



Guidance Note: Fostering An Inclusive Entrepreneurial Culture

Overview

This note describes the steps that policy makers can take to foster a more supportive entrepreneurial culture for women entrepreneurs. The policy guidance is structured around the good practice statements that comprise the “Fostering an Inclusive Entrepreneurial Culture” module in the Inclusive Entrepreneurship component of the Better Entrepreneurship Policy Tool. For further discussion of these issues and additional examples of relevant policy actions, please see:

OECD/European Union (2018), “Policy brief on women’s entrepreneurship”, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. <https://doi.org/10.1787/f493861e-en> [1]

*OECD/European Union (2017), *The Missing Entrepreneurs 2017: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264283602-en> [2]*

*OECD/European Union (2016), *Inclusive Business Creation: Good Practice Compendium*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264251496-en> [3]*

*OECD/European Union (2015), *The Missing Entrepreneurs 2015: Policies for Self-employment and Entrepreneurship*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264226418-en> [4]*

*OECD/The European Commission (2014), *The Missing Entrepreneurs 2014: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264213593-en> [5]*

*OECD/The European Commission (2013), *The Missing Entrepreneurs: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship in Europe*, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264188167-en> [6]*

1.1. Women’s entrepreneurship is promoted widely in society.

Awareness campaigns should seek to develop positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship and stimulate entrepreneurial intentions. Once there is an overall awareness about entrepreneurship among a population, tailored campaigns should be designed for specific sub-groups. Key activities in awareness campaigns for inclusive entrepreneurship include disseminating positive messages in the media, organising outreach and awareness events, and using awards and success stories to celebrate successful entrepreneurs from various population groups. When promoting women's entrepreneurship in society, it is important to not only present a positive image of entrepreneurship to women, but also to men. Approaches used by policy makers include role models, success stories and women's entrepreneurship ambassador networks.

Inclusive entrepreneurship policies and programmes may be ineffective if large sections of the population do not consider business ownership as a viable career choice. Negative socio-cultural perceptions about entrepreneurship can be a significant barrier to business creation and undermine the impact of entrepreneurship policy and support. Fostering a culture that values entrepreneurship is therefore essential to the success of enterprise policy and support.

Policies that promote inclusive entrepreneurship broadly seek to: (1) create positive attitudes towards business creation as a career choice for people from groups that are under-represented or disadvantaged in entrepreneurship (e.g. women, youth, immigrants, the unemployed); (2) foster entrepreneurial intentions among people from groups that are under-represented or disadvantaged in entrepreneurship. They can also be used to mobilise the key stakeholders in the region or country (e.g. entrepreneurs, chambers of commerce, business development support providers), to work together to communicate a positive image of entrepreneurship.

Inclusive entrepreneurship awareness campaigns typically include one or more of the following activities:

- *Delivery of positive messages in the media*, including television, radio, social media, blogs, newspapers and magazines.
- *Outreach, awareness events and conferences* at national, regional and local levels (e.g. Entrepreneurship Week) in collaboration with relevant stakeholders (e.g. business associations, chambers of commerce, professional associations, and community groups). Such events could include information and career fairs, forums and summits on business opportunities, including in specific economic sectors or on specific business models, such as micro-franchising.
- *Creation of Ambassador networks*, which actively promote entrepreneurship through informal (e.g. word-of-mouth during daily activities) and formal channels (e.g. keynote speeches).
- *Public celebration of inclusive entrepreneurship* role models through entrepreneurship awards and the promotion of success stories.
- *Support for private sector-led* initiatives, including business associations and entrepreneurship networks.

Each of these activities should seek deliver positive messages that:

- Highlight the value of entrepreneurship to society;
- Address negative cultural biases towards entrepreneurs from groups that are typically under-represented or disadvantaged in entrepreneurship;
- Raise awareness about different forms of entrepreneurship (e.g. part-time, social entrepreneurship);
- Raise awareness of public sector support programmes; and
- Stimulate private sector-led initiatives.

