



REPORT

TP Winnet BSR START CONFERENCE

WOMEN RESOURCE CENTRES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION

September 25, 2014, Vilnius



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TP WINNET BSR START CONFERENCE WOMEN RESOURCE CENTRES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Date: September 25, 2014

Time: Registration start at 8.30 am, conference start at 9.00, conference end at 4 pm.

Venue: Ministry of Economy, Gedimino pr. 38, LT-01104 Vilnius. Room 212

Aim: The aim of the conference is to introduce the Thematic Partnership Project "Winnet BSR" and to discuss about gender sensitive policies, models and methods contributing to business development and promoting innovation in SMEs led by women.

Participants:

- TP Winnet BSR project partners from Lithuania, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Sweden,
- „Going Abroad - promoting women social and economical activities and networking between EU and East Europe" Project partners from Moldova and Belarus
- Invited participants - politicians and decision makers, public authorities, researchers, representatives of NGOs and other related organisations.

OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

Moderator – journalist Aurimas Perednis from 'Žinių radijas' ('News radio')

The cultural greeting of Rietavas M.K.Oginskis Art School.

Greeting. Jolita Van Otterlo, Director of Business Environment Improvement Department of Ministry of Economy:

Current indicators show that the business environment has improved in Lithuania: Lithuania rose from the 27th to the 17th position. Its presumption - the business inspection reform. It is necessary to minimize the restriction of the business. Women are active in the service sector (70 per cent of European products in this field is generated by women). There is a huge difference between men and women in the management of companies. There is still a lot of space to involve women in business. It is very meaningful to talk about it with the partners from the South Baltic States.

3. Greeting. Laima Dockevičienė, Director of Rietavas Business Information Centre:

We usually talk about equal rights for both – men and women, centres of the country and province. The regions require to be heard. They are small but ambitious. Some positive things happened. The Ministry of Economy welcomes this conference. Useful knowledge can be spread wide. So, we should learn from each other. Success likes active, inquiring and curious people. I welcome the participants of conference wishing to have the constructive work.

4. Presentation of movie „Rietavas: History Inspire Future“

SPEECHES OF THE CONFERENCE GUESTS

1. Gediminas Rainys – General President of Confederation of Industrialists

Wherever I am, I always say: I wish to grow up so that you could become the members of the Confederation. 15 years ago, we used the business models from abroad. I am proud that the system has proved its viability. Unfortunately, the whole network of business information centers have not persisted but the remained ones are an example to others. One of them is in Rietavas. Excellent work was done not only by Rietavas Business Information Centre but also Federation of Industrialists, whose president is from Rietavas. Rietavas is famous for the Dukes named Oginskiai. I have never experienced that Polonaise of Oginski would not be played. Therefore, the character of this conference is the regional areas and internationality. It is difficult to create or find a new thing in the world. The best discovery is the successful and good copies of the recent examples. Today we are focused on the innovation and occupation of women. It has a great meaning. Realization of creative flights is the most important thing. I encourage to take that first step in the creation of business.

2.Vanda Juršėnienė, Head of Department of Equality Between Women and Men of Ministry of Social Security and Labour of Lithuanian Republic (instead of Gintaras Klimavičius, Vice-Minister of Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Chairman of Equal Opportunities Commission)

Mr. Vice- minister apologizes; he was withdrawn from the conference. So, he obligated me to read the greeting. The President Dalia Grybauskaitė was elected as a Chairwomen of World Women's Council. Mr. Minister refers: 'Dear participants of the conference, I have the honour to welcome all of you in Vilnius. Traditionally, women are better educated than men in Lithuania, women are more easily incorporated into the labour market, but women are still poorly represented at the small and medium-sized business. Only 30 per cent of women are the owner (manager) of business. Therefore, it remains a long-term priority of the national programme. I emphasize the independence of women's entrepreneurship everywhere.'

3. Kristina Indriošienė, Head of Alternative Activities Division of Rural Development Department of Ministry of Agriculture of Lithuanian Republic:

From 40 per cent of all farms are the farms owned by women. While realizing the programme, we promote equality between women and men, adaptation to alternative activity, we encourage learning the basics of business. The mean that could ensure the equality between women and men is the promotion of small and medium-sized business. There are over 200 million Euros to promote small business and small farmers. The cooperation and particular funds will help to connect the states of the Baltic Sea Region.

