

"Together to create new growth"
"Social entrepreneurship & social economy: Developing a European ecosystem to unlock social innovation, growth and jobs"
Conference on 18 November 2011 – Brussels

Speaker: Maria NOWAK



CURRICULUM VITAE

A graduate of the "Institut des Etudes Politiques", Paris (1956) and postgraduate of the London School of Economics (1959), Maria Nowak has pursued a career in the development field working for the "Agence Française de Développement". As Director of Policies and Research, she transferred, in the eighties the Grameen Bank approach from Bangladesh to West Africa.

Seconded to the World Bank in Washington, in 1991, she started the first microlending programmes in Central Europe while at the same time initiating a similar programme in France in the framework of the "Association à l'Initiative Economique" which she founded and of which she is Chairwoman on a voluntary basis.

She was co-founder and the first president of two resource centers : the Microfinance Center for Central and Eastern Europe and the NIS countries, (1996) and the European Microfinance Network (2003).

Between 2000 and 2002, she was a Special Adviser to Laurent Fabius, Minister of the Economy, Finance and Industry.

She is author of « La Banquière de l'espoir » - (The Banker of Hope), Albin Michel 1994. « On en prête (pas) qu'aux riches » (Lending not only to the rich), JC Lattès, 2005 and « L'Espoir Economique : du microcrédit à l'entrepreneuriat social, les ferments du renouveau », JC Lattès 2010.

Among other awards, she received the "Human Rights Prize" awarded by readers of the newspapers "La Croix" and "Liberté de Fribourg" for her work in favour of "microcredit development " in France and was selected in 2007 «European of the year » by Reader'sDigest.

She is also Officier de la Légion d'Honneur (2008) and Commandeur de l'Ordre du Mérite (2011)