



DATE
**September 17,
2020**



WOMEN IN BUSINESS

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES ARISING AFTER THE PANDEMIC

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought even more uncertainty to the workplace and has worsened the employment position of women. Employers, experts, and public officials met at the Women in Business digital conference to discuss current trends, opportunities, and challenges resulting from the pandemic and stressed the intensified demand for flexibility and a culture without prejudices.

Naturally, the conference reflected not only the prevailing trends related to women employment but above all the risks and challenges resulting from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

The first panel focused specifically on the ways in which women were much more impacted by the current situation and how it has worsened their situation on the job market as well as at home. However, the panelists agreed that the situation has improved and that the specific qualities of women are becoming more and more recognized and valued in business as well as politics, at least in the developed countries. Any meaningful

change for the better cannot be achieved without men, as the path to an equal and much more prosperous society can only lead through dialogue and mutual trust.

The panel was followed by an inspiring presentation on sustainability in fashion, in which Katarína Hutýrová, Founder of Nosene, described her own journey towards a more sustainable lifestyle.

While the first panel featured speakers from the public sector, the second one brought together representatives of private businesses. The discussion was opened by Pernille B. Henneberg,

Economist in the Global Economics team at Citi Research, who provided an in depth look at the global impact of the pandemic on female jobs and growth. Panelists from Adient, Citi, Dell and Swiss Re described how their companies reacted to the pandemic, especially in terms of flexibility, telework and the resulting work transformation.

Katarína Šilhárová, Director, PwC Slovakia, presented very interesting numbers from the latest Women in Work Index, stressing again that women may have a much harder time returning to work in these difficult times. The presentation also offered a great opportunity to compare Slovakia's statistics related to gender equality with the rest of the world and show where we lag behind.

The last panel focused on the issue of beauty bias and its detrimental effects in the workplace. Mateja Čotar, General Manager Oncology & Country President, Novartis Slovakia and Olívia Hurbanová, Founder, Olinclusive shared several stories from their professional and personal lives in discussion with the moderator of the conference Barbara Jagušák.

Without men, the change is impossible. The discussion is between men and women as equal partners.

As a society we are much more critical of women and even women are more critical of women than men.

Every woman who wants to work should be able to work whether she has children or not. In these days it is not possible due to a lack of pre-school facilities.

LUCIA ĎURIŠ
NICHOLSONOVÁ,
Member of
the European Parliament



From left: Barbara Jagušák (Moderator); Barbra Záhradníková, General Manager, Adient Slovakia s.r.o.; and Lucia Groneová, Head of HR Slovakia, Swiss Re



MAIN



SILVER



IN-KIND



BRONZE



GENERAL



MEDIA



” I believe that the situation is changing and that women are respected more and more. Society understands that certain female characteristics are bringing added

value to political or business discussions. Hi-tech businesses are deliberately employing women because of their different approach. We cannot support these women [in developing countries] only

from the outside. We need to foster changes in these countries to make women a part of the decision making process. As a result there should be proper legislation and more secure jobs for women and

that will make them less vulnerable to economic shocks.

MIRIAM LEXMANN,
Member of
the European
Parliament



” Women are the primary caretakers of children and of elderly relatives. They also perform most of the unpaid domestic labor at home.

I think this is an area of opportunity. Telework has not been something that has been widely available to our diplomatic staff. Suddenly with Covid we really had to test and improve our remote technology.

We have to empower younger women, we have to give them skills and we have to inspire them so they can become fully participating members.

NATASHA
FRANCESCHI,
Deputy Chief
of Mission,
U.S. Embassy
in Bratislava



” Instead of incessant growth, more focus should be put on sustainability. Sustainability has become the most crucial word for our current situation and the future.

We believe we won't need as much office space as we have been using up till now. We are looking for opportunities to reduce the space we are using.

BARBORA
ZÁHRADNÍKOVÁ,
General Manager,
Adient Slovakia
s.r.o.



” The empathy that we were seeking from our customers and our colleagues is there because we are living in the same era. When it comes to the question of morale - it is a challenge. It is quite difficult to create the emotional bonding solely through the screens and monitors. But people were quite creative, conducting virtual team buildings or virtual drinks.

We need to have clear priorities, we need to focus on our core business, on the things that are absolutely mandatory. But I wouldn't initiate massive changes across the industries now because we are all influenced by emotions, by fear and by the fact that we are still living in a crisis.

LUCIA GRONEOVÁ,
Head of HR
Slovakia, Swiss Re



” It doesn't matter how much you weigh; you should be happy with who you are. Appreciate your health and be grateful.

Beauty comes from inside out. Who you are, how you accept other people, how you treat them, help them, support them. This is also what makes us happy and when we're happy we shine and vibrate a different energy. I wish people would be seen as beautiful for what they do and how they are and not for how they look.

MATEJA ČOTAR,
General Manager
Oncology &
Country President,
Novartis Slovakia



” I think that consistency and responsibility is something one would expect from the government but their motivation and their behavioral patterns are probably a little bit different than in businesses.

Flexibility is a necessity now because we live in a very exceptional situation.

MICHAL NEBESKÝ,
Chief Executive
Officer in Czech
Republic and
Cluster Head for
Czech Republic &
Slovakia, Citi



We have plans in place to have a 50/50 gender split across our company and 40% of management positions held by women by 2030. At Dell Bratislava, we're pretty much at those goals today.

Work is not a place. Work is what we do. And we can do it anywhere in this interconnected world we live in.

STEPHEN CAULFIELD,
Vice President
Global Field
Services, Dell
Bratislava Site
Leader, Dell, s.r.o.



” The gender gap between men and women in Slovakia is at 22%, a huge difference compared to the most successful countries where the difference is not larger than 10%. Taking into consideration the gender pay gap and the expensive private pre-school care many women decide not to return back from maternity leave.

KATARÍNA
ŠILHÁROVÁ,
Director, PwC Slovakia



” If we want to build a fair society we need to know about these implicit biases and we need to judge people by their behavior and competence and not based on the happenstance of their looks.

Our brain reflectively associates beauty and good. It's not a cultural thing, it's very biological and deeply rooted in us and we need to do something about it. We cannot escape our biology but we can build awareness and understand it better.

OLIVIA
HURBANOVÁ,
Founder,
Olinclusive

