



Action Plan for M/F Equivalence

Action Plan for M/F Equivalence

Index

Preface

1. Reason

2. Barriers

3. Action!

4. Guarantee

5. Elections

6. From Practice

Preface

During the CDA congress of 2 June 2018, the resolution "Equality between Men and Women" was adopted. Immediately after its adoption, an action team was set up by the party board assigned with implementing what is called for in the resolution:

- To form an action team consisting of men and women who identify the obstacles that both men and women encounter in all parts of our party;
- To present an action plan at the coming autumn congress addressing how to remove obstacles and ensure efforts promoting diversity are enforced at all levels of the party;
- To come up with best practices on this theme in the short term, specifically focusing on water boards and provincial government campaigns, so that extra attention can be paid to this topic

The theme of equality between men and women is not new. Throughout the history of the ARP, CHU and KVP, there has been an active women's movement arguing for more rights for women and, ultimately, an equal position for men and women. Since the creation of the CDA, the participation of women in the party has increased, but even in 2018 there is a noticeable lack of proportionality. At the moment, only about 30% of our members are women, and about the same percentage are active in a representative or managerial position.

| <i>Functions</i> | <i>Men</i> | <i>Women</i> |
|----------------------|------------|--------------|
| Minister of State | 66,6% | 33,4% |
| Member of Parliament | 68% | 32% |
| King's Commissioner | 100% | 0% |
| Deputy | 66,6% | 33,4% |
| Member of the States | 70% | 30% |
| Mayor | 77% | 23% |
| Councilor | 70% | 30% |
| City Councilor | 69% | 31% |
| Chair of Water Board | 100% | 0% |
| DB-Water Board | 86% | 14% |
| AB-Water Board | 71% | 29 |

Table 1. Ratio of male and female CDAs to various political and administrative functions. August 2018

In 1996 the Participation and Integration of Women Committee was established by the party board. This committee published the "More Party with Women" report in 1997. The action team read this report with great interest; however, many of the issues mentioned in the 1997 report are, unfortunately, still present. That is why the guarantee of this action plan is given attention in a separate chapter. Because, if we really want to achieve equality, we must realize that:

- *We, all women and men, at all levels within the CDA, are responsible for achieving this.*
- *This is a long-term process.*

In this action plan we are only talking about the equality of men and women. We know and fully realize that diversity within our party also requires attention in other areas. We hope that with this action plan we can also pave the way for diversity in all areas, but specifically focus on the equality of men and women in this report.

We hope you enjoy reading this action plan, and especially hope that you will be inspired to contribute to this process.

Daisy Vliegenthart - Goedhart

Jan Jacob van Dijk

Josine Westerbeek - Huitink

Jelle Beemsterboer

Lisanne Spanbroek

Hans Peter Verroen

Carina van Os

Joost Breas



1. Cause

If we go through the list of members, we see that the percentage of male and female members is 70% and 30%, respectively. If we compare this with the members of parliament, deputies, members of the States, councilors and aldermen, then these percentages are roughly comparable. However, female representation is much lower for mayors, members of the water boards, and commissioners of the King. We can put the "problem" of too few women in different political and administrative posts in perspective in the light of the percentages of members. Overall, these figures show a bigger problem: we have too few female members in general.



The CDA is a broad people's party. That is why it is important that the party is also recognizable for the entire Dutch population. A representation that reflects the population's male / female ratio is therefore worth pursuing. In addition, there are other reasons to focus more strongly on this now:

- *Teams with a mixed composition of men and women perform better than one-sided teams;*
- *Equality in politics lags behind in the Netherlands;*
- *The representation of men and women within our party is not yet balanced, as is apparent from the membership numbers, the percentage of women on the lists of candidates for the municipal elections, members of the party council, and as directly eligible persons for other members of parliament.*

Goals

- To recruit more female members, which means that the membership base is built up equally;
- Strengthen the position of women by paying structural attention to this phenomenon at all levels;
- Remove barriers that inhibit full equality between women and men within our party;
- Help department boards by providing good examples of approaching and retaining women for the local department;
- Make equality between men and women a responsibility of the entire party.

