

# THE ON-GOING MEETING POINT FOR CROATIAN CONTROLLERS ICV CROATIA I



8 YEARS  
25 WORKSHOPS  
70 MEMBERS



**Jasmina Očko,**  
Controlling Consultant,  
Kognosko, Head of the  
ICV Work Group Croatia I

Back in 2010, the Croatian community of controllers was more than ready to organise and gather formally in order to share experiences. It seemed logical for us to carry out this project under the auspices of ICV, the world's largest association of controllers. ICV has many years of know-how and experience in this area. Our first workshop, WG Croatia, proved that this was the beginning of a great story.

Our membership base grew extensively. During the past eight years, 160 members from all over the country took part in this group. Some of our members are highly positioned board members in large multinationals, some are controllers in Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, some are entrepreneurs. Today, we have a stable group of around 70 controllers who make a firm base and are very connected. There are about 30 participants present at each of our workshops, which enables fast sharing and expansion of ideas, solutions and experiences.

During the early years, our partner company Microsoft Croatia let us use their premises, but in 2013 ICV WG Croatia got its own permanent premises. Since then we have had the best conditions for work and gatherings.

In the course of all these years we have never encountered any problems regarding the selection of subjects or volunteers inside WG or externally, who were willing to prepare materials, presentations or tasks for an all-day workshop. The schedule is agreed upon at the end of the year for the next year and future subjects are chosen at each workshop. A few months ago we distributed a questionnaire among all our members in order to find out what they find the most useful and what type of work they prefer. According to the results, we prefer guest lecturers from abroad who come from the field of controlling. Among our favourite guests are Dietmar Pascher, Herwig Friedag and Andrej Lapajne, to whom we express our gratitude. We were lucky enough to have an all-day lecture about transfer prices or IFRS held by colleagues from TPA Audit and Mazars Cinotti. Also, thanks to the contribution of our ICV members, we were able to go through case studies from more than 30 medium and large-sized companies from Croatia.

Each of our workshops is an all-day event where we work with much discipline, solve problem tasks, have debates. But sometimes we also want to relax. For this we choose subjects related to soft skills, which are also very helpful in our everyday controllers' lives. Two of those workshops

were particularly interesting. They were organised by our colleagues who are psychologists: "Do not kill the messenger" and "In what way can the organisational culture beat the controlling department?". These two workshops impressed us greatly and all of us concluded that, in our attempt to master the hard skills, we pay too little attention to soft skills. It was a truly enlightening experience.

Speaking of hard skills we usually say that having no choice makes it easier. Therefore, "Transfer Prices" as well as "IFRS" are the most popular subjects.

But, do not get us wrong, because we also like to have fun. After 19 workshops, the 20th was organised at "Stari fijaker", a traditional restaurant in Zagreb. It was a great opportunity to connect work and pleasure.

The most important benefit of the group's activities is good networking and the possibility for Croatian controllers to meet, work together and socialise at least 3–4 times a year. These activities resulted in many new job opportunities and transfers, and recommendations regarding ERP and BI systems. Last but not least, we had the opportunity to observe many examples of best practice from the everyday work of controllers. Each year, at our workshop, we organise a presentation held by the winner of the contest for the best controlling project in Croatia. Once a November (November 15, 2018 in Zagreb), we organise the international ICV conference – just like the Munich Controller Congress. This is the opportunity for many members, as well as other sympathisers – over 200 of them – to see the best international practice. Collaboration with ICV makes it possible for our members to get to know the international controlling scene and enrich their insights.



*Workshop with Dr. Herwig R. Friedag.*

**The following are subjects at all our workshops and can serve as suggestions for any WG which has exhausted its ideas:**

1. Planning – necessity or nightmare?
2. One page only report
3. Structuring of expenses in controlling
4. Management by objectives
5. Assessing profitability of investment projects
6. Implementation and development of the function of controlling in companies
7. Measuring employees' productivity in profit and cost centres
8. Calculating the cost price and establishing the selling price
9. Project controlling
10. Planning – the modern approach
11. Managing supplies
12. Balanced scorecard is management, not measurement
13. Risk management and innovations in cost management
14. Psychology in controlling – Do not kill the messenger
15. Zebra BI – the most desired controlling tool
16. Measuring process efficiency of the business support service
17. Controllers for controllers – the best advice and verified solutions
18. Controllers for controllers – first aid
19. Power BI – the beginning of the new era of controlling?
20. Presentation of the awarded controlling project and celebration of the 20th anniversary ICV workshop
21. How organisational culture can beat the controlling department
22. Window dressing in financial reports
23. Transfer prices
24. MSFI for controllers and managers
25. BI tools for controlling support

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