

# *il bollettino*

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This issue begins by examining a matter of widespread concern: **climate change [page 2]** and its implications for the insurance sector. **The second article looks at Ambition Expo [page 7]**, an event organised by and for the 5,000 employees of Generali France.

Next there is a report of a prestigious sponsorship deal linking Generali and **Ducati [page 10]**. The next article, **“The future of Guernsey” [page 14]** deals with a project whose aim is to predict and address possible future developments.

The section that follows is devoted to culture. The subject of the first article is the ancient city of **Aquileia [page 18]** and its mosaics. The second contains an interview with **Claudio Magris [page 23]**, winner of the *Campiello Germania* prize.

This is followed by a report of a visit to the Trieste Operations Centre of **Banca Generali [page 28]**, which has seen improvements in both work quality and the effectiveness of customer service. Then we take a look at the world of the web with **Netglobers [page 32]**, the social network for dedicated travellers.

Our usual **low impact column [page 34]** examines the question of electricity consumption and possible ways of conserving energy.

The issue closes with an investigation of the relationships between **life style and health risks [page 36]**.

Enjoy your read!

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# Climate change

risks and opportunities for the insurance sector



**2007 Nobel Peace Prize winner Professor Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, an IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) member and Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Research, addressed the pressing question of climate change and considered the risks and challenges that it poses for the insurance sector at the Generali Executive Forum held in Prague last July.**

Formerly seen as little more than a possibility, climate change is now an established phenomenon and is sure to be a major issue in the future. It appears on international political agendas and is a major topic for discussion by economic and political panels; what seemed only recently a distant prospect has become the global challenge of the new millennium. Our Managing Directors took the far-sighted decision to focus the Group's attention on this issue and selected it as one of the four strategic risk areas to be considered by the last Generali Executive Forum held at Prague and organised by GGIA (Generali Group Innovation Academy). The debate was opened by Professor Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate

Research and advisor to the German government on environmental matters. He emphasised the implications for the insurance sector, saying that "Climate change creates a new scenario with mixed prospects for insurance companies. Although it presents opportunities for growth, it also carries the threat that we shall have to face major catastrophes. This requires the insurance industry to perform a fundamental overhaul of its products and structure. I am convinced that immediate action is needed if we are to address the problems of climate change in the most effective manner". The Stern Report, published in October 2006 and the various IPCC reports, alerted the world – particularly its economic system – to the increasingly confident conclusions of science regarding 5

*fundamental relationships linked to climate change* and described by Stern in his book: between economic activity and emissions, emissions and increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, greenhouse gas concentration and rising temperatures, rising temperatures and climate change, and finally between climate change and well-being.

The IPCC entertains no doubts about the urgent need for immediate action to tackle the issue of global warming, which could well reach a point of no return in 2015, with much of the planet becoming uninhabitable if current trends continue. The maximum 2°C rise in temperature on which over 100 governments are basing their strategies,



viewing it as “economically acceptable”, threatens a desolate future for over 660 million people by 2030. Schellnhuber considers that global temperatures may rise by up to 5°C by 2100, prompting a collapse in the world population to one billion. The director of the Potsdam Institute explains that “Among the dangers posed by climate change, five are of particular concern: drought, floods, storms, rising sea levels and food shortages. There are

five most powerful ever to hit the United States, with unparalleled economic damage, causing more deaths than almost any other, while Cyclone Nargis, which struck Burma, caused devastating destruction and was one of the strongest tropical storms ever seen. The increasing frequency of natural disasters, particularly category 4 or 5 hurricanes (the most dangerous, with wind speeds reaching over 250 kilometres per hour) will

essential resources. Among the other crucial factors that Schellnhuber believes the insurance sector will have to address are over-population and widespread famine. Crops such as maize and rice are extremely sensitive to rising temperatures and changing seasonal patterns, and estimates suggest that famine, environmental degradation and land loss may force 200 million people a year into exile by



*climate change has become the global challenge of the new millennium*

many scientific predictions to suggest what may be at stake during the next 20 years. Solutions need to be found now if we are to prepare ourselves to meet the future. Our current well-being should not deceive us into thinking that we are guaranteed a tranquil future. We are already beginning to feel the impact of the effects of climate change, which can cause havoc when they strike if we don't intervene. Hurricane Katrina, for example, was one of the

force insurance companies to consider higher premiums and analyse in detail the risks that they are prepared to cover”. By 2030 it seems likely that natural disasters will occur at a rate three times higher than between 1975 and 2008, with perhaps 375 million people affected by hurricanes, earthquakes, fires or floods by 2015. Climate change is already forcing migrations, and international disputes are sure to arise over the control of diminishing

the year 2050. An important feature of the Aquila summit was the emphasis placed by NGOs and major international organisations such as the World Bank on the need for immediate action to save the planet. Although climate change is generated predominantly by the industrialised world, its consequences are principally felt by the poorer countries. Two hundred scientists from all over the world participated in the climate maxi-summit held

in Venice last July. Their task now is to determine how to employ new data and strategies in the battle against climate change, and, in the next few years, to compile the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report on climate change, with an eye to the Copenhagen summit planned for the end of the year. The first volume of the Fifth Report will be published in 2013, followed by the second and third volumes, and the Synthesis Report, in

2014. In addition, a climate change research centre, where one hundred experts from all over the world will work full time, is to be established in Venice near the Fondazione Cini on the island of San Giorgio Maggiore. This confirms the increasing attention that businesses and institutional administrations are paying to climate change and related policies of opposition. The global scale of the problem has induced insurance companies,

financial institutions and investment funds to mobilise their resources and focus on the problem. They are developing products to be allocated which are based upon national and international shares in ethical funds and/or renewable energy enterprises.



Schellnhuber maintains that “In these circumstances insurance companies should ensure that they can offer cover to face the disasters that are predicted to arise as a result of climate change. In view of the vulnerable position of Venice, and Trieste too, it might be wise for Generali to divest itself of property in these areas in favour of alternative investments. Future trends need to be carefully assessed if losses are to be avoided.

The challenge of limiting the warming effects of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions may also present opportunities in the realm of finance as well as that of insurance. Many investment centres might already find it prudent to invest in programmes for reducing carbon emissions and in renewable energy production”. The 2008 Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) report is highly reputed in this regard and has been taken as a point of reference by German

leader Angela Merkel and by opinion formers such as Bill Clinton and Al Gore. The CDP is an independent publication that analyses 3000 international companies and whose monitoring activity is supported by 385 investors who manage funds for a total of 57 thousand billion dollars.

Today 13% of investors consult or recommend the use of the CDP report before making investments or



*crops such as maize and rice are extremely sensitive to rising temperatures and changing seasonal patterns*





granting loans. A global conference on saving the planet will be held in Copenhagen at the end of 2009. Both the wider public and governments are placing their hopes in this event, and Professor Schellnhuber believes that: “This will be a good opportunity to draw up a new international agreement on climate

China and the United States, currently the chief polluters, to cooperate in the world-wide effort. The recent signing by China and the USA of a memorandum of understanding to combat the greenhouse effect together, and put the war against global warming at the centre of their bilateral relationship, is a positive sign. The new era

*“the increasing frequency of natural disasters will force insurance companies to consider higher premiums and analyse in detail the risks that they are prepared to cover”*

*H. J. Schellnhuber*

change, and for world leaders and others to get together around a table and create a global CO<sub>2</sub> market. However, it must be kept in mind that the principal challenge is to conduct global trade in a manner that will help to win the battles against climate change and poverty. Should the Copenhagen conference be successful, it would lead to the creation of institutions charged with policing the global CO<sub>2</sub> market”. The target of an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, as proposed by the G8 is important, but it can only be reached through a series of intermediate stages, or else will remain no more than a good intention. Europe has set a good example, but it is now crucial to persuade

of Obama, whose outlook on environmental matters differs from that of his predecessor, has thus offered a chink of light to what the US President says could be “a global response for a safe and prosperous future of clean energy” because the problems of climate change will not be solved unless “the markets are open to new ideas”.