The objectives of awareness campaigns need to fit the context in the region or country. If there is little history of promoting entrepreneurship, a general campaign that speaks to the entire population is likely to have a greater overall impact than a campaign that is tailored for specific target groups. However, if there have already been general information and promotion campaigns, a more targeted approach would increase the likelihood of reaching the hard-to-reach populations. Also, targeted campaigns should be used when there is a clear rationale for reaching out to a specific population. For example, regions with high youth unemployment should consider targeted entrepreneurship awareness campaigns for youth.

When promoting women's entrepreneurship in society, policy makers should:

- Use role models and ambassador networks to promote a positive image of women's entrepreneurship at public events, and in schools and universities. See the Women's Ambassadors scheme that operated in Sweden as a good example of how this could be organised.

Case study: Women Ambassadors, Sweden

'Women Ambassadors' was set up to promote women entrepreneurship by increasing the visibility of women entrepreneurs and inspiring potential women entrepreneurs through personal stories and role models. The ambassadors' role was to encourage more women to view entrepreneurship as a potential career and to inform about the impact of women-owned businesses. The main target groups were female students, career advisors and women with an immigrant background.

[Tell me more \[7\]](#)

- Use the education system to promote women in the labour market and in entrepreneurship.
- Use positive messages to highlight the economic contribution of a range of women's entrepreneurship activities, e.g. part-time businesses, innovative growth-oriented businesses, etc.

1.2. Entrepreneurship is promoted to different profiles of women.

Target populations of inclusive entrepreneurship campaigns are heterogeneous so awareness campaigns should include tailored messages that are delivered through appropriate channels. Common approaches used include promoting success stories and role models, and using awards to inspire entrepreneurs by showcasing different profiles of entrepreneurs and different types of entrepreneurship activities. When promoting entrepreneurship to women, policy makers should use different channels to reach different groups of women, including the higher education system to reach young women and community organisations to reach groups such as migrants.

Population segments are typically heterogeneous despite having common characteristics such as age or gender. Entrepreneurship promotion activities can be more effective if they are tailored to, and targeted at, a specific sub-population (e.g. unemployed youth) since there will be variation in motivations and intentions. Other issues such as accessibility of support must also be considered and highlighted when appropriate.

Awareness campaigns should seek to demonstrate that entrepreneurship is feasible for many members of the target groups, and inspire them with positive messages. It is important that the messages are also informative, explaining briefly what it means to be an entrepreneur.

An important tool for promoting entrepreneurship for specific population groups is the promotion of success stories and role models. It is critical that successful entrepreneurs from the awareness campaign's target population are showcased to demonstrate that everyone can be successful in entrepreneurship, including entrepreneurs with different profiles from within the target population (e.g. part-time entrepreneurs, service businesses, technology businesses). Success stories and role models are likely to have a greater impact if the target audience can relate to them. In other words, the success stories and role models should not have a level of success that is "unreachable" for most people. The identification of inspiring success stories and role models can be done through *ad hoc* methods, or systematically through award programmes or competitions.

Another popular method of promoting and raising awareness about entrepreneurship is through awards, which can be targeted at specific population groups. Awards can have several functions. First, they can showcase role models to inspire others with similar characteristics and backgrounds. Second, they publicly recognise success, offering motivation to entrepreneurs and promoting their businesses. This can also improve access to networks and finance, as well as new customers and markets. Third, some awards provide cash prizes or other business development services (e.g. professional consulting, introduction to investors).

