

## **Gonzalo Gortázar welcomes the finalists in CaixaBank's first ever "Women in Business Award"**

- ***The ceremony marked the 10th anniversary of the IWECA Awards, promoted by the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, chaired by Miquel Valls, along with other institutions, to recognise leading female business owners throughout the world. Since 2007, a total of 277 women have received these international accolades with the support of CaixaBank and IESE.***
- ***The "Women in Business Award" highlight CaixaBank's support for companies and for those initiatives that help secure gender equality.***

**Barcelona, 29 November 2017.** CaixaBank Chief Executive Gonzalo Gortázar welcomed the winner of CaixaBank's first ever "**Women in Business Award**", **Inés Juste**, along with the other regional finalists.

Inés Juste and **Anna Vallés**, chairwoman of Sorigué and Construmat, selected by the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, chaired by Miquel Valls, have been the two Spanish businesswomen who attended the International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWECA) held on 14 November 2017 in Seattle (US) among 40 female business leaders from 20 countries.

CaixaBank's "Women in Business Award" initiative aims to identify, recognise and acknowledge leading businesswomen with outstanding professional performance in Spain. The awards were created in the framework of the 10th annual International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWECA), a global network of female business owners providing opportunities for worldwide collaboration in order to help create and distribute wealth in the business arena.

After assessing the candidates proposed by CaixaBank's 14 Regional General Divisions, the panel selected Inés Juste, president of Grupo Juste, citing her consistent performance in making her company a benchmark in the Spanish chemical-pharmaceutical industry. This group currently exports 98% of its production.

## Commitment to developing talent

While speaking to the finalists of this first edition of CaixaBank's "Women in Business Awards" and the representatives of the IWEC Awards in Spain, Inés Juste y Anna Vallés, and the winners of previous editions, the Bank's Chief Executive **Gonzalo Gortázar** stated that "our institution is at the forefront of implementing policies to promote gender equality and ensure that females are represented in business, mainstreaming these objectives in our strategic plans since 2007".

According to Mr. Gortázar, "with this initiative, we hope to further equal opportunities amongst professionals and highlight, once again, our commitment to developing talent, removing any discrimination or barriers that could stand in the way of effective equality between men and women".

Mr. Gortázar also cited CaixaBank's commitment to companies, noting that the Bank has opened 116 business centres staffed by more than 1,375 highly-specialised and skilled professionals. "Thanks to this personalised attention, 48% of Spanish companies invoicing between 1 million euros and 100 million euros have become CaixaBank customers. We are the largest lender to companies," said Mr. Gortázar. He added that CaixaBank is the only European financial institution holding AENOR certification for its financial services and high-level assistance in corporate banking.

## IWEC Awards

During the event presided over by CaixaBank's chief executive, **Inés Juste** shared her experience at the International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWEC) held on 14 November 2017 in Seattle (US), which she attended as one of the two Spanish businesswomen represented among 40 female business leaders from 20 countries, and **Anna Vallès**, chairman of Sorigué and Construmat.

In her speech, Ms. Juste thanked CaixaBank for "acknowledging the value of female business leaders, who work day in and day out to be recognised in the business world, thereby supporting gender equality". She stated that, for her, "it was an honour to be one of the Spanish representatives in such a distinguished event as the IWEC Awards 2017, particularly during the 10th anniversary of these international accolades".

The IWEC Awards aim to highlight the visibility, credibility and responsibility of female business owners, so they can play a decisive and important role in shaping the 21st Century global economy. The awards were founded by the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, chaired by Miquel Valls, in 2007 with the support of CaixaBank and IESE and in collaboration with the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry's FICCI Ladies Organisation (FICCI/FLO). The awards are also supported by the Cape Chamber of Commerce in South Africa. Since 2007, IWEC has presented its awards to 277 business owners. The IWEC network

operates in 34 countries and employs over 125,000 professionals with a turnover of more than 26 billion dollars.

### Regional finalists

As part of the event, CaixaBank presented its "Women in Business Award" to both the regional finalists and the overall winner, all of whom are successful female business owners:

- **Rocío Medina Muñoz**, executive chairwoman of Grupo Medina (Western Andalusia Regional General Division)
- **Esther Gómez**, executive at Frutas Esther (Eastern Andalusia-Murcia Regional General Division)
- **Alicia Asín**, co-founder and executive at Libelium Comunicaciones Distribuidas S.L. (Aragón-La Rioja Regional General Division)
- **Corinna Graf**, CEO of Puerto Portals (Balearic Islands Regional General Division)
- **Carmen García**, CEO of Montesano Canarias (Canary Islands Regional General Division)
- **María del Mar García Baquero**, chairwoman of Lácteas García Baquero (Castilla-La Mancha and Extremadura Regional General Division)
- **María Helena Antolin**, vice-chairwoman of Grupo Antolin (Castilla y León-Asturias Regional General Division)
- **Anna Bosch**, general manager of Noel Alimentaria (Catalonia Regional General Division)
- **Rosa Ana Perán**, vice-chairwoman of Grupo Pikolinos (Valencia Regional General Division)
- **Silvia Ezquerro**, chairwoman of Talleres Ezquerro Seamers SL and of Sommetrade SL (Navarra Regional General Division)
- **Isabel Vega**, director of Club Deportivo Marisma Wellness Center de Santander (Basque Country-Cantabria Regional General Division)

And the winner:

- **Inés Juste** (Madrid, 1974), who assumed the helm of the chemical group in 2011 and oversaw a complete reorganisation of the corporate structure, the business and the financial structure. This family-owned pharmaceutical group, founded in 1922, has become a global benchmark in diagnostic imaging pharmaceutical specialities. The group operates in the European Union, the United States, Canada, Central and South America, India and the Middle East.

**CaixaBank, supporting gender equality and diversity**

The "Women in Business Award" is one of the many initiatives CaixaBank has rolled out in order to bring about true gender parity. The Bank is also a signatory of the Women's Empowerment Principles, an initiative championed by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations Global Compact. This membership implies a public commitment to align the Bank's policies with the advancement of gender equality. Along the same line, CaixaBank signed a voluntary agreement with the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality to work towards increasing the percentage of women in executive positions. The Bank is a signatory of the Diversity Charter, reflecting its commitment to promoting equal opportunities and eradicating discrimination, and a member of the Generation and Talent Observatory, which fosters inter-generational diversity in organisations.

In line with these commitments, CaixaBank actively promotes policies and measures to further equal opportunities amongst its professionals and supports a number of initiatives that promote gender equality. At CaixaBank, 37% of executive positions are held by women and females represent 52.6% of total staff. Moreover, the Bank has rolled out an Equality and Work/Life Balance Program to encourage a balance between employees' personal, family and professional lives and an Equality Plan to foster and ensure effective equality between both genders.