GENDER DEVALUATION AND GENDER FATIGUE:

GETTING WOMEN ON THE GLASS ESCALATOR

Irene Kamberidou

PRESENTATION AT THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S

DIGITAL AGENDA ASSEMBLY 2011, 'EVERY EUROPEAN DIGITAL'[1]

Abstract

How can we move from *gender devaluation* and *gender fatigue* to *gender energy* and get more women to ride up the *glass escalator*? Current research indicates the need to focus on innovative approaches to getting gender back onto the agenda: reproducing women's recruitment, retention, advancement and agency. (Farrington 2011, Kamberidou 2010, Kelan 2010, Merriman 2010, Benschop & Brouns 2003, Hultin 2003) Despite legislation and gender mainstreaming policies, the recognition by many companies, organizations and institutions that diversity is essential, women still lag behind men in compensation and advancement and are less satisfied with their careers than men. Women are overlooked in decision making positions in the business sector, in S&R, in the academia, on research committees, etc. This paper examines three major gender gaps: 1) the leadership gap, 2) the pay gap and 3) the engagement/participation gap, with references to the phenomena of *gender fatigue, tokenism* and the hidden advantages for men in the so-called 'female' professions. Taking their gender privilege with them, men experience positive discrimination in female dominated professions and are promoted up the ladder (ride up the glass escalator) even faster than their female counterparts, as opposed to women who confront the glass ceiling and the *sticky floor* in male dominated fields. *Gender devaluation*, namely the subtle processes by which women's contributions are minimized, undervalued or devalued in male dominated professions are especially apparent in the academia as well. Consequently, "getting gender back on the agenda" (Kamberidou 2010) requires an *Alternative Model*—redefining professional success and concepts of *excellence*, finding alternative paths to advancement or tenure, establishing measures and best practices at many levels—examined in the strategy proposals presented in this paper. Research shows that women are an economic force to be reckoned with and utilizing the entire talent provides an important competitive advantage. Studies confirm that companies that recognise talent in any form and make good use of it show greater success with regard to profits and sustainability. Women must be present in sufficient numbers at senior levels in order to achieve better results and especially to drive cultural change.

[1] Kamberidou**,** Irene (2011). 'Gender devaluation and gender fatigue: getting women on the glass escalator.' Presentation at the *Digital Agenda Assembly, 'Every European Digital'***,** EUROPEAN COMMISSION, INFSO, Belgium, 16-17 June 2011, Brussels. (http://ec.uropea.eu/digital-agenda/daa. See Workshop 22, *Women for smart growth:* http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/cf/daa11/item-display.cfm?id=6003,

Keywords: gender fatigue, the 'stupid curve': wastage of talent, the glass escalator, tokenism, gender devaluation, gender-blind academic structures

1. Gender fatigue

A new study blames "gender fatigue" (Kelan 2010) for the failure of companies and organization to increase the number of women reaching executive ranks. Gender fatigue refers to the loss of energy to acknowledge and oppose gender discrimination, including the lack of interest to tackle afresh something no longer perceived as a problem. (Kelan 2010, Merriman 2010) Unquestionably women have come a long way in the workplace, helped by legislation and gender mainstreaming policies, the recognition by many companies that diversity is essential, etc. But diversity's move into the mainstream corporate world has its disadvantages as well. It can make more subtle discrimination harder to spot and tougher to deal with. Although member states have accomplished a lot in dealing with problems of deliberate discrimination there is still a need to raise awareness amongst the different stakeholders and establish measures at many levels. Gender fatigue— especially observed in younger women— refers to the lack of energy to repeatedly reconstruct the workplace as gender neutral, despite the fact that discrimination continues to exist. This applies to women in the academia as well, and not only! Female faculty, in particular, as indicated in many studies, experience a "gender devaluation" process (Benschop & Brouns 2003), namely the subtle process by which women's contributions are minimized, undervalued or devalued, such as teaching and service. (Farrington 2011, Kamberidou 2010).

Elisabeth Kelan[2] (2010), author of the new book "Performing Gender at Work," argues that if you talk to people today in the workplace they construct the workplace as gender neutral. They assume that gender no longer matters because the issue has long been solved. Kelan calls this phenomenon *gender fatigue*, which defines as the individual's feelings of weariness or of being too drained out to discuss gender discrimination and social bias. A qualitative study conducted, prior to the publication of her book, in two large organisations/companies in Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Switzerland— that promote themselves as having leading-edge policies and programs for gender equality— reveals that many of their female employees experience gender fatigue. Specifically, in her research, Kelan conducted job-based observations of 16 female employees as wells as 26 qualitative in-depth interviews with the staff— 16 men and 10 women. The age range of the participants was 25 to 54, the majority of which were in their late thirties. The ICT sector was chosen for this study because it is commonly perceived as an egalitarian and gender neutral sector, namely a true meritocracy sector where gender should not matter. One need point out, however, that this is also a sector which is male dominated and where there is a 25% gender pay gap, despite the fact that on a global level there is a shortage of 1.2 million staff in the ICT sector. The Commission estimates the European ICT sector will face a shortfall of 700,000 skilled workers by the year 2015. And if there is no drastic change in the female employment rate, demographic developments in Europe indicate that by the year 2036 there will be a drop of 24 million in the active workforce.[3]

