



BPW Europe
Business and Professional Women

A History of important Female Figures in BPW Europe

1930

The International Federation of Business & Professional Women (IFBPW, or also known as BPW International) is founded in 1930 in Geneva by Lena Madesin Philips.



Lena Madison Philips

1960

In the course of the 1960s and 1970s, several relatively informal international meetings are held for already existing German-speaking (DACH) and French BPW members. There is a general desire for contacts and cooperation across national borders.

1977

The International Federation of Business and Professional Women was accredited to the Council of Europe and received consultative status along with some 200 NGOs. **Marcelle Devaud** was nominated Permanent Representative and **Michelle Laublé** her alternate (both BPW members in France).



Marcelle Devaud

1981

Michelle Laublé, acting President of the BPW Strasbourg, invites all European BPW National Presidents and interested members to the **1st European conference that took place September 25-27, 1981**. The purpose of the meeting is to create a firm structure for the European Federations of BPW. This idea is supported by **Rosmarie Michel** (Switzerland), who by 1983 becomes the President of BPW International. The conference elects an Ad Hoc Committee whose role is to work out proposals and prepare the second European Conference: **Renata Blodow** (Germany), **Hildegard Fuegg** (Switzerland) and **Yvonne Pencoat** (France). To provide administrative support, a Contact Center is set up in Karlsruhe, Germany, staffed by two volunteers, **Traude Westermann** and **Hede Steilberger**.

1983

The 2nd European Conference held in Udine, Italy on September 11, 1982 adopts the Organization Plan, Rules and Budget proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee as well as reports prepared by the Committee on "Part Time Work and Retraining", "Women in Rural Areas" and "Unpaid Work by Women in Family Enterprises".

A European Coordinating Committee is elected with **Renata Blodow** as chairperson, and **Anneli Reinikka** (Finland) and **Marian Waatts** (France) as members. The ECC makes first contacts with the Women's Information Service of the European Commission in Brussels, and with the Committee on Women's Rights of the European Parliament. It also prepares reports on "NGOs, International Organizations and Democratic Institutions", "The Second Generation of Migrant Workers" and "Data Protection". **Marcelle Devaud** is elected Member and later Vice President of the Liaison Committee of NGOs accredited to the Council of Europe.



Renata Blodow & Marian Waatts

1985

In October 1985, the 17th International Congress of BPW International in Auckland, New Zealand, votes to **set up five regions, headed by Regional Coordinators**. **Marian Waatts** was elected to this position for Europe.

1990

In September 1990, through the hard work of women such as **Marcelle Devaud** and **Emilienne Brunfaut**, the **European Women's Lobby is founded in Brussels**. BPW Europe is a member of the European Women's Lobby and **Renata Blodow** the first delegate of the European Federations of BPW International to the EWL.

2009

In January 2009, the presidents of the European Federations of BPW International create a **legal structure to run common projects at European level : BPW European Coordination aisbl** (association internationale sans but lucratif – international non profit organisation).