

Leading UAE firms discuss importance of diversity in business at CaixaBank's "Diversity Talks"

- **Diverse workforce key to innovation and growth, say senior executives from UAE's leading institutions**
- **CaixaBank brings its global "Diversity Talks" programme to Dubai**

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Firms that promote and implement an inclusive and diverse working environment tend to be more innovative and grow faster, outperforming competition, according to industry leaders attending CaixaBank's roundtable discussion "Diversity Talks" which took place in Dubai today. CaixaBank, the leading retail banking operator in Spain, launched its "Diversity Talks" programme earlier this year. Now in its third iteration, the event brought together the UAE's leading industry participants who shared their experiences and discussed the importance of diversity and how it contributes to business success in the Gulf region.

The event panel brought together senior executives from UAE's leading firms, including **Kathryn Wightman-Beaven**, Director, Global Sustainability at DP World; **Abdulaziz Almoosa**, Head of Recruitment at Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank; **John Lee**, Regional Head of Talent, Diversity & Inclusion, HSBC; and **Izabella Szadkowska**, Al Tamimi & Company. The panel was moderated by **Maya Khelladi**, manager of CaixaBank's United Arab Emirates representation office, and attended by **Maria Victoria Matia**, executive manager of international banking, CaixaBank.

"The world is changing rapidly. A world with new types of jobs, new skills, new opportunities. More women are becoming part of our family but we need to become an employer of choice for women. That's why we have developed DPWorld4Women. It's a sustainable approach recognising the essential role that women have in our business and in the future and developing the programmes and initiatives to support," said Kathryn Wightman-Beaven, Director, Global Sustainability at DP World.

"Diversity is a key aspect of CaixaBank's international banking network – it drives new and innovative thinking, challenges the status quo, leading to better results and performance. It is encouraging to see that ensuring diversity is front of mind amongst the leading firms in the UAE as the industry realises the social and economic benefits of a diverse workforce," said Maya Khelladi, manager of the United Arab Emirates representation office, CaixaBank.

To further enhance the diversity of its workforce across the international banking network, CaixaBank has established a specialist team to coordinate cross-organisation projects that

encompass multiple aspects of diversity, including cultural and gender as well as functional and generational diversity.

The bank has already organised international debates “Diversity Talks” to discuss diversity and how it contributes to business in Turkey and Poland. In Turkey, the event focused on the position of women in the Turkish financial industry. In Poland, meeting was dedicated to diversity as a key aspect of business management, focused specifically on the position of women in top positions in international companies and institutions in Poland.

For CaixaBank, international banking, diversity is not only an excellent approach to human resources management, but a key aspect of the business model. CaixaBank’s international network specialises in providing advice to Spanish companies undertaking projects overseas, which means that understanding the underlying cultural, social and gender-specific drivers of economic activity is just as important as having specialist international banking capabilities and services.

CaixaBank’s international network includes 26 operating branches and representative offices in 18 countries. The bank has established multicultural teams of diverse origin, which implement projects to provide close support to clients, focusing on the specific requirements of each region. Gender diversity is particularly important: 42% of managerial positions in CaixaBank’s international network are held by women.

About CaixaBank

CaixaBank is leader in retail banking in Spain, with a 26.7% share among individual customers who make it their main bank. The bank, headed by chairman Jordi Gual, and led by CEO, Gonzalo Gortázar, has around 16 million customers in Spain and Portugal, with 5,379 branches, the largest commercial network in the Iberian peninsula. Additionally, CaixaBank holds an 84.5% stake in the Portuguese bank BPI and 9.92% of the Austrian operator Erste Bank.

CaixaBank also provides financing and specialized services to businesses via an extensive range of corporate banking solutions, including guarantees, bilateral loans, syndicated loans and transactional banking. Currently the bank has an international network comprised of 26 operating branches and representative offices in 18 countries.

CaixaBank has been named "Best Bank in Spain 2017" by the UK magazine Euromoney and New York magazine Global Finance also recognized recently the entity as the "Best Bank in Spain 2018". This year, Euromoney named CaixaBank, the "Best Private Bank in Spain" for the fourth time in a row.

It is also among the most sustainable in the world, according to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, and was honored by Euromoney as the Best Bank for CSR in Western Europe.