With regard to Kelan's study, it examined the ways in which employees navigated the dilemma of simultaneously acknowledging gender discrimination in the workplace whilst holding the view that their workplace is gender neutral. Most of the participants were reluctant to even talk about gender, an attitude which could lead to totally dismissing the relevance of gender in the workplace, in other words stabilizing women's under-representation. As observed in the study, younger women in particular are the ones who experience gender fatigue. In her research Kelan argues that women confront more subtle

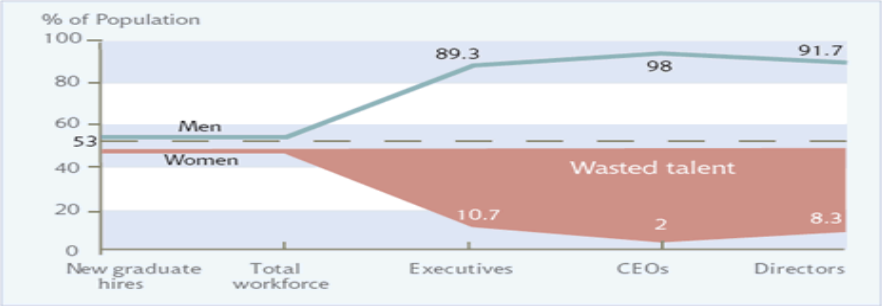
[2] A Lecturer in Work and Organisations in the Department of Management at King's College in London.
[3] Eurostat 2005, Global Insight 2000-2030 McKinsey.

gender bias in the workplace, which is much harder to deal with, especially since younger women are not active or engaged in discussions in women's networks. In an interview to Reuters (Merriman 2009) Kelan argues that: "Younger women find it difficult to connect to women's networks in the workplace, because they view these networks as something that belonged to their mother's generation." Although companies have been taking measures to eliminate gender discrimination by appointing diversity officers and running diversity programs— that are seen by many people in the workplace as helping to ensure equality— women are usually excluded from the networking and client work in the workplace. (Kelan 2010) An important message from this study—in confronting the ideological dilemma of gender neutrality and discrimination in organizations—is that prior to launching new initiatives to address the three gender gaps, including the phenonmenon of gender fatigue, there is a need to first understand the current mindsets, attributions and attitudes of both women and men at all levels, specifically in relation to gender, race and age in their organisation. That is to say, re- addressing unconscious biases and social stereotypes in talent assessment practices.

Another revealing study followed the career progress of 4,143 women and men with MBA's (Carter and Silva 2010), in light of the increased numbers of women graduating with advanced professional degrees and entering the workforce. Initially, in 2007 and 2008 an online survey was conducted of 9,927 alumni who graduated between 1996 and 2007 from MBA programs at 26 leading business schools in Europe, the United States, Asia and Canada. From this data and findings, career path profiles were created for 4,143 women and men who graduated from full-time MBA programs and were working full-time in companies and firms at the time of the survey. The study compared job placement opportunities, career advancement, remuneration (the gender pay gaps) and job satisfaction. According to the results here too the promise of the *pipeline* for women into senior leadership was found to be lacking. In other words, women faced the same problems in career advancement: the glass ceiling and the leaky pipeline. Specifically, what emerged from this study is evidence that "the pipeline is in peril and not as promising as expected". (Carter & Silva 2010:2) Women lag behind men in compensation and advancement and are less satisfied with their careers than men. Moreover, men were twice as likely as women to be at the CEO/senior executive level.

2. The *"Stupid Curve"*

Fig 1: The "Stupid Curve"



Source: The CEW CEO Kit edition 2, EOWA Australian Census of Women in Leadership 2008

The Australian picture is even worse. Chief Executive Women (CEW) released a report, February 2009, according to which Australian organisations select 90% of their leaders from their male employees, specifically from only 50% of their workforce (the male half). Although men and women enter the workforce in about equal numbers, men have a 9 times better chance of reaching the executive level. Consequently, the other 50% (the female half) of the workforce is overlooked, underutilised and devalued. In essence, although women

represent 50% of their workforce, men have a nine times better chance of reaching executive levels than women. The *"Stupid Curve"*—a phrase coined by former Deloitte USA Chairman Mike Cook— emphasizes this significant wastage of internal talent. Namely, by failing to recognise and promote women as leaders, organizations miss out on a significant and measurable competitive advantage and the *Stupid Curve* refers to the extent of this *wastage of talent* in Australian companies. (CEW 2009)

It is also quite common in Australia to hear the view that equality of opportunity for women is no longer an issue. Could this be due to gender fatigue? Namely, the loss of energy to acknowledge, oppose or tackle afresh something no longer perceived as a problem, or is this part of the gender devaluation process? Although gender discrimination is no longer perceived as a problem, the facts give us a different picture. For example, the percentage of women CEOs has only increased slightly between 1994 and 2008, a period of record economic growth for Australia. The percentage of women CEOs increased from 8% in 1994 to only 10.7%. in 2008. Moreover, in 2008 women on boards represent only 8.3% (CEW 2009:5) Alarming as well is the decrease in the percentage of female directors. Specifically, in 2004, 50.3% companies had at least one female director (something we can perceive as a token), whereas in 2008 this percentage decreased to 49%, less than it was in 2004! It seems that tokenism[4] does not reproduce engagement. This underrepresentation is not an issue of women's workforce participation or education level, since women make up around half of all workforce entrants and are graduating in equal or even greater numbers to men in faculties of economics, commerce, business and law. However, by the time they reach senior executive levels their proportion falls to 10.7%, while only 2% get to sit in the CEO chair.[5] (More Tokens!)

