

CASE STUDY: Women's leadership and community action: Laura Mariano, Italy

I work for Meridaunia, a Local Development Agency, responsible in the Communication and Cooperation office. I coordinate or supervise the tasks assigned to other 8 colleagues (most of them are women). I am also a co-founder of a Private ICT Company which develops framework and software for decision-making processes.

In my spare time, since 2008, I am on the Board of AVIS BOVINO, a Local Blood Donor Association, where I have the role of secretary and event organizer.



The main lesson is the importance of being curious and to be proactive: the desire to study, to dig deeper in each topic, to have many interests.

Personal growth should be a lifestyle for each woman. Of course, this means challenging the problem of finding more time other than the ones you need to be a woman/mum/worker. But giving your contribution to several causes will improve more self-awareness and self-satisfaction.

The role I have in Meridaunia brings many responsibilities such as planning work and funds, planning of events, and the coordination of different people. There are many women in my team, some of them are mothers and they have faced the closure of the school in the last years. So, "Covid-19" has forced us to rethink times, methods of communications, and instruments.

The most important thing I have done is the ability to delegate completely some activities. My colleagues had the freedom to organize their work according to their needs, establishing priorities and outputs. Also, I succeed to teach and to share to younger colleges some practical skills I learned.

In Avis, I have been the only woman on the board and the youngest for a long period. When I first arrived, I had a lot to learn. During the time, I can say the other members of the board learned from me too as about working organization and how to involve young people.

- In Meridaunia, some of my colleagues have developed a completely new "sector" (without any help from me) that is going very well. They grow up a lot, so they can work without supervision.
- In Avis, after the activities that I proposed, we reached many new blood donors (+35%). Most of them are very young. Also, we have succeeded in a generational transition, with the election of a new young president.
- Above all, we have developed a new brand, as a young and smart association near to the needs of the community.