

Within the framework of the International IWECA conference

Arancha Manzanares (2019 CaixaBank Women in Business Award), recognised at the 2019 IWECA Awards

- ***The vice president of the engineering and technology consultancy Ayesa, is one of the Spanish representatives in the international awards that are granted every year at the International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWECA).***
- ***This year, the IWECA Awards have recognised the careers of 39 women in business from 18 countries, directing companies with a total combined annual turnover of 5.7 billion dollars, and which employ more than 83,400 people.***

Barcelona, 16 November 2019

Arancha Manzanares, national winner of the 2019 CaixaBank Women in Business Award, has been recognised in the 12th edition of the 2019 IWECA Awards, delivered within the framework of the annual International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWECA), an international network of worldwide leading female entrepreneurs, the goal of which is to highlight the role of women entrepreneurs in the global economy.

In this edition, the IWECA Awards have acknowledged the professional career of 39 entrepreneurs from 18 countries. The companies led by these women operate in various sectors, including engineering and construction, textiles, energy supply, education, food and marketing. In total, they have recorded a combined turnover of 5.7 billion dollars and employ 83,400 people.

Arancha Manzanares, vice president of the engineering and technology consultancy Ayesa, has a PhD in Industrial Engineering from the University of Seville (1992 and 2006), and took the Senior Management Programme (PADE) at the IESE Business School. She joined Ayesa in 1996, where she has taken on various roles. In 2004 she became the CEO of ACT Sistemas, the origin of the group's IT department. Between 2005 and 2007 she took on the role of General Corporate Management. In 2011 she was appointed president of Ayesa Advanced Technologies, and since May 2019 is the vice president of Ayesa.

According to Manzanares, the award gives her "great pride, not only for representing Spain, but also all the women who will accompany me in New Delhi. We are proof that effort and hard work are the true driving forces behind achieving great objectives."

The vice president of Ayesa has been granted the 2019 CaixaBank Women in Business Award among 14 regional candidates across the whole of Spain, becoming one of the Spanish representatives at the international IWECA Awards. She follows in the footsteps of Inés Juste, chairwoman of the Juste Group, and Rocío Hervella, founder of Prosol, the winners of the 2017 and 2018 editions of the CaixaBank Women in Business Award, respectively.

Since the creation of the IWECA Awards in 2007, 411 women have been recognised from 42 countries, the companies of whom have an overall turnover of 35.5 billion dollars, and they employ more than 348,200 people.

The annual IWECA Conference, the women entrepreneurs network meeting point

For three days every year, the IWECA Conference gathers the women that comprise its global network as a meeting point to share knowledge, experience and connections. In its 12th annual edition, the conference was held between 11 and 13 November in New Delhi (India).

Under the title "Connecting Women Businesses Globally: Leading the Way to Innovation and Integration", the conference focused on innovation, technology and cybersecurity, and the effects that they have on the performance and sustainability of companies. The economy and society of India, this year's host country, took a special focus, with the presence of institutional, religious and business leaders from the country.

CaixaBank moderated the debate table "Leading the Way to Integration", on which Mar Santana, Commercial Director Medium & Large Enterprises for Madrid Region at CaixaBank and IWECA advisor, presented the programme Work 4 Progress by "la Caixa" Obra Social, together with Dr. Ashok Khosla, chairman of Development Alternatives Group and Kanika Verma, head of the programme. The goal of Work 4 Progress is to create sustainable and quality employment among women and young people from India, Mozambique and Peru. Via the support of a network of companies from these regions, the programme fosters the creation of businesses and access to employment among the most excluded groups in these countries.

About IWECA

IWECA is an international organisation of women business owners, created in 2007 with the backing of the United States Department of State. Its mission is to develop a global business network comprising women entrepreneurs, in order to help them in their international growth, offering them a platform to share knowledge, experience and connections.

“IWECE understands that providing access, resources and support to help enable the success of female entrepreneurs is key to ensuring women’s active, sustainable participation in the global economy, and contribute to close the gender gap. We provide a global forum to exchange knowledge, experience and connectivity among women business owners, setting the stage for education, disruptive business opportunities, roads to joint ventures, and promoting social dialogue among women entrepreneurs and business leaders”, states Ruth A. Davis, chairwoman of IWECE.