Also lagging behind are equal opportunities for women when it comes to remuneration/compensations in Australia. Despite equal pay legislation passed 50 years ago, female executives still earn considerably less than their male counterparts. An analysis of remuneration in company annual reports shows that the overall median pay for women executives is only 58% of the median pay for men. The gender pay gap persists in 9 out of 10 industries and is greatest in the financial services. (CEW 2009: 4-9)

On the other hand, research shows that women must be present in sufficient numbers at senior levels in order to achieve better business results and drive cultural change. Studies have shown that companies that recognise talent in any form and make good use of it show greater success with regard to profits and sustainability. For example, a McKinsey & Company (2008) study shows that companies with the most gender diverse management teams have on an average higher business results. This does not mean that women are inherently more talented and better skilled than men. It does however indicate that the companies that have taken advantage and utilized their entire talent pool—that have also identified and promoted female talent into leadership roles— show greater success rates. In other words companies that have cultures that enable them to recognise talent in any form and make good use of it, regardless of gender, race, color, etc., show greater success/profit rates. (CEW 2009)

This is also confirmed in the surveys conducted by the National Foundation of Women Business Owners (NFWBO), according to which women-owned firms compete in the global market, stimulate growth, have greater revenues and are more focused on business expansion than firms that are domestically oriented.[6] Women entrepreneurs have a significant impact on the economy, not only in their ability to create jobs for themselves but also in creating jobs

[4] Tokens are usually women, ethnic minorities, the aged or individuals with special needs who are often treated as *symbols* or *representatives* of a marginal social group.
[5] *Source:* EOWA Australian Census of Women in Leadership, 2008.
[6] http://www.internationalentrepreneurship.com/european_entrepreneurship/greece_entrepreneur.asp (retrieved 14/12/2010)

for others.[7] However, they constitute only 34.4% of the EU's self-employed workforce and only 39.4% women choose to be self-employed compared to 50.2% men.[8] Studies also confirm that women entrepreneurs are highly educated and use more high technology systems than their male counterparts.[9] Additionally, women create smaller but relatively more viable enterprises, are more cautious than men and possess better awareness regarding the risk of failure.[10] Consequently, it is vital for women to learn how to play the international trade game as well as to raise the visibility of women's entrepreneurship.

3. Wastage of Talent

Is this wastage of talent a threat to sustainability. At this point one need reiterate that on a global level there is a shortage of 1.2 million staff in the ICT sector. The Commission estimates the European ICT sector will face a shortfall of 700,000 skilled workers by the year 2015. If there is no drastic change in the female employment rate, demographic developments in Europe indicate that by the year 2036 there will be a drop of 24 million in the active workforce.[11] In many countries around Europe an average of about 23% of women that graduate from technical universities, do not apply for work, and those that do leave the ICT sector after a few years. The gender pay gap makes things even worse, namely it discourages engagement and reinforces these predictions, including the leaky pipeline. According to the "Women and ICT status Report 2009" (European Commission 2010) women across Europe earn about 17% less than men and in some countries the *gender pay gap* is widening even more, that is to say it increases as one gets older. For example, the gender pay gap for young female engineers, scientists and technicians is 17% until the age of 35 and rises to 38% and 37% for the 45-54 and 55-64 age-groups respectively.

With regard to the *leadership gap*, it seems to be widening as well, since women are still overlooked in decision making positions in the business sector globally. For example, only 13 women are on the boards of the top 500 companies listed in Fortune and only one could be considered to be working in a technical field, specifically at *Xerox*. In the top European companies, from 2004-2008, women's participation in decision making positions has hardly risen. The number of women on the boards of European companies in 2004 was 8% and in 2008 it slightly increased to 8.5%, with the exception of the Scandinavian countries. Through a number of proactive policies and quotas it seems that only the Scandinavian countries have managed to move ahead: Norway still remains ahead with 28.8% women on boards while Sweden is second with 22.8%, Finland third with 20% and Denmark fourth with 17.9%. (European Commission 2010: 9-10) Nonetheless, these figures also confirm that women still do not ride up the glass escalator at the rate of their male counterparts. Despite the fact that in the business sector both in Europe and the US research shows that companies with women in leadership positions are more successful in regard to return on sales, on equity and on

---

[7]"Women Entrepreneurs encouraged to take the plunge", 08/12/2010, in: http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1675&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en

[8]Ibid.

