

An innovative European survey to promote women to boards of SMEs Accelerate's kick-off conference in Warsaw, Poland on June 17th

Accelerate! An EU-funded project promoting women to boards of SMEs

The top-ranked EU-funded project Accelerate! complements existing EU action on gender-balanced boards by targeting specifically Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the EU. The starting point: a highly innovative 'Needs Analysis' survey in Belgium, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Romania to map the specificities of SME governance and board requirements, in order to address their needs. The next step: dedicated tools developed for use by organisations wishing to accelerate women's access to board positions in SMEs.

Four Accelerate! Conferences

Between June and October 2015, the process translates into major events aimed at: presenting the results of the survey in each of the partnering countries, and running brokerage events to connect SMEs with qualified women. They will be held in major European cities including BRUSSELS, LISBON, MILAN and WARSAW. The consolidated results of the Accelerate! survey will be presented in Brussels in September 2015.

Kick-off Conference in Warsaw on June 17th

PWN Warsaw is hosting the Accelerate! KICK-OFF CONFERENCE. It will see the presentation of first results of the 'Needs Analysis' survey -5000 organisations will be surveyed in Poland -, and of the Polish "board-ready" women database. A brokerage session with representatives of boards of directors meeting candidates, both managers and women experts - ready to take board seats in companies -, will be also staged. Workshops on leadership and responsibility of board and supervisory board members complete the agenda of the day.

Key guest speakers include Prof. M. Fuszara, Secretary of State in charge of Diversity and equal rights. The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in Poland is also one of the partners of the conference. Other stakeholders participating in the conference include ACCOR, HBRP, Orange, Outbox, Bisnode, Newspoint, Inicado, Balajcza, SmyrskaPR.

The event will take place at the **Hotel Sofitel Victoria, ul. Królewska 11**. For the programme of the conference and the registration link, please visit:

<http://www.321leader.com/>

<http://www.sofia-accelerate.eu/events> & <http://www.sofiafoundation.org/events>

Representatives of PWN WARSAW, Accelerate!'s partner in Poland :

Jowita BUKOWINSKA is President of the Board of the Professional Women's Network (PWN) Warsaw, a non-for-profit association supporting the development of professional women's careers. Jowita currently holds the position of Director at ORANGE Group.

About the Sofia Foundation:

Accelerate! is run by the [Sofia Foundation](#) (Societal Organisation for Feminine Impact and Achievement) a Brussels-based non-profit researching and accelerating women's participation in economic, political and social governance across Europe, both engaging accomplished women leaders on boards of organisations and promoting women as experts in the media.

The Sofia Foundation collaborates with the Global Board Ready Women Initiative (GBRW) supported by the EU, and is partner of the Female Board Pool established by the University of St. Gallen in 2005.

SMEs wishing to participate in the survey for Poland, and in the Conference, please contact:

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