



Winnet8

Note and Recommendations from West Zone Round Table 16th August 2011

Key: *recommendations shaded and italic*

1. Welcome - Councillor Tom Buchanan, Convenor Economic Development, City of Edinburgh Council, welcomed delegates to City Chambers and Round Table Event

- Councillor Buchanan highlighted the huge loss to the Regions' economy from lack of women in entrepreneurship and women's unequal participation in the labour market, particularly in segregated sectors.
- *He stressed the importance of projects like Winnet8 in terms of promoting policy to address this and pooling on the good practice from our colleagues across the EU.*
- *His recent visit to Sweden had afforded him opportunity to see a WRC in practice and he would like to see more opportunities for such initiatives in Scotland*

2. Irene Oldfather, Life Changes Trust, former Convenor of European and External Affairs Parliamentary Committee

- EU West Zone Round Table Event provides an opportunity to shape EU policy in terms of gender equality and this in turn provides opportunity to reflect at member state level on how we can align ourselves with the EU to maximise potential for financial support to promote equality and in turn growth.
- Winnet8 has been providing a channel to influence EU policy and strategy and in turn advise us at Scottish level on issues and opportunities in terms of occupational segregation and promoting women's entrepreneurial potential.

3. Hazel Smith, Strategy Lead, Winnet8

WINNET8 is reporting at a pivotal time for Structural Funds and it is critical that advancing the policy objectives around growth and competitiveness includes an explicit commitment to gender equality. The Headline vision for Europe 2020, the EU's Growth Strategy for the coming decade is ensuring the EU as a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy.

It is clear from research work undertaken by WINNET8, the collation of good practice examples and benchmarking study trips across the 8 EU Member States participating in WINNET8, that Scotland has some excellent examples of good practice in addressing

occupational segregation and indeed has 4 examples highlighted in a European Commission Good Practice Guide. They are Close the Gap, Scottish Resource Centre for Women In Science Engineering and Technology, Girl Geeks Scotland and Fife Women's Technology Centre. All of these projects have received ESF or ERDF support through the LUPS Programmes or the former EQUAL Community Initiative.

In order to continue to improve and develop on our work here in Scotland and to influence policy in terms of addressing occupational segregation, at Regional and EU levels, a number of key recommendations have emerged. These recommendations have been developed at our – EU West Zone Round Table Event on the 16th August.

Discussion between the Strategic Representatives of WINNET8 and Scottish Government Representatives from relevant government departments offers us the opportunity to fulfill the aspirations and objectives of Scottish Government and the EU.

WINNET8 aims to influence macroeconomic development strategies to ensure they integrate gender equality and recognise the significant contribution women's equal labour market participation makes to social and economic cohesion

- Hazel gave a brief introduction to Winnet8 and status of project to date including: the collation and analysis of good practice across the 8 participating member states; benchmarking and research work; opportunities for transferring learning from other member states; informing EU policy particularly EU 2020 strategy and 5th Cohesion Policy; and in turn Regional Operational Programmes as well as Government Policy within participating regions and countries
- The relevant Scottish policy leads have requested a meeting with MAG members (strategy group involved throughout project) to discuss the project and policy recommendations which will provide W8 with direct opportunity to influence the development and implementation of the Regional Operational Programme.

4. Muriel McKenzie – ESEP Ltd (IAB) Research and Policy

- Highlighted how the timing of W8 work is perfect in terms of discussion and potential to influence the implementation of EU policy and strategy at member state level
- *Previous evaluation of success of the 2000 -2006 programme (in terms of gender equality) highlighted importance of committed people in key positions supporting gender equality & the provision of guidance, toolkits, training, awareness raising, good practice events, knowledge exchange*
- The overarching Winnet8 priority is to influence current funding – however a significant percentage of ERDF funding is already committed in Scotland (e.g. Priority 1 is 91% committed & P2 is 96% committed – these are the two priorities which Winnet8 activities and objectives fall under). Therefore there is limited potential to

influence this round of funding but significant opportunities to influence the next programme for funding (2014 – 2020)

- European funding for Scotland is set to reduce from £1.2bn in the current programme to £400m for the next round. *Therefore it would be prudent to ensure that we tie the gender equality objectives to the emerging priorities i.e. innovation, digital*
- Gender equality is mentioned in the Strategy but there is not a strong emphasis. The learning and subsequent recommendations from WINNET8 is key to influencing future Programmes. Scottish Government is holding an information event in November to begin the consultation process for ROPs and we can carry forward W8 recommendations to that.

5. Irene Oldfather

Highlighted that Policies and legislation in Scotland/UK are in place to address the issue of gender inequality and occupational segregation. The key question therefore is how we translate these into actions on the ground?