[9]"Women @ Business, Interview for Policy Report issued by ESYNE", pp. 1-5. (Interview with Dimitris Lakasas, President of the Greek International Business Association (SEVE), pp.2-5. In: http://www.womenatbusiness.eu/Files/files/W@B_WP8_Interview_GREECE_SEVE.pdf). Project funded by the European Commission [Competitiveness & Innovation Framework Programme 2007-2013. (Retrieved 14/10/2010)

[10]Women Entrepreneurs encouraged to take the plunge", 08/12/2010, in: http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1675&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en

[11]Eurostat 2005, Global Insight 2000-2030 McKinsey.

invested capital. And in the global competition for talent we know that qualities like creativity, flexibility, mobility, networking, resilience[12] are strongly related to women.

Undeniably it is critical to focus on innovative approaches to *getting gender back on the agenda*, namely to re-evaluate our strategies on how we can move from *gender fatigue* to *gender energy*, especially in light of the above alarming forecasts. This includes re-addressing unconscious biases and social stereotypes held by both men and women in talent assessment practices; focusing on evidence and not on our assumptions about where women land in organisations; and holding ourselves accountable for decisions in order to ensure that women and men have the same development, visibility opportunities and compensations.

4. Men take the Glass Escalator and Women hit the Glass Ceiling: the Sticky Floor and Tokenism

"*Women face the twin barriers of the glass ceiling and the sticky floor, which combine to keep them stuck at the bottom [sticky floor] and unable to reach the top [glass ceiling]. The sticky floor keeps women trapped in low wage positions with little opportunity for upward mobility. The glass ceiling consists of those artificial barriers, based on attitudinal or organizational bias, that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward within their organization into management level positions … The glass ceiling keeps women from being promoted equally with men … and the glass ceiling effects are multiplied when race is brought into the equation.*" (Kimmel (2004: 195)

On the other hand studies reveal that when men enter female dominated professions, they do not confront the *glass ceiling* or the *sticky floor,* but instead they experience positive discrimination. They ride up—on what sociologist Christine Williams was the first to call—the "glass escalator" (1992:296), following interviews with seventy-six men and twenty-three women in four professions considered "female fields" : social work, librarianship, nursing and elementary education. In other words underrepresented men are *re-socialize* in their new workplace environment: encouraged, supported, retained, reproduced and promoted up the ladder much faster than their female counterparts. In her study Mia Hultin (2003) argues that "the glass escalator takes underrepresented men on an upwardly mobile internal career path at a speed that their female colleagues can hardly enjoy." Specifically, they are welcomed into the workplace, receive higher salaries and are promoted up the ladder, in the managerial ranks, more frequently and much faster than their female counterparts, and not only! They are overrepresented in the upper hierarchies. (Kamberdiou 2010, Kimmel 2004, Hultin 2003, Williams 1992).

Men who enter so-called women's professions and women who enter the so-called men's professions also experience "tokenism" (Kimmel 2004:198-199). In both cases women and men experience tokenism, however their experiences as tokens are quite different. Research reveals strikingly different experiences when women are tokens in male dominated workplaces and when men are tokens in predominantly female workplaces. (Kimmel 2004, Williams 1992, Kanter 1977) Tokens are people who are hired or accepted into an organization, an institution or a company because of their minority status, such as gender, race, color, physical disability, and so forth. Tokens are usually women, ethnic minorities, the aged or individuals with special needs who are often treated as *symbols* or *representatives* of a marginal social group. The focus here is on *difference* as an analytical category. Inevitably this focus on difference, as opposed to respect for diversity, reproduces workplace inequalities, social stereotypes and the gender order, as confirmed by the figures previously cited in this paper. (CEW 2009, Carter and Silva 2010, European Commission 2010: 9-10)

[12] Women Leaders and Resilience: Perspectives from the C-suite, Accenture 2010

In her pioneering work, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, sociologist Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977)—was the first to argue that tokenism heightens the boundaries between groups as opposed to eliminating them. This is done by highlighting *difference (*and not diversity*)*, namely the contrast between the majority and the token. Over a period of five years Kanter observed and interviewed employees at a large industrial supply company that she called *Industrial Supply Corporation*. Kanter refered to the relatively few women given prominent positions in a particular occupational setting as *tokens*. She also argues that tokens are constantly being reminded of their outsider status and that their presence serves to increase the 'men's club', that is to say male-group solidarity, something observed in today's workplace. (Kamberidou 2008a) On the other hand, Kanter points out that when men are tokens, they usually receive preferential treatment. Their token status works to their advantage not only in hiring but in promotions as well.

This is not the case when women enter male dominated professions. They do not ride up the glass escalator, since women continue to be exceedingly underrepresented, and especially in decision making positions in the ICT sector, in research, engineering, science and technology (S&T) and so forth. Indeed, one can argue that we've come a long way since women's exclusion from the so-called "male fields" of the hard sciences. In the European Union (EU) 29.7 million women work in the science and technology (S&T) sectors, the highest percentage in Lithuania (72%) followed by Estonia (69.7%).[13] In Europe women make up 52% of university graduates and in the majority of the EU member states (15 out of 27) women comprise over 50% of Human Resources in Science and Technology (HRSTO). This however is no cause for celebration since the overwhelming majority of female HRSTO work in services rather than in pure engineering or manufacturing (eg. 27 million women in services as opposed to 2 million in manufacturing). Not to mention the persistent and alarming gender gaps: 1) the leadership gap, 2) the pay gap and 3) the engagement/participation gap. The invisible obstacles –glass ceiling/sticky floor/leaky pipeline— that prevent women from getting on the glass escalator (moving up the ladder) indicate that *gender devaluation* processes are consistently being reproduced. Consequently the new gender agenda or action plan must consider ways to eliminated these subtle processes by which women's contributions are minimized, undervalued or devalued.

