



AER Training Academy Support of Women Entrepreneurship 2 and 3 June 2010 Istanbul

The number of women who are self-employed across Europe is much smaller than that of men and the number of women entrepreneurs with employees is even smaller. In 2005 only 8,6% of the total number of women in work were self-employed. This was only half of the proportion of men in work who were self-employed (Source: Eurostat).

Entrepreneurial activities are an important factor in creating and increasing employment opportunities and fuelling economic growth. Entrepreneurship plays a crucial part in the transition process in Eastern Europe being an important source of job creation, opening career opportunities for women and men.

However, men traditionally have better opportunities for self-employment as women face more constraints than men in developing their businesses. These constraints include less access to credit and larger markets; mobility constraints; more workload in the family and household; lack of networks needed to facilitate business development; and lack of know-how concerning ICT, corporate and public sector procurement. Traditional attitudes towards the gender role and unfavourable social climate have also constrained women entrepreneurs.

Regions being close to citizens and business stakeholder are best placed to promote a culture of entrepreneurship in their territories and to support women who start their own company or want to develop their business.

Entrepreneurship research made it clear that support will be the more efficient the more target group oriented it is designed. Many regions across Europe have already put in place support structures assisting entrepreneurs in the different phases of company set-up. However the gender dimension is not always properly taken into account and different support activities are not connected in the best possible way. A concept that coordinates and links existing support structures and

signposts women entrepreneurs to the right contact point can be a solution to actively support women entrepreneurs and at the same time improve the overall support structure.

The AER Training Academy on women entrepreneurship has the aim to give regional politicians and officers an in depth view on support schemes from different European regions and help them to develop their own support programmes.

The Training Academy will include lectures on:

- Raising awareness for female business start-ups among support institutions, banks and the business community,
- Initial consulting and first information, e.g. how to reach business starter, how to assess their profile and signpost them to the right support institution
- Training and qualification for female business starters and women entrepreneurs, e.g. specific content such as negotiation skills, starting part-time, reconciliation of professional and private work,
- Consulting, advisory services and mentoring for women entrepreneurs
- Access to finance, including financing institution, micro financing, guarantee schemes,
- Networking as a means to link women entrepreneurs in a region and beyond.
- EU and other international policy on women entrepreneurship, including European funding to support women entrepreneurship in the regions and interregional cooperation in concerning women entrepreneurship

More information:

<http://www.aer.eu/events/aer-training-academy/2010/aer-training-academy-woman-entrepreneurship.html>

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