



City of Celje



European Programme for Urban Sustainable Development

URBACT II

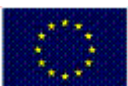
THEMATIC POLE: CITIES, ENGINES OF GROWTH AND JOB CREATION

WEED

WOMEN, ENTERPRISE AND EMPLOYMENT IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

BASELINE REPORT

September 2008



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I. Overview

This project seeks to establish a thematic network of 9 Cities and 9 Regions and develop an integrated exchange programme relating to the theme of “Women, Enterprise and Employment in Local Development”. The project is part of the URBACT II European Programme that fosters the exchange of experience among European cities and the capitalisation-dissemination of knowledge on all issues related to sustainable urban development. Its central premise is:

“To improve the effectiveness of sustainable integrated urban development policies in Europe with a view to implementing the European Lisbon-Gothenburg Strategy (Priority to Competitiveness, Growth and Jobs)”.

It aims to draw on the experience and best practice of URBACT partners, draw conclusions from their experiences and assist city policy-makers, practitioners and managers of operational programmes to define action plans for local urban sustainable development practices and policies.

Policy Context

There are a number of contextual factors relating to the theme that underpin this proposal:

- The EU as well as the partner cities and regions outside the EU have recognised that gender equality can make a major contribution to economic growth, prosperity and competitiveness in cities. In the developed world increasing numbers of economists are recognising that the increase in female employment has been a major driving force of growth in the past two decades (Economist 2006¹). Some economists would go so far as to argue that women could be seen to have contributed more to global GDP growth than either new technology or the new economic growth giants of China and India. Outside the EU research has also shown that women can be key partners to economic development (Murthy et al, 2008²). It is essential that such potential be realised locally.
- Addressing gender equality in employment affairs and releasing this potential is an important theme in the EU. A fundamental principle of the European Union, it was enshrined early in the EC Treaty as well as appearing as one of the Community’s objectives. The Barcelona European Council of 15/16 March 2002 stated that Member States should remove disincentives to female labour force participation; the Spring European Council of 2006 stressed that policies and programmes on gender equality are essential instruments for economic growth, well being and competitiveness. In order to fully employ the potential of the European workforce, the Council stressed, moreover, how it is essential to promote women’s long-term participation in the labour market and in the business field. In fact, gender equality is one of the key horizontal themes of the European Strategy for Growth and Jobs. The Strategy for Growth and Jobs is the key shared policy platform for the development of the European Union and the well being of its citizens.
- Unfortunately, whilst there are examples of effective ways of developing women’s potential to contribute to growth that have occurred as a result of EU commitment its achievement remains slow and in many ways is compromised by the various and numerous obstacles women still encounter in the job market and business creation field at local level. This is reinforced by a report from the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2007)³ which states that the success of the strategy for growth and jobs continues to depend on the involvement and contribution of both men and women across the Union and the achievement of gender equality is key to unlocking this involvement and contribution. It recommends that the centrality of gender to the success of the Strategy for Growth and Jobs be given greater recognition. Since the Lisbon

1 Economist (2006) *Finance And Economics: A guide to womenomics; Women and the world economy* The Economist. London: Apr 15, 2006. Vol. 379, Iss. 8473; pg. 80

2 Murthy .i K., J Sagayam J., Nair R.S. (2008) ‘Gender, efficiency, poverty reduction, and empowerment: reflections from an agriculture and credit programme in Tamil’ *Gender & Development* Volume 16 Issue 1

3 Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (May 2007) *Opinion on the Revision of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs*.



Strategy actually defined targets in terms of participation rates for women in the labour market and entrepreneurship development and the more recent European Roadmap to Equality 2006-2010 stresses the need for targets and activities to promote the economic independence of men and women it is crucial at this stage to explore what assists the effective and equitable economic involvement of men and women at local level and how supporting women can be incorporated into local economic growth and job creation.

- In addition to overarching issues relating to women and European economic strategies there is every need to address these issues at local level. According to a scoping exercise endorsed by the Ministers for Spatial Development and the European Commission at the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Regional Policy and Territorial Cohesion, 20/21 May 2005 in Luxembourg⁴ a key political challenge for the Union at this moment is to become economically more competitive and dynamic at the same time as maintaining and developing social and economic cohesion. Urban revitalisation has a key part to play in this. If Europe is to benefit from more than the dynamism of metropolitan areas such as London, Hamburg, Munich, Milan and Paris then cities, small and medium as well as large cities need to be supported as motors for development, they play a key role in strengthening territorial cohesion in the light of the Lisbon aims. Understanding how gender affects urban revitalisation and supporting further developments to develop the underused potential of women in small and medium sized urban areas can address two major themes of EU policy.

Aims, Objectives and Expected results

Given the above contextual background, this project has the overall aim of assisting Cities and Regions (Managing Authorities) to examine whether a programme of action to redress women's underdeveloped role in economic development within small to medium sized cities is possible and to consider how to develop and extend good practice that could do so. From the very beginning strong links have been built between its partners, with the overall aim of facilitating transfer of actions/ideas that actively address and improve practice in relation to the issues of women, entrepreneurship and employment within their regional operational programmes.

To realise this overall aim the 6 month development phase had the following objectives:

1. Extend Partnership in order to incorporate 5 additional partners.
2. Produce the European and local mapping of realities and needs in the field of women, enterprise and employment.
3. Conduct analysis of the produced mappings
4. Develop Phase II Proposal
5. Complete contractual requirements of the project.

Project partners

The partnership brings together 10 cities and their managing authorities, covering 10 European countries from competitiveness and convergence regions:

Partner	Country
1. Celje- Lead Partner	Slovenia
2. Enna	Italy

⁴ ESPON (2005) *Scoping document and summary of political messages for an assessment of the territorial state and perspectives of the European Union towards a stronger European territorial cohesion in the light of the Lisbon and Gothenburg ambitions.*



3. Crotone	Italy
4. Santiago	Spain
5. Umea	Sweden
6. Karvina	Czech Republic
7. Amiens	France
8. Alzira	Spain
9. Medway	UK

Development phase action plan

ACTION	WHO	Deadline
Establish initial partnership	Celje with support of potential partners	
Write declaration of interest form and submit	Celje with support of potential partners	
Secure participation of five additional partners	Celje with support of potential partners	June 2008
Prepare and agree template for local scoping reports	Thematic expert and all partners	June 2008
Hold first steering group meeting	All partners	June 2008
Recruitment of expert to conduct local mapping of priority needs and issues	All partners	June 2008
First draft of local mapping to be sent to City of Celje and Thematic expert	All partners	July 2008
Feed back on the draft mapping report by thematic expert	Thematic expert	August 2008
Revised version of mapping reports to be sent to City of Celje and thematic expert	All partners	August 2008
Second feedback on the revised version of mapping report by thematic expert	Thematic expert	Aug 2008
Final version local mapping reports to be sent to City of Celje and thematic experts	All partners	Sept 2008
Development of a common methodological framework and definition of outputs and activities of phase 2	All partners	Sept 2008
Finalisation of a format of local action plan for phase 2	With input from partners	September 2008
Hold second steering group meeting	All partners	September 2008



II. The State of the Art: European Mapping

Introduction

A mapping exercise was undertaken for the project at both European Union and city/regional level. Its purpose was to review existing knowledge, policy and networks working on the issue of cities, women, enterprise and employment and establish the areas in which the WEED project could build. According to Room (2005) ⁵mapping or benchmarking for the purpose of policy learning and innovation is an essential element of the Lisbon Agenda. It is a means of coordinating and enriching policy debate at different levels, from top to bottom and bottom to top.

At the *European Union level* the mapping was aimed at providing partners with a brief overview of

- How the role of cities and city regions in driving economic growth is being explored in Europe and how the approach could be extended to examine what women could bring to a city economy.
- The main policy instruments that underlie any analysis of gender, economic growth and regional development.
- How the EU agenda is addressing gendered employment and pay gaps at local level and how policy and funding streams at European level could be drawn on to help reduce those barriers.
- How supporting women's involvement in economic development, particularly entrepreneurship, has provided lessons for local economic growth and urban regeneration and could be developed.

Sources used for the review are footnoted but include the following major European Commission reports and policy papers and OECD reports. Further academic research is referenced in the text.

- European Commission (2005) Communication to the Spring European Council: Working together for growth and jobs. A new start for the Lisbon Strategy (2005)
- European Commission (2003) Communication: Innovation Policy: Updating the Union's approach in the context of the Lisbon strategy COM (2003) 585 final, Brussels: euro commission
- European Commission Communication from the Commission: Regions For Economic Change COM (2006) 675 final
- European Commission (2005) Communication 'Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme – Modern SME Policy for Growth and Employment'. COM (2005) 551 final of 10.11.2005.
- Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2007) Opinion on the Revision of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs.
- European Commission (2008) Report on equality between women and men -2008. European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
- European Commission (2005) Roadmap for equality between men and women 2006-10
- European Commission (2007) Gender inequalities in the risks of poverty and social exclusion for disadvantaged groups in thirty European countries.
- European Commission (2003) Conclusions of Informal Ministerial Meeting on "Gender and Information Society" Athens, 6 May 2003
- European Commission (2007) Changing European Gender Relations: Gender Equality Policy Concerning Employment and the Labour Market. Policy Synthesis of EU Research Results. Series No. 6. European Commission. European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship (WES) Activities Report 2006 European Commission (2008) Gender Mainstreaming of Employment policies: a review of 30 European Countries. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
- European Commission (2006), A Roadmap for equality between men and women 2006-10, European Commission, Brussels
- European Commission (2006) She Figures 2006: Women and Science, Statistics and Indicators. Brussels. European Commission, Directorate General for Research.
- European Council (2000) Lisbon European Council, Presidency Conclusion. Lisbon: European Council

⁵ G Room et al (2005) *The European Challenge : Innovation, policy learning and social cohesion in the knowledge economy*. Bristol, Policy Press.



- European Council (2006) Community strategic guidelines on economic, social and territorial cohesion, 2007-2013. 2006/702/EC. Luxembourg: European Council
- Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2008) GEM Global Report on Women and Entrepreneurship. London, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor.
- OECD (2001) The New Economy: Beyond the Hype, Paris: OECD
- OECD (2006) Competitive Cities in the Global Economy, Paris: OECD

Local mapping was carried out in order to assess the current situation facing each city/region. The mapping was undertaken by each partner, supported by members of the LSG. It comprised a review of the current position of women, current actions and services, and stakeholders' priorities in relation to the three sub-themes identified by the project:

- **Women's position in the local labour market**
- **Women and the knowledge economy**
- **Women and entrepreneurial activity.**

To do this an agreed template (Annexe 1) was produced and each partner appointed a local expert to conduct the mapping exercise and produce a report for which they received feedback from the thematic expert until a final version had been completed (Annexe 2). The results of the local mappings were presented by the expert at the second steering group meeting in September 2008. The mapping exercise comprised desk based research, one to one interviews and local consultation with key stakeholders. It provided an opportunity for cities and managing authorities to work together and identify areas of common interest and commitment.



Europe, women and city economies

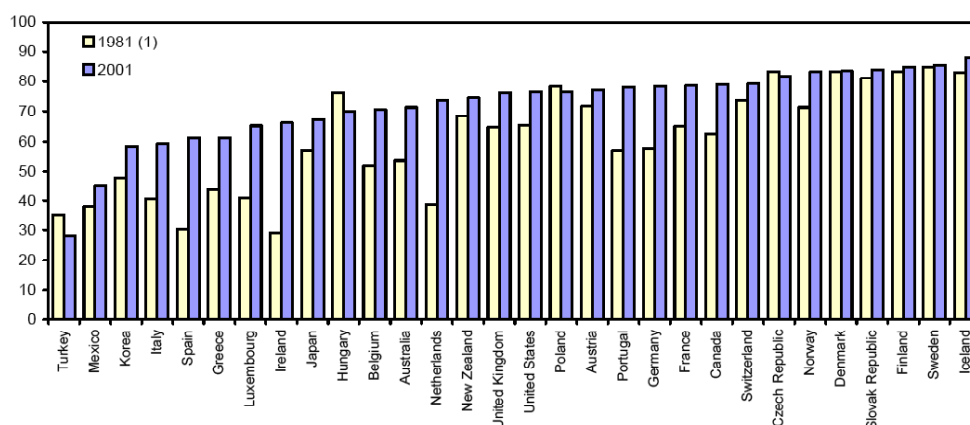
Why change is needed

The Lisbon strategy stresses the need for actions in Europe to achieve strong competitiveness in combination with other features such as social stability, integration and cohesion. Balancing a commitment to gender equality alongside a commitment to competitiveness and economic growth is part of this agenda and the full integration of women and men into the economy at the local level is a topic of significant interest for EU Member States. The ageing of the population in many areas, demands for part time and flexible workers alongside the expansion of new sectors (including labour intensive sectors) have accompanied a growing demand for the participation of women in economic activity at national and local levels. Gender specific employment policies, demands by women themselves and by governmental and non governmental agencies as well as the impact of smaller families and increasing levels of education amongst women have reinforced such demands. Women's involvement in economic activity has become a key element of Europe's move to 'the most dynamic and competitive economy by 2010'. Assessing how far things have to change at local and national level to ensure the optimum benefit of such involvement entails, initially at least, an analysis of gaps and potential in three areas: the extent of women's paid work, their engagement in the learning and research that can contribute to economic growth and their role in entrepreneurial activity. Such an analysis is provided below.

Paid employment

It is clear that most OECD states have seen changes in women's participation in the labour force. In Europe, however, the picture is not a simple one: national and local circumstances affect rates quite significantly. Looking first to national differences there is no single pattern of women's employment in Europe. It varies, for example, between historically low rates in Italy and historically high rates in Sweden and Iceland. Nevertheless figures from the OECD show marked changes during the last twenty years and a narrowing of cross-country differences. Significant increases, for example, occurred in Italy, Spain, Netherlands and Ireland between 1981 and 2001 at the same time as slight decreases in participation in post Soviet countries such as Hungary and the Czech Republic.

Figure 1: Labour force participation rates of women aged 25-54, 1981 and 2001



1. 1983 for Greece and Luxembourg, 1986 for New Zealand, 1988 for Turkey, 1991 for Switzerland, Iceland, and Mexico, 1992 for Hungary and Poland, 1993 for the Czech Republic, 1994 for Austria and the Slovak Republic.

Source: OECD Labour Market Statistics.

Change, then, is occurring. The gender employment gap, defined as the difference in the employment rate between men and women, is clearly falling in all countries listed below. On average, it nearly halved between 1980, from 30 per cent to 16.7 per cent by the year 2000. An interesting feature of the change is the fact that the fall in the gender gap was mainly due to the rising female employment rate in all countries in newer jobs, very often locally specific, rather than a



shift in those areas where men were traditionally employed⁶. Closer examination (Table 3) shows however, that despite this narrowing of the gender employment gap the potential contribution of women to economies is underdeveloped in a number of member countries and there remains much that needs to be done to produce the level and type of change that the Lisbon Strategy demanded.

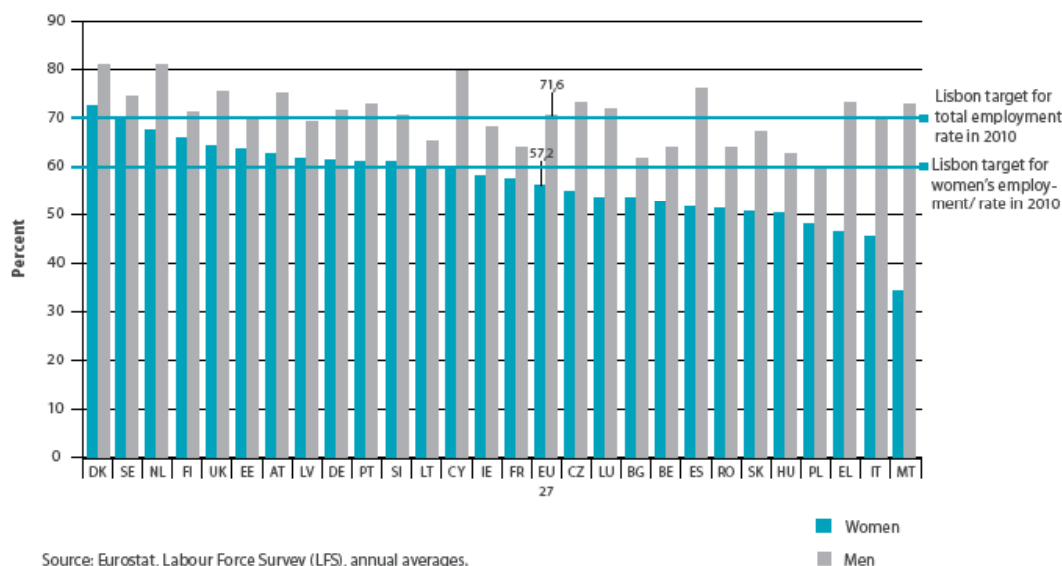
Table 1: Comparative female Employment Rates 1960-2000 (persons aged 15-64)

		1960	1980	2000	Men, 2000	Lisbon distance (a)
Nordic		40.5	64.3	70.3	78.6	10.3
	Denmark	42.7	66.2	71.2	80.4	11.2
	Finland	54.9	65.0	64.3	69.7	4.3
	Norway	26.1	58.4	73.4	88.1	13.4
	Sweden	38.1	67.6	72.1	76.2	12.1
Anglo Saxon		43.1	54.5	65.2	79.3	5.2
	United Kingdom	43.1	54.5	65.2	79.3	5.2
Mediterranean			30.8	40.1	69.7	-19.9
	Greece		30.7	40.4	70.2	-19.6
	Italy	28.1	33.2	39.7	68.5	-20.3
	Spain	21.0	28.4	40.3	70.3	-19.7
Rest of Europe			41.0	56.6	74.4	-3.4
	Austria		52.4	59.3	78.1	-0.7
	Belgium	29.6	35.0	51.1	69.8	-8.9
	France	42.9	50.0	53.1	68.1	-6.9
	Germany	35.0	34.8	58.1	73.5	-1.9
	Ireland		32.2	52.2	74.0	-7.8
	Netherlands		35.7	62.1	81.1	2.1
	Portugal		47.1	60.1	75.9	0.1
North America			53.1	66.6	77.8	
	United States	39.5	53.9	68.0	80.4	
	Canada		52.3	65.1	75.2	
Average				58.6	75.2	

Notes

- (a) Lisbon distance is the percentage difference between the female employment rate in 2000 and 60 per cent
 (b) source: OECD 2000

Figure 2: Employment rates (men and women 15-64) in EU Member States 2006



⁶ C Pissarides, P Garibaldi, C Olivetti, B Petrongolo and E Wasmer (2004) 'Women in the Labour Force: How Well is Europe Doing?' in *Women at Work: An Economic Perspective*, edited by T Boeri, D Del Boca and C Pissarides, A Report for the Fondazione Rodolfo De Benedetti, Oxford University Press

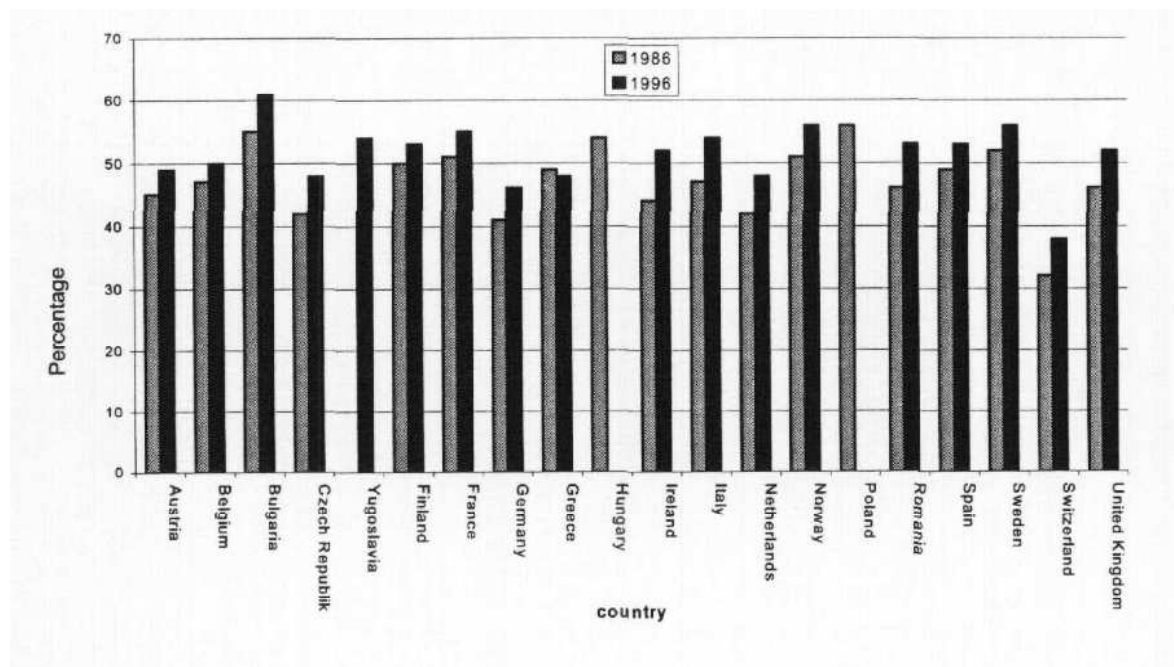


The difference in women's paid employment between countries is demonstrated quite markedly in both Table 1 and 2. Some nations appear to be far closer to achieving the Lisbon target of 70 per cent of women in paid employment by 2010. There can be little doubt that the European Commission and Members of the European Union are committed to the Lisbon goal of increased employment and there is every reason to believe that transnational learning could enhance local strategies for change. It's not quite so clear, however, whether changes in paid employment and a closing of the gender employment gap will bring significant additional income to households if the jobs are low skilled. In fact the Commission's 2008 report *Equality between Men and Women* concluded that whilst the Strategy for Jobs and Growth has created more jobs for women in the EU a gender pay gap, labour market segregation and difficulties of work/ life balance remain significant challenges. Many would argue that education and training have a major part to play to ensure that women as well as the economy gain from change and in the next section we examine how far women are accessing the type of education that would ensure they offer more to a local economy than a source of flexible and cheap labour.

Higher education, training and research

Universities are attracting more and more women. Figure 3 shows how female students are increasingly likely to be in the majority⁷. The significance at local economic level is that as universities attract more women and produce more women graduates they have a particular interest in working with local municipalities to ensure that their graduates can gain employment. In such a situation the relatively lower rate of geographic mobility amongst women can be presented positively: it can be a way of meeting local skills gaps more efficiently, enhance the University's local profile and build a greater capacity to attract knowledge intensive industries in a city. A recent Work Foundation study (2008)⁸ reported that cities are the place in which knowledge industries tend to locate and the fastest growth in knowledge workers has tended to be amongst women.

Figure 3: Percentage of female students in higher education 1986 and 1996: selected countries in Europe



Source: A Mischau 'Women in higher education in Europe - a statistical overview' *The International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*; 2001; 21, 1/2

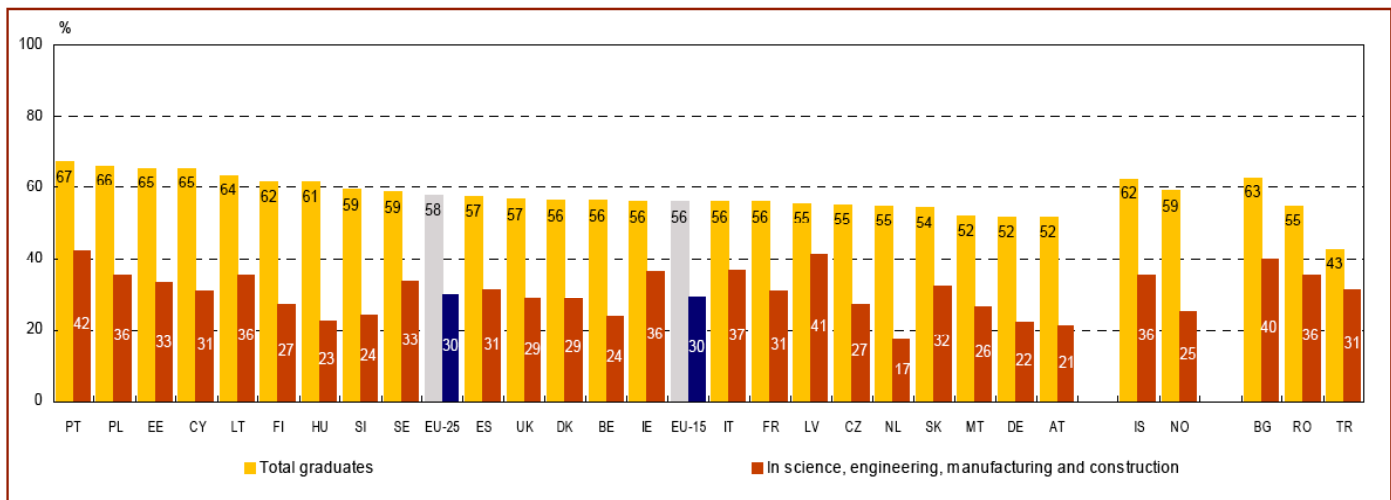
⁷ Education and Culture Directorate General (2007) Key Data on Education in Europe 2007. Eurydice and Eurostat

⁸ A Jones, N Lee, L Williams, Clayton, K Morris (2008) *How can cities thrive in the changing economy? Ideopolis Report*, London. Work Foundation.