MORNING SESSION - ECONOMICAL GROWTH AND GENDRES EQUALITY

Moderator VANDA JURŠĖNIENĖ, Head of Equality Between Woman and Men Division, of Ministry of Social Security and Labour of Lithuanian Republic

Brit-Marie Soderberg Torstensson – President of WINNET SWEDEN. The presentation of Winnet Baltic Sea Region (Winnet BSR) and the Baltic Sea Region Partnership Platform for Gender and Economic Growth and its conditions.

Congratulations to all of you. I am the coordinator of the project; I thank the organizers and sponsors. I want that you understand the essence of this project, which is supported by the Swedish Institute. It is very important to know the history. The essence of this project is gender equality EU-wide, in the field of national strategy for ICT and tourism. Local resource centers for women will help here. It is also wished to strengthen both women's and men's entrepreneurship in business.

Short-term aims: to create a strong network of five countries. We know that the other Baltic Sea countries want to join this Project and to create a structure. The equal salary for women and men is important. This is solved by the Gender Policy in the year 2014-2020. We need to develop resource centers for women. It is important to open both eyes and see everything from a broader perspective. Now we have this project, which is focused on tourism and ICT. The strategy has to be created at European level. We agreed with our partners that we also have to influence the strategy of EU. We must work at four levels - local, regional, national and European. We have to create a platform, which is already in the process. Everybody wants results. We also need them. It is necessary that everyone work together - women and men, researchers, different networks, politicians, private companies. Business, ICT and innovation is the essence of everything. We will work until November 2016. This is the start conference and later there will be other conferences. We will try to create a network of partners. We need to learn from each other and the most important thing, to achieve results. There are also partners, that do not belong to a part of the EU, eg., Iceland. We wish that all levels of government will join us. More info www.winnet.se, www.winnet8.eu, www.winneteuropa.org. We will discuss the results during other presentations.

Laimutė Kalinauskienė, Senior Project Manager of Entrepreneurship Department of PI Enterprise Lithuania. The overview of small and medium-sized business in Lithuania. Dynamics of Entrepreneurship.

I represent the entrepreneurship in Lithuania. This obliges to talk about business and entrepreneurship, what is important for each country. Entrepreneurship is responsible that country's economy would be adaptive to changing conditions, flexible. The survey show that more and more people would like to make their own business in Lithuania – they want to be the masters of their own situation. It is imagined that the business provides a good income, although this is not always true. It is an opportunity to do what you wish, to realize the ideas, to treat work as a hobby, etc. What hinders Lithuanian to make this step? First of all, the fear of bankruptcy. It seems that after the bankruptcy is anything more. We want to promote another message, we say that it's like a lesson that allows to be stronger and to go further. As well as personal fear of failure. Fear - negative opinion of surrounding, friends or relatives. They will say: 'He has not done anything'. It is also difficult to find staff, funding source, there are a lot of administrative requirements, many licenses. A distinctive feature is the fact that business in Lithuania is very young. Well, not the business, but the businessman. We have a lot of young businessmen to 24 years old. This is the time when a man is not afraid to take risks, he has nothing to lose. But it is also a time when a man has no experience. And here you can see the segments. IT-16, entertainment - 15 tourism - 9, advertising - 8, restaurants - 8, trade - 7 building - 6 cars - 6 fashion – 6, etc. Business developers to 1,000 people in Vilnius - 9.1, Klaipeda - 3.4, Kaunas Region- 3.3. Entrepreneurship is prospered in the towns. One of our aims is to raise the level of entrepreneurship in small towns, and strengthen entrepreneurship of women.

What determines the lack of women's entrepreneurship in Lithuania? The difficulties in obtaining start-up capital, lack of communication and contacts, lack of skills and qualifications. They spend more time with their families than to searching for external contacts, there is a lack of good examples. When they are asked, 64 per cent of women say 'yes', and nearly 97 per cent would like to participate in programmes designed to help business. PI ENTERPRISE LITHUANIA promotes entrepreneurship and export. Many events and training are held to promote women's entrepreneurship. One of them - the project 'The smart woman'. We are trying to take into consideration the differences between women and men. Business is business, everything is the same for both: women and men. However, both female and male business is targeted to the same customers, there is no difference. But the difference is in the woman herself and we are trying to take in account. So, organize the training, invite successful businesswomen and the lecturer, who understand the psychology of women. This is a very successful project, which began last year, and is continuing this year. There are 36 events provided in Klaipeda, Kaunas and Šiauliai. 'Good Business' is intended for young people and women. Promoting of entrepreneurship and training. It is an opportunity to have individual talk to businessmen, be advised and consulted. These events are designed to regions. A network of mentors consists of about 70 mentors. It is the platform established. Virtual office, consulting, training, discounts of partner. 'Business stimulates' promotes entrepreneurship among young people.

