

Part of “The Circle” discussion forum

Jordi Gual stresses the importance of the Polish market for CaixaBank

- ***Paweł Choraży, Deputy Minister of Investment and Economic Development, as well as Francisco Javier Sanabria Valderrama, the Ambassador for the Kingdom of Spain, took part in the event.***
- ***“The Circle” discussion forum is aimed at initiating in-depth discussions on economy, current developments and sharing experience among high-level business representatives.***

Warsaw, 3 July 2018

On 3 July, in Warsaw, Jordi Gual, Chairman of the CaixaBank, took part in an instalment of “The Circle” discussion forum, during which he stressed the long-term presence in Poland, spanning over 11 years. The meeting, which was hosted by Paweł Choraży, the Deputy Minister of Investment and Economic Development, was also attended by Francisco Javier Sanabria Valderrama, the Ambassador for the Kingdom of Spain, and Juan José Marín Giménez, the Chairman of the Polish branch of CaixaBank.

In his speech, titled *“Poland and CaixaBank looking ahead”*, Jordi Gual, Chairman of CaixaBank, underlined the bank’s business model, as well as its involvement in the development of local companies and Spanish firms operating on the Polish market.

“CaixaBank has taken root as an entity specialised in servicing companies carrying out projects aiding the development of Poland” – emphasised Gual.

Moreover, Jordi Gual drew attention to innovations and digital transformation introduced into the bank operations, and explained *“CaixaBank is much more than a regular bank, it’s a leading financial group which has managed to come up with an impressive offer of highly specialised digital services aimed at fulfilling the customers’ expectations and has harnessed modern technology to meet their needs, while keeping the highest quality of its services, as well as its consultancy offered by the bank’s branches which are in the constant process of development and improvement”*. At the same time, Chairman Gual explained that “digital channels complement physical and direct communication channels” and underlined “the technology as a factor aiding the broadening of international co-operation and improving the customers’ satisfaction”.

In conclusion, Jordi Gual stood by the model of responsible banking, as exemplified by CaixaBank, which consists in being client-oriented and operates by three fundamental

values: transparency, integrity and corporate governance based on the best management practices. Other pillars, on which the responsible banking rests, include promoting social initiatives in the closest neighbourhood as voluntary service. Chairman Gual reminded that over 10.000 of CaixaBank employees participated in community service initiatives organised within the Week of Social Action by the bank, and also stressed that over 12.700 local social activities were carried out in 2017.

Paweł Choraży, the Deputy Minister of Investment and Economic Development expressed his gratitude for organising the event and emphasised the crucial role of the banking sector in the implementation of the governmental Strategy for Responsible Development – *Our strategy encompasses over 200 projects. Just the infrastructure investment will amount to 142 billion euros by 2030. Many of them will be carried out through different financial engineering models, including the outside financing. Here's where the co-operation with banks may become fruitful* – said the Deputy Minister of Investment and Economic Development.

In his opinion, support provided by investment banks will be necessary to make investments achieve the level of 25% of Polish GDP, as envisaged by the government. – *Public investment is one thing, but to reach the assumed goal we need more investment from companies. This is where the co-operation between firms and banks comes into play.*

Engagement in business projects within the Polish-Spanish co-operation

CaixaBank is developing “The Circle” initiative to trigger discussion on current economic issues and sharing experience among the local and international business communities. In Poland, “The Circle” will promote analysis of economic outlook and will support the business environment.

CaixaBank offers financial specialised services for companies through a wide range of corporate banking solutions, including guarantees, bilateral loans and consortia, and transactional banking. It stands above the competition thanks to highly personalised client service, efficiency, and paying the utmost attention to the highest quality of service.

This level of activity has strengthened the position of Poland as the country of crucial importance for the international expansion of CaixaBank's foreign branches. Apart from Morocco and Great Britain, Poland is one of the three countries where the bank has located its international operational branches.

Currently, CaixaBank has an international network engulfing 26 operational branches and representative offices in 18 countries. Representative offices of CaixaBank are located in Paris (France), Milan (Italy), Istanbul (Turkey), Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong (China), Dubai (United Arab Emirates), Delhi (India), Cairo (Egypt), Santiago de Chile (Chile), Bogota (Columbia), New York (USA), Singapore, Sao Paulo (Brazil), Algiers (Algiers), Johannesburg (RSA) and Lima (Peru).

Moreover, CaixaBank has international branches in Warsaw (Poland), Casablanca, Tanger and Agadir (Morocco), London (Great Britain) and Frankfurt (Germany). CaixaBank has signed a number of agreements with international banking institutions to facilitate provision of services on international markets and servicing international business and trade activities of companies and international transactions of physical entities made from any country in the world.

CaixaBank was awarded “*Best Confirming-Bank Partner for Financing in Emerging Markets 2017*” prize by International Finance Corporation, affiliated to the World Bank, within the framework of Global Trade Finance Program.

About CaixaBank

CaixaBank is a leader of retail banking in Spain, with 26.7% market share among individual clients, who chose it as their primary bank. The bank, chaired by Jordi Gual, and managed by Gonzalo Gortázar, its director general, provides banking services to 16 million customers in Spain and Portugal, and has 5379 branches, which makes it the biggest retail chain on the Iberian Peninsula.

Cutting-edge technologies and digitalisation aid the development of business model of CaixaBank, which is the leader of online, mobile and electronic banking: 56% are digital customers, 4.9 million clients manage their bank accounts with their mobile phones, and CaixaBank, according to Comscore data, is the fastest in the world at increasing its market share. At the same time, CaixaBank operates 16.4 million debit cards, and its turnover make it market share reach 23.3%.

CaixaBank has carried out a number of projects that have become real milestones in the development of modern technologies in the banking sector, like the first European commercial implementation of contactless payment and mobile payments made with mobile phones, creating the world’s first contactless ATMs, the launch of imaginBank, first Spanish mobile bank, as well as pioneering applications based on artificial intelligence, aimed at servicing clients.

Thanks to the implemented strategy, CaixaBank is among the best-rated banks, world leaders in the quality of digital services. In 2017, CaixaBank was awarded the Best Technological Project of the Year prize, issued by The Banker, a magazine of the Financial Times Group. The awarded project consisted in the implementation of chatbot for imaginBank, providing service for customers based entirely on artificial intelligence and helping them get acquainted with current offers and promotions. In 2017, Global Finance magazine also awarded CaixaBank the Best Digital Bank in Spain and the Best Digital Bank in Western Europe, and the Best Bank in the World in the Social Media 2017 category.