However it is not all good news. The gender distribution of graduates is different for different subjects⁹ and across Europe there is a lack of gender balance in subjects that might lead to innovation and to women's capacity to earn higher income. Figure 4 below shows how women are significantly under-represented in scientific and engineering disciplines: there are more men than women graduating in science and engineering in every country. Portugal and Latvia come the closest to parity at 42% and 41%, respectively. But elsewhere, as in Belgium, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Hungary and Slovenia women account for less than a quarter of total Science & Engineering graduates.

Figure 4: Graduation from tertiary education in 2001: percentage of women



- EU-25 and EU-15 are estimated.
- Exceptions to the reference year — DK, FR, IT, FI, CY and HU: 2000 data.

The under-representation of women in science and technology is marked. Europe's position as a leading knowledge-based economy is reliant on mobilising its full capacity for innovation. However, while women students are well represented in higher education as a whole in the EU, they tend to dominate in the arts and social sciences and remain too few in scientific and technological fields. Encouraging women to study these subjects and subsequently follow careers in science and technology is on the policy agenda and there is some evidence of change¹⁰ but a further boost to Europe's research and development performance is still needed.

In research too the imbalance between men and women remains significant and increases the higher you get to the top. In fact it is clear that level of education is not the only factor that impacts on occupational level. According to EU statistics, "She Figures 2006", women make up more than 50% of EU students and earn 43% of EU doctoral degrees but on average only get to 15% of senior academic - and thereby research - decision-making positions. In some countries and in some disciplines, these percentages are even lower. Women also only make up 18% of the scientists in the private sector and, in the majority of the EU member states, only represent less than 20% on scientific boards and panels. This under-representation of women scientists could be described as the "leaky pipeline", particularly as in many member states they try to combine work and care without access to childcare. In many cases, though, it is also the result of the "glass ceiling": European research and European research policy is losing the potential of highly qualified women scientists. If we look closer at education and training we also see reasons for change that derive from a business case as well as one of fairness. With the pressure of an ageing population a number of key economic sectors traditionally dominated by men (like science, technology, engineering and construction) are experiencing shortages of skilled labour. There is a risk of exacerbating the skills gaps if women are not more encouraged to train in different sectors, or retrain

⁹ European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Report on equality between women and men 2008.

¹⁰ Eurostat (2004) Statistics in Focus: Science and Technology, Theme 9 – 6/2004 Women, science and technology: Measuring recent progress towards gender equality



on the job – change is needed in both vocational and on-the-job training needs to be improved¹¹. In a situation where the global market requires frequent adjustment of skills and knowledge to the changing demand under the influence of competition and evolving information technologies vocational training and lifelong learning is important. Employers most often provide this type of learning but is often more directed at higher-level workers and at men. There have been changes, often EU funded, but two problems remain. Firstly inadequate access remains a factor affecting women's employability in on-the-job training, particularly if they have taken time out of the labour market for caring responsibilities. It also appears that off-the-job training associated with European funded can actively contribute to a widening skill gap between women and men¹². Rees research showed that women only participated in any significant numbers in low cost, low level, short training courses while men were overwhelmingly the beneficiaries of longer term, transformative technical training involving placements which considerably enhanced their career prospects. What is needed, according to Rees and many other commentators, are strategic policy actions that challenge structures and systems as well as practice. It is time for a change.

Entrepreneurial activity

One of the greatest losses for a local economy of the poor representation of women in research and the higher levels of education is that their capacity for creating and implementing new economic ideas is restricted. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the field of entrepreneurial activities. Research points to a strong connection in much of Europe between increases in entrepreneurship amongst women with higher levels of education. Admittedly entrepreneurship is a difficult term to define and the myriad of definitions that do exist make it difficult to compare valid indicators across countries¹³ and even more difficult to assess the different experiences of men and women. Nevertheless economists and policy makers generally consider 'entrepreneurship is a 'good thing'. The Commission's own Green Paper *Entrepreneurship in Europe* argues that entrepreneurship is important to the European economy because: - it is increasingly new and small firms that are the major providers of job; new entrepreneurial initiatives can boost productivity; entrepreneurship can unlock personal potential; and entrepreneurial approaches can often enhance innovation and client orientation in health, education and welfare services¹⁴. There is also growing agreement that it is possible and useful to identify a framework of pragmatic measurement that would allow international comparison to be made and policy to be developed that would ensure that a more entrepreneurial economy achieves the end it is intended to by policy makers.

One framework that attempts to identify indicators of **entrepreneurial performance, determinants** of these levels and the **impact** of entrepreneurial activity is that of Ahmad and Hoffman in 2008 for the OECD Entrepreneurship Indicators Steering Group¹⁵. The indicators they identify include survival rate of new businesses and average firm size after 3 years for entrepreneurial performance; culture, access to finance and regulatory frameworks for determinants; and job creation and poverty reduction for impact. Many of these are already available, albeit in a different policy context, and examination of them points to some interesting international and gendered comparisons. We know, for example, that the incidence of self employed and business owners varies widely across Europe, from around 6 per cent in Denmark and Luxembourg to 13 per cent in Spain and 18 per cent in Portugal. And despite very different ways of measuring entrepreneurial performance across Europe data collected for the Enterprise Policy Scoreboard in 2004 (Table 2) show significant variations in entrepreneurial activity and policy intentions.

¹¹ Euractiv 'EU fails potential of highly qualified women scientists' accessed at <http://www.euractiv.com/en/science/eu-fails-potential-highly-qualified-women-scientists/article-166419>

¹² T Rees (1998) *Mainstreaming Equality in Training Policy in the EU*. Labour Market Studies, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol, Bristol.

¹³ N Ahmad and A Hoffman (2007) *A Framework for addressing and measuring entrepreneurship*. OECD : Paris.

¹⁴ European Commission (2003) *Green Paper . Entrepreneurship in Europe*. COM (2003) 27 pp 4-7

¹⁵ N Ahmad and A Hoffman (2007) *A Framework for addressing and measuring entrepreneurship*. OECD : Paris.

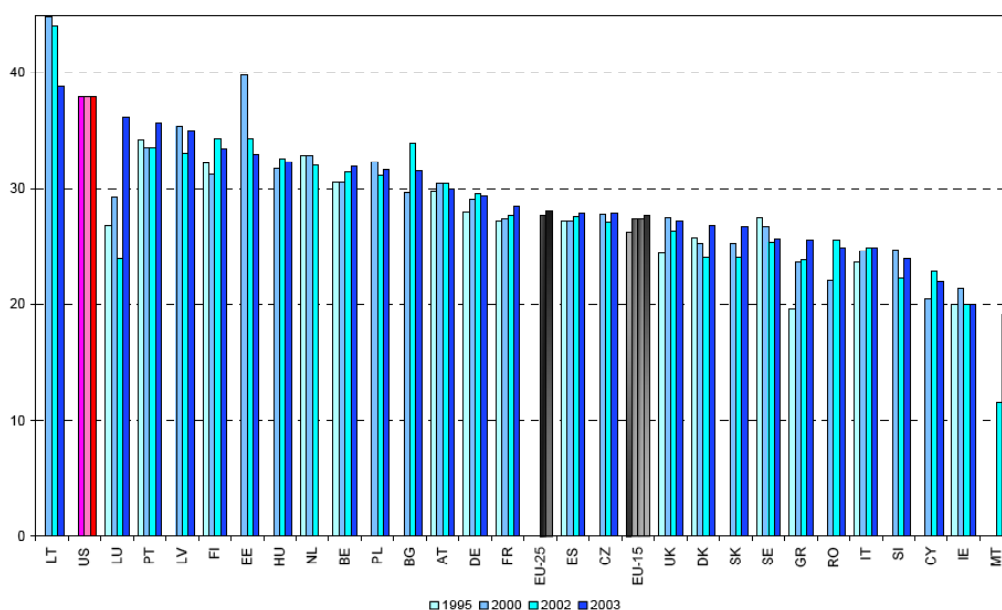


Table 2: Entrepreneurship targets and performance of member states, candidate countries and Norway 2004

Member State	Indicator	Actual performance (year)	Target (year)
A. Entrepreneurship			
France	New enterprises created per year	178,000 (2002), 186,350 (mid 2002-mid 2003), 221,000 (mid 2003-mid 2004)	220,000 (2007)
France	New enterprises supported by public incubators	964 (2000-2003)	865 (2000-2003), 791 (2004-2006)
Ireland	Real birth rates of high potential start ups	48 (1999), 51 (2002)	520 (accumulated) (2006)
Ireland	Business incubators per million employed	37 (2002)	71 (2006)
Latvia	Number of enterprises per 1000 inhabitants	18 (2002) (EU15 = 40-60)	19 (2004), 30 (2010)
Malta	New enterprises created through public incubators	2 (Oct 02 – Sept 03), 12 (Oct 03 – Sept 04)	10 (Oct 04 – Sept 05)
Malta	Business Incubators per million employed	8.2 (Dec 02), 8.3 (Dec 03)	8.3 (Dec 05)
Malta	Businesses per million capita	2.6 (Dec 03)	2.6 (Dec 05)
Netherlands	Enterprises as % of working class	10.9 %	To be among top5 in EU15 (2010)
Netherlands	Number of start-ups per year	44,000 (2003)	More start-ups, EU15 average (2008)
Netherlands	Share of fast growing enterprises among medium-sized enterprises	9 % (1998-2001)	Average of US, UK, DK, B, DE (2010)
Romania	Number of new created companies	123,838 (2003)	760,000 (cumulative from 2004-2008)
Romania	Number of jobs created per incubator	Under EU average	41 per incubator annually, starting from 2005
Slovakia	Number of enterprise incubators	9 (2003)	22 (2007)
Slovenia	New enterprises per year	8,760 (2002), 9,274 (2003)	10,500 (2007)
Slovenia	Number of people considering to go into business		Raise
Sweden	Number of real start-ups	144,175 (1998-2001)	150,000 (2003-2006)
Sweden	Number of self-employed	357,600 (2001), 353,400 (2002), 346,500 (2003)	380,000 (2006)
UK	Proportion of people considering to go into business	11.3 % (2003)	Raise

Source: Appendix A, Benchmarking enterprise policy: results from the 2004 Scoreboard. European Commission SEC (2004) 1427

The same Scoreboard commented in 2004 “Despite general female labour market participation rates approaching 60%, the pool of female entrepreneurial talent is still under-utilised.” Certainly data support this comment. The Global Enterprise Monitor *2007 Report on Women and Enterprise*¹⁶ identifies a significant gender gap for both early stage entrepreneurial participation and established business ownership, and this gender gap is most pronounced in high-income countries. Across much of Europe men are shown to be almost twice as likely to be early stage or established business owners than women. Women are far less likely than men to consider self-employment and as the Figure 5 below shows this is a picture reproduced across much of Europe.

Figure 5: Female self employment in industry and services as % of self employment

Source: EUROSTAT (2004), Community Labour Force Survey; and for the US (2002 data): OECD (2003), Labour Force Survey.

¹⁶ Global Enterprise Monitor (GEM) (2007) *Report on Women and Enterprise*



Despite this rather dismal picture there is some more positive evidence. The GEM report, for example, shows there is no gender difference in the survival rate of women's businesses versus those of men in high-income countries. Indeed in one Finnish study presented in the GEM report there is strong evidence that female corporate leadership and female representation on corporate boards are significantly positively linked to several measures of firm profitability. There is also evidence of growing potential for women entrepreneurs in particular localities and amongst SMEs¹⁷. The OECD, for example, has reported¹⁸ that women entrepreneurs constitute a growing share of SME owners, with higher than average start-up rates in several OECD Member and non-member countries, and in some cities more than others. Finding out the determinants of such behaviour and performance is essential if local economies are to benefit. A conclusion with which OECD's in 2001 concurred: -

“Eliminating obstacles to the creation and development of firms by women and creating a level playing field for women business owners is vital for a thriving entrepreneurial sector and important for national growth strategies. Women business owners are creating new niches for entrepreneurial activity and have the potential to become key players in the new, knowledge-based economy.” (OECD (2001 p81)

Why change – summary of findings

From the review so far we have a picture that shows women potentially have much to contribute to the European Strategy for Growth and Jobs but that the current position is one in which:

- Women's involvement in economic activity outside the home has been changing over the last three decades but a gendered gap exists in many sectors of employment, in the access to and uptake of education relevant to European economic policy, and in levels of entrepreneurial performance. All three gaps mean that women's potential is underutilised in many countries of the EU.
- This represents a problem insofar as the employment rate for women is not yet as high as that set by the Lisbon Strategy, differs quite markedly between different Member States and even when achieved seldom produces the quality of jobs that women despite increases in quantity
- Whilst women's education and training levels have gone up in all Member states their involvement in research and in a knowledge based or knowledge intensive economy has not gone up proportionately. Even with increased numbers of women graduates women are still overrepresented in low-paid and low-status jobs, and under-represented in high status jobs including the scientific and technical jobs central to the 'Knowledge Economy';
- Entrepreneurship is important to the European economy but women's entrepreneurial activity tends to be less innovative and involves smaller businesses than men's despite evidence to suggest that focusing on the determinants of their non involvement could produce a boost to the very types of enterprise where women could excel.

In the next section we examine whether policies designed to address urban economic change and equalities are ones in which these problems are being addressed as well as examining what still needs to be addressed.

¹⁷ R Barrett and J Burgess 'Small firms and the challenge of equality, diversity and difference' *Equal Opportunities International*. Vol 27 pp.213-220

¹⁸ OECD (2001) Women Entrepreneurs in SMEs: Realising the Benefits of Globalisation and the Knowledge-based Economy



Current Policy Directions: strengths and weaknesses

We examine here whether the problem areas identified above are being addressed in current European policy and whether they could be explored further in the European context. Two key areas of policy are discussed, urban policy and equalities policy, in effort to see whether there are any lessons for the issue most central to WEED's work i.e. women's potential to contribute to and benefit from an urban focused approach to jobs and growth. The section comprises an examination of: -

- How policy and innovation supporting cities and city regions role in economic growth is being explored in Europe and whether there is a problem of non-inclusion of a gender perspective.
- How policy and innovation in the EU addresses gendered employment and pay gaps and whether problems of non-integration between gender equality policy and a local 'growth and jobs ' agenda exist.

Cities as centres of growth and job creation - what about the women?

In the past older cities were seen as sites of economic and social problems. Such a view, however, is declining. Across Europe governments are increasingly likely to view cities as having the potential for renewed economic dynamism and as places that can help resolve many social challenges^{19 20 21}. According to Turok and Mykhnenko²² the reasons for this changed attitude is that cities are seen to offer distinct advantages employers, employees and residents.

For employers and investors the advantages of cities include:

- A pool of well-qualified labour that can be drawn on to expand the newer, more productive sectors of industry.
- A pool of less qualified labour that can support the newer industries and the new markets of revamped 'consumer cities'²³
- A continual flow of new ideas: firms and research centres can swap and share ideas and experience leading to greater innovation and more effective skill sets.

For employees and residents of cities the potential advantages include:

- A vibrant centre of retail, entertainment and hospitality that can make a city a more pleasant place to live in than suburbs.
- A centre of employment opportunities that smooth the more flexible employment contracts of more globalised economies.

Although there is not a vast amount of research examining whether this view of cities is one that is actually experienced or could be achieved (i.e. whether cities do add a further dynamic to local economic growth) there is some. For example, Turok and Mykhnenko's carried out an analysis of 152 cities across Europe, using the Cambridge Econometrics European Regional data to explore evidence for resurgence in cities over the last twenty years. Their analysis shows that most cities (although unfortunately not many German cities) are much better off in terms of economic production than 25 years ago. Their analysis shows similar increases in employment. The optimism of policy makers seems to be borne out. However the picture is not quite so simple. Rates of increase in income are not as great suggesting that the 'knowledge intensive' employment is not driving changes as much as many would hope. And population increases are also lower than production increases so do not fully bear out the idea of cities as comparatively attractive centres of work and living.

¹⁹ OECD (2006) *Competitive Cities in the Global Economy*, OECD

²⁰ European Commission(EC) (2006) *Cohesion Policy and cities: the urban contribution to growth and jobs*.

²¹ Communication from the Commission to the Council and Parliament: EC (2007) *State of European Cities*. Directorate-General Regional Policy.

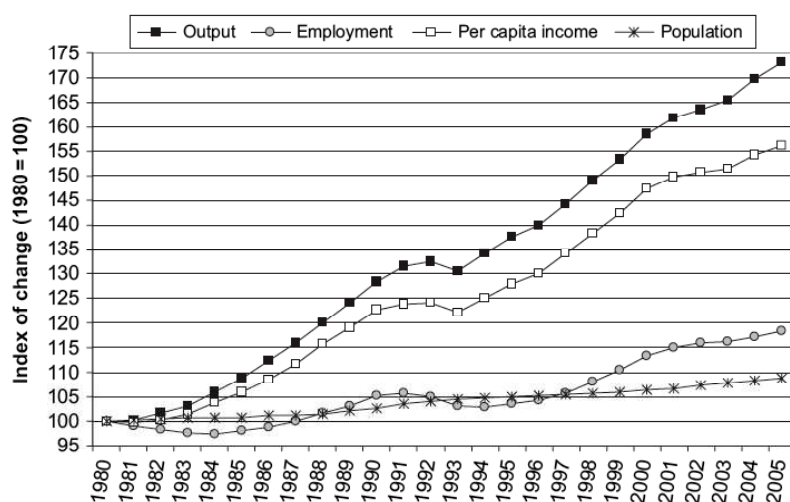
²² I Turok and V Mykhnenko (2008) 'Resurgent Cities', *Urban Research and Practice*, 1:1, 54-77

²³ C Pissarides, P Garibaldi, C Olivetti, B Petrongolo and E Wasmer (2004) op cit



Many of the changes they identify in city economies could be due to global and national economic cycles but Turok and Mykhnenko's analysis shows that some cities are growing faster than others, even in the same country. Cities in the UK, Finland and Sweden, for example, have experienced the greatest positive change in Europe but within these countries there are some that have grown and others that have seen a slowdown (e.g. Bristol vs. Luton in the UK).

Figure 1. Growth trajectories of West European cities, 1980–2005.



Source: 'Resurgent Cities', *Urban Research and Practice*, 1:1, 54-77

Quantitative research of this type is very valuable but if change is to be promoted then we need to understand what produces the differences: what factors and processes are important, what works and what doesn't. These are huge questions for municipalities and governments and it has to be admitted that there is little available research into the drivers of change on a comparative basis. We have some quantitative data – the European Urban Audit, the Cambridge Regional Data but across Europe there is a growing need to explore the processes and the impact of EC programmes on the dynamics of city economies. Much of the URBACT programme is designed to do exactly this – to explore and establish what processes work and which policy terrain holds the most potential for producing growth, or at least preventing the lower growth rates of cities such as Liege and Bremen. It is not being suggested that analysis has not occurred. There have been evaluations of community level and national programmes but at city and city region level there are gaps. These include, for example, analysing how and whether the knowledge base of a city will really lead to higher quality growth and how and whether investment in small scale/ bottom up entrepreneurial activity can have a long-term citywide impact.

One surprising gap, however, has been the lack of connection between analyses of city economic development and the role of men and women in that development. This is surprising insofar as the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (2007)²⁴ states, "The success of the strategy for growth and jobs continues to depend on the involvement and contribution of both men and women across the Union and the achievement of gender equality is key to unlocking this involvement and contribution."

Policy and research on women and development have seldom addressed issues of women and city/ city region development: they have tended to concentrate on either women's participation in decision making or on the promotion and impact of women in highly localised settings. There are, though, a number of reasons even on a cursory review why this needs to be redressed: -

- Where there is a knowledge intensive sector in a city then the share of low paying jobs for women tends to fall and the share of better paying jobs increases²⁵. Women's uptake of higher education is significant but

²⁴ Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (May 2007) *Opinion on the Revision of the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs*

²⁵ R Fauth & I Brinkley. (2006) *Labour market polarisation and labour market efficiency: The Work Foundation*, London



the higher rates of unemployment amongst women graduates in many cities suggests women could make a greater contribution to the knowledge intensive industries that the Lisbon strategy emphasises and a higher rate of growth in income achieved for them.

- Women's labour market participation is extremely high where female friendly sectors are developed: sectors such as retailing, restaurants and hotels i.e. the essential parts of the 'consumer city' that attracts population and investment in a city.
- For many women the capacity to work depends very strongly on developing local services that are often the responsibility of citywide agencies – services that both support them and employ them such as childcare and community care. Finding the workers to fill these sectors often needs local solutions. In London, for example, the low rate of female employment is explained in part by the long 'travel to work time' and lack of access to highly local jobs and a local service economy²⁶. Small to medium sized cities may not experience the same issues but changing aspects such as these could increase the dynamic of a city.
- The capacity to support women's entrepreneurial capacity tends to be at regional or highly localised level. Few support and developmental programmes relating to women are operated nation-wide so that if change is to be achieved then a local focus is needed but one that encompasses citywide needs as well as those at community level. Locally based activities that have tackled women's entry to the labour market, business start up issues and regeneration is illustrated in the Equal San Cosme project near Barcelona. This was a joint initiative involving a large financial institution based in Barcelona, local social services, and employment services. It involved co-ordinated activities within and beyond a highly localised area and was designed to increase employability, combine micro financing and business support to support self employment as a way out of social exclusion and increase access to new technology for women that would enable them to become employed or become self employed. Its success was highly dependent on the engagement and empowerment of local residents as well as local and city region regeneration agencies, banks and employers²⁷.

Redressing this gap may not be so difficult if gender equality is integrated with urban policy and specifically the Jobs and Growth agenda. We have seen here how urban policy has seldom addressed the issue. In the next section we examine the EU equality agenda and whether integration is achieved by that means.

Gendered employment and pay gaps – integration with a 'growth and jobs' agenda?

EU policy in relation to equal opportunities can be seen to have progressed in three stages: the 1970s was characterised by legislation for equal treatment, the 1980s by positive action intervention and the 1990s by mainstreaming. Each represents a distinct strategy for approaching the issue of equality that has been at the heart of EU legislation and policy for the last fifty years.

Equal treatment as a principle was enshrined in the Treaty of Rome: it is a principle rooted in the idea of treating all citizens the same. It wasn't until the 1970s and 1980s though that the member states took the idea seriously – introducing a series of Equal Treatment Directives and an equality organisation to ensure the new laws were enforced and equality promoted. Some talk of this period of legislative change as the 'tinkering' phase – tidying up the legislation and procedures for equal treatment. Positive action programmes characterised the 1980s and 1990s, largely in the form of training and employment projects for women returners, women wanting to study new technologies and women wanting to set up their own businesses. The programmes were introduced by the European Commission to address the disadvantages experienced by women in the labour market and were seen to be essential because equal treatment had seldom assured equal outcome. The programmes were often very successful at incorporating women into the newer sectors of city economies but, nevertheless, they were often piecemeal and precariously funded. All too often there were

²⁶ Mayor of London (2002) *London Divided: Income Inequality and Poverty in the Capital*. London: Greater London Authority

²⁷ G Scott (2007) 2nd Peer Review Workshop, Women and Local Development Case Studies. <http://www.qec-eran.org/projects/womenlocaldevprew.htm#prew2>



no mechanisms for grafting good practice that was developed onto mainstream provision. The third phase, mainstreaming, was developed as the EC recognised that granting women the legal right to equal treatment and funding add on positive action was insufficient to address the intractable problems of women's underemployment, low economic activity and lack of skills in many member states. It was defined as: -

'Gender mainstreaming involves not restricting efforts to promote equality to the implementation of specific measures to help women, but mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality by actively and openly taking into account at the planning stage their possible effects on the respective situation of men and women (gender perspective). This means systematically examining measures and policies and taking into account such possible effects when defining and implementing them' (European Commission 1996).

The institutionalisation of mainstreaming – the systematic integration of equal opportunity into all policies, programmes and projects- together with positive action has now become (officially at least) a central element of the EC's approach to gender inequality. The change in EC approaches partly explains the incorporation of a gender focused project in the URBACT programme and the Strategy for Growth and Jobs but there is much that needs to be done. Pissarides et al. note that increases in employment at the level proposed by the Lisbon Strategy depend heavily on the capacity of local markets to create jobs that women can fill at all levels: real increases in women's access to jobs and to jobs that close the gender pay gap depend heavily on local situations. Making sure that any change addresses the complexity of equality issues is a key issue for any of those interested in sustainable change. It is not just about increasing the number of jobs, quality is important and analysis of structural causes rather than separate initiatives are important. Whilst, for example, it is true that the numbers of women entering the labour market and self employment is increasing, there is worrying evidence that women's access to as wide a range of jobs as men and access to jobs or self employment in cities is limited. According to figures issued by Eurostat in 2004 more women than men work in the science and technology sectors in the majority of EU Member States but only a minority of these women hold science and engineering posts. Female participation in research is particularly low across the EU, representing just 18 per cent in the private sector and 35 per cent in the public sector. More women may graduate from university, but their figures on the senior level stagnate at around 15 %, according to the European Commission's *She Figures 2006*²⁸: worrying when Europe is estimated to need an extra half a million researchers to meet the EU's Lisbon goals of becoming the world's most competitive knowledge-based economy. Women are simply not filling these posts quickly enough. The balance between access and availability of different types of jobs for a city's economy is a critical one if women's potential contribution is to be realised. Mainstreaming is one way to approach the issue as it encourages analysis, assessment of policy impact and redesign of policy.

