**Roundtable Seminar with Women Entrepreneurs**

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On March 8, International Working Women’s Day, the Yasar University Women and Family Studies Application and Research Center, KAIT and ECREA Women’s Network held a roundtable seminar with international entrepreneurs titled “Female Future: Round Table with International Female Founders” to discuss the role of women in business. Roundtable was moderated by YUKAM member Prof. Dr. Huriye Toker and with the introductory speaker Prof. Dr. Sabine Prossnegg. Three entrepreneurs from Turkiye/England, Austria and Malta participated in this 2 hour roundtable seminar with 52 attendees and talked about their experiences, motivations about entrepreneurship through it.

Women Entrepreneurs

            The roundtable started with celebration of the International Women's Day. And its main focus was on honouring women’s struggles for life, experiences and discussion of gender equality and inequality.

            Selin Yigitbasi-Ducker ,founder of Goodsted, describes how she launched her company at the age of 26 with the goal of helping and bringing individuals, organizations and communities together. “It was difficult to volunteer and share my experiences,” she said. Then explained that she wanted to have an open platform who shows support. And she added that the support she got and focusing more on the business helped with her success. While she runs her business through her website, a mobile app will be launched in BETA to give users a simpler experience.

            Bettina Ganglberger ,founder of Bettilicious, on the other hand explained that her business comes from her hobbies and her healthy lifestyle, she also shares her entrepreneur life. With Bettilicious, Bettina shares vegetarian or plant-based recipes and shows how creative and delicious this way of cooking is. Bettina first created her Instagram account to reach and connect with people and currently she has 9k followers. In December 2021 she started selling and producing vegan, sugar free sweets and later on she published a cooking book with her recipes. She also organizes workshops about living with a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages.

            Maryrose Francica, launched the professional training center for soft skills, personal development, and entreneurship known as Skillszone in 2019 at the age of 55. While people around her told her to just retire and stay at home, she wanted to chase her dreams to be her own boss whatever her age is. “I regret not starting earlier,” she says. Her business is about helping people with soft skills, entrepreneurship etc. and it’s also free. Skillszone has involved in many women organizations.

Business Climate

“As in the UK, there has been differences between men and women in the past but now it’s better and women now has more opportunities than before even though some things are still uncomfortable,” says Selin. According to Bettina “There are a lot of opportunities, but it still is a challenge for women.” She also adds that a lot of times men doesn’t think that women can be their own boss. She says that women often experience sexism from elder men and adds that financially, for men it’s easier to increase prices because when it’s a women, people tries to get free samples. A lot of the time people think women is just doing this because it’s their hobby while women do this as an actual job. Maryrose puts down a different angle and says “Since Malta is an island its size and population is small, and women entrepreneurs are still minority. They come a long way but there are still things to do. Because of the culture they think men should be in charge.” She says that women organizations bring hope.

There’s No Better Time Than Now

            At the roundtable, participants talked about how network, support and motivation is necessary for the business’ survival. And when you enjoy what you’re doing it doesn’t even feel like work. They say that it’s challenging but worth it but don’t forget to ask for help. They also pointed out that you shouldn’t put all your money to business until you see a profit.

            And for the people who wants to start their own business “It’s never a good time to start, so start it now.”