



PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI

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Posłanka do Parlamentu Europejskiego

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XVI Baltic Sea Region Forum

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are more and more aware that there is no sustainable development without gender equality! "Smart" economics is the one that uses men's and women's talent equally. It is encouraging that 16th BRS Forum recognizes the importance of gender as a pre-condition for sustainable development.

We have to work hard to integrate this understanding into economic thinking and strategies in a broadly regional perspective. Baltic Sea area is an exceptionally good case study in this respect: place of growing inter-sectoral, interregional and inter-state cooperation; where new ideas and pioneering projects have a room to emerge and grow; or the well-functioning macroregional platform.

I think that the role of the European Parliament in promoting change is pivotal. The Committee of Regional Development, that I presided over, hold hearing twice on the topic of *Gender equality in regional policies for growth - the approach of the new cohesion policy in the Baltic Sea Region to gender equality issues*. I hope it contributed to broad understanding of the necessary connection between gender equality and sustainable growth.

Much remains, though to be done: we need fuller data and research on links on the issue in the context of presenting tools and good practices: on the role of BRS Partnership Platform for Gender Equality in Innovation, Sustainable Growth and Development. As you probably know, I am a strong partisan of WINNET, for it is one of the best repositories of innovative concepts, research agenda and implemented projects in this area. There are many good practices: women's resource centers; 4 helix approach; wide network of partners in all BRS countries.

I have observed the WINNET work from the very beginning with hope and now I see the most encouraging result emerging: for example extensive collaboration among many stakeholders and partners around BRS, such as in Poland that of Szczecin University and the International Forum of Women in Science and Business at the Warsaw School of Economics. I am happy that Poland, together with Sweden and other countries such as Lithuania are strongly involved in making growth more equal and thus stronger. Gender equality has to be put firmly on the agenda of regional policy to assure sustainable growth in the post crisis Europe and BRS. It warms my hearts when I see it happening!

I want to assure you that I will do everything in my power to advance that goal of connecting equality and sustainability in the new term in the European Parliament. I look also to your support. Thank you for your attention.

Prof. dr hab. Danuta Hübner