*Federica Martufi*





PH. VINCENT BOURDON

## defining the vision of the future

**Projects, conferences and exhibitions organised by and for the 5,000 employees of Generali France at the Saint Denis headquarter, from 20 to 23 October.**

Four days, 148 stands, fifteen conferences, 5,000 employees. That's a brief numerical profile of Ambition Expo. However, it isn't enough to explain the significance of an event designed to help every employee to learn more about the company, its daily activities and its plans, in every functional area: working methods, business tools, products, the concerns of the moment... A complete patchwork of achievements already attained or planned for 2009, presented by employees in the working environments so that all can feel involved in the event. Everyone will simultaneously be both organiser and visitor, ensuring that day-to-day

*everyone will simultaneously be both organiser and visitor, ensuring that day-to-day services are provided as normal*

activity is carried out regularly in the various departments. Employees from the regional offices and representatives of the various sales networks will also be invited, and conducted visits will be organised for our partners and principal suppliers. "Ambition Expo will mark a new stage

in the plan to transform our business. We shall attempt to demonstrate that inclusiveness and cooperation are parts our daily activities and are built into Generali's genetic code" explains Marie-Louise Antoni, a member of the General Management Board, advisor to the company President Claude Tendil, and the person in charge of this business project. In addition to the stands, a number of conferences shall be featured

during the four days of the event, in which experts and public figures will participate, addressing problems common to our profession and our clients, and also examining

social matters. Employees are already hard at work preparing for October 20. Projects have been selected and workgroups are meeting to prepare the presentations, which will employ a variety of animation techniques: videos, sketches, quizzes...

### An ad hoc web site

An ad hoc web site will be created in September to supplement this event. It will not be possible for every employee to visit all 148 stands, and the web site will act as a showcase for the various presentations,

allowing all the information to be assembled at one location. It will continue to be maintained after October 23 as a reminder of the dynamics of Ambition Expo and its projects. Beyond its role of diffusing information and knowledge of business tools and working methods, Ambition Expo will be the major event of year-end 2009 for all employees of Generali France.

### The Ambition Generali adventure

Following a total reorganisation, Generali

France decided to accelerate the transformation of the Group in 2007 through the creation of the Ambition Generali project. This project is aligned along 5 axes.

- **A customer promise:** focusing on the customer and supplying a quality of service that builds loyalty.
- **A builder of insurance solutions:** integrating advice, insurance products, services and assistance in order to provide a global solution.

• **A lean business:** encouraging project working and developing more efficient information systems.

• **The Generali approach:** encouraging initiative and fostering dialogue.

• **Action for our future:** continuing to be the market leader, promoting responsible development.

How does the project mesh with daily activity? Quite simply, through a process of participation, involving listening and



PH. HERVÉ THOUROUDE

communication. An initial series of forums in 2007 allowed all employees to express their views on the project. More forums on the action plan were held in 2008: organised by functional area, they provided opportunities for employees to exchange information on developments in working methods, business tools and management objectives. About 160 forums were held during 2008 and 2009: each year 500 of the Group's top managers meet to discuss the challenges of the year

*forums on the action plan provided opportunities for employees to exchange information on developments in working methods*



PH. HERVÉ THOUROUDÉ


ahead. Another important feature was the development of the OTRs, internal work organisations whose function is to promote higher

client satisfaction through improved procedures, greater employee autonomy, and the development of a range of skills. These

organisations currently involve approximately 1,400 employees.

Nathalie Vilain





# When Ducati races, it's not just the engines that roar

the Lion official sponsor of Ducati Corse

*To create. Some men enjoy the gift of creation, matching knowledge and skill with passion and imagination. They can produce beautiful objects, flawless and desirable. But only few can add that almost magic touch that brings their creation to life and sets it roaring. You recognise the engine's growl before you see where it's coming from; it's a symbolic sound, and to hear it is to remember. A look confirms what your ears have told you: it's all part of its message - power and pleasure.*

*Does this description remind you of anything? To me it speaks of a cat, a great maned cat. The Company's institutional advertising campaign is spreading the message that the Lion has begun to roar alongside Italy's best loved bikes on the world's most famous circuits – as official sponsor of Ducati Corse in MotoGP.*

# Official Sponsor



*Ducati men are creating a legend: some are moulding its form and others its character. Livio Suppo has been doing it for 11 years, and as team manager he leads the GP Project. What does this entail? For him it simply means waking up each morning to the thrill of belonging to a company that remains a legend to him after so many years, working with a team that he sees, above all, as a group of individuals with whom he shares strong bonds of friendship. And his role? It is to guide the team, to choose the rider whose task will be to tame the potent Desmo engine, to perform the many activities that are essential to managing a team project, a group of friends and a winning squad, in short, to enable Ducati Corse to play out our two-wheeled dreams.*

## **Interview with Livio Suppo, Ducati team manager**

*Our call reaches his mobile at Donnington. He is under pressure, at the end of practice on the eve of the race. "Hello Livio, I work for the Group Internal Communication at the Generali Group. We're writing an article about you. On you and us together, to be precise..." Some rapid exchanges - he can spare ten minutes or so. We want to peer a little more closely into this sponsorship deal. Beginning with him, his work, how it felt to win the title in 2007. It couldn't have*

***"Passion: that's what unites us.  
Italianess: dynamic inventiveness.  
Dedication: ideas are not enough – they  
have to be realised"***

*Livio Suppo*

*been the same as being manager of a Japanese team...*

**Livio, how would you describe your company? In three words.**

Passion. That's what unites us, why we work with enthusiasm every day.

Italianess. In the best sense of the word: an inventiveness that is generally more dynamic in Italy than elsewhere.

And dedication. To get to where we are today, ideas were not enough. We had to be able to realise them.

*This last remark turned my thoughts to technical director Filippo Preziosi, to what a man will give to*

*bring his ideas to fruition when he has the dedication and the will... The next question is perhaps predictable. I ask him about Generali, and how this union is viewed after a start-up at Mugello that was spectacular, to say the least. Livio gets straight to the point.*

It's very pleasing to be able to involve prestigious companies in our project, especially if they are Italian. While it's good to see Ducati flying the "Made in Italy" flag, it's even better that this vision be shared by one of Italy's leading companies. We build dreams here, toys for adults, and a partnership with Generali is marvellous,

since it will bring the right touch of reality to the dream.

**Generali sells insurance, much harder to move than a motor bike...**

Generali makes it possible for someone who buys a bike to ride it. Having insurance means having a better quality of life, since it brings security to your enthusiasms. To do certain things you need common sense; if you don't have it, you're better off without a bike.

**And now that you've got to know Generali, how do we strike you?**

As far as I can see, it's probably a little difficult to bring the same air of intensity to an insurance product that you can to a motor bike, but I believe that people at Generali have the same passion for their work as we have for ours. Perhaps we have more in common than one might have thought.

*We say goodbye, with a last few words on his memories, on his youth travel all over Italy, wearing out the asphalt on two wheels.*

## Two testimonies to the high regard for Ducati at the Generali Group

### Giorgio Girelli, CEO of Banca Generali

*What's in the DNA of a Ducati bike? It's a sports bike, designed for high performance. That's the plain view of Giorgio Girelli who, of course, owns one.*

#### Which one?

I have a Monster 695, the world's most beautiful bike in my opinion. Its lines are pure and fresh, and yet it has hardly changed since 1993; it's the world's first "naked" bike – light, easily handled and full of thrills. I mainly use it on trips with Banca Generali's Motorcycle Club, together with my daughter Maria. And it's a genuine "Rosso Ducati".

*How did the CEO of Banca Generali develop his passion for motorbikes? It started when he was 14, riding off-road on a KTM. At that time his family considered this to be less dangerous than road biking, and this is still his preferred weekend activity. He hasn't held on to all the bikes that he has owned. He replaced many of them with new ones, but he will probably never sell his Monster. His enthusiasm for off-road biking is undiminished, and he and some colleagues from Banca Generali took part in the Ducati Riding Experience at Adria in June, a day of test rides on some of the Borgo Panigale constructor's models: a Hypermotard,*

*a Monster 1100 and a Multistrada.*

#### Your verdict?

Without any doubt the Hypermotard is a challenging bike, obviously designed for high performance, and a bit of a handful on long road journeys. As for speed limits, they're a pain...

#### How come? Does the Motorcycle Club know something about fines?

*(Laughing...)* Plenty. Especially me, I've had plenty!

