

PRESS RELEASE

INTESA SANPAOLO ELITE LOUNGE: 60 SMEs and startups JOIN THE 2025 PROGRAMME

- **38 SMEs and 22 startups, clients of Intesa Sanpaolo's Banca dei Territori Division, take part this year in the programme created with Euronext's ELITE platform**
- **Over 500 companies supported in eight years of collaboration to foster growth through extraordinary finance and access to capital markets**
- **Companies admitted to the Lounge have recorded an average annual revenue growth of +11% and +8% in employment over three years**

Milan, 17 December 2025 – **A total of 60 companies**, including SMEs and startups, have joined the 2025 **Intesa Sanpaolo Lounge**, the initiative developed for the eighth consecutive year in collaboration with **ELITE**, the **Euronext** ecosystem supporting small and medium-sized enterprises in their growth and access to private and public capital markets.

This unique opportunity gives SME and startup clients of Intesa Sanpaolo's Banca dei Territori Division access to a tailored training programme with modules dedicated to **strategy, innovation and corporate finance transactions**, mentorship from industry experts, and direct access to a network of investors and industrial partners.

Intesa Sanpaolo ELITE Lounge: the 2025 edition

For the first time, this year's edition includes **international companies from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)** that are clients of the bank, thanks to the involvement of Intesa Sanpaolo's International Subsidiary Banks Division.

2025 also marks the **fifth year** of support for startups, which have been a key focus since 2020. This reflects the Bank's broader strategy of enhancing the value of innovative enterprises through initiatives such as **Up2Stars**, as well as international programmes aimed at fostering connections with investors, technology partners, and businesses – as demonstrated by the recent mission to Silicon Valley.

An eight-year partnership

Since 2018, Intesa Sanpaolo and ELITE have launched **25 Lounge classes**, involving **over 500 companies** with a **total turnover** exceeding **€34 billion** and **99,000 employees**.

This successful partnership is now gaining further momentum, driven by Intesa Sanpaolo's push to enhance the competitiveness of Italian businesses through an exclusive **advisory model** – unique in the Italian market – offering SMEs access to financial tools once reserved for large industrial groups, including expert advice in structured finance, IPOs and M&A. Since 2020, over **€10 billion** in structured finance transactions have been finalised for SME clients of the Division led by **Stefano Barrese** – defined as companies with annual turnover of up to €350 million – including more than **€2 billion in the first nine months of 2025 alone**. In recent years, over 35 transactions, including M&A and IPOs, have also been completed thanks to the support path developed in collaboration with ELITE.

According to ELITE data, companies that have joined the Lounge have recorded significant average annual revenue growth (**+11% in three years**) and **employment** growth (**+8%**), confirming the programme's amplifying impact not only on turnover, but also on the economic and social impact of businesses in their local areas.

SMEs in the Lounge

Companies admitted to ELITE through Intesa Sanpaolo span a wide range of sectors: **40% in industrial, 22% in consumer goods, 19% in technology, and 6% each in healthcare and consumer services** – reflecting the diversity of Italy’s industrial fabric.

The geographical distribution is balanced: companies are based both in northern Italy – especially **Lombardy (26%), Veneto (13%) and Piedmont (10%)** – and in central and southern regions (21% from eight southern regions), along with international companies from **Croatia, Slovenia and Slovakia**.

Anna Roscio, Executive Director Sales&Marketing Imprese, Intesa Sanpaolo: *“The new edition of the ELITE Lounge confirms the value of an initiative that, since 2018, has involved more than 500 companies. This year, we welcomed 60 new businesses – SMEs and startups – which reflect the vitality of Italy’s entrepreneurial ecosystem. We are committed to continuing our successful collaboration with Euronext’s ELITE as part of the Group’s broader strategy to support SME growth, also through our new advisory model for corporate finance solutions dedicated to SMEs.”*

Marta Testi, CEO of ELITE – Euronext Group: *“Our mission is to support the growth of the Italian and European entrepreneurial ecosystem. Through our strategic partnership with Intesa Sanpaolo, we aim to offer SMEs and startups privileged access to expertise, advanced financial tools and strategic networks, promoting innovation, internationalisation, and global market competitiveness. Together, we generate real value for the business community: companies that joined this ecosystem via Intesa Sanpaolo have seen average annual revenue growth of 11% and an 8% increase in employment. Our goal is to continue offering businesses access to capital, boosting competitiveness and driving economic development in local communities.”*