The *Gender Impact Assessment of the 5th Framework Programme on the Provision of Innovation and Encouragement of participation of SMEs (ISME)* provides some clear evidence on why mainstreaming is needed in the enterprise and employment field. The impact assessment (carried out before mainstreaming was introduced) examined firstly what was known about the participation and barriers to participation of women (as owners, entrepreneurs and managers) in companies with less than 250 employees but more than 10 (i.e. it excluded micro enterprises). Secondly it examined how far the ISME programme addressed these barriers. The specific barriers affecting women entrepreneurs that the researchers identified from their literature search were lack of access to finance, lack of financial know how to expand business, lack of role models, inadequacy of information and difficulties of balancing family and business. They found that the ISME programme (established before gender mainstreaming was adopted by EC) was characterised by gender bias. It was present, albeit unintended, in the projects funded by the stream and amongst policy makers drawing up guidelines. Some of their conclusions are listed below and show the need to incorporate gender into an analysis of policy.

"The programme appears, overall to have been conceived overall without acknowledging gender differences or at least failing to show what those differences are and how activities cater for them... the programme is more focused on the economic and operational aspects involved in innovation and creation of enterprises and less so on social aspects.

²⁸ European Commission (2006) *She Figures 2006 : Women and Science , Statistics and Indicators*. Brussels . European Commission, Directorate General for Research.



“The assessment of the programme raises another question in relation to the type of enterprises that the EC is trying to promote. The final aim is to increase the competition in Europe by strengthening the innovation and Research and Development capabilities of companies and it is understood that the programme targets SMEs with already a technological basis or innovative potential. However a significant number of women run companies of a small size in retail trade or service sectors and therefore it is possible that most do not fulfil the requirements for participation or find the programme activities unsuitable for their needs.” (Gender Impact Assessment of the Fifth Programme specific programmes, Promotion of Innovation and Encouragement of participation of SMEs, Final Report 2001. Enterprise Directorate)

Gender mainstreaming was designed to address such short sightedness of programmes but by 2005 it was clear that only the first part of the ‘more and better jobs’ objective of the European Strategy for Growth and Jobs had been achieved for women, and it became necessary for the EC to give new impetus to Community policy in the gender equality area. One of the reasons for this is that, as a recent review of gender mainstreaming in employment policies in 30 European countries found:

Although the European strategy for growth and employment recognises that gender equality and gender mainstreaming are essential for progress, analysis of the National Reform Programmes (NRP) 2005 and 2006 illustrates that the gender mainstreaming of the employment part of the NRP is limited and that the visibility of commitment to women’s employment and gender equality is declining ²⁹ (European Commission 2008).

Developing appropriate ways of promoting equalities and using gender mainstreaming, however, is not as easy as it appears. Booth and Bennett argued in 2002 that since the ‘Communication on Incorporating Equal Opportunities for Men and Women into All Community Policies and Activities’ in 1998 there has been considerable progress in implementing gender mainstreaming across Europe in fields such as human rights, employment policy and structural funds but there remains significant confusion and misunderstanding on how gender mainstreaming can be used and whether it can produce strategies for addressing inequalities. They argue that changing gender mainstreaming from a reasonably well developed set of tools and methods into an effective strategy for promoting equality is difficult. Nevertheless in 2006 the European Commission published a framework for the future development of policies to support and promote gender equality: the *Roadmap for equality between men and women*³⁰. This defined priorities for action and reinforced a long-standing tradition of the Commission to actively support gender equality. It is supported by the Member States through the European Pact for Gender Equality. It identified six priority areas for EU action on gender equality over a five year period through to 2010, each with a series of objectives and actions designed to build on and revive existing strategy. Together with the reconciliation of professional family and private life, equal economic independence for women and men are two of the key objectives. Within them the Commission hopes to address the lower employment rates of women, the 15% pay gap that derives from structural inequalities and the fact that women constitute only 30% of entrepreneurs in Europe. Funding for key actions was envisaged to come from a multitude of sources but Structural Funds were to be the major source of funding. Together with the €210 billion available for investment in growth and jobs over 2007-13 there appear to be resources for change.

Implementation of the measures announced in the Roadmap started in 2007 and although it is still early days the EC’s own *Report on Equality between women and men -2008* gives some idea of how far things have progressed and what Member States and the Commission feel still needs attention. It was the first of the annual reports to cover the enlarged European Union of 27 States. It identifies five areas where special attention still needs to be focused (p7). These are:

- Creating more and better jobs for women in the new cycle of the European Strategy for Growth and Employment.
- Including a gender perspective in all aspects of job quality.

²⁹ European Commission(2008) *Gender Mainstreaming of Employment policies : a review of 30 European Countries*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities Downloadable at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2007/ke8107103_en.pdf

³⁰ CEC (2006), *A Roadmap for equality between men and women 2006-10*, European Commission, Brussels Downloadable at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/roadmap_en.html



- Improving both the supply and quality of services helping to reconcile professional and private life for both men and women.
- Tackling stereotypes in education, employment and the media and emphasising the role of men and women in promoting equality.
- Developing tools to assess the impact of policies from the gender stereotypes.

Concerted and comprehensive action remains key to the achievement of these and the Report gives some indication of agreement amongst Member States. However gathering and adopting knowledge and resources at all levels is also important. Although the combination of the Structural Funds and the Strategy for Growth and Jobs has a key focus on cities and city regions there is very little in the equalities documentation from the EC that seems to recognise this. It is for this reason that WEED's role is clearly important for improving the knowledge base necessary for integrating the two policy areas and for informing funding streams if they wish to integrate. It will contribute to developing a body of knowledge based on practice that could help inform city authorities as well as Member States. WEED's activities and output will certainly be of interest to URBACT but may also be of interest to the newly established European Institute for Gender Equality.

Possible policy directions: integrating women, enterprise, knowledge economy and local development.

At this point in the review it is worth asking whether in practice, despite an apparent lack of integration between urban policy and equalities strategies, innovation and policy implementation have produced a measure of integrated and effective measures to dealing with the underutilisation of women's skills and female entrepreneurial talent. We saw earlier how, whilst women potentially have much to contribute to the European Strategy for Growth and Jobs, particular problems of a gendered gap exists in many sectors of employment, in the access to and uptake of education relevant to European economic policy, and in levels of entrepreneurial performance. All three areas are ones where urban policy has a strong relevance if women's potential is to be more effectively utilised across the EU. The intention here is to identify more clearly not only what the problems are for the Strategy for Growth and Jobs but also the possibilities for change that previous policy has established. The three areas examined here are the relationships between women and **local labour markets/urban regeneration, entrepreneurship, the knowledge based economy**. The first is included as it highlights the important role that gender sensitivity could add to regeneration: the second because since 2000 there have been significant efforts to draw together evidence on women and entrepreneurship at European levels and it might provide a strong base for city based activities and research. The third has been selected because the Lisbon strategy states its intention is to make the EU "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world". Taken together we can understand the EC view that: -

'The European Union will be most successful in pursuing its growth and jobs agenda, if all regions –especially those with the greatest potential for higher productivity and employment – are able to play their part. Cities are essential in this effort. They are the home of most jobs, businesses, and higher education institutions and are key actors in achieving social cohesion. Cities are the centres of change, based on innovation, entrepreneurship and business growth' (European Commission, 2005).

The important thing in this review is to establish whether there are innovatory practices and networks that could be extended amongst partners in WEED and to cities generally.

Women and the transformation of local labour markets/ urban regeneration

As we saw earlier a gender employment and pay gap, labour market segregation and difficulties of work/life balance continue to be major challenges facing women in employment in most Member States. Significant differences in national responses to these issues exist but local, citywide and neighbourhood responses can also provide some idea of how they can be addressed. Projects developed under theme H of the EQUAL programme are probably some of the most obvious ones funded jointly by local bodies and ESF. Theme H's aim was to promote gender equality in the work place,



reduce gender gaps and support job desegregation. Projects funded ranged in focus from the development of pay audit tools, support of micro credit approaches to local female entrepreneurs, support for childcare strategy planning, production of training and support materials for careers advisers, and challenging both gender and ethnic stereotyping in the work situation. One such project is San Cosme Innova, it provides a valuable example of how using local knowledge can help to create real choice and remove stereotypes.

San Cosme, Spain

San Cosme is an old industrial neighbourhood, close to Barcelona airport, undergoing heavy restructuring. The number of job opportunities for local people has fallen dramatically and unemployment rates stand at 25%. Around 60% of the local population is made up of ethnic minorities, with a high proportion of gypsies. The Equal San Cosme project is a joint initiative involving a large financial institution, local social services, and employment services. It involves co-ordinated activities designed to increase employability, combine micro financing and business support to support self employment as a way out of social exclusion and increase access to new technology for women that would enable them to become employed or become self employed. A working group was established at an early stage in the project to examine existing knowledge about the area, its residents and barriers to social inclusion that existed. Local voices were incorporated through a survey of local people without stable employment and their involvement in the working group. The decision to focus on women as a part of the larger project emerged from this process and from a view based on development work elsewhere that women could be important drivers of change in the local area. Nine groups of women were recruited at an early stage of the project, 30% of them from the gypsy community. Reducing stereotypes of professionals and male partners as well as empowering the women participants was recognised to be an important element of the work. Individualised assessment of need was also carried out an early stage to overcome this and to identify what type of programme and support would be most effective i.e. flexibility and recognition of personalised circumstances were key elements. Its assessed impact included increases in the number of participants working, increases in those working outside their immediate locality, positive changes in the domestic division of labour and a large proportion of participant more engaged socially.

Involving local women was a vital feature of the project and reminds us that local solutions are needed for urban regeneration. Cities are increasingly marked by diversity and gross disparities between localities and now that local regeneration agencies have larger budgets and greater autonomy from national government they are able to draw on their experience of regeneration working better if local people are involved and have a sense of ownership and, in the case of San Cosme, including women in discussions of economic strategy to created the impact.

The case for including women is made even more strongly by the Latent Potential project, whose report comments:

All the key regeneration issues such as transport, employment, education, housing, health and the environment have important gender considerations. For example, more women than men travel by public transport, women often have a different relationship than men with labour markets and economic development as a result of their domestic and caring responsibilities. Community groups are often composed of women yet decision-makers are mostly men, and women face particular barriers in getting involved in regeneration that once again reflect their gender roles. (Latent Potential Final Report 2005).

This is not an argument to be ignored and recent changes at European and national levels show that it is not. In 2003 the Commission stated as part of European Employment Strategy (EES): *A strategy for full employment and better jobs for all*:

Gender equality should be a key element of all policies affecting the local level. No local employment initiative can be successful unless women are actively involved in it as both partners and beneficiaries.

Two projects that have examined this potential are the *Latent Potential* project which involved over 200 practitioners working in eight regeneration areas in five member states and the *Getting Engaged: Women and Local Development*³¹

³¹ Latent Potential: Tapping Human and Social Capital to Promote and Support Gender Equality in Decision Making in Areas of High Social Exclusion. Final Report Accessed at <http://www.qec-eran.org/projects/latentpotential/gender.htm>
Getting Engaged: Women and Local Development . Final Report Accessed at <http://www.qec-eran.org/projects/womenlocaldevindex.htm>



project involving over 200 practitioners working in eight regeneration areas also from five member states. The first was funded under the 5th Community Action Programme for Equality between Men and Women of the European Union and the second under the European Union Action Programme Relating to the Community Framework Strategy On Gender Equality. They are two projects where policy learning and peer review methods have provided evidence of the issues relating to gender and urban regeneration and governance. Like WEED's intended approach they involved local action groups and peer review workshops as a method to establish concerns and activities at local and national level and the lessons that can be drawn from such activities. They identified a number of issues as possible barriers to meeting the needs of women in urban regeneration policies. These include: -

- Underdevelopment of gender issues generally, and acceptance of equal opportunities as central to good practice. The extent to which an equal opportunities ethos informed service provision at local level is limited.
- Limited use and resources for targeting resources more effectively towards need. The result is a reduced ability to respond to the full diversity of need at community level as a whole including the needs of women.
- A systemic lack of women's access to employment and participation in decision making: producing an under representation of women at senior policy making levels and under resourcing of organisations working to improve the situation of women.
- Only a little change in most European countries regarding women and unpaid caring work. This continues to have major implications for women as it impacts on their ability to participate in the labour market, education and training and political life.
- Continued lack of access to education and training for women with low skills. There is a real danger that women with family responsibilities and low skill levels, both inside and outside the workforce, will be further marginalised and disadvantaged with the move towards a knowledge based economy.

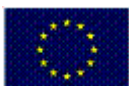
They also identified a number of processes and actions that can address these issues. These included:

- Adopting bottom-up approaches to policy development and ensuring women from disadvantaged communities are able to participate in decision-making processes and influence the policies that affect their lives is crucial for effective development at local level. Even the World Bank recognises that empowerment of women is smart economics.
- Time specific and quantifiable targets and goals need to be set for women's involvement in local development agency/ partnership i.e. going beyond statements of the importance of gender balance.
- Greater leadership/ direction from national, regional and local authorities is needed to increase the commitment to the equal opportunities duties of local partnerships.
- Innovative, comprehensive programmes to meet the needs of women in communities have been and can be developed, often with European Commission support. Such programmes need support at a number of administrative levels but it has to be recognised that their success has often originated in and been based on women's own involvement in the process, they need to be integrated into regional and national thinking.

Entrepreneurship

The Commission's Communication 'Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme – Modern SME Policy for Growth and Employment' (2005) gives some indication of the policy direction that many in Europe would like to see in relation to entrepreneurship. It provides a framework plan of activities that aim at:

- enhancing the growth and competitiveness of business in a knowledge-based internationalised economy;
- promoting entrepreneurship;
- simplifying and improving the administrative and regulatory framework for business so that research, innovation and business creation in particular can flourish;
- improving the financial environment for business, especially SMEs;
- giving business easier access to Community support services, programmes and networks and improving the coordination of these facilities.



However the organisational capacity to promote and support women's involvement in this is a major concern amongst a number of policy analysts. Promoting self employment for women is a significant issue. It could provide a valuable alternative for women with caring duties, particularly in cities with significant rural hinterlands: it could also help address the lack of growth in entrepreneurial activities beyond the simplest self employment model adopted by highly educated women. Two major sources of information on women and entrepreneurship have been drawn on for this review. Firstly the BEST report *Promoting entrepreneurship amongst women 2004*; secondly the ongoing work of the European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship. The BEST report was commissioned by the Enterprise Directorate-General of the European Commission in 2002/3 and focuses on specific measures adopted amongst EU and EFTA-EEA countries for the promotion of female entrepreneurship. For the purpose of the report a female entrepreneur was defined as "a woman who has created a business in which she has a majority shareholding and who takes an active interest in the decision-making, risk-taking and day-to-day management".

The BEST report comments that previous research has shown that women face a number of difficulties in establishing and maintaining businesses but that measures to facilitate the creation of business by women and the expansion of existing women-owned companies have been taken by E.U. Member States and EFTA-EEA countries. These measures have addressed issues such as start-ups, funding, training, mentoring, information/advice and networks. The European Commission has also tackled the issue of female entrepreneurship within a number of projects promoted through the Structural Funds, the European Employment Strategy, and the fourth Community Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, the Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005) and the 3rd Multi-annual Programme for SMEs in the European Union. The report itself, however, provides a valuable review and evaluation of good practice.

Measures to support (potential) female entrepreneurs that the report identifies range from facilitating the creation of businesses by women, providing training and mentoring programmes specifically targeted at female or potential female entrepreneurs, the implementation of electronic platforms for women entrepreneurs, making available very specific types of information and giving access to the right and necessary types of networks and funding. The examples illustrate how it is possible to promote effectively female entrepreneurship in the various Member States of the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries and underline the point that (potential) female entrepreneurs have a range of specific needs and demands and that they will succeed best if the support provided to them is comprehensive and of high quality. Fifteen cases were identified as particular examples of good practice: three of them are listed below: -

THE 'FLYING ENTREPRENEUR' PROGRAMME (Belgium)

The Belgian 'Flying Entrepreneur' programme ('De Vliegende Ondernemer') aimed to increase the number of female entrepreneurs by making independent entrepreneurship 'softer', i.e. making it easier for a women entrepreneur to achieve a good balance between work and life by offering the possibility of getting a professional representative in case of emergencies.

The programme enabled women to become independent entrepreneurs, who can temporarily replace an existing entrepreneur or her partner in cases of unforeseen events (e. g. disease, accident, crisis), planned absences (e. g. holidays, maternity leave, training) or peak periods. It was implemented by the Centrum van Zelfstandige Ondernemende Vrouwen (CEZOV, 'Centre of Independent Entrepreneurial Women') of the organisation Markant in October 2001. Its training courses took place in each of the five Flemish provinces and in Brussels. The programme received funding from the European Social Fund (ESF).

It comprised a training course - three modules and a final traineeship: The starter course provided participants with a good economic base as Flying Entrepreneurs. It included starter procedures, sales techniques, bookkeeping and fiscal issues, order processing, invoicing as well as financial and business planning. The starter course was followed by the ICT training module that basically covered basic Word, Excel, Internet, and Outlook. It was designed to overcome the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) disadvantage among many female entrepreneurs. In the last module, entrepreneurial development is dealt with. The objectives of this module were to strengthen the personality, to train good situation assessment, to learn efficient time scheduling and good communication. The training course was followed by a traineeship with an independent entrepreneur allowing the participants to apply their knowledge in practice.

THE 'ENTERPRISE CREATION SHOP' (Italy)

The Italian 'Enterprise Creation Shop' ('Sportello Fare Impresa') fostered the creation and the development of new economic activities in the craft sector. It was established by the Equal Opportunities Committee in 1999 and there was an enterprise creation office in every local Association of Confartigianato (the National Confederation of Craftsmanship).



Through various support methods the measure aimed to promote the decision to start-up a business in the craft sector, to assist women in accessing this sector, and to offer an alternative to being unemployed, working in the household or working dependently with a company. The guidance given directly through experts at the Enterprise Creation Shop, as well as through information sheets and publications, was designed to help women establish enterprises with a stable development in the first years.

The Enterprise Creation Shop helped female entrepreneurs to overcome bureaucratic problems during the start-up phase and to obtain financing on attractive terms through special agreements with financial institutions. It was considered an important programme. Promoting female entrepreneurship in the craft sector - as an alternative to working dependently - has encouraged the development of many new small and medium firms, particularly in the north of Italy, where the agreements with banks led to larger financing even with a low level of guarantees.

'BUSINESS ADVISERS FOR WOMEN' (Sweden)

The Swedish project 'Business Advisers for Women' ('Affärsrådgivare för Kvinnor') aimed to promote women's entrepreneurship and to stop the outflow of women from sparsely populated areas that offer few job opportunities. It originated in the Swedish Ministry of Regional Affairs assigned NUTEK, Sweden's central public authority for industrial policy issues, to set up a project with special business advisers for women in areas of the northern part of Sweden. The task was to encourage municipalities to employ a business adviser for women and to provide co-financing. Studies had demonstrated that female entrepreneurs were unwilling to seek advice from traditional business advisers or to approach bankers, due to their experience of not being taken seriously by such consultants. NUTEK organised regular training courses and conferences for the business advisers and set up an electronic network to exchange experiences and information.

The programme started its activities by identifying women business-owners in the sparsely populated areas of northern Sweden and then offering assistance, training and information through the network of business advisers to help women to start and develop their own business. The business advisers organised seminars and courses with the aim of raising levels of competence and skills, and fostering networking among women and training them to cope with their own situations, (i.e. helping them to help themselves). In addition the business advisers tried to positively influence the general attitude towards women's entrepreneurship and to build a more professional image of women entrepreneurs.

The government financing for the project was stopped in 2001. However, some of the advisers are now employed within the mainstream system and the project did succeed in creating considerable awareness of the existence of women entrepreneurs in the municipalities. It is estimated that the business advisers helped to create at least 1,000 new companies during the first three years of the project.

The report concludes with a consideration of a few critical success factors supporting good practice in the promotion of female entrepreneurship. These included the use of female mentors, trainers etc where possible, the availability of group and individual support, a focus on start up in sectors that can provide women with an adequate income, flexible training, post start up support and the development of financing partnerships relevant to small businesses and to women in small businesses. It demonstrates the various ways to tackle general and more country specific problems faced by female entrepreneurs and argues, moreover, that the approach chosen depends more on the range and type of problems that need to be addressed than on the political setting of a country. It is for exactly this reason that there have been continued attempts to sustain a fruitful exchange of good practices between the Member States of the European Union including the Women's Enterprise Portal (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/craft/craft-women/womenentr_portal.htm). Since 2005 the Commission has also been supporting WES, the European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship that was initiated in Sweden. The network has members from 30 European countries (EU, EEA and Candidate Countries). WES members provide advice, support, information, and contacts regarding existing support measures for female entrepreneurs at national and regional level as well as help in an annual identification of good practices and research at national and regional level. In 2007 their annual report³² concluded

- There is a north-south dimension to women and entrepreneurship that seems to be based on the presence or absence of public/private social care e.g. childcare and elderly care. For example in Austria and Bulgaria childcare is lacking but this is also seen as a business opportunity to create new women entrepreneurs.
- The policies used to support women entrepreneurs in different countries depend on the situation of women in that particular country; in nations where women's unemployment rate is high, entrepreneurship often seems to be seen as a way to empower women and encourage them to start their own businesses.

³² European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship (WES) Activities Report 2006 accessed at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/craft/craft-women/documents/wes_activities_report_2006_en.pdf



Southern Italy, for example, is the geographical area of Italy with the highest incidence of female-owned companies: 26,5% of the total compared to North-western Italy with 22,0% of the total. The geographical distribution of enterprises is clearly influenced by economic and social conditions of women in certain areas of the country, as the rate of unemployment is particularly high in the southern, less developed regions.

- Market analysis should look at entrepreneurs' growth during the whole life cycle of the business.
- Micro businesses should be examined to identify potential and support growth.
- Support for first employee and business succession should be a priority as most female entrepreneurs are sole traders/ self employed.
- In some countries ethnic minority women entrepreneurs emerge as a new area of female entrepreneurship that needs to be addressed.
- Post start-up support for female business is necessary.

The reports of WES provide very useful examples and updates of country-by-country developments as well as detailed examples of programmes and processes that exist and work. There is clearly a great variety of approaches, of reasons for local interest and of which groups of women are seen to be the main target for the purpose of wider economic development. There is still room, however, for the collation of city based strategies and programmes, exchange of good practice and consideration of next steps for cities, particularly if they are to be incorporated more fully into the Strategy for Growth and Jobs and if different interests of local stakeholders and Managing Authorities are involved. Two key issues that appear to attract interest if we look at recent reports of activities in the area are firstly the growth of interest in supporting women in areas of high unemployment and low levels of part time employment and secondly in the growing science, technology and knowledge-based start-ups. The biosciences, for example, could be an area for expanding women entrepreneurs. Most life science graduates are women but there are very few women amongst those starting companies in this field and few senior managers who are women. For this reason the WEED project is a valuable addition to the work that is already going on. It could not only provide an opportunity to more effective learning exchange but also a sound basis to discuss future strategy based on a greater awareness of the challenges of promoting women's entrepreneurship in different city environments and the measures that have provided some women with the support they need to become entrepreneurs.

Women and the Knowledge based economy

It is not just the lack of women in start-ups in science that pose an issue here. When we turn to the second identified area where women's contribution to key areas of the Strategy for Growth and Jobs and could be built on - the 'knowledge economy' - we find again that there is evidence of commitment but underutilised potential in the whole field of innovation in science and technology. Before we go further though let us define what is meant by 'knowledge economy'. It is an all-encompassing term that is used in many different ways. The term was first used in the 1960s and referred to a wide range of knowledge, not just IT or scientific but by the 1990s the notion of the knowledge economy that has become central to economic policy in Europe had emerged. Many policy makers see the creation, accumulation and diffusion of knowledge as an important source of production in post-industrial societies and one that can increase Europe's capacity to compete in a global economy. Improving training and promoting career opportunities for researchers and scientists is key to this goal.

The OECD defines a knowledge economy as:

One that encourages its organisations and people to acquire, create, disseminate and use codified and tacit knowledge more effectively for greater economic and social development. OECD 2002

It refers not just to levels of ICT production or biotechnology but also to the production, exchange and use of knowledge services involving the innovative application of ICT. Its development involves investment in ICT itself, the reshaping of business practices, and the human investment in management and workforce that will enable this technological and organisational innovation. Generally it is managerial, scientific and technological knowledge that is understood to be able to drive productivity and wealth creation. These are the main areas of 'knowledge work'. 'Knowledge work' has at times also been extended to include education and health but generally these have largely been seen as marginal to



discussions of knowledge-based economies³³. For women this has posed some difficulties. Research has shown that certain skill sectors have been seen as more appropriate for women but such feminised sectors as health and education have been seen as less able to contribute to productivity and growth leading to lower pay and conditions. There is also some evidence that women and men do not enjoy equal access to professional skills, or to training, learning, and personal development opportunities that would allow them to become equal members of the 'knowledge economy as well as undervaluing the tacit knowledge that women at lower levels of formal skills bring to an organisation. Women are underrepresented in scientific and technological fields and when they do enter the fields of technology and science they are underrepresented in senior positions. They are also more likely to experience the negative aspects of 'flexibility': they secure fewer well-paid contracts and have less secure employment than their male counterparts³⁴. It is clear, moreover, from the employment patterns of female graduates that were identified earlier in the review that whilst women are often potentially well placed to prosper in the knowledge economy due to their educational and technical skills their status in the labour market has not improved at the same rate. This is a situation at recruitment, promotion and retention phases: the 'glass ceiling' and the 'leaky pipe'. Women scientists appear infrequently in private sector, they disappear in disproportionate numbers from every stage in the academic hierarchy and find it difficult to return to industrial or academic research once they have children.

