

Resolution adopted at the EPP Congress, Dublin (Ireland), 6th -7th March 2014

Women and Entrepreneurship

The EPP, meeting on 6th and 7th March 2014 in Dublin,

- having had thorough discussions in the EPP Member Parties and the EPP Associations, among which the EPP WOMEN, about the financial and economic crisis that has affected all Europeans, men and women as well as young and elderly
- being discussions leading to the *EPP Action Programme 2014 – 2019* that has been adopted by the EPP 2014 European Elections Congress today,
- from which it becomes clear that:
 - A. the financial and economic crisis has affected all Europeans, leading to very harsh consequences which we can only overcome by calling on all human resources, and in particular on female entrepreneurship;
 - B. female entrepreneurship has become a strong driving force in today's economy, in the corporate world as well as among small and medium enterprises;
 - C. there still exist many challenges for female entrepreneurs to overcome, in particular dealing with access to business capital, a lack of expertise in information technology and business skills, work / life balance, and persisting gender stereotypes which still considers entrepreneurship a male dominated field;
- addressing the European Commission, and the EU Member States,
- and also calling upon the EPP Member Parties and their Women's Organizations,

has formulated the under noted recommendations:

The European Commission should:

1. Continue to analyse and publish key data on enterprises by gender, to improve understanding and monitoring of the gender impact and to facilitate the identification of measures to ameliorate adverse impacts;
2. Launch a target oriented, EU-wide policy on female entrepreneurship, consisting of:
 - 2.1. Encouraging Member States to integrate entrepreneurial as well as innovative technical education in school curricula that particularly address girls, and to make use of the full potential of the new Erasmus+ Regulation and its components, and the Leonardo da Vinci Programme;
 - 2.2. Initiating life-long learning concepts for women that stimulate the setup of innovative businesses which are either export-oriented or address new economic demands;
3. Acknowledge in all EC economic and social programmes that:
 - 3.1. Educational and occupational mobility of women is offering added value to the EU;
 - 3.2. the economic crisis is making it increasingly vital for women to be more adaptable to the demands of new career opportunities when changing occupations;

- 3.3. Fostering the educational and occupational mobility of women and promoting the learning of foreign languages can contribute to raising the employment rate for women;
4. Continue its full support to the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors that was inaugurated in October 2009 in Stockholm;
5. Consider adaptation of the European Structural Funds to focus on additional support for areas of female entrepreneurship and make use of European social funds as a tool to boost women's business models;
6. Provide additional resources to enable civil society organisations, especially women's business NGO's and umbrella organisations of small and medium enterprises, to identify ways of strengthening female led enterprises.

The EU Member States should:

1. Deliver key measures aimed at supporting growth in female entrepreneurship in their Action Plans for Jobs in dealing with the economic and financial crisis;
2. Adapt existing investment readiness schemes to the needs of women entrepreneurs and establish Start Funds for Female Entrepreneurs aimed at stimulating potential female-led business start-ups;
3. Stimulate access of women to technical scientific and general business networks and to business training courses;
4. Deconstruct gender stereotypes, especially in the educational process, which are mostly responsible for the mistrust of financial institutions and society vis-à-vis female entrepreneurs;
5. Exchange good practices and experiences between Member States;
6. Develop child care facilities, in order to improve the access of parents, and in particular mothers, to the labour market.

The EPP Member Parties and their Women's Organisations should:

1. Support government measures to promote entrepreneurship that increases the participation of women;
2. Actively put into practice their value of a social orientated market economy, hallmarked by entrepreneurship of stakeholders, like family enterprises and small and medium size companies;
3. Encourage women to take up responsibility in these type of enterprises.

SOURCES FOR RELEVANT EC and EP DOCUMENTS:

- Evaluation on Policy: Promotion of Women Innovators and Entrepreneurship (EC, 2008), to be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/index_en.htm
- EP Resolution "Women entrepreneurship in small and medium-sized enterprises" (September 2011):
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0367+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>
- EP Resolution "Educational and occupational mobility of women" (June 2013) to be found at:
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0247+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>