

# Europe: Consider It All! Conference

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*European Integration as - 'his-story'*

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*... A victory on every page*

*Who cooked the victory feast?*

*A great man every ten years*

*Who paid the costs?*

**Bertolt Brecht**

*European Integration – whose story is anyway?*

*Were there any 'founding mothers' of the EU? And, if yes, who and what did they contribute, given the societal restrictions imposed on women? (Abels & MacRae, 2021)*

# Presentation Roadmap

- ❑ The Gap in European Studies: whose story is anyway?
- ❑ Why do we need gender lens in studying European Integration?
- ❑ Closing the Gap: Gendering the history of European Integration
  - The aim & scope of the study
- ❑ European Integration – as '*her-story*'
- ❑ Consider Them & Say Their Names!
- ❑ Concluding Remarks – Recommendations for Future Studies

# The Gap in European Studies: whose story is anyway?

- Although existing EU scholarship has tried to grasp the dynamic nature of the European integration process through applying different analytical and theoretical perspectives and/or approaches, gender-sensitive perspective is still lacking in the literature. In that regard, before discussing to what extent integration theories, EU policies, or institutions are gender-sensitive, we need first to re-visit the history of integration process with a gender lens.
- Although undoubtedly these men played a significant role in the early development of integration process, and there were not many women in important positions of power during early stages, "writing out" women and gender relations of the history of integration means that history of the integration process remains *incomplete*.



# Why do we need gender lens in studying European Integration?



- Zeus 1.0 (Dejaegher, 2011)
- The focus on EI as the story of "great men" is a sort of historicization which presents a myth of EI as a masculine project (Abels & MacRae, 2021)
- Scholarly reproduction of this perception paves the way for Zeus 2.0, which means EU as his-story.

# Closing the Gap: Gendering the history of European Integration

## - *The aim & scope of the study*

- Overarching aim is to challenge the prominent *one-sided* telling of EU history.
- Although European politics started to become feminised (Lovenduski's concept) from the beginning of 1980s, since the integration project was portrayed as a male project in the early days of the integration and the contributions of women were entirely ignored, this study tries to present the profile and work of the early women of European integration with this study.
- Therefore, the scope mainly focuses on 1950s and 1960s.

# European Integration — as "*her-story*"

Delegate	Country	Start date
Marga (Margaretha) A.M. Klompé	Netherlands	26/08/1952
Maria Probst	Germany	27/02/1958
Käte Strobel	Germany	27/02/1958
Marguerite De Riemaecker-Legot	Belgium	13/03/1958
Jacqueline Thome Patenôtre	France	13/03/1958
Johanna Schouwenaar-Franssen	Netherlands	29/12/1960
Erisia Gennai Tonietti	Italy	15/02/1961
Ilse Elsner	Germany	29/11/1961
Jacqueline C. Rutgers	Netherlands	26/09/1963
Astrid Lulling	Luxembourg	20/10/1965
Nilde (Leonilde) Iotti	Italy	21/01/1969
Colette Flesch	Luxembourg	11/02/1969

Source: EPRS Historical Archives data (cited in Guerra, 2022)

# Consider Them & Say Their Names!

Not only indicate the numbers of women MP but also talk about their contributions, impacts, and stories.





# *Marga Klompé*

## *(Netherland)*

*"Community is an economic entity which currently covers the territory of a number of well-defined countries, but it cannot apply a new isolationist policy since it hopes to work towards a stronger united Europe, aware of its common heritage, which alone can become a powerful partner in Atlantic cooperation."*



## *Jacqueline Thome-Patenôtre (France)*

*"...more than ever, by studying the geographical, economic and demographic structure of the USA, we realize that only a unified Europe can save the European nations from collapse."*



## ***Nilde Iotti (Italy)***

*Throughout her time as an MEP she championed direct elections to the European Parliament, believing that election by the people would give the Parliament an unshakeable mandate and the credibility to act on behalf of citizens. (European Commission)*



# Concluding Remarks & Recommendations

- These examples have clearly demonstrated that women have undoubtedly shaped the early years of European integration through their domestic, European, and international actions. However, they are hardly part of the official historiography.
- Tell their stories, include different, marginalized voices and experiences and show the imbalances in the existing scholarship.
- There is still need for in-depth research and memorialization.
- Apply gender lens in preparing curriculum : *Curriculum Reflecting Reality*



# Sources

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*Thank you!*

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*Questions*