

Twelve years have passed since the re-establishment of independence in Estonia. This has been quite a short time to adjust to the new system and new ways of living. To get an idea of innovations in Estonia, let's take a look at the following figures:

In 2002 were registered with the Estonian Patent Office :

- Patent registration: 504 patents, 2,6% Estonians
- 97,4% of them are owned by citizens of some foreign state
- Utility model registration: 72 at all, 96% Estonians
- Trademarks registered: 4263 , 16,5% Estonians
- Industrial design: 146, 22% Estonians

NB! No women within named!

Estonia has a very small number of inventors today :

That can be explained by the fact that:

- one has to cover himself/herself all the costs involved in obtaining a patent and there is no bonus system in place
- few inventors have a talent for successful marketing of their ideas
- lack in Estonia a support system similar to the one developed in Finland.

There is existing the monoculture of the innovation system

- official statistics do not show female inventors separately. A simple analyse certifies that women are strongly underrepresented in the innovation system of Estonia.
- today women's creativity is not used as a resource for national growth and individual fulfilment
- the innovation system itself is a result of a structure made by men, run by men and consisting mainly of men

Reasons for the low representation of women in Estonia are:

- the role of an inventor is untraditional for women
- lack of self confidence of women. Many women do not consider themselves as inventors, even they own patents
- measures of innovativeness are not adjustable for female inventions
- lack of traditions of intellectual property culture:
- During the 50 years of Soviet rule in Estonia innovations started to be approached differently:
 - the notion intellectual property did not exist - all property was collectively owned.
 - imported equipment, machinery, technologies and items was copied and sold on the internal market.
 - the inventor could not apply for a patent. That was left for the government, and the patent belonged to the state. The inventor received an authorship certificate and a moderate bonus.
- knowledge of intellectual property, its protection and relevant legislation continues to be very limited

Promotion of women is also promotion of diversity.

We need to promote heterogeneity to generate new, sustainable ideas for products, services.

Competence Development

Train the women, train the innovator.

- QUIN conference and the exhibition in Tallinn last year opened for Estonian women a new door, the door to the world of intellectual property „„
- QUIN-Est have lectured for women in rural area, for handicraft makers to explain the necessity of intellectual property rights (in 7 different places of Estonia)
- participation in WIPO seminars in Tallinn (2 in Estonian, 2 in Russian), organizing female participants
- dissemination of info material published by Estonian Patent Office among women entrepreneurs
- 5 seminars with the travelling exhibition of patented textiles have planned to held in Estonia in year 2004

Train the trainer

- it is necessary to direct the organizations that advise inventors and innovators to provide information and methods for being more accessible to women.
- there is needed to produce strategic development programs for regions that want to improve the creative climate for women in Estonia.

An area for research

- competence development is a most important area for actions.
- to develop our own understanding further by linking to academia.
- we will organize researches' network with participants from several universities representing a board variety of academic disciplines such as entrepreneurship, design, technology, marketing and gender perspectives
- research and introduction of new or extra criterions for protecting female inventions (might lead to the situation where no-one can say women are bad inventors or their ranks are limited)

Visibility is very important.

QUIN website: www.quinnetwork.com

Our overall QUIN website makes women innovators visible and is used frequently.

There will be open in October the website of QUIN-Estonia separately. It has taken so much time for lack of money.

- Mass media.
- the approach happened in August 2002 after the QUIN conference in Tallinn (in 2 biggest newspapers, in 2 magazines, in 2 radiobroadcasts)
- for the editors the problem was that even if they wanted to publish more material about women, they did not know where to find it.
- we have found contact with some editors.
- This has resulted in more articles about innovation and innovative women in the ordinary pages (Eesti Ekspress, Russkaja Vedomostj)

- publicity helps inventors to introduce their patented ideas, to make them known and so protects inventions

Specially pointed out

- patented products could be sold in shops under the information “These articles are patented. Imitation is forbidden.”
- patented female inventions could be published or informed in special publications, handicraft magazines, in websites, etc.

CO-OPERATION

Networking

- Networks are very important in all our activities.
- When women inventors and innovators meet they define their special needs, which means that they support one another works with ideas.
- With developed actions the networks are essential in carrying out the activities.

Co-operation with organizations in Estonia

Some of our co-operation partners today are for example:

- the Estonian Patent Office
- the Estonian Patent Library
- Nordic Council of Ministers in Tallinn
- Tallinn Technical University
- Tallinn Academy of Arts
- Tartu University
- Business and Professional Women - Estonia
- regional women organizations in Estonia
- Women Education Centre in Tallinn, etc.

International co-operation

- We are firmly convinced that we are working for an important issue when we promote women as inventors and innovators.
- We hope to get stronger by reaching outside our national boards to build new international networks and co-operation supporting innovative women.

Some of our foreign partners today:

- QUIN-Finland
- QUIS
- QUIN-Iceland,
- QUIN-Denmark
- Women Innovative Activities Centre of Lithuania
- Creative and Innovative Women Centre in Wroclaw, Poland
- Global Women Inventor’s and Innovator’s Network (GWIIN), UK
- IFIA (International Federation of Inventors Associations) in Geneva
- WITEC , Halmstadt University, Sweden
- WIPO

There are two very important factors in co-operation :

1. people:

- who are ready to do a lot of voluntary work
- are able to write projects for getting money for network
- could lead and communicate with people of different cultures

2. money:

- a very necessary energetic material to cover costs, to network (11 applications and 3 grants)

We, Estonian women, would like to find by the help of network :

- role models
- information exchanging
- good practice
- networks
- tested-out models, i.e. know-how as well as show-how.

We are ready:

- to learn,
- to share experience and contribute new ideas,
- do subcontracting work for the realisation of new ideas,
- act as mediators when exploring and entering new markets, etc.
- Estonia's fast-track accession to the European Union means also increased integration into the European business community. We are ready to do so engaging in mutually beneficial cooperation.
- Finally, I'd like to finish with the words of Mrs Bola Olabisi, the founder of the Global Women Inventors and Innovators Network:
- Encouraging women into the world of business, creativity, science, engineering, technology & intellectual property is to promote invention and innovation.
- Encouraging innovation and invention is to encourage growth in enterprise.
- Encouraging growth in enterprise is to encourage economic development and sustainable growth.

Thank the organisers of this excellent seminar , in particular Mrs Maila Hakala. I wish everybody lots of good ideas, success in protecting them and good luck.

Thank you for your attention!