

## **CaixaBank named Best Bank in Spain 2022 and Best Bank in Western Europe 2022 by Global Finance magazine**

- **The bank reclaims its top position in the Spanish market for the eighth consecutive year and is recognised for the fourth time as the best bank in Western Europe.**
- **Among other factors, the jury commended the successful merger with Bankia, which is the largest in the history of the banking sector in Spain; the bank's financial soundness; and its commitment to society through sustainable financing and by supporting vulnerable communities.**
- **Last year CaixaBank, for the first time in its history, was recognised as "Best Bank in Spain" by key industry magazines, Global Finance, Euromoney and The Banker, all in the same year.**

**13 April 2022**

CaixaBank has been recognised as Best Bank in Spain for the eight consecutive year and Best Bank in Western Europe for the fourth time at the annual "*Best Bank Awards*" by the US magazine, *Global Finance*.

The editors of the magazine have selected CaixaBank from among banks in more than 150 countries after consulting with analysts, consultants and banking sector executives around the world. Among other factors, the jury commended the successful merger with Bankia, which is the largest in the history of the banking sector in Spain; the bank's financial soundness; and its commitment to society through sustainable financing and by supporting vulnerable communities.

Running for 29 years, the *Best Bank Awards* recognise the world's best banks that stand out for their leadership, and product and service innovation, among other aspects. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and amid low interest rates, the magazine gave special recognition to those banks that have met their customers' needs at all times, while strengthening their balance sheet to lay the foundations for a sustainable future.

**José Ignacio Goirigolzarri**, CaixaBank's Chairman, commented, "All international recognition is a great honour for the bank, but it is even more special in a year in which, despite the complicated operational environment, we have not only strengthened our

1

leadership in Spain with significant market share, but also reinforced our commitment to society by carrying out our commercial activity based on the proximity and a vocation to serve our more than 20 million customers, by supporting families and companies at all times and by contributing to the social and economic recovery and development of our country."

In addition, **Gonzalo Gortazar**, CaixaBank's CEO, emphasised that "the award acknowledges the work carried out by the entire team of CaixaBank, which has closed an extraordinary year that culminated in the largest merger the sector has seen in Spain in record time. Meanwhile, we have continued to strengthen our balance sheet with high levels of capital and provisions. The merger has provided us with the scale, the competitive position and the efficiency to grow sustainably in the current uncertain environment".

In 2021, CaixaBank successfully completed the merger with Bankia, consolidating its position as the largest bank in Spain in terms of customers and assets and with a dominant position in the European market. In recent months, CaixaBank has also strengthened its leadership in terms of market share in key products of the bancassurance business: deposits (25.2%), loans (24.2%), investment funds (24.5%) and pension plans (33.9%).

Since the merger was announced, the company has combined the teams, the business and commercial models, and the technological platforms in record time, as well as completed a very positive year in terms of business by maintaining its commercial momentum and meeting its activity, financial soundness and income statement goals.

CaixaBank closed the year 2021 with assets valued at over €600 billion and with one of the largest liquidity positions in the Spanish financial system, exceeding €168 billion. Its CET1 ratio stood at 13.2%, above the minimum requirement. In terms of non-performing loans, CaixaBank has been able to maintain the ratio at 3.6%, the lowest among the major banks in Spain.

This strong balance sheet has enabled the bank to resume its traditional dividend distribution policy by distributing 50% of the financial year's recurring profit and to announce a payout increase for 2022, which will be set between 50% and 60%, as well as a share buy-back programme.

### **CaixaBank, leader in ESG-linked issuances and sustainable financing**

In 2021 the bank advanced in the area of sustainability by creating a new Sustainability Directorate and by expanding on the international initiatives that promote sustainable financing, such as joining the Net-Zero Banking Alliance.

CaixaBank continued to issue green and social bonds, becoming the leading European bank in ESG issuances in the euro market. It also mobilised €31.37 billion in sustainable financing in 2021, 150% more than the previous year; and ended the year in the sixth position in Refinitiv's ranking of sustainable financing in EMEA, making it the highest-ranking Spanish bank in the Top Tier Lender classification.

### Supporting society

As part of its commitment to society, CaixaBank pledged in 2021 to support its customers affected by the volcanic eruption in La Palma by implementing a raft of measures to help families, businesses and companies, including no fees on ATM cash withdrawals for non-customers and the freezing of debt repayments over the next 12 months, as well as granting 850 debt moratoria.

In 2022, in the wake of the humanitarian crisis caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, CaixaBank has spearheaded a general package of products and services to help the civilian population affected by the conflict. Among these, of a particular note is CaixaBank's Social Account, which offers basic financial services, such as checking account, card and access to online banking, at no cost for customers in vulnerable situations. In the last few weeks, the bank has initiated an interpretation service and adapted its documents and internal training materials to make it easy for recent arrivals from Ukraine to sign up for basic financial services. Furthermore, the free use of ATMs by holders of Ukrainian bank cards and free transfers to Ukraine and neighbouring countries have been enabled.

In addition, the bank has collaborated with the CaixaBank Volunteers Association to facilitate the evacuation from the Ukrainian border with Poland of 400 people who wish to request asylum in Spain, and it has launched a crowdfunding initiative among its employees to collect funds with the bank's commitment to match the contributions collected by the staff at the end of the campaign.

### Wide international recognition

These Global Finance awards follow last year, during which CaixaBank obtained the highest acknowledgement in Spain for the first time from the three major international financial publications in the sector: *The Banker*, *Euromoney* and *Global Finance*. This recognition adds to *Euromoney's* acknowledgement of CaixaBank as "World's Best Bank Transformation 2021" for its strategic leadership and forward thinking shown during the merger process.

Within the scope of digital banking, CaixaBank was named "Best Consumer Digital Bank in Spain 2021" by *Global Finance*, which also recognised its website as "Best Consumer Website Design in Western Europe 2021" and CaixaBankNow as "Best Consumer Banking App in Western Europe 2021".

In the area of innovation, CaixaBank was named "Most Innovative Bank in the World 2021" at the *EFMA-Accenture Banking Innovation Awards* and "Most Innovative Bank in Western Europe 2021" at the *The Innovators Awards* by *Global Finance*.

Lastly, in the field of Private Banking, *The Banker* and *PWM* recognised CaixaBank as "Best Private Bank in Spain 2021" and "Best Private Bank in Europe in Big Data Analysis and Artificial Intelligence 2021", whereas the magazine *Global Finance* acknowledged it as the "Most Innovative Private Bank in Western Europe" at the *World's Best Private Banks Awards 2022*.

### About Global Finance

Global Finance magazine, founded in 1987 and based in New York, has a circulation of 50,000 readers in 193 countries. The magazine provides analysis and articles for corporate and financial executives making strategic and investment decisions in multinational companies and financial institutions. Its annual Best Bank Awards select top performers among banks and other financial services providers. These awards have become a trusted standard of excellence recognised by the global financial community.