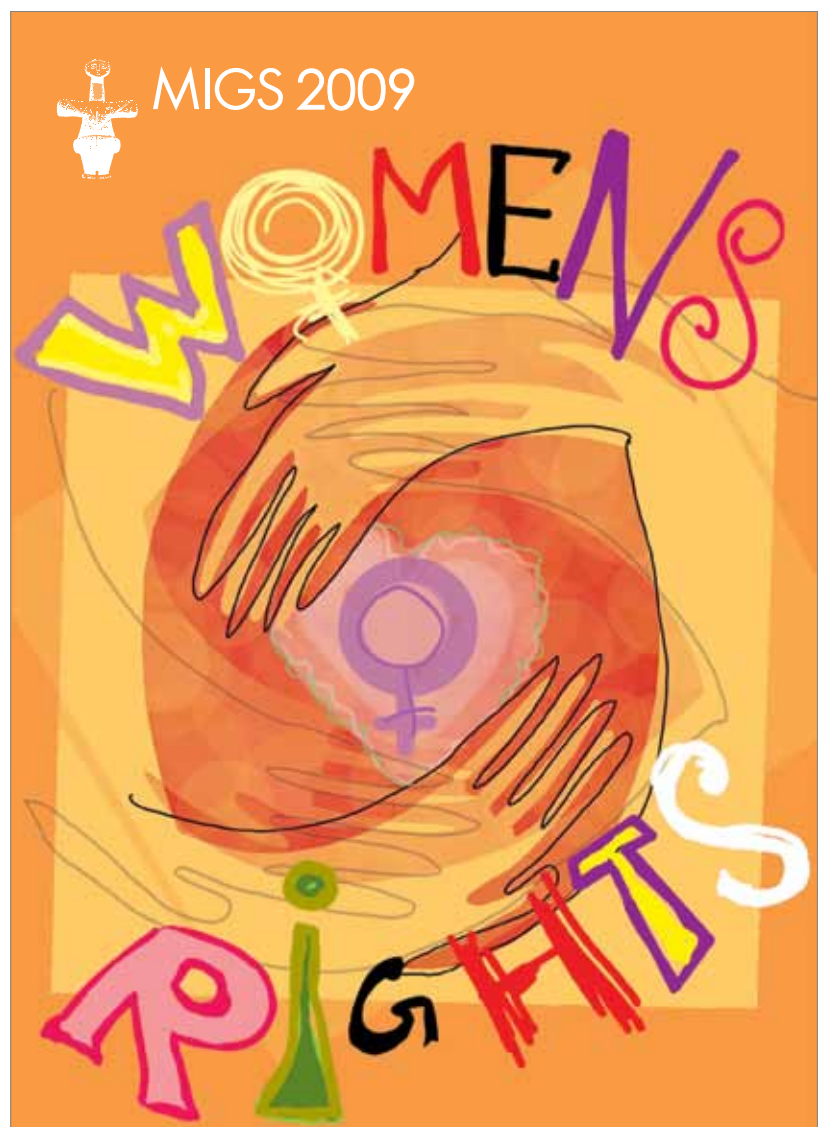
Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies

# MIGS 2009 Diary: 30 Years of the CEDAW Convention

In 2008, MIGS published a diary for the year 2009 with the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as its central theme. This publication, marking 30 years since the adoption of CEDAW by the UN General Assembly in December 1979, aims to raise awareness on the only comprehensive international treaty guaranteeing women's human rights and the prevention of discrimination against women.

The CEDAW Diary 2009 is characterized by its playful and innovative designs and includes information on women's rights and discrimination, simplified summaries of all the CEDAW Articles, a weekly calendar as well as a glossary of terms used in the Convention. The diary is written in Greek and English and targets mainly young women and men, NGOs, youth organisations, and students in secondary education.

The CEDAW Convention plays an important part in MIGS lobbying and advocacy activities. In 2006, MIGS actively participated in the CEDAW reporting process by submitting a shadow/alternative report to the Cyprus Government report to the CEDAW Committee for review. MIGS was present during the 35th CEDAW Session in New York to create a lobby presence during the session, as well as to provide input during the drafting of the concluding comments by the CEDAW Committee.



