



28th International Conference on System Theory, Control and Computing
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Round Table on Women in Engineering

Organizers:

- **Elvira Popescu** (University of Craiova, Romania)
- **Elena Helerea** (Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania)

Abstract: Engineering is a male-dominated STEM field, with women working in technology still a minority. Furthermore, various surveys and interviews with women in tech reveal discouraging experiences and perceptions within the industry. The role of the panel is to trigger a fruitful discussion on the importance of attracting more women to the engineering fields and how the various stakeholders can address issues women are facing in the science and technology workplace. Several panelists from various backgrounds will join us and share their experience, statistics, support initiatives, solutions for diversity and inclusion problems, as well as methods for inspiring and encouraging women in engineering.

Panelists:

- **Elvira Popescu** (University of Craiova, Romania)

Title: Introduction and Overview on IEEE Women in Engineering

Short bio: Elvira Popescu is a Full Professor at the Computers and Information Technology Department, University of Craiova, Romania. Her research interests include technology-enhanced learning, adaptive educational systems, learner modeling, computer-supported collaborative learning, learning analytics, and intelligent and distributed computing. Prof. Popescu also serves as the Vice Chair for the IEEE Women in Engineering Romania Section Affinity Group and is a board member for the IEEE Technical Committee on Learning Technology and the International Association of Smart Learning Environments. She is also a Distinguished Speaker in the IEEE Computer Society Distinguished Visitors Program. She is actively involved in the research community by serving as editor-in-chief for the Smart Learning Environments journal, associate editor for two other journals and serving as a conference chair, program committee chair and track chair for over 20 conferences.

- **Elena Valcher** (University of Padova, Italy)

Title: Women in Engineering: Some Statistics and a Personal Perspective

Short Bio: Elena Valcher is Professor of Control Theory at the University of Padova since 2005. Her current research interests include data-driven methods, social networks, Boolean control networks, multi-agent systems and consensus problems. She served as 2015 IEEE Control Systems Society President and she is the 2024-2025 EUCA President. She is the Founding Editor

in Chief of the IEEE Control Systems Letters (2017-). She served as Program Chair of the 2012 IEEE CDC, and co-General Chair of the 2022 IEEE CDC. She is an IEEE Fellow since 2012 and an IFAC Fellow (Class 2020-2023). She served as Program Chair for ICSTCC 2023 and 2024.

- **Anca Daniela Ionita** (National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania)

Title: Obstacles and Opportunities

Short bio: Anca Daniela Ionita is a professor and PhD supervisor with the National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest and head of Automation and Industrial Informatics Department. She was the recipient of a Copernicus grant at Politecnico di Torino, Italy, in 1994, and of a Marie Curie fellowship at Joseph Fourier University, Grenoble, France, from 2004 to 2006. She has research interests in software engineering, hazard management, and educational software.

- **Mercedes Chacón Vásquez** (University of Costa Rica, Costa Rica)

Title: Women in Engineering: Strengthening Women's Entry and Retention in Engineering

Short bio: Dr. Chacón worked in oil, gas, mining, and energy control systems for two years for clients in Latin America and Europe. She has a PhD in networked control systems from the University of Strathclyde in Scotland. She has an MBA with an emphasis in Finance. She is a professor at the University of Costa Rica and coordinator of the Automation Laboratory. She is a member of the IEEE, Control Engineering Research Laboratory, and the Gender and Equity Committee. Dr. Chacón collaborated with the Ministries, IEEE, and UNESCO, as well as with projects such as Women in Engineering, to motivate the entry and permanence of women in engineering. She won the 2020 Stimulus Fund from the Vice-Rectorate of Research. Her areas of interest are: Process modeling and optimization, Automation systems, Renewable energies, Gender and engineering and Sustainability.

- **Iulia Stamatescu** (National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania)

Title: Women in Control: Driving Engagement in Automation Education

Short bio: Iulia Stamatescu is currently an Associate Professor with the Automation and Industrial Informatics Department, Faculty of Automatic Control and Computers, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania. She obtained in 2012 the title of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in System Engineering. Her PhD thesis covered the field of energy efficiency modelling and optimization for datacenters, being partially carried out within an international project at Grenoble Institute of Technology, Grenoble, France. Her research activity revolves around the management and optimization of energy systems and data modelling algorithms based on computational intelligence techniques. Current research interests span the areas of electric vehicles. Since 2009 she is a member of IEEE, currently serving as the Young Professionals Affinity Group Vice-Chair, within the Romania Section.

- **Ioana Cercel** (Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania)

Title: A Girl Confidently Turning into an Engineer

Short Bio: Ioana Cercel is 23 years old and currently pursuing a Master's degree in Advanced Electrical Systems at Transilvania University of Braşov within the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. It has been 29 working days since she started her employment at ARC Braşov, one of the most popular Romanian distributors of electrical and electronic measuring and

control devices. She is willing to develop her practical engineering skills by getting involved in projects related to power electronics, electrical storage systems containing renewable energy sources and electromagnetic compatibility during the Master's degree studies.

- **Elena Helerea** (Transilvania University of Brasov, Romania)

Title: What Are the Urgent Tasks for the Members of the WIE Romania Affinity Group?

Short bio: Elena Helerea is professor within the Department of Electrical Engineering and Applied Physics, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Transilvania University of Brasov. Her activities covered the education in Electrical materials, Power quality, Electromagnetic compatibility and History of electrical engineering. As supervisor of doctoral studies her interest is in new smart materials, magnetoresistance sensors, measurement techniques, local energy communities and history of technology as steps for sustainable development. She is a senior member of the IEEE. As member of the IEEE Section Committee in Romania, and as president of the Romanian Women in Engineering Affinity Group, she acts to increase performance in the field of electrical and electronic engineering in Romania.