Such a situation implies that women remain unable to fully develop, progress and secure whatever benefits the Knowledge Economy may confer – in other words, to secure high quality work on equal terms with men: a loss not only to women but also to the human potential that could assist Europe's innovative competitiveness. The 2005 report to the European Commission from the Women in Industrial Research entitled *A wake up call for European Industry* noted that the number of women who train in science and technology may be increasing but very few enter the private sector or stay in industrial research. The statistics show the untapped potential of women in industrial research. The report comments that this means that high potential women are being lost to industrial research and the chance to build multi skilled, highly creative and innovative teams from a diverse and gender balanced base is underdeveloped.

This has not been ignored by the EC. The 2003 European Congress on Gender and Information Society³⁵ concluded that

- Gender equality plays a key role in the process of making the European Union the most dynamic and competitive economy of the world, based on knowledge and social cohesion.
- Policies and initiatives for confronting the under-representation of women in education in the fields of information and communication technologies is needed
- Support is needed for the creation of women's enterprises, especially in sectors of the intensification of knowledge. (Awareness-raising campaigns, and measures of support for beginners. Help in planning and financing of enterprises, and relevant guidance.)
- Structural Funds and in particular the Social Fund should be used for training in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), particularly with regard to entry or return to the job market (unemployed women, initiatives for re-training, always in the context of the Lisbon objective for the employment participation rate).

And the Commission's Roadmap for Equality for Men and Women comments:

"The participation of women in science and technology can contribute to increasing innovation, quality and competitiveness of scientific and industrial research and needs to be promoted. In order to reach the target of 25% women in leading positions in public sector research, policies should be implemented and progress monitored. Further networking and availability of EU data are essential." European Commission's Roadmap for Equality Between Women and Men, 2006-2010

³³ E Kofman (2007) 'The Knowledge Economy, Gender and Stratified Migrations, *Studies in Social Justice Vol 1, Issue 2* : 122- 133

³⁴ Gill, R. (2002) 'Cool, creative and egalitarian? Exploring gender in project -based new media work in Europe, *Information, Communication and Society* , 5, 1: 70-89.

³⁵ European Commission (2003) Conclusions of Informal Ministerial Meeting on "Gender and Information Society" Athens, 6 May 2003



Deciding exactly where to focus such interventions is difficult and there is much to learn from partners that could help the process. Gender gaps in science, engineering and technology professions, for example, are not universal. In the former socialist countries women were strongly represented in the knowledge economy³⁶. There may be important lessons in how women were trained, attracted and retained in these professions that could help the development of gender equality in scientific and technical work across the EU. The *WellKnow* project, commissioned by the EC reviewed the position in 2003. It developed a series of social indicators to determine whether there is a connection between the pursuit of the Lisbon Agenda – the creation of high quality work in the knowledge-based society – and greater gender equality. The project found that despite a generalised improvement in job quality in selected member states, gender inequality remains a major problem. The Nordic countries have made the greatest progress towards equality, and the Mediterranean countries the least progress, but even in the former, gender equality remains far from achieved. The *Wellknow* project shows that greater equality or social cohesion cannot be taken for granted as an inevitable outcome of the transition to a knowledge-based society. For the knowledge-based society to be gender equal, the project concludes, deliberate policy efforts are required which make social inclusion generally, and gender equality specifically, an explicit objective. This finding has major implications for policy-formulation at both European and member state level: it suggests that policies for the knowledge-based society have to be very carefully constructed to address the needs and requirements of both women and men without taking it for granted that higher quality work will inevitably benefit the whole of the labour force.

The Women in Industrial Research Initiative³⁷ provides some recommendations in the field. In order to develop effective strategies to ensure the fuller participation of women in industrial research the European Commission's Research DG set up the Women in Industrial Research in 2001. The initiative has produced a review of the situation of women in industrial research, a set of good practices in companies that have addressed some of the problems and a checklist (including sound work/life balance policies) of how companies could implement a gender mainstreaming approach to their advantage and become employers of choice amongst highly skilled women. It has also identified key movers for change as companies, governments, universities and even schools: the problems start at an early age.

A different set of recommendations is likely to be needed when looking at the knowledge economy and less skilled and unemployed women. Some ideas of the types of innovation that might be helpful can be found in the *SERVEMPLOI* project³⁸. This was a major EC funded study of women's employment and development prospects in European services – retailing and financial services (both of which have been seen as central elements of a city's attraction). The research covered eight European countries and examined how technical and organisational innovations impact on the work processes of female employees in junior positions, on the knowledge content of their work and how well they are prepared or trained for such innovation. Its main findings were that women were heavily employed in these sectors that are so important to growth and employment but that: -

'although knowledge and information, particularly concerning markets and customers, are assuming increasing importance in retail and financial services companies, these resources and their attendant benefits are not filtering down to women working in junior positions in the two sectors. At the level of workplaces in which women perform the routine functions of selling, checkout work, clerical and cashiering work, skill development is more concerned with providing customer service than with fostering substantive knowledge or encouraging the use of information. Training opportunities and progression prospects for women to move out of these jobs are variable, and highly contingent upon national training regimes and local company practices. Lengthening and unpredictable working hours also act as a major obstacle to women's progression.'

³⁶ J Webster (2007) *Changing European Gender Relations : Gender Equality Policy Concerning Employment and the Labour Market. Policy Synthesis of EU Research Results. Series No. 6.* European Commission accessed at http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy_reviews/eur23163_en.pdf

³⁷ Women in Industrial Research Expert Group (2005) *Women in Industrial research – a wake up call for European Industry.*

³⁸ J Webster et al (2007) *SERVEMPLOI : Innovations in Information Society Sectors – Implications for Women's Work, Expertise and Opportunities in European Workplaces* , Final Report to the European Commission.



The major conclusions of the research were that company managements need to find ways of designing work both to meet their own service delivery requirements and to improve the quality of working life for female employees. It called on companies to make regular training and lifelong learning opportunities routinely available to junior employees and to develop clear progression paths. Since one of the Structural Funds Regulations for 2007-2013 is to focus on increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises the recommendations here for retailing and retail banking may be valuable to draw on for other sectors of the knowledge economy and could provide a focus for some of the learning action work of WEED. Their conclusions provide particularly valuable insights if we consider the potential role of women in other sectors of the knowledge where small firms and entrepreneurial activity occur. For example, as we noted above women in the new media sector are often employed flexibly, or on a freelance basis; they often provide an important and localised source of entrepreneurial activity albeit often small. Developing their skills and managerial competence to extend to employing others is recognised in entrepreneurial research – perhaps it could be explored more for women in the knowledge economy as a means to increase localised sources of entrepreneurial opportunities.

Conclusions: Policy and Research Implications

The problematics

- The European Growth and Jobs agenda is one to which women could contribute quite significantly and there is evidence to show that they are doing so. Women's employment outside the home has been growing over the last three decades, their engagement in small to medium sized enterprises is growing faster than men's and their uptake of higher education more than matches men's. Considerable problems in utilising the potential of women, however, still remain. These include a gendered gap in many sectors of employment and in pay, a low uptake of science and technological education relevant to European economic policy, and a much lower level of entrepreneurial performance than men's. All three gaps mean that women's potential is underutilised. Specifically: -
 - Employment for women has increased markedly but problems include the non achievement of the Lisbon target, an increase in the quantity of jobs but not in the quality of jobs, a pattern of part time employment that does not suit what women want and low rates of pay for part timers. This is further compounded by poor work/life balance.
 - Women's education and training levels have gone up in all Member states but their involvement in research and in a knowledge based or knowledge intensive economy has not gone up proportionately. Even with increased numbers of women graduates women are still overrepresented in low-paid and low-status jobs, and under-represented in high status jobs including the scientific and technical jobs central to the 'Knowledge Economy';
 - Entrepreneurship is important to the European economy and women's entrepreneurial activity has increased but their activity tends to be less innovative and involves smaller businesses than men's. Despite evidence to suggest that focusing on the determinants of their under performance could produce a boost to the types of enterprise where women could excel, policy has not been fully developed to ensure this.

Current policy – strengths and weaknesses

- Two areas of broad European policy have particular significance for addressing the problems of women's underperformance within the Jobs and Growth agenda: urban policy and equalities policy. European policy is increasingly based on the view that a focus on cities is valuable because cities hold the potential to attract and retain a pool of skilled labour, can smooth the flexible employment contracts of more globalised economies and constitute the best environment to engender and sustain the flow of new ideas and innovation necessary for European competitiveness in a global economy. The second area of policy - addressing gender inequality - has been central to European policy and legislation for at least four decades, it is one of the defining features of the EU commitment to cohesion and integration and policy has been much refined during that time. Together



current urban policy and equalities policy would appear to offer a rich environment in which to address the problems of underutilisation of women in the economy. There are considerable resources in current funding that could be adjusted to integrate more fully and if the *Roadmap for Equality between Men and Women* and the *European Lisbon- Gothenburg Strategy* are both drawn on there is much scope for change.

- There are, however, weaknesses in the wider policy environment. These include: -
 - A less than full recognition of the contribution that women could make to the 'consumer city' that is seen as a solution to competitiveness. This includes their contribution at all levels to the retailing and service sectors that attract population and investment in a city.
 - An underdevelopment of the infrastructure, such as childcare and caring services, that would enhance women's contribution and add to the service base and attractiveness of a city.
 - A tendency for policy to address regional or highly localised issues rather than citywide approaches.
 - A relative failure to exploit the skills of highly educated women in cities.
 - An underdevelopment of gender mainstreaming in economic and operational aspects of urban policy.
 - A lack of attention to a gender perspective in aspects of job quality.
 - Lack of analysis of how to combine the jobs and growth agenda with that of equalities.

Opportunities and limits

Despite such weaknesses in the current policy environment, practice and policy across Europe provide valuable examples of ways to address key problems of the pay and employment gap, the under-promotion of women entrepreneurial activities and the under-utilisation of women in the knowledge economy that local economies could draw on. Specifically: -

- Good practice in addressing the problems does exist and there are a number of networks and reviews that could be drawn on by municipalities for pragmatic solutions.
- Innovations and successes often depend on very local situations. Differences between countries and cities within countries highlight the influence of local environments on the determinants of enterprise, job improvement and incorporation of women into the applied side of science and technology. With such a range of experience there is potential for policy learning and transfer.
- The exposure of many groups of women in areas of regeneration to the risks of poverty, disadvantage and discrimination combined with their experience of involvement in local development makes local women valuable informants and partners for effective economic and social regeneration in urban areas.

Making the most of the lessons, however, appears to be limited by the lack, until now, of many explicit efforts to integrate urban policy and equalities strategies and by the lack of analyses of the value added to each side of the policy agendas by the other when integration does occur. The European Commission's analysis of the National Reform Programmes (NRP) 2005 and 2006 commented that the European strategy for growth and employment recognises that gender equality and gender mainstreaming are essential for progress, but illustrates that the gender mainstreaming of the employment part of the NRP is limited and records concern that the visibility of commitment to women's employment and gender equality is declining³⁹. Locating the WEED project within the URBACT Thematic pole of Cities, Engine of Growth and Job Creation provides an important space in which to explore whether these issues can be addressed in an integrated and strategic way at local level.

³⁹ European Commission(2008) *Gender Mainstreaming of Employment policies : a review of 30 European Countries*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities Downloadable at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2007/ke8107103_en.pdf



III. The State of the Art: Local Mapping

The local mapping was aimed at clarifying whether, and how, each partner city experienced the problem of the underutilisation of women within the context of policies and strategies aimed at supporting economic growth and jobs development. Summaries of the key elements of the individual mapping reports are provided below. They examine:

- The current situation in each city regarding employment, entrepreneurial activity and the knowledge economy and women's position in each;
- How and whether policies and strategies are addressing the problems of underutilisation of women's skills and how that is incorporated into local economic development;
- The priorities for change that each local support group has identified;
- The strengths and experience that each partner can bring to the WEED partnership; and
- The key issues that partners want to explore with others in WEED.

This is followed by an analysis of how clusters of experience and desire for change could be useful in developing a work programme for the next stage of WEED.

I. ALZIRA

Current situation in Alzira

Alzira is a town and municipality of 43,038 people (2008) in the province of Valencia in eastern Spain. As capital of the Ribera Alta region, it is the base of numerous public services such as: Area Inland Revenue offices, Social Security, the Ribera Hospital, Public Health Centre, and educational establishments. During the 20th century Alzira changed from an agricultural based economy to a diversified industry-orientated city with an important commercial infrastructure and associated services. The service sector now represents 75 per cent of the economic activity of the city. Factors currently affecting the city's pattern of growth and jobs include the global economic crisis and a real estate crisis in the local area.

Women have become an increasingly important part of the labour force as the base of the local economy has changed. Women constitute around 41 per cent of the employed labour force in the area. The employment gap between men and women in Alzira is still greater than in many other parts of Europe but the gap has lowered. This is largely due to a stagnation in the construction areas of the economy where men are employed and a modest increase in the female dominated sectors of retail and services. Nevertheless the LSG report notes a concern that women in Alzira have a higher unemployment rate than in other parts of Spain, particularly younger unskilled women and when women do work it tends to be as part time workers (78 per cent of women workers are in part time work compared to 20 per cent of men).

Women are not only increasingly likely to be employed, they have also shown an increasing propensity to create new businesses in the city: 53 per cent of new businesses for which grants were applied for in 2005 were made by women. Women's businesses tend to be small and are all in the service sector; typically hairdressers, restaurants/bars and clothes shops. The report notes two problems in relation to women's entrepreneurial activity: firstly numbers interested in setting up an SME have been declining as the recession is provoking a decrease in the incentive to open a business and secondly a significant lack of knowledge regarding the setting up businesses exists amongst small entrepreneurs: a business friendly environment which allows that the process of creation of new companies to be a simple task doesn't exist.

The knowledge economy does not play a significant part in the local economy. The town has no higher education or research facility. The knowledge economy, however, is seen as an essential part of economic functioning that could be developed further to enhance business opportunities e.g. information technology expertise to allow website development, better marketing and commerce. The local mapping pointed to an underutilisation of IT by small businesses. The new industries that are created in the city are not characterized by the use of new technologies.



The LSG identified a range of policies, services and agencies that are involved in one way or another in addressing the problems. Their specific attention to the three sub themes of WEED are discussed below. Following this the outcome of Local Support Group's discussion of the mapping and which areas they want to prioritise is presented.

Improving women's performance in the labour market

There is a range of national and regional financial incentives available to employers if they employ women. The town council's main priorities concern the provision of information about job opportunities. The council itself, through its job development agency (IDEA), has an established and reportedly strong system of managing direct grants supporting programmes that develop local job formation with work experience. These are not specifically aimed at women but at times unemployed women are given priority. They are based on strong connections between employer and local council. The two most important programmes are 'La Casa de Oficios' (directed at 16 to 25 year olds wanting to enter building, carpentry, electricity, gardening and plumbing) and 'Los Talleros de empleo' (directed at those over 25 wanting to enter home care and child care). Both programmes are highly gendered. Only 12 per cent of participants in 'La Casa de Oficios' are women, only 8 per cent of participants in 'Los Talleros' are men. However the distinct advantage of IDEA programmes that include formation and job experience mean on many occasions participants have the opportunity to work and experience contact between employer and employee. It depends strongly on developing contacts between IDEA and employers.

Developing a knowledge base

There are regional programmes offering advice to individuals on information technology but the new industries that are created in the city are not characterized in the use of new technologies nor the knowledge economy. The LSG identified this area as one where all members were interested in change. A national programme of loans exists for acquisition of computer equipment and access to the Internet for small businesses but it is limited in its capacity to increase the use of technologies by new industries in the city and to develop the base for attracting businesses that do. Two problems were identified. Firstly, it is difficult for small businesses to obtain clear and complete information about all the resources they can get and, secondly, funding for the public sector to provide essential training in new technologies is limited. It means that training is generally at only low levels and the city cannot develop new technologies and science in the city. Women have access to some 'women only' courses but they are at low level and limited.

Utilising women's skills for entrepreneurial activity

This appears to be the strongest focus of support to develop and utilise women's skills. The mapping reported that the Spanish administration has a commitment at all levels to support business activity, dedicating a special attention to businesswomen. There are, for example, national and regional grants available for new businesses: 5000 Euros for men and 7000 for women. At local level there are three organisations that support enterprises: Servicio Infodona (a service providing business advice exclusively for women), the Chamber of Commerce of Valencia and IDEA. IDEA is the local development agency of the town council, responsible for promoting the economic development of the town of Alzira. It provides information and advice on setting up a business as well as support for work orientation and formation. It was rewarded in 2007 as the best enterprising entity of Valencia Community – for its support to entrepreneurs.

However there is no one place where all the necessary licences, documentation etc, can be transmitted that is needed to set up a business, not a national regional or local basis, and at the same time receive a complete specialised information. This happens because each of these three local action associations depends on other organisations such as Regional Government, National Government, and Local Authorities. All of them want to help the entrepreneurship by creating offices for the information but the lack of coordination between them makes virtually impossible that these offices and institutions can realize all the necessary red tape for the opening of a new company nor can you receive a complete information since each of them advises from its own area of work.



Integrating equalities and regeneration policies

The Council of Alzira has fulfilled the first Plan of Equality, whose action includes the years 2005 - 2007. Now there is a new one, the second plan of equality that it includes the years 2008-2010. The object of this plan is to introduce equality in opportunities between women and men in the municipal policy involving the whole population and contributing to detect inequalities. Through this first plan of integration, from the local authorities they are trying not only to apply this to employees of the town council but also to the educational centres and private businesses across the business association of Alzira, largely through informative campaigns. The participation of Alzira in the Program WEED, demonstrates the interest of the local authorities to improve the policies of equality and to improve the integration of the woman in all the levels of the local society.

Priorities for change

Following the initial local mapping identification of the current situation and problems regarding the utilisation of women for a Jobs and Growth agenda in their local area members of the LSG discussed what they might prioritise for work with the WEED project. This was based on where they felt they had capacity for change and interest in doing so. In the case of Alzira the LSG comprised members from the CCOO Union, SERVEF, Foundation Bancaxia, Women Entrepreneurs, Asociacion Empresaria, Director of the local Technical College, women researchers and CEEI.

There was general agreement that they had a medium level of ability to support women into enterprise, to promote women's interests and involvement in new technologies and to get women into work. There was little difference in perceived capacity in any of these areas although most members felt they had less capacity or ability to get women into work than to support female entrepreneurs. When members considered what expertise they had to offer other WEED partners specific areas of capacity became clearer: they included a level of knowledge and experience in supporting women into self employment, in developing policies with private companies, and in running programmes for improving IT usage amongst women rural communities. The guide to resources for reconciling work and family life that was carried out by the CCOO Union and had developed against the background of the equalities commitment of the town council could be useful for analysing of how to integrate equalities and economic development.

Members of the LSG also identified which of the three WEED themes - labour market, entrepreneurship and knowledge economy - they were interested in developing. There was general agreement again across the themes although CCOO Union were more interested than others in getting women into work and CEEI were more interested in helping women set up their own businesses. Discussion over priorities clarified this interest further and the area that LSG members were most interested in prioritising was: increasing the knowledge base on which to develop business management and better employment prospects. It was felt that increasing the motivation of women and improving their skills of business management could overcome the fear often caused by the lack of knowledge related to the managerial world. Increasing the access of women to technologies was seen as a priority insofar as it could improve both the increase of employment for women and the quality of the employment and help reconcile labour and family life. Specific suggestions as to how this might be assisted by WEED included exploring with partners: -

- Programmes that practise conciliation of the labour and family life.
- Actions to increase the telework (Working from home) in women.
- Programs to increase the presence of women in the management of companies.
- Areas of training in private companies and what policies exist in other countries of the EU
- Alternative ways of getting women into the labour market. (Policies and Practices)
- Programs of getting women into all levels of the society.



2. AMIENS

Current situation in Amiens

Amiens is a town and municipality of 163 000 people (2008) in the department of Somme in northeast France. It is strategically situated at the crossroads of European communication routes, two hours from London and Amsterdam- and less than one hour and a half from Paris. It is in the heart of one of the most dynamic area of the European Union. Amiens is in a strong position to accommodate business industry and services but suffers now well-identified disadvantages: a lack of a well trained workforce (the population is less educated than the national average) high unemployment and the loss of skilled population to nearby cities such as Paris.

The city and its surroundings have important agriculture activities and manufacturing industry. Amiens has six business parks that have attracted many small to medium sized companies and industries. Areas include pharmaceutical packaging (e.g. Unither), food processing, environmental engineering and the cultural industry (e.g. jazz label Bleu). Unlike the rest of France the tertiary sector employment does not, however, feature strongly. Moreover the agriculture activities and the manufacturing industry do not provide enough jobs for the local population. This has also been influenced by massive closures since 1975. Between 1998 and 2003, the Gross Domestic Product of the city did increase by 1.1 per cent per annum but this was lower than all the others cities in France where the average was 2.3 per cent per annum.

Women are an important part of the labour force. They constituted 43 per cent of the employed labour force in Amiens in 2006, a slightly lower rate than the 47 per cent in France as a whole. Contracts for men and women do differ: in 1999 7 per cent of men compared to 10 per cent of women were on part time contracts but this rate is low in comparison to the rest of Europe. Women's unemployment is more pronounced than men, including persons with the same characteristics. Among the reasons that make it more difficult for women to access employment are that the tertiary sector (major employer of women elsewhere) accounts for only 66 per cent of paid work in Amiens compared with the national average of 72 per cent of jobs. The relatively dispersed nature of habitat also disadvantages women's employment, caused by constraints in terms of home-duties. Young women are particularly affected. Women with more than two children and young people are the most exposed to the vagaries of the economy in the city.

Since 2002, women are more involved in setting up a business with the rise of tertiary sector (services sector) where they are more represented. For example, the women are creating 33 per cent of the companies in Amiens when there are only 29 per cent in France. 90 per cent of the companies are in the tertiary sector. 60 per cent of the women are between 30 and 49 years old. Companies created by women with a higher education are the most frequent to be always present three years later. During the last five years there was an important expansion of the new companies. The technological and science sector is not yet major employer of women in the city, due perhaps to early conditioning away from this sector of education.

The LSG identified a range of policies, services and agencies that are involved in one way or another in addressing the problems. Their specific attention to the three sub themes of WEED is discussed below. Following this the outcome of Local Support Group's discussion of the mapping and which areas they want to prioritise is presented.

Improving women's performance in the labour market

There is a national plan that takes different actions in support of the women employment. Also the region, the department and the city are proposing new actions.

The national plan, with each prefecture of the country, is developing a culture and a practice of equality between men and women.



Also they propose actions to fight against gender-based violence (training and gender analysis, information guides), information tools and awareness to equality of opportunity between girls and boys, explain to the teachers the importance of letting the girls choose what they want to study and to support their choices.

The government and some NGO propose professional formations for the women for a better insertion like a first job after 40 years old, or a job after a long time of inactivity taking care of children.

The city's strengths in supporting women into work include:

- Facilitating childcare for women who want to work
- Communicating to companies to promote equality between men and women
- Communicating at high schools the possibilities for the young students to choose what they really want to do without giving attention to the usual stereotypes (women have to work with children, or have to be nurses, secretaries...)
- Facilitating meetings between women looking for a job and companies offering a job.

Developing a knowledge base

Guiding young girls to let them know all the different possibilities of studies so they can have a greater vision of their future access to employment and not only the stay with the traditional feminine jobs is a feature of the city's approach to the underutilisation of women in the science and technology fields. At present the vast majority of girls in school are concentrated in sectors where the value of their professional qualifications is lower than in sectors with low scientific and technological potential. The consequences for girls are that they take longer to enter the labour market than boys.

Utilising women's skills for entrepreneurial activity

There are many NGO that care about helping people with modest resources to access bank credits. Also these NGOs provide specific advice to manage their own business. But there are still many stereotypes about women and managing a business, like "women are less able than men to take important decisions", or "women are less capable to support the stress", or "women have to care their children when they are sick"... Whilst some women can take the risk to access a lot of responsibilities, many others think they are not capable. This may explain the Municipality's interest in school-based programmes to change attitudes. Part of this also integrates with regional policies to set up meetings in high schools for students to meet women who have chosen a male job and who are very happy with it.

Integrating equalities and regeneration policies

Amiens has strengthened the machinery to encourage equality of political representation was strengthened in 2007. This reflects the 2007 Act, which increased the financial penalties on parties that do not honour the parity principle for the election candidates, and brings in compulsory parity for municipal and regional councils. Since May 2008, there has been a new mayor and a new working team developing greater parity for women. In the past actions included fight against domestic violence doing conferences and public advertising teen age violence prevention with a special program. This program includes a specialist who interacts with a movie support and group debate at high schools. Group debates with women coming from sensitive neighbourhoods were carried out in order to discuss personal problems and limitations like children education, employment, and health care...

Developing the equalities policies in relation to urban regeneration and the Jobs and Growth agenda have included a city forum to help women to find a job in 2007. This included activities such as helping writing a professional resume, how to prepare for an interview, give advices and tips where to search for jobs. The new team is continuing the process:



beginning with new actions for helping women caring their children when they are working, meetings between companies and women looking for a job.

Priorities for change

Following the initial local mapping identifying the current situation and problems regarding the utilisation of women for a Jobs and Growth agenda in their local area members of the LSG are discussing what they might prioritise for work with the WEED project. Two areas of activity are proposed: employment and entrepreneurial activity.

The areas where the LSG felt they had much to offer included experience and understanding of

- Schools based programmes to address gender stereotyping
- Development of a city forum to help women to find a job in 2007
- Actions for helping women caring their children when they are working, meetings between companies and women looking for a job.