# Violence against Women

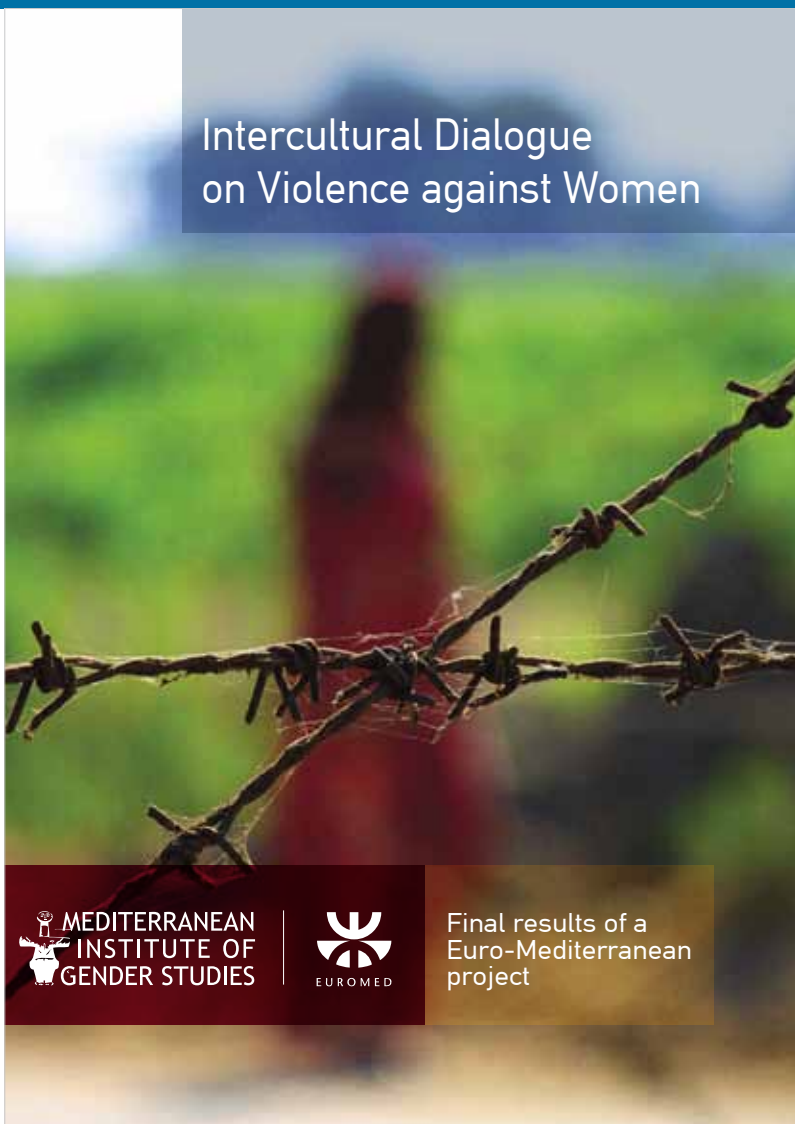
Combating violence against women has been among MIGS's thematic priorities since its inception and has been active in raising awareness, conducting research, and monitoring national and EU efforts to combat violence against women in all its forms.

## Gender Violence among Young Women and Adolescents

In 2008, MIGS's main activities focused on preventing violence among young women and adolescents within the framework of projects funded under the Daphne II Programme of the European Commission.

MIGS also implemented a project funded by the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures, focusing on intercultural dialogue on violence against women in the Euromed region.

### Intercultural Dialogue on Violence against Women



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Final results of a  
Euro-Mediterranean  
project

**New Publication: Resource Book** entitled “Intercultural Dialogue on Violence against Women: Final results of a Euro-Mediterranean project”, published within the framework of a project funded by the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures.



