Supporting Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe:
Creating Sustainable Employment and Promoting Equal Opportunities

Tuesday 18th September 2012
The Silken Berlaymont Hotel,
Brussels

"An International Symposium for gathering knowledge, discussing the latest challenges and sharing best practices in promoting employment, entrepreneurship and equality in the labour market in Europe"
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Overview

Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) currently represent 99% of all business in Europe and contribute 65 million jobs. 85% of the total number of new jobs in the European Union between 2002 and 2010 were created by SMEs, demonstrating the importance and scale of this sector and the immense potential that it holds for job creation in the EU. In the context of the global financial crisis, it is essential to encourage entrepreneurship as a means to create sustainable employment.

Entrepreneurship represents an opportunity to encourage a more inclusive and fair labour market. Unemployment amongst young people is dramatically high, currently at around 22% and more than double the EU average (10%). Only 20% of businesses created with venture capital belong to women (WES). Providing training and raising awareness of existing programmes and funding could help to address these issues and redress the balance of equality and inclusion at the same time.

The results of data available from several EU Member States suggest that ethnic minority groups and migrants create a proportionally high number of small businesses. These groups hold an enormous amount of potential within Europe, which could and should be accessed. Current recommendations have already targeted the obstacles faced by marginalised groups and identified initiatives and objectives to tackle them.

In the face of serious cuts to public services across the EU, the societal contribution that can be made to social business is extremely significant. Whilst social economy is not a recent concept, it has only recently started to gain momentum in current political agendas. At a European level there are now several initiatives and various funding opportunities such as the European Social Fund 2007-2013, which supports self-employment and new businesses as one of its main priorities. However, there is still a strong need to assess exactly how social economy and entrepreneurship are defined and used. Current examples of best practices and functioning funding mechanisms need to be collated and used to define policies at the EU level.

This International Symposium seeks to analyse current entrepreneurship practices across Europe. It aims to monitor and measure the impact of partnership working, exchange good practice at local, national and international levels and ensure that current measures are both inclusive and transposable on a supranational level. The symposium seeks to integrate European knowledge in order to help shape sustainable EU-wide inclusive entrepreneurship strategies.

The Symposium will support the exchange of ideas and encourage delegates to engage in thought-provoking topical debate with local and regional practitioners and policymakers at EU level.

Why Attend?

✓ Contribute to the shaping of a comprehensive and inclusive EU-wide entrepreneurship strategy
✓ Assess entrepreneurship practices and stimulate partnership working at all levels
✓ Share comparative multi-level good practices in employment-inclusion policies
✓ Discuss and promote early intervention mechanisms to strengthen inclusive entrepreneurship

Who Should Attend?

• Small Business Federations
• Chambers of Commerce
• Social Funds
• Gender Equality Councils
• Local Authorities
• Training Managers
• Recruitment Advisers
• Organisational Development Professionals
• Equal Opportunities Officers
• Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Practitioners
• Equal Opportunity Ombudsmen
• Women’s Associations
• Women’s Enterprise Agencies
• Institutes for Occupational Health
• Child Care Service Agencies
• Associations for Education and Development of Women
• Institutes for Training and Employment
• Institutes for Social Inclusion of Women
• Women’s Centres
• Anti-Discrimination Agencies
• Research Centres for Gender Equalities
• Academics and Universities
• National Agencies on Gender Equality
• Women’s Networks
• Trade Unions
• Employers’ Associations
• Equal Opportunity Agencies
• Women’s Lobbyist Groups
• Women’s Councils
• Women’s NGOs Networks
• International and Regional Organisations
• National Ministries and Institutes
• Confederaions of Women’s Organisations
• Joint Committees on Women
• National Coordinators on Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities
• Social Exclusion Officers
• Judges and Lawyers
• Human Rights Groups
• Disability Forums and Associations
• Confederations of Independent Unions
• Women in Legal Careers Associations and Bodies
• Medical Women Associations
• Social Care Professionals

