



## BPW & YBPW EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Business and Professional Women Association, Tallinn, Baltic States (Estonia) (BPW Estonia)**, is an independent non-profit organization of woman entrepreneurs and managers, and professionals. BPW Estonia was founded in November 1992 and joined the BPW International in January 1993.

A dramatically changed economic and social environment accompanying re-establishment of independence and Estonia's transition to a market economy prompted the establishment of the organization.

BPW Estonia's initial mission was to help women in their full-scale reorientation under the changed socio-economic conditions and to encourage them to make full use of their entrepreneurial and professional capabilities. It now seeks to exercise a greater impact on socio-economic processes through all-round advancement of women and raising their status in the society.

BPW Estonia has currently about 200 registered members, both Estonian and non-Estonian speaking, in 16 clubs throughout the country.

### BPW Estonia's activities are focused on

- Maintaining and expanding business and professional women's networks
- Disseminating experience and best practice for mutual assistance and support
- Upgrading women's skills and knowledge through training and participation in national and international programs
- Supporting women's career aspirations and all-round advancement
- Familiarizing the public at large with business and professional women's achievements and problems, and suggesting solutions
- Stimulating women's increased involvement in decision-making positions
- Promoting women's interests and protecting their rights
- Working toward increased understanding and cooperation both nationally and internationally especially in view of Estonia's progress toward EU membership
- Find interesting ways of doing things together: relaxing, doing sports, having fun and enjoying the company of each other

BPW Estonia joined the BPW International in January 1993.

### BPW Estonia's Traditions

- Nomination of the Woman of the Year from among outstanding women entrepreneurs and professional women to highlight women's contribution to the national economy and social development.
- Annual women entrepreneurs' trade fairs and contact seminars
- Annual meetings, winter and summer events arranged by local clubs

- Monthly meetings and discussions on a large variety of women-related topics
- Charitable activities
- Training courses and discussion groups

## Cooperation Partners

BPW enjoys cooperation with the majority of Estonia's 160 women's and family organizations, women's studies and resource centers; women MPs and major decision-makers, Estonia-based foreign donor-organizations, the UNDP, the Nordic Council of Ministers, foreign embassies in Estonia, sister organizations in foreign countries, in particular in Sweden and Finland.

A 10-member Board runs BPW Estonia. Its highest executive body is the 26-member Extended Board which consists of all Board members plus club presidents, and immediate past president.

## Young BPW

Young Business and Professional Women offer young businesswomen a special forum that is integral to the various BPW federations and BPW clubs in different countries. Moreover BPW International is independent of any profession, party or denomination. In Europe there are active Young BPW programs in Austria, Cyprus, Germany, Estonia and Switzerland.

## Young BPW in Estonia

YBPW started in Estonia year 2000 with approximately 10 members. One of the establishing members, Lee Murrand, was elected as a President of Estonia's YBPW until Fall 2003.

YBPW main goal is to share our professional experiences and expertise with one another, make business and private contacts, and advise one another on questions of career and personal development.

During the active years YBPW Estonia has organized theme-focused workshops and training seminars, charity events, forums on national and international level in which we encourage the exchange of ideas and information, visited different clubs in Estonia and co-operated with other organizations and local authorities.

For year 2003/2004 the topic under research is "turning point in life and career". YBPW meets every month on last Wednesday for lunch meeting. Each time there is a special guest to talk about her/his life and career. Meetings so far have been very exciting with lot of questions and answers.

## Young BPW International History

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| 1985 | New Zealand - Rosemarie Michel, as BPW International President, started the "Young Career Women" program at the New Zealand Congress just as a congress program to motivate young members. |
| 1989 | Bahamas - YCW became a taskforce lead by Maxine Hayes (a member of BPW USA with lots of experience). The YCW program was featured at Congress.   |
| 1991 | Nairobi - Susanne Engberg from Sweden became the first leader of YCW and an ad hoc committee was formed. The International YCW Newsletter was published for the first time.                |

- 1993 Nagoya - YCW became a Standing Committee, and Fabiola Kun from Mexico was chosen as Chairperson. The newsletter started to become more important, and YCW members organized the YCW program at Congress for the first time.
- 1996 Venice - Jun Sawada from Japan was elected as Chairperson, and the e-mail mailing list was started.
- 1998 Acapulco - the first International YCW Meeting took place, with 60 YCW members attending from 15 countries.
- 1999 Vancouver - The YCW Committee underwent radical changes! The official name was changed to "Young BPW", and a Young BPW Representative was appointed to the Executive Board of BPW International for the first time.