

21-22 March 2019



EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR  
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

## Event Report

### Annual Gathering in Milan

Each year, WIL Europe organizes an **Annual Gathering** for its Members, Talents and Friends, to meet and exchange with other participants from the **WIL network** and **selected guests**. This year, we met on the **21st and 22nd of March 2019** in **Milan**, at the **Microsoft House** and at the **Cariplo Factory**.

On the first day, the **21<sup>st</sup> of March**, we came together at the [Microsoft House](#), one of Europe's most vibrant hubs of innovation and technology, where we explored the topic of Artificial Intelligence through panel debates and presentations given by experts.

On the second day, the **22<sup>nd</sup> of March**, we moved to the [Cariplo Factory Hub](#), for a day of networking sessions and panel debates that focused on how to build synergies to help start-ups and their ecosystems to scale, and how female start-ups are redefining business and leadership.

In addition, those who wished were invited to a **day of shopping the Italian way**, on Saturday **23<sup>rd</sup> of March** at [Fidenza Village](#)!



Picture Gallery

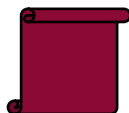


EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR  
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

## OUR ANNUAL GATHERING AT A GLANCE



**Microsoft House**  
**Cariplo Factory**  
**MILAN, Italy**



- **5 NETWORKING SESSIONS**
- **4 PANEL DEBATES**
- **2 KEYNOTE SPEECHES**
- **2 TRAINING SESSIONS**



**18 HIGH LEVEL  
SPEAKERS**



**80+ PARTICIPANTS**



**25+ NATIONALITIES\***

*(\*) In addition: Egypt, Russia, United States and Anguilla.*

**21 March 2019, Microsoft House**

*The Microsoft House in Milan represents the spirit of the company's ethos of a "new world of work" and values of openness, visibility, flexibility, energy, dynamism and innovation. It embodies Microsoft's commitment to open innovation and collaboration with the local community and surrounding environment, putting forward the idea of an open center for the city and professionals, schools and clients.*

The first day of the Gathering took place at the [Microsoft House](#) in **Milan** and kicked-started with a **visit of the Microsoft Technology Center** and a showcase of the "**Retail Experience**", during which the participants of our Women Talent Pool programme were able to learn how the current way of strategizing and executing marketing is being disrupted by data and artificial intelligence (AI), and what new skills are required to navigate and thrive in this new data-driven paradigm.

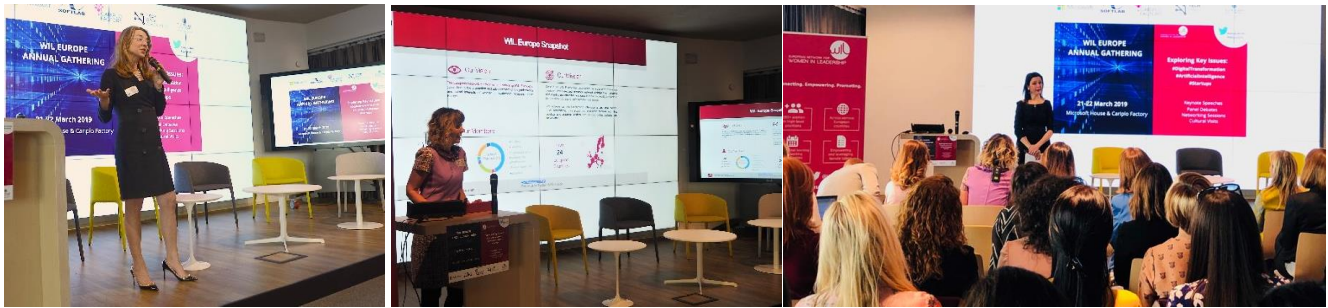


Picture: [Diana Georgescu](#), 4P Consumer Lead - South East Europe of Lenovo and participant of our WTP programme during the demo of the Microsoft Retail Experience.

*With 72 percent of businesses stating that improving their customer experience is their top priority, in today's hyper-connected world, meeting the expectation of shoppers is crucial for success – and a difficult challenge to overcome. Presently, consumers not only expect the 24/7 convenience and support that online shopping offers, but they are also hungry for the personal touch. How then, can a company merge the convenience of the digital world, with the personal touch of the physical? The answer is data<sup>1</sup>.*

After a first training session given by Microsoft's experts **Matteo Gerosa**, Microsoft Azure Tech Solution Professional, **Maria Luisa Onorato**, Technical Architect Dynamics 365, and **Alessandro Simonetti**, MTC Interactive Experience Technical Architect, and an introductory networking lunch that was joined by the rest of the participants, WIL Board members **Elena Bonfiglioli**, Managing Director Health and Life Sciences EMEA of Microsoft, and **Emanuela Palazzani**, Founder & CEO of Atman Advisory, welcomed the attendees together with **Barbara Cominelli**, COO Marketing and Operations Director of Microsoft.

