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Economic AI and HPC Forum

Step forward Towards Anorganic Intelligence

Opatija, May 27, 2026
Grand Hotel Adriatic



Nina Begičević Ređep is a Full Professor at FOI and Head of the Laboratory for Strategic Planning and Decision Making. She also leads the Pre-incubation Center in Smart Industry and served as the first female Dean of FOI from 2019 to 2023. She currently chairs the Board of Science, International Cooperation, and Art at the University of Zagreb. Her academic background includes specialization in the United States at the University of Pittsburgh. She has received numerous awards for her scientific and social contributions and has authored more than 100 publications and books. Furthermore, she has led many international projects and serves on the Supervisory Boards of Erste&Steiermärkische Bank and the Varaždin Technology Park.



Pre-incubation and Skill Development for the Smart Industry Era

The Center for Pre-incubation in Smart Industry, currently being established in Varaždin by the University of Zagreb Faculty of Organization and Informatics, aims to bridge academic knowledge and real-world technological innovation. Focused on Industry 4.0, the center supports student entrepreneurship through technologies such as IoT, autonomous systems, and digital value chains. The project promotes innovative learning and entrepreneurial development for students and citizens in Northern Croatia, with a strong emphasis on pre-incubation as a crucial early stage for startup success. Based on the triple helix cooperation model between academia, industry, and government, the center creates an ecosystem for innovation and collaboration.

By combining academic expertise with practical business experience, the initiative helps develop future tech leaders and startups capable of shaping the digital and industrial transformation of society.

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Neven Vrčec is a researcher, lecturer, and former dean at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Organization and Informatics (UNIZG-FOI).

His fields of interest include smart industry, IoT, organizational performance management, and software engineering.

He has authored 80+ scientific papers, several books, and supervised 15 PhD candidates.

He has led numerous national projects, including e-government, interoperability frameworks, and e-invoicing systems.

He has held key academic and professional roles, including head of doctoral programs and certified auditor of higher education institutions.

He currently leads the Doctoral Program in Digital Innovation Management and chairs the auditing board of the Croatian National Bank.



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