



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

## PRESS RELEASE

II EDITION OF THE AWARD “WELCOME - WORKING FOR REFUGEE INTEGRATION”

### **A GROWING NUMBER OF BUSINESSES ARE SUPPORTING THE EMPLOYMENT INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES**

Milan, 21 March 2019 – UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, today awarded the Italian businesses that stood out in 2018 for promoting the professional inclusion of refugees and supporting their integration in Italy. The award ceremony took place at the headquarters of Assolombarda in the presence of representatives of the Milan city council and prefecture.

The businesses were presented with a certificate bearing the logo **Welcome - Working for refugee integration**, which they can display and use in their communication activities during the coming year.

The project, supported by the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Interior and Confindustria, involves presenting an annual award to businesses which, in accordance with their possibilities, have distinguished themselves by employing beneficiaries of international protection or promoting their labour and social integration, as well as those that have fostered the creation of self-employment activities.

**The second edition** of Welcome - Working for refugee integration saw greater and more enthusiastic and prestigious participation than the first, in demonstration of the strong commitment of the private sector to promoting the social inclusion of refugees. In particular, large companies promoted more qualified employment, showing a desire to pursue employment integration paths that went beyond mere recruitment.

**75 businesses of all dimensions**, from the 15 large companies such as Barilla, Gucci, Sky Italia, Roberto Cavalli, The Adecco Group Italia, Decathlon Italia, Mantero Seta, Sodexo, Brembo, Scame Parre, Freudenberg, JW Marriott Venice Resort & Spa, Panino Giusto, Phoenix International, Pricewaterhousecoopers, to the small and medium-sized enterprises operating in various sectors, from agriculture and apiculture to care services, social inclusion and reception, from the hospitality and food service industry to manufacturing, were presented with the logo by

representatives of the European Commission, Ministries of Labour and Interior, Global Compact Network Italia and Tent Partnership for refugees.

Since 2017, a total of 120 businesses have been awarded for promoting the employment inclusion of 1,200 refugees, broadening the horizon of their social responsibility.

*"I am proud to receive this award," said **Marco Bizzarri, President and CEO of Gucci.** This accolade bears witness to our commitment to favouring the professional integration of refugees and to supporting their process of integration in Italy, as well as to promoting and sensitising our employees to an inclusive society model that can prevent and combat xenophobic and racist sentiment against asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection."*

*"Barilla Group is proud and pleased to have adhered to the initiative for the employment integration of refugees in Barilla premises in Italy, France, Germany and Sweden, as one of the distinctive elements in favour of its commitment to the promotion and maintenance of diversity and inclusion at every level of the company," said **Luca Virginio, Chief Communication and External Relations Officer at Barilla Group.***

**The High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi**, was also present at today's award ceremony, in recognition of the strong participation in this edition.

*"Countries receiving refugees face major challenges to integrate them into their economies and societies. But the time has come to change the way we look at this trend," said Grandi in his closing remarks. "Refugees must be seen as a resource for their host countries, they bring a wealth of skills and experience which, if properly tapped, can be of great benefit to all. Refugees are human beings, people who in most cases used to lead normal lives like the rest of us: they had jobs, they developed skills, they attended training courses or aspired to do so before conflict or persecution in their home countries forced them to flee. They were doctors, plumbers, engineers, teachers, electricians. This is who they were and this is who they still are and dream of being. I have met so many refugees during my career, and when I have asked them what has helped, or would help, them to feel integrated, the reply has almost invariably been: employment."*

For this second edition a special prize was awarded to the international law firm Baker McKenzie, which scouted client companies in Lombardy as part of its social responsibility activities in 2018 and facilitated the employment integration of more than 30 refugees. The company has also shown the desire to extend its commitment to national level.

*"The project Refugee Integration aims to be the first concrete step towards the effective integration of refugees," said **Andrea Cicala, the partner in charge of Baker McKenzie's pro bono activities in Italy.** "These people represent a resource for companies, one that is often not taken into consideration; they are able to add effective value and develop a working environment that is more inclusive and sensitive to matters of welcome, as demonstrated by the success of the over 30 job placements that we have realised. This prestigious award shows us that we are on the right path and motivates us to continue moving forward."*

Applications will soon be open on the website [www.unhcr.it](http://www.unhcr.it) for the 2019 edition of the project, in the hope that promoting refugee integration might represent a new horizon for companies' social activities and that, with their skills and knowledge, refugees might be a concrete resource for our economies.

For further information on the project Welcome - Working for refugee integration see: <https://www.unhcr.it/progetto-welcome>

#### **COMPANIES AWARDED:**

##### **Small-medium enterprises**

- *Care/social inclusion and reception:* Partecipazione & Sviluppo, Associazione Don Bosco 2001, Valpiana Società Cooperativa Sociale, World In Progress - Società Cooperativa Sociale, Iride ScS, Cooperativa Pollicino, APS Cambalache, Consorzio Matrix, Magazzini Società Cooperativa Sociale, Consorzio Solidalia, Un mondo di gioia SCS Onlus, Associazione Lachesi, Società Cooperativa Sociale I Girasoli, Pazza Idea Società Cooperativa Onlus, Cooperativa Sociale Le Soleil, LESS ScS, Cooperativa Sociale Le Radici e le Ali, Società Cooperativa Sociale Arca Di Noe', Cooperativa Siamo, Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco SCS Onlus.
- *Hospitality and food services:* Kilowatt Srl, Touring Srl, La Vegana, Ceppo Rustico Snc, Hotel Relax degli Eredi Antonio Bernardini, Hotel Rivamare, La Svolta Snc, Yoyo Gusto, Camping Florenz, E' Buono Cooperativa Sociale, Ca'Sana cibo arte cultura, Trapizzino Srl, Accogliere ScS, Grandma Srl.
- *Agriculture/apiculture:* Il Peraccio Azienda Agricola Biologica, I resilienti Società Cooperativa Sociale, Biocolombini srl Società Agricola, Azienda Agricola Cascina Goretti di Castelli Michele, Cascina Sabbione, Società Agricola Agape, Azienda Agricola Bovina Manuel, Brutti Nicola Vivai, Agriturismo Le Piagge, Azienda Agricola Le Terre del Fiume.
- *Consulting/business services:* Cooperativa Sociale PICTOR, Boston Group Srl, Società Cooperativa Partenhope.
- *Manufacturing:* Società Costruzioni Capannoni Srl, Il Serramento, Vincenzina Portelli Srl, Ferradini Bruno Srl.

- *Retail*: Cotonica S.r.l.s., Vesti Solidale.
- *Training and culture*: CEFAL Emilia Romagna Società Cooperativa, Ozono Factory APS, Associazione Culturale Lignarius Arte e Restauro.
- *Construction*: Loro Gino srl, T.S. Costruzioni Srl.
- *Waste management*: Società Ecologia Territorio Ambiente SPA.

#### **Large enterprises**

- Panino Giusto SPA
- Phoenix International SPA
- Servizi Aziendali Pricewaterhousecoopers srl
- JW Marriott Venice Resort & Spa
- S.r.l. Decathlon Italia
- Freudenberg Sealing Technologies SAS di Externa Italia Srl
- Brembo S.p.A
- Scame Parre S.P.A.
- Adecco Italia Holding di Partecipazione e Servizi S.p.A.
- Sky Italia Srl
- Roberto Cavalli S.p.A.
- Sodexo Italia S.p.A.
- Barilla G.e R. Fratelli
- Mantero Seta Spa
- GUCCI

#### **Special Partner**

- Baker McKenzie

ENDS

#### **For further information:**

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