Muriel M (ESEP Ltd):

- *Dual approach to addressing gender inequality needs to continue, that is gender mainstreaming and positive action*
- *All EU funded projects should be explicit in terms of their commitment and action to addressing gender equality issues*
- *We need to improve our methods for capturing the learning from good practice and new mechanisms to share them so successful projects and programmes don't remain short-term project level activities but are sustained in order that we can sustain success (commercialisation of projects). This leads to sustained growth*

Britt-Marie Soderberg Torstensson (National Resource Centre Sweden & WINNET Sweden):

- *Policy objectives in terms of gender equality as a key component of regional growth need to be agreed, operational structures need to be put in place both through EU funding and member state funding with budgets to match*

Jackie Brierton:

- *We need rigorous evaluation of what has already been achieved and to identify how we can build on this and promote positive policy and subsequent action – this should be to be a partnership with relevant representatives from government and their working/strategic partners.*

Comment: The work of WINNET8 has contributed to that and sustained progress from this partnership project is essential

Geraldine Wooley SRC:

- We need to go beyond evaluation and into a real transmission level. Within WINNET8 we are largely preaching to the converted with the agencies and representatives round the table but *key to success in terms of addressing occupational segregation is the transmission of knowledge to employers particularly within key, growth and segregated sectors. A combined approach with bottom up and top down elements. The top down approach must focus on work with employers. Without employers being prepared, accepting and on board, there is very limited scope for improving the situation of occupational segregation. EU Programme regulations/priorities should target partnership activity with the private sector. That is, investment in building and brokering relationships through education, business development and the private sector*

Niki Kandikirira Chief Executive Engender UK:

- *The Financial Framework for spending under the Cohesion Policy Instruments proposes introducing 'conditionality' based on results and incentives to implement the necessary reforms to ensure effective use of financial resources. Therefore it would seem prudent to use gender indicators and make obligatory the collection of gender data for all projects – particularly data and indicators which measure socio-economic impact of gender equality*

Margaret Morrison– Economic Development:

Situation is challenging given that there will be less funding and that prior projects addressing gender equality, particularly those focused on employment and occupational segregation have been shut down. *It is essential we promote the economic development argument at regional and EU levels.*

6. Emma Ritch (Close the Gap) – Addressing Occupational Segregation Presentation

Key issues:

- Productivity has a distinct gender dimension, where skills deficits and market failures are key barriers to economic growth
- The Women & Work Commission (2010) estimated that the gender inequality cost to the UK economy was £23 billion which represents 3% of the GDP. The underuse of women's skills, qualifications and expertise is the cause of that and occupational segregation is a significant contributor in this respect.
- Between 2000 and 2009 segregation has increased across the EU-27. *Therefore it is crucial that we analyse this at member state level.*
- Highlighting key Scottish labour market data (gender disaggregated) it is clear that across sectors, professions and education we still have a long way to go to address occupational segregation.
- Focussing on the UK Modern Apprenticeship Scheme where 1.3% of the participants in construction are young women, 1.9% of apprentices in Engineering are women,

0.9% of Motor Vehicle Maintenance apprentices are women and 98.9% of early years care and education participants are women.

- Construction, Engineering and trades are more resource intensive including finance - another inequality dimension which we must address.

Comments/Recommendations in response to Close the Gap presentation:

- *We see a perpetuation of occupational segregation precisely where we most need to advocate for change i.e. in education and in modern apprenticeships for our young people.*
- *These life transition stages for younger people are a key opportunities to effect change both culturally and economically. Investment in these areas is crucial*

(Bill Fraser Skills Development Scotland – Comments following the event)

Access to employment support, career development/employability/training programmes etc must include an employer dimension to secure a comprehensive approach to addressing occupational segregation. As much as we can address the issues with agencies working on the ground and improve their gendered perspective we still need to convince employers both SME's and key growth sectors to look at how they recruit and how they promote women's career development/potential within their companies.

