

Letter to the stakeholders

Again in 2021, the Cassa Centrale Group reaffirmed its focus on people and its reference Communities, consistent with the Mission and the social function of mutual credit cooperation.

In drafting the Consolidated Non-Financial Statement, we unfortunately once again had to take into consideration a difficult reference context: from the pandemic emergency that broke out in 2020 and continued, with highs and lows, in 2021, we suddenly transitioned to a tragic war triggered by the invasion of Ukraine.

Just when the recovery was gaining steam, our confidence was called into question and outlooks have become increasingly uncertain and volatile. The economy and finance have not escaped unscathed from this continuously changing context and outlook.

Our Statement bears witness to the commitment of the entire Cassa Centrale Group to sustainability matters, with positive performance enhanced by the attention demonstrated to a path of growth that considers not only the financial and economic results achieved, but also the value recognised to people and local Communities.

In asset management, the proposals oriented towards sustainability met with increasing investor approval, driving the overall trend: the Group is highly committed to these topics, combining respect for regulatory provisions with a specific focus on interpreting Customer requirements.

A total of 86% of the electricity purchased by the Group Companies came from renewable sources, up by more than 10 percentage points.

In continuity with 2020, the Group donated one million euros to Caritas Italiana to finance initiatives in favour of people without a permanent home, households and small businesses. The collaboration will continue by devoting particular attention to the local areas in which the Group operates, placing priority on those characterised by the most critical social aspects, and intervening in situations of hardship and vulnerability of adolescents and young people, which have been accentuated by the continuation of the pandemic situation.

Furthermore, the initiatives developed in 2020 to provide concrete support to households and businesses in relation to the credit moratoria granted and financing backed by public guarantees continued. A specific focus was dedicated to young people, with the launch of the "Progetto Giovani" ("Youth Project"), aimed at defining a set of banking products designed specifically for them.

The Group has also demonstrated its attention to its Employees, whose energy and motivation represent a fundamental value that contributes towards ensuring the effective functioning of the Group.

In particular, in the course of 2021 the initiatives taken in previous years were confirmed and expanded, through the activation of additional useful actions to handle this unique moment linked to the pandemic.

With reference to Governance, the process of reinforcing and consolidating the various actions already characterising the Group continued. In its first year of activity, the Sustainability and Identity Steering Committee worked intensely, in collaboration with the Board of Directors, the other Committees, the Management and the Parent Company structures.

The establishment of a dedicated Committee confirms the focus given by the Group to the values characterising its nature ever since its founding: proximity to local areas and the needs of local Communities, environmental protection, active stakeholder listening and value creation in the medium-long term.

In defining its approach to sustainability, the Group intends to embark upon a journey respectful of its specific characteristics (including the founding principles of mutual credit cooperation), its way of interpreting the concept of "bank" and the sustainable development goals identified by the Agenda 2030.

For the Cassa Centrale Group, sustainability therefore means:

- maintaining balanced management in order to be able to play a full role in serving the Communities;
- enhancing knowledge of proximity and the privileged relationship

with cooperative Partners, which derive from the regional roots that have always characterised Cooperative Credit Banks, Rural Banks and Raiffeisenkassen;

- combining the autonomy of the Affiliated Banks with the economies of scale and synergies of being a Group.

In the course of the year, the Board of Directors of Cassa Centrale Banca fully acknowledged ESG (environmental, social and governance) aspects as factors enabling the 2021-2024 Three-Year Strategic Plan and, in December 2021, approved the first Sustainability Plan, which summarises the Group's approach to sustainability in detailed objectives, concretely outlining our values already established in the Articles of Association of Cassa Centrale Banca and the Affiliated Banks as well as in the Code of Ethics. In 2021, the latter was revised, and was then adopted by the Group Companies.

In keeping with this overall direction, in January 2022 the establishment of the ESG Steering Committee was approved. This technical unit has the role of coordinating and systematising within the Group the many adaptations required by both legislation and regulations that assign Banks a decisive role in accelerating the ecological transition process. On this last point, the National Recovery and Resilience Plan is a unique opportunity, which must absolutely be seized. The Cassa Centrale Group is ready to do its part.

Aware of the significant progress made in this first three-year period, and the responsibility assigned to us as a Group of Banks characterised by cooperation, mutualism and local presence, we strive to pursue our virtuous process of sustainable growth in the belief, more current than ever, that Cooperative Credit, which is sustainable by its very nature, can adequately respond to future challenges.



The Chairman

Giorgio Fracalossi