5. Tokenism and the Glass Escalator in the Academia

Tokenism, gender devaluation and wastage of talent are also observed in the academia. Universities—and not only companies and businesses—do not take advantage of their entire talent pool. Women do not ride up the academic glass escalator at the rate of their male counterparts. A plethora of international studies confirm that the higher the position in the academic hierarchy, the lower the percentage of women, and not only. Findings also confirm that women's interest in an academic career has been steadily decreasing! (Farrington, 2011; European Commission 2010, Kamberdiou 2010; Kamberidou, Patsantaras, Pantouli 2007; Vosniadou 2004; Benschop & Brouns 2003)

Among the obstacles women confront that prevent them from riding up the glass escalator are the gender-blind academic structures and policies that devalue their services. For example, women teach more hours and as a result engage in less research in contrast to their male counterparts. Secondly, they have limited access to male-dominated scientific networks that provide sources and funds for research, and subsequently limited opportunities for publications and advancement, with the exception of women academics who are perceived as *Tokens*. Thirdly, women also constitute an 'invisible minority' on decision-making

[13]According to the EC status report (2010) the Science and Technology (S&T) field covers the natural sciences, engineering and technology, medical sciences, agricultural sciences, social sciences, humanities and so forth. (European Commission 2010: 9).

committees. In Greece, for example, the presidents/chairs of university research committees are 100% Men (no tokens here). Research committee members are comprised of 90% men and only 10% women. (Tokens) Moreover, the male faculty, over the age of 50, dominate in decision-making positions or on scientific committees that grant funds, scholarships, distinctions, and influence the orientation of scientific programs and projects. (Kamberdiou 2010, Vlahoutsikou & Abatzi, 2007, Vosniadou 2004)

At the University of Athens—one of the oldest state institution of higher education in Greece, founded in 1837, and among the largest universities in the European Union today with a student's body of about 92,000 undergraduate students, over 2,000 members of academic staff and 1,000 administrative, secretarial and specialised personnel— 46% of Lecturers and 40% of Assistant Professors are women. This percentage drops sharply to 27% in the higher university hierarchy, namely only 27% of the Associate Professors and Full Professors are women. Moreover, women are a minority (*tokens*) in administrative power positions and if you disregard the highest positions and look only at departmental chairs and assistant chair posts, one finds only 17% occupied by women. (Vlahoutsikou & Abatzi, 2007) Evidently tokenism does not reproduce women's engagement in the academia as well.

Gender distribution in the Greek Academia[14]

Although women comprise over half of the student body in Greece, only about one third (27%) of the teaching staff in universities are women (2,369) as opposed to 73% men (6,367), and not only. The higher the position in the academic hierarchy, the lower the percentage of women. (Vosniadou, 2004) Clearly, there is a gradual reduction of women as they go up the academic ladder, as is the case internationally. According to a study, conducted by Professors Stella Vosniadou and Lydia Vaiou, covering all Greek universities for the academic year 2003-2004: (1) the percentage of women decreases every step up the academic ladder. This decrease is particularly sharp between the middle and the high ranks of the academic hierarchy (i.e. Professors: 14% female, 86% male; Associate Professors: 26.5% female, 73.5% male; Assistant Professors: 32% female, 68% male, and Lecturers: 61% female, 39% male.) (2) The percentage of women drops sharply in the administrative positions and power structures of the university (Faculty Presidents in the Sciences: 100% men; in the Humanities: 69% men and only 31% women; Vice-presidents in Science faculties: 93% men, 7% women and in the Humanities: 65% men, 35% women. Department Chairs in the science faculties: 96% men, 4% women and in the Humanities: 61% men, 39% women. Directors/head of Laboratories in the Sciences: 88% men, 12% women and in the Humanities: 76% men, 24% women.).

Moreover, women teach more hours and engage in less research in contrast to their male counterparts. They have limited access to male-dominated scientific networks that provide sources and funds for research, and subsequently limited opportunities for publications and advancement. Women constitute an 'invisible minority' in decision-making committees: Presidents/Chairs of University Research Committees are 100% Men. Research committee members are comprised of 90% men and only 10% women. Their male colleagues, over the

[14] Excerpt from Kamberidou, Irene (2010). "The Glass Escalator and Gender Fatigue: Getting Gender back on the Agenda". In *Proceedings* of the 5TH International Conference on Interdisciplinarity in Education ICIE'10: New Higher Education Programs & Jointly 4th International Steering Committee Meeting, June 17□19, 2010, Tallinn, Estonia, pp. 89-98. (Also in European Commission DG Education and Culture: demosthenes.ece.ntua.gr/PDF/ICIE2010/ICIE2010-89-98.pdf and in www.womenandtechnology.eu)

age of 50, dominate in decision-making positions or on scientific committees that grant funds, scholarships, distinctions, and influence the orientation of scientific programs and projects. (Vosniadou, 2004)

