

# MAGYAR HÍRLAP

## THE 50 MOST SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSWOMEN

PHOTO: PÉTER ANDRÁS NÉMETH

### Marianna Lukács

Health policy maker  
Creator and director of Patika Health Fund

“I grew up around doctors and pharmacists, so it never occurred to me not to work in health care,” says Marianna Lukács in relation to her roots. Rather than working in curative medicine, she was more interested in the functioning of the system. Moreover, being a doctor and mother at the same time is not too practical. Seeing the beautiful, high-standard Austrian hospitals as a child, she decided to launch the first private health fund in Hungary.

She realised here plans. After receiving a degree in economics and sociology, she earned a PhD in the financing of European health insurance schemes, and then studied the sickness insurance scheme in Germany. Her mentor, Rudolf Andorka, asked her to return to Hungary and work at the Austro-Hungarian Action Foundation. She didn't feel comfortable with pursuing a university career, so she chose a more dynamic job as head of department at the Fund Supervisory Authority, the predecessor of the Hungarian Financial Supervisory Authority. She later became involved in pension reform at the Ministry of Finance.

Although the relevant law permitted the operation of private health funds from 1993, for years only employer-operated funds carried out activity. It was only from 1999, when the Patika Fund was launched, that other institutions appeared on the market, which were open to everybody. For the start-up of the fund, she secured the support of roughly 500 pharmacies.

“After a seven-year marriage that left me with nice memories, fate brought me together with a person who stands on his own two feet and has independent plans, so fortunately, he doesn't tighten the grip on our relationship. He doesn't work in my profession, so I can relax with him,” she explains. After a long and busy day, she always relaxes with swimming and the sauna. Her hobbies are dancing, which is now optionally solo belly-dancing, and bead stringing, which, in parallel with interpreting, had been a source of income during her studies at university. She has an enormous collection of old photos, but is also a film fan, and not an evening goes by without a movie. She is fascinated by Marlene Dietrich and Marilyn Monroe both as actors and women. She can't go long without travelling, either. As a big advantage of an executive position, she can travel wherever and whenever she wants.