

**PRESS RELEASE**

**INTESA SANPAOLO: LAUNCH OF SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR FEMALE STUDENTS OF STEM SUBJECTS IN SOUTHERN ITALY UNIVERSITIES**

**FEMALE EMPLOYMENT IN THE SOUTH, SUBJECT OF A FOCUS GROUP BY THE BANK AT 5PM WITH PARTICIPATION OF GOVERNMENT MINISTERS BONETTI AND PROVENZANO**

Wednesday, 9 December 2020, at 5pm  
Live streamed to website [group.intesasanpaolo.com](http://group.intesasanpaolo.com)

*Naples, 9 December 2020* – Intesa Sanpaolo is promoting today's discussion at 5pm (live streaming on the Group's website): “**The role of women in the development of southern Italy. Awareness and enhancement of female talent in the support of economic and social growth of the region.**” The aim of the meeting is to highlight one of the issues that has emerged most clearly in the current situation but which has existed for some time: the female employment rate, particularly in southern Italy. Speakers include **Elena Bonetti** (Minister for Family and Equal Opportunities), **Giuseppe Provenzano** (Minister for southern Italy and Territorial Cohesion), **Paola Angeletti** (Chief Operating Officer of Intesa Sanpaolo), and **Lucrezia Reichlin** (Chair of the Fondazione Ortygia Business School).

The meeting will address the recent launch, a few days ago, of '**YEP - Young Women Empowerment Program**', the project set up by Intesa Sanpaolo in collaboration with the **Fondazione Ortygia Business School** to promote the personal and professional growth of 40 female university students from STEM faculties in southern Italy who will be assisted and mentored for six months by the same number of Intesa Sanpaolo managers working in the area. The students will be able to gain useful skills that allow them to understand their own strengths and talents, in order to take control of their own future and present themselves to the labour market with greater awareness and perception. Five universities are participating in the initiative, from the 67 which collaborate regularly with Intesa Sanpaolo in Italy and the 16 present in the south of Italy: Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Politecnico di Bari, Università della Calabria, Università degli Studi di Catania and Università degli Studi di Palermo.

In Italy, the percentage of women who work in technical-scientific roles is among the lowest in OECD countries: 31.7% as compared with 68.9% of men, and only 5% of Italian fifteen-year-old girls hope to take up technical or scientific careers. Thus, there remains a general tendency for girls to opt for the study of humanities, especially in the south.

With the arrival of **digital transformation**, professions are now taking centre-stage that were inexistent or relatively neglected up to a few years ago. As one of the biggest employers in Italy (over 100,000 employees), Intesa Sanpaolo now hires graduates in physics, engineering, IT fields, and other technical-scientific areas. To encourage the enrolment of girls in STEM faculties and the acquisition of skills which are increasingly necessary in the banking industry, Intesa Sanpaolo has decided to offer five scholarships for girls entering universities in the south of Italy.

The project presented today by Intesa Sanpaolo and Fondazione Ortygia Business School is a step in this direction and part of the **gender policies** by the Bank; these have for some time included a KPI that rewards managers who make decisive efforts to achieve gender equality, professional acceleration for the most talented women managers, and a specific programme on inclusive leadership aimed at top management. These are joined by partnerships that promote female talent, such as those with Valore D and the Fondazione Bellisario. This dedication by the Group to resolving the issue of equal opportunities has been publicly recognised in numerous international indices, including (most recently), the Refinitiv's Diversity & Inclusion Index. This

index selects 100 of the most inclusive and diversity-aware companies worldwide listed on the stock exchanges, among which Intesa Sanpaolo is the only Italian bank to be named.

The meeting is also a chance to reveal studies and proposals regarding female employment in the south of Italy in the current situation which has led to an extraordinary acceleration in **remote working**, a modality that Intesa Sanpaolo has adopted since 2015 and which has increased significantly in just a few months - from 14,000 people at the end of 2019 to 77,000 in 2020. Intesa Sanpaolo has for many years been strongly oriented towards assisting employees with measures such as its own creches, paternity leave, and a list of over 200 affiliated services throughout life - from birth and education of children to free time and assistance for pensioners.

Studies and research groups agree that there is a general drop in female employment rates due to the outbreak and extended duration of the pandemic. As often occurs, this situation is even worse in the south of Italy, where the number of women employed has remained stable at 30% for some time, and where many women give up working due to work-family reconciliation, problems with childcare and cultural factors. After the first stage of adjustment in order to guarantee continuity, it is necessary to find new working methods and places, to update the technological infrastructure and urban mobility, and (last but not least) rethink the legislation.

#### *Press information*

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#### **About Intesa Sanpaolo**

Intesa Sanpaolo is one of the most solid and profitable banks in Europe, providing wealth management, consumer banking, corporate and investment banking, asset management and insurance. As the market leader in Italy, Intesa Sanpaolo serves nearly 12 million customers through digital and traditional channels. The Group's international subsidiary banks provide for an additional 7.2 million customers in Central Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Intesa Sanpaolo is recognized as one of the most sustainable banks in the world.

The Group believes that value creation should be interpreted broadly, supporting social purpose and driving the real economy. As part of its commitment to sustainable growth, Intesa Sanpaolo has created a €5 billion financing facility dedicated to the circular economy. The Group's large-scale project for economic inclusion and poverty alleviation includes a Fund for Impact to provide €1.2 billion in loans to those parts of society that find access to credit difficult. Intesa Sanpaolo is deeply committed to cultural initiatives that it promotes on its own and together with partners in Italy and abroad, including permanent and temporary exhibits of the vast artistic patrimony at the Gallerie d'Italia, the Group's three museums located in Milan, Naples, Vicenza and soon also in Turin.

Additional information may be found at [group.intesasanpaolo.com](https://group.intesasanpaolo.com) | News: <https://group.intesasanpaolo.com/en/newsroom/news> | Twitter: @intesasanpaolo | Facebook: @intesasanpaolo | LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/intesa-sanpaolo> | Instagram: @intesasanpaolo

#### **Fondazione Ortygia Business School**

Ortygia Business School is an educational platform, able to attract best academic profiles and competencies to deliver first-class business education, in the heart of the Mediterranean from an idea of the economist and teacher Lucrezia Reichlin. We aim at developing a center of excellence in Syracuse with the mission to foster economic co-operation and development among the countries of the Mediterranean. At the same time, the initiative seeks to relaunch the Southern Europe, and in particular the Southern Italy, through the development of human capital of the area.

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