Entrepreneurship awards are a relatively low-cost policy intervention and are often done in partnership with, or

led by, the private sector and/or non-governmental organisations. Entrepreneurship awards can take several forms, including: (1) competition-based awards where entrepreneurs nominate themselves and their business for a cash-prize; (2) positive role-model / publicity awards with, or without, a cash-prize where entrepreneurs and businesses are nominated by others for their accomplishments. The key design issues for inclusive entrepreneurship awards are:

- *Type of award:* What type of entrepreneurship award can help accomplish the objectives of inclusive entrepreneurship policy? Does the award aim to reward existing entrepreneurs or to stimulate business creation among potential entrepreneurs? Does the award target a specific sector (e.g. manufacturing) or activity (e.g. social innovation)? Is there a cash-prize or some other type of prize attached to the award?
- *Eligibility and award criteria:* Is the entrepreneurship award open to all entrepreneurs or does it target entrepreneurs from a narrow population segment (e.g. young female entrepreneurs)? Is the award aimed at entrepreneurs in particular sectors? What are the criteria for winning?
- *Partnerships:* Are businesses and organisations from private and voluntary sector, including media organisations, involved in sponsoring the award? Has the award been communicated through relevant channels to reach the potential award-nominees from the target groups? Have suitable judges from the business community been chosen to support the initiative? Have the appropriate media channels been informed?
- *Integrated support:* Should the award be linked to entrepreneurship training, business development support, or an entrepreneurship event?
- *Media coverage:* Have appropriate media outlets been engaged in developing, promoting and delivering the awards? Is there a plan to ensure media coverage for the winners?

To be effective, awareness campaigns need to use appropriate outreach mechanisms to reach the targeted populations. One common method is to partner with organisations (e.g. chambers of commerce, business associations) that already work with the target group to leverage their established relationship.

When promoting entrepreneurship to different profiles of women, policy makers should:

- Use different channels for reaching different profiles of women. For example, use the higher education system to reach young women with high potential business ideas or community organisations to reach groups such as migrant women.
- Highlight the potential of part-time entrepreneurship for those with family care responsibilities.
- Deliver messages through online platforms that are heavily used by women, e.g. social media.
- Recognise that entrepreneurship is not a suitable activity for all women.

1.3. Targeted campaigns promote women's entrepreneurship to key role models.

Key role models have an important role in informing about entrepreneurship and encouraging (or discouraging) entrepreneurship activities. Policy makers therefore also need to reach them with information packages and positive messages. To support entrepreneurship for women, it is important for policy makers to create a positive image of women's entrepreneurship so that family, friends and colleagues are supportive of women who are interested in business creation.

To encourage entrepreneurship and increase the level of business creation by people from groups that are under-represented or disadvantaged in entrepreneurship (e.g. women, youth, immigrants, the unemployed), policy makers should launch initiatives that promote entrepreneurship to key role models for these groups, including parents, teachers, community leaders, social workers, clubs and associations, and peers.

This can be accomplished by developing information packages with positive messages about entrepreneurship

to these role models. Role models can have an important influence on potential entrepreneurs' interest in starting a business, both positively and negatively. Entrepreneurial role models fulfil a number of functions: (1) inspiration and motivation; (2) increasing self-efficacy; (3) learning by example; and (4) learning by support. Research confirms that role models can have a significant and positive impact on entrepreneurial career intention. It is therefore important for policy makers to ensure that these role models are aware of the requirements and opportunities of entrepreneurship so that they can encourage it when they feel that it is appropriate.

To promote inclusive entrepreneurship to key role model groups within a particular region, country or network, policy makers should use a range of communication and outreach methods:

- Identify and promote success stories in different media, including TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and social media.
- Develop network links with different public and private actors, including local government, chambers of commerce, business associations and community organisations, to identify and promote success stories.
- Develop information brochures to be distributed in schools and by public employment services.

When promoting entrepreneurship to role models for women, policy makers should:

- Promote entrepreneurship widely so that friends, family, peers and colleagues are supportive of entrepreneurship for women.
- Inform educators and career advisers about the potential of women's entrepreneurship.

1.4. Formal education builds positive attitudes towards female entrepreneurship among students.

Formal education presents an opportunity to promote entrepreneurship to a large number of youth and young adults. To be effective, teachers need training on entrepreneurship and also need to understand the potential that it can hold for different population groups. Moreover, teaching material should showcase a wide range of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship activities. To encourage young women in entrepreneurship, the education system should showcase women role models in the learning materials used. Young women should also be encouraged to pursue studies in fields where entrepreneurship is a likely career path, e.g. science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

Entrepreneurship education has an important role in building positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs. This is particularly important among children and young people in primary, secondary and higher education. Educational institutions can help promote entrepreneurship to students and young adults, creating awareness about its potential as a career option. It can also help create an acceptance of entrepreneurship activities by people from under-represented and disadvantaged groups (e.g. youth, women, immigrants, the unemployed).