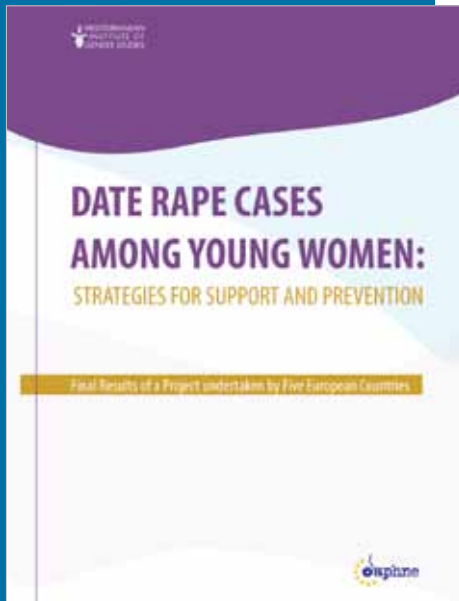
## Project entitled “Date Rape Cases among Young Women: Strategies for support and prevention”

MIGS recently completed the coordination of the project Date Rape Cases among Young Women and the Development of Good Practices for Support and Prevention, funded by the Daphne II Programme of the European Commission. The project team included the Institute of Equality in Greece, the University of Malta, the Coalition for Gender Equality in Latvia, and the Women’s Issues Information Centre in Lithuania.

This was the first time a Cypriot NGO had received a grant to implement a project funded by the Daphne II Programme and the first time the issue of sexual violence in interpersonal relationships was addressed in Cyprus.

The project was launched in September 2006 and was completed in September 2008. Its main aim was to measure the prevalence and incidence of date rape among female college students in the partner countries and assess the attitudes, behaviours and level of awareness among young women as well as relevant stakeholders. The project also promoted awareness and made policy recommendations for the prevention of date rape and support to victims.





• **New Publication – Date Rape Cases among Young Women: Strategies for support and prevention**

A Resource Book encompassing the final results of the project was published in August 2008. The resource book included the main results of the research conducted in the partner countries, good practice examples for the prevention of date rape and for victim support, myths and realities associated with rape, as well as strategies and policy recommendations targeting policy makers and NGOs on a national and EU level.



• **Final Conference, 26 June 2008**

The project concluded its final phase with a final conference that took place in Nicosia, Cyprus. The main aim of the conference was the exchange of best practice for the prevention of date rape and sexual violence in Europe, and for victim support.

The conference provided a forum for constructive dialogue among government authorities and civil society on issues of violence against women, as well as the exchange of best practice and knowledge on date rape and sexual violence on a European level.

Guest speakers included the Cyprus Minister of Justice and Public Order, Colette de Troy, Director of the European Policy Action Centre on Violence against Women, Joanna Lovett, Research Fellow, Child & Woman Abuse Studies Unit - London Metropolitan University, and Dr. Rickert Vaughn, Professor of Clinical Population and Family Health, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University. The conference

concluded with two parallel workshops entitled Sexual Violence: Assessment and Management by Professor Rickert Vaughn and Setting up a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) by Joanna Lovett.

The conference was attended by over 50 delegates including NGO representatives, public officials, and representatives of relevant authorities such as the police, the Social Welfare Services, and the Attorney General's Office. The print and television media covered the conference extensively.

## Project entitled “Secondary Education Schools and Education in Values: Proposals for gender violence prevention”



The Daphne II project Secondary Education Schools and Education in values: Proposals for gender violence prevention, coordinated by the University of Zaragoza in partnership with MIGS and the University of Malta, was concluded in June 2008. The project was implemented in Cyprus, Malta and Spain with the aim to identify and analyse the types of values in secondary school that affect male and female models of attraction and their connection to gender violence.

The project aimed to contribute to gender violence prevention in secondary schools, given that it is one

of the stages in which many young people begin their first relationships and begin to shape certain values in relation to the ‘models of attraction’. These models respond to certain values that in many cases promote and value violent attitudes, perceiving them as attractive. This mainly research oriented project analysed the context of secondary schools, as well as other contexts for socialisation of youth, in order to propose specific actions that contribute to the prevention of gender-based violence among adolescents.

## 365 Violence Against Women Poster Exhibition



MIGS hosted the 365 Violence Against Women Poster Exhibition from the 7-12 June 2008 at the ARTOS Cultural and Research Foundation in Nicosia.

