

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **‘Women in Fibre’ group wants to close the digital gender divide**

*The FTTH Council Europe initiative kicks off with a lively networking lunch.*

WARSAW, 26 FEBRUARY 2015 – The FTTH Council Europe and its President Karin Ahl are pleased to report the very successful launch meeting of “Women in Fibre”, a forum for women to share ideas and support one another in their work.

The initiative is being carried out in cooperation with the “Women in ICT” campaign of the European Commission, which aims to encourage young women to take up careers in ICT. Increasing the number of women working in ICT and related industries could generate billions of euros annually for Europe’s economy.

Intelligent women are increasingly at the forefront of the evolution to next-generation broadband based on fibre. At the lively networking lunch held during the FTTH Conference in Warsaw, women made and renewed connections with like-minded women who share the same determination to make a difference to society through their work in the fibre to the home (FTTH) industry.

The attendees included Magdalena Gaj, president of the Polish telecommunications regulator UKE, responsible for Poland’s broadband strategy, who spoke at the opening ceremony of the FTTH Conference, Iwona Wendel, Undersecretary of State in the Polish Ministry of Infrastructure and Development and Anna Krzyzanowska, Head of Unit “Broadband” at DG CONNECT of the European Commission.

“The number of women taking on leadership roles in the broadband and ICT industries - and in the FTTH industry especially – is steadily increasing and this is inspiring for us all to see,” said Karin Ahl. “But the fact remains that women are under-represented at the higher levels of our industry. It is important that we support women in their careers, and attract a new generation of women into the industry so that we can close the gender gap.”

The Women in Fibre networking lunch was just the start. A programme of activities is being planned, including more networking meetings. The aims of the initiative are to empower women in their professional lives, ensure a good representation of women in board and executive-level positions, encourage women to take a more active role in the work of the FTTH Council Europe and its committees, and support newcomers to the industry.

The initiative is very close to the heart of FTTH Council Europe President Karin Ahl. Any women in the industry who would like to participate in this important initiative are encouraged to contact us on [wif@ftthcouncil.eu](mailto:wif@ftthcouncil.eu)

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The Women in Fibre networking luncheon took place during the FTTH Conference 2015, held in Warsaw's international exhibition centre EXPO XXI on 10 to 12 February 2015.

Taking place under the theme "Creating a Connected Continent", the FTTH Conference is the largest FTTH-focused event in the world, attracting around 3,000 participants in 2015.

Next year's FTTH Conference will take place in Luxembourg. Further details on our website: [www.ftthconference.eu](http://www.ftthconference.eu).

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### **About the FTTH Council Europe**

The FTTH Council Europe is an industry organisation with a mission to accelerate the availability of fibre-based, ultra-high-speed access networks to consumers and businesses. The Council promotes this technology because it will deliver a flow of new services that enhance the quality of life, contribute to a better environment and increase economic competitiveness. The FTTH Council Europe consists of more than 150 member companies. [www.ftthcouncil.eu](http://www.ftthcouncil.eu)

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