

SUMMER SCHOOL FOR FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Dear ladies,
Dear “young future” of Europe!

I am honoured to be the Honorary President of the 2022 Summer School for Female Leadership in the Digital Age. It takes place during the Czech presidency of the Council of the European Union and, as a Czech and European citizen myself, I believe Prague to be an excellent choice of host city. It is not only a beautiful enclave at the heart of Europe, but also one which combines a long, rich history and culture of innovation with a modern 21st century outlook.

Promoting equality between women and men, closing the gender pay gap, advancing gender balance in decision making, ending gender-based violence and opening doors for women in sectors that have been traditionally dominated by men are key objectives for the European Union, and for the first ever female President of European Commission, Ursula Von der Leyen. I am so happy to see that many of these same objectives are addressed through this School’s programme.

As Director at the European Commission for Equality and Union Citizenship in its department for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST), it is my role to advance the equality agenda and to work to break down barriers and challenge prejudices and stereotypes. I am also a mother of two daughters myself and I am convinced that we will only be serving our society well when we are able to empower all citizens to reach their full potential. The digital transition can play a positive role in this as it affords us many opportunities to advance equality across our society. We must ensure that everyone has an equal chance to benefit from technology and that nobody is left behind, as the motto of this initiative goes.

I am particularly struck by the inclusive nature of the Schools for Female Leadership in the Digital Age, and the opportunities that they continue to offer for students to discover more about European countries beyond their own. During my career as a diplomat, I was fortunate enough to live in a number of countries around Europe, and also beyond. The experience of different cultures and people made me recognise the importance of dialogue and engagement in fostering strong relationships and understanding other people’s points of view. Together we are stronger, and it is only through cooperation that we can advance equality, security and prosperity in the European Union and abroad.

The 29 young women that will take part in this Summer School will have the chance to learn from their peers from across Europe – other equally talented women that are shaping our Union from their universities, towns and regions. Not only will they master skills that will be invaluable in their future careers – I hope that they will also be inspired to take their place in leading the change that they want to see in the world.

Dear future leaders, dear #NextGenChangeMakers: make the most out of this exciting week ahead. Explore Prague, write down all the thoughts that will come to your mind while listening to your professors, and to each other; brainstorm ways to advance equality within your local communities; and most importantly: support each other, be there for each other – in Prague, and even more importantly after Prague. Your friendship and mutual support can last forever if you cherish and nurture them.

I will be looking forward to learn about your experience once you are back from this life-changing experience in my beautiful hometown. Enjoy it to the fullest!

With my best wishes,

Irena Moozová
Director, Equality and Union Citizenship, EU Commission;
Honorary President, 2022 Summer School for Female Leadership in the Digital Age