The 365 Violence against Women Poster Exhibition was developed by Colm Dempsey, a member of An Garda Siochana (Irish Police) who hoped to reach the number of 365 posters in order to raise awareness on the issue of violence against women worldwide. Based in Ireland, the posters have now by far exceeded the original idea with the exhibition including posters by individuals, agencies and organisations from 58 countries around the world. Posters included in the exhibition featured many forms of violence such as child sexual abuse, rape, sexual assault, domestic abuse and sexual exploitation.

The exhibition was officially opened on Saturday, 7 June 2008 by Stella Kyriakidou, MP and Member of the House Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women. The exhibition was visited by over 400 individuals from NGOs, government authorities, and education institutions.

For more information on the exhibition please visit [www.dvposters365.net](http://www.dvposters365.net).



## Trafficking in Women for Sexual Exploitation: Focus on demand for sexual services and gender equality

Trafficking in women has been a priority issue for MIGS since 2006 and our activities have had a high impact on policy formulation on a national level. MIGS activities in 2008 focused specifically on the demand side of trafficking in women for sexual exploitation and on gender mainstreaming in anti-trafficking policies.

Although the Cyprus Government has signed and ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Trafficking in Human Beings, which requires state parties to take measures to discourage demand as well as promote gender mainstreaming in all policy measures,

Cyprus as well as other EU member states have yet to take concrete action toward this end. Thus, MIGS objectives for 2008 included raising awareness among key stakeholders, including NGOs and the media, on the issue of demand for sexual services as well as gender equality through awareness-raising flyers and the organisation of a major conference. In 2009, MIGS will examine this further through a research project examining demand for sexual services and how this is linked to trafficking in women for sexual exploitation. MIGS has also lobbied intensively for concrete actions to ensure that a gender dimension is incorporated in all anti-trafficking policies.

**Awareness-raising flyers on trafficking in women for sexual exploitation targeting buyers of sexual services.**



## Conference: Trafficking in Women for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation



Within the framework of European Anti-Trafficking Day, on the 13 October 2008 MIGS, in partnership with the European Parliament Office in Cyprus, hosted a conference entitled “Trafficking in Women for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation” with the aim to address the issue of trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation with special focus on demand for sexual services and gender equality. The conference provided a forum for dialogue and discussion between NGOs, public authorities, and other organizations such as the European

Women’s Lobby and the Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit, London Metropolitan University.



Keynote speakers included Neoklis Sylikiotis, Minister of Interior of the Republic of Cyprus, Therese Murphy, member of the Executive Committee of the European Women’s Lobby (EWL), Dr. Maddy Coy, Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit, London Metropolitan University, Rita Superman, Head of Office for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings of the Cyprus Police, and Mine Yucel, Director of Prologue Consulting Ltd. The conference was concluded with the screening of the documentary “Not for Sale” produced

by the European Women’s Lobby and the Coalition against Trafficking in Women.

The conference was attended by over 60 participants including NGOs and women’s organizations, government officials, representatives of trade unions, as well as students and researchers. The event received extensive media attention with coverage in all major newspapers and television news channels.

## Building Capacity: Training of the police and welfare officers

On 19 December 2008, MIGS organized a training seminar for police and social welfare officers directly involved in anti-trafficking activities and victim care. The aim of the training was to provide them with the necessary tools to effectively provide services to victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Conducting the workshop were trainers from the Poppy Project, Eaves Housing for Women Limited (UK).

The seminar provided an opportunity for much needed exchange of experience and knowledge on providing support and assistance to victims of trafficking, as well as a forum for discussion on inter-departmental cooperation on anti-trafficking and identification of victims. Over 25 members of the Cyprus Police and officers of the Social Welfare Services attended the workshop.

## Raising awareness among potential buyers of sexual services

MIGS in partnership with Prologue Consultancy Ltd. published awareness raising flyers on trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation with the aim to increase awareness and knowledge among potential buyers of sexual services on trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The flyers were published in English, Greek, and Turkish and were disseminated widely across Cyprus. The flyers have also been made available on the websites of various international organizations and NGOs such as Women's UN Report Program & Network (WUNRN) and the Network of East-West Women (NEWW Polska).

