

## ***Gonzalo Gortazar underscores the value of diversity at a meeting with the winners of the '2021 CaixaBank Women in Business Award'***

- ***At the meeting, the chief executive officer of CaixaBank stated that: "It's important for diversity and equality to be at the centre of the policies and strategies of companies, at leadership level and across the entire organisation".***
- ***Women hold 41.6% of managerial positions at CaixaBank (September 2021), and a 40% representation in its Board of Directors, one of the highest ratios in the sector.***

**Madrid, 16 November 2021**

Gonzalo Gortazar, CaixaBank's chief executive officer, held a meeting with the national and regional winners of the latest 'CaixaBank Women in Business Award', now in its fifth edition, that recognises the career paths and talent of leading female executives in Spain.

At the meeting, held at the all-in-one branch in Madrid and attended by various senior CaixaBank executives, Gonzalo Gortazar congratulated the winning business leaders and extolled the high quality of the candidates, acknowledging the importance of these awards which goal is to recognise the value of diversity: "We realise that there is still much work to do. For this reason, with these awards, CaixaBank wants to help raise awareness about the need to promote equal opportunity and diversity in the professional and business world".

In this regard, CaixaBank's CEO noted that "Diversity and equality are part of our culture, and one of the pillars of our strategic plan. When we emphasise the value of diversity and inclusion, we are more competitive and innovative. It is important for these values to be at the centre of the policies and strategies of companies, at leadership level and across the entire organisation".

At the meeting, Gortazar was able to share reflections and experiences with the winning entrepreneurs, and to learn about the experience of the national winner of the '2021 CaixaBank Women in Business Award' in Spain', Pilar Martínez-Cosentino, from Almería, the executive vice-president of Grupo Cosentino, and of the winner of the 'Premio Mulher

Empresária BPI' in Portugal, Sandra Santos, the CEO of BA Glass Group, as representatives of their respective countries at the international IWECA Awards. These awards were presented on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of November at the 14th annual IWECA conference, which was held virtually under the title, 'Connecting women entrepreneurs in the world - Sustainability of companies: from surviving to thriving'.

To conclude, Gortazar encouraged the winners to keep sharing their knowledge, ideas, and experiences amongst themselves via the 'CaixaBank Women in Business Community', an online network that provides a place in which to establish professional links between the group of women executives and other international organisations.

### **The IWECA International Awards**

The International Women's Entrepreneurial Challenge (IWECA) is a worldwide network of female business leaders who nurture company ownership and cooperate on a global level with the goal of creating and distributing wealth in the business world.

The IWECA awards, which are presented every year at the annual IWECA Conference, recognise and support women entrepreneurs from all over the world so they can play an important and decisive role in developing the global economy in the 21st century.

At this edition, IWECA recognised the careers of 35 female entrepreneurs from 18 countries. The companies led by these women reported general revenue in excess of \$3.4 billion and employ more than 15,700 people.

Since its founding in 2007, IWECA has recognised 460 businesswomen from 47 countries. The companies led by these women provide 295,416 jobs and have a combined turnover in excess of \$40 billion.

### **Wengage, CaixaBank's commitment to equality**

Diversity, meritocracy, equal opportunities, and talent recognition are some of the pillars of CaixaBank's corporate culture. Under these premises, it works with a commitment to be a pacesetter for its employees, promoting inclusion and participation and bolstering projects that promote equality, both within the company and across the whole of society. In fact, women hold 41.6% of managerial positions at CaixaBank (September 2021), and a 40% representation in its Board of Directors, one of the highest ratios in the sector.

CaixaBank's Wengage diversity programme is a cross-disciplinary project developed by people from all areas of CaixaBank, based on meritocracy and the promotion of equal opportunities, which works to foster and visualise gender, functional and generational diversity. Wengage includes internal measures to foster flexibility and work-life balance, to raise awareness regarding diversity and strengthen the role of women, with training

programmes and female mentoring plans, through which female managers guide other professionals in developing their careers.

Wengage also develops external initiatives for customers and society, based on championing the diversity and equal opportunities in three fields of action: leadership and entrepreneurship, innovation and education, and sport.

Furthermore, CaixaBank has had an Equality Plan since January 2020 to promote the principles of equal opportunities and diversity in work teams, increase the presence of women in managerial positions and strengthen measures to enhance the work-life balance. The plan features the scope of gender in managerial development programmes and in recruitment and training processes, and the fostering of teleworking and flexibility.

Since 2018, CaixaBank has adhered to the EJE&CON Code of Good Practices for Talent Management and the Improvement of Company Competitiveness, committing to fostering the presence of women in managerial positions, and works actively to drive their international outreach. It is also part of the STEAM Alliance for Female Talent “Girls on the Science Stand,” an initiative led by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to promote STEAM careers in girls and young women. It is also associated with the international programme Target Gender Equality and the United Nation’s Women’s Empowerment Principles; as well as the Diversity Charter, promoting equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory measures.

### **Recognition of diversity**

As a result of this commitment, CaixaBank has received recognition as the world's best bank for gender equality according to the international 2021 Bloomberg Index, and ranks first in Spain in the EWoB Gender Diversity Index.

Other distinctions in this field, include the Workplace Equality Seal (DIE in Spanish), presented by the Women's Institute, and the MásFamilia Foundation with its Family-Friendly Company (EFR) certification, making it the first Spanish financial company to achieve a level of excellence ‘A’.

These awards come in addition to the 25th Anniversary Award of FEDEPE (Spanish Federation of Women Directors, Executives, Professionals and Entrepreneurs) and the Diversity Foundation's distinction of the Wengage programme as “Best Practice of a Large Enterprise 2020”.