Educators can promote entrepreneurship by placing distinct emphases at different levels of education, as appropriate to the individual needs and development:

- *Primary level:* The aim is to increase awareness about entrepreneurship as a career option and to develop basic knowledge, skills and attitudes that encourage entrepreneurial behaviour. Examples of initiatives at this level include classroom visits by local entrepreneurs to speak about their business or taking students to spend a day with local businesses to watch and learn about their day-to-day work.
- *Secondary level:* The focus should be more on the delivery of specific technical skills, involving active learning and real-life situations. Students can, for example, set up a simulation or a real business to learn about business planning and how to access start-up finance.
- *University level:* At this stage, entrepreneurship is integrated within traditional subject teaching. Additionally, students should gain the basic skills for starting and operating a business and to learn about

the value of networks through a range of extra-curricular activities, including networking events, business plan competitions and group-run start-up businesses.

Entrepreneurship education can be an effective tool for raising awareness about entrepreneurship because it can reach a large number of people. While including entrepreneurship in the mandatory curricula across all levels of education can help ensure this reach, supporting extra-curricular activities (e.g. clubs) can help make entrepreneurship more tangible. This reinforces a positive image of entrepreneurship.

At all levels, it is important, that teachers receive entrepreneurship training so that they understand it, and are equipped to deliver an engaging and relevant programme. This would require the inclusion of basic entrepreneurship training in teacher training programmes, as well as offering professional development training for teachers. This can also be supported with entrepreneurship conferences (e.g. The European Council for Small Business and Entrepreneurship's Enterprise Education Conference) and good practice exchange platforms. To support inclusive entrepreneurship, teachers need to understand the potential biases that can be reinforced by training programmes, e.g. that entrepreneurship is only technology related.

In addition, policy makers need to ensure that teaching material is consistent with inclusive entrepreneurship policies. Course books and lessons should show people with different backgrounds involved in different types of entrepreneurship activities.

When building positive attitudes about women's entrepreneurship through formal education, policy makers should:

- Include entrepreneurship education in the mandatory curricula at all levels.
- Train teachers in entrepreneurship so that they view it positively, and are aware of gender issues in entrepreneurship.
- Ensure that both curricular and extra-curricular activities present positive examples of women's entrepreneurship, including role models and success stories.
- Encourages female students to study in fields that are more likely to lead to entrepreneurship and innovative businesses.
- Ensure that teachers, educators and career counsellors are supportive of entrepreneurship as a career path for female students.

1.5. Monitoring and evaluation are used to assess the impact of entrepreneurship promotion activities.

Monitoring and evaluation are an important part of the policy development process. These activities are often contracted out to leverage specialised knowledge and to maintain the impression of impartiality. When evaluating awareness campaigns for women's entrepreneurship, it is important to take gender differences in labour market participation and activity levels into account.

The policy development process should include monitoring and evaluation to measure progress against the objectives and targets. Policy makers should want to understand what works, what does not work, and to ensure that lessons can be learned and shared with others.

Basic monitoring is done with key performance indicators (KPIs) by programme or project managers. KPIs measure progress of a policy or project against the objectives and targets. Indicators can be grouped into three main types:

1. *Impact* (i.e. changes in the problem or other outcomes of concern);
2. *Cost-effectiveness* (i.e. costs for a given level of impact); and

3. *Net Benefits* (i.e. all beneficial impacts minus all costly impacts).

Mid-term and *ex-post* evaluations can help identify the ways in which the policy can be improved or developed to increase its impact. These evaluations are typically undertaken by external experts to ensure independence and objectivity. Such evaluations should be built into the policy design process from the outset. Furthermore, the lessons learned from evaluations should be available and accessible to other policy makers in order to share good practice.