The LSG includes two sub groups reflecting this. One with NGOs specialized in access to employment and one with NGO specialized with the entrepreneurial activity. And, to link the two groups as a transversal support, there are government representatives.

Group 1: employment

- Assedic : Governmental Agency which takes care of the unemployed people and which give them money
- ANPE: Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi: Governmental Agency that helps people to found a job
- APEC: Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi des Cadres: Gouvernemental Agency, which helps managers to found a job
- Maison de l'Emploi et de la Formation: Public NGO that links the public and private partners to develop and implement an action plan for employment and training
- Mission Locale: NGO which informs, guides and support to help young people between 16 and 25 years old to solve all the problems posed by their social and professional integration.
- PLIE: Plan, Local pour l'Insertion et l'Emploi: it is an NGO dispositive funded by one of the several municipalities, and by the European Social Fund. Its aim: to help people in very difficult social and working to integrate into the working world. Bas du formulaire
- CIDFF 80: Centre d'Information Droits des Femmes et des Familles: NGO that helps and informs women and families in their rights and to found a job or a training
- Retravailler Picardie: NGO that helps women to found a job or to have access to training
- Interfor: is a training organisation of the Chamber of Commerce
- AFPA : Association Nationale pour la Formation Professionnelle des Adultes : Governmental NGO which allows people to have an academic training having a job or which give a custom made training program to people to improve their competencies in their job. They also are specialized in guidance, training and accreditation, assistance, training course design and counsel

Group 2 : entrepreneurial activity

- Chamber of Commerce
- Réseau Diane: Development and Integration through the Arrival of New Entrepreneurial women, aims to upgradte the self-employed women and assist candidates for start-ups in order to create the their own activities.
- Boutique de Gestion: National Network consultancy and training in entrepreneurship, which accompanies the creators in all the processes of their project.
- J'entreprands en Somme: network of economic actors for the creation and acquisition of companies. Mission information, advice and guidance
- ADIE: Association pour le Droit à l'Initiative Economique: NGO which finances and coaches entrepreneurs who have not access to bank credits and more particularly the unemployed people.
- URSCOP: Société Coopératives de Production: network of cooperative comapnies = commercial companies whose employees are shareholders.

Transversal group:

Amiens City Hall



WEED

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Délégation Régionale aux Droits des Femmes et à l'Égalité : Ministry Delegation In the region Picardy who execute the governmental policies in the region for the women rights and equity.

Conseil Général:

Conseil Régional:



3. CELJE

Current situation in Celje

Celje is a city of 49 039 people (2008) in Slovenia. It is located in the Lower Styria region, in the North-East of the country. It is the third largest city in the country and is the administrative, business, economic, commercial, cultural, educational, medical, sports, and market centre of the region. The city is part of a dominant chemical, graphical, manufacturing industry. Celje depends quite heavily on the industrial sector, as 68% of its active population is employed by local industries. Social services are well established, providing childcare, schools, care for elderly etc. enabling women to enter the labour market for the past 50 years. The City's largest public employer are the Hospital, House for elderly people, Center for Social Service, Employment Service, approx. 20 Primary and Secondary Schools, 5 University Departments, where mostly women work.

The city has a long tradition of manufacturing and trade. In 18th and 19th century it had a well-developed tourist industry, but lost its importance to neighbouring tourist wellness and spa locations. After independence of Slovenia from former Yugoslavia republic, Celje was the first city in Slovenia where the economy collapsed. From 1990- 2000 it had very high unemployment rate. Its socio-economic situation has greatly improved in the recent period: the unemployment rate has reduced from 11 per cent to 6 per cent over the past 6 years. This has improved with local employment plan. Like the rest of Slovenia this rate is one of the lowest amongst EU accession countries. There has recently been a rapid development in technological and educational field in the city and in the last five years the city got department of 5 University programmes.

Women have played a significant part in the labour market in the city for more than 50 years. They continue to do so. The employment rates for women, as for Slovenia as a whole, are higher than the European average (around 59 per cent). However among first the biggest 50 private companies in Celje (by number of employed people) only 8 are officially led by women (16%). Public sector employers have a duty to implement equal opportunities and women hold high level managerial posts. In the private sector the position is not so strong. Women have fewer opportunities for on the job training and for promotion. The number of highly educated women is high. Despite the higher average education it is more difficult for women to find a job than men and the difference between employment and unemployment rates of men and women has increased during the last years. So higher education does not provide a guarantee that higher education will add to the pool of skills in the city. Higher educated women in Celje, for example, make up 4 per cent of the unemployed compared with 3 per cent in Slovenia as a whole. However the existence of highly educated women in the city does indicate the capacity for the city to develop a more knowledge based economy, and its current underutilisation. Women's rate of unemployment generally is higher than men's: 6.3 per cent women, 5.7 per cent men in 2002, women comprise 55 per cent of the unemployed, men make up the other 45 per cent. This rate is relatively low compared to other accession countries. Many women (and also men) have to leave the city to find and get a qualified job in two larger cities of Slovenia (Ljubljana and Maribor). A lot of them are daily migrants (leave city at 7.00 come back at 19.00). Many students have previously left the city to study at Ljubljana and they do not all move back to Celje.

Despite the great will of many organisations and larger businesses to improve the position of women problems still exist in the pay-gap, and gender segregation in the labour market is reflected in the fact that most women are employed in service industry. There is also the question of managerial positions. At municipal level there is a majority of women who are managers but in private sector there are few women at managerial level, inconsiderate of type of businesses. The LSG identified the following as strengths in the city's capacity to provide routes into better paid work for women: -

- Fast city development in technological and educational field
- In last five years city got department of 5 University programmes
- In short future there is a plan of establishment of International University.

Weakness included: -

- There were few university educated jobs, but in last three years situation changing
- A lot of young people, who are searching for first job
- Because Celje did not have University, a lot of students want to stay in Ljubljana.



The figures above give an idea of how women play a significant role in the Celje economy as workers. However self employment is lower than the European average. Nevertheless women are increasingly likely to create new business in the city. Their enterprises are mostly in sectors of service (medical care, social security, financial activities and tourism, marketing, a few education and child care); they are mostly small companies with 2-5 employed people, are at the low risk end of enterprise and they tend to be started and run by highly educated women.

The knowledge economy is beginning to play an increasingly important part in the local economy. The town recently gained both higher education and research facilities. The rate of innovative and research projects is increasing and the number of student and faculty members has been increasing. 54 per cent of those with Masters degree level education in the city were women. However most ICT training in the city is basic training to deal with known programmes, women have a low level of involvement in science and IT, until recently there was only a weak connection between the economy and universities, and higher education gave little stress to practical education.

The LSG identified a range of policies, services and agencies that are involved in one way or another in addressing the problems of segregated labour market, lower than desired involvement in enterprise by women and underdevelopment of science and technology and women's role in it. Their specific attention to the three sub themes of WEED is discussed below. Following this the outcome of Local Support Group's discussion of the mapping and which areas they want to prioritise is presented.

Improving women's performance in the labour market

Slovenia has a long tradition of public service (childcare, health care, care for elderly) and strong traditional way of life (help form grandparents) to help women to be employed and work for full time. Balancing work and family through working part time is not really available: part time jobs are hard to find. Most women work for the public sector, education, healthcare, childcare and administration, where possibilities for both employment and advancement are greater. Because of legal regulations and established system there is a move towards a balanced gender participation in the public sector. The National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2005 to 2013 provides a structured framework for change.

Strong gender stereotypes exist regarding what is men and women occupation in both public and private sectors. Main occupations for men are: manufacturing, transport, storage, construction and real estate. Women's occupations are in: hotels, restaurants, communication, financial intermediation, public administration and education.

Five year ago care for elderly people has been privatised, after that period more private Centres for elderly people have developed providing new employment opportunities for women. Year ago the education get possibility for privatisation. National legislation allows the establishment of private kindergartens, schools. But till now nothing has changed.

Developing a knowledge base

The city has recently benefited from the opening of a local university and Union, local authority and NGO members of the LSG members identified a growing need to get more women into IT and science. Small businesses do provide ICT training but last year research by the biggest Slovenian newspaper company among companies and IT employers into how much and where IT workers educate themselves found that 59 per cent of IT skilled people are aware of lifelong learning (they mostly do self learning, on web pages, but 28 per cent attend seminars, 9 per cent get accredited training). However the same study found that 75 per cent of respondents felt that employees had some way to go to meet their needs. They felt employers should invest more money and resources for lifelong learning.

In the past there has been a national funding programme to help make connection between economy and knowledge industry. Some companies gave students practical experience and after that period employed young students. National policies also exist to improve parity between men and women. The Act on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for



example allows “positive measures to be adopted by state authorities in accordance with their structure and procedures, other bodies in the public sector, economic operators, political parties and civil society organisations”. The Act also states

Education on matters of gender equality shall be an integral part of the system of education and vocational training that, among other things, shall include the preparation of both genders for active and equal participation in all fields of social life.

The ministries responsible for education and labour as well as other bodies and persons with competencies in the field of education and vocational training shall ensure equal treatment for women and men, especially with regard to the preparation, adoption and implementation of public programmes of education or vocational training, to the attestation of schoolbooks and teaching aids and to the introduction of organisational innovations and the modification of pedagogical methods. They shall also establish, within the framework of their competencies, an appropriate system of measures for the elimination of established forms of unequal treatment of women and men.

Utilising women’s skills for entrepreneurial activity

There are grants and financial help as well as consultant help for those wishing to set up a business but there is no specific programme for increasing women’s entrepreneurial activity. In 2003 the OECD reported that Slovenia is playing a leading role on the topic of women and entrepreneurship and undertakes actions at national, municipal and NGO level. Government support is developed in partnership with women’s business associations and other partners. Innovative ways to improve women’s access to financing have been developed by municipalities and local governments. There is a national association of women entrepreneurs based in Ljubljana. However women tend to run only small businesses, take few risks in business and have difficulty getting bank loans for starting up new jobs and in Celje there is no strong tradition of female entrepreneurs.

Integrating equalities and regeneration policies

Promoting equalities has been a significant theme of the Municipal Authority in Celje. The City implements gender policies through positive actions as provided by national and community indications. Perhaps because of this women are reported to be actively participating in local development, particularly in the public sector. Within city public administration the majority of employees are women, also women are head of the departments. City council has among 33 members 14 women (42,42%). This rate is higher than national rate. Women mostly lead public companies. Women also have an important role in public voluntary service (associations, societies,) mostly work for free and to something for society. Women’s role in the private sector, however, was reported as being much more resistant to an equalities agenda so that integrating economic development and the equalities agenda was seen as having some way to go and ensuring more effective communication and cooperation between public and private services providers had still to be addressed.

Priorities for change

Following the initial local mapping identification of the current situation and problems regarding the utilisation of women for a Jobs and Growth agenda in their local area members of the LSG discussed what they might prioritise for work with the WEED project. This was based on where they felt they had capacity for change and interest in doing so. In the case of Celje the LSG comprised employers representatives, training organisations, NGOs, Craft Union, City Authority and a Private Company.

Representatives from the training organisation, city authority and union felt they had a reasonably high ability to support women into work and to promote women’s interest in science and technology. They were less convinced that they could effectively help to support women in setting up in business. Representatives from employers and private



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company felt they currently had relatively little capacity to support women in any of the three WEED themes. However when members considered what expertise they had to offer other WEED partners specific areas of capacity became clearer: they included a level of knowledge and understanding of women in business, experience of supporting women graduate clusters and motivating women to take risks for growth of women business as well as experience of collaboration between different authorities.

Members of the LSG also identified which of the three WEED themes - labour market, entrepreneurship and knowledge economy - they were interested in developing. There was a high level of interest from NGO representatives and the city authority in promoting women's interest and involvement in new technologies or science and in getting women into work. The particular areas that members wished to prioritise included: -

- Improving career opportunities in all areas of society.
- Reducing segregation between public and private sector and integrating women into strongly male dominated sectors
- Increasing the numbers of women in IT and science and on high paid positions.
- Developing training and education opportunities for women in entrepreneurship or with small children or own business (or even both).
- Increasing women's self-esteem within business area.

Discussion over priorities clarified this interest further and the area that LSG members appeared to be most interested in drawing on other WEED partners experience by: -

- Exchanging experiences between partners concerning different approaches in different regions and cities)
- Exploring how the level of women owned and run businesses can be enhanced and women encouraged to take higher risks for growth of female headed businesses
- (Similar to Sweden) Methods to improve support for women businesses in the rural areas (small-scale production of rural produce).



4. CROTONE

Current situation in Crotona

Crotona is a city of 60,517 people in the region of Calabria in the South of Italy. In the 19th century, the large number of factories, followed by major industries, turned Crotona into a working city, unique on the landscape of Southern Italian cities. Trade flourished, thanks to the city's busy port, a nerve centre linking East and West. Following the sharp decline in the chemical and metallurgy industries in the 1980s Crotona became a city in crisis, with problems deriving from industrial redundancies as well as others of a social and economic nature. The employment rate in Crotona in 2006 was only 40 per cent and this stands in strong contrast to the Italian rate of 58 per cent. Crotona suffers many of the critical issues common to the cities of Southern Italy.

After the end of the industrial era and the downturn of the eighties, Crotona is reported by the LSG to be lacking a clear economic purpose and needs "resurgence and urban change". It is in this context that a fresh strategic approach, based on environmental, cultural and economic resources, is being adopted and is forging a new model for development in which attention to cultural recovery, sustainability and environmental regeneration prevails. There are numerous programmes and projects which converge in such objectives as recovering a strong cultural identity, combining development and progress through prestigious schemes, providing new functions for the port by promoting waterborne leisure activities and passenger transport, moving towards the much desired "motorways of the sea".

Women in Crotona didn't play a major role outside the family nucleus until the late 1960's for many social, cultural, religious and political reasons that obliged them to subjugate into a passive role. The sexual revolution of the 1960's reached the South of Italy a full decade after reaching the northern regions of Italy. Women even now represent only 25 per cent of the employed labour force. There is some good news. The percentage of women holding executive-management posts rose to 71,1% in 2007 and women business owners overall employ a roughly gender-balanced workforce (52% women and 48% men.)

Information about women's entrepreneurial activity in Crotona is very robust and shows a changing pattern, albeit an overall reduction in the last year. The Observatory of the Province of Crotona produces regular updates and shows clearly the numbers and characteristics of female entrepreneurs. Women owning or managing businesses are 5.915 in 2007, much fewer than men and fewer than in 2006 when they were 6.007. In contrast with a natality rate of women enterprises of 4,2 per cent in 2007 the mortality rate reaches the 5,6 per cent for a failure of 92 women owned enterprises. The situation has not improved in 2008. In Crotona, 56,4 per cent of women entrepreneurs is aged between 30 and 49 years, while 50-year – old women or older women represent the 31,2 per cent of the total number of entrepreneurs. The percentage of younger women entrepreneurs aged less than thirty is 12,1%. Agriculture is the sector where over thirty women entrepreneurs are concentrated (92,4 per cent of which the 47,3 per cent is over 50 years). The average age (31-35 years) is prevalent in the manufacturing sector (61,9%), buildings (56,3%), the most favourable sectors for the development of young female entrepreneurship. The main sectors of women's enterprises are commerce and trade, agriculture and manufacturing.

A new generation of women has emerged - women who have started their business within the past 5 years have more managerial experience, education and have the same overall business revenue and employment profiles as women who have been in business 5 years or more. They are more similar to their male cohorts in these respects, and are also more growth-oriented. Although most women are attracted to entrepreneurship for positive reasons, the past 5 years have seen a rise in such motives as frustration with work environments, the desire for greater challenges and more flexibility. Women-owned firms continue to diversify into all industries. Health and social services, Construction, manufacturing and transportation have seen the largest recent increases in the number of women-owned firms, although services and retail still make up the largest share of women-owned firms. However, women-owned businesses are not as financially strong and creditworthy as the average firms, with similar performance on bill payment and similar levels of credit risk. Women entrepreneurs could help the city of Crotona recover the sense of cultural identity that it has lost even in the eyes of its own citizens. If sufficient support and direction could be established the LSG believes that women could promote:



- The urban regeneration and socio – economic rebirth of the historic centre
- The recovery and exploitation of the archaeological and cultural heritage of the urban area. Encircled by the 16th – century city walls, the centre still has buildings of considerable historical and archaeological value (the Castle, churches and noble palaces).
- The creation of parks, gardens and public spaces, the restoration of premises intended to house shops craft enterprises, cultural centres or centres for highly specialised services.
- Crotone's LSG is of the opinion that individual and collective empowerment is central for girls, young and adult women to meet their immediate practical needs as well as their long term strategic interests. It begins with consciousness- raising and leads to self-realization. Crotone must support processes that increase women's self-confidence, develop their self-reliance and help them set their own agendas.

In the last decades, the overall level of education of the Calabrian population has been constantly on the increase, particularly thanks to women. The youngest female generations are better educated than their male counterparts and female graduates outnumber male ones (55.2% of all graduates). In Calabria, the presence of women is still very high in the so-called “feminised” disciplines, as humanities or biology and medicine, though it is on the increase in “hard” and technical sciences as well. In 1998, the feminisation rate among graduates, in fact, is less favourable towards women in engineering (16.1 women every 100 men); land sciences (58.9 women every 100 men); and economics (88.4 women every 100 men) - all disciplines which guarantee an easy access to labour market. Women are in the majority in humanities (337.3 women every 100 men), medicine (155.8 women every 100 men) or maths (122.5 women every 100 men). Nevertheless, in the last 10 years (between the academic year 1987/1988 and 1996/1997), technical disciplines had the highest percent increase from the point of view of the female presence: +153.2 in engineering, +76.3 in land sciences as compared to –3.8 in maths and +21.5 in humanities.

The career at university is organised in three levels: full professors, associate professors and researchers. Women are less than 1/3 of the academic staff in total and upgrade with difficulties up the top levels of the career; in 1999/2000 they were 41.3% of all researchers, 29.4% of associate professors and 11.5% of full professors. The gender unbalance is only partly due to the fact that few women embarked on academic career in the past. In fact, if we look at the youngest generations, women remain less than men (32.1% of researchers less than 35 years old) do. It is interesting to note that in the last years there is a slight increase in the presence of women among university professors, though still far from “parity” between sexes: among winners of recent competitions for researchers the percentage of women passes from 29% of 10 years ago to about 36%; among associate professors the percentage raises from 22.6% in 1988 to 26.4% in 1993 and for full professors it passes from 16.3% in 1991 to 19.3% in 1995. Women involvement in the knowledge economy outside the university sector is even scarcer.

The LSG identified a range of policies, services and agencies that are involved in one way or another in addressing the problems. Their specific attention to the three sub themes of WEED is discussed below. Following this the outcome of Local Support Group's discussion of the mapping and which areas they want to prioritise is presented.

Improving women's performance in the labour market

A range of policies and practices exist to address the issue of women's low representation in the world of paid work:

- A new law approved on March 8, 2000 by the Italian Parliament concerning the parental leaves, which stimulate the use of leave for both parents for children and relatives' care and which supports bodies subscribing favourable contracts for the carrying out of familiar responsibilities (reversible part-time, tele-working, flexible timetables).
- In the Italian juridical system, positive actions were introduced in 1991 Thanks to them, in Calabria and in Crotone have been created the Equality Regional, Provincial and Municipal Committees and the Equality Counsellors as bodies with surveillance and control tasks, having the purpose to promote a substantial equality between men and women in the job field.
- In the use of the European Structural Funds (2000-2006), innovative criteria have been introduced in order to ensure both equal opportunities for men and women and transparency in the choice process. Both the Italian



National Operational Plans and Calabria's Regional Operational Plans bind a percentage of the funds for the achievement of targets and specific actions in the field of the equal opportunities.

The LSG believes more could be done to improve the position. Specifically: -

- Make employment rates for women arise.
- Fighting against structural inequalities such as segregation in work sectors.
- Eliminating the difficulties that women meet in accessing finance and training.
- Reducing the risk of poverty for women strengthening the social protection systems for adequate individual pension rights.
- Health care: Women are confronted with more health risks than men. Medical research and many safety and health standards relate more to men and male-dominated work areas.
- Combating multiple discrimination against immigrant and ethnic minority women.
- The reconciliation of private and professional life.
- Improve women's training so that they can seek council from experts in their field and be better at communicating and building relationships. Women have to learn to build networks and help each other, too

Developing a knowledge base

Measures have been adopted to promote the role of women in the scientific research by a number of agencies

Ministry for Equal Opportunities:

- Memorandum of understanding between the Ministry and the Conference of Rectors to promote gender studies, new disciplines to value gender perspective and support to gender dimension in the scientific research.
- During the academic year 2000-2001 a pilot-project was realised in order to revalue the humanistic degrees, obtained in the great majority by young women, with new professional and computing competencies; an experimental video was realised (University of Pisa) for the students' guidance in the Faculty choice, denouncing the bonds imposed by gender stereotypes, especially in the hard sciences field.

Commissions for Equal Opportunities:

- Information on empowerment and mainstreaming strategies.
- Increasing networking of women.
- Financial support for the Report "Women at University" (next issue) and for "The First Report on women's career in national public research organisations".
- Structural funds. Ministry for University and Research: National Operative Programme (2000- 2006):
- Specific measures to promote jobs for women in research in ob.1 regions. 1. Info to women accessing University to enhance women presence in research and development.
- High training.
- High-level training specific for the IT sector.
- Assistance to women for spin-off companies.

Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Department for the Equal Opportunities:

- a data bank of females of high qualification for responsibility and government competence' appointments is in course of achievement.

Universities.

- Women and men business owners are not equally likely to be using the Internet for business. In Cosenza's University, an Academic network (University Centres, Departmental or Interdepartmental Centres, Centres between Faculties or Universities) has been established. It promotes women participation in the knowledge society. It is named: Centro di Women's Studies "Milly Villa" (Centro Interdipartimentale Universitario) - Dipartimento di Sociologia e Scienza della Politica, Università degli Studi della Calabria, 87 036 Arcavacata di Rende.



Small businesses

- Just a low percentage of small businesses provide ICT training to employees. This is largely due to the fact that they have to cope with structural difficulties to survive and face such problems as access to funds and bank-credit. They are not supported and helped especially in the start-up phase by Institutions and Category Associations.

The LSG considers that more could be done. Specifically: -

- Stakeholders in Crotona should support the broad and active participation of women in the media, in information networks and the development of information and communication technologies. They should, especially, support the development and use of ICTs as a resource for the empowerment of women and girls. This should be accompanied by intensified efforts to encourage more diversified and non-discriminatory portrayals of women and men in the media;
- An innovative approach to accelerating entrepreneurship through educational programming and research is necessary in Crotona.

Utilising women's skills for entrepreneurial activity

The strengths of the city in relation to entrepreneurial activity:

- Crotona is a city for living that has always been able to reinvent itself in line with the vicissitudes of history. Its fertile plains, its port, its happy geographic location, which is enclosed between two headlands, its mild climate and the hard – working, friendly nature of its inhabitants ensure that it will be a “resurgent” city, capable to be engine of development for the whole Region Calabria.
- Crotona is in Calabria, a Convergence Region. Plenty of FSE and FESR funded Programmes (2007 – 2013) are going to be worked out to promote an increase of the rate of employment both for men and women, higher forms of qualifications and better standards of life.

The weaknesses of the city in relation to entrepreneurial activity that need to be addressed according to the LSG include:

- Driven by entrepreneurship and the need for a balanced life, women business owners meet difficulties in breaking through the glass ceiling and the stereotypical business world of male dominance owing to:
- Lack of interest of City Authorities in promoting Gender Balance in all areas of social, economic and political life.
- Bad communication techniques in promoting the importance of Gender Policies.
- A lack of political pressure on the educational system that should be necessary to contribute to the development of more female entrepreneurship in society in collaboration with innovative environments. The relationship between entrepreneurship and education should be deepened through studies of didactics and pedagogy in praxis-oriented disciplines.
- Lack of synergies and concentration between stakeholders, practitioners, policy makers and sector organizations.

Integrating equalities and regeneration policies

There have been attempts to address some of the equality and economic issues in the city. For example a Network created by the Provincial Counsellors has constituted the Permanent Observatory on Work Issues. It is made up of representative of almost all municipalities of Crotona's Province and of organizations, unions and associations. Nevertheless the LSG considers there are a number of issues that could be addressed through mainstreaming. Specifically: -

- A gender perspective should be integrated in policy planning, programming,
- implementation and evaluation activities in all areas of Crotona's Municipality and Province competence with a view to promoting empowerment and achieving gender equality. Women's priorities and vision of development goals and approaches should be addressed and promoted through greater participation of



women at all levels and in all areas of political, social and economic life through practical directives that would yield visible and tangible results.

- A Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework for 2007-2010 should be created in Crotona to provide governmental and non-governmental bodies, institutions and organizations with a road map and compass that will allow its personnel to effectively integrate a gender perspective.
- It is clear, however, that gender equality cannot come about only through women-targeted and men-targeted projects that seek to improve individual conditions alone. A profound transformation of the structures and systems, which lie at the root of subordination and gender inequality, is required. To do this, we must uncover the hidden biases that limit women's and men's ability to enjoy equal rights and opportunities and find the most effective and culturally appropriate means to support women's and men's capacities to drive social change. This means that Crotona must mainstream gender concerns in all its operations

Priorities for change

Following the initial local mapping identification of the current situation and problems regarding the utilisation of women for a Jobs and Growth agenda in their local area members of the LSG discussed what they might prioritise for work with the WEED project. This was based on where they felt they had capacity for change and interest in doing so. Crotona's Local Support Group (LSG) is made up of stakeholders such as practitioners, policy makers, universities, and managing authorities

There was general agreement that they had a low level of ability to support women into enterprise, to promote women's interests and involvement in new technologies and to get women into work. Unions were perhaps the most optimistic and felt they could contribute well to supporting and promoting women's involvement in entrepreneurial activities and in science and technology. There was little difference in perceived capacity in any of these areas although apart from the city authority most members felt they had less capacity or ability to get women into work than to support female entrepreneurs. When members considered what expertise they had to offer other WEED partners specific areas of capacity became clearer: they included a level of knowledge and experience in eliminating gender stereotypes, in developing better childcare facilities and understanding the factors leading to vertical and horizontal segregation.

