



Press Release

Alpha Bank: Initiatives for female empowerment and entrepreneurship

Meeting of the Group CEO and Top Executives in Heraklion, Crete, with the civil non-profit organization "Women Do Business" on the subject of female empowerment

Alpha Bank validates **its steadfast commitment to women's empowerment**, the promotion of female entrepreneurship and the elimination of inequalities, through its partnership with the "**Women Do Business**" Civil Non-Profit Organization, to support women from all over Greece who wish to become active in the business sector.

As part of the Bank Management's tour of Crete, the **CEO of the Alpha Bank Group Vassilios Psaltis and the Group's Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) Fragiski Melissa, accompanied by the Retail Banking General Manager Isidoros Passas and the Head of Attica II, Southwestern Greece and Islands Branch Division Maria Papageorgiou** met with "**Women Do Business**" co-founders **Mrs. Eri Paulaki and Mrs. Natasa Grigoraki**. During the meeting, it was stressed that the **Bank will continue to actively support the promotion of female entrepreneurship and gender equality in the workplace**, strengthening the Organization's Academies and its overall work, both in the region of Crete and in other regions of the country. Alpha Bank, after all, is at the forefront of developments in this area, **creating and implementing programs for women in all stages of their professional life cycle**, and has built a significant and constructive cooperation with "Women Do Business" to support and empower women, among them also former Alpha Bank Employees, in their first business steps.

"Alpha Bank supports female empowerment and the participation of women in the labor market. We do this by supporting female entrepreneurship as well as our own female Employees, in achieving their professional goals and in successfully balancing their multiple roles in the workplace, in their families and in society.

Our cooperation with "Women Do Business", a women's social enterprise from Crete, is not limited to mentoring programs for women in the Alpha Bank family. We actively support in many ways, including through the ecosystem of Alpha Bank partnerships, their efforts to access the labor market and achieve professional success.

From start to finish, all our actions are driven by the concept encapsulated by the word "Together". Because we believe that this is the only way leading to Progress," said **Vassilios Psaltis, CEO of the Alpha Bank Group**.

Chief Human Resources Officer Fragiski Melissa said: *"The initiatives to empower women are at the heart of Alpha Bank's operation.*

For the first time, an organization in Greece is designing female empowerment programs that start with teenage women, giving them the opportunity to come into contact with the banking industry for the first time, continue with the provision of constant support to our female Executives in their professional and personal development and, finally, provide support and counselling to our former female Employees in their next professional steps, proving in practice that it stands by every female employee and every woman."

For her part, "**Women Do Business**" co-founder **Mrs. Natasa Grigoraki**, said: *"Female empowerment is the springboard for women to achieve their personal and professional goals, in order to strengthen their participation in the labor market and in entrepreneurship.*

With pioneering partnerships, such as that of the "Grow aware" program for former Alpha Bank female employees, our goal is to support women build a successful career path in whatever they choose. For an organization based in the country's periphery, such as 'Women Do Business', it is crucial to have the assistance of partner such as Alpha Bank in its work."



Grow Aware Academy and synergies with “Women Do Business”

The under-representation of women in positions of responsibility and the **“glass ceiling” phenomenon** have in practice prevented many women, especially those in Greek regions, from accessing knowledge for creating their own business, while it is characteristic that **only 25.8% of businesses in our country are run by women**, according to an ICAP survey dated 2021.

Through its programs, policies and partnerships, Alpha Bank seeks to help reduce this phenomenon. As part of the empowerment initiatives it develops and carries out for women inside and outside the Bank, it designed, together with “Women Do Business”, the **three-month online Grow Aware Academy**, whose purpose is to provide counselling and education of women over 40 years old, who have voluntarily left the Bank and want to start their own social enterprise. At the same time, a corresponding action is also planned for current female Employees of the Bank.

The **Grow Aware Academy** was launched in March 2022 and offers lectures, workshops and **seminars**, whose main topics cover **skills development, work-life balance, fostering entrepreneurship** and raising awareness of **stereotypes and limiting beliefs with a view to their ultimate abolition.**

Apart from the Grow Aware Academy, Alpha Bank also supports the work of “Women Do Business” for the promotion of female entrepreneurship, empowerment and gender equality in the region of Crete and the rest of Greece. Indicatively, under the guidance of the Small Business Banking Division, the **Bank’s participation as a “mentor”** in the “Women Do Business” academies is planned, focusing on **the provision of useful practical advice for the starting-up of new businesses** by women, jointly with the Alpha Bank’s ecosystem of partnerships.

Innovative mentoring and empowerment programs for Alpha Bank female Employees

At the same time, Alpha Bank is leading developments by creating empowerment and mentoring programs for female Executives, covering their entire work lifecycle. Relevant examples were the programs **“TAB (Trading Alpha Brains)”** and **“She for He”**, implemented in 2021, through which the Bank has inspired women and has encouraged them to share positive practices, while at the same time building their **personal branding.**

Moreover, in the broader context of initiatives with a social footprint, pioneering **job shadowing programs (Bankers & Daughters)** were successfully completed, involving the provision of vocational orientation to teenage girls who had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the activities of Alpha Bank Divisions in which women are under-represented.

A work culture promoting integration and strengthening the position of women

In addition to the above, Alpha Bank has taken the lead with initiatives, supporting our female empowerment in the work environment and supporting its female Employees in achieving their professional goals, based on **meritocracy** and **equal opportunities**, which has made it a **leading employer in Greece in terms of gender equality**, through its inclusion **for the 4th consecutive year in the International Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index (GEI).**

Guided by a work culture that promotes integration, Alpha Bank adopts policies and practices that ensure **wage equality, equal opportunities for personal and professional development, equal evaluation and equal rewards.** It should be noted that women represent 56% of the Bank’s total Personnel, while women’s **access to top-level management positions** is particularly encouraged, reaching **37%**. At the same time, **60% of the promotions in 2021 were given to women.** Moreover, the Bank is implementing a special provision regarding the **diversity policy for its Board of Directors**, which has resulted in a significant increase in women’s representation in the BoD (from 8% in 2019 to 23.1% in early 2022).

Finally, it should be noted that in March 2022, the Bank’s Management **signed a Special Business Collective Labor Agreement**, the very first of its kind in the Greek financial sector, which strengthens the policy of the Alpha Bank Group for **preventing, addressing and eliminating violent and harassing behaviors.**