2. Barriers

The First Impression Counts

Watch the debates on television: they often show older men in gray suits, which gives people a certain image of politics. The tone of debates has not improved in recent years, either. Shouting, swearing and violent gestures are increasingly common in the Lower House, for example. The media also plays a role in this phenomenon. In particular, the one-liners and spectacular debates that are often not about policy issues are widely reported in the newspapers and news reports. This generally does not benefit the image of "politics" as a whole.



This negative image often emerged during our survey as a reason why women (mainly outside the CDA) are not members of a political party or politically active. The idea that you have to survive in a political arena, have lengthy discussions and that, after all, it is just an "old boys network" seems repulsive.

Dusty Image?

Specifically for the CDA, "a dusty image" is mentioned, because the organization is mainly viewed as a layered men's party. Nowadays, we see enough examples that invalidate that theory, but the perception is still the same. And, although the CDA wants to be open as a party, this is often not the reality. People who visit an ALV for the first time or have a look at it are outside "the network", "have little connection with the people sitting there," and find that the meetings take far too long.

Masculine System

More fundamentally, we wonder whether the system of political decision-making is, by nature, less attractive to women. Why don't we look for systemic solutions like harmonious consultation, with a mutual understanding for each other's position, working towards the best and most supported solution? Why does the verbal struggle of the debate, external profiling and "being right" play such a strong role in our decision-making? Could the fact that men are more attracted to politics have to do with the fact that the entire decision-making model is based on a predominantly male-based approach? The phenomenon goes too far for this research to address, but the idea does stimulate the wish to also critically assess internal processes within the CDA for optimum effectiveness for both men and women.

Terms such as "old boys' network," and the fact that politics used to be for men only, have come to the fore. We must acknowledge that politics is still too masculine. This is not only the case within the CDA; men also often dominate in other parties. This also applies in broader society, namely in almost all social organizations and

churches where we see men dominate administrative activities. In both the public and private sector, we also see that more important positions are often filled by men.

It seems that men are much more focused on positions of power than women are. Historically, men are the "strongest" and they must protect women. This image still affects all systems and institutions within our society. Although more is being done to achieve a balance, men are still more highly represented in positions of power.



Today, the performance of women is still compared to that of men. Women sometimes set different standards and approach problems differently. There are differences between the two sexes, that's for sure. However, the problem is that a woman's performance is compared to a man's performance, not the other way around. Historically, the man's performance is the benchmark.

Many male politicians are also "male" by nature. Men often stand at the front, more convinced that they can do something or at least try it, and often compete in politics.

Women, on the other hand, are usually less convinced of themselves. For example, many women feel they must meet all the conditions of a particular profile. Women also want to achieve substantive legislation with less talk and conversation. In practice, it is too common for under-qualified men to take up positions because they have overestimated themselves and for qualified women to not apply because they underestimate themselves. In addition to the aforementioned trends, women generally present themselves differently from men.



Our tour also shows that many active women have been asked to become members and to become active members; women must be convinced.

Customization: Every Member Counts

A system providing guidance for our members is often limited or not present. Coaching must start, for both men and women, before someone becomes a member. We need to inspire, motivate and make people feel welcome. More than men, women want to be asked to become members. External confirmation of someone's qualities is a strong motivator. This aspect of asking people to participate is handled very differently by departments within our party. As a result, we do not use the potential of external confirmation sufficiently. When people join our party, coaching,

support and / or a “buddy” is of great importance in navigating the profession and removing obstacles that people encounter.

The training offered within the party is not specifically tailored to women. Training is “uni-sex;” however, there are differences between men and women in how they deal with politics. It is striking that the vast majority of people who follow a course at the CDA training institute, the Steenkamp Institute, are women. This can also be seen outside the CDA, like at the knowledge center for democracy, ProDemos, for example. It is good to see more closely why this is this case.



Practical Barriers

There are also still many practical obstacles, which often complicate political work unnecessarily. An example is the so-called State Days, the days on which the Provincial States meet. In some provinces this takes place on a Wednesday. For years, Wednesday has been the day on which children in primary school are free in the afternoon. This is particularly impractical for parents with children in primary school.

Another example of a practical barrier is evening meetings. In the evening, parents like to put their children to bed themselves, but meetings at the municipal level often start at 7.30 p.m. This timing causes unnecessary pressure and problems for councilors with younger children. Due to the culture that prevails in politics, it is difficult to discuss practical aspects of this kind. People indicate that they do not discuss practical issues, but rather attempt to adapt to the existing situation. A big risk is members often drop out earlier because of such barriers.