#### And how did things go at Mugello?

We were welcomed very warmly to a circuit which

we might call "the University of Motorcycling". We spent all day with the Ducati team, a very sincere and likeable group of people. But the thing that most impressed me was the Desmo engine. Each driver has two bikes, which are stripped down after every ride. To follow this operation at close quarters, as we were able to do, is a real thrill for an enthusiast, especially when you think that this engine was designed many years ago and has barely changed since. The Desmo is something unique to Ducati, and still retains its mysterious appeal.

My favourite roads? There are some glorious mountains around here...



*“the most impressive thing that I saw at Mugello was the Desmo engine: the bikes are stripped down after every ride, and I was able to see everything in detail”*

*Giorgio Girelli*

*“Generali and Ducati are both global brands, visible in the markets and on the circuits all over the world”*

*Valter Trevisani*



## **Valter Trevisani, deputy general manager of Assicurazioni Generali**

*Valter Trevisani, who studied Ferrari in his degree thesis, is a lifelong motoring enthusiast and has always viewed Ducati as “the other Rossa”. His analysis is more “industrial” and he is quick to explain the characteristics that he believes Ducati and Generali share.*

They are both global brands – and this is the first common characteristic - visible in the markets and on the circuits all over the world. Both companies take pride in their Italianess. We remember Ducati’s victory in the 2007 World Championships, which brought the title back to Italy 33 years after the last success of MV Augusta. Ducati showed how a small team of skilled and

dedicated people can conceive winning projects capable of challenging the giants of Asia. The second common characteristic of Generali and Ducati is the pervasive feeling of belonging. Based on my travels in various parts of the world, I would say that you particularly find it in markets such as Germany, England and, strangely enough, Japan. A motorbike is the ideal way to travel to new places and avoid queues, and above all to experience a sense of freedom, and this is the third characteristic that we share: since it makes no sense for this freedom to lead to the tragedy of an accident, we need to develop a culture of safety, which unfortunately is often lacking in the motorcycling world. Generali supplies this safety through its very business activities. Generali and Ducati together integrate these three concepts and bring

them to life, demonstrating a shared “chemistry” and common cultural values such as attachment to the company, technical skills, a sense of belonging, and dedication.

### **Let’s talk about motorbikes...**

I have a Sportclassic GT 1000: light, enjoyable and responsive, but at the same time it’s a bit like a cat, always alert, and at times ready to show its claws... It has a Desmo at its heart, the one created by legendary “Doctor T” (engineer Taglioni, A/N). We may remember that a similar distribution system was tested during a race by Mercedes in the early fifties, but with little success, because they were unable to achieve the necessary reliability. Ducati has turned it into a winner, both for its road bikes, Superbike motorcycles and MotoGP bikes. It has enormous torque and impressive

acceleration, and it has never let me down.

Are there any routes that I am particularly fond of? Germany’s Romantische Strasse and the Passo dello Stelvio...

*text and interviews by  
Alessandra Gambino*

*Left:  
Giorgio Girelli on a Hypermotard  
at the Ducati Riding Experience  
in Adria*

*Above:  
Valter Trevisani with Livio Suppo  
at the Brno GP*

*Article first page:  
the image used in the  
communication campaign  
promoting Generali as the  
official sponsor of Ducati Corse*

# The future of Guernsey

major opportunities from anticipating risks

*For the past four years, the Generali Group Innovation Academy has organised the Generali Executive Forums, which are attended by the Group's top executives for a process of reflection, debate and brainstorming on matters of strategic relevance to future development. These international initiatives spawn a series of Strategic Management Forums which cover the same topics in the Group's principal local languages, to allow the strategic debate to be continued at a local level with*

*wider participation. The deliberations of the local and international Forums are assembled and forwarded to Group senior executives at the end of the year. Debbie Le Noury, Head of Generali International, and Gavin Tradelius, CEO of Generali Worldwide, have participated in some of these proceedings, which highlight the risks, strategic opportunities and various options open to the Group. They have described their experience to us, outlining future projects identified by the Forum.*



## Two questions to Gavin Tradelius, CEO of Generali Worldwide

**We would like to talk about your project “Regulatory Change – The Future of Guernsey”, which emerged from the Executive Forum of the GGIA. Can you explain how your initiative came into being and describe the basic stages in a process of this kind?**

This project began life at Group level, and was intended to help us better understand what “risk” means in our business at an international level.

I participated in one of the Executive Forums, where we identified a number of risks, including those linked to regulatory developments, technology, and environmental and climate change. For Generali Guernsey we then decided to identify the causes and effects of such risks to help us develop our strategic plans. For example, we attempted to understand the changes lying behind potential risks, and to visualize possible future scenarios and their impact on the Generali Group. We reviewed the changes that these scenarios might bring to our business in the future, and assessed the positive and negative consequences that might arise were particular events to occur. What we are seeking to create at Guernsey is a dynamic database model of possible responses to these scenarios, a kind of simulation of the future that will assist us to prepare in the best possible way for unpredictable events. We aim to prepare in the same way as any company developing a disaster recovery plan, while hoping to never have to resort to it. The best method of achieving this is to establish a well tested infrastructure that can be continuously refined and updated. We don't know what the future holds, but it is important to map out a range of possible changes, review and update them regularly, so that we maintain an archive that we can consult as we seek to offer our clients a more effective and efficient service. We began with a regulatory risk relating to the environment in Guernsey, particularly significant in late 2008 as the financial world was undergoing a time of severe crisis in the so-called credit crunch. Some thought was also

given to extending the project beyond Generali Guernsey. A number of persons were invited, and then formed into sub-groups, to analyse the scenarios and propose possible responses and solutions. They included representatives from local industries and the government, the island's key institutions. We invited leading figures from the banking, insurance, administrative and financial sectors, and were privileged to benefit from their contributions. We asked them principally to develop scenarios that we could present to Generali Guernsey managers, with whom we could then work to develop explicit responses relevant to our business. As documentary evidence of our work, we produced cards and posters which have proved to be very useful as a means of communicating powerful and interesting messages pertinent

to our daily activities. Indeed, they have proved important to our strategic planning and we are using them currently. We are now making progress in analysing new scenarios, for example technology, and we shall move on in the future to the issue of climate change. We intend to study the environment around us and investigate how natural events can influence the world of insurance. Unless we think about the future we shall fail to foresee risks, and that is why we are determined not to leave ourselves unprepared, for I believe that risks conceal major opportunities.

**Can you describe to us the initiative known as “Glass Box” – Building Futures of Guernsey?**

The concept we wanted to associate this new project with was that of a “Glass Box”, a single container for the most interesting and challenging scenarios, accessible to everyone,

symbolizing transparency, revealing possible developments in our business and concealing nothing. GGIA has sown the seeds so that all of this could take root. In other words, it has triggered that process of reflection that lies behind a fuller assessment of risk, in the sense of achieving a wider and deeper understanding of it all, implications included. GGIA also kindly provided us with logistic support, and some of its facilitators provided considerable assistance to the development of scenarios, working for two days on the preparation of practical work. They also helped us to become



*“we are seeking to build a dynamic database model of possible responses to these scenarios”*

*Gavin Tradelius*



## Two questions to Debbie Le Noury, head of Generali International

**We would like to talk about your project “Regulatory Change – The Future of Guernsey”, which emerged from the Executive Forum of the GGIA. Can you explain how your initiative came into being and describe the basic stages in a process of this kind?**

We were very pleased to be involved in the international programmes of the Executive Forum and the Strategic Management Forum. Gavin Tradelius, CEO of Generali Worldwide, and I participated enthusiastically in these initiatives organised by the Generali Group Academy. Some of our Guernsey colleagues also took part in these international meetings, and are benefiting in their daily activities. We are now determined to turn theory into practice and the ideas generated in the Forums into concrete actions so that our business improves and becomes more effective and good intentions become reality. In the Strategic Management Forum that I was part of, we examined the concept of innovation and how we might apply it to risk management in the event of regulatory changes. This is a very pertinent theme for Guernsey, which occupies a position that I would describe as “unique” in its role as an international financial centre. As things turned

familiar with the methodology used both to develop scenarios and put together responses. GGIA did much to boost awareness, knowledge and professionalism within the Generali Group in its efforts to anticipate risk and prepare us to respond to best effect. We can't wait to take this work further in the next 18 months and produce some useful results to share with colleagues in the hope that they will find them suitable for wider dissemination to various locations and environments within the company, in order to add value to our business.