Members of the LSG also identified which of the three WEED themes - labour market, entrepreneurship and knowledge economy - they were interested in developing. There was general agreement that getting women into work and helping women access science and technology was marginally more worth pursuing by the LSG than entrepreneurial activity. The area Crotona's Local Support Group (LSG) particularly want to prioritise for change is women's capacity to enter the dynamic sectors of Crotona's economy so that gender equality becomes a concrete aim of city authorities and the principles of equality mainstreaming are incorporated into the city's employment and business start up programmes. LAG's members hope action plans can be defined in order to turn women into a real source of economic dynamism and growth, capable to promote "resurgence and urban change" in Crotona. Achieving this was seen to resort to some extent on women's equal representation in decision-making - seen as essential to fight against their persistent under-representation in civil society, politics and senior management which is a democratic deficit in public administration. A balanced participation of women will contribute to a more productive and innovative work culture. To achieve it, transparency in promotion processes will be essential. Crotona's LSG would like to reach the target, set by the Member States, of 25% women in leading positions in public sector to increase innovation, quality and competitiveness of research in the knowledge society.

Specific suggestions as to how this might be assisted by WEED included exploring with partners how equal participation of young and adult men and women as agents of change in economic, social and political processes can contribute to achieving gender equality. What the LSG wants to learn is especially how to build partnership between women and men as empowering women does not mean excluding men. It is about establishing partnerships between women and men that empower both sexes. This implies giving an equally pivotal role to men and women in creating more equal societies.



5. ENNA

Current situation in Enna

Enna is a town of 28.917 people (2008) in the province of Enna (20 municipalities). In 70's and 80's a decrease in population was recorded due to the closing of sulphur mines and public offices that produced an economical recession and migration. By the end of the 90's a new demographic and economic growth is recorded thanks to the expansion of Enna Bassa and of University and the start-up of new commercial activities connected with the University.

Factors currently affecting the city's pattern of growth and jobs include on the negative side the geographical isolation of Sicily from the rest of Italy, the isolation of internal areas of Sicily, (Enna is the only province with no access to coasts, producing a lower development of tourism). On the positive side the establishment of the University in 2004 caused the start-up of new commercial activities. The economy is also affected by migration flow towards north Italy and by the long dependence of regional economy on public financial support/assistance/allowances that hold back the entrepreneurial culture. According ISTAT data in 2007 the unemployment rate in the province of Enna was 16,3 per cent (a decrease of 0,4 per cent compared to 2006), that is still very high especially if compared with national Italian rate (6,1 per cent). The economic situation of the province of Enna in 2007, did not substantially improve due to the historical backwardness of internal areas of Sicily, characterized by a lack of development pre-conditions worsened by the strong rise in price of oil. However it cannot be said that the province growth totally stops, but rather it shows considerable signs of vitality especially in the field of agriculture and in the establishment of a considerable numbers of new small business. In the last few years the institutions, especially the Province, has given financial support to young entrepreneurs for the start-up of new and entrepreneurial activity.

According to the survey of Arcidonna based on ISTAT data of 2007, woman activity rate of South of Italy is 36,2%. In Italy it is almost double. Similar situation for unemployment rate, which in southern regions is 14,6%, in central Italian regions it is 6,7 per cent and in northern region it is 4,5%. In 2007 Sicily the unemployment rate is 16,9%, the employment rate is 28 per cent and woman activity rate is just 34,6%. (In 2001 in Sicily man employment rate was 50%, the woman one 18,8%; man unemployment rate is 16,8%, woman one 31,2%. Enna was the third worst for unemployment rate in 2001 with 36,9%.) Moreover, for the access to work there is a phenomenon of woman segregation and underemployment compared to their education level. Most of Italian women workers have "non-typical" contracts; this causes that 77,5 per cent have an annual income under € 10.239,14. 8 per cent earn from 10.329,14 to 15.943,71; 4,6 per cent from 15.943,71 to 20.658,28. The average annual income for woman workers is about € 6.197,48, that is exactly the half of man average annual income. Women workers are mainly employed in the so-called "poor jobs", to which lower wage are paid, and consequently lower rent contribution for future rent. Type of contracts: mostly temporary, short-term, part-time. This concern the private sector, in the public sector there is no difference in wage between men and women. Statistics from Almalaurea underline that strong difficulties to enter the labour market concern both men and women graduates, but for women the situation is worse: one year after the degree (at Sicilian Universities) 42,2 per cent of men, against 35 per cent of women, find a job. (In Italy: men 57,4 per cent against women 50,1%). Gaps between man and woman graduates in Sicily have been found also in the wages: the average monthly net wage for woman graduates is 848,5 euros against 1.172 for man graduates. A difference of 27,5%, which is about the double of the national rate (13,5). Also the quality of the woman graduates' job is lower: men who get an open-ended contracts are 54,5 per cent against 40,7 per cent.

Official statistic data show that on 31st December 2006 woman owning or managing business in the Province of Enna are 4.169 on a total of 15.632, that is the 26,67%. In Sicily the percentage is 24,58% and in Italy is 23,16%. If we analyse the data of the years 2003-2005 we observe that the rate of woman in business has constantly increased. The woman business in the province of Enna has mainly the legal status of sole-proprietor firm (85% of woman enterprises). Just the 4% are corporate enterprises. The sole-proprietor firm is the prevailing typology of enterprises in Sicily and in Italy as well. The sectors with higher percentage of woman entrepreneurs are: "Health and social services" (45%), "Other public, social, personal services" (43%), Hotel and restaurant (37,68%), Trade (31,30%) and Agriculture (30,43%). An informal survey shows that the dimension of the women's business in the province of Enna is mainly micro: just 1% has



more than 10 employees; 1% between 6-10; 28% between 1-5; 64% has no employees. According to this survey Woman managing business has mainly a medium-low level of education: 41% lower-secondary school; 48% upper-secondary school; 8% university degree.

The knowledge economy plays a significant part in the local economy. The new university has provided a new range of employment in the sectors connected with which women are mainly traditionally employed (restaurant, bed and breakfasts, cultural services) but also provides new types of employment and education. We can speak of knowledge economy when the economic value (utility for economic subjects) of a segment of the economic system is produced through knowledge (services, information, consultancy, communication, etc). In our local context we can include in this concept the economy related with scientific sector, education, training and university, IT. Women represent the majority of university students, but in scientific field they represent just 46%. Women prefer human sciences (73%). In the scientific sectors the most attended faculty is Engineer (20%). This is significant, since Engineering is the faculty which in Sicily (like in Italy) records the best performance in terms of employment. According to recent data "Almalaurea" after one year of the degree 76,5% of Italian find a job. But for graduates in human science just 47,7% find a job after one year and for literary group, 58,4% of linguistic group.

The LSG identified a range of policies, services and agencies that are involved in one way or another in addressing the problems. Their specific attention to the three sub themes of WEED are discussed below. Following this the outcome of Local Support Group's discussion of the mapping and which areas they want to prioritise is presented.

Improving women's performance in the labour market

Italy and Sicily have many legislative instruments, some of them quite updated and complete, which follows the indications of EU policies. However the real context shows many gaps and difficulties. In 2006 Regional province of Enna in cooperation with Soroptimist, an international organization of women committed in business, professionals and research, conducted a research on the factors affecting the participation of women in economic development in the province. The conclusions of the research are very interesting and can be summarised as follows:

"Women expectations have been considered in a global view, connected with their hopes and real possibility to meet a positive way in the job search. But not always the results satisfy their expectations so disappointment and discouragement reach high level with consequent renouncement to pursuit a more stimulating life project".

To the question "What services could improve woman worker quality of life?" the research found the following:

- longer time to access to public services in general (56%)
- longer time to access to shops and stores (33%)
- improvement of public transport service (13%)
- improvement of services for elderly people (13%)
- improvement of services for maternal and child health and welfare (21%)
- improvement of services of day nurseries and schools (16%).

Although institutions show awareness towards the need to foster the inclusion of women in the labour market there still are many obstacles that affect on the adoption of real policies. Given the weaknesses of economic-political-social context women participation in work and economic development could be improved only through the development of synergies among the different institutions and stakeholders which should adopt policies more focused on women needs and resources.

Developing a knowledge base

From the study of the Chamber of Commerce of Enna, it appears clear that women cannot be included in all the economic sectors, in professional sectors and in jobs adequate to their expectations, potential and education level. This situation is directly connected also to the family life that affects their job choices and the time they can dedicate to their career. From one point of view the family load underlines the gender inequality in and the social organization worsen the difficulties to enter the labour market. The access to autonomous and entrepreneurial activity is a real problem for the complex of economical, political, cultural, social and individual processes.



Utilising women's skills for entrepreneurial activity

A survey conducted by the Chambers of Commerce in 2007 on a sample of women business in the Province of Enna, for example, shows that the most frequent difficulties that women meet in the start-up of entrepreneurial activity are the length of administrative-bureaucratic processes and then the difficulties in getting resources, information or shareholders, mainly in terms of financial support (as it has already been done). The survey also showed that for 60% to be a woman does not represent an obstacle in the start-up of an entrepreneurial activity. For 32% it is an obstacle. Family load represents an obstacle for 31% of interviewed women.

Even if the statistics shows that in the last few years women entrepreneurs increased a lot and even more than man's, there are some aspects that should be improved. The LSG concluded that women entrepreneurship should be directed more towards the enhancement of local resources, development of tourism, and the development of traditional handicrafts. Moreover, the structures and services that can help women to reconcile private life and work should be improved, developed and increased in order to improve the quality of life, and to attenuate their traditional burden. Financial support is not enough to support women entrepreneurs, but the different authorities and institutions and should cooperate together, each for their specific role, in order to create and develop an integrated system of information, training and services, which could support women for the whole life cycle and work life.

Integrating equalities and regeneration policies

Within the area of Enna women participation in planning local development is very low, one of the city authority's aims is to increase women participation in city life, local development and labour market and to promote gender equality. New city policies focusing on gender equalities have been adopted and some actions, have been developed: carrying out of a pilot project for the creation of and strengthening of women enterprises in the province of Enna, strengthening of economic support for single mothers, improvement of services for children, activation of service for abused women.

However much needs to be done, there is the willingness to exploit support measures for women entrepreneurs, to adopt actions for the promotion and activation of Gender Equalities Committees within public bodies, and to define and adopt local action plan in order to:

- To highlight the "gender mainstreaming" through a cultural renewal and specific actions
- To stimulate communication and cooperation between public and private services providers
- To create more useful synergies able to bring together different subjects with common objectives in term of gender equalities and social inclusion of women on all levels: family, school, workplace, politics, associations, etc.

Region Sicily implements gender policies through positive actions as provided by national and community indications. In particular, in the Programming of Structural Funds, a better declination of the gender mainstreaming has been included in all the Axis and Measures of the Programming Supplement of Regional Operative Programme Sicily. These documents will affect the policies of the Provinces and Municipalities.

One interesting project that attempts to integrate equalities issues with economic development is "Women and entrepreneurship": Integrated actions for the creation of and strengthening of women enterprises in the province of Enna" (within Regional Operative Programme Sicily – Axis III – Measure 3.12). This has been successfully carried out with the support of the city and of the province and other key stakeholders. This shows that when synergies are developed it is possible to do positive actions.

Moreover, the city of Enna can count on the effective contribution given by the Councillor for Equality of the Province. The Councillor has a key role in the promotion of woman employment, the fight against discrimination and segregation. She has a role in the protection and also in the active promotion. She has an institutional role and is appointed by the Ministry of Work and Welfare and in her functions she is a public official with the duty to report any violations or crimes against the law (125/91, 196/00). She has cooperated with the Municipality and with the Province in the implementation of different projects and activities (also European projects). She is one of the Local Support Group and can certainly give a key contribution to the projects and to the other partners.



Priorities for change

Following the initial local mapping identification of the current situation and problems regarding the utilisation of women for a Jobs and Growth agenda in their local area members of the LSG discussed what they might prioritise for work with the WEED project. This was based on where they felt they had capacity for change and interest in doing so. In the case of Enna the LSG comprised representatives from employers, training organisations, NGOs, Unions, City Authority and Professional women.

There was general agreement that they had a low level of ability to support women into enterprise, to promote women's interests and involvement in new technologies and to get women into work. There was little difference in perceived capacity in any of these areas although most members felt they had the least capacity or ability to support women in setting up or running their own business. When members considered what expertise they had to offer other WEED partners specific areas of capacity became clearer: they included expertise in the promotion of international mobility: through University, Eurodesk, (twinning, exchange programmes, etc) within the local context and with transnational partners. The city authority reported particular expertise in promoting women's interest and involvement in new technologies or science.

Members of the LSG also identified which of the three WEED themes - labour market, entrepreneurship and knowledge economy - they were interested in developing. There was general agreement again across the themes although promoting entrepreneurial activity and getting women into work were considered slightly more important than promoting women's interest in science and technology. The city authority and employer representative appeared to show the most interest in all three themes. Discussion over priorities clarified this interest further and the area that LSG members were most interested in prioritising was: improving information, training, guidance, consulting, for women (about job opportunities, financial support for women entrepreneurs, general services)

- information about access to credit
- social services, family services and services in support of working women
- more involvement of women in knowledge economy and especially in science and ICT

Specific suggestions as to how this might be assisted by WEED included exploring with partners: -

- policies of social inclusion and integration
- entrepreneurs and local development
- measures to support/enhance social enterprises (i.e. artistic arti-crafts, etc) as a source of employment and development
- measures to support/ enhance sustainable tourism and agro-food industry



6. KARVINA

Current situation in Karvina

Karvina is a city of 63 000 people and is the administrative center of Karviná District. Karviná lies in the region of Cieszyn Silesia, North East of the Czech Republic and has been one of the most important coal mining centers in the Czech Republic. Typically there was high employment rate of men. Most women were housewives, often with no useable education. Over time the industrial restructuring is occurring with coal mining loss and industrial areas arising where many working places has been created.

Whilst the economy of the town has suffered a gradual coal mining loss it benefits from being an important health, cultural and educational center. It is close to Lazne Darkov, which is considered as a health spa, focused on the treatment of locomotive organs, neurological sickness, circulatory organs and after burn treatment. It is also a university town: Slezska university offers studies of economic policy and administration, economics, management, system engineering and informatics.

Women constitute around 37 per cent of the employed labour force in the area. They are not only less likely than men to be economically active, they also experience higher rates of unemployment. Women's unemployment rate is higher for about 4% then men's. Compare to national unemployment rate, Karvina has higher women's unemployment rate for 1,5%. Portion of unemployed women in Karvina is growing due to lower number of job vacancies for women since 2005. To compare most vacancies were in men's jobs (e.g. mason, miner, seller, tool engineer, guard). Almost 60% of women are in evidence of Bureau of labour more than 1 year.

In Karvina there are in total 1.855 persons making business on their account. 727 of them are women (cca. 39% women of total number). Women making business tend to be in food and clothing retail, services, restaurants, craft and care. All of them are small companies or sole traders. Often reasons to start private business are to continue in family business, as alternative to unemployment or as a reflection of high personal characteristics and qualification. There is a growing interest in private business in Karvina due to incoming of new investors and the growing potential of Darkov bath (increasing number of bath guests from various countries). In addition the increasing number of women – “prosperous businesswomen” is increasing the interest of other women in setting up businesses. Extending entrepreneurial activity, however, is limited by the lower entrepreneurial activity of women, lower levels of education amongst women in Karvina (it tends to be the more educated who establish businesses), insufficient capacity of nurseries and difficulties of balancing work and family, and stereotyping of women's capabilities.

Women are not well represented in the knowledge economy in the city. Although there is evidence that those women who work in the sector find it flexible, interesting and financially rewarding the general view of the sector is that IT worker is programmer of network administrator and technical abilities and reasoning are necessary. There are a number of organisations offering courses to address this but the majority of women think that this job is more suitable for men then for women. To increase the interest of women to work in IT it will be necessary to increase of knowledge of diversity of work in IT - show that there are also other jobs than work of programmers or net administrators.

The problems identified here suggest an underutilisation of women generally in the city's economy. They are only now being seen as key workers, entrepreneurial activity remains underdeveloped and women's capacity to see IT, science and technology as a source of employment and development is limited. The LSG went on to examine policies, services and agencies that are involved in one way or another in addressing these problems.

Improving women's performance in the labour market

Getting women into work is more difficult then in men. The big problem is mainly returning from maternity leave. Women's self confidence is usually lower and the couple of years absence disadvantages them in labour market. They're losing their professional knowledge and working skills. Women are more disadvantage than men because



employer prefer men for their higher territorial mobility and because they believe them to be unweighed by keeping house. Factors addressing this include the growth of new working places, the extension of foreign contacts, structural funds of EU producing change and the re-qualification of the labour force that is widening opportunities for women. This will take some time to make an impact because employers are not creating part time working places and continue to give priority for multishift work and because the rebalancing of industry towards more female dominated sectors is slow and there is insufficient support from small and middle business for change. The LSG reported that for women really to have greater opportunities in the labour market it is necessary to increase the possibility of flexitime, balance men and women's pay, increase the possibility of partial work for 4 or 6 hours a day and change of opening times of nurseries and preschool facilities.

Developing a knowledge base

There are city programmes offering advice and courses to individuals on information technology. The Bureau of Labour in Karvina provides courses and lessons in IT. For example during 1st half of 2008, there were provided 29 courses of Working on PC, Basic of working on PC, where participate 346 expecters, 163 women of them. In addition the Municipal authority has provided in years 2005 to 2007 for their employees courses „European Computer Driving Licence“ on which participate 309 employees, 257 women of total number.

Kofoed's school –department in Karvina is periodically providing computer courses – Basic of working on PC and Ms-Word, Basic of work with Internet, Basic of work with Ms-Excel, PC course for renters, Presentation in Ms-PowerPoint, Course of Ten-fingers writing on PC. In 2007 was in total 22 courses, on which participate 119 students, the 89 women of them (74,79%). In first half of 2008 were organized 7 courses with 35 participants, 32 women of them (91,43%). Training generally though is at only low levels.

Utilising women's skills for entrepreneurial activity

This appears to be the strongest focus of support to develop and utilise women's skills. There are specific support services. The local office of RPIC – ViP ltd company is implementing education courses and advisory activity for beginning entrepreneur, the Chamber of Commerce of district Karvina provides advisory services in business activities and the Trades Licensing Office and Tax Office as departments of Municipal Authority of town of Karvina supports new businesses.

There is also a functional network of services necessary for women-mothers providing good working care of their adolescents at time when women are in work. The key organizations are municipal organizations and private non-profit making organisations supported by town's authority. Agenture Sedmikraska in Karvina providing baby-sitting services in clients' homes, providing accompanying of children on their way from home to schools, nurseries, free-time facilities.

The LSG report, however that support for beginning entrepreneurs from side of state is very low. Recently the program START – granting interest-free credits for beginning entrepreneurs has stopped yet the target of programme was to help to beginning entrepreneurs to start their business. The report also identifies a lack of interest of job seekers at the Bureau of Labour in continuing or improving their skills or education.

The LSG consider that it is important to help beginning entrepreneurs to start their business with soft loans and find ways of paying the cost of re-qualification courses to start private business and education.

Priorities for change

When the LSG discussed what they might prioritise for work with the WEED project after carrying out their local mapping the agencies involved were the Bureau of Labour, two training organisations, the city authority and the Chamber of Commerce.



There was general agreement that they had a medium to high level of ability to support women into enterprise, and to get women into work but less ability to promote women's interest in new technology or science. These were also the areas where there was most interest in change.

When members considered what expertise they had to offer other WEED partners specific areas of capacity became clearer. For example they included expertise and understanding of supporting small and medium sized businesses and the creation of new working spaces. They also offered expertise and understanding of measures to balance home and work such as measures allowing work home, eventually work from home. Growing experience of the support of the active employment policy and creation of new working spaces within legislation of employment office and ESF projects was also mentioned. Specific expertise and understanding was offered by training companies such as RPIC – ViP s.r.o. who contribute to change of current situation through the following services:

- Programmes for business support (existing „Programme of support of small and medium sized businesses a employment in the city of Karvina“)
- Consultancy for starting businesses and mentoring
- Entrepreneurial education particularly for women
- Education in the “soft” skills areas – key competencies for successful activity in working process and even in private life
- competencies for communication in foreign languages
- Special motivation programmes determined for short term and long term unemployed counselling programmes oriented to effective techniques of searching for employment

Members of the LSG also identified the areas of practice and policies members wish to learn from the exchange activities as: -

- What is the support of entrepreneurial environment in cities connected to this project?
- How does the engaging of women in educational process in requalification courses work?
- What is the role of city authorities in motivation of women to entrepreneurship?
- What are the conditions for entrepreneurship of women in partnership cities?
- What organizations (institutions) keep the data about “successful” businesswomen?

- How do employment offices work in partnership countries in EU
- What experience do the employment offices have in other countries within EU
- To learn about projects that were processed in partnership countries and were successful and also unsuccessful – to take a lesson.
- What help and services for women are provided in partnership countries?
- How does the educational system work in those countries?
- What is the motivation to start own business in EU countries

- How do the consultation centres for starting businesses work in partnership countries?
- Which programmes for support of small and medium sized businesses are available in partnership countries?
- Which special services are provided by partnership countries, eventually by regions for better employment opportunities for women on the labour market or in their own entrepreneurial activity?
- Rate of success in business sphere – examples of successful “women – businesswomen“?
- How the educational process works in these countries (counselling programmes, motivation and requalification courses oriented to help to women in working process or in business sphere?



7. MEDWAY

Current situation Medway

Medway is a conurbation of small towns and unitary authority in South East England. It was formed in 1998 when the City of Rochester-upon-Medway amalgamated with Gillingham Borough Council to form Medway Council, a unitary authority independent of Kent County Council, though still within the ceremonial county of Kent. It comprises five towns on the River Medway that have gradually merged together: Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham, and Rainham. It is strategically situated as a major crossing of the River Medway by Watling Street. The conurbation has a population of 250000 and a working population of 160000. It has very good transport links to London and many of the employed population now work outside the district: the area itself has only 90000 employed. Medway exports 41 per cent of its workforce daily to London and the south east of England and there is a predominance of low wages. There has, however, been a development of increased capacity and economic activity arising from Thames Gateway development and key initiatives. Jobs in Medway increased from 73000 to 85000 between 1994 and 2004. 30 per cent of these new jobs were from new firm foundation, 50 per cent from business expansion. Within Medway itself the jobs have the following breakdown:-

- Public sector administration and health 28.0%
- Retail and distribution 24.4%
- Finance and business services 19.1%
- Manufacturing and engineering 10.4%
- Leisure and tourism 6.9%
- Construction 4.7%
- Other 6.5%

It is a service sector economy but Medway is an under-performing part of the London-centric South East economy, and it lags significantly behind the South East average in economic performance. According to the Medway Economic Development Statement the conurbation has, however, a number of advantages that could enable it to fulfil its potential. They include centrally-located major brownfield opportunities, geographically close to London/South East/European markets, and London hub airports, a developing Higher Education sector with 4 universities, a very significantly sized workforce and a range of good natural amenities. This means there are a number of 'pull' factors that are driving change in Medway: Thames Gateway regeneration schemes that will transform Medway's built environment; the expansion of the Universities at Medway, and of the University College for the Creative Arts; and the recognition of quality of life on offer in Medway with the creation of attractions in Chatham, the Ranscombe Country Park. The Olympics may also present an unparalleled opportunity for the Thames Gateway to galvanise its development plans. Medway, as a key part of the Thames Gateway, should allow the Olympics to become a key driver of efforts to improve Medway's image, cultural offer and infrastructure. It will become a catalyst for job creation, for delivery of skills and training, and a major opportunity for Medway's businesses.

Women are an important part of the labour force. Medway has a good record in terms of women's participation in the labour market and in the enterprise field. 22 per cent of economically active women work part time and 32 per cent full time. This is slightly higher than for England as a whole. Employment is higher among men than among women but employment rate has increased as much as well for men as for women in recent years. Enterprise figures show that in the South East region as a whole around 50,000 businesses are owned by women. Female self-employment accounts for around 30 per cent of total self-employment, alongside London the highest proportion in the country. The 2006 – 2016 South East Regional Economic Strategy Evidence Base reports that although this may appear high, we have to remember that females account for over 50 per cent of the total population in the region. Furthermore, men are 2.4 times more likely to start a business than females (the ratio of female to male rates of self employment is one to 2.4 averaged across the eight counties). Within the region there are also large disparities in self employment rates amongst females. The rate of self-employment among females is highest in Surrey (9 per cent) and lowest in the area where Medway is located - Kent and Hampshire and Isle of Wight (5 per cent). The biggest differential in female to male rates of self-



employment is in Kent where it is 1 to 3.4. Business start-up rates amongst women are significantly below the rate for men, the fact which is reflected in the proportion of women-owned businesses/proportion of self-employment. The SE Regional Economic Strategy report goes on to state that women are half as likely as men to start a business within the next three years, one-quarter less likely to see good opportunities for starting a business, two-thirds as likely to think they have the skills to start a business, and significantly more likely to fear failure.²⁰⁸ This represents a vast source of untapped potential. If women started businesses at the same rate as men we would have 150,000 extra start-ups in the UK.