Is There a Problem?

Is equality between men and women a problem within the CDA? There are different opinions on this, with a clear difference in the group below and above 35 years of age. It is clear to everyone that

something needs to change: more women need to become members, and the party must actively get started with this process. The younger generation, however, looks to the future with confidence and believes that the inequality in numbers and percentages of men and women in positions will automatically correct itself. The group of people aged 35 and over is less positive. Equity measures, such as a women's quota with a minimum and maximum balance of 60% to 40% per gender on



boards, or a 50/50 list at national level, go too far for the majority of respondents. The PvdA, for example, has abandoned the principle of automatically placing a woman on the list. There is also an increase in quotas, because the process of achieving equity is simply not fast enough. For the group of 35+, it is widely believed that the balance of men and women in positions will not balance out automatically.



Conclusion

Many obstacles have been reviewed, and there are undoubtedly many more. The aforementioned obstacles catch the eye most. There is work to be done: work to get a more balanced membership and therefore more female members; work to provide opportunities for those female members in all administrative level; work to better guide women. Let's get to work!

3. Action!

The representation of women within our party is around 30%. This applies to the percentage among all members and for active members. Of course, we see major differences per organ, but there are very few organs where the percentage of female membership is above 50%. If we want to bring about a change, we will have to start with potential new members, and address the question of how we can make our party attractive to a diverse group in the future.

Various studies and conversations show that the atmosphere and culture within a volunteer organization is of great importance for women. Women are more likely to avoid involvement if they find the atmosphere unpleasant or too masculine. This can only change if extra attention is paid to a welcoming atmosphere by both men and women. Changing a culture does not happen today or tomorrow. The actions below are therefore aimed at changing this culture in small steps in order to emerge as a truly open and diverse party.

All of our conversations have shown that many women within our party have encountered obstacles one or more times. Making these barriers discussable is not yet self-evident, since the culture within our party is not one that makes it easy for people to share their vulnerabilities. Consideration must be given to how the threshold for sharing one's experiences can be lowered. This can be achieved by working with several confidants within the party. However, all administrations (national, provincial and municipal) must realize that they can provide a culture in which discussing these topics becomes a matter of course.



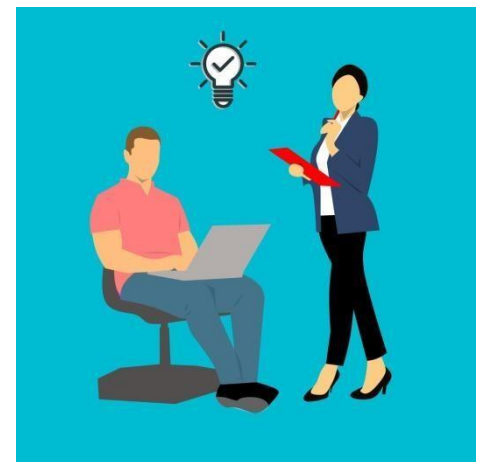
The Power of Our Local Departments

Most members come into contact with the CDA at the local level. They receive information, visit a meeting or a GMM. We see that it is very difficult for local departments to recruit enough people for management positions, thus making it difficult to focus on diversity. The importance of finding new people is therefore even more important. Below are a few tips:



Welcome, Safe and Cozy

- Bet on the recruitment of new members and choose a personal approach.
- Welcome new members in person, ask what they expect and what they may need. This is a task that local authorities must continue to focus on. Make sure that people feel welcome and that someone shows them a comfortable environment within the CDA.
- Work with a buddy system for new members, and actively offer guidance from, for example, group members or board members to make people feel welcome more quickly.
- Add a leaflet to the information package for new members that provides contact information for individuals in the local department or in the neighborhood that can assist with finding a "buddy" in the organization.