*Alongside:  
Generali House at Guernsey*

*Above:  
the island of Guernsey,  
lying in the English Channel*

*Article's first page:  
a view of Guernsey*



out we attracted attention from the international media. For many years Guernsey was viewed negatively as a “tax haven”, and we have spent much time trying to improve our status by being transparent and open, and by adhering as closely as possible to best practice. The Strategic Management Forum allowed us to become familiar with a range of alternative future scenarios tracing a specific area of strategic risk and highlighting possible evolutions within our activities. During the meetings we identified a number of opportunities at local and operational levels and were able to take advantage of operational intelligence, within business contexts, to enrich the strategic vision and produce a feedback loop at the corporate level. One of the suggested exercises was to consider how innovation might benefit our business. We came up with the idea of creating a Forum that would not be restricted to Generali Guernsey employees, but would draw members from the island’s enterprises to join us in seeking shared solutions and common action plans. Many ideas emerged, and we are now attempting to incorporate them into our plans for the future. We decided to give some substance to the Forum’s reflections by setting up a small team of five principal players: in addition to Gavin Tradelius and me, it will include the CEO of Generali PanEurope, our sister company in Ireland, the Head of Compliance here in Guernsey, and the Head of Compliance and Legal Affairs for Generali PanEurope, based in Switzerland. It was an experience that generated much to think about. We considered future scenarios in which regulation might affect our business, observing that globalisation is now a reality in which the consumer is the undisputed king, and that we live in a world where technology is to the fore. We then decided to extend this process of reflection to political leaders and the heads of Guernsey’s leading companies so that they might form a panoramic view of the impact of future changes on our business. It was thrilling to see their involvement in these exercises and to join them in thinking about future risks and possible responses. Obviously our work does not stop here, because risk identification is only part of the problem if we wish to play a part in ensuring that things really change.

After the individual meetings we sat around a table in Guernsey with the Generali management, a group of around 16 persons, and analysed strategic risks while thinking about a range of strategic opportunities, not just for our company but also for the Group. The extraordinary participation by everyone involved was extremely pleasing to see. It was important for us to assess all the ideas that emerged, even those that are difficult to put into practice, because we need to think clearly about a viable future if we wish to plan winning strategies and be ready to confront the risks that will inevitably accompany the changes already under way. All those who took part did so with enthusiasm, inspired by the opportunity to think unconventionally and to ponder what the future might hold for our business.



*“we became familiar with a range of alternative future scenarios and visualised possible evolutions within our activities”*

*Debbie Le Noury*

**Can you describe to us the initiative known as “Glass Box” – Building Futures of Guernsey?**

Another initiative that we are currently working on is the “Glass Box”, our window on the world for building new futures, an environment in which we can test new ideas, assess strategic options, and create innovative opportunities and solutions. The “Glass Box” is a place for learning, growing, playing and succeeding – possibly for failing too. It is important that we think about new scenarios and new business opportunities, and that’s why we want to involve all our young people and all our colleagues who have not yet had the chance to participate in these meetings. To this respect, Generali Worldwide has continued to study future scenarios, following the example of the Forums organised by GGIA, and it was the Academy’s initiatives that inspired us to conceive the Glass Box” – Building Futures programme, held in Guernsey from 24 July to 22 September. We firmly believe that it provides a genuine opportunity for confrontation in order to improve our business. We would like to ask our colleagues to imagine how our world might change in the next 5 years and think about new courses of action for the business.

*Federica Martufi*



# The mosaics of Aquileia

a UNESCO protected site, one of the most extensive in the Northern Adriatic region

Aquileia, occupying a site already inhabited in the protohistoric era, was founded by the Romans in 181 BC as an important outpost in the Northern Adriatic region with a logistic and strategic role as a bridge between East and West. Its favourable position meant that it quickly became an important economic centre and remained so until the late Roman era. In the 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD it was celebrated by poet Ausonio

as the empire's ninth most important city, famous for its port and its walls (*moenibus et portu celeberrima*). It developed into a defensive stronghold serving a fundamental strategic role in the alpine line of defence against barbarian invasions from the lands beyond the Danube. The city was planned, as a whole, around a north-south axis leading through the forum as far as the southern flank of the basilica, and today the line of Via Giulia Augusta. The fluvial port and its warehouses lay to the east, with the public entertainments (circus, amphitheatre, theatre) and a large hot baths complex spreading out to the west.

Alongside the public buildings lay imposing residential dwellings arranged in regular blocks, traces of which can be seen in the southern part of the city, built around and beneath the 4<sup>th</sup> century Christian basilica, and over earlier residential and commercial buildings. Aquileia is now an exceptionally important archaeological site, one of

of mosaic flooring dating from various periods over a long stretch of time, from the early Roman Empire to the Late Roman era, magnificently exemplified in the Christian basilica. Various forms of flooring have been discovered, including inexpensive baked tiling, simple concrete surfaces, sometimes embellished with coloured marble inlays, imposing multi-hued marble slabs, and

*in the so-called flowered carpet mosaic the plant motif merges with, and is almost indistinguishable from, the geometric pattern in the background*

the most extensive in the Northern Adriatic region and under UNESCO protection. It contains large expanses of exposed ruins open to public view, making this site one of the principal attractions of Northern Italy. Excavations that began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and are still under way have revealed an abundance

luxurious mosaics formed from stone tesserae and vitreous pastes. The type of flooring laid depended upon its location, with particular attention being given to private dwellings and public areas in and around the hot baths. Property owners and their guests, and visitors to



## The Mosaics of Aquileia online catalogue project

Following an agreement between the Archaeology Department of Padua University - which is supported by Assicurazioni Generali - and the Friuli Venezia Giulia Department of Archaeological Affairs, a programme to catalogue the Aquileia mosaics is now under way. It forms part of a larger project known as Tess, which currently involves nine Italian regions and has the objective of compiling an online catalogue of ancient floor surfaces ([www.perseo.lettere.unipd.it/tess](http://www.perseo.lettere.unipd.it/tess)).

A novel feature of this work is that it encompasses two levels of investigation. One level involves a global approach to mosaic artefacts, which will involve study of floors and their architectural contexts, whereas the other is concerned with cooperating with the Department in the ever more urgent task of protecting, conserving and enhancing the pieces at issue as a work of art. Analysis of the Aquileia site has led to computer cataloguing of all the city's floors, including those not on public view, a total of around 700 in all, ranging in date from the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC to the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. Cataloguing has proceeded through a rigorous method of investigation, combining archive searches and on-site inspections, aimed to assess, where possible, the reliability of current documentation and to gather information (dimensions of rooms, floors, tiles...) that is not available in the bibliography or in archives. The collected data have been loaded to a multi-user computer application that is ordered in a series of levels, is easy to update, and can be readily accessed by users with and without archaeological knowledge. The programme can respond to data enquiries based on various criteria (position, chronology, state of conservation, accessibility, classification by type, decorative features...) as specified by the user. In addition to decorative details (geometric or figurative, monochrome or polychrome) the cataloguing process attaches great importance to recording the appropriate context, with a view to



*a global approach to the subject of hand made mosaics, which will involve study of floors and their architectural context*

reconstructing the histories of the buildings and the changes that have occurred over the centuries. The next stage of the research task involves data analysis through the development of the various flooring techniques and of the geometric and figurative designs. The results will help to formulate hypothesis for interpreting Aquileia's figurative culture against the background of the wider Roman-Italian and Mediterranean artistic context, focusing on its relationship with techniques in Africa and the East, and will aid the task of reconstructing the role of this Upper Adriatic city in absorbing and adapting the repertory of geometric and figurative mosaic design.

Data processing may spur new ideas for discussion with regard to the historical/social, political and economic analysis of the Aquileia context in the Roman era. Two possible products are envisaged: a CD-rom containing all the records, along the lines of the one produced for the Veneto mosaics, to be made available to the Department and the Aquileia National Museum; and a paper publication containing images, graphics and tables to illustrate each item's detailed evolutionary history, which can then be set in a comprehensive view of the city's development in the period of mosaic production.