<sup>1</sup> MICROSOFT, *The trends that are shaping the future of the retail industry*,  
<<https://news.microsoft.com/europe/2017/12/22/microsoft-in-milan-showcasing-the-transformation-of-the-retail-industry/>>.



Pictures (from left to right): [Barbara Cominelli](#), [Emanuela Palazzani](#) and [Elena Bonfiglioli](#).

Subsequent to those welcome remarks, we were pleased to meet our first panel debate, who spoke about: ‘**How can Artificial Intelligence help Organizations Operate in the 21st Century?**’, moderated by **Elena Bonfiglioli**, *Managing Director Health and Life Sciences EMEA of Microsoft*, and including **Rafaella Folgieri**, *Professor of the University of Milan*, **Milena Harito**, *Digital Transformation Expert*, **Gianluigi Marino**, *Partner of Osborne Clarke* and **Lucilla Sioli**, *Director for Artificial Intelligence and Digital Industry, DG CONNECT of the European Commission*.



Left picture (from left to right): [Milena Harito](#), [Elena Bonfiglioli](#), [Rafaella Folgieri](#), [Lucilla Sioli](#) and [Gianluigi Marino](#). Right picture (from left to right): [Milena Harito](#) and [Elena Bonfiglioli](#).

Continuing the tradition at **WIL** of our **Women Talent Pool** participants closing each panel debate, **Fozia Jabbar**, *Head of Legal of Microsoft Denmark*, conveyed the wrap-up of the proceedings of the first round table.

WIL then welcomed **Professor Maurizio Zollo**, from Bocconi and Imperial College, who, in conversation **with Elena Bonfiglioli**, shared with us his insights on how to help organisations flourish and how leaders learn in an era of AI and fast innovation.





EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR  
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP



Picture (from left to right): [Elena Bonfiglioli](#) and Prof. [Maurizio Zollo](#).

Following this inspiring conversation and a networking coffee break, the participants had the pleasure of partaking in a meditative session on how to flourish from an individual approach thanks to **Professor [Valeria Berchicci](#)**, *Consultant and Executive Leadership Coach, Imperial College Business School and SDA Bocconi*.



Our final **Panel Debate** of the first day, **'The Skills that you Need in an AI Driven Future'**, was moderated by **Kristine Beitland**, *Corporate Affairs Director of Microsoft Norway* and was joined by speakers **Alberto di Minin**, *Professor of Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies*, **Santina Franchi**, *General Manager of Enterprise Commercial for Western Europe of Microsoft* and **Michaela Jamelska**, *Global Business Operations Director of Unmanned Life*.

**Corina Giathau**, *Organizational Development Manager of Orange* and participant of our Women Talent programme, then conveyed a summary of the discussion adding her individual touch.



Left picture (from left to right): [Kristine Beitland](#), Prof. [Alberto di Minin](#), [Santina Franchi](#) and [Michaela Jamelska](#). Right picture: [Corina Ghiatau](#) doing the wrap-up of the session.

Thanks to our partner [Softlab](#), we then finished the evening with a **unique networking dinner and drinks** at [Terrazza Martini Milano](#)!



## 22 March 2019, Cariplo Factory

*Cariplo Factory is a hub where innovative ideas circulate and where young people achieve their ambitions, through innovation processes between big corporations, start-ups and other innovators, involving institutions and attracting capital. Cariplo Factory is a reference point for its innovative projects and partnerships, corporate social responsibility and the enhancement of young talents<sup>2</sup>.*

On the second day, we moved to the [Cariplo Factory](#) hub for innovation and start-ups, where we were kindly welcomed by its *Managing Director, Carlo Mango*. On this occasion, WIL Member **Emanuela Palazzani**, *CEO & Founder of Atman Advisory*, introduced our network to the participants and guests.

It was then the turn for **Anders Nilsson**, *Partner of GrowITup*, to take the floor for a keynote speech and presentation on how GrowITup is contributing to scale up start-up ecosystems.