Greek Women in Scientific Research

The General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT), in order to investigate the position of women in scientific research in Greece, commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (EKKE) to conduct a study entitled "the enhancement of the participation of Greek women in scientific research". Quantitative data coming from 50 public research institutions and research university institutes was included in the first database, according to which women's participation in scientific research is relatively limited: only 34, 7% out of the registered 3.221 researchers are women. Additionally, women represent only 14, 4% of the permanent (tenured) university teaching staff, even though 45.7% of the staff holds contracts and 38% of the staff under project contracts are women. With regard to the distribution of researchers according to field of study, the percentages of women researchers is lower in the traditionally male-dominated fields such as Engineering (20%), Agricultural Sciences (23%), Natural Sciences (32%) and Medical Sciences (23%,4%), contrary to the female-dominated field of the Humanities where the proportion of women is higher (52,5%). In relation to academic qualifications, male researchers more often hold a PhD (75% men, 25% women), while women mainly an undergraduate degree (37% women, 63% men) or a postgraduate degree (MA, M.Sc.; 43% women, 57 men). Moreover, in 18 research Centres under the auspices of GSRT, from a total of 835 researchers of all academic ranks (A-D), the percentage of women is lower in the higher ranks (academic hierarchy). For instance, in rank A-equivalent to Professor, only 16,1% are women as opposed to 83,9% men. The percentage of women is higher in the lower academic ranks: in rank B-equivalent to Associate Professor women represent 28,6% of the total, in rank C-equivalent to Assistant Professor 31,4% and in rank D-equivalent to Lecturer 29,8%. A survey was also carried out on a sample of about 300 researchers, primarily women, working in research centres and organizations in order to provide a qualitative analysis on the difficulties women scientists confront, according to which acknowledged was the compatibility of private life/children and career. (Alipranti-Maratou, Kalliroi, et al. 2004)

Clearly evident in Greece is that women ride up the "glass escalator" less frequently or at a much slower pace than men and their participation in scientific research is relatively limited, as is the case internationally. Attracting the best researchers with proportional representation of women and men is integral to the success of the European Research Area (ERA) and essential for the sustained competitiveness in Europe. In the next two years a number of projects supported by the European Commission's 7th Framework program (FP 7) will be focusing on how to diminish the gender divide in the area of science and technology.

Today, on a global level there is a shortage of 1.2 million jobs in the ICT sector due to the absence of skilled labour. In Europe this figure is 300.000. So getting more girls and women into the science and technology sector is not only a gender equality issue but a crucial economic necessity! **(**www.womenandtechnology.eu**)** INCLUDE DIGITAL AGENDA…HERE

6. Strategy Proposals for the Gender-Blind Academic Structure: the Alternative Model presented at the *DIGITAL AGENDA ASSEMBLY 2011*

1. Redefining Professional Success: Alternate Paths to Advancement and Tenure

A plethora of research and hundreds of case studies and analyses on the obstacles that affect the advancement of women in the academic hierarchies, women's survival strategies and strategies to cope, have already been identified (Farrington, 2011 et al.) The underrepresentation of women at the top and even medium level hierarchies constitutes a persistent and global phenomenon of the gender blind academic structures, despite the removal of formal obstacles. Studies also reveal that academic women's positions do not improve as their educational level increases. Consequently, "getting gender back on the agenda" (Kamberidou 2010) is vital and requires an *Alternative Model* that will encompass the following strategies:

Reconceptualizing and redefining the model for professional life that allows both men and women to flourish as individuals and professionals. For example, when you apply for funding**,** promotion or tenure, only research matter, including 'publish or perish'. Social service, community engagement, civic engagement or volunteerism are not recognized for advancement or tenure! Female faculty, in particular, as indicated in many studies (Farrington, 2011, et al.) identified a *gender devaluation* process, namely the subtle processes by which women's contributions are minimized, undervalued or devalued, such as **service work and teaching.** Only Research is rewarded, getting more grant money, and all resources are given to the hard sciences, in which women are under-represented.

1.1 Reward Social Service and Community Building

Especially in light of *the European Year of Volunteering 2011*[15], redefining professional success requires rewarding and valuing social service, community services as well as volunteer contributions in the academic community: administrative work, managerial work, social work, etc. Additionally vital is to reward Teaching (equivalently to research) in advancement or tenure procedures. The 'male model' of rewarding advancement based primarily on research— and student evaluations or responses that show us how much they actually like you or not, or may be influenced by academic petty politics— seems to have reproduced the devaluation of women's contributions. The recommendation to reward teaching and service is one way to combat *gender devaluation* and promote gender inclusion and gender energy, as studies show women usually dominate in community service work, in academic volunteer services, etc. To reiterate, social engagement/volunteer contributions are not recognized in promotions or tenure processes and this must change.

2. Politicizing the personal

The institutionalization of specific policies and funding for professional support and survival services in universities: (1**)** Formal career spousal/partner hiring policies, (2) sharing parental leave, (3) institutional day care, (4) longer tenure tracks, as part of a family-life balance program, or the expansion of such programs where they already exist.