In fact, flooring-related data represent an essential tool for protecting, and thus enhancing, these archaeological treasures, and are undoubtedly a prerequisite for the production of maps showing the distribution of the mosaic heritage, for use in real and virtual itineraries.

Scientific advisor:  
Francesca Ghedini

Project managers:  
Tatiana Clementi, Federica Rinaldi



the hot baths, could enjoy walking past the geometric patterns traced out on the floor, stopping here and there to admire their many depictions of mythological worlds or daily life. The variety of designs reflects the levels of skill that developed locally over the centuries and the ability of craftsmen to absorb and innovate those styles originating in Rome and the Empire, adapting them to local tradition. The mosaics of Aquileia demonstrate an abiding tension between tradition and innovation, evident in both the exhibits of the National Archaeological Museum and the extensive archaeological sites open to the public, all of which contain a rich variety of

designs that reveal an evolution in which geometric forms become progressively less constrained. As the years pass, the strictly geometric patterns of the early designs yield to the progressive introduction of sinuous curvilinear elements enclosing detailed

representations of geometric forms and plant life, while the original black and white compositions gradually give way to vibrant contrasts of colour. A significant stage in this evolution is the so-called Flowered Carpet mosaic – unfortunately no longer on show – in which the plant motif merges with, and is almost indistinguishable from, the geometric pattern in the background: the

vibrant display of coloured flower heads, rosebuds, cone-shaped stalks and flowered branches on the floor of a well-to-do household of the imperial era reproduces designs that were part of the common stock and were also used to decorate fabrics. In common with the geometric designs, the more figurative mosaics show the craftsmen of Aquileia experimenting in a constant process of evolution, culminating in the renowned floor of the Christian basilica. After early experimentation, still powerfully influenced by the Hellenistic tradition, the repertory of designs limits itself to simple



Page 18:  
**Mosaic displaying hexagons  
 and flowers**  
 National Archaeological  
 Museum, Aquileia

Page 19:  
**The flowered carpet mosaic**  
 Former Cassis estate, Aquileia

Page 20:  
**Mosaic from the Great Baths  
 showing athletes**  
 National Archaeological  
 Museum, Aquileia

Page 21:  
**Mosaic with image of Nereides  
 or Europa on a marine bull**  
 National Archaeological  
 Museum, Aquileia

Alongside:  
**Mosaic showing a  
 personification of Summer**  
 Aquileia,  
 Casa delle Bestie ferite

representations of domestic earthenware, flowered branches and animals displayed within a rigid geometric pattern border, elements that only later

the garments of wealthy land owners (and long interpreted as images of the Good Shepherd) or represented as contributors to the cost of the great basilica floor.

games, hunting scenes and representations of the seasons are revealed in the spacious reception hall. These are only some of the many examples of the exceptional heritage of the Aquileia mosaics, a heritage that remains partly buried and still to be fully assessed. Restoration work and museum expertise will be required to allow the public to appreciate a display of craftsmanship that constitutes one of the world's best known archaeological treasures.

Michele Bueno  
 Marta Novello

*marine themes alternate with hunting scenes, powerful images of athletes, and depictions of patrons clad in the garments of wealthy land owners or represented as contributors to the cost of the great basilica floor*

became predominant features in the designs of larger floors. Marine themes (cherubs fishing, sea nymphs riding on exotic creatures, Neptune in a chariot drawn by sea horses) alternate with hunting scenes, powerful images of athletes, and depictions of patrons clad in

Scenes from mythology accompany the abundant images of animals and busts of the Seasons. These two latter themes merge in a composition of complex symbolic significance at the *Casa delle Bestie ferite (House of Wounded Animals)* where images of animals wounded in amphitheatre



ING. A. RIVA. MONNERET & C  
MILANO

# Gifts from the soul

interview with Claudio Magris, this year's winner of the Campiello Germania Prize, sponsored by Generali

**First of all let me say, Professor Magris, that I am very pleased to visit with you this photographic display, which is one of the ideas to celebrate your 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.**

Yes, I have to admit that it has been an intense period, and very emotional. Many people were involved in creating the book *Argonauta*, and it was a genuine surprise.

**I shall take advantage of the opportunity offered by this book, and its splendid photographs by Danilo De Marco, to propose to you a journey as... as the argonaut that you are! The Pitter hydroelectric power station still has a lot of appeal. What did your family think about it while living here at Malnisio?**

The construction work at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century must have fascinated the inhabitants of this area, and I must say that I also find these machines very striking. They remind me of Kipling's *The Bridge Builders* with its tale of men and technology challenging the jungle, and its elephants. There is something archaic about it that is far more familiar and congenial to me than the world of bits.

**Getting back to the present, it was extremely interesting to**

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**listen to your chat with Arturo Falaschi, which suggested a certain familiarity even if you have very different personalities.**

We have a high regard for each other, even though we belong to different professional worlds. Falaschi is an extraordinary man whose knowledge of literature and philosophy is at least equal to mine. Perhaps I have the edge on him with German literature, but nevertheless he can discuss any work. He is a great geneticist with a love of letters. For my part I can't boast the same range of knowledge; I have only a vague idea of what DNA is.

**It was great to see you having such a friendly discussion, and what's more, when they were preparing the photographs they inserted a text on the very subject of friendship. When did you write these words?**

If I remember correctly, about ten years ago, but I have to say, reading my thoughts again, here with you, they exactly reflect the way I think today.

**Apart from your son Francesco, the *Argonauta* was**

*“when I'm writing I prefer places where life goes on around me”*

**the idea of Danilo De Marco and José Gonzáles Sainz, both friends of yours.**

These are people I have known for years and have the greatest regard for. The Spanish writer, among other things, is my translator. However, Danilo and José are not lifelong friends who know everything about me... nevertheless, both they and my lifelong friends are very dear to me.

**People do say that you are a person who puts great value on friendship.**

Yes, that's true. I devote a great deal of time and

energy to my friends.

**It can't be easy, being as busy as you are.**

It's not easy, but I would say that it's part of my life, because I'm one of those people who always live beyond their energetic

means, although I think I've become a little wiser recently, thanks to the influence of my second son Paolo. Nevertheless, on the subject of friends and the energy I use up on them, I've already phoned six times to Turin today.

**Have you been like that ever since childhood?**

To be honest, no; as an only child I was a little solitary. I think I began to come out of my shell when I was around twelve, and became less fearful and timid when I joined the Scouts. My

personality developed further during my time at secondary school and university.

**Which school did you attend?**

I went to the Dante Alighieri Humanities-based School in Trieste, and then studied Literature at Turin University. Some of my closest friends, such as professor Giovanni Gabrielli, date from that time.

**Were you school friends?**

We were class-mates and companions in various escapades, and we were suspended several times.

**Because of your friendship?**

That as well. I remember once when he was made to stand outside the classroom door and my father was walking along the corridor at that very moment to speak with the teachers. Giovanni greeted him and said “Just wait, *Dottore*, Claudio will be out here soon”. There was another legendary incident during our secondary school leaving examination. Gabrielli was very clever. I was quite good, but



L'AMICIZIA

Sento molto l'esistenza condivisa, questo senso di camminare insieme, anche verso il fiasco finale che ci attende tutti, ma con la possibilità di aiutarsi fraternamente e di strappare, all'ombra che ci attende tutti e che ci accompagna così spesso, gagliardi momenti di gioia, di piacere e forse anche di felicità. Per questo, sento moltissimo l'amore come esistenza condivisa, come epicità. Sono fedelissimo alle amicizie: dedico molto tempo agli amici. Cerco ogni giorno di incontrare qualche amico e, per riuscire a farlo, ci metto altrettanto impegno che nell'organizzazione del lavoro. Sono convinto che, altrimenti, si è perduti.

not as good as him. Just for a dare we decided that he would keep a picture of Mazzini under the desk, and I would keep one of Garibaldi. Every now and then we would throw a glance at the pictures and at each other with a deliberate look of surprise. Then Giovanni came out with these words: “I know it’s not allowed, but it really helps”.

