



More women for the Private Equity industry:

Level 20 Germany looks back on a successful first year

- **220 members from the industry one year after founding**
- **In addition to Private Equity (PE), the focus is now also on Venture Capital (VC)**
- **Mentoring program as an important element for more women in leadership positions**
- **Roll-out of further Level 20 committees planned in other European countries**

Frankfurt, February 13, 2019 - The nonprofit initiative Level 20 Germany, which campaigns for more women in the Private Equity industry, can look back on a successful first year. The initiative, which originally came from the United Kingdom, has been active in Germany and Switzerland since the beginning of last year and has grown to 220 members in the areas of PE, banking, law firms, LPs, consulting firms and VCs. This was announced by the German committee of the initiative, comprising Anja Bickelmaier, Dörte Höppner, Giovanna Maag, Martina Pfeifer, Michala Rudorfer and Laura Schröder, in Frankfurt last night on the occasion of the second Level 20 Germany Annual Reception with an audience of about 100 people.

Keynote speaker Bilge Ogut (Managing Director, Partners Group) said at the annual reception: "In our fast-changing world, bringing diversity to the way that businesses are run and investments are made will likely foster more unconventional perspectives and hence better outcomes. Every professional endeavor in history has benefited from having an association to think about the bigger picture, and which enables its members to build skills and a relevant network to attain both their individual and collective goals. Participating in Level 20 is a privilege for me, like many of you, and I hope we can all do more in the coming years."

Dörte Höppner, Level 20 spokeswoman, adds: "Unfortunately, the proportion of women in the financial industry in general, and Private Equity specifically, is not where it should be. However, the successful first year of Level 20 in Germany shows that there is a positive dynamic. Level 20 raises awareness and intensifies the networking of successful women in the Private Equity industry. We do not just want to help make more women enthusiastic about a career in the PE sector. We would also like to increase the proportion of women in senior management, by motivating women to pursue a long-term career in the industry. Our

mentoring program, which was initiated around six months ago, is an important component of this."

This first Germany-wide mentoring program for women from the PE sector started in September 2018. Experienced PE professionals take time to mentor women in PE who want to develop their potential and seek leadership positions. The program started with 17 mentoring couples who have met regularly over a period of nine months.

Laura Schroeder of Level 20 Germany commented on the mentoring program: "The initial feedback from the participants is very positive and shows how valuable mentoring is at all career levels. Therefore, we're looking forward starting a new mentoring class in September 2019."

Over the first year, Level 20 Germany has organised ten local networking events in Frankfurt, Munich, Berlin and Zurich, which have been well received by women in the industry. Initially Level 20 in Germany was focussed on Private Equity. The initiative will include Venture Capital firms over the coming year given the strong interest shown by women working in the sector. The first PE-VC Level 20 Germany networking events took place in 2018 and showed that the challenges and objectives for motivating women are similar for a career in their respective industries.

Other regions are taking the German Level 20 initiative as a model. The Netherlands have started to create a local Level 20 chapter, other chapters in Europe will follow.

About Level 20:

Level 20 is a non-profit organisation founded by 12 women in London who held senior positions in the Private Equity and Venture Capital industry, representing GPs (General Partners) as well as Limited Partners (LPs). Level 20 aims to work with the leading names in the European Private Equity industry to attract more women to the industry so that they represent 20% of senior executives in the future. The German leadership committee consists of Anja Bickelmaier, Dörte Höppner, Giovanna Maag, Martina Pfeifer, Michala Rudorfer and Laura Schröder.

Press contact

IWK Communication Partner
Ira Wülfing
Ohmstraße 1
80802 München, Germany
+49. 89. 2000 30-30
level20@iwk-cp.com