*growITup is Italy's new platform for "digital" entrepreneurs to Go-Big! Not taking equity, they support start-ups on their path to success, helping the growth of Innovation in Italy. Its objective is to boost job opportunities through a healthy, go-big Startup Ecosystem, create a new perception of Italian Startups abroad and increase Startup investments in Italy over three years<sup>3</sup>.*

Picture: [Anders Nilsson](#) presenting GrowITup' programme to support start-ups scale.

The first Panel Debate of the day on **'Building Synergies to Help Startups to Scale'** was moderated by **Debora Marrocchino**, *Marketing Consultant* and brought together speakers from an assortment of sectors: **Barbara Cominelli**, *COO Marketing and Operations Director of Microsoft*, **Myriam El Ouni**, *Group Head of Sales for Financial Institutions of Europ Assistance and Founder of CleveHR*, **Betsy Robinson**, *Vice Chairman of Board of Directors of Indaco Venture Partners SGR* and **Kristin Schreiber**, *Director of COSME Program and SME Policy of the European*

<sup>2</sup> CARIPLO FACTORY, <<https://www.cariplofactory.it/chi-siamo/>>.

<sup>3</sup> GrowITup, Growth Initiative, <<https://www.growitup.it/growth-initiative/?lang=en>>.





Left picture (from left to right): [Debora Marrocchino](#), [Myriam El Ouni](#), [Betsy Robinson](#), [Kristin Schreiber](#) and [Barbara Cominelli](#). Right picture: [Diana Georgescu](#).

Commission. Concluding the first panel, **Diana Georgescu**, *Consumer Lead - South East Europe of Lenovo*, conveyed the wrap-up of the proceedings.

After a networking break, it was then time for the second panel debate of the day on **How Female Startups are Redefining Business and Leadership** and moderated by **Debora Marrocchino**, *Marketing Consultant*. It was joined by speakers **Taryn Andersen**, *Founder of Impulse4Women*, **Betta Maggio**, *CEO of U-earth Biotech* and **Serena Torielli**, *Founder of Virtual B*.

Concluding the second panel, **Katherine Kirrage**, *Associate Director of Osborne Clarke*, conveyed a summary of the discussion adding her personal touch.



Left picture (left to right): [Debora Marrocchino](#), [Taryn Andersen](#), [Serena Torielli](#) and [Betta Maggio](#). Right picture: [Katherine Kirrage](#).

There was no better way to conclude this gathering than with a **presentation** by [Roberta Cocco](#), *Councilor for Digital Transformation and Citizens Services of the Municipality of Milan*. Roberta Cocco emphasized that **everyone has a**



**digital right** and shared with the participants the determination to ensure that the city of Milan evolves in such a way, that all the residing citizens are granted with the same possibilities presented by this digital driven future.



*Milan is the heart of the startup scene in Italy. The city is the centre of the Italian economy: many companies and multinationals have branches here, the Stock Exchange is here, main Italian media are here, investors are here. Historically, Milan is the economic engine of the country. Even if the city is internationally known mostly for food, fashion, design, it is also developing as a centre of innovation<sup>4</sup>.*

Her presentation led to a networking lunch for all participants within the **Cariplo Factory**, followed by a **visit to the premises of Cariplo Factory and Base** and the exhibition "**Jean Auguste Dominique INGRES and Artistic Life at the Time of Napoleon**" at Palazzo Reale, an inspiring end to a great Annual Gathering!



Thank you to all of those who participated to the event: your motivation and interventions made for our Annual Gathering to be a considerable success. We look forward to welcoming you at our upcoming initiatives in the future!

<sup>4</sup> SCALE CITIES, *Milan*, <<https://scalecities.com/cities/milan/>>.



## 23 March 2019, Fidenza Village

In addition, the participants who were staying in Milan over the weekend and who wished were invited to a **day of shopping the Italian way**, on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> of March at [Fidenza Village](#), a luxury outlet shopping experience.

A bus took them from Milan to the [Fidenza Village](#), where they enjoyed a great shopping experience and were welcomed at the VIP Lounge for a networking lunch with local regional products. Thank you to Fidenza Village and to **Silvia Tagliaferri**, *Tourism Director of Value Retail Management (Fidenza Village)* for treating us like queens!



For further information, please contact:

**Ainara Vilaseca**

**WIL Project Manager**

**+33 970403310**

[contact@wileurope.org](mailto:contact@wileurope.org)