**Was it the secondary school leaving examination that brought you to the attention of Professor Getto?**

Yes, because he had been appointed as the president of the examination commission and, in view of his status in the academic world, was seen as rather baronial. Unfortunately he became increasingly confused in his later years. Personally I owe him a great deal: he taught me a trade. Just as a tailor can teach you to sew a sleeve or line a jacket, so he

introduced me to the written word. However, things didn’t look too rosy at first, because he acted as defender of the students in the 1957 school leaving examination. I remember his precise words: “They

*“yes, writing is a pleasure, but it’s also stress and effort”*

must know that I will act as a father whenever they make a legitimate challenge, but if they ever stoop to the vile practice of sending anonymous letters they will meet my displeasure”. It was an irresistible invitation for us; we wrote sixteen letters, anonymous of course, accusing the commission of the foulest deeds.

**And then you met him again when he was Professor at Turin University?**

Yes, in fact Giovanni Getto taught in the literature course, and demonstrated his great intelligence and

sensitivity when I informed him that I wished to prepare my dissertation with the assistance of a different teacher. It was precisely this that led me to a freer and more constructive relationship with him. It was

a very important time for me, and I can say that even now I live psychologically in two cities, Trieste and Turin, although I miss the sea when I’m in Piedmont.

**It seems that the recurring theme in these images is the sea. It’s also a fundamental element in your writing...**

Without any doubt the sea is my element, which brings me great peace.

**Do you often swim?**

Yes, every day if I can. I don’t see the sea as stormy or

challenging, but as a great means of relaxation which is always welcoming. Even in dark and difficult times, the sea would always renew my spirits.

**It’s now time to leave the sea and enter a cafe. Do you like to write in a public place?**

Very much, if it’s peaceful, obviously.

**Do you not need peace at home?**

No, because paradoxically I have more distractions at home. I look around, see my books, and start reading. I prefer places where life goes on around me, with people talking and passing by.

**Another place you like to visit in Trieste, Libero’s Tavern...**

I always found Libero himself fascinating, and I remember him with great affection. It was wonderful to listen to him speaking about his



*Alongside: Some of Danilo de Marco’s photographs, shown at the exhibition mounted for Claudio Magris’ 70<sup>th</sup> birthday at the “Pitter” hydroelectric power station in Malnisio, which is also the second site of the Trieste Immaginario Scientifico (Science Centre): four portraits of the writer and the text of his passage on friendship, plus a portrait of the innkeeper Libero.*

exploits during the war: he had a way of expressing himself that made everything exciting, and he never complained about anything.

**Is listening – or reading – a comparable pleasure to writing?**

No – reading is much more pleasurable! Yes, writing is a pleasure, but it's also stress and effort.

**Did you find this pleasure in the first book you ever read?**

My aunt Maria began reading *I Misteri della Giungla Nera* (*The Mystery of the Black Jungle*) to me when I was five and a half, and I finished it myself. And with my closest friends I read other stories of Emilio Salgari that I can still recall from memory. Even with my father and my children, we used to challenge each other. One said: “You sea spider!” and the other had to reply “And in saying that, he raised his scimitar”.

**What's the significance of the scraps of paper?**

It was something I no longer needed and was throwing away.

**Do you write on scraps of paper?**

In fact, no, I write on lined and margined paper, I think I have some here... look! I only ever write on these sheets.

**Do you use any particular pen?**

I love *Tratto Pens*, because they have a smooth action and I can avoid making too much mess, even though my handwriting is rather poor. I've also noticed that it depends on what I'm writing, in the sense that it becomes hard to read if I'm not particularly interested in the subject.

**I read that your mother used to help you transcribe texts?**

Yes, she was a real help to me until she reached eighty. My mother was able to see many of my books published because she was very old when she died, whereas unfortunately I lost my father very early; I was twenty seven, and he was just sixty.

**You mentioned that you enjoy writing in public places, but not necessarily**

**in your home town?**

No, in this photo I'm in Paris.

**A capital city that you feel at home in?**

Yes, very much so, particularly with my son Francesco living there. Usually, however, I'm only there for a week at the most, and don't manage to write more than a few articles. The only time that I attempted something more demanding was when I was at the Collège de France and wrote a large part of *Alla Cieca*. During my stay there I was fortunate to discover the existence of Jorgen Jorgensen in a bookshop, because otherwise I would never have been able to unravel the confusion that I was getting into with this book.

**Which of your books are you fondest of?**

This is a very difficult question to answer.

**The first one you wrote?**

The first was *Mito Absburgico*, which I wrote for my dissertation when I was I do find it extremely difficult to make a choice, but I can



mention some that I am particularly fond of because they played a decisive role in my life. My first publication, *Mito Absburgico*, as I mentioned, and then *Danubio* which came out in 1986. I'm also very fond of *Un Altro Mare*, while for the story alone - not for the way it is written because I would now write it differently - I think I prefer *Illazioni su una Sciabola* to any of the others. For personal reasons, since it is the most autobiographical, I feel a tie to *La Mostra*, which was the hardest one to write.

**Are any of your friends writers?**

It's true that some of my lifelong friends are writers, but that's not the basis of our friendship. And I have certainly had close bonds to a number of writers... Canetti, whom I met in England in the Sixties, comes to mind. Another with whom I often talk about writing is Daniele Del Giudice, but if we're speaking of soul mates, I can think of just one, Stefano Iacomuzzi, unfortunately now dead, who played a large part in my life and work.

**Your wife, Marisa Madieri, was also a writer...**

Yes, her first book was published in 1987 after she had worked for several years at Generali (*see the book La Cultura, published by the Company, A/N*). Marisa was extremely skilled at cutting superfluous words from a text, and would remove every ounce of fat. It's a trait that I've picked up in a small way. She used to say that this skill came from studying Latin and from writing letters as a Generali employee. I can say without hesitation that I saw many things through her eyes.

**I believe your father Duilio was also a Generali employee and introduced you to Biagio Marin at the time he was working in the library at the Central Head Office...**

Yes, I was still at secondary school and one day my father decided to take me to Generali to introduce me to the poet from Grado. I also remember Mr Stefani, the office manager, who had great interest in historical matters, and Traian Sofonea who wrote *Kafka Impiegato*, if I remember correctly.

**Marin himself referred to both of them in a *bollettino* article, recounting that Di Stefani was a rather authoritarian figure who would mellow visibly when he recited poetry, moments that he described as gifts for the soul. But what does poetry mean to you?**

I love poetry, and music too, but, as with music, I find it a little difficult to analyse. Faced with a novel, however, I like to turn it over, examine it and handle it, as though I were in a workshop. I like to put my hands to it as if I were a

mechanic.

**Do you recall any special moments that were gifts for the soul in the way that Marin describes?**

Certainly, there are many such moments when a word or a glance seem to open up new worlds.

**Can you recall one in particular?**

It's difficult to think of a specific episode: for me gifts for the soul are certain freedoms or cheerful moments that bring a feeling of well-being, moments that you can't simply wish into being. But to experience them you need to open up your soul like an empty suitcase, pack them in when they unexpectedly crop up, and never let any of them go.

*Elisabetta Delfabro*

**“gifts for the soul for me are certain freedoms or cheerful moments that bring a feeling of well-being, moments that you can't simply wish into being”**

# Banca Generali

from lean thinking to an agile organisation

At the heart of the organisational structure of Banca Generali (the financial centre of the Generali Group, which operates in the market through a vast network of agents) normal banking operations are guaranteed by Operations Management, more particularly by the Trieste Centre. The latter undertook a significant reorganisation process based on the Lean Thinking approach in 2008, which involved all offices and all 160 people working in them.

