

**“2017 EUROPEAN ONLINE BANKING FUNCTIONALITY BENCHMARK”**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**INTESA SANPAOLO  
DECLARED THE THIRD DIGITAL BANK IN EUROPE  
BY FORRESTER RESEARCH**

- **Recognised by Forrester Research as one of the seven leading global players in digital transformation in 2016, Intesa Sanpaolo has now moved into podium position in the ranking of the best Internet banking sites in Europe**
- **According to the study, Intesa Sanpaolo’s areas of excellence are the following: the new secure authentication system, personal financial management software, the online chat and assistance service, the search engine based on state-of-the-art cognitive features, storage tools and document management**
- **The range of digital services offered by Intesa Sanpaolo promotes the freedom of channels, circularity, independence and mobility: digital touchpoints are being increasingly used for routine transactions, but the human touch is still essential for the more complex financial needs**

*Turin, 20 December 2017* – **Intesa Sanpaolo is one of the three best digital banks in Europe** according to the report *“2017 European Online Banking Functionality Benchmark”* by **Forrester Research**, one of the most authoritative and influential independent analysts in the world. In 2016, the Bank had been considered one of the seven leading global players in the digital transformation of business.

**The study compares and contrasts Internet banking platforms from European banks regarded as the most pioneering in the range of online services they offer, and assesses the ability of their websites to meet customer needs.** Forrester uses 49 analysis criteria that determine a rating divided into eight categories – *Login and Security, Account management, Money management, Money movement, Marketing and Sales, Self-service features, Assisted-served features and eDelivery* - with a final score (out of 100) that is weighted based on the importance of each criterion to customers.

With its new Internet banking site, Intesa Sanpaolo received **a score of 86/100**, placing it in **third position out of the 13 banks examined** this year by Forrester (average score 75/100), beaten out by just one point by the Turkish Garanti Bank (87/100), and by four points by the Spanish bank BBVA (90/100). Not only this, but **Intesa Sanpaolo is also the biggest climber compared to the report’s last edition, increasing its score by 30 points:** in 2014, it was eighth in the ranking, lagging far behind the top three banks (mBank 82/100, Garanti Bank 71/100, and BBVA 63/100). This progress **confirms the validity of the strategy fine tuned by Intesa Sanpaolo to bring innovation to the customers’ multi-channel experience** and to develop a series of features necessary for managing “day-to-day banking”, in the context of a major digital transformation of business that has involved processes, platforms and services.

Intesa Sanpaolo's online banking platform has **a strong position in all the categories** assessed. Forrester's analysis identifies the distinctive characteristics of the new range of digital services as areas of excellence: these include the new **authentication system O-Key Smart** (in the *Login and Security* category), which complies with the new PSD2 Directive and provides an even greater level of security when accessing the site, using digital fingerprints and new facial recognition instead of physical USB pen drives; **personal financial management** software (in the *Money management* category) for sorting incomings and outgoings and setting aside sums of money using the "Salvadanaio" ("*Piggy Bank*") feature, based on the customers' saving objectives; the **chat and assistance service** (in the *Assisted-served features* category) that is always displayed and available on all the site's pages by using the quick access menu and the "Parla con noi" ("Talk to me") feature; and the innovative "**natural language**" **search engine** (in the *Self-service features* category), that brings together state-of-the-art cognitive features, such as interpreting the search for concepts, and the opportunity to translate requests with intent (e.g. "*transfer 100 euro to Mario*") into direct actions. Intesa Sanpaolo once again received the top score for the **document archive** (in the *eDelivery* category), which was highlighted as the most complete of its kind in the market and boasting a wealth of functions that allow for its maximum customisation; as well as the service that can contact customers and provide them with **customised sales offers** in real time (in the *Marketing and Sales* category).

The digital transformation of business project undertaken by Intesa Sanpaolo in 2014 has, **in just two years since it began**, led to the launch of a **new pioneering digital retail platform in Europe** - with an online bank, showcase site and mobile app - and to the introduction of multi-channel sales and post-sales pathways for most of its products. The different channels are fully interoperable, and customers can finally choose between "doing it themselves", calling on remote assistance (by phone, through online chat with their manager, or by accessing the Filiale Online, *Online Branch*, the new "telephone banking") or going to a branch for more complex needs.

**Today, Intesa Sanpaolo is the leading digital bank of Italy**, producing some extraordinary results: **a 30% increase in multi-channel customers** compared to 2014 (there are now more than 6 million); **more than 2.5 million users of the Intesa Sanpaolo Mobile app**; and **a 25% increase in positive results** from sales campaigns.

*"Forrester Research's analysis is testament to the timely achievement of our goals of innovation and positioning of Intesa Sanpaolo figures among the global leaders in customer service – said Stefano Barrese, Head of the Intesa Sanpaolo Banca dei Territori Division - The results obtained up until now are the product of a determined change in culture and a strategic vision focused on being completely in harmony with our customers. The new platforms allow us to do everything we were doing before and more, but in a far simpler and more secure way. We wish to consider all of this not an end point, but a starting point: we are working to, on one hand, provide the innovations that our retail customers already enjoy to companies, and on the other hand make our key products available on smartphones, which will increasingly become the access point for bank services."*

## **Online or in branch? Both (and there's more...)**

*Digital channels are increasingly being used but the human touch is still essential for Italians. The bank will therefore take an increasingly multi-channel approach, say Forrester analysts.*

**Two thirds of Italians access the Internet at least once a week.** These are the “adults online” referred to in a recent Forrester survey on the most used channels to access banking services.

It is no surprise that for this target group internet banking is the most used channel in day-to-day operations. **62% use their own computer at least once a month to connect to the bank** (50% in 2013), especially to check their balance (53%) or a particular transaction (48%), as well as to send money to others (38%). 32% say that they have used computers to find out information about financial products, and 19% have requested or purchased such a product online. The analysts stress that whilst these percentages are below the European average, they are continually increasing.

**The use of smartphones is also increasing, with 35% of Italians online using them at least once a month to access banking services.** Checking one's location is the most common reason for Italians to use their smartphones online, but nevertheless the percentage of those who carry out money transfers or look for information about banking products is a notable 10%. Almost all mobile phone users also use their computers for banking operations.

**Out of all the adults who are online, the percentage of those who go into a branch at least once a month is almost 30%.** The main reason to go to a branch is functionality, but **the percentage of those who come to particularly receive advice in branch has increased** (23% in 2017, a 2% increase compared to 2015's study).

**Customers of Italian banks therefore are primarily “multi-channel”.** Although 47% say that they use only digital channels on a regular basis, branches still have an important role, particularly in more complex transactions or ones that are closer to home. 15% call their bank's call centre at least once a month, a channel that is crucial to giving a human touch to digital operations say the analysts.

## **About Forrester Research**

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Forrester Research is an international research firm in customer experience, marketing and CRM, and figures among the most influential globally in terms of the competitive positioning of banking and non-banking players in the digital world.

A completely independent firm that has been operating for more than 20 years, Forrester Research conducts annual surveys on a sample of more than 500,000 consumers and executives from a variety of sectors. It uses groundbreaking methods that, by interpolating the surveys' results with business data, offer a clear understanding of the successful strategies of top global players in many industries.

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