

# How women are renewing labour market patterns

Resolution adopted by the EPP Political Assembly  
18th November 2014



Having regard to the discussions held in Zingst during the EPP Women Summer Academy in July 2014, and in Zagreb in October 2014 for the EPP Women General Board meeting;

- having regard to the EPP Action Programme 2014-2019;
- having regard to the Europe 2020 targets in terms of employment and growth;
- having regard to its previous resolution, adopted by the EPP Congress of 6 March 2014 in Dublin, on women and entrepreneurship;

### **The EPP has adopted the following:**

- A. considering that the EU average employment rate for women is 62,1% compared to 75% for men;
- B. considering that 60% of new graduates in the EU each year are women;
- C. considering that women's potential is not fully taken into account and valued as it could be by the labour market; considering that several case-studies and reports show that companies with a higher share of women in managerial positions have higher profits than their counterparts; considering the glass ceiling faced by women in non-executive boards of companies listed in stock exchange;
- D. considering the ageing of the population in Europe; considering that the life expectancy at birth is constantly increasing in Europe (77 years old for men and 83 years old for women in average, EU 28) but that life expectancy in good health conditions is not rising as fast;
- E. considering that the labour force will be reduced by 25 million people by 2050;
- F. considering that the EU-28 unemployment rate was 10.2 % according to recent Eurostat data in July 2014, and the youth unemployment rate (under 25) was as high as 21.7 %;
- G. considering that our societies need to face the challenge of sustainable health, social and pensions systems which should not create new debts on our children;
- H. considering the very slow progresses made in closing the gender pay gap, which within the EU remains in average at 16%;
- I. considering that gender stereotypes continue to be obstacles for women, especially in the labour market;
- J. considering that family is a core value for the EPP and that growth and prosperity are among the main objectives of the political action;

1. Recalls that promoting women's participation into the labour market is beneficial to Europeans - men and women; underlines that promoting work-life balance can be beneficial not only to families in Europe, but also to our economy both in the short and long term;
2. Calls on all EU Member States to introduce more affordable childcare options, not only by public means but also thanks to incentives towards companies which can open internal or joint childcare facilities and by promoting pooling of funds and innovative ideas by SMEs and entrepreneurs, including female entrepreneurs;
3. Underlines that flexibility is key to promote reconciliation of family life and work; encourages EU Member States to promote flexibility, for men as well as for women, in terms of working hours and in terms of work organisation;
4. Encourages EU Member States to fully consider the necessary flexibility of parental leave schemes, in terms of lengths but also in terms of part-time and progressive reentry in the labour market and to adequately inform parents about their rights;
5. Calls on the European Commission and the EU Member States to promote, with business/private partners, a broad discussion on flexibility at work and the reconciliation of work and family life, including through awareness raising among managers and employers;
6. Urges the EU Member States to find an agreement within the Council of the European Union on the so called 'Women on Boards' Directive;
7. Calls on the European Commission and on the EU Member States to move forward concerning the correct implementation of the Directive of 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation;
8. Recognises the fact that tailored measures are needed to help women (re-)enter the labour market, in this sense calls on Commission, the EU Members States and local authorities to reinforce and make use of the already existing special incentives which focus on women having different background situations, for example are belonging to national minority communities, or belonging to either socially, economically or geographically specific/isolated areas;

9. Recognises that specially targeted professional trainings, or that kind of improvement of the education systems, is needed which can offer the possibility to women to improve their skills, re-profile themselves, whether short or mediumterm, in order to have easier access to the labour market. It is of major importance that responsible authorities from different EU Member States or regions cooperate and exchange best practises;
10. Urges the competent authorities on national and local level to use all tools, funds and resources available under the new MFF 2014-2020 programming period (e.g. Youth Guarantee Scheme, European Cohesion and Social Fund) taking into account women as specific targets and to use these new financing tools as leveraging for women's sustainable integration into the labour market;
11. Calls on the European Commission to conduct prospective studies on the working times and days patterns, taking into account their impact on health, on the sustainability of our pension and social systems and on the inclusion of women in the labour market;
12. Underlines the key role that ICT (Information and communications technologies) can play in facilitating more flexibility in labour market patterns and a better work-life balance; calls on the EU Member States, EPP Member Parties and their Women's Organisation to tirelessly highlight the potential of ICT for the purpose of renewing labour market patterns in favour of gender equality; urges the European Commission, especially its new President, to put a clear focus on ICT and labour market patterns in the EU Digital agenda;
13. Invites the European Commission and the EU Member States to seriously consider the possibility of including gender clauses / considerations in public procurements in order to encourage companies to pursue gender equality within their ranks; acknowledges that this idea can only be further developed in respect with the EU competition law;
14. Recalls that female entrepreneurship constitutes a strong driving force in today's economy and should be strongly promoted; notes that female entrepreneurship is also a way for renewing labour market patterns in a more family-friendly and gender equality friendly orientation.

**If you have any question  
you would like to ask  
please contact us.**

Rue du Commerce 10  
1000 Brussels

**T** +32-2-2854140

**E** [connect@epp.eu](mailto:connect@epp.eu)