



Press Release

**PARIS, 25 October 2022 – Leading global companies convened at the LEAD Network conference in Paris, France, focused on advancing gender parity in business.**

*Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion were key topics discussed and debated over two days at the 10th annual LEAD Network conference, which took place October 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at the Palais des Congrès d'Issy.*

Since 2015, United Nations Member States have strived toward gender equality, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. LEAD Network members are committed to closing the professional gender gap and have been working for over 10 years with corporate leaders in the European market, toward achieving gender parity.

Companies like **Danone, Carrefour, Coca-Cola, Kimberly Clark, Kellogg Company, and Procter & Gamble**, among others, came together at the annual LEAD Network conference to share best practices on how to create inclusive, innovative business solutions in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and retail industry.



*LEAD Network: Nigyar Makhmudova, Rami Baitiéh, Cécile Beliot-Zind, Béatrice Dupuy - ©photo credit - Philippe Barbosa*

## **TOP BUSINESS EXECUTIVES FROM LEADING GLOBAL COMPANIES WORK TOGETHER TO DRIVE SYSTEMIC CHANGE.**

This year's conference brought together more than 700 members in person, with over 1,000 additional members participating virtually. Sixty nationalities were represented, and 130 companies united around a singular theme: **"Doing not Trying - Lead through Inclusion"**.

Setting the stage were **top managers and C-level directors of leading global companies** in the retail and consumer goods industry, featuring dynamic speakers like Rami Baitiéh - Executive Director at Carrefour, Nigyar Makhmudova - Managing Director in charge of growth and innovation at Danone, Page Guillot – President of Coca-Cola France, Béatrice Dupuy - President & General Manager France & Benelux for Procter & Gamble and Cécile Béliot-Zind - General Manager at Bel Group.

## CONFERENCE INSIGHTS

**Sharon Jeske, Executive Director of LEAD Network** kicked off the conference by celebrating the accomplishments of LEAD Network over the past ten years. Membership has grown to 16,000+ members, 15 Chapters, 60 corporate Partners, and 370 volunteers, all helping to make a stronger impact in driving change and positioning LEAD Network to become the **Voice of the Industry** for D&I in Europe.

During the opening ceremony, **Rami Baitiéh, Executive Director Carrefour France and member of the Carrefour Group Executive Committee** explored with the audience the power that a D&I approach offers for a company, its employees and how CEOs and managers have the opportunity to make diversity an asset in service to improving company performance.

At Carrefour, “D&I” is a keystone of HR development strategy thanks to an integrated training course which features loyalty programs, equal pay, and excellent career development prospects for younger generations.



**Rami Baitiéh**  
Executive Director, France  
& Member of Carrefour  
Group Executive Committee



**Page Guillot**

President & General Manager  
France



For **Page Guillot, President of Coca-Cola France**, *“It is important for us as leaders, through the LEAD Network, to come together and learn from each other what we can do differently to keep improving our D&I journey”*

*“As one of the world’s largest advertisers, we have a responsibility to use the voice of our brands to tackle bias and promote gender and intersectional equality”* states **Pankaj Bhalla, Senior Vice President Europe Grooming, Procter & Gamble**



**Pankaj Bhalla**  
Senior VP Grooming



**Olivier Kac**

General Manager, France



At **The Kellogg Company**, in France, 60% of senior executives are women, an asset for **Olivier Kac, General Manager France**, who has made gender, age, and social background diversity a fundamental key to the success of the company’s teams. An approach anchored today in the *“A Place at the Table for Everyone”* program.

**Béatrice Guillaume-Grabisch, Executive Vice President, Global Head of Human Resources & Business Services at Nestlé S.A** *"I strongly believe that achieving equality remains one of humanity's greatest projects. There are many other important challenges, but equality is fundamental in building the right foundations to solve these as well, and it must all go hand in hand."*



**Béatrice Guillaume-Grabisch**

Executive VP, Global Head of HR  
& Business Services



**Cécile Béliot**  
CEO



Closing the conference, **Cécile Béliot, General Manager of Bel Group** alerted managers to the key role each individual plays in driving systemic change. Based on her own experience, she encouraged other CEOs to take a stand on D&I topics and strive to educate internal teams and staff. Proud to announce that the Bel Group's management committee has reached parity, Cécile Béliot also noted that business leaders should not wait for government leadership to take things in hand, reminding that every CEO has the power to effect change at all levels of management.

