



EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR  
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP



## EVENT REPORT

# WIL 10 Year Anniversary Event

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WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

 

### WIL 10th Anniversary

20-21 October 2022 - Paris

with



**Christel Heydemann**  
CEO of Orange Group



**Mariya Gabriel**  
Commissioner for Innovation,  
Research, Culture, Education  
and Youth (by video)



**Catherine MacGregor**  
CEO of ENGIE



**Harlem Désir**  
Senior Vice President Europe of  
International Rescue Committee &  
former French Minister for  
European Affairs



**Thaina Samman**  
WIL President & Partner  
of SAMMAN Law &  
Corporate Affairs



**Elizabeth Tchoungui**  
Executive Director CSR,  
Diversity and Philanthropy,  
Deputy Chair for the Orange  
Foundation



**Sunny Kumar**  
Founder & CEO of  
Carbon27



**Monique Goyens**  
Director General of The  
European Consumer  
Organisation



**Malgorzata Gryz**  
Advisory Board Member  
of Lingaro Group



**Pinuccia Contino**  
WIL Secretary General,  
Head of Unit, EU  
Commission & Ambassador  
of Applied Compassion



**Nathalie Wright**  
WIL Board Member & Chief  
Sustainability Officer of  
Rexel



**Cristina Hoffmann**  
Interdisciplinary Artist

More speakers to be announced soon!

20-21 October 2022  
Paris



# Event Snapshot



Photos by Marie Flamant

On 20-21 October 2022, the **European Network for Women in Leadership (WIL Europe)** celebrated its **10th Year Anniversary** with support from event partners **Orange** and **Capgemini**, attended by over 140 people.

The festivities kicked off on 20th October with a networking cocktail hosted by Capgemini, a perfect opportunity for the women in the WIL network and guests to mingle and exchange ideas. This was followed the next day by the main event at Orange, offering the chance to reflect on what we have achieved in the last decade of the life of our association and where we go next; to hear discussions on the changing world order in the last ten years and what prospects there are for the future in Europe; and to network.

The main event at Orange was opened by **Elizabeth Tchoungui**, Executive Director CSR, Diversity and Philanthropy at Orange Foundation, and WIL Board Member **Nathalie Wright**, Chief Digital, IT and Sustainability Officer at Rexel. This was followed by a session on the Impact of WIL moderated by **Marina Niforos**, Affiliate Professor at HEC Paris with interventions by WIL Board Member **Pervenche Berès**, Chair of Association Europe-Finances-Régulations, WIL Member **Malgorzata Gryz**, Advisory Board Member of Lingaro Group, and WIL Fellows **Néné Maïga**, CEO Orange Botswana, and **Cristina Hoffmann**, Interdisciplinary Artist. The next panel debate on Climate & Energy Democracy was moderated by WIL Fellow **Marie-Louise Weeda**, Partner at Osborne Clarke, with guest speakers **Nathalie Wright**, **Sunny Kumar**, Founder & CEO of Carbon27, **Monique Goyens**, Director General at The European Consumer Organisation, and WIL Member **Anne Houtman**, Lecturer at Science Po Paris, with a wrap-up by **Lia Plamadeala**, Talent Manager and International Project Manager at Orange and participant in WIL's Women Talent Pool (WTP) leadership programme.

After a networking lunch, guests had the chance to join an exchange and Q&A with **Catherine MacGregor**, CEO of ENGIE, and **Christel Heydemann**, CEO of Orange, moderated by WIL President **Thaima Samman**, Partner at SAMMAN Law & Corporate Affairs. This was followed by an interview with **Mariya Gabriel**, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, moderated by WIL Board Member **Milena Harito**, Vice President for IT and Network: Europe at Orange. Also in the afternoon was an exchange on humanitarian crises and responses with **Harlem Désir**, Senior Vice President at the International Rescue Committee and former French Minister for Europe, moderated by WIL Board Member **Paulina Dejmek-Hack**, Director General Affairs, DG FISMA, European Commission, with a wrap-up by **Lisa Mangan**, Workstation Leader at Lenovo and participant in the WTP programme. The last session on compassionate leadership, led by WIL Secretary General **Pinuccia Contino**, Head of Unit at EU Commission and Ambassador of Applied Compassion, was followed by an intervention by representatives of a delegation of female students and closing words by Thaima Samman. The momentous day ended with a networking cocktail at Orange.