Lean Thinking is a particular theoretical approach that aims to eliminate waste by improving and simplifying processes and focusing on activities that bring value to the client. Therefore, the reorganisation of the Trieste Operations Centre has three main objectives: added value for the client, lower costs (in terms of time, expense and energy), and more attention to individuals. To this end the Centre's structure was changed, with various offices being dissolved and reconstituted to reflect functionality, in order to rationalise processes and logical flows. "It's not easy to describe the reorganisation of the Operations Centre" explains Marino Michelazzi, its head since 2002, "because we have always thought of it as something that involves many aspects of our business life, from a

strictly business point of view as well as in terms of coexistence and personal relationships: in other words, it was a matter of totally spring-cleaning our working methods. We tried to build an organisation with a precise orientation: maximum attention to the client, whether internal or external". The exercise was partly prompted by the findings of the "Ascoltiamoci" ("The Listening Post") engagement survey and benefited from support and advice from the bank's Human Resources Department. It offered an opportunity to examine the

themes of motivation and manager/employee relations in the context of the development of certain management skills identified by the Generali Group, such as organisational integration and personal development. The essential point of Lean Thinking, a concept formalised on the basis of experience in the manufacturing sector, is to combat waste. The gurus of Lean Thinking identify various types of waste in companies (7 to be precise), some obvious and some hidden, for example pointless circulation of documents, needless stocks or long delays in case management. It is immediately obvious if materials are piling up in a factory stockroom, but parallel examples can also

be found in the services sector, such as unread emails or documents lying around for days in the in-tray. Clearly this eventually translates into unnecessary delay for the client, or into waste - of time, that is. Therefore in implementing this approach we did not begin by thinking about "who does what", because, as so often happens, that would have led to offices being designed around the employee rather than around clients and their needs. "From the start, one of the tools we used to focus on clients' principal needs and strip out major waste", adds Michelazzi, "was an Ideas Bulletin Board where everyone was invited to post thoughts



The team led by Marino Michelazzi (clockwise from top left: Catalanotti, Filippini, Goitan, Zavaldi and Michelazzi)

and ideas that might make our work more effective". We subsequently analysed the suggestions and selected those we wished to develop and apply to daily activity. For example, the new system for sorting mail and documents was inspired by a bulletin board posting. Its implementation has led to a reduction in the resources and time employed in mail management, a more rapid service, and reduced client waiting time, with 66 minutes per day required for this function rather than the previous 275 minutes. This allows us to process almost 100% of paper communications from clients within one day and achieve improved service levels at lower cost. In order to attain these and other important



*unread emails or unattended documents lying in the in-tray eventually translate into pointless delays for the client*

efficiency objectives and, in particular, to allow everyone to express their abilities and take full advantage of a cooperative effort, we settled upon an open modular structure, in other words a network. By reconstructing operational flows the organisation created with

enthusiasm by Michelazzi and his team was able to identify clients' real needs. It was noted that previously a number of people would work on the same process in a compartmentalised manner and in various offices because its flow passed transversally through the structure. This was creating obstacles, delays and, above all, waste. It was therefore

decided to reorganise work around the flow of a process, so that everyone involved in it, from start to finish, would work in one office, leading to significantly improved functionality. It is important to recognise the contribution of all colleagues, at every level of operation, to this reorganisation of the Trieste Operations Centre. "My task" continues Michelazzi "is to give advice, suggest procedures and steer the ship, but those who perform the daily tasks are best placed to propose innovations, since they are the ones who have the in-depth knowledge of what their work involves. As always, we approach things methodically: before implementing any changes we identify the procedures involved at brainstorming sessions open to everyone, where we pool our ideas and come up with new solutions to real problems.

The project for change and development animating Trieste Operations Centre is well under way and is expected to bring further improvements in client service, although, continues Michelazzi, "a working environment becomes innovative and interesting only if everyone is motivated and committed to improvement. This is our main challenge, and it has our full commitment".



Stefano Insaghi, head of Operations Management, sums up experience to date, setting it in the much wider context of the entire Banca Generali organisation: “We believe that we have attained some of the objectives

employee involvement and job satisfaction, and better service to clients and the sales network, mainly achieved as a result of proposals and suggestions from staff members. In my view, our next step must be to

manner that recognises possible individual or common concerns, so that the company can take full advantage of it”. The ultimate aim in every case must be to foster a stimulating working environment for our colleagues and a constantly improving service to the sales network – and consequently to our clients.

*eliminating waste by focusing on activities that bring value to the client*

*Silvio De Capitani  
Federico Mangiagalli*

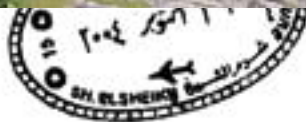
we set ourselves, such as cost containment, by reducing overtime, ensuring that holiday entitlements are used,

inform colleagues outside the Trieste Operations Centre of the benefits of the approach that we have adopted, in an unassuming





Above the title:  
www.netglobers.it homepage



# NetGlobers.it

an initiative from Europ Assistance  
the social network dedicated to travel health and safety

Innovation also means keeping an eye on the advantages of new technologies. The Internet is part of our daily life, and social networks have become modern-day *agoras* where millions of users meet every day and generate new content. After surveying the scene, Europ Assistance, leading provider of personal assistance in Italy,



launched a new social network last June dedicated to travel health and safety.

Its novel feature is to allow users to input information to supplement the official content covering health risks. Visitors to the site are contributing to its growth by drawing up and submitting travel reports that other users

can read, rate, and comment on. Each report describes the perceived degree of risk (positive, negative or neutral) in specific categories: transport, accommodation, communications, food hygiene and health facilities. The user generates a report by

completing sections reserved for each of these categories adding personal comments with regard to quality and overall satisfaction.

“It’s the first project of this type to be planned and created by a company” emphasises



visitors to the site create travel reports that other users can read, rate and comment on



Cristina Triola, web marketing manager at Europ Assistance Italia. “Netglobers was developed from an intranet application by a group of employees for an international competition, promoted by the Europ Assistance Group, for the best internal innovatory proposal. It shows the company once again confirming its pioneering approach in offering clients a service that merges their travel experience with the company’s expertise in matters of assistance. The Italian pilot project is taking on an international dimension: it is now matched by English (Netglobers.com) and French (Netglobers.fr) versions, and will soon be available in other languages.

The figures confirm users’ interest in the portal: at the beginning of August 2,500

users were registered and 450 reports had been created. The site content is evolving continuously; anyone can contribute personal travel experiences by first registering with Netglobers.it and entering the reserved area, where reports and attached photographs can be submitted, allowing experiences to be shared with others. Site navigation is easy as is access to the pages dealing with medical and travel advice, where there is much useful information ranging from flights to first aid.

Many Internet sites provide travel information. Is Netglobers making a difference? “Most sites of this kind” replies Triola, “are concerned with rating hotels and flights. But I think we

## The “2<sup>nd</sup> Chance” competition

Netglobers was launched with the “2<sup>nd</sup> Chance” competition which offered two prizes of round the world trips, each worth € 20,000, for the best travel reports by an employee and a website user. The winning employee was Françoise Lin of Europ Assistance Holding, who gained over 3,300 votes for her report of a journey to India entitled Magic Rajasthan. In a few lines she managed to convey the magic of the place while providing reliable information on health and safety en route.

have an exciting edge on the others because we offer the opportunity to share information on travel health and provide a general indication of risk”. The site gains authority by providing real time updates on alerts, risks and natural disasters in 190 countries, supplied

by Crisis Consulting, which joined forces with Europ Assistance to develop a useful tool that complements existing sites.

*Rosario Pipolo*





# ...last one out switch off the lights

reduction in energy usage is a target within our reach

Energy, a constant presence in everyday life. We use it in practically everything we do, sometimes knowingly, sometimes not. If we were to itemise all our energy dependent tools we might well be persuaded that our way of life is enslaved by this phenomenon. Evolution is strictly related to human progress in controlling the processes of energy transformation, energy usage now being fundamental to all aspects of social activity. At times we even pay no attention to it, and forget that it is a precious resource; unaware of its presence, we don't ask ourselves what it is, where it comes from and how it gets to us, and above all what costs and consequences the planet may have to bear for our modern attitudes. One of our most common forms of energy is electricity, which is more flexible in use than other

forms. Although it is not directly available in nature, technical progress has allowed man to produce it from other energy forms. This conversion takes place in power stations, complex structures where one type of energy is yielded by a natural source (fossil fuels, water flows, wind, sun, etc.) and converted to a form that can be used in a variety of applications.

***a growing demand for fossil fuels, which are non-renewable, is increasingly incompatible with the need for sustainable development***

The final product of this cycle is thus a "secondary" form of energy that has the huge advantage of easy widespread distribution and conversion to other forms.

