



## Press Release

### Alpha Bank and NKUA join forces, transforming academic knowledge into practical applications

*The Memorandum of Cooperation covers, among other things, the conduct of research jointly by the Bank and the University, the enhancement of the skills of Alpha Bank's People, the offering of internships to students and the organization of educational activities*

A **Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC)** was today signed by Alpha Bank and the Postgraduate Studies Program "Internal Audit, Risk Management & Compliance" (IARC) of the Department of Economics of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA). The main objective of this cooperation **is to promote academic knowledge and the application of risk management, internal control and compliance** in businesses, as well as in the banking industry and the public sector.

This new channel linking **the academic community to the real economy will facilitate** the transfer of expertise on financial issues to those active in the real economy and to society general. The key action lines of the cooperation include the following:

- **Expanding academic research to the real economy, with practical application** in tasks of the Bank and of businesses, by conducting joint research and studies, as well as by designing or implementing small-scale pilot research and educational activities.
- **Enhancing the knowledge and skills of the Bank's staff**, by means of the following:
  - participation in the Expert Lecture Series (webinars) of the University,
  - design and creation of educational and training programs ("upskilling" programs) related to banking, which will also be addressed to students and graduates of the Postgraduate Studies Program.
- **Enhancing the work experience of students**, by offering internships at the Bank to undergraduate and postgraduate students.
- **Transferring academic knowledge to the real economy**, with the organization of educational workshops, conferences and seminars.
- **Putting together and organizing joint research and business proposals** at both national and European level, aimed at implementing cross-thematic programs that will highlight issues related to risk management, internal audit and compliance.

During the MoC signing ceremony, **the broader prospects for cooperation between the two organizations** were discussed, while special reference was also made to **the Bank's initiatives for attracting young talent** from both Greece and abroad, as well as to the **organization of training seminars on risk management** throughout Greece.

On the part of Alpha Bank, the ceremony was attended by the Chief Risk Officer of the Group **Spyros Andronikakis**, the Chief Risk Control Officer **Georgios Adraktas**, the Chief of Compliance **Xenophon Avlonitis**, the Chief of Internal Audit **Maria Rontogianni**, the Talent Acquisition Development and Change Management Director **Penny Gialakidi**, the Non-Financial Risks Control Director **Georgios Fortsaris**, the Credit Risk and Enterprise Risk Modelling Director **Konstantinos Anyfantakis**, the Credit Control Director **Antonios Geramanis**, and the Risk Models and Data Validation Director **Anastasia Kouvari**.

The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens was represented by the Professor of Finance and Member of the University's Administration Council **Dimitrios Kenourgios**, the Associate Professors of the Department of Economics **Georgios Dotsis** and **Spyridon Papathanasiou**, and the External Associate for Risk Management and Academic Teacher in the University's Postgraduate Studies Program "Internal Audit, Risk Management & Compliance", **Dimitrios Blourgouras** .



On the occasion of the Memorandum's signing, **Mr. Adraktas** made the following statement:

*"The Memorandum of Cooperation, which we signed with the NKUA, is the first chapter in a broader cooperation of Alpha Bank with Greece's leading university, which will bring the real economy and the academic community closer together. This joining of forces has multiple benefits: on the one hand, it will be possible for the significant corpus of knowledge produced at academic level concerning the issues of Risk Management, Internal Audit and Compliance, to be disseminated to –and put to use by– the wider business community. On the other hand, our People are gaining a valuable ally in their effort to develop new knowledge and skills, while at the same time students are given the opportunity of a first-hand experience of the banking industry."*

For his part, **Mr. Kenourgios** said:

*"The signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation marks a new chapter in linking academic research, innovation and education to the business and financial sectors, with positive impact on society at large. As Director and Scientific Coordinator responsible for the IARC Postgraduate Studies Program of NKUA, I consider this cooperation to be a milestone for the effort to gradually bridge the skills gap. Moreover, precisely because it is based on a mutual research and development environment, its importance for the development of new skills in our students and for the further development of the Alpha Bank executives, is crucial. The cooperation framework focuses on many areas that will contribute to the development of knowledge around Risk Management, Internal Audit and Compliance, with applications in both banking and other sectors of the real economy. I am particularly proud of this opportunity for us to work with a leading financial institution and I look forward to seeing the results of this collaboration in practice."*