Communication

- *Think about specific campaigns for recruiting female members;*
- *Think about equivalence in publications. Do our magazines and newsletters radiate a diverse picture, both in the articles and in the photos;*
- *Ensure that content-related articles are alternated with articles that are more about people and the motives of people;*
- *Let active CDA women speak more about why they are committed to the CDA. What are their motives, and how to they combine this with other roles;*

- *Ensure diversity in the campaign teams and communication (also on social media.) Make sure there is a good mix between young and old, men and women. Too one-sided of a team often ensures too one-sided communication;*
- *Emphasize that work is being done by the CDA on gender equality and what options we offer;*
- *Make it clear that in politics, salaries are the same between men and women. In business, men receive more salary for the same work as women. Politics should be at the forefront of this issue.*

Participation in Meetings and Working Visits

- *Increase the participation of women in meetings, working visits and the ALVs. Think about the atmosphere and organization of the meeting. For example, are only men invited as speakers? Choose themes that appeal to women more and vary work forms;*
- *Be open to changes in the times and places of meetings. Listen to the possible objections of parents with small or school-aged children and see together if a time can be found that is suitable for everyone;*
- *Be critical of the times for the people's representative bodies to gather, such as the council meeting. That something has always been this way does not mean that it must continue to. Help new candidates and councilors express their concerns.*



Active Members

There are various forms of coaching and cooperation within our party, but this is not offered structurally and to everyone:

- *Every new active member who has a political or administrative function will be offered a coach / mentor of his or her choice who will offer guidance and assistance for their first 2 years.*
- *During conversations, pay extra attention to how our active members can combine the various roles they play.*
- *We see a large level of female participation in training courses for new councilors and statesmen, but also at the talent academy. Keep in touch with the women who have followed this training, and pass on the names to the local departments.*
- *Ensure that training courses continue to meet the demands of women and men. Ensure differentiation. Test the training sessions with the target group, and adjust the training regularly where necessary.*
- *Ensure a good monitoring system in which (active) members are followed over time. It is clear which functions and expertise members have. This ensures that we can respond more quickly to vacancies.*



Share of Women in CDA Organs and CDA Fractions

The CDA organs must, at all levels, reflect society:

- *Structural attention to recruit and bind more female members to the party, so that the membership base that forms the basis for the representative functions as a reflection of society.*
- *A targeted plan for the continuous and structural recruitment of women for positions at all levels. Where men apply themselves earlier, women must be asked and sometimes convinced. Keep this in mind when recruiting, and ensure a good monitoring system.*
- *There are many good examples within the CDA of how women's involvement can be increased, but we see that they are only implemented for a short time. Choose a number of targeted promotions and keep them up for at least 5 years. This includes a buddy system, working with experienced politicians, training, coaching, and peer supervision.*
- *The meeting cycle of all organs must be critically reviewed in terms of content, form and time.*
- *Functions are now often fulfilled for 4 years. That requires a commitment that men seem to be more likely to have than women. Think about a more flexible interpretation of functions.*
- *Learn from the experiences of people who stop early or have to resign. Always organize an exit interview and learn from the points that emerge. The learning points from the exit interview are (anonymously if desired) shared with the provincial HRM committee.*

Action Plan for M/F Equivalence



4. Guarantee

This action plan is a first step in the process of truly achieving an equal position of men and women within the CDA. This document is not cast in concrete and is certainly not a document to be placed in the cupboard. We see this document as the first step in a long-term process to ensure that structural work is done on equality. To do that, we suggest that:

- *The duration of this action plan is set until 2030 or until the goals mentioned in the introduction have been achieved;*
- *The implementation of this action plan and the actions are the responsibility of the daily management;*
- *A member of the action team follows the implementation of the action plan and sits at least 3 times a year with the daily management.*
- *Diversity coordinators from the provincial HRM teams, the Diversity Network, CDA Pride, the chairman of CDAV and the director of the CDA Bureau are also involved in this discussion.*
- *This action plan is a living document. Three times a year this coordination team checks which actions have been completed and which new actions are needed;*
- *This coordination team has a signaling function and provides solicited and unsolicited advice to the party administration and the provincial administrations and specifically to the HRM officials, national and provincial. In addition, it will be agreed with the HRM officials nationally and provincially how the aspect of equality between men and women can emerge more clearly. The coordination team that monitors the implementation of the action plan is responsible for this.*



CDAV Role

The CDAV plays an important role in raising awareness of the unequal participation of men and women. The CDAV stands for emancipation and equal rights for everyone in Dutch society and is committed to improving the position of women and girls. The CDAV also contributes to political policy. This "louse in the fur" function is essential until the goal of an equal distribution is achieved. In addition, the CDAV plays an important role in the party's networks and in organizing meetings for women. What we have seen in recent years, however, is that responsibility for the equal participation of men and women rests too much on only the CDAV. In our eyes, this is not possible, given that it is a responsibility of both men and women to ensure equity in the party. The CDAV, as an affiliated organization with a secured seat, forms part of the party administration and the provincial administrations. This representative function is still essential to properly fulfilling certain roles. However, the responsibility for equality ultimately lies with the entire party at all levels.