COFFEE BREAK

Vanda Juršėnienė, Head of Women and Men Equality Department of Ministry of Social Security and Labour of Lithuanian Republic. Realization of Women and Men Equality in Lithuania: promotion of women's economic independence.

How to solve this problem, when the woman has no time? How to get the men into the families back? Nowadays young men have another point of view, they use paternity allowance, but if only 12 per cent take paternity leave, it's not the best situation. And when we talk about the care of the elderly and disabled people, men are far less. Recently I was asked, how many men are working at the kindergarten? Unfortunately, very rare man work as an educator. And as sweepers or drivers as well. Women, who wish to build own business, face major challenges. Here is a deep reason: there is an old attitude to the role of a man and a woman in our society. A woman can manage the largest companies, but here we have a lack of balance. Another point is that our work culture and environment are insensitive to others. Traditions are not always visible, but at the end it leads to indirect discrimination. I would like to mention other, less visible, but known facts. We have studied, what is one woman attitude to the other woman and we noticed a lack of female solidarity. Mentoring system seems not always successful.

Maurizio Mosca – Representative of Intitution of Gender Equality in the EU (EIGE), has spoken in the name of Theresès Murphy, Head of Labour Organisation Department of Intitution of Gender Equality in the EU. EIGE report about the women and economic (Monitoring of Beijing Activities Platform).

He greeted in the Lithuanian language and sent greetings from Th. Murphy.- I am Italian and I work in the EU agency, which is responsible for gender equality. I am responsible for the liberal market. The good practices and gender equality is a priority. It is a lack of attention of men to these issues. We have to understand - it's not just a matter of women. Gender differences - is still a problem. There are stereotypes at the workplace. It is not a good thing for working women to leave the workplace for a longer period of time. Especially for businesswomen of small business. Another challenge – to accumulate experience of the

EU level. The opportunity to learn from mistakes, decisions. As well as the systematic collection of information. Some countries are doing it. Thematically important is the stability in business. And it is not only beginning of business, start, financial management. The information is necessary, consulting, etc. Winnet network is similar. It is important to show that businesswomen are the motivating force. Female workers say that there are the lack of skills, competence and the entrepreneurship need to be promoted from the beginning.

**Karina Tomaszewska(Poland), West Pomeranian University of Technology.
The WINNET centre of mastery at Baltic Sea Region: facts, numbers and research agenda.**

All the Baltic countries are involved in the research. The main activity is the policy-oriented research and implementing women promotion approaches. Why women are building up business? They want independence, earn, and seek for professional autonomy. The labour exchange requires more men to women, although women are more educated. Their work is paid less. More and more women choose technical specialties. But there are still more men than women in IT field. The number of self-employed women is less. It is very important to support them.

WINNET research plan. We will investigate the gender and innovation. It is necessary to make a network of researchers, to organize the seminars, to analyse the gender opportunities in ICT and tourism sectors. The training will take place next November in Szczecin. Ewa RUMINSKA will be our expert. We invite you to suggest ideas for further research.

Summary of morning session. Moderator Vanda Juršėnienė.

There are number of reasons, preventing more women in business. Of them unequal access to finances, credits, lack of motivation, self esteem, lack of knowledge, information, competences, lack of exchange of good practices and the lessons learned, role models, thematic forums, lack of gender sensitive environment, still prevailing unequal treatment of women and men, lack of work- life balance and others, as well as ways to combat these obstacles were presented and discussed by the participants.

There are number of arguments – why to start own business. They are both personal and more global. For instance- from gender equality point of view women’s participation in businesses and leadership leads to equal economic independence – one of gender equality priorities. The arguments mentioned where: better income of women, leading to better welfare, self-realization, including through new, challenging but exciting process, and more globally – equal economic independence

Discussions touched upon the impact of the Winnet-BSR and high value of it’s activities. It creates opportunities to exchange views and experiences, good practices and lesson learned, to share information. These activities contribute to encouragement of women, their motivation, promotes networking. These so called “soft activities”, very relevant and valuable for women, fills up niches not filled yet by other stakeholders.

