

„Controllers need to prepare for a future of radical breaks“

Europe's largest controlling conference in Munich opened / Siegfried Gänßlen requires „success or quick failure“ also in controlling

Munich, 23.04.2018– **Europe's largest controlling conference, the 43rd Controller Congress, was opened on Monday (23.04.2018) in Munich with about 600 participants. Siegfried Gänßlen, Board Member of the hosting International Association of Controllers (ICV), explained in his opening speech that the high number of participants shows that the motto of "controlling on the move" hit the nerve of the controller community.**

The progressive digital transformation of society and the economy brings profound changes for companies and thus also for controlling. This would require from controllers "motion and agility" to keep up with the pace. Digital transformation is no longer just about product innovation, but about the impact of digitalization on business models, corporate management, competitive strategies, value creation, customer relationships and the world of work. Changes brought by digitalization not only help start-ups, but also give established companies new opportunities to expand their business models. "We have to prepare for a future of radical breaks," said Gänßlen. Also in controlling "success or quick failure" is required; This concerns products as well as processes and projects in companies.

The longtime Chairman of the ICV asked the audience whether digitalization actually sets the controllers in motion. Over the next two days, the "Controller Congress" will use business examples to show how controlling, together with management, can drive digital transformation. But what's really there, where "digital" is on? The digital potential is only insufficiently exploited today; The digital transformation still lacks the necessary dynamics. There is still a lack of the foundation for the digitalization of standard processes and "the expertise of distinguishing cause and effect from pure coincidence".

According to Gänßlen, controllers themselves are active in shaping the change in companies and in controlling. This requires that they act more proactively. "This challenges us as controllers and at the same time opens up opportunities for us to further develop, specialize and help make controlling more of a driver of the digital business model." Many companies and functions, however, are still on the beginning. Regarding the Congress motto, "Controlling on the Move", Gänßlen said: "We are at the beginning of the movement." Controllers now have "the fantastic opportunity to advance this movement, to be there, to shape, to open up new fields and stake out new claims".

According to Gänßlen, when we talk about evolving controller's capabilities, there are three key points: you need to "solidly understand the company's business model and value chain," and "know and feel the market and its customers." It is also about communication skills and knowledge of statistics and IT.

"Let us use the new place to devote more time to analysis and demanding tasks", Gänßlen told about using in the corporate management learning machines, which quickly and reliably take on routine tasks such as data collection or compliance checks.

Gänßlen explained that securing rationality in corporate management will become even more important. "Controlling on the move" should be understood as a request from the Munich Congress for continuous learning. Businesses need to educate employees on time, and employees need to be prepared to learn more, from dealing with "Big Data" to ability to use cognitive systems effectively.

Gänßlen was firmly convinced that "good controlling, continuously supplemented by new skills, is more important than ever, and will continue to be important in the future". For this reason, the two-day conference shall "actively discuss the digital changes in controlling, openly address risks and fears and define limits".

The opening speech by Siegfried Gänßlen was followed on Monday morning by keynote speech of Dr. Ralf P. Thomas, CFO of Siemens AG, and then by presenting the prestigious "ICV Controlling Excellence Award" to Robert Bosch GmbH, Powertrain Solutions Division (Diesel Systems), Stuttgart, with the project "Big Data-Based Approach to Optimization Net Working Capital at Bosch / Diesel Systems".

*The **International Association of Controllers (ICV)** has in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Poland and 12 other countries in Central and Eastern Europe around 6,500 in practical Controlling active members. The key objective of ICV controlling philosophy is reaching permanent economic success. With its honorary chairman Dr. Albrecht Deyhle the association, founded in 1975 has shaped the Controlling in German speaking countries placed and influenced. The ICV merges controllers, CFOs, managers and scientists and it is strictly oriented its members' benefit. Experience, communication and being focused on future-oriented trends are foundations of ICV. ICV combines practical experience with the latest research results and prepares its knowledge for practical implementation. The ICV is makes personal contribution to the success of its members and to the sustainable performance of companies. Prof. Dr. Heimo Losbichler, FH Steyr, is the Chairman of the ICV, Deputy Chairman of the ICV is Matthias von Daacke, BLANCO GmbH & Co. KG.*

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