

H.E. ALEXANDER DE CROO and SASKIA EGAS REPARAZ NAMED 2025 RISE & LEAD CHANGEMAKER HONOUREES

Rise & Lead Women honours former Belgian Prime Minister H.E. Alexander De Croo and HEMA CEO Saskia Egas Reparaz with the 2025 Changemaker Award

THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS, September 2, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Rise & Lead Women](#) today

“

Rise & Lead Women is delighted to shine a spotlight on these visionary leaders. We are thrilled to honour again impactful leaders advancing the cause of gender equality and inclusive leadership.”

Ebere Akadiri, Founder and President of Rise & Lead Women, added:

announced that H.E. Alexander De Croo, Prime Minister of Belgium (2020–2025), and Saskia Egas Reparaz, CEO of HEMA, have been named the 2025 Rise & Lead Changemaker Honourees.

[The Rise & Lead Changemaker Award](#) honours purpose-driven leaders and role models whose actions have created opportunities and advanced inclusion across organisations and society. The honourees will be recognised at the Rise & Lead Summit & Awards on September 11–12, 2025, at the Hilton Hotel, The Hague.

"I feel honoured to receive the 2025 Rise & Lead Changemaker Award. Advancing inclusion, gender equality,

and sustainable development has been at the heart of my work in public service. I'm grateful to be part of a community that turns purpose into action," said Alexander De Croo.

"I'm deeply honoured to receive the Special Changemaker Award. To me, this recognition goes beyond accomplishment – it reflects the values that drive me. It's a powerful reminder to continue shaping an organisation where authenticity is embraced, leadership starts with listening, bold decisions are welcomed, and differences are celebrated," said Saskia Egas Reparaz.

Marguerite Soeteman-Reijnen, Chair of the Rise & Lead Distinguished International Jury, commented:

"Each of our honourees is creating a legacy by paving the way towards a more inclusive future. We salute their leadership and their commitment to making inclusion a lived reality in

workplaces and society."

About the 2025 Honourees

H.E. Alexander De Croo (b. 1975) served as Prime Minister of Belgium from 2020 to February 2025, leading the country through the COVID-19 crisis and driving economic recovery. His coalition government championed gender-balanced leadership in cabinet and prioritised sustainable development.

Previously, he was Deputy Prime Minister (2012–2020), Minister of Finance and Development Cooperation (2014–2020), and played a central role in Belgium's contributions to the European project. Before entering politics, De Croo was an entrepreneur in the intellectual property sector. He studied at Solvay Business School (Brussels) and earned an MBA from Kellogg School of Management (Chicago).

Saskia Egas Reparaz (b. 1973) has been CEO of HEMA since 2021, where she revitalised the nearly 100-year-old brand into a customer-centric, innovative, and inclusive organisation. Under her leadership, HEMA embraced authenticity, bold decision-making, and inclusivity, aligning business strategy with societal needs.

Previously the CEO of Etos, she oversaw growth and renewal. Before that, she spent nearly two decades at Albert Heijn, holding senior leadership roles in marketing, e-commerce, and retail formats. She has served on supervisory boards, including ANWB and Hortus Botanicus Amsterdam. Egas Reparaz studied Financial Economics at the University of Amsterdam and the University of San Francisco, and completed executive leadership programmes at Harvard, Nyenrode, and NIMA.

About the Rise & Lead Summit & Awards

The Rise & Lead Summit & Awards convenes executives, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and changemakers to share strategies for inclusive leadership and equitable growth.

Event Details:



Summit: 11–12 September 2025

Awards Ceremony: 11 September, 6:30 pm – 10:00 pm

Venue: Hilton Hotel, The Hague

Register: www.riseandleadsummit.com

Distinguished International Jury

The finalists and honourees are selected by the Rise & Lead Distinguished International Jury, chaired by Marguerite Soeteman-Reijnen – Chair of the Advisory Board of SER Topvrouwen, Non-Executive Director at Siemens NL and MN. Members include:

Dr. Janet Visbeen – Member of the Management Board, PwC Netherlands

Céline van Asselt – Managing Director, Fiduciary Management Continental Europe Multi-Asset Solutions, Goldman Sachs Asset Management

Robert Baker – Founder and CEO Potentia Talent Consulting, Member of the Board of Trustees, UN Women UK

Jamie Holton – Senior Program Manager, UN Global Compact Network Netherlands

Laura Lee – Diversity & Inclusion Leader

Wendy Morée – CEO & Founder, MoreeQuality BV; Advisory Board, Frankly Solutions

Prof. Lionel Paolella – Professor of Social Sciences and Organisations, Cambridge Judge Business School, UK

Hilary Richters – AI & Digital Leader

About Rise & Lead Women

Founded in 2018 by Ebere Akadiri, Rise & Lead Women is an international organisation based in the Netherlands that champions women's leadership, gender equality, and financial inclusion in workplaces and marketplaces. Through its annual Summit & Awards, leadership development programmes, and advocacy initiatives, Rise & Lead Women equips leaders to build equitable, inclusive, and sustainable organisations.

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