In general the conference was very well organized both in terms of content and logistics, well balanced theoretical part (contributions) and active part – discussions involving all participants. Presentations of well chosen experts were well prepared and interesting in terms of content and leading to active discussions.

LUNCH BREAK

AFTERNOON SESSION. INNOVATION AND ITS PROMOTION

Moderator Ingrida Gečienė, Head of Institute of Social Innovations.

Vytautas Minasianas, Head of Project 'Incubation of New Technology Enterprise' of TECHNOSTARTAS (TECHNOSTART), the agency of Science, Innovation and Technology. Role of women in developing innovations

Women have the ambition to work for themselves. But they face with the idea that they have to look after their children, what causes the long time gap in the labour market. They can be employed as part-time employees, but it is problematic. Women come together in communities. They have knowledge of new technologies. Eg., Supermama.lt.

The idea of 'Smart woman'. With the help of competencies, it is offered consultation and assistance, allowing the opportunity to work, to qualify, to communicate and to develop new products in real world. So we create a community. The aims: to solve the problems of qualification, unemployment and entrepreneurship, to promote and increase women's knowledge in the field of IT, to create new services, products and innovations, expecting short-term and long-term economic and social benefit. We solve some unemployment problems.

Dr. Ewa Ruminska-Zimny, President of International Forum of Women to Warsaw School of Economics. Development, competitiveness and gender equality: involmnet of politics.

The economy is gender-neutral. My thought is that the main programmes of gender equality are poorly funded. In the eighteenth century, men made the production and exchange. And this is a part of the economy. The reproduction is over the economic model. Economy needs investment. And unpaid reproduction does not require investment, it comes free. It's free, it get used of men when they were children. For many years, equality has been understood as a human right or social matter. Gender means a lot of for economy: from the household to macroeconomics. New science research area: International Feminist Economics Association: Gender and macroeconomics GEM. Two-way traffic: growth affects equality, but also equality affects the growth. Progress needs time. Women get lower wages. It is necessary to see how quality affects the growth. (table) More equality, more GDP. Why feminine factor is visible in the growth? There is a difference between having children and labour. You can have a job, but not have children and in contraries. The creativity has no limits. A good investment in growth and development. The benefits of gender equality can be calculated by the rise of company profits. Strategies and gender; the genders projects could be a priority, but it requires particular documents. Why 'lost in translation'?

Dr.Lilija Kublickienė, Institution of Sociology, Female participation in IT sector. The use of young women's potential.

Linking innovation and new IT, there's no doubt that the effect of innovation is visible in various business sectors. Innovation promotes competitiveness. Although, the contribution of IT sector's to GDP is relatively small in Lithuania, the impacts of this sector on other sectors creates a higher value. Working in the ICT sector, makes 3.7 per cent in the EU. 2.9 per cent in Lithuania. Lack of ICT professionals. It is forecasted that it can be a lack of over 17 thousands of IT professionals in 2016 in Lithuania . However,

among the few studying IT professions, women are just 1 per cent. The attracting of women to the ICT sector is relevant. If we succeed to include as many women as men, the GDP could increase to 9 billion LTL.

Problems that prevent women to become involved in the ICT sector business. It is a cultural tradition, stereotypes for women as managers. Internal barriers: social psychological factors, the lack of confidence, negotiating skills, avoiding of market, negative attitude to the competition. External barriers: masculine environment in the ICT sector; difficult to balance personal and professional life, the lack of female behaviour models in the ICT sector. Priorities of changes: to create a new image of the ICT sector, strengthen the opportunities for women in the ICT sector; increase the number of women entrepreneurs in the ICT sector, to improve working conditions in the ICT sector. "Companies that do not pay attention to feminist factors, risk losing half of their clients. It was proved that women and men thinking different, so it would be foolish to ignore this and continue to the work by exploiting only 50 per cent of potential (Website 'All Things Digital')

Rasa Baliulevičienė, Project Administrator of Rietavas Business Information Centre. *The method of Success Tteam to promote women's entrepreneurship.*

One of RBIC target groups is women. They need motivation and support. The essence of the method of successful team - group of women meeting every 3 to 4 weeks, supporting each other, forming tasks with large number of suggestion and impulse to start something. At the beginning every woman explained, what she want to work or what she want to achieve in business over the years. Regular meetings take place later. At the first meeting of each phase, each participant reports on what she has achieved over the month. In the second stage - the maintenance period, when each participant tells her bad points, faced problems. It is discussed and helped to find solutions. Thereafter, each participant plans the specific business development tasks to be done before the next meeting. Women orientate better in the Success Team, because the general strategy is build for individual person. Women got to know themselves and others better, helped each other. Women caring about home, raising children, paid less attention to themselves, to their education in Lithuania. The abilities to communicate and contact rose, they were encouraged, became more positive.