5. Elections

The party congress resolution also asks us to pay specific attention to the water board and provincial elections.

Composition of Lists

Although the process of compiling lists is currently in full swing, we call on the provincial authorities to pay extra attention to asking women to make themselves available for the lists when composing them. Such an action is only possible with the realization that it requires a long period of preparation. Immediately after the elections, the boards must start recruiting for the following period. The actions in this aspect of the plan can help involve more women in elections.



Content

In the campaigns for the Provincial States and Water Boards, we suggest thinking about specific themes that are more important to women than to men. We also suggest thinking more about expressions of diversity, and ensuring that the image the party radiates embraces diverse themes. Examples of substantive themes or issues:

- *What does the province do for families and households?*
- *What is the province doing to increase mutual respect of norms and values in society?*
- *Increase road safety for school-age children by constructing separate cycle paths;*
- *Are provincial cycle paths lit and is the greenery well maintained to prevent women from feeling unsafe?*
- *The production of food: more attention to local products.*
- *Recreation and tourism: more attention to trips for the entire family.*
- *Is sufficient attention paid to greenery and nature in the immediate living environment, and also within the city?*
- *Space for outdoor play in the entire province.*
- *What is the quality of the swimming water?*
- *Installing fiber optics and maintaining local facilities / small schools.*
- *Bet on more participation opportunities within the province.*

6. From Practice

A lot is also going well, and we have come across great examples of success. We spoke with Anke van Extel-van Katwijk (alderman in Gemert-Bakel), Liesbeth Spies (mayor in Alphen aan den Rijn) and Theo Bovens (governor of the King in Limburg)



Anke van Extel-van Katwijk: *"It is unique that aldermen in the college of Gemert-Bakel are all women, but for us they are simply just a head that you come across. Apparently it is unique for many, but we certainly don't think about it anymore. When a new college was formed, it soon became clear that there would be a college of 2 parties. The Village Party and the CDA."* It is not that a female College becomes the measure of things. Being a woman has not played a role in Gemert-Bakel, either. *"During the selection procedure within the CDA, the chairman asked every candidate whether it would be a problem to put three ladies at the top. The most beautiful answer was 'If there was a man with better qualities, he would have been there.'"* Quality always comes first.

Liesbeth Spies also agrees: *"The qualification that you are a woman can never be the reason for being on the list. It's always about competencies. If they had said, you are on the list because you are a woman, thank you, but then you have to, it doesn't work."* Theo Bovens also sees no benefit in positive discrimination. *"It all starts with having good candidates. The CDA could use its strength and network more for vacancies for that purpose. "*



Yet there is still an unequal distribution of men and women in politics. Something has to change. Anke van Extel-van Katwijk: *"After all, if the council is a reflection of society, then I also believe that you should see society reflected in the council. As a political party you have a responsibility in this."* Liesbeth Spies: *"It is important that the people currently in various positions provide for their succession. And these people must be representative. So there is certainly a responsibility resting with current politicians. Just start searching for successors much earlier."* Theo Bovens: *"Now that more women are mayors in major cities such as Roermond or Maastricht, the argument that women cannot do it is no longer valid either. So women help enormously to set a good example."*

A Few Nice Examples and Tips:

"I have a waiting list for women who want to walk once. It is just beautiful to show what gives me energy. We have to work even more with buddies or ambassadors or whatever to give ladies an impression of all the work." -Liesbeth Spies

"Like everyone else, I think everyone deserves a chance. This may mean that people will be disappointed, but there must be room for innovation. If you do not do

this consistently, you will be bothered by this at some point. -**Anke van Extel-van Katwijk**

"In Limburg the trust committee is always of mixed composition". -**Theo Bovens**



Buitenom 18
Postbus 30453
2500 GL Den Haag

☎ 070 3424888

✉ cda@cda.nl

• www.cda.nl