The most critical issue, the most frequent and intractable problem that arises in all studies is the career–family imbalance: lack of affordable child care facilities and family-friendly working environments. For instance, when a woman academic applies for advancement, funding or tenure she cannot say, "I took time off to have a baby, to take care of my children,

[15] http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/focus/focus840_en.htm

my sick parents, etc." The human dimension of this issue is largely ignored as a strategy relevant for reform, **and not just in the academia**. The concept of professional success needs to be redefined so it allows for *alternative models*, as opposed to the linear, traditional male model in which the professional is focused on a career full-time, with few family duties (the male model), thereby preserving male stereotypes and making it difficult for individual men to break out.

More analytically, politicizing the personal, requires (1) the establishment of longer tenure tracks that will facilitate not only maternal leave but parental leave for both genders (sharing parental leave). (2) Ensuring that the legal mechanisms are in place and that they actually work—**accountability and penalties**— since many studies, such as the case studies conducted by Benschop and Brouns (2003), showed that, although such policies did exist in some institutions, they were ignored. (3) Additionally, findings reveal that women who are professionals frequently have husbands or partners who are also professionals, consequently the institutionalization of career partner-hiring policies needs to be considered, as well as (4) redefining professional success or alternative paths to professional life and especially reevaluating interpretations of *excellence* and advancement.

One common solution is to increase the number of the discriminated groups into power positions. Having more women (and minorities) in positions of power, although necessary, is not enough. Studies indicate that just holding office is not always enough to ensure change. Having more women in top positions, although crucial, is not enough to change the way we think about gender and knowledge production. Men also need to change and this could be accomplished with their participation in such *alternative models*, which also should include their active participation in Mentoring programs for women.

3. Formal Mentoring Programs for Women and Men

Compulsory participation of both male and female faculty members of all ranks (including professors and not just the lower academic ranks) in formal mentoring programs. Explicitly, the institutionalization of a mentoring program extended beyond tenure. This will safeguard and recognize the requirements for continued professional growth, contribute to changes in attitudes and eventually eliminate the devaluation of women's contributions.

This proposal requires (1) the formulation of specific guidelines on what the Mentor should do for the female mentee, such as discuss the curriculum they are teaching, their services, duties, contributions and obligations, inform their mentee about where to publish and how, where to apply for grants, and not only. Mentors require training/coaching in order to acquire the required skills and know-how to discuss overt discrimination (including sexual harassment), subtle institutional and cultural forms of discrimination observed within the university, social biases, and so forth. Consequently, what is also required is (2) a training program for Mentors.

Additionally, in the long term, once the mentorship program has been established and its success confirmed, (3) male mentees could participate in the program as well, and be assigned a female Mentor. This could eventually contribute to their sensitization, to reducing or eliminating male stereotypes (the male model) of excellence and success.

Initially, however, we need to discuss how to get universities to agree with this proposal, how to initiate the formal mentoring program: how to approach rectors, deans, head of departments in order to convince them. We need to brainstorm, disseminate the idea, find academic volunteers who may have the influence and willingness to cooperate and exercise pressure on their department presidents, etc. This process can be facilitated with the establishment of an Academic Women's Website: Center of Excellence for Women and Science in the Academia (see next proposal).

4. An All Encompassing Hub of Information: Academic Women's Website or, Academic Women's Center of Excellence

Providing an all encompassing hub of information, an Academic Women's Website for *thinking globally and acting locally*— for networking with other universities, within their own universities, with diverse stakeholders, with progressive thinking peers and experts and the media— will facilitate dialogue with those who are at the forefront of implementing change, mentorship programs, successful lobbying practices, etc. This could facilitate discussions on issues such as finding an Alternative Model of Excellence, the effectiveness of existing legal mechanisms in protecting women, legal and formal administrative mechanisms, accountability processes, confronting overt discrimination practices, etc. Such an effort, partnered with education ministries and policymakers could ensure that information and support services for women are mainstreamed throughout the system to diverse stakeholders— official bodies, non-governmental organizations, faculties, teachers, parents, guidance counsellors, administrators, school boards, and so forth Specifically, working together**,** thinking globally and acting locally via universities, school programs, etc. This hub of information could, in the long term, facilitate the establishment of a common platform and collaborations concerning:

♦ Best practices and measures, raising awareness and confronting contextual obstacles: traditional views and stereotypes about women in science and innovation and raising the credibility of women professionals.

♦ Retention: retaining women in their careers and reproducing female engagement: raising the profile of our role models and mentors, and as a result inspiring young women into the academia, technology, the sciences, etc. and in the long term getting them to ride up the glass escalator.

♦ The establishment of formal mentoring programs, annual *Shadowing* events— similar to those of the EC (www.ec.eruopa.eu/itgirls).

♦ Inviting the Media to focus on these events and activities.

♦ Partnerships for closing the gender gap in Europe.