Summary of the afternoon session. Moderator Ingrida Gečienė

To sum up the 'Innovation and Promotion' session, we can notice that two reports were dedicated to discuss the overall situation of women and the potential for growth, innovation, especially in men's domination areas such as information and communication technology (ICT) sector and technology. The reports emphasize unsatisfactory economic situation for women compared with men, factors that hinder a greater contribution to economic growth and innovation: higher female unemployment, lower number of women at management positions and policy decision, female and male stereotypes, internal social psychological factors related to the lack of self-confidence, as well as external barriers hindering to harmonize personal and professional life, male environment in ICT and in the development of other technologies and so on.

It was revealed, a high potential of women's involvement in the growth and development of innovation: involvement of unemployed women into economic and social activities, better knowledge of their creativity, ideas, care of the environment and women's (as the biggest part of society) needs. The use of education, more women than men, could help to improve all European Union countries' economic growth and competitiveness. In order to increase the involvement of women, speakers considered that it is

necessary to seek for systemic political changes: to evaluate the impact of women to macroeconomic and recognize that the economy is not neutral in gender, to increase the number of women at management positions and policy decisions, to accept the friendly solutions about the involvement of women in economic activities, business and innovation, to reduce the gender roles and stereotypes and to create women-friendly working environment.

The other two sessions' reports were related to specific involvement of women in economic activities, business innovation and development through the best examples. At the pilot project 'Smart woman', there is an opportunity to work part-time and remotely, get advice, communicating and cooperating with each other to develop new products and services. In this way, housewives, women raising children, young women, the older, who are withdrawn from the labour market but skilled and having ideas are included, everybody who want to find out what they want to do. Another report presented the method of a successful team to develop women's entrepreneurship, support and motivation, strengthen the self-confidence. The cooperative way encourages the development of business ideas, improves products and services, improves the use of ICT tools and other competences.

SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE: PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

Moderator Laima Dockevičienė, Director of Rietavas Business Information Centre

Britt-Marie Torstensson, President of WINNET SWEDEN. Thematic Partnership – the use of a joint effort and knowledge to economic growth.

We go into a larger project. We want to move everything into action and strategy. It is important the equal salary of women and men. Gender Policy for the period 2014-2020. Resource centers for women need to be developed. It is important to open both eyes and see everything from a broader perspective. Now we have this project that is focused on tourism and ICT. The strategy should be created at European level. The partners agreed that we also have to influence the EU's strategy. It must be worked by four levels - local, regional, national and European. We have created a platform in Szczecin. Successful use of platform. The essence is Gender equality. Everybody wants the results. We also need them. It is necessary that all women and men, women's researchers, other networks, politicians, private companies work together. Business, ICT and innovation is the essence of all things.

Presentations of the CONFERENCE

- 1. Winnet BSR, Thematic Partnership project, *Britt-Marie Torstensson, President of Winnet Sweden***
- 2. Good Practices in the area of Women's Entrepreneurship, *Maurizio Mosca, EIGE***
- 3. Dynamics and promotion of business, *Laimutė Kalinauskienė, Enterprise Lithuania (in Lt)***
- 4. Winnet Centre of Excellence in BSR region: Facts, Figures and Research Agenda, *Karina Tomaszewska, West Pomeranian University of Technology***
- 5. Pilot project "Smart woman", *Vytautas Minasianas, Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology (in Lt)***
- 6. Growth, competitiveness and gender equality: policy implications, *Ewa Ruminska Zimny***

- 7. Women participation in ITC sector. Using potential of young women, *Lilija Kublickiene, Institute of Sociology, Researcher***
- 8. Success teams method for promoting women entrepreneurs, *Rasa Baliuleviciene, Rietavas Business Information Centre, Project Administrator***
- 9. Report from consultation meeting Athens 27-28 February 2014, EIGE**