7. Hazel Smith WINNET8 – Promoting Women's Entrepreneurship (inc Recommendations)

- The economic argument for investing in women's enterprise is strong, and not just at the start-up stage.
- *There is much evidence from the WINNET8 good practice analysis to show that targeted support for existing women business owners who want to grow, delivered by successful practitioners – i.e. absolutely based in the real commercial world reaps substantial economic rewards.*
- Research & practitioner experience across the EU is that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work in either engaging or delivering to women. Women Entrepreneurs or potential entrepreneurs have different drivers/motivations, different styles and approaches to business and well researched additional challenges (Attitudes to risk and finance, cost & availability of childcare, & balancing this role with demands of running a business & a lack of confidence, even with established businesswomen.).
- *As a first step we need to invest in strengthening existing structures – generic Business Gateway Services and High Growth Support. Delivering equalities training with a gendered perspective would reap reward as good practice analysis of Swedish and Greek examples of Awareness Raising and Training and Development for Business Advisors highlights.*
- There is clearly also a distinct need to have *proper targeted start-up support which really focuses on known barriers to enable women to properly de-risk their businesses before starting & also to be able to properly plan and fund for growth –*

we have the opportunity to use tried and tested good practice examples e.g. WRCs in Sweden & Greece, Enterprising Women in UK

- *Women's Enterprise Scotland (WES) is a developing initiative which merits and analysis and support to establish it's potential*
- There is huge unlocked potential for the Scottish economy.

There are first class solutions that we can adopt and tailor for our women to generate a step-change in Scotland. Analysis of WRC Models from both Sweden and Greece offers significant potential for our Region. Likewise in terms of Enterprise the Enterprising Women UK model is also transferable .

8. Ailsa McKay – Gender Budget Analysis and Economic Performance

“All Member States of the United Nations, regardless of their political, religious or ethnic composition, spoke with one voice when the UN pledged to make the world fit for children at the General Assembly Special Session on Children. But rallying around the cause of children without championing gender equality is like stocking a sports team with players but failing to teach them how to play the game”. (State of the World's Children 2007, UNICEF 2006)

“The agenda is immense. It means challenging conventional ways of doing and thinking, and changing the norms and cultures of the host of private and public sector organisations involved in developing regional economic. Without this focus, however, regional economic development policies will always be limited in their effectiveness. Moreover the prosperity of regions will be held back by the social and economic costs of exclusion” Teresa Rees “The Learning Region? Integrating Gender Equality into Regional Economic Development”

We must ensure that economic advances positively impact women's position in economy. Economists don't understand gender equality and so therefore we must start speaking to them in their language. Equally gender equality specialists don't always understand economics. We need to invest in partnership work with the private sector, with economists (in academia and in the business world) and with other relevant experts.

We need to examine how women and men occupy different places in the labour market and challenge the economists' model

- *Changing 'resource allocation'*
- *Establishing a means of quantifying the 'Depletion of human capacities' i.e. the underuse of women's skills, experience and qualification in the labour market?*

Key issues: Gender Neutrality and Gender Blindness

- Macroeconomic policy and Macroeconomic institutions

- Gender and the 'structures of constraint'
- Making visible the invisible – paid v's unpaid work

Gender equality remains outside economic initiatives on growth, innovation and competitiveness; isolated from top policy priority areas of economic growth - this includes the EU policies including Cohesion Policy as well as macroeconomic policy and strategy at member state level.

Women play a key role in member states economic growth both in terms of their direct contribution through work and in the social/reproductive contribution.

- *Women are a key source of labour and when we can fully acknowledge the link between gender equality and growth then it will no longer be seen as a cost but as an investment.*
- *We must ensure an explicit gendered perspective and dedicated equalities actions within macro-economic policy and institutions as this is key to achieving sustainable growth*
- *Gender budgeting of strategy, policy and implementation of EU funding programmes eliminates the need for mainstreaming activities further down the chain of policy and action*
- *Gender budgeting of strategy, policy and implementation of funding for public services, employability & employment initiatives and projects, enterprise programmes supports economic and social cohesion.*

9. Open discussion

Irene

- Develop briefing papers with key policy recommendations for parliamentary committees so it can be used to interrogate ministers
- Key policy recommendations: draft and circulate to participants for suggestions and additions and the final report will be circulated
- *Women's resource centres: is this the missing link? For previous similar organisations (e.g. Fife centre) there was no opportunity to lobby and influence government and policy makers (this wasn't necessarily their area of expertise). Sweden has the structure and direct channel of influence to government.*

Emma

- Need to use the language of 'excellent work of partner states' but acknowledge we have a different political architecture – any development of WRC in Scotland needs to be open and unrestricted in structure to respond to specific regional issues and priorities
- Need to continue with horizontal themed projects as started but make room for vertical themed funding

Jackie

- *There is not enough qualitative statistics and data for the Region. There importance in study to underpin this work: Scotland has a high percentage of women in self-employment but we don't know anything about them. EU funding should stipulate the need for clear quantitative and qualitative gender disaggregated data.*

Muriel

- *W8 needs to focus on areas where they can have most influence over i.e. the draft ROPs (Ltd or no opportunity to influence structural funds regulations)*

Geraldine

- *We need to develop key indicators of gender mainstreaming within our area of influence and 'gender mainstreaming' still needs an agreed definition as part of that*