

PRESS RELEASE

**INTESA SANPAOLO AND SACE
PROMOTE INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT ABROAD OF SMEs**

- **Third edition of the 20-stage tour promoted by Intesa Sanpaolo, this year in collaboration with SACE**
- **First stage tomorrow for SMEs in Piedmont, Liguria, Valle d'Aosta and Sardinia, with focus on the United States and Brazil**
- **Three focuses: United States/Brazil, UAE/Qatar and Singapore/Australia illustrated by Intesa Sanpaolo's Italian and foreign network, with contributions by SACE on the subsidies and opportunities offered by the NRRP**

Milan, 7 March 2022 – Tuesday, 8 March marks the start of the third edition of **Smart International Tour**, the project launched in 2020 by Intesa Sanpaolo dedicated to **internationalisation**, which more and more companies are recognising as a key lever for growth, development and competitiveness of their business, including in light of the opportunities offered by the NRRP.

With over 1,000 SMEs participating in the two previous editions, this year *Smart International Tour* will involve another **500 companies** and will be held in collaboration with **SACE**, the insurance and financial company specialised in supporting companies and the national economy and a key partner to Italian companies exporting and growing in foreign markets.

The 2022 program includes a cycle of **20 webinars** aimed at business customers of Intesa Sanpaolo's Banca dei Territori, led by Stefano Barrese, to support them in their international growth thanks to the Group's worldwide network. Through its foreign network present in about 40 countries, consisting of branches, representative offices and banks, Intesa Sanpaolo will provide the necessary support to small and medium-sized enterprises, assisting them as they grow towards development of operations in new markets.

The series of events focuses on **three** areas of interest for SMEs that want to grow in the foreign markets of the **United States-Brazil, the Gulf area (UAE-Qatar) and Singapore-Australia**. These countries will be the subject of numerous events involving the Banca dei Territori Division's twelve regional offices, the structures of the IMI Corporate & Investment Banking Division's international network, including the branches in **New York, ISP Brasil SA, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, Singapore and Sydney**, the representative office in **Vietnam** and the experts at **SACE Education**.

During the meetings, there will be a series of discussions of the economic scenario of the countries concerned to better outline the development prospects for exports and investments there, with analysis and in-depth analysis of the subsidies for internationalisation and the opportunities offered by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan.

The cycle of meetings is being organised in collaboration with **SACE Education**, the training hub that, in addition to supporting companies in the process of formulating and implementing their international growth strategies, aids them in pursuing sustainable growth on Italy's domestic market. SACE Education has three main pillars: in addition to specialised courses and meetings on exports

and internationalisation, there are programmes to support green, digital and infrastructure strategies and certified academic training.

The global economy will continue to grow in 2022. Intesa Sanpaolo's **Study and Research Department** expects global GDP to grow 3.8%, following the robust recovery in 2021 (5.8%). World trade growth will slow from an exceptional 11% in 2021 (reflecting a one-time rebound after the pandemic-related decline) to 4%. The slowdown also reflects the difficulties in logistics chains that emerged in 2021, but are expected to gradually ease in 2023. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has worsened the outlook, but its impact on global trade is expected to be modest.

According to the latest **SACE Risk Map**, "(Un)usual risks for unusual times: the world in 2022," the global macroeconomic context is gradually being consolidated and international trade in goods is continuing to grow, returning to volumes above pre-crisis levels, but the risks to the global outlook are still significant. In 2021 the recovery of global economic activity was driven by solid demand conditions countered by supply-side issues. These imbalances resulted in upward pressures on prices. Despite global supply chain difficulties, compounded by continuing high energy prices, the volume of international trade in goods is booming. The volume of global trade in goods moved beyond recovering from the previous year's loss, surpassing pre-pandemic levels and in 2022 is expected to grow by 4.8% (after an estimated +11% on average for 2021).

This initiative to support companies in relaunching their economic activities in foreign markets also contributes to implementing one of the pillars of "**Motore Italia**", Intesa Sanpaolo's strategic programme to support SMEs with new credit and liquidity for investments. From now until 2026, the Intesa Sanpaolo Group plans medium-/long-term disbursements of over 410 billion euro, of which 120 billion euro destined for SMEs to contribute actively to the country's economic recovery in close correlation with the objectives of the NRRP.

The recent measures introduced by the country's leading banking group for companies exporting to Russia and Ukraine in particular and energy-intensive companies – in light of the increase in prices and risks linked to the volatility of commodities – also fall into this context.

*"A vocation for exports and development on foreign markets is part of the identity of Italian SMEs and Intesa Sanpaolo intends to continue to support their projects, even in a rapidly changing context," commented **Anna Roscio**, Executive Director of Sales & Marketing SMEs at Intesa Sanpaolo, "Thanks to SACE, we will contribute to illustrating new opportunities and potential paths towards the sustainable growth of SMEs, including in the light of the opportunities offered by the NRRP and the new needs of companies linked to the changes in the scenario we are witnessing."*

*"We are proud to contribute to this initiative," commented **Mariangela Siciliano**, Head of Education at SACE, "which is fully in line with our support for SMEs approaching international markets for the first time or interested in strengthening their competitiveness abroad. In fact, we have always been committed to offering support to companies that need effective tools and concrete support both in Italy and in the target countries for Italian exports. Together with Intesa Sanpaolo, we will provide interested companies with our know-how on the markets that are the focus of this series of webinars and on the opportunities offered by the NRRP."*

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About Intesa Sanpaolo

Intesa Sanpaolo is Italy's leading banking group – serving families, businesses and the real economy – with a significant international presence. Intesa Sanpaolo's distinctive business model makes it a European leader in Wealth Management, Protection & Advisory, highly focused on digital and fintech. An efficient and resilient Bank, it benefits from its wholly-owned product factories in asset management and insurance. The Group's strong ESG commitment includes providing €115 billion in impact lending by 2025 to communities and for the green transition, and €500 million in contributions to support people most in need, positioning Intesa Sanpaolo as a world leader in terms of social impact. Intesa Sanpaolo is committed to Net Zero by 2030 for its own emissions and by 2050 for its loan and investment portfolios. An engaged patron of Italian culture, Intesa Sanpaolo has created its own network of museums, the *Gallerie d'Italia*, to host the bank's artistic heritage and as a venue for prestigious cultural projects.

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About SACE

SACE is the financial insurance company specialized in supporting the growth and development of businesses and the Italian economy through a wide range of tools and solutions to improve competitiveness in Italy and worldwide. For over forty years, SACE has been the partner of reference for Italian companies exporting to and expanding in foreign markets. SACE also cooperates with the banking system, providing financial guarantees to facilitate companies' access to credit. This role has been reinforced by the extraordinary measures introduced by the so-called Liquidity Decree and Simplification Decree. These measures have added important elements to SACE's role, expanding its scope beyond its traditional role in exports and internationalisation, to the domestic market and green projects. SACE has always paid particular attention to the sustainability of the projects it supports, evaluating environmental, social and economic impacts on the basis of OECD guidelines, in a logic of inclusiveness and shared value. Values that are reaffirmed in SACE's Sustainability Report and strengthened by the introduction of the Climate Change Policy: these include measures aimed at improving the contribution of business activities supported by SACE to the reduction of climate-changing emissions. SACE serves over 26 thousand companies, especially SMEs, supporting their growth in Italy and in around 200 foreign markets, with a diversified range of insurance and financial products and services.