



Female entrepreneurship: creating growth and dispelling myths

The Government needs to address the shortage of female entrepreneurs, and needs to nurture stability, cultivate economic growth and bring a sense of renewed confidence to small businesses and burgeoning entrepreneurs.

Women's enterprise contributes around £130bn turnover and £70bn Gross Value Added every year to the UK economy. However, if the UK had the same level of female entrepreneurship as the US, there would be 600,000 extra women-owned businesses, contributing an additional £42 bn to the economy.

The latest figures demonstrate that despite women making up 46 per cent of the working economy of the UK, they constitute only 29 per cent of self-employed people in the UK.

While the Government has said it is looking into female entrepreneurship, the FSB believes it is an economic resource the Government has yet to fully tap into within its plans to grow the economy.

Recommendations

- Better promote alternative sources of finance and provide access to training and support on finance options to increase the growth potential of women-owned small businesses
- To offer female mentors through the New Enterprise Allowance Scheme (NEAS) and promote women-specific business networks and forums through Jobcentre Plus
- Introduce enterprise clubs for women to facilitate networking with successful female entrepreneurs and provide access to speakers and advisors on how to start up a business
- Tap into existing campaigns to further promote female business role models in the media

It is not just women that have to break down the barriers to starting up a business, it applies to both men and women, and consequently the FSB is urging the Government to prioritise self-employment – especially during this period of high unemployment.

Key Statistics

- In the UK alone, 150,000 start-ups would be created per year if women started businesses at the same rate as men.
- In 2009, the UK Women's Enterprise Taskforce found that the contribution from women's enterprise to the UK economy was in the region of £130bn turnover and £70bn Gross Value added annually
- If the UK had the same level of female entrepreneurship as the US, there would be approximately 600,000 extra women-owned businesses, contributing an estimated £42 bn to the economy
- Only five per cent of female established businesses are in the technology sector compared to 11 per cent of men

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