

Princes Risborough, UK. January 14th 2010

Dear Sirs

Public consultation on the future EU 2020 strategy

I represent The International Network of Women Engineers and Scientists (INWES) which is an international organisation which was established to strengthen the capacity of individuals, organisations, and corporations to influence policies in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) worldwide, and encourage the education, recruitment, retention, support, and advancement of professional women and students through an international network of organisations and experts. Our goal is to build a better future worldwide through full and effective participation of women and girls in all aspects of STEM.

Our members are organisations, individuals, corporations and university/institutes, come from all over the world, including Eastern and Western Europe, and are from various backgrounds, academic, industrial, commercial etc.

I would like to comment briefly on the proposed strategy from the point of view of INWES, as follows.

We would agree with the fact that the exit from the present economic crisis will depend on innovation and using resources better, and that the key to input will be knowledge. We agree that this new approach should take advantage of a world of globalisation and interdependence. We agree that huge opportunities exist for people and businesses if they are equipped to take them and that these opportunities can be exploited if we have knowledge based, greener and more inclusive economy.

Key Drive 1: Creating value by basing growth on knowledge. This section concentrates on education and research, innovation and creativity, and comments that a great emphasis on vulnerable groups, gender equality and social cohesion is needed to ensure that no-one is excluded from knowledge.

We strongly agree with this statement, as it is well known that education will bring benefits both to the workplace and to society at large. However, we would take it further to highlight the potential for attracting more women into science, engineering and technology where we need to consider the better use of resources. At the moment the crucial area of science, engineering and its associated subjects are missing out on the talents of nearly half of the population. We are facing some of the most difficult technical problems the world has encountered, and we are trying to solve them without the input of a huge part of the population whose potential talent and skills may be able to supply a completely different view of the problem and its solution. This is not just the case in the laboratory, but it is to do with science policies and the direction of research. We would therefore like to see an explicit statement in the strategy which encourages the participation of women in science and engineering both by encouraging girls to study the relevant subjects at school, and by encouraging women to use scientific training and education to add value to the economy and society at large. From our experience, when policies are put into place to benefit women in STEM subjects, benefits are felt by all, including men, the economy and society.

We would also suggest that more research work is carried out into gender issues in science and engineering, which should investigate how this large group of people can contribute to the economy and society. INWES has experience of situations all over the world in different

countries and cultures, and research in this area would be extremely useful in promoting Key Drive 1.

The above views will also inform **Key Drive 2: Empowering people in inclusive societies**. Once again, encouragement for women to take a proportionate part in a competitive economy will add value and skills to the workforce and society.

Similarly for **Key Drive 3: Creating a competitive, connected and greener economy**, the involvement of more women in the science of a green economy will increase the potential of the scientific community to solve the complexities of this subject and help meet the environmental goals. This in turn should lead to better use of resources and higher productivity.

In summary, the inclusion of specific initiatives and targets for attracting and keeping women in STEM and involving them in its policy making will help to achieve some of the aims in the EU2020 strategy, and we consider that it is important to make sure that this is included in the strategy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours faithfully

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