



TARGET
GENDER
EQUALITY



Target Gender Equality – When She Leads

"I believe that we, as a society, can do better and must do more in order to create more heterogeneous and diverse teams, thus contributing to development. This motivates me as a manager, as a woman and as a mother."



Quick facts: Marijana Bačić – Vice President for Corporate Customers and ICT – Hrvatski Telekom (Croatian Telecom Inc.) – Croatia

We have 10 years to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. What are you doing to champion the Global Goals in your business?

Sustainability in its essence has a long-term perspective and we both as an organization and as individuals have a great responsibility to create a better tomorrow for future generations. And the time to act is now. As the leading telecommunications company in Croatia, Hrvatski Telekom is fully committed to this goal and because of this we made a promise to ourselves, our partners and to the communities we operate in to build a world of better possibilities. This is a bold promise, but it is an integral part of what we believe in, and we are dedicated to actively participate in the development of the society by bringing the opportunities of digitalization to everybody.

This in a nutshell explains Hrvatski Telekom's SDGs approach and our dedication to driving the positive change in the society and the business community. The 'ground zero' for making a tangible impact is by having the SDGs as a part of our corporate culture and living them across the company.

By building the ICT infrastructure - the importance of which came abundantly clear during 2020, by enabling businesses to transform, by making sustainable smart cities a reality, by promoting education, gender equality and empowering women and by helping society close the digital divide gap, we directly contribute to the quality of life, provide benefits for the economy and society and help unlock greater human potential.

We are also focused on promoting equality and diversity within our company and our employees by creating a stimulating working environment. A big number of our projects are focused on promoting STEM for people of all ages. We are proud of our donation program "Generation NOW" which is focused on developing STEM skills for students of all ages.

I am proud that Hrvatski Telekom is actively promoting a society of knowledge, with the highest social, environmental and ethical criteria integrated and exemplified in our strategy, business model and above all in our corporate culture. We will continue to invest in new technologies, we are looking forward to utilizing the opportunities that technology provides and we are committed to connecting individuals, businesses and communities. This is our purpose, our goal and our responsibility.

What motivates you to keep fighting for the issues you care about?

It gives me great pleasure to work in an industry that is fast growing, that positively impacts all segments of our lives and that provides essential services that enrich everyday lives of individuals, businesses and the society as a whole.

I'm also pleased to be in the position to break down stereotypes in the male-dominated ICT industry, and we at Hrvatski Telekom are living proof of that and are also actively working to change this misguided perception.



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I'm proud of my career growth in Hrvatski Telekom and of the fact that women hold some 40% the managerial positions and that my company strives to identify key talents from all areas of the company and approach the development of their careers individually in order to increase competencies, commitment and motivation.

In these transformative times where research shows that companies in the top quartile of gender diversity achieve 15% better results, and in which at the same time, EU data show that 17% of ICT students, 19% of ICT managers and only 9% of ICT developers are women I believe that we as a society can do better, and must do more in order to create more heterogeneous and diverse teams, thus contributing to development. This motivates me as a manager, as a woman and as a mother.

Can you share one obstacle that you had to overcome to achieve a successful career in business?

One can always find obstacles in everyday work, but the key is to put them in perspective, and not let them get you down, shatter your confidence and make you doubt yourself. A healthy dose of belief in yourself, in your possibilities combined with hard work, dedication and stubbornness will get you to your goal.

I'm privileged in the sense that I work for a company that shares my values, in which I started my career 19 years ago, that has recognized my potential and supported me in developing it and that I still feel passionate about my work. Looking back, I'm proud of my career growth and the fact that my efforts were recognized and acknowledged - having been promoted this year to Vice President for Corporate customers and ICT in Hrvatski Telekom.

Can you share one barrier to women's economic empowerment that you think is overlooked or not adequately prioritized? In your opinion, what needs to happen to accelerate the pace of change?

There isn't a single leadership skill or business trait that is exclusively male or female by definition. As a society we have to continue pushing the gender equality agenda. And this starts from the earliest age – at home and with the access to quality education. This is the cornerstone for building a society in which we want our children to grow up in and later thrive in. Personal engagement, hard work, dedication, expertise, professional values and recorded results should be the only benchmark for career growth which should be "genderless".

What is one piece of advice you would like to share with fellow women that are aiming to shatter the glass ceiling in the business world?

Never give up. Use your advantages, and don't doubt you have them, work in your favor.

What is one piece of advice that you would like to share with male leaders?

Working as individuals we can all be good, working together as a team we can be great.