# Networking Cocktail at Capgemini



WIL's 10th Anniversary kicked off in style with a welcome networking cocktail hosted by Capgemini Group Legal, bringing together 80 female and male leaders from the private, public, academic and non-profit sectors. A chance for guests to reconnect and, in some cases, meet for the first time. There were opening remarks by WIL President **Thaima Samman** and WIL Board Members **Maria Pernas Martinez**, Group Executive Committee Member, Group General Counsel and Commercial and Contract Management at Capgemini, and **Béatrice Delmas-Linel**, Vice President and General Counsel France/Morocco and South & Central Europe at Capgemini.



## Main Event at Orange: Welcome Remarks



**Elizabeth Tchoungui**

Elizabeth Tchoungui recalled some of the important moments in the life of the 12-year partnership between WIL Europe and Orange, noted that one of the Orange Foundation's key objectives was gender equality in the workplace, and drew from her personal experience to emphasise the importance of sorority.



**Nathalie Wright**

WIL Board Member **Nathalie Wright**, used her opening to take a look back at the origins of WIL Europe and why the work of the network was so important. She made a call to arms, urging guests to continue connecting and empowering each other and other women.

Photos by Marie Flament

# Session on the Impact of WIL

“ Understand your environment and learn to leverage it to reach your objectives and bring more good – more inclusiveness, more diversity – to your organisation

Néné Maïga, WIL Fellow



This being the 10-year anniversary of WIL Europe, there was no better place to start the main event agenda than by hearing from different women across the network who had been touched by WIL in different ways and at different moments in their lives. In her introduction, session moderator **Marina Niforos** drew on findings from WIL's 10-year anniversary survey and report that one of the most important things for the women at WIL was the sense of community and the opportunity to connect and network with others. She probed special guest speakers **Pervenche Berès**, **Néné Maïga**, **Malgorzata Gryz**, and **Cristina Hoffmann**, on why they had decided to join WIL, what it had brought them and why they were so committed the network. The speakers spoke of insights gained about how to manage and navigate office politics, the value of the "safe space" that WIL provided, the open and honest discussions in support of those embarking on a career change, the strength of networking and the importance of WIL as a community for female solidarity in a world where this was too often put to the side.



# Panel Debate: Climate & Energy Democracy

“We need to change our lifestyles to succeed the green transition. It is crucial for policymakers to provide us with an environment to make the sustainable option the easy, attractive & affordable one. Don't patronise people, bring them on board!

Monique Goyens



The second debate of the day offered a chance for guests to reflect on a key issue for leaders, and one of the critical issues of our times: solutions to the climate and energy crises, and the impact for democracy. Moderated by **Marie-Louise Weeda**, the discussion heard from women and men from different sectors and industries: **Nathalie Wright**, **Sunny Kumar**, **Monique Goyens**, and **Anne Houtman**. The speakers encouraged guests to reflect on how the whole of society could be better mobilised to ensure faster energy transition, if and why democracies were faring better than autocratical regimes in moving towards a greener economy, and how to build trust in governments and corporations in an ever more complex world.

