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CONVERGENCE
Public-Private Financial Sector Development Program
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How Can The Croatian Banking Sector Contribute To Improving Financial Intermediation?

On February 20, Convergence delivered a seminar to the Executive Board of the Croatian Banking Association (CBA) on how the Italian Banking Association (ABI) has made important policy contributions to the development of the Italian financial system. Over the last 5 years, ABI has participated in the design of more than 300 policy changes affecting the conduct of banking business in Italy, working in partnership with monetary and financial authorities.

Professor Francesco Cesarini, the Convergence speaker, summarized the management tools and the technical capabilities developed by ABI to become a trustworthy and responsible policy partner. He said: *“The main reasons for ABI’s success must be traced to the highly representative nature of ABI and to its readiness to engage in research projects on new and emerging issues. ABI drew not only on its members’ intellectual resources but also on external counsel and by linking itself with parallel studies conducted by regulatory authorities and independent research organizations.”*

Professor Cesarini is the former Chairman of Unicredit, Banco Ambroveneto, Banca Popolare di Milano and the Italian Stock Exchange.

Convergence is already active in Croatia, providing assistance with the EBRD to an industry working group that is reviewing the legal framework for securitization transactions. Croatian experts have worked with Convergence on the financial policy reform of the Romanian Deposit Insurance Fund.

Sponsored by the World Bank, and supported by a grant from Italy’s Ministry of Economy, the “Convergence” Program has been set up to promote the build-up of analytical capabilities in financial economics, banking and finance and legal and regulatory matters within the civil society in order to foster micro-structural market-building reforms conducted in consultation with market participants in its seven countries of operations in South-East Europe¹.

Convergence is willing to assist authorities and market participants in Croatia to introduce financial instruments that are in line with EU practices.

¹ The countries are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro.