

## PRESS RELEASE

### Women, entrepreneurship and inclusivity: New independent study shows Direct Selling is supporting inclusive, flexible business opportunities for millions of Europeans

In celebration of its **50<sup>th</sup> anniversary**, Seldia, the European Direct Selling Association, commissioned Ipsos to conduct a comprehensive survey into the lives of direct sellers in 2018. The independent study, revealed at Seldia's 7<sup>th</sup> European Direct Selling Conference on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018, is the first of its kind in over a decade. The results show direct selling continues to contribute to equality, entrepreneurship and growth in Europe.

One clear takeaway is that **direct selling is helping drive equality in European entrepreneurship**. Women are the driving force behind the sector's success. Over 4 in 5 direct sellers are women, a figure almost twice higher than the European average for entrepreneurial businesses.<sup>1</sup>

Direct selling also offers **inclusive business opportunities for people from all ages and backgrounds**. 1 in 5 direct sellers are aged 55 and over, and there are no educational barriers to becoming a direct seller – people from all types of educational backgrounds choose to be involved in direct selling, ranging from those with no educational background to those with post-graduate degrees.

**Entrepreneurship is at the core of direct selling**. 1 in 3 direct sellers choose our sector because it offers **flexibility and long term supplemental income**, and the study revealed that the vast majority of direct sellers **enjoy the independence, freedom and flexibility of their work**. Sellers are empowered to build their own business, set their own working hours, and sell to their networks in their own unique ways. Direct selling enables people to build a career the way they want, at the pace they want.

**Direct selling is a thriving sector, contributing to the success of Europe**. The core of direct selling has always been personal connection between a seller and a customer, and the study shows that even in the modern age, this is true today. We have adapted to the online space, with many sellers using social media and other online platforms to build their businesses. However, 77% of sellers believe the strength of direct selling is the personalized service offered by direct sellers, and face-to-face meetings remain a popular way to buy and sell. This model proves to be consistently effective, with a 29 billion euro sales turnover last year. In a world where it is becoming increasingly difficult to connect with others, direct selling continues to build communities and bring people together across Europe, contributing to our economies, both online and offline.

*"The IPSOS study shows the many ways direct selling is improving the lives of citizens across Europe"* says Seldia Chairman Paul Jarvis. *"Seldia is proud to see the positive trends of equality, entrepreneurship and growth continue to be felt by direct sellers, and we hope to amplify their voices at the European level".*

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission, DG Grow, Female Entrepreneurs Fact Sheet, October 2018

The IPSOS study confirms that the values direct selling has had since its inception continue to contribute to European citizens and economies in the modern retail space. At Seldia, we look forward to seeing these trends continue over the next 50 years. If you quote figures, please refer to Ipsos survey on direct selling in Europe as the source.

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***SELDIA** was established in 1968 and represents the direct selling industry in Europe. Seldia's mission is to represent and promote, at European level, the interests of national direct selling associations and of their members engaged in direct selling, as well as to ensure that the EU and the national policy makers in Europe are aware of the industry's benefits and advantages, and of its contributions to national economies.*

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