

Isidro Fainé, re-elected president of the World Savings and Retail Banking Institute (WSBI)

- Isidro Fainé, president of CECA and "la Caixa" Banking Foundation, was re-elected for another three years as president of World Savings and Retail Banking Institute (WSBI) at the WSBI's 2021 World Congress, held in Paris. The Institute's Managing Director will be Peter Simon of Germany.
- Founded in 1924, the WSBI currently represents the interests of 6,500 savings and retail banks around the world. WSBI members have total assets of 15 billion dollars, employ 2.2 million workers and serve some 1,400 million customers in 63 countries, with a network of more than 221.500 offices providing banking services all types of groups, institutions, large enterprises, SMEs and families.
- WSBI members devote 1.8 billion dollars annually to the fight against poverty and social inequality.
- The priorities for the coming years are: financial inclusion, promoting sustainable finance, innovation and embracing digitisation to forge ever-closer relations with customers, and strengthening solvency within the framework of Basel IV.
- Besides Isidro Fainé and Peter Simon, the WSBI President's Committee is formed by Dominique Goursolle-Nouhaud, president of the Fédération Nationale des Caisses d'Epargne (France); Rebeca Romero Rainey, president & CEO of the Independent Community Bankers of America (USA); Macario Armando Rosales Rosa, president of Fedecredito (El Salvador); Helmut Schleweis, president of the German Savings Banks Association (Germany); Isara Wongrung, executive vice-president of the Government Savings Bank (Thailand); and Redouane Najmeddine, chairman of the Management Board of the Banque Al Barid (Morocco).

Paris, 18 November 2021. - Isidro Fainé, Chairman of CECA and of "la Caixa" Banking Foundation, was re-elected as president of the World Savings and Retail Banking Institute (WSBI) at the organisation's 28th World Congress, held in Paris.

The members of the Assembly of this Institute, which represents the interests of 6,500 savings banks and retail banks in more than 60 countries, unanimously re-elected Isidro Fainé as WSBI president for the next three years. Peter Simon of Germany will be managing director over the same period.

The priority lines of action established for the coming years include financial inclusion, promoting sustainable finance (reflecting the fact that WSBI member institutions are characterised by their social commitment to the communities in which they operate), exchanges of good practice in the implementation of the new Basel IV solvency framework, and innovation, seeking to make digitalisation a tool to bring members closer to customers.

In his speech, Isidro Fainé noted that, “over the coming years, we will have to address major challenges: economic recovery, increasing inequality, demographic changes that will put pressure on natural resources, climate change, sustainability... The urge to help the most vulnerable and strengthen the community forms part of our members’ DNA: members' social contributions stand at some 1.8 billion dollars per year, aimed at fighting poverty and social exclusion”.

During Isidro Fainé’s first mandate as president (2018-2021), the organisation focused on the following issues:

- 1) Promoting financial inclusion: the WSBI has exceeded the targets set by the World Bank in its commitment to Universal Financial Access (UFA2020), increasing the number of banked people by 329 million between 2014 and 2020. Moreover, the organisation’s cooperation with the Mastercard Foundation was strengthened, leading to the launch of such initiatives as Scale2Save, focused on promoting savings in Africa. Collaboration also began with the Profuturo digital literacy project to promote financial education in developing countries.
- 2) Increasing dialogue with international organisations: in response to the crisis caused by the pandemic, the WSBI has focused on promoting economic, fiscal and social measures before regulators, aimed at establishing a flexible framework that enables both a successful recovery from the crisis and that the new demands that arise as a result can be satisfied.
- 3) Encouraging cooperation among members: The World Institute of Savings and Retail Banks is formed by four regional groups (Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa, and North America/Latin America/Caribbean). The coronavirus crisis has resulted in increased exchanges of good practice in responding to the financial needs of all types of groups, institutions, large enterprises, SMEs and families.

Strengthening the Spanish representation in international forums

The World Congress also renewed the mandates of the other statutory bodies, including the Coordination Committee. Antonio Romero, Corporate Director of Association Services and Resources at CECA, was elected as chair of this committee, which coordinates the associated activities of the World Savings Banks Institute and the European Savings and Retail Banking Group. Similarly, Joan Rosàs, Director of International Institutional Relations at CaixaBank, was appointed as the representative of the WSBI Board for International Relations. This representation strengthens the participation of the Spanish banking sector in European and international working groups.

About WSBI

Founded in 1924, the WSBI represents the interests of 6,500 savings and retail banks around the world. WSBI members have total assets of 15 trillion dollars, employing 2.2 million workers and serving some 1,400 million customers in 63 countries, with a network of 221.577 offices providing banking services all types of groups, institutions, large enterprises, SMEs and families.

About CECA

CECA is a banking association committed to representing, defending and promoting its member entities' interests. It provides them with advice and supports them in their endeavour to offer services that promote financial inclusion and access to credit.

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ANNEX: MEMBERS OF THE WSBI PRESIDENT’S COMMITTEE

President: Isidro Fainé, president of the WSBI, CECA and "la Caixa" Banking Foundation

Managing Director: Peter Simon

Vice-presidents:

- Dominique Goursolle-Nouhaud, president of the Fédération Nationale des Caisses d'Épargne (France)
- Rebeca Romero Rainey, president & CEO of the Independent Community Bankers of America (USA)
- Macario Armando Rosales Rosa, president of Fedecredito (El Salvador)
- Helmut Schleweis, president of the German Savings Banks Association (Germany)
- Isara Wongrung, executive vice-president of the Government Savings Bank (Thailand)
- Redouane Najmeddine, chairman of the Management Board of Banque Al Barid (Morocco)

Honorary President: Heinrich Haasis