

## Women Talent Pool 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Opening Session

March 15th, 2018

Orange Headquarters, Paris

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*“The future of Europe is digital, and women cannot be left out”* were among the words of **Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society**, who joined us for the launch of the **4<sup>th</sup> Edition** of our **Women Talent Pool (WTP)** programme and met with nearly **90 WIL members and guests**. Among them were the **46 selected talents** that she will accompany as **Godmother** of this edition throughout the **18-month programme**.



Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society

### WIL – Women Talent Pool programme

Since 2012, WIL Europe has launched its Women Talent Pool (WTP) programme, an **18-months cycle programme**, to support **high potential women** by offering them a range of **online and offline learning and networking opportunities**. 3 editions took place so far, involving more than **120 participants** and **30 role models**.

Check out who are the 46 selected talents of our 4<sup>th</sup> edition in the [Welcome Book!](#)

## Welcome Remarks and Programme Introduction



From Left to Right: **Line Pélissier**, Group Diversity Director at Orange, **Thaima Samman**, Partner, SAMMAN Law and Corporate Affairs & WIL President

The kick-off event began with a **warm welcome** from WIL's President **Thaima Samman**, Partner, SAMMAN Law and Corporate Affairs, and **Line Pélissier**, Group Diversity Director at Orange. Line Pélissier shared the experience of Orange in partnering with WIL and the positive feedbacks she received from the 30 talents that have already participated in the programme since 2012.



From Left to Right: **Cristina Hoffmann Muñoz-Seca**, Artist, **Line Pélissier**, Group Diversity Director at Orange, **Marina Niforos**, President and CEO of Logos Global Advisor, **Racha Abu El Ata**, Health Industry Sales Director in France at Microsoft, **Beata Dobrowolska**, Architect for Convergent Transport Network and Country Support at Orange

The participants then had the opportunity to hear the **testimonies of WTP Alumni** during a lively panel session moderated by WIL Board Member **Marina Niforos**, President and CEO of Logos Global Advisor. **Beata Dobrowolska**, Architect for Convergent Transport Network and Country Support at **Orange** advised the current participants to grasp every little bit of the 18 months journey as it offers unique tools and experiences that are not readily available in their current professional environment. She especially enjoyed the speed-dating sessions with WIL members, a one of a kind experience to learn from women in senior positions.

Throughout the trainings and networking sessions, **Racha Abu El Ata**, Health Industry Sales Director in France at **Microsoft** learnt to be valued in the workplace, being for example more confident when asking for a promotion and salary raise as she became aware that opportunities will not come along by themselves. After many years in the corporate sector, the programme allowed **Cristina Hoffmann Muñoz-Seca**, now **Artist**, to challenge her comfort zone and to make a drastic change in her career. All former participants agreed that the programme widened their horizons, enabled them to push boundaries and taught them to dare.

### Keynote Speech: Towards Gender Inclusive Digital Europe



**Christine Albanel**, Former French Minister for Culture and Communication, Senior Executive Vice-President

On behalf of Orange, **Christine Albanel, Former French Minister for Culture and Communication, Senior Executive Vice-President, Corporate Social Responsibility, Diversity, Partnerships & Philanthropy** at Orange, welcomed and introduced the EU Commissioner. She also took this opportunity to encourage the participants to trigger change and fight for equal pay, promote flexible working hours and work-life balance.



From Left to Right: **Thaima Samman**, President of WIL and Founder and Partner at SAMMAN, **Mariya Gabriel**, EU Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society

During her **Keynote speech**, **Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society**, introduced the initiatives of the European Commission with regards to the digitalisation of Europe and the promotion of women in the digital sector.

She reminded the audience that the **EU situation regarding digital** is alarming with 18 million Europeans still not having access to the internet and only 37% of the EU labour force having basic digital skills, when from 2020, 90% of jobs will require those skills. To tackle this issue, the European Commission has adopted serious initiatives including:

- In 2017, the EC adopted the **'Digital Education Action Plan'**, that consists of 11 initiatives to support technology-use and digital competence development in education, especially among girls.
- The **'Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition'** brings together the Member States, companies, social partners, non-profit organisations and education providers, who take action to tackle the lack of digital skills in Europe.
- The **'Digital Opportunity traineeship'** will provide cross-border traineeships for up to 6,000 students and recent graduates between June 2018 and 2020. The aim is to give students of all disciplines the opportunity to get hands-on digital experience in fields that are increasingly demanded by the market.

