UNI EUROPA WOMEN

UNI Europa Women’s Conference – Rome, March 12

On March 12th, 2016, UNI Europa had its 5th UNI Europa Women’s Regional Conference.

The theme chosen for the Conference was “Women at the heart of change”. The theme revolved around the issue of the current changes that Europe is living and how we, as members of service unions, need to be part of that change.

In the case of the UNI Europa Women’s Conference theme, this meant that unions need women at their center, to adapt to those changes. Including women in unions and making them part of change provides for a more fair, inclusive and social Europe.

More than 200 people participated in the Conference, which had 115 delegates and 30 observers from 83 organizations from 28 countries.

This was the first time the Women’s Conference was held before the Regional Conference and as a result, there was a large increase in women delegates participating.

The Conference revolved around three main issues:

- Growing unions: under this issue, we discussed the importance of including gender issues on the bargaining table. This was addressed as a presentation by Carol Scheffer from CWU, Ireland on the importance of the mentoring Program.

- Growing Bargaining Power: in order for unions to become stronger, with true bargaining power, they need to reflect the needs of their members. For this reason, the inclusion of gender issues on the negotiations and more women at the bargaining table and at leadership positions is essential.

The discussion of this topic included the UNI EOD campaign on Equal Pay.
- Growing Quality Jobs: in order to reach a truly equal and just society, the employment standards for women must be improved, creating a safe environment free from all forms of discrimination.

Discussion for this topic revolved around campaigns like Violence against women and the Maternity Leave Directive.

Towards the end of the meeting, the participants discussed the current immigration situation Europe is living. Originally, the UNI Europa Women's Committee had presented a motion to be adopted by the UNI Europa Women's Conference; but it was agreed with the participants that the UNI Europa Women's Conference would adopt the motion on refugees adopted by the main conference and add a special request for women and children.

Furthermore, the UNI Europa Women's Conference elected a new UNI Europa Women's Committee and adopted the motion to amend the UNI Europa Women’s Rules to add one additional seat to the UNI Europa Women’s Committee, with one titular and two substitutes.

Arlette Puraye was elected as the new UNI Europa Women's President.

**Campaigns:**

**Women's Health**

On the 8th of March 2016, and for International Women's Day, UNI EOD launched a new Women’s Health campaign, in accordance to the motion adopted at the World Women’s Conference in Cape Town.

The campaign’s website includes issues like: the effects of violence, mental health, cervical cancer, breast cancer and sexual reproductive diseases.

Furthermore, and as a result of the discussions carried out in the last UNI Europa Women’s Committee in Brussels as well as the discussions that took place in Rome at the UNI Europa Women's Conference, the issue of the impact of digitalization in health and safety will also be explored.

**40for40**

In order to implement the 40% women representation rule that was adopted in the 2010 UNI World Congress in Nagasaki, UNI Europa has been working with UNI Global Union on developing a procedure for the implementation of the rule.

The procedure will be presented to the UNI World Women’s Committee for discussion and afterwards to the UNI Management Board and UNI Executive Meeting for approval and adoption.
Violence against women

On November 25th, and as part of the 16 days of activism, UNI Europa Women launched with all other UNI Women regions, a new phase of the UNI EOD campaign: “Breaking the Circle”.

This new stage of the campaign focused on how media stereotypes women and objectifies their bodies, giving rise to violence. The campaign was named: “Let’s change the media, let’s change reality”.

Upcoming activities:

- UNI Europa Women’s Committee- October 2016 in Brussels.
- New phase and launch on the Equal Pay campaign, focusing on the impact on pensions
- Work on the impact of digitalisation on women’s health
- Work on the survey for DV@WorkNet, geared towards the adoption of an ILO campaign against gender violence
- Work on the 40% implementation procedure