♦ Projects for getting girls to choose and to stay in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

References:

1. Alipranti-Maratou, L., Kalliroi, D. et al. (2004). "Women and Science: Review of the Situation in Greece". *Greek National Report of the National Centre for Social Research* (EKKE). (www.gsrt.gr/Women&Science)
2. Benschop, Y & Brouns, M. (2003). Crumbling Ivory Towers: Academic Organizing and its Gender Effects. *Gender, Work and Organization*. Vol. 10 No. 2 March 2003.
3. Carter, Nancy M. and Silva, Christine (2010). "The Pipeline's Broken Promise". *Catalyst*, Aequus Partners' Diversity and Flexibility e-newsletter, February 2010 (full pdf:: http://www.aequus.com.au/aequus_partners_enewsletter_february_2010.html
4. CEW (2009). "The business case for women as leaders: One Woman is not Enough." Chief Executive Women (CEW), Women leader enabling women leaders, Feb. 2009. (full pdf. in:http://lgwomen2010.org.au/document/show/15)
5. European Commission (2010). "Women and ICT Status Report 2009". European Commission Information Society and Media, Brussels.
6. Farrington L. Elizabeth *(2011)*. Women in Higher Education: Strategies to Reach Gender Parity in College Presidents. Report in: http://www.wihe.com/printBlog.jsp?id=19251 (Retrieved May 9, 2011).

7. Hultin, Mia (2003). Some Take the Glass Escalator, Some Hit the Glass Ceiling? Career Consequences of Occupational Sex Segregation. *Work and Occupations*, vol. 30, no.1: 30-61.

8. Kamberidou**,** Irene (2011). 'Gender devaluation and Gender Fatigue: getting women on the glass escalator.' Presentation at the *Digital Agenda Assembly*, '*Every European Digital'***,** European Commission, INFSO, Belgium, 16-17 June 2011, Brussels. (http://ec.uropea.eu/digital-agenda/daa. See Workshop 22, *Women for smart growth:* http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/cf/daa11/item-display.cfm?id=6003,

9. Kamberidou, Irene (2010). "The Glass Escalator and Gender Fatigue: Getting Gender back on the Agenda". In *Proceedings* of the 5TH International Conference on Interdisciplinarity in Education ICIE'10: New Higher Education Programs & Jointly 4th International Steering Committee Meeting, June 17□19, 2010, Tallinn, Estonia, pp. 89-98. (Also in: European Commission DG Education and Culture: demosthenes.ece.ntua.gr/PDF/ICIE2010/ICIE2010-89-98.pdf and in www.womenandtechnology.eu)

10. Kamberidou, Irene (2008a). "Training the trainers, educating the educators. Education-Engagement-Retention: the gender factor in digital illiteracy in Greece". In proceedings of the *European Commission Shadowing Conference* 6 March 2008, Brussels "Move out of the shadow! Seize the opportunITy!", pp. 51-68.

11. Kamberidou, Irene (2008b). "Eliminating the Leaky Pipeline: Sustaining-Normalizing-Engendering Women's Careers as Academics, Researchers and Professionals in Engineering, Computers and the Sciences." Presentation at the UNICAFE Dissemination Conference "Beyond the Glass Ceiling: Women Academics in Engineering, Technology and Life Sciences across Europe", November 12-13, 2008, Constantinople**.** (www.womenacademics2008.org)

12. Kamberidou, Irene; Patsantaras, Nikolalos; Pantouli, Olga (2007). "The anachronistic gender-science imbalance: technophobia and the technological gender gap in Greece". Proceedings of *'The 3rd International Conference on Interdisciplinarity in Education, ICIE '07* An International Forum for Multi- Culturality, Multi-Ethnicity and Multi-Disciplinarity in European Higher Education and Research, Multi Forum '07.'Athens, pp. 138-151.

13. Kanter, Rosabeth Moss (1977). *Men and women of the corporation*. New York: Basic Books.

14. Kelan, Elisabeth (2010). *Performing Gender at Work*. Macmillan Publishers/Palgrave Macmillan.

15. Kimmel, Michael S. (2004) *The Gendered Society*, Oxford University Press, New York

16. Merriman, Jane (2009). Women have come a long Way. *Reuter*, Nov. 2, 2009. London (Reuters Life) http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE5A13HE20091102.(Retrieved April 3, 2010)

17. Merriman, Jane (2010). Younger women face "gender fatigue", subtle bias. *Reuters*, March 8,2010.In:http://uk.reuters.com. (Retrieved April 3, 2010)

18. Vlahoutsikou, Christina & Abatzi, Kaliopi (2007). Women's Careers at the University of Athens: Dilemmas and Strategies. In: Proceedings of the *3d International Conference on Interdisciplinarity in Education ICIE'07,* March 15-17, Athens Greece. An international Forum for Multi-Culturality, Multi- Ethnicity and Multi- Disciplinarity in European Higher Education and Research:155-160.

19. Vosniadou, Stella (2004). The Position of Women in Greek Universities. Presentation at the international conference "*The Position of Women in the Academic Community and University Gender Policies"*, 11-12 December 2004. University of Athens Interdisciplinary Gender Studies Programme. (In: www.isotita.gr)

20. Williams, C. L. (1992). "The glass escalator: Hidden advantages for men in the 'female' professions." *Social Problems*, 39, 253-267.