## MIGS speaks out at the Cyprus Parliament

On 18 June 2008, MIGS was asked to present the research results of the project Mapping the Realities of Trafficking in Women for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation in Cyprus to the House Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women. The recommendations were welcomed by the Committee who arranged a second meeting on 25 June 2008 where representatives of all relevant ministries and other governmental agencies were asked to attend and respond to specific questions arising from the MIGS research report. Representatives of MIGS participated as observers.

MIGS also held meetings with individual ministers and MPs on a national level in order to lobby for the integration of gender mainstreaming in all anti-trafficking policies, and to exchange views on current policy developments on the issue.

## Cyprus Coordinating Multidisciplinary Group on Trafficking in Persons

In 2008, MIGS was selected as a member of the Coordinating Multidisciplinary Group on Trafficking in Persons. The group was established by the Law on Combating Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Beings and Protection of Victims (L.87(I)/2007). The group's purpose, among others, is to monitor the implementation of the Law and National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons (2005) as well as to take all necessary measures to monitor and evaluate the national referral mechanism for victims, and to collect and exchange information with regards to offences as these are foreseen by the law.

## Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)



Josie Christodoulou, Policy Coordinator at MIGS, has been elected, among candidates from all over Europe, as

a member of the newly established Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA). The group was established to monitor the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, and was elected by the Committee of Parties of the Council of Europe. GRETA will regularly publish reports evaluating the measures taken by the member states, and those states which do not fully respect the measures contained in the Convention will be required to step up their action.

# Women and Migration: Integrating female migrant domestic workers

The rights of migrant women have been a policy priority for MIGS since 2004. Drawing on the results of previous projects and activities, MIGS aims to promote migrant women's rights on a national and EU level involving all relevant stakeholders, including migrant women themselves aiming to give them the opportunity to raise their voices and engage in public dialogue on integration and migration. The aims and objectives of this year's activities were to raise awareness among relevant stakeholders and diverse groups on a national and EU level, advocate and lobby for migrant women's rights among policy makers and government authorities, and engage in the transfer and exchange of information on integration policies and strategies specific to the needs of migrant women across Europe.

## Integration of Female Migrant Domestic Workers: Strategies for Employment and Civic Participation

This was the first project funded by the INTI Programme that was implemented in Cyprus and coordinated by a Cypriot NGO. The project was launched in September 2006 and was completed in February 2008. The project partners were CREA - University of Barcelona in Spain, ANTIGONE- Information and Documentation Centre on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non-Violence in Greece, ISIS - Institute Fur Soziale Infrastructur in Germany, Lai-Momo Cooperative in Italy and the Filipino National Workers Association in Cyprus.

The main aim of the project was to stimulate transnational cooperation involving a wide range of actors at the local, regional and EU level, and consisting of the transfer of information, lessons learned, and best practices in order to develop recommendations for an integration model responding to the specific needs of female migrant domestic workers and their host countries, and adaptable to different contexts.

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INTEGRATION OF FEMALE MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS  
Strategies for Employment and Civic Participation

Maid Carer  
Domestic Domestic Worker  
Putzfrau Οικιακή Βοηθός  
Pflegerin caregiver Colf  
cleaning woman domestic worker  
Γυναίκα που καθαρίζει cleaning lady  
Aupair Mädchen Aupair Mädchen Κοπέλα Cuidadoia  
caregiver Mujor de la limpieza cleaning woman  
Οικιακή Βοηθός Badante Κοπέλα Colf  
elderly people minder Pflegerin Asistenta  
Domestica Κοπέλα Οικιακή Βοηθός