Mariya Gabriel reminded us as well of the **importance to increase the participation of women in the digital sector**, as female participation in all STEM fields is not only poor, but it is also worsening: today, only 19% of women work in ICT. More women in digital would mean 16 billion-euro GDP increase in the EU alone and urgent actions are required.

Among the Commissioner's actions is the **'Code of Best Practices for Women in ICT'**, a pamphlet that aims at breaking the stereotypes and emphasises the attractiveness of the ICT sector, targeting both schools and universities and other tertiary education institutions. These Best Practices ensure that more women choose a career in the ICT sector. In addition, it also aims at encouraging and supporting those women who already have a job in ICT but want to advance in their career.

Mariya Gabriel calls for more female role models, not only in the business sector but also on tv and general media as it is imperative to amplify women's voices. This is the reason why she recently launched the **campaign #NoWomenNoPanel** and is refusing to participate in events and panels where women are not equally represented.



From Left to Right: **Thaima Samman**, **Mariya Gabriel**, **Bénédicte Javelot**, Chief Strategy Officer at Orange

**Bénédicte Javelot, Chief Strategy Officer at Orange**, responded to the Commissioner’s call for urgent actions by underlining Orange’s own initiatives, which has adopted a non-gendered bias approach and actively supports women in the workplace. Bénédicte Javelot also stressed the importance of networking, bonding with other female colleagues, and creating strong links between different levels of the company.

### Training on Emotional Intelligence



**Axele Lofficial**, Executive Coach and Manager of the Key Account Development Team at BPI Group

Putting words into actions, WIL offered the participants of the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition of our WTP Programme a **training session on “Emotional intelligence: the key to a new leadership style”** by **Axele Lofficial, Executive Coach and Manager of the Key Account Development Team at BPI Group**. According to Axele Lofficial, it is impossible to manage all critical situations simply with expertise. Companies and organisations need to have a vision and have strong leaders that give meaning to the employees. Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify and regulate one’s emotions and understand the emotions of others.

A high Emotional Quotient helps build relationships, reduce team stress, defuse conflict, while at the same time improving job satisfaction. With Emotional Intelligence, it is possible to increase team productivity and staff retention, as it is proven to enhance the firm performance and the well-being of its employees.

### Speed Dating Session

After the first training session, the talents of our Women Talent Pool Programme were divided into small groups and had the opportunity to meet and network with 13 WIL senior level members: [Béatrice Delmas-Linel](#), [Emanuela Palazzani](#), [Catherine Ladousse](#), [Sylviane Toporkoff](#), [Enrica Acuto Jacobacci](#), [Wassila Zitoune-Dumontet](#), [Serena La Torre](#), [Claire Bouchenard](#), [Viktorija Smatko-Abaza](#), [Milena Harito](#), [Jennifer Schenker](#), [Christine Marlet](#) and [Anne Houtman](#).

WIL Members have always thrived to share their knowledge and experience with emerging women leaders, and we can proudly say that transmitting to other generations is in the DNA of our network.



## WTP Trainings

After the lunch break, the participants were offered to choose between two trainings, the first one on the **importance of networking for leaders** and the second on **decision Biases and stereotypes**.



**Marina Niforos, President and CEO at Logos Global Advisors**, held the first training session on the importance of building a dynamic network. How do we create and develop our networks to accomplish our goals? What kind of leadership skills are necessary for an uncertain and fluctuating environment? The workshop examined some of the challenges women face today in establishing their leadership style and developing their strategic networks to navigate their careers and live better. It explored the basic notions of situational leadership and discussed how to develop resilience and foresight within networks and ecosystems.



**Laurent Derivery, President at Valeurs & Development**, explored in which ways decisions, both individual and collective, are biased. How stereotypes influence us and others in decision making and most importantly what can be done, individually and collectively, to master stereotypes and lessen biases.

Thank you to all participants and partners! We are looking forward to seeing you at our upcoming events!

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