The demand for energy, at present largely met by

non-renewable resources, has been increasing for decades, and is likely to accelerate further in coming years, since many areas of the developing world are yet to be connected to electricity supplies. From an environmental viewpoint this is a significant problem, because the growing consumption of fossil fuels, which are non-

renewable, is increasingly incompatible with the imperative need for sustainable development. Such concerns have led to demands for diversification of energy sources used for electricity generation, with priority attached to the use of renewables and more

advanced technologies that will reduce climate changing emissions. But if actions and decisions of this kind are high level concerns, albeit rarely in evidence, each of us can make an immediate contribution to the cause by being aware of how much energy we use and how much we really need to use. We can limit environmental damage by reducing our consumption; this is the first practical measure we can take, and is the easiest "energy reserve" to exploit.

Many people are beginning to become aware of the need to "think green" at home and in their daily



## Good news from the Group

All Group companies have taken steps to reduce electricity consumption; some “illuminating” examples follow

- new LED lighting is being tested at some of the Group’s European headquarters;
- lighting levels have been reduced in communal areas at the Mogliano Veneto site, and an automatic control system employing a presence sensor has been installed to switch lights and air conditioning on and off;
- about 80% of energy in Austria comes from renewable sources (hydroelectric and wind);
- energy saving fluorescent lights are being used throughout buildings in Israel;
- timers have been installed in Spain to regulate luminous signs according to the ambient light levels;
- aluminium film has been applied to all windows in Belgium and Portugal to provide protection against seasonal heat or cold;
- a surveillance system checks that all electronic equipment has been switched off in Guatemala, at 7 pm every evening, to comply with local regulations.

For a fuller picture of the Group’s energy policies please consult the 2008 Sustainability Report available online at [www.generali.com](http://www.generali.com)

lives. However, similar concerns have yet to develop in the public sphere or in the work environment, where there are undoubtedly many opportunities to implement

*one way each of us can make an immediate contribution to the cause is by being aware of how much we use and how much we really need to use*

eco-sustainable practices. In order not to stray too far from our principal realm of action, let’s consider habits and behaviours of our daily office life, and discover how easy it would be to reduce energy consumption and expenses

and possibly also help to limit environmental damage. While action is possible at various levels in business life, some are beyond the scope of individuals, but if everyone

takes action every day we may begin to register some improvement. Here are a few reminders of easily performed small actions, possibly so banal that they may provoke a smile, although they should not be ignored:

- set up your PC and monitor in energy saving mode, adapting the stand-by or hibernation facility to match your personal work patterns;
- always switch off the printer, scanner and any other peripherals attached to your PC, and the PC itself, at the end of the working day;
- always switch off the lights when there is sufficient natural light;
- avoid using the lift when possible, which is also good health advice.

Paola Cabas

# Lifestyle and life expectancy

smoking cessation, a Mediterranean diet and physical exercise prevent cardiovascular disease

According to a World Health Organisation definition of 1999, “A healthy lifestyle is a way of living that lowers the risk of being seriously ill or dying early. Not all diseases are preventable, but a large proportion of deaths, particularly those from coronary heart disease and lung cancer, can be avoided. Scientific studies have identified certain types of behaviour that contribute to the development of non-communicable diseases and early death”.

The leading causes of death worldwide, responsible for 21.9% of all deaths according to WHO, are cardiovascular diseases, comprising ischaemic heart disease and cerebrovascular disease. The WHO estimates that the situation will show no improvement by 2030, when these diseases will still be the principal causes of death, accounting for up to 26.3% of the total.

What can be done to arrest this trend? Some risk factors pertaining to cardiovascular diseases can be reduced insofar as they are associated with unhealthy lifestyles that encourage the onset and development of these pathologies. They include smoking, dyslipidemia, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, obesity, dietary factors, lack of exercise and excessive alcohol consumption. These are typical elements in a western lifestyle, which is characterised by a high calorie diet rich in saturated fats, smoking and physical inactivity. This is confirmed by a United States study into the causes of early death, according to which

most cases (42.8%) are linked to behavioural patterns, with 18.1% associated with smoking, 16.6% with poor diet and lack of exercise, and the remaining 8.1% with alcohol consumption, road accidents, firearms, sexual behaviour and the use of illegal substances.



## The seminar

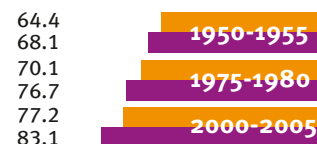
This article is extracted from the paper *Lifestyle and Life Expectancy: Modifiable Risk Factors for Cardiovascular Disease* presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Global Life Underwriting Seminar*, organised for the life companies of the Generali Group by Servizio Selezione Rischio / Studi Attuariali in the Congress Centre of the Trieste Maritime Station on 12-13 May 2009. Seminars of

this kind, attended by doctors, underwriters and actuaries, are held periodically to review current medical topics and discuss questions of supplementary insurance covers and financial risk assessment. Fifty-five employees from Italy and elsewhere, including Israel, Dubai, the United States and Panama, attended the May seminar. Seventeen presentations were delivered by doctors and experts from the Generali Group, professional reinsurers and external specialists from the scientific and academic worlds.

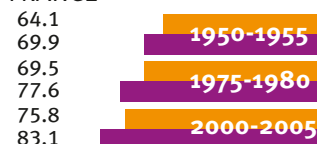
The topic that generated most interest was the relationship between lifestyle and life expectancy. Seminar participants were each offered a pedometer to enable them to check if they were achieving the recommended target, that is the minimum level of physical activity (at least 10,000 steps per day for adults and 12,000 for children) considered necessary to maintain an energy balance.

## Life expectancy at birth

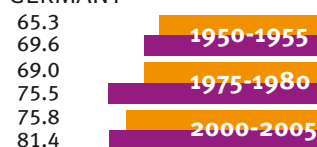
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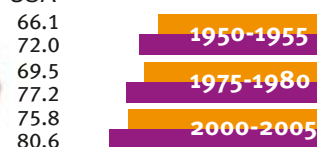
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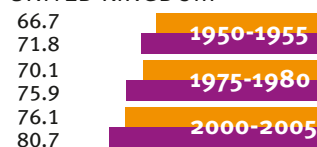
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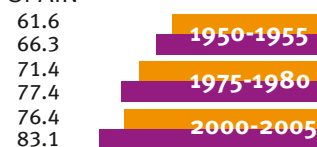
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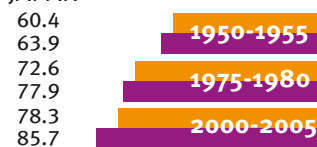
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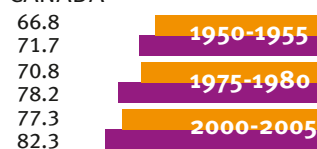
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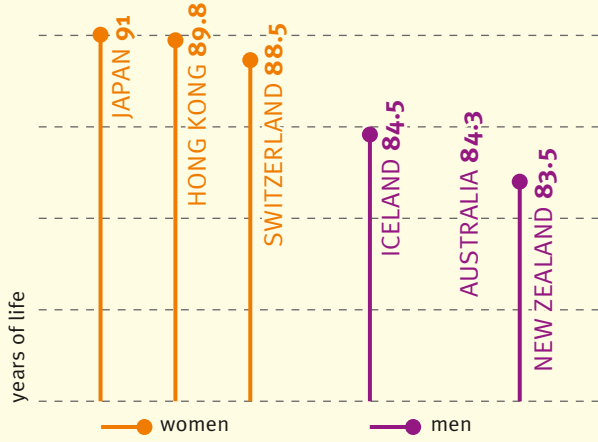
### CANADA



men women

(UN World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision)

Countries predicted to have highest life expectancy in 2050



The EPIC-Norfolk study (European Prospective Investigation of Cancer and Nutrition) of over 20,000 men and women in England aged between 45 and 79 and with no record of cardiovascular disease or tumours, awarded 1 point to each aspect of healthy behaviour:

- NOT SMOKING ..... 1 POINT
- EATING AT LEAST 5 PORTIONS OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES EACH DAY ..... 1 POINT
- CONSUMING ALCOHOL IN MODERATION ..... 1 POINT
- TAKING REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ..... 1 POINT

After