**WORKERS**

**LABOUR AND CIVIC RIGHTS FOR FEMALE MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS**

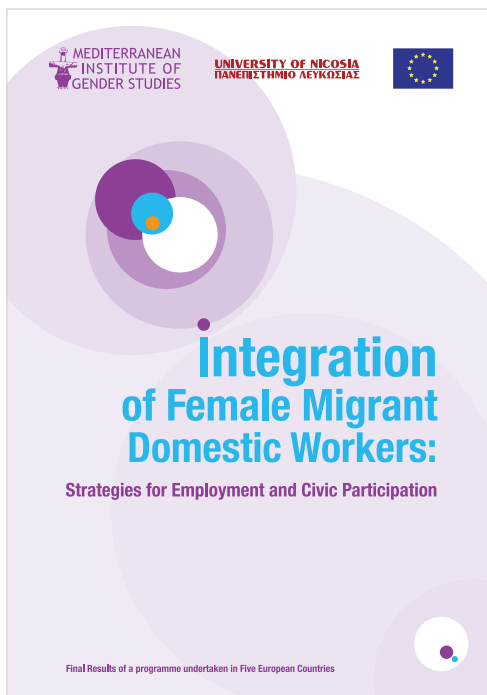
UNIVERSITY OF NICOSIA ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΛΕΥΚΩΣΙΑΣ

For more information visit [www.medinstgenderstudies.org](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org)

Awareness-raising posters on female migrant domestic workers.

## New Publication - Integration of Female Migrant Domestic Workers: Strategies for Employment and Civic Participation

The project's Resource Book entitled *Integration of Female Migrant Domestic Workers: Strategies for Employment and Civic Participation* was published in February 2008. The book incorporates the results of a mapping survey conducted in all partner countries as well as best practice examples and policy recommendations on the national and EU levels. The resource book has been disseminated widely to organisations such as the European Women's Lobby and UNIFEM, as well as researchers and policy makers across Europe.



## Final Conference, 28 February 2008

As a final activity to this project MIGS hosted a final conference on the 28 February 2008 at the University of Nicosia, Cyprus.

The conference addressed the need for the development of an integration model that responds to the particular needs of female migrant domestic workers in Europe. Participants included NGO representatives, policy makers from both the local and EU level, public authorities, representatives of international and local migrant organizations, experts in the field of migration and gender studies, as well as representatives from the five European partner countries.

The conference received extensive media coverage and was attended by over 50 delegates.

## MIGS targets policy makers

Within the framework of this project policy recommendations were drafted based on the recognition that the intersectionality of gender and migration constitutes an indispensable analytic tool for understanding and combating the social exclusion of female migrant domestic workers in Europe. MIGS published a policy briefing in December 2008 with key policy recommendations targeting the Cyprus Government in relation to the integration of female migrant domestic workers in Cyprus.

MIGS also met with the Cyprus Minister of Interior, Neoklis Sylikiotis, on the 19 June 2008 to present and discuss the results of the Cyprus mapping report on the integration of female migrant domestic workers, with the aim to develop more effective integration policies on a national level.

# Linking the Global with the Local: MIGS representation in Europe

MIGS actively seeks to develop and strengthen partnerships and alliances with NGOs and other organizations across Europe. In 2008, MIGS initiated the process that brought women's organisations across Cyprus together to form the Cyprus Women's Lobby. MIGS is also a new member of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network.

## The Cyprus Women's Lobby

In 2008, MIGS initiated and organized a number of meetings with women's organizations in Cyprus with the aim to apply for full membership of the European Women's Lobby (EWL), of which MIGS was an associate member. The EWL is the largest umbrella organisation of women's associations in the European Union representing over 2000 organisations and aimed at promoting women's rights and equality between women and men. The EWL works primarily with EU institutions and has a direct impact on gender equality policy on a European level. For more information please visit [www.womenlobby.org](http://www.womenlobby.org).

As a result of this process, on the 8 September 2008, 16 women's organizations and NGOs gathered at the University of Nicosia to sign the Protocol of Cooperation formally establishing the Cyprus Women's Lobby (CWL). The CWL mission is to promote the empowerment of women in all their diversity, to advance gender equality, to combat all forms of discrimination and violence against women, and to ensure full access for all women to their human rights through their active involvement in society and in policy development and implementation.



The CWL is the newest member of the EWL having been voted unanimously during the EWL General Assembly that took place on the 25-26 October 2008 in Lyon, France.

## The EWL 50/50 Campaign "No Democracy without Gender Equality"



The Cyprus Women's Lobby actively supports the EWL 50/50 Campaign for Parity Democracy ([www.5050democracy.eu](http://www.5050democracy.eu)) that seeks to ensure the equal representation of women and men in the European

Parliament to be elected in June 2009 and in the upcoming European Commission.

