

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **The merger agreement, incorporating Banca Meridiana into bancApulia, is concluded**

As of today's date, the merger agreement, incorporating Banca Meridiana into bancApulia, has been concluded. This is the latest step in the comprehensive integration project between the Gruppo Veneto Banca and the Gruppo bancApulia, in virtue of which, bancApulia and its subsidiaries will become part of the Gruppo Veneto Banca.

The merger will come into effect on 10 May, 2010 which is the date set for the migration of the computer data held by bancApulia to the computer systems used by Gruppo Veneto Banca.

As already announced, with the completion of the merger, Veneto Banca Holding s.c.p.a. – parent company to the Gruppo Veneto Banca – will hold 50.67% of bancApulia's shares capital; Finanziaria Capitanata srl, once bancApulia's major shareholder, maintaining its investment unaltered, will own 25.85% of the Foggiano bank.

Thanks to the incorporation of Banca Meridiana, bancApulia will have a network of 105 branches, 16 points of sale "Apulia punto finanziario" network of financial advisors, 18 points of sale "Apulia prontomutuo" – network of credit brokers, more than 400 ATM's, over 11 billion euros in assets in administration and approximately 1,000 employees. This new size and increased equity will ensure that the bank confirms its position as important point of reference in the geographical area where it operates .

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**Veneto Banca Holding**, headed by Flavio Trinca and governed by Vincenzo Consoli, is the head of the Veneto Banca Group, which operates in Italy through Veneto Banca spa, Banca Popolare di Intra and Banca Meridiana, and in Eastern Europe through Banca Italo Romena (Romania), Veneto Banka (Croatia), Eximbank (Republic of Moldova), and Veneto Banka former BIS - Banca Italiana di Sviluppo (Albania).

*With 336 branches in Italy and 56 abroad, the Group has more than 4,500 employees.*

**bancApulia**, headed by Vincenzo Chirò and managed by Giulio Simonelli, with 550 employees, operates in Italy through a network of 91 points of sale, comprising 53 bank branches, 16 points of sale Apulia Puntofinanziario – network of financial advisors, 18 points of sale Apulia Prontomutuo – network of credit brokers, 2 points of sale Apulia Prontoprestito, 1 point of sale Apulia Previdenza 1 Representative Office as well as 340 ATMs.

**Banca Meridiana** was established in 2002 following Veneto Banca's acquisition of Banca Popolare del Levante and 29 branches of Nuova Banca Mediterranea.

*The bank has 52 branches and 402 employees, and operates in the Puglia and Basilicata regions.*

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