The knowledge economy has not played as significant part in the local economy as in the UK as a whole, or even as in the wider south east. Whilst Medway hosts four Universities North Kent has only 20% of employment in knowledge driven sectors compared to the south east figure of 27.5% and the GB figure of 23.6%. North Kent remains well below the south east and GB benchmarks. (Source Kent Economic report 2004)

Policies services and agencies that are involved in one way or another in addressing the key problem of increasing entrepreneurial activity, particularly insofar as it could address economic regeneration, social inclusion and the underutilisation of women's skills represent the main focus of Medway's involvement in WEED. The LSG has given specific attention to this theme of WEED.

Improving women's performance in the labour market

Partnerships between the Local Skills Council, South East Economic Development Agency (SEEDA), local authorities and local strategic partnerships on a wide range of local growth and regeneration projects and initiatives have allowed partners to better align and target funding to meet the learning and skills needs relating to employability of adults in the area. This has been encouraged by national programmes such as the Train to Gain strategy and the Skills for Life strategy. The Kent and Medway workforce has the lowest qualification levels of any South East region. It partly explains the relatively low income of workers in the area. Skills shortages and gaps are highest amongst skilled trade and professional and technical occupations and the predicted shift from the low skills economy to high skills economy has put pressure on the need for higher skills. Local Area Agreements between local authority, Local Skills Council, BusinessLinkKent and other stakeholders and providers have been developed to address this issue for all adults and there is interest in matching this with equalities issues.

Utilising women's skills for entrepreneurial activity

SEEDA and its partners, including Business Link Kent (both members of the Local Support group) have openly stated that they are working at "releasing the potential of Women's Enterprise in the South East, which will not only make a significant contribution in rivalling the world's most competitive regions, but will transform the lives of individual women, their families and communities particularly in disadvantaged areas

Current activities of BusinessLink Kent, SEEDA and the Learning and Skills Council of Kent and Medway include:

- Supporting the South East Ambassadors Network and Advocates programme
- Providing an online version of a Women's Business Support Directory (which has been updated from 2005), and also contains details on the women's networks that are available in the region.
- Preliminary discussions to establish a Women's Business Centre in North Kent
- Women's Enterprise website www.womensenterprisesoutheast.co.uk supported by South East Enterprise Development Agency (SEEDA)
- Involvement in the EQUAL project 'Trading Up'. This was a pilot project 'encouraging more enterprise in disadvantaged communities, under-resourced and underrepresented groups' by providing access to a community-based confidence-building programme built around the establishment and running of a business.

Much of the activity has taken place against the background of a wider national strategy to increase women's entrepreneurial activity – the UK Women's Enterprise Task Force. The Task Force was set up in 2007 to champion women's enterprise and encourage more women across the country to start and run successful businesses. Its aim is to



provide leadership and champion women's enterprise and drive the women's enterprise agenda forward across Government and into the regions. It is expected to work with the Regional Development Agencies to ensure women have access to high-quality, women-friendly support. Smart Growth is one of its actions to bring more people into the workforce by encouraging more women into entrepreneurship. In the South East region this includes a Women's Enterprise Advocates programme, encouraging and inspiring women to start and grow their businesses to contribute to the 10,000 new women-owned businesses targeted for 2010. Against this background the WEED project represents an important opportunity to develop and explore a wider range of options that might have a national as well as local impact.

Priorities for change

Key issues for change that Local Support Group members identified include:-

- Developing a Women's Business Center to further support the creation and sustainability of entrepreneurs among a population of socially and economically disadvantaged women
- Working with partners, stakeholders and providers to match skills learning with new opportunities for a knowledge based economy
- Focusing on the needs of 14-19 year olds who are not in education, training or employment.
- Extending business support schemes beyond mainstream groups. Most schemes don't take into account the specific needs of disadvantaged/excluded or under-resourced groups.
- Developing various options of employer engagement.

These are relevant issues within the context of the URBACT programme and appear to be similar to Karvina and Umea.

The expertise the Medway partner offered other WEED partners included expertise and understanding of the needs of new and small enterprises run by women and particular expertise in partnership working at local and regional level as well as experience in developing the Taxtix board game, developing access to technology for women to develop their business plans and providing workshop and one to one support for women entrepreneurs.

Members of the LSG also identified some of the areas of practice and policies members wish to learn from the exchange activities as: -

- What are the resources needed for an online community that will act as an entry point for some clients, but also provide a vehicle for peer-to-peer networking.
- What role do other projects attach to mentoring and coaching support: can lessons be shared at national and local level.
- How do other countries develop and use capacity building programmes, including training
- What role do ad hoc business advice services serve elsewhere?



WEED

URBACT II

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8. UMEA

Current situation Umea

Umeå is located in the northern part of Sweden, near the sea and has a population of 110,000. It lies in the region of Västerbotten. It is a city of civil servants and fairly well educated women and men. The strongest sectors in Umeå's economy include IT, modern forestry, engineering industries and research-based biotechnology. There are also a large number of people employed in commerce and trade. The public sector is a large employer – 47% of jobs are in the sector that includes the hospital and two universities. Women are active in planning, politics and the economy through work. Well-developed social services providing childcare, schools, care for elderly etc. enabling women to enter the labour market. This has been a case for the past 30 years approx. The city is part of a dominant forestry (and mining) region. The coastline is inhabited and the inland is very scarcely populated. The City of Umeå largest private employer is Volvo Lastvagnar, car industry (both women and men work there). Factors currently affecting the city's pattern of growth and jobs include the presence of some major industries with many employees which city depends on and the University.

Women are an important part of the labour force. Compared to other European regions and cities, Umea has a good record in terms of women's participation in the labour market and in the enterprise field. As in Sweden as a whole, women have been in the Umea labour market for a long time. Employment is higher among men than among women but employment rate has increased as much as well for men as for women in recent years. In 2004 – 62,9 % of women and 85,9 % of men worked fulltime. The main problems now are not to get the women in to the market but to create full-time jobs and abolish the pay-gap that is due to gender and sexual harassment at workplaces. The municipality wishes to address the gendered pay gap issue, as well as the persistence of segregative patterns in education and training and thus in professional life. The need to increase immigrant women's involvement in the labour market is also an important area of concern. There is also the question of managerial positions. At municipal level there is a majority of women who are manager but in private sector there are few women at managerial level, inconsiderate of type of businesses. There are very many highly educated women in the city and there is hard competition for any skilled jobs, so many women (and also men) have to leave the city to get a qualified job. The university is a work place that used to create many opportunities but in the last couple of years there has been setback in amount of students in some areas, which also affect the number of employees.

The knowledge economy plays a significant part in the local economy. The Universities are very important factors for the city economy. Umea University in 2008 has over 28 000 students, 4 100 employees and more than 25 research centres. The research centres such as the Centre for Biomedical Engineering and Physics involving several departments at Umeå University, Umeå University Hospital and Luleå University of Technology as well as companies in the field. It develops new product ideas through advanced university research that will benefit the health-care system. The town has a young population with many students. The population has an extremely high rate of turnover when it comes to people, due to university and difficulty in finding work for educated people in the city. People come to study, like the town and want to stay but there are no jobs for them. There can be hundreds of qualified applicants for one single job. The City of Umeå largest public employer is the University Hospital where mostly women work but men and women's work tends to be segregated.

Policies services and agencies that are involved in one way or another in addressing the key problems of labour force segregation and pay gap and the potential for increasing entrepreneurial activity represent the main focus of Umea's involvement in WEED. The LSG has given specific attention to these two sub themes of WEED and this is discussed below. Following this the outcome of Local Support Group's discussion of the mapping and which areas they want to prioritise is presented.

Improving women's performance in the labour market

Sweden has a long tradition of a strong public sector which has been the reason so many women could go out in the labour market, i.e. childcare, care for elderly has been arranged. Also, the sector has created many job opportunities and today, most women in our region work for the public sector, primarily in healthcare, schools, childcare and



administration. At the same time, this means that there are quite few different employees to choose from and the labour market is narrowed in. This is of course also because, and foremost, due to extreme gender segregation in labour market in Umeå as well as in Sweden. Also strong gender stereotypes regarding what men and women "should" be doing. Today the public sector is being privatised; creating new challenges for the gender equality work in Sweden. In Umeå, the public sector has stayed public, but staff can for instance run their own kindergarten. Private sector business companies run about 20 % of elderly care in Umeå. These are national companies.

Umeå municipality has a political goal that "Full-time job is a right and part-time job is a possibility." This goal has not been carried out yet, and many people, mostly women, still work part-time because they do not get offered more hours. It is very hard today to live off one part-time wage so this is a big problem. Also because the pension becomes so small since many people working part-time do this for a long period of time.

Developing a knowledge base

There are regional programmes offering advice to individuals on information technology but the new industries that are created in the city are not characterized in the use of new technologies or the knowledge economy. The LSG identified this area as one where all members were interested in change. A national programme of loans exists for acquisition of computer equipment and access to the Internet for small businesses but it is limited in its capacity to increase the use of technologies by new industries in the city and to develop the base for attracting businesses that do. Two problems were identified. Firstly, it is difficult for small businesses to obtain clear and complete information about all the resources they can get and, secondly, funding for the public sector to provide essential training in new technologies is limited. It means that training is generally at only low levels and the city cannot develop new technologies and science in the city. Women have access to some 'women only' courses but they are at low level and limited.

Utilising women's skills for entrepreneurial activity

The government of Sweden has a strong focus on increasing women's entrepreneurial activity, so at the moment there are several national programs that can be applied for help to finance start of business, there are national ambassadors for women's entrepreneurship.

There are special loans for setting up smaller businesses, typically addressed as women's businesses, that are useful, but at the same time – Why should women always run small businesses? This is one of the questions one of the members of the LSG said was very common. That is the fact that the women do not dare to borrow a lot of money, take fewer risks and in this way do not expand their businesses – creating more job opportunities etc.

But nothing specific in the municipality is focusing on this and the LSG is interested in exploring ideas on these issues. One important aspect, for example, is the attitudes and self-image of "The BusinessMAN" which is so hard to change.

Integrating equalities and regeneration policies

Gender Equality is an aim of the city authority. The goal of Umeå's gender policy is that men and women should have the same power to shape society as well as their own lives. Gender equality should, in a concrete way, be included and applied at all stages of decision-making process and in all documents Umeå municipality is behind. (Gender mainstreaming)

Umeå municipality has an overall equality plan which the City Managers Office Personnel dept. is responsible for. This is revised each year and each administration / Board should follow it. The action plan is to create activity and has a broader perspective than the Equality plan, which is developed with the support of The Equality Officer. The two complement each other, but should not be confused. The action plan provides the opportunity to bring gender equality to



the different activities. The desire to work with these questions grows with the level of knowledge. Individuals and organizations become more developed when both men's and women's knowledge and experience, living conditions are put forth. To investigate, identify and analyse how women and men live their everyday life, gives a picture of how structures in organization and society affects and is affected by both sexes. The aim is to highlight what conditions women and men have in Umeå municipality, as elected representatives, civil servants and citizens. Facts and gender statistics is a good start but gender analyses is also needed.

Strategy for Equality Gender mainstreaming is the strategy and methodology as the government decided to promote gender equality. Gender mainstreaming means that an organization all levels, both horizontally and vertically, to be implemented with a gender perspective. It is the management who needs to take the strategic decisions and set targets for gender equality. The actual implementation should be carried out in the same way as any other change, by all managers and employees. All people in Umeå municipality can contribute to achieve an equal society.

Umeå municipality has signed the European Municipalities and region Cooperation Organisation, Council of European Municipalities and Regions, the declaration between men and women. CEMRs declaration is a political document and an instrument to work with gender equality. Very briefly, the declaration is for the signatories to work on the equality in the best manner on the basis of the framework and powers that the organization has. The declaration contains of six basic principles. Umeå municipality's action plan deals with two of these principles:

- to eliminate gender stereotypes is crucial to achieving gender equality
- to integrate a gender perspective in all activities of municipalities and regions necessary to promote gender equality

Making these policies work in the area of economic regeneration is a challenge but the experience of mainstreaming is a significant step in its development.

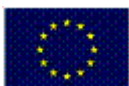
Priorities for change

Following the initial local mapping identification of the current situation and problems regarding the utilisation of women for a Jobs and Growth agenda in their local area members of the LSG were consulted what they might prioritise for work with the WEED project was discussed. This was based on where they felt they had capacity for change and interest in doing so. In Umeå the LSG members comprised representatives from NGOs, City authority, County administrative body, regional committee and ALMI business partner.

Partners varied in the areas they felt they had capacity to contribute to change. The city authority reported greatest capacity in supporting women into work, the regional committee and business partner felt they had most to contribute in the areas of enterprise development and promotion of IT and science. There was, nevertheless, a strong commitment to change in all areas by partners. When members considered what expertise they had to offer other WEED partners specific areas of capacity became clearer: they included a level of knowledge and experience in providing leadership programmes promoting women's self-esteem and taking part in their local society, providing financial support systems, developing Gender mainstreaming projects and implementation on overall equality goals at local and regional level and providing projects on attitudes regarding gender stereotypes/ gender roles

Members of the LSG also identified which of the three WEED themes - labour market, entrepreneurship and knowledge economy - they were interested in developing. These included

- Addressing the gender-segregated labour market and its consequences, part-time work, the pay-gap, status jobs, career opportunities.
- Working for change in the regions focus areas (geotechnology, forestry): getting more women into these areas both in research and at work. Gender consequence analyses would be a good strategy for the focus areas, since they are strongly male dominated sectors today.
- Support functions to projects that wish to work actively with gender mainstreaming as strategy.
- Business laws in Sapmi, gender roles that affect both women and men's choices on the labour market. The Double shift (triple in Sapmi), i.e. paid and unpaid work - still mostly women's situation.
- To change attitudes in financing and finding ways for women's self-esteem greater within business area.



- All members stress how important it is with education, to create networks and education opportunities for women in entrepreneurship. Also to be able to offer mentorship programs for women in career opportunities or in other areas in society.

The areas that the members in Umeå ULSSG wish to learn from the exchange activities include:

- How do other cities and regions manage these issues? General level? Is it through a lot of established collaboration, projects, strong political will, or how?
- Women and entrepreneurship, how do other cities work to promote this and increase the level of women owned and run businesses?
- Interested in exchange with women businesses in the other areas, especially if there are rural areas nearby. Are their women businesses there? Within which areas – tourism, food distribution, small-scale production of rural produce etc.
- How does one create sustainable development after a project closed down?
- How to question and change/leave gender stereotypes, enabling and creating a broader labour market for both women and men?
- How does it work to start businesses in other countries? How do women get jobs without large public sector?
- Do other cities have interesting steering/managerial systems incorporated into their cities planning, annual reports and plans regarding gender mainstreaming and questions on gender analysis, which we could learn from?



9. SANTIAGO DI COMPOSTELA

Santiago de Compostela, capital of the Galicia region in North-Western Spain, has a population of close to 93 000 inhabitants. It is the Capital of the Galician Community. The city's economy depends mostly on the public administration, health, cultural and tourism sectors. The university is also a major employer. The city's economy is characterised by heavy dependence on the political-administrative, health, tourism and cultural sectors. It suffers from a weak infrastructure/low industrial index

The economically active population has increased over the last ten years – 18.5 per cent in recent years but has started to slow down. Santiago has been the major site of population increase in the region and women have been more effectively integrated into the labour market. Most of the economically active population are employed in the service sector (73%). However there has been a marked increase in unemployment, irregular employment and underemployment. The rise in temporary and precarious employment is particularly marked amongst young women. 35 per cent of contracts in the city are temporary contracts. The municipality is especially concerned with the high levels of unemployment of young women and those above 45. This is partly due to inadequate levels of education and training but also to the persistence of gendered stereotypes and lack of facilities and services allowing family and work-life conciliation. Women comprise 70 per cent of employees in the service sector. They are relatively well represented in IT companies, amongst intellectuals, technical and professional scientists but feminine activity is 50 per cent lower than men's, their wages are 30 per cent lower and women's unemployment rate is slightly higher. In addition within the IT sector they tend to be more likely to be in administrative roles, whereas men are more likely to be in managerial positions.

In terms of entrepreneurial activity 2.7% of working people are self-employed, lower than the European average. The retail trade is the sector with a higher level of self-employment although there are opportunities in the area of communications and IT. Women's entrepreneurial activity, however, is mainly in the field of agriculture and services, especially in the retail sector. Most women's enterprises are small and they work autonomously. Self-employment and enterprise can be important ways of increasing women's participation in local development, regardless of their age, socio-economic background and origin and there is an interest locally in promoting change in this area.

Problems that face the city are

- Economic slow down affecting the labour market. The real estate crisis and price of oil are both affecting the economy.
- Problems of the employment creation policies. It is difficult to solve precarious working conditions, especially for women.
- Problems of innovation. Change of growth model needed. There is a need for greater financial support systems for entrepreneurs and new ways of capitalising micro businesses.
- Insufficient participation of women in local economic development.
- Problems in reintegrating women into the labour market. The market is not adopting adequate measures to incorporate women into the labour market, to adopt measures of conciliation between personal and labour life.
- Professionally qualified women are underutilised.
- Entrepreneurial education for women is underdeveloped.
- Low representation of women in the new economy. There is still a predominance of jobs traditionally developed by women (health, education, retail trade).
- Need of improving business development services for women. Need of specific programs aimed at creating women entrepreneurship.

Methods to address the problems currently include

- **Creating opportunities of demographic development**
Measures to increase the rate of young people in work.
Local industry plan. The plan includes four strategic orientations: growth and social inclusion, diversifying the economic base of the city's economy, stimulating innovation through R&D support of the University, strengthen the international profile of the city as an area of cultural, scientific, economic and social activity.



Increased development of infrastructures, technological and science parks.

- **Creating opportunities of economic development**

Using business references to support a growth strategy (graphic arts, wood, electronics of consumption and communication).

Promoting endogenous development, including the creation of working spaces within legislation of employment office and ESF projects.

- **Incorporating new policies of employment creation**

Multilateral programs to support entrepreneurship.

New ways of capitalizing for micro-businesses.

- **Opportunities of innovation**

Increasing focus of growth towards R&D and innovation, including organising joint structures oriented to cooperation and provision of services of I and D and technological.

Problems that exist in implementing and developing these strategies include a lack of integrated approaches to insertion into the labour market, an underdevelopment of monitoring tools that would help address deficiencies in employment and training programmes (particularly significant for addressing the under representation of women) and a situation where self employment does not feature highly for policy makers or women themselves. There are also problems insofar as innovative projects seldom get the chance to develop and are often repeated in almost identical parameters.

Priorities for change

When the LSG discussed what they might prioritise for work with the WEED project after carrying out their local mapping the individuals involved included representatives from local and regional councils, trade unions, entrepreneurs, universities and employment offices.

There was general agreement that they had a medium to high level of ability to support women into enterprise, and in new technology or science but slightly less capability when it came to promoting women's interests in work. The areas of change that most interested members of the LSG were, in general, evenly spread across the three sub themes of WEED. Specific areas of change that members wanted to prioritise included: -

- To promote the employment of the women and the equality access to conditions at work and to professional promotion.
- To promote women's entrepreneurship and confidence in entrepreneurial capacity (empoderamiento in Spanish)
- To help to eliminate behaviours and discriminatory actions in the labour area.
- To favour the access of the women to spaces of decision in the managerial organizations, favouring a balanced representation between men and women in the different organs and levels of taking of decisions, charges of headquarters and of managerial responsibility.
- To extend the knowledge on the feminine participation in the environments of the science and the technology in the city, in order to feed innovative strategies to reach the equality in these areas.
- To integrate the vision of the women in the processes of design, production and management of scientific areas (equity and technology).
- To increase the number of women involved in the generation of the knowledge.

In particular, though, members of the Santiago LSG are interested in sharing everything about entrepreneurial activity especially women's entrepreneurial activity in the knowledge economy, because a good previous experience of supporting entrepreneurs exists in the city and because of a desire to develop our municipality in the area of new technologies business.



WEED

URBACT II

The LSG expects the WEED project to provide a rich exchange of experiences, as a way of developing a methodology that will allow the transfer of good practice to strengthen women's active participation in social and economic local life, promoting a more balanced presence of women and men in the field of entrepreneurship and in local economic development.

Hopes for the project include: -

- Exchange of experiences regarding: women entrepreneurship, methodology and policies implementation.
- Exchange of experiences in management of intermediation platforms and entrepreneurship support.
- Clearer definitions of the guidelines that can be used by local development agencies, including protocols of assistance to women integration into the labour market by entrepreneurship.
- Clearer definitions of strategies for women empowerment from local development.



Common problems – common priorities?

As we mentioned at the beginning of this section local mapping was aimed at clarifying whether, and how, each partner city experienced the problem of the underutilisation of women within the context of policies and strategies aimed at supporting economic growth and jobs development. It was also aimed at establishing the extent to which each city was able and wanted to address the issues they identified.

Looking at the results of the problem mapping, it serves, firstly, to demonstrate that trends at European Union are also experienced at local levels. It appears that all partner cities experience a situation where women's skills are under-utilised to some extent in the areas of employment, entrepreneurial activity and business related research. The mapping, however, showed considerable diversity and within that diversity much that can be drawn on to begin to address the problems that partners have identified. In some cities, for example, a gendered gap in overall employment rates is evident, in others women have been successfully incorporated into the local economy as workers but the gap is more over pay and types of work. Amongst some partners there is evidence of growing entrepreneurial activity at local level but low levels of women's involvement. In others women have a rate of involvement in entrepreneurial activity that is higher than the European average (albeit still lower than men's) but concern exists about the extent to which women's self employment can transfer to larger and more sustainable businesses. In nearly all cities women are entering higher education in larger numbers but even in cities where significant proportions of women have achieved higher education there is concern that this has not been transferred into a use of their skills and knowledge in areas of science and technology relevant to European economic policy.

The extent to which cities had resources they could use to achieve change and how the WEED programme/partners could be drawn on to develop them was a second stage of the mapping. It was undertaken once the review of 'problematics' was completed: each partner city proceeding to a review of the current policy and service environment was undertaken. This was then used to stimulate a collective consideration by LSG members of the priorities for change, the resources they could use to achieve change and how the WEED programme/partners could be drawn on to develop them and help others do the same. The results of the exercise are reported for each city in the previous section of the report. In the section below an attempt is made to pull the results together in effort to inform the overall WEED work programme.

Priorities for change

Different cities have different needs and priorities and it is clear from the LSG discussions that specific priorities were wide ranging. Nevertheless certain key priorities for change emerged that could offer a focus in each of the sub themes for individual LSGs and the WEED programme as a whole. These included: -

Improving women's work

1. Developing and promoting programmes that actively promote the conciliation of work and family life, such as actions to promote teleworking amongst women.
2. Initiating and extending measures to support/ enhance social enterprises as a source of employment. Particular sectors of interest include sustainable tourism, agro food industry and artistic artefacts.
3. Finding ways of improving women position in the private and NGO sectors, including where women's current paid work opportunities are concentrated in the public sector.

Promoting/ supporting entrepreneurial activities

1. Developing a framework of analysis and evaluation of factors delivering success amongst female and male entrepreneurs that could be used to provide guidelines for future use by female entrepreneurs.
2. Developing locally based measures to increase motivation and reduce risk aversion amongst women, particularly in sectors that might enhance the economic profile of individual cities e.g. in the field of tourism, and agro food industry.
3. Developing and managing effective municipal support programmes for female entrepreneurs (e.g. financial support, information and advice).



Promoting/ supporting women in use of new technology and position in science and knowledge

1. Exploring actions that could marry women's increased educational performance with employment in applied science and technology or entrepreneurial activity in knowledge economy.
2. Developing measures to increase educated women's involvement in entrepreneurial activity and SMEs. This includes actions taken to increase school age girls' interest.
3. Finding ways to increase uptake of technology by women in rural areas as a way of integrating them with economic development in small cities.

Integrating policies

1. Developing guidelines for locally based opportunities for men and women interested in working together in an area of entrepreneurial activity.
2. Developing measures to increase political will to incorporate gender equality issues into economic development policy.
3. Developing and incorporating gender analysis into local economic planning.

This last theme is of a horizontal nature i.e. it applies to all three themes outlined above.

Resources for change and the potential for WEED programme/partners

Besides identifying the priorities of partners and the extent to which there were similarities amongst WEED partners the profiles provided some clear ideas about the resources cities were already adopting in order to address some of these priorities. Most importantly, however, they provided an indication of the directions in which resources needed to be developed if effective realisation of the priorities was to be achieved. In the table below the priorities are matched with existing resources/ practices where some strength has been developed but where weaknesses remain. The weaknesses, however, also represent the areas that partners felt could be developed to achieve their priorities.