Effective policy evaluation should include several features. It should be systematic and analytical, focused on actual effects and provide judgement of the level of success. Moreover, they should aim to improve decision making, help resource allocation, enhance accountability, and bring about organisational learning. Six principles for good evaluation practices can be highlighted:

1. Evaluation should lead to policy change;
2. Evaluation should be part of the policy debate;
3. Evaluators should be “in at the start”;
4. Evaluation techniques should always use the most appropriate methodology;
5. Evaluation should apply to all policies and programmes; and
6. International comparisons should be made where necessary.

The process of policy evaluation may vary, depending on the circumstances. Some government departments and organisations have a dedicated unit with responsibility for evaluating policies, while others may commission evaluations in-house or from outside organisations, as required. Although best practice principles exist, the context of the policy and the target audience requires particular attention against these broader best practice guidelines.

When assessing the impact of awareness campaigns, a number of tools can be employed to monitor and measure their short- and long-term success. In the short-term, policy makers can conduct surveys to evaluate the effects of policy initiatives pre- and post- intervention and feedback can be received from questionnaires after a promotion event. Over the longer term, surveys such as the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM)¹ or the Flash Eurobarometer² can provide an indication of changes of social attitudes towards entrepreneurship over time. Responses by specific target groups can be identified in many of these surveys.

Capturing the effectiveness of policies that seek to develop favourable socio-cultural conditions for inclusive entrepreneurship can be a challenge. Success stories and role models can positively influence entrepreneurial intentions, but the intentions do not necessarily translate into entrepreneurial behaviour.

The *Framework for Indicators of Entrepreneurial Learning and Competence in Europe*³ has been developed to help monitor and measure entrepreneurship education across countries. The framework covers both qualitative and quantitative indicators (e.g. participation rates, learning outcomes, attitudes towards entrepreneurship) but also recognises important gaps where improvements could be made to capture data on the direct impact between entrepreneurial learning and the outcomes.

One of the main potential dangers in the realisation of policy evaluation is a failure to understand the culture of an awareness campaign's target group, within particular national or regional contexts. In the contexts where evaluation culture and practice are absent or limited, there is necessarily a lack of learning from the policy making process. Budgets available for evaluation can sometimes be constrained by the need to allocate resources for programme delivery. This can be addressed, to a degree, by assigning a percentage of a programme budget for evaluation work at the outset. It is essential that the scale, time and source of funds are

specified in the policy design. Another possibility for policy makers, particularly government departments, is the use of peer review system where evaluations are carried out by a team of people drawn from other departments.

When monitoring and evaluating entrepreneurship promotion activities for women, policy makers should:

- Ensure that targets and objectives are clearly defined and linked to measurable indicators.
- Recognise that business start-up can occur many years after promotional activities. It is also likely that some people will discover that entrepreneurship is not suitable for them when they have a better understanding about what it is and what it entails. This should be considered a positive outcome.
- Account for gender differences in labour market participation.

¹Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, Available at: www.gemconsortium.org/ [8].

²Flash Eurobarometer (2013), "Entrepreneurship in the EU and Beyond", https://data.europa.eu/euodp/data/dataset/S1024_354 [9].

³European Commission (2014), 'Expert Group on Indicators on Entrepreneurial Learning and Competence: Final Report', A report submitted by ICF GHK on behalf of the European Commission, 29 April 2014, Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/reports/2014/entrepreneurial-expert-report_en.pdf [10].

Source URL: <https://betterentrepreneurship.eu/en/node/244>

Links

[1] <https://doi.org/10.1787/f493861e-en>

[2] <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264283602-en>

[3] <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264251496-en>

[4] <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264226418-en>

[5] <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264213593-en>

[6] <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264188167-en>

[7] <https://betterentrepreneurship.eu/en/node/919>

[8] <http://www.gemconsortium.org/>

[9] https://data.europa.eu/euodp/data/dataset/S1024_354

[10] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/reports/2014/entrepreneurial-expert-report_en.pdf