Venue and Accommodation

The Silken Berlaymont Hotel,
11-19, Boulevard Charlemagne
1000 Brussels - Belgium

Through our partnership with the Silken Berlaymont Hotel we are pleased to be able to offer our delegates specially negotiated accommodation rates. These discounted room rates are subject to availability and are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

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SMEs and entrepreneurs play a significant role in all economies and are the key generators of employment and income, and drivers of innovation and growth. In the OECD area, SMEs employ more than half of the labour force in the private sector. In the European Union, they account for over 99% of all enterprises. Furthermore, 91% of these enterprises are micro-firms with less than 10 workers. Given their importance in all economies, they are essential for the economic recovery.”

- Centre for Entrepreneurs, SMEs and Local Development, OECD, 2009
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Programme

09:15  Registration and Morning Refreshments

10:00  Chair’s Welcome and Opening Remarks
Ms. Madi Sharma, Group I - Employers - UK, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) (confirmed)

10:10  Increasing the Skills and Competencies Needed for Entrepreneurship
• EU Flagship Initiatives to Promote Sustainable Growth
• Social Business as a Provider of Sustainable Growth
• Regulating and Implementing Social Enterprise at the EU Level
• Recommendations for EU Wide Policies

10:50  First Round of Discussions

11:20  Morning Coffee Break

11:40  Investing in Entrepreneurship: Societal and Economic Benefits
• Capacity Building Projects on National, Regional and Cross-border Levels
• Locally Designed Policies to Support Entrepreneurship Amongst SMEs
• Cooperation with Universities to Increase Growth of Graduate Entrepreneurship
• Policy Recommendations Based on Best Practice Examples

12:00  Second Round of Discussions

12:30  Networking Lunch

13:30  Towards Wider Participation of Women and Disadvantaged Groups
• Providing Equal Access to Credit and Financing
• Promoting Inclusion of Disadvantaged Groups Through Entrepreneurship
• Combating Gender and Social Stereotypes in the Workplace
• Recommendations and Examples from Existing Initiatives

13:50  Third Round of Discussions

14:20  Afternoon Coffee Break

14:35  Fostering Best Practices and Evidence-Based Entrepreneurship Initiatives
• Towards Establishing a Comprehensive International Framework for Monitoring Entrepreneurs
• Providing Reliable and Relevant Data to Assess Current Access to Funding
• Understanding the Needs of SMEs and Entrepreneurs
• Policy Objectives for Sustainable, Inclusive Growth of Entrepreneurship

14:55  Fourth Round of Discussions

15:25  Chairman’s Summary and Closing Comments

15:30  Networking Reception

16:00  Close

Event Details

Date:  Tuesday 18th September 2012
Time:  10:00am – 4:30pm
Venue:  The Silken Berlaymont Hotel, Brussels

Speakers include

✓  Mr. Marko Curavic, Head of Unit, Entrepreneurship, DG ENTR, European Commission (confirmed)
✓  Ms. Jackie Brierton, Director, Young People’s Enterprise Centre of Expertise, Women’s Enterprise Scotland (confirmed)
✓  Ms. Miriam Koreen, Centre for SMEs Entrepreneurship and Local Development, OECD (confirmed)
✓  Mr. Guzman Garcia Gonzales-Posada, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Spain (confirmed)
✓  Ms. Anna Ludwinek, Research Officer, Living Conditions and Quality of Life Unit, Eurofound (confirmed)

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Parvin Madahar on +44 (0) 20 3137 8630
or email parvin.madahar@publicpolicyexchange.co.uk

Small businesses and the men and women who start them are the backbone of the EU economy, contributing greatly to wealth creation and employment. Entrepreneurship can also offer independence and self fulfilment to those who take up the challenge. Supporting self-employment and entrepreneurship is [a] priority, in particular giving help and guidance to potential entrepreneurs from disadvantaged social groups who often face more obstacles to setting up their own businesses.”

- “The ESF: supporting entrepreneurs and the self-employed” DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission

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