## Wrap-up

Lia Plamadeala

Talent Manager & International Project Manager at Orange & Participant in WIL's Women Talent Pool leadership programme



# Panel Debate with CEOs

“ *Technology and digital solutions are essential to manage the carbon neutralisation. This is the focus of our mission at Orange.* ”

Christel Heydemann



Photo by Marie Flament

“ *When a company stops looking at inclusivity, it goes backwards. Gender equality should be high on the agenda.* ”

Catherine MacGregor

One of the highlights of the anniversary event, and a moment that none of the leaders and emerging leaders in the room could forget, was a unique interview-exchange with two female leaders who have had remarkable careers: CEOs Catherine MacGregor (ENGIE) and Christel Heydemann (Orange), with moderation by WIL President, Thaima Samman. The two CEOs shared their views on responding to the energy and climate crisis, before giving attendees an insider's perspective on how they had navigated their careers and what it meant to them to be two of only three female CEOs running France's biggest companies today. They shared insights on the responsibility that comes with being at the top, how leading HR teams had changed their perspective on gender diversity, and the importance of having fun at work, whatever your day job.



# Interview with Mariya Gabriel

“ Gender equality is one of our biggest commitments. Personally, one of my goals is to speed up the pace through concrete initiatives that link with each other.

Mariya Gabriel



As one of the European Commission's most impressive female leaders and a long-time supporter of WIL Europe, including as the patron of the fourth edition of WIL's WTP Programme, it was only natural that the 10th anniversary event would include an exchange with **Commissioner Mariya Gabriel**. Moderated by **Milena Harito**, this discussion gave guests the chance to hear from a leading policy-maker who has made an impressive contribution towards boosting female leadership, pushing for better education practices, and mobilising society overall, especially young people, to tackle the biggest challenges facing society. Guests were impressed to see the range of innovative solutions being proposed by the Commission in the areas of research, culture, education and youth, and thrilled to have the chance to put their questions to the Commissioner.

# Humanitarian Crises & Responses with Harlem Désir

“ In times of conflict, we face multiple challenges, from agricultural problems to violence against women, and our aim is to combine solutions. We have emergency support but also livelihood programmes in order to help communities reach autonomy.

Harlem Désir



Photos by Marie Flament

In the afternoon, participants had a welcome opportunity to reflect on another critical issue for leaders in Europe, whatever their industry and expertise: understanding and addressing the devastating refugee and humanitarian crises across the world, and identifying possible solutions for the future. This moving exchange, moderated by **Paulina Dejmek-Hack**, welcomed insights from the brilliant and inspiring, **Harlem Désir**, of the International Rescue Committee (IRC). The session showcased the efforts of the IRC in helping those whose lives are affected by conflict and disaster – from refugee crises to violence against women – and highlighted the importance of dealing with conflict through a humanitarian lens.

## Wrap-up

Lisa Mangan

Workstation Leader at  
Lenovo & Participant in WIL's  
Women Talent Pool  
leadership programme





# Compassionate Leadership with Pinuccia Contino

“Compassion is noticing suffering in ourselves and others, and doing something to decrease that suffering.”

Pinuccia Contino



The final session of the day was a special one: an interactive talk on compassionate leadership with WIL Secretary General, **Pinuccia Contino**, who had previously drawn on her studies to be certified as an Ambassador of Applied Compassion by Stanford university to offer workshops on leading with purpose and wholeness to our Talents on the WTP Programme. In her talk She advocated bringing to the fore two important but often overlooked leadership qualities: empathy and compassion given their impact on well-being, resilience and performance in professional settings, as evidenced by academic research on the topic and her own experience as a manager. Her session included a discussion in pairs, in which guests were encouraged to reflect on their own leadership practices and what compassion meant to them.

# Delegation of Female Students



Photo by Marie Flament

To commemorate its tenth anniversary event, WIL invited a delegation of female students to join the event, hear the debates and engage with the network. Led by Céleste Doussot, this courageous delegation had a chance to come up on stage at the end of the day to share a few words on their work to promote gender equality in their universities and communities.

## Closing Remarks



The event ended with closing remarks from our President. In addition to looking back at the journey of WIL Europe, her words reminded and inspired guests to continue doing their good work to support the advancement of women in the workplace.



# Networking Lunch & Coffee Breaks

Throughout the event, multiple networking coffee breaks and a networking lunch were scheduled in between the panel debates. This gave guests a chance to mingle, exchange with each other and share insights on the discussions.





# More Event Photos



Photos by Marie Flament