The under-representation of women in political decision-making in Cyprus and in Europe constitutes a serious democratic deficit. The goals of the EWL 50/50 Campaign are on the one hand to ensure 50/50 representation of women and men in the European Parliament, the European Commission, and other EU institutions in 2009, and on the other to mobilize European women and men to be involved in the European elections and to put the values of gender equality and sustainable and social development at the core of the programmes of political parties for the European elections.

In 2009 the Cyprus Women's Lobby will continue its efforts to promote the equal representation of women on the candidate lists of the political parties, in view of the June 2009 European elections, and lobby for the inclusion of gender equality as a political priority in their electoral programmes.



## Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network: Defending human rights in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) was established in 1995 in order to overcome economic and political inequalities between a quite wealthy and democratic North and a comparatively poor and undemocratic South. The changes that the EMP is working towards have proved to be slow and main improvements are still waiting to be accomplished. With regard to the Barcelona Process there is a serious gap between the declared commitments to human rights in the Barcelona Declaration and the human rights situation in the region.

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) aims to promote and strengthen human rights and democratic reform within the framework of the Barcelona Process and EU-Arab cooperation frameworks. The Network seeks to develop and strengthen partnerships between NGOs in the Euro-Med region, facilitate development of human rights mechanisms, disseminate the values of human rights and generate capacity in this regard. MIGS became a full member of the EMHRN following the General Assembly that took place in Barcelona in December 2008.

MIGS is a member of the EMHRN's Working Group on Gender and Women's Rights. This working group aims to contribute to the full implementation of human rights values and international standards relating to women's rights and the achievement of gender equality in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

### Monitoring of the Euro-Med policies addressing gender equality, in particular the Istanbul Plan of Action (IPA)

The EMHRN participated actively in the EU Ministerial Conference "Strengthening the Role of Women in Society", held in Istanbul on 14-15 November 2006. In 2008, it launched its initiative to follow-up and monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Plan of Action (IPA). The initiative includes awareness raising activities targeting Euro-Med NGOs, and the preparation of a structured Shadow Report evaluating the implementation of IPA. In the upcoming phase the Gender Working Group will finalize and publish its Shadow Report, lobby and advocate for its recommendations, and continue its preparations for the follow-up Ministerial Conference scheduled in 2009.

For more information please visit [www.euromedrights.net](http://www.euromedrights.net)

## European Policy Action Centre on Violence against Women (EPAC-VAW)



The European Policy Action Centre on Violence against Women is an international non-profit organisation working to achieve equality between women and men through the elimination of all forms of male violence against women. Set up as a branch of the European Women's Lobby in 2007, EPAC-VAW supports the EWL's Observatory on Violence against Women, with the aim of promoting and improving policies to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination and violence against women. Its work is based on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, the Beijing Platform for Action, and Beijing + 5.

As members of the Cyprus Women's Lobby MIGS serves as national expert for EPAC-VAW. In this capacity, MIGS provides information from the national level regarding legislation and the implementation of policies for combating violence against women, in preparation for a Europe wide monitoring report.

For more information please visit the EPAC-VAW website at [www.epacvaw.org](http://www.epacvaw.org).

## Women against Violence in Europe (WAVE)



MIGS is a member and Cyprus focal point for WAVE, a network of European women's non-governmental organisations working in the field of combating violence against women and children including women's refuges, counselling centres, SOS hotlines/helplines, organizations focusing on prevention and training, among others.

In this capacity, MIGS regularly provides information on the situation of violence against women in Cyprus including latest statistics, new legislation, NAPs, new research and reports, etc. On 4 December 2008, MIGS submitted a brief country report to WAVE outlining information on domestic violence in Cyprus including updated facts and figures, information on victim support services, new legislation, and government measures.

For more information please visit the WAVE website at [www.wave-network.org](http://www.wave-network.org).

# MIGS Team 2008

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# Acknowledgments


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Designer by Mario Pavlou 3ems Limited  
Printed by FlexiPrint, Flexi Group of Companies  
Published by University of Nicosia Press, 2009



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University of Nicosia Press   
Nicosia 2009