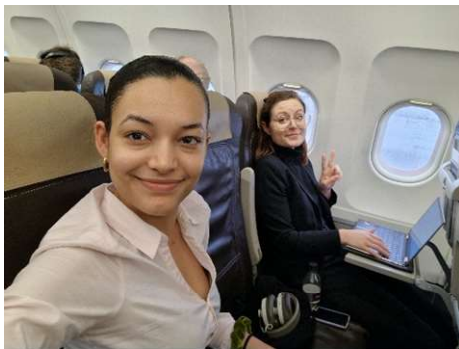


BPW Europe Day and 10th YBPW Symposium

by Kauanne Wisard

The journey started on the 28th of April at 5.30 am. Full of excitement I made my way to Zurich Airport, where Vanessa (board member of BPW Club Zürich) was already waiting for me. We were expecting our flight to leave at 7.30 am so that we would arrive on time for registration and the visit of the European Parliament. Little did we know.

Due to technical problems, we couldn't take off at the scheduled time. We had to change aircraft and wait for 2 hours at Zurich airport until the technical problem was solved, and we could finally continue our journey. That was an unexpected start.



After resigning to our fate, we started looking forward to our trip again. We left Zürich at 9.30 am and arrived in time for the start of the afternoon program at the Info Hub of the European Parliament.

We couldn't wait to start the day and engage in interesting discussions with inspiring women from all over Europe on the topic of women rights.

Agnieszka Bielska, Policy Officer in Unit Gender Equality, did the opening with an input on her works with the European Commission on gender equality whose goal is to promote equal economic independence for women and men, closing the gender pay gap, advancing gender balance in decision making, ending gender-based violence and promoting gender equality beyond the EU. She presented the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025. My personal highlight of the afternoon was the roundtable on the topic "cooperation of women's organizations". Nanditha Vijayaraghavan, EWOB Executive Committee, presented her organization to us and gave us an insight into her innovative mentoring philosophy which sees mentoring less as a kind of "social work" and more as an investment on the part of the mentor.



We finished the first day of our Brussel trip at the "Brasserie de la Presse" where we had one of the best chocolate mousses I have ever eaten in my life.





On the second day we headed to “Amazone” for the 10th Young BPW Symposium. Anna Zimmermann (Young Representative BPW Club Frankfurt, Germany) started the day with a presentation on the topic of volunteering. We then all discussed our personal motivation to be part of the BPW network. This was a great start to the Symposium, and it was also very insightful to hear each personal motivation stories.

My personal highlight of the Young BPW Symposium was the input of Johanna Flüten about her experiences as a BPW delegate at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) of the UN in New York. She told us about their work and explained to us that every BPW-member is given the chance to apply for next year’s CSW and be a BPW delegate at the 68th CSW on the topic of “Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective.”.

The day ended with a wonderful dinner at the “Dominican Restaurant”, where we could all discuss on the findings and learnings of the past two days and deepen the new made friendships.



I was able to participate at this year’s BPW Europe Day as well as at the 10th YBPW Symposium thanks to the generous support of BPW Switzerland who granted me sponsorship for these two amazing events. I would like to thank BPW Switzerland for this great opportunity and in general for the work that these wonderful women do.

If anyone wants to know more about my experience, the process of applying for sponsorship or anything else that I can help with, please do not hesitate to contact me (kauanne.wisard@hotmail.com).