The consumer goods and retail sector in Europe continues to move towards gender equality with 35% of management positions now held by women. Although the pandemic has slowed down certain actions, the career of women in this sector remains a key focus of concern for members and partner companies of the LEAD Network.



LEAD Network Advisory Board, Leadership Team and Steering Committee - ©photo credit - Philippe Barbosa

## ACTION IN MOTION - SPOTLIGHT ON THE NEXT TEN YEARS

LEAD Network's 10th annual conference is a small part of a paradigm shift that each of the network's 60 partner companies embraces every day.



*"Diversity makes it possible to accomplish great things. Like a magic wand, it reveals us and takes women, men, and companies where they never thought they would go."* proclaims **Sharon Jeske, Executive Director LEAD Network**

Supported by its partners, volunteers, and a growing network of more than 16,000 members and 15 chapters to date, the LEAD Network is laser focused on the next 10 years, pushing forward towards a **50/50 parity objective**, from executive positions to all levels of business management.

**From CEOs to younger generations, LEAD Network is committed to driving change.**

The **NextGen Chapter** was created with the aim of empowering young professionals to grow into capable, confident business leaders of tomorrow. These mid-career individuals have an eye on the future, are digitally connected and in search of a fulfilling career with a strong work-life balance. This group's dynamic energy and ideas provide valuable input for members of the LEAD Network.



LEAD Network NextGen Chapter - ©photo credit - Philippe Barbosa

*"At the **CEO Roundtable**, we agreed to establish a new board, a unique combination of NextGen talents and CEOs, who will address the inherent barriers that exist for this new generation's talent progression."* **Sinéad Kwant, President Europe, Diversey**

LEAD Network's research has proven that diversity drives innovation and employee engagement, and that companies with greater gender and racial diversity financially outperform their peers. Diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiatives are thus critical to a successful organization.



LEAD Network Mick Broekhof, Helayne Angelus, Sharon Jeske - ©photo credit - Philippe Barbosa

*"I dreamt big about creating a movement to advance women in the CPG/Retail Industry in Europe through education, leadership, and business development. My personal leadership model of envisioning, engaging, energizing, enabling and executing with Mick made the dream a reality."*  
**Helayne Angelus, Co-Founder, Past Chair Advisory Board, LEAD Network & Lifetime Partner Kalypso**

The inspiring discoveries made, and ideas generated during two days of lively, authentic exchanges, will continue to grow, and develop within LEAD Network chapters. This will nurture the growing network of global leaders and managers who are convinced that Diversity and Inclusion are key to success, both personal and professional.

LEAD Network looks forward to welcoming participants to **Düsseldorf on October 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023!**

[Download photos of the event](#)

#### **About LEAD Network**

LEAD Network is a non-profit and volunteer-led organisation whose mission is to attract, retain and advance women in the consumer products and retail sector in Europe through education, leadership, and business development. LEAD Network has a fast-growing membership of more than 16,000 people – both women and men – drawn from 81 countries. Members can build their leadership skills, widen their circle of contacts, and be inspired by female role models as well as male champions in the industry. To date, 65 companies have signed LEAD Network's CEO Gender Parity Pledge, a charter whereby CEOs and top managers commit to implementing specific actions aimed at cultivating a work environment that promotes inclusiveness. The CEO pledge recognises companies where women hold high-level positions, and which are striving to achieve gender parity over the next decade. Download more information about LEAD Network [2021 Annual Report](#) and about the LEAD Network [CEO Gender Parity Pledge](#).

#LEADNetwork22 #DoingNotTrying #LeadThroughInclusion #GenderEquality  
[www.lead-eu.net](http://www.lead-eu.net)

PRESS OFFICE – CIEL ROUGE PR  
Jane Peck – [jane@ciel-rouge.com](mailto:jane@ciel-rouge.com) – 06 07 12 24 76