Priorities and strengths and weaknesses of current resources

Priority	Current policies/ practices/ services	Weaknesses - areas for development
Women's work		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes and activities for balancing home and work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of developing better childcare facilities for working mothers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underdeveloped in areas without strong public provision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extending support to areas that could employ women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes to create workspaces with ESF projects/ understanding needs of SMEs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seldom married with women's needs or capacities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving position of women in private sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes for leadership/ soft skills/ work motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seldom transfers strengths of public to private sector and vice versa. Lack of gender impact analysis and its use for planning in private sector.
Entrepreneurial activity		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and implementing framework for analysis and evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools for analysing needs/ factors for women's success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines seldom developed or implemented
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing motivation & reducing risk aversion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and training programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seldom bring men and women together for entrepreneurial development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal programmes to support new enterprise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies with private companies to support a growth strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seldom takes women's small businesses to next stage of development
Knowledge economy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving graduate position in applied science/ technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate cluster development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underdeveloped and not fully integrated with entrepreneurial development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing awareness & uptake of technological education at all levels of education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender stereotype reduction programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seldom co-ordinated with business
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing technological take up – to include rural women/ women on margins of city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes to improve IT usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seldom reaches rural women or connects with job opportunities beyond entry level



A future work programme? Clusters and activities

The identification of shared or at least overlapping priorities as well as areas of weakness provides a basis for the development of some clear objectives for partners. In a two-year programme, however, not all the areas for change or identified areas of weakness can be tackled. Any workplan developed as part of the URBACT programme will have to have the following characteristics:

1. Be specific in relation to the needs of Local Support Groups
2. Assist in the development of local action plans that could attract resources or alter the way resources are used
3. Have outcomes at all stages of the local action planning process that are measurable and realistic
4. Be able to show the added value that the exchange activities offers for partners and European Commission
5. Have outcomes at all stages of the exchange process that are time specific, measurable and realistic

A first step in identifying a realistic framework for WEED as a whole has been the identification of the clusters of interest amongst partners. There is a strong interest in exploring issues around all three sub themes of the partnership but analysis of the local mapping does suggests that there are particular clusters of interests that could be developed to allow expertise to be exchanged and issues explored in a way that meets local priorities more effectively. The clusters are presented below.

Women at work, Alzira and Amiens

	The lessons offered by partner	What the partner wants to learn/ develop
Alzira	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong contact between employers and IDEA (local development agency) leading to improved routes to work for women • Knowledge of resources needed to reconcile work and family life - based on research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to increase women's presence in better paid work, particularly at managerial level, employment at time of global and local economic crisis • How to develop resources for reconciling work and family life
Amiens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership between specialist NGO and Municipality to increase help for unemployed women who wish to work • Schools based programme to change stereotypes at an early age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to overcome stereotypes of men and women's work and family roles in a city where the traditional industry base is changing • How to make partnerships between Municipality and NGOs more effective in improving types of jobs and career development for women
Possible project outcomes	<p>Project proposals would be linked to regional programmes or other sources of funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for joint public/ private/ NGO 'Investment in Women' activities • Pilot procurement activity (e.g. gender impact assessment) involving SMEs in sectors where women work 	



Raising levels and success of entrepreneurial performance by women, Karvina, Crotone and Enna

	The lessons offered by partner	What the partner wants to learn/ develop
Karvina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of developing and supporting women in SMEs • Experience of promoting/ combining work and home in a way that increases women's career profile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of city authority in motivating and promoting women entrepreneurs • Examples of successful business women and analysis of reasons for success
Crotone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful development of women's entrepreneurial activity in small business landscape – particularly in service and retail sector • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to expand entrepreneurial success to the heritage/ cultural sector that city wants to develop • How to build effective partnership between men and women for expanding businesses
Enna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of developing women's entrepreneurial capacity in agricultural industry • Experience of providing financial support for female entrepreneurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to enhance/ support women's involvement in social enterprise in field of artistic artefacts allied to tourism and agro food industry • Role of local agencies in promoting/ supporting entrepreneurship amongst women
Medway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of developing women's entrepreneurial activity at market entry and beyond • Linking support for women with other business development programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to support networks of support between new and established enterprises • Role of local agencies in promoting/ supporting entrepreneurship
Possible project outcomes	<p>Project proposals would be linked to regional programmes or other sources of funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of support programme for women who have been self employed/ in business for more than 2 years • Drawing up guidelines and implementation programme for supporting women entrepreneurs from existing research 	

The knowledge economy: improving position of women graduates and widening access to IT, Umea and Celje

	The lessons offered by partner	Learn/ develop
Umea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insight into how a university city addresses imbalance between educated women and availability of highly skilled jobs • Experience of Municipality and University working together to research possibilities for making women entrepreneurs in rural hinterland of city more efficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods for overcoming extreme gender segregation in technology/science labour market • Methods for increasing educated women's involvement in entrepreneurial activity
Celje	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of how strong state support for gender equality impacts on local job segregation • Understanding of how women's business knowledge can be increased and bring innovation to changing city economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to increase female graduate participation in private sector and entrepreneurial activity • How to ensure women in rural hinterland of city are included in new sectors of economy
Possible project outcomes	<p>Project proposals would be linked to regional programmes or other sources of funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinating municipal and private sector support for women graduate clusters • Planning IT and entrepreneurship programme for rural based women: joint municipal and business project 	



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Each cluster could take particular responsibility for the work programme relating to their sub theme, possibly leading the proposed workshops in the area. Possible project proposals that could be part of the Local Action Plan outcomes are suggested. They have been discussed at a preliminary stage by the Steering group on the basis of LSG local planning reports but have been used as a way to show how any project proposal outcomes are expected to have relevance for an individual LSG but are also outcomes that the European and local mapping have shown to be of interest beyond an individual city level.

Project proposals, however, are only one part of the intended outcomes of the WEED project. The URBACT programme is aimed at not only assisting cities in planning action but also at providing a sound base of experience and information and partners can draw on for their current and future local action plans **and** at providing a repository of ideas and actions for other hoping to address the key issue of the underutilisation of women's skills in the jobs and growth agendas of small to medium sized cities. It is for this reason that the work plan proposed is based on clear ideas of positive learning and reflection throughout the programme period that draws on shared activities at local and transnational level and establishes a strong pattern of dissemination aimed at allowing partners and other to capitalise on lessons learnt. The workplan contains specific suggestions about:-

1. Creating an action learning exchange for over 90 key actors from 9 partners.
2. Establishment of 9 Local Support Groups
3. Production of template for local project development
4. Electronic newsletters
5. 3 sub-theme reports
6. 3 sub-theme linked case-study reports incorporating at least 40 case studies
7. An online resource relating to the specific sub-themes. The overall aim is to create an online resource that enables participants to maintain contact with each other and at the same time provide access to the experience, knowledge and skills of a sample of participants in the project.
8. Project proposals linked to regional operational programmes or other sources of funding
9. Dissemination of results to at least 30 other Cities and Regions.
10. Generating guidelines for future interventions in relation to women, enterprise and economic development enterprise at European, national, regional and local levels.

It is also drawn up with a clear idea of how and when outcomes will be achieved. A detailed timetable is included in the workplan but at each stage the intention is to establish an action learning exchange relating to one of the sub themes of WEED, a template for local development, a sub theme and case study report, an online resource, project proposals linked to regional operational programmes or other sources of funding and a dissemination seminar.

At the final stage guidelines based on experience of template development for future interventions in relation to women, enterprise and economic development at European, national, regional and local levels will be drawn up, a dissemination seminar organised and aimed at capitalising on the results at local level to inform and effect change at regional and national levels. This will form the basis of the final synthesis report.



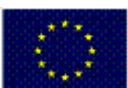
IV Synthesis and conclusions

Gender equality is one of the key horizontal themes of the EU Strategy for Growth and Jobs. The Lisbon Strategy defines targets in terms of participation rates for women in the labour market and also, entrepreneurship development. The achievement of such targets remains compromised by the various and numerous obstacles women encounter in the job market and in the business creation field. A key aim of the WEED project is to show whether and how addressing gender equality can make a major contribution to economic growth, prosperity and competitiveness in cities. It is a role that the EU as well as the partner cities and regions outside the EU have recognised as a particularly valuable one. According to a scoping exercise endorsed by the Ministers for Spatial Development and the European Commission at the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Regional Policy and Territorial Cohesion, 20/21 May 2005 in Luxembourg a key political challenge for the Union at this moment is to become economically more competitive and dynamic at the same time as maintaining and developing social and economic cohesion. Urban revitalisation and equality strategies both have a key part to play in this. If Europe is to benefit from more than the dynamism of metropolitan areas such as London, Hamburg, Munich, Milan and Paris then cities, small and medium as well as large cities need to be supported as motors for development, they play a key role in strengthening territorial cohesion in the light of the Lisbon aims. Understanding how gender affects urban revitalisation and supporting further developments to develop the underused potential of women in small and medium sized urban areas – in employment, enterprise and the newly developing areas of the Knowledge economy - can address two major themes of EU policy.

This project has the overall aim of assisting Cities and Regions (Managing Authorities) to examine whether a programme of action to redress women's underdeveloped role in economic development within small to medium sized cities is possible and to consider how to develop and extend good practice that could be part of a local action plan. During the last six months partners from Competitive and Cohesion countries from Nordic as well as EC member states have worked together with the lead partner and lead expert involved in the Development phase of the project to clarify whether exploring the issues and possibilities of promoting women in enterprise, employment and economic development that they identified in the application phase of URBACT 11 can be valuable in achieving change at European and local level. They have, moreover, examined whether there is a desire and possibility for change at local and regional level and whether the next stage of the URBACT programme can assist in focusing resources for change. From the very beginning strong links have been built between its partners, with the overall aim of facilitating transfer of actions/ideas that actively address and improve practice in relation to the issues of women, entrepreneurship and employment within their regional operational programmes.

Their work has involved carrying out and considering a Baseline mapping exercise at European and local level. Its purpose has been to review existing knowledge, policy and networks working on the issue of cities, women, enterprise and employment and establish not only the areas in which the WEED project could build but also how such building could proceed with the assistance of an exchange programme. According to Room (2005) ⁴⁰mapping or benchmarking for the purpose of policy learning and innovation is an essential element of the Lisbon Agenda. It is a means of coordinating and enriching policy debate at different levels, from top to bottom and bottom to top'. This report from the Development Phase of WEED and its suggestions for a workplan give some idea of how change could be approached and how working together could help to inform and progress innovation amongst partners and beyond. At European level it includes a mapping of women, work and enterprise within the context of urban development at European level as well as an examination of key European policy and examples of actions at European levels that have addressed weaknesses. At local level it includes a summary of Local Support Group's reflections on their local weaknesses, strengths, possibilities and priorities for change as well as considerations of how they might benefit and contribute to a programme of transnational learning. Each is summarised below as well as the conclusions regarding a possible workplan that would take things forward over the next two years.

⁴⁰ G Room et al (2005) *The European Challenge : Innovation, policy learning and social cohesion in the knowledge economy*. Bristol, Policy Press.



European mapping: Women and the Jobs and growth agenda

At the *European Union level* the mapping was aimed at providing partners with a brief overview of: -

- How the role of cities and city regions in driving economic growth is being explored in Europe and how the approach could be extended to examine what women could bring to a city economy.
- The main policy instruments that underlie any analysis of gender, economic growth and regional development.
- How the EU agenda is addressing gendered employment and pay gaps at local level and how policy and funding streams at European level could be drawn on to help reduce those barriers.
- How supporting women's involvement in economic development, particularly entrepreneurship, has provided lessons for local economic growth and urban regeneration and could be developed.

Sources used for the review are footnoted in the main report but include major European Commission reports and policy papers, OECD reports and academic research in the area.

The problematics

- The European Growth and Jobs agenda is one to which women could contribute quite significantly and there is evidence to show that they are doing so. Women's employment outside the home has been growing over the last three decades, their engagement in small to medium sized enterprises is growing faster than men's and their uptake of higher education more than matches men's. Considerable problems in utilising the potential of women, however, still remain. These include a gendered gap in many sectors of employment and in pay, a low uptake of science and technological education relevant to European economic policy, and a much lower level of entrepreneurial performance than men's. All three gaps mean that women's potential is underutilised. Specifically: -
 - Employment for women has increased markedly but problems include the non achievement of the Lisbon target, an increase in the quantity of jobs but not in the quality of jobs, a pattern of part time employment that does not suit what women want and low rates of pay for part timers. This is further compounded by poor work/life balance.
 - Women's education and training levels have gone up in all Member states but their involvement in research and in a knowledge based or knowledge intensive economy has not gone up proportionately. Even with increased numbers of women graduates women are still overrepresented in low-paid and low-status jobs, and under-represented in high status jobs including the scientific and technical jobs central to the 'Knowledge Economy';
 - Entrepreneurship is important to the European economy and women's entrepreneurial activity has increased but their activity tends to be less innovative and involves smaller businesses than men's. Despite evidence to suggest that focusing on the determinants of their under performance could produce a boost to the types of enterprise where women could excel, policy has not been fully developed to ensure this.

Current policy – strengths and weaknesses

- Two areas of broad European policy have particular significance for addressing the problems of women's underperformance within the Jobs and Growth agenda: urban policy and equalities policy. European policy is increasingly based on the view that a focus on cities is valuable because cities hold the potential to attract and retain a pool of skilled labour, can smooth the flexible employment contracts of more globalised economies and constitute the best environment to engender and sustain the flow of new ideas and innovation necessary for European competitiveness in a global economy. The second area of policy - addressing gender inequality - has been central to European policy and legislation for at least four decades, it is one of the defining features of the EU commitment to cohesion and integration and policy has been much refined during that time. Together current urban policy and equalities policy would appear to offer a rich environment in which to address the problems of underutilisation of women in the economy. There are considerable resources in current funding that



could be adjusted to integrate more fully and if the *Roadmap for Equality between Men and Women* and the *European Lisbon- Gothenburg Strategy* are both drawn on there is much scope for change.

- There are, however, weaknesses in the wider policy environment. These include: -
 - A less than full recognition of the contribution that women could make to the 'consumer city' that is seen as a solution to competitiveness. This includes their contribution at all levels to the retailing and service sectors that attract population and investment in a city.
 - An underdevelopment of the infrastructure, such as childcare and caring services, that would enhance women's contribution and add to the service base and attractiveness of a city.
 - A tendency for policy to address regional or highly localised issues rather than city wide approaches.
 - A relative failure to exploit the skills of highly educated women in cities.
 - An underdevelopment of gender mainstreaming in economic and operational aspects of urban policy.
 - A lack of attention to a gender perspective in aspects of job quality.
 - Lack of analysis of how to combine the jobs and growth agenda with that of equalities.

Opportunities and limits

Despite such weaknesses in the current policy environment, practice and policy across Europe provide valuable examples of ways to address key problems of the pay and employment gap, the under-promotion of women entrepreneurial activities and the under-utilisation of women in the knowledge economy that local economies could draw on. Specifically: -

- Good practice in addressing the problems does exist and there are a number of networks and reviews that could be drawn on by municipalities for pragmatic solutions.
- Innovations and successes often depend on very local situations. Differences between countries and cities within countries highlight the influence of local environments on the determinants of enterprise, job improvement and incorporation of women into the applied side of science and technology. With such a range of experience there is potential for policy learning and transfer.
- The exposure of many groups of women in areas of regeneration to the risks of poverty, disadvantage and discrimination combined with their experience of involvement in local development makes local women valuable informants and partners for effective economic and social regeneration in urban areas.

Making the most of the lessons, however, appears to be limited by the lack, until now, of many explicit efforts to integrate urban policy and equalities strategies and by the lack of analyses of the value added to each side of the policy agendas by the other when integration does occur. The European Commission's analysis of the National Reform Programmes (NRP) 2005 and 2006 commented that the European strategy for growth and employment recognises that gender equality and gender mainstreaming are essential for progress, but illustrates that the gender mainstreaming of the employment part of the NRP is limited and records concern that the visibility of commitment to women's employment and gender equality is declining. Locating the WEED project within the URBACT Thematic pole of Cities, Engine of Growth and Job Creation provides an important space in which to explore whether these issues can be addressed in an integrated and strategic way at local level.

Local Mapping: Common problems – common priorities?

Local mapping was carried out by WEED partners in order to assess the current situation facing each city/region. The local mapping was aimed at clarifying whether, and how, each partner city experienced the problem of the underutilisation of women within the context of policies and strategies aimed at supporting economic growth and jobs development. The mapping was undertaken by each partner, supported by members of the LSG. The mapping exercise comprised desk based research, one to one interviews and local consultation with key stakeholders and members of the Local Support Group. It provided an opportunity for cities and managing authorities to work together and identify areas of common interest and commitment.

Looking at the results of the problem mapping, it serves, firstly, to demonstrate that trends at European Union are also experienced at local levels. It appears that all partner cities experience a situation where women's skills are under-



utilised to some extent in the areas of employment, entrepreneurial activity and business related research. The mapping, however, showed considerable diversity and within that diversity much that can be drawn on to begin to address the problems that partners have identified. In some cities, for example, a gendered gap in overall employment rates is evident, in others women have been successfully incorporated into the local economy as workers but the gap is more over pay and types of work. Amongst some partners there is evidence of growing entrepreneurial activity at local level but low levels of women's involvement. In others women have a rate of involvement in entrepreneurial activity that is higher than the European average (albeit still lower than men's) but concern exists about the extent to which women's self employment can transfer to larger and more sustainable businesses. In nearly all cities women are entering higher education in larger numbers but even in cities where significant proportions of women have achieved higher education there is concern that this has not been transferred into a use of their skills and knowledge in areas of science and technology relevant to European economic policy. The extent to which cities had resources they could use to achieve change and how the WEED programme/partners could be drawn on to develop them was a second stage of the mapping. It was undertaken once the review of 'problematics' was completed: each partner city proceeding to a review of the current policy and service environment was undertaken. This was then used to stimulate a collective consideration by LSG members of the priorities for change, the resources they could use to achieve change and how the WEED programme/partners could be drawn on to develop them and help others do the same. The results of the exercise are reported for each city in the previous section of the report. In the section below an attempt is made to pull the results together in effort showing how they can inform the overall WEED work programme.

Priorities for change: -

Improving women's work

- Conciliation of work and family life
- Support/ enhance social enterprises as a source of employment.
- Improving women position in the private and NGO sectors

Promoting/ supporting entrepreneurial activities

- Analysis of female and male entrepreneurs - to guidelines for female entrepreneurs.
- Increasing motivation and reduce risk aversion amongst women – to local economic possibilities.
- Effective municipal support programmes for female entrepreneurs

Promoting/ supporting women in use of new technology and position in science and knowledge

- Education to employment in applied science and technology or entrepreneurial activity in knowledge economy.
- Increasing educated women's involvement in entrepreneurial activity and SMEs.
- Increase uptake of technology by women in rural

Integrating policies

- Developing guidelines for locally based opportunities for men and women interested in working together in an area of entrepreneurial activity.
- Developing measures to increase political will to incorporate gender equality issues into economic development policy.
- Developing and incorporating gender analysis into local economic planning.

Resources for change and the potential for WEED programme/partners

Besides identifying the priorities of partners and the extent to which there were similarities amongst WEED partners the profiles provided some clear ideas about the resources cities were already adopting in order to address some of these priorities. Most importantly, however, they provided an indication of the directions in which resources needed to be developed if effective realisation of the priorities was to be achieved. In the full report above the priorities are matched with existing resources/ practices where some strength has been developed but where weaknesses remain. The weaknesses, however, also represent the areas that partners felt could be developed to achieve their priorities.

A future work programme - local and European outcomes



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The identification of shared or at least overlapping priorities as well as areas of weakness provided a basis for the development of some clear objectives for partners. In a two year programme, however, not all the areas for change or identified areas of weakness can be tackled. Any workplan developed, as part of the URBACT programme was understood to need the following characteristics:

1. Be specific in relation to the needs of Local Support Groups
2. Assist in the development of local action plans that could attract resources or alter the way resources are used
3. Have outcomes at all stages of the local action planning process that are measurable and realistic
4. Be able to show the added value that the exchange activities offers for partners and European Commission
5. Have outcomes at all stages of the exchange process that are time specific, measurable and realistic

A first step in identifying a realistic framework for WEED as a whole was the identification of the clusters of interest amongst partners. There is a strong interest in exploring issues around all three sub themes of the partnership but analysis of the local mapping suggests that there are particular clusters of interests that could be developed to allow expertise to be exchanged and issues explored in a way that meets local priorities more effectively. The clusters offered insight into not only where discussions of strengths and weaknesses, possibilities and problems could be valuably explored within a learning exchange but also generated some ideas of possible project proposal outcomes.

Women at work, Alzira and Amiens

	The lessons offered by partner	What the partner wants to learn/ develop
Alzira	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong contact between employers and IDEA (local development agency) leading to improved routes to work for women• Knowledge of resources needed to reconcile work and family life - based on research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to increase women's presence in better paid work, particularly at managerial level, employment at time of global and local economic crisis• How to develop resources for reconciling work and family life
Amiens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnership between specialist NGO and Municipality to increase help for unemployed women who wish to work• Schools based programme to change stereotypes at an early age	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to overcome stereotypes of men and women's work and family roles in a city where the traditional industry base is changing• How to make partnerships between Municipality and NGOs more effective in improving types of jobs and career development for women
Possible project outcomes	Project proposals would be linked to regional programmes or other sources of funding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guidelines for joint public/ private/ NGO 'Investment in Women' activities• Pilot procurement activity involving SMEs in sectors where women work	



The knowledge economy: improving position of women graduates and widening access to IT, Umea and Celje

	The lessons offered by partner	Learn/ develop
Umea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insight into how a university city addresses imbalance between educated women and availability of highly skilled jobs Experience of Municipality and University working together to research possibilities for making women entrepreneurs in rural hinterland of city more efficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methods for overcoming extreme gender segregation in technology/science labour market Methods for increasing educated women's involvement in entrepreneurial activity
Celje	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of how strong state support for gender equality impacts on local job segregation Understanding of how women's business knowledge can be increased and bring innovation to changing city economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to increase female graduate participation in private sector and entrepreneurial activity How to ensure women in rural hinterland of city are included in new sectors of economy
Possible project outcomes	Project proposals would be linked to regional programmes or other sources of funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinating municipal and private sector support for women graduate clusters Planning IT and entrepreneurship programme for rural based women: joint municipal and business project 	

Raising levels and success of entrepreneurial performance by women, Karvina, Crotone and Enna

	The lessons offered by partner	What the partner wants to learn/ develop
Karvina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of developing and supporting women in SMEs Experience of promoting/ combining work and home in a way that increases women's career profile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of city authority in motivating and promoting women entrepreneurs Examples of successful business women and analysis of reasons for success
Crotone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful development of women's entrepreneurial activity in small business landscape – particularly in service and retail sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to expand entrepreneurial success to the heritage/ cultural sector that city wants to develop How to build effective partnership between men and women for expanding businesses
Enna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of developing women's entrepreneurial capacity in agricultural industry Experience of providing financial support for female entrepreneurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to enhance/ support women's involvement in social enterprise in field of artistic artefacts allied to tourism and agro food industry Role of local agencies in promoting/ supporting entrepreneurship
Medway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of developing women's entrepreneurial activity at market entry and beyond Linking support for women with other business development programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to support networks of support between new and established enterprises Role of local agencies in promoting/ supporting entrepreneurship
Possible project outcomes	Project proposals would be linked to regional programmes or other sources of funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of support programme for women who have been self employed/ in business for more than 2 years Drawing up guidelines and implementation programme for supporting women entrepreneurs from existing research 	

The URBACT programme is aimed at not only assisting cities in planning action but also at providing a sound base of experience and information and partners can draw on for their current and future local action plans **and** at providing a repository of ideas and actions for other hoping to address the key issue of the underutilisation of women's skills in the



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jobs and growth agendas of small to medium sized cities. It is for this reason that the workplan proposed is based on clear ideas of positive learning and reflection throughout the programme period that draws on shared activities at local and transnational level and establishes a strong pattern of dissemination aimed at allowing partners and other to capitalise on lessons learnt. The workplan contains specific suggestions about: -

1. Creating an action learning exchange for over 90 key actors from 9 partners.
2. Establishment of 9 Local Support Groups
3. Production of template for local project development
4. Electronic newsletters
5. 3 sub-theme reports
6. 3 sub-theme linked case-study reports incorporating at least 40 case studies
7. An online resource relating to the specific sub-themes. The overall aim is to create an online resource that enables participants to maintain contact with each other and at the same time provide access to the experience, knowledge and skills of a sample of participants in the project.
8. Project proposals linked to regional operational programmes or other sources of funding
9. Dissemination of results to at least 30 other Cities and Regions.
10. Generating guidelines for future interventions in relation to women, enterprise and economic development enterprise at European, national, regional and local levels.

The workplan contains a clear idea of how and when outcomes will be achieved. A detailed timetable is included but at each stage the intention is to establish an action learning exchange relating to one of the sub themes of WEED, a template for local development, a sub theme and case study report, an online resource, project proposals linked to regional operational programmes or other sources of funding and a dissemination seminar. At the final stage guidelines based on experience of template development for future interventions in relation to women, enterprise and economic development at European, national, regional and local levels will be drawn up, a dissemination seminar organised and aimed at capitalising on the results at local level to inform and effect change at regional and national levels. This will form the basis of the final synthesis report.

Drawing up and discussing the mappings and consequent workplan at Steering Group and Local Support Group meetings has provided an important process of consolidation of partners' understanding of what they wanted from WEED and the URBACT programme as a whole. The opportunity to extend this for the next stage of URBACT is one that is welcomed by partners and promises to give real insight into how local, regional, national and European contexts can affect and/ or be used to produce innovative solutions to a problem that the European Commission takes seriously and which, if addressed can improve regional development.

It provides, moreover, a real opportunity and methodology to address some of the limitations shown in both the European and local mapping of efforts to integrate urban policy and equalities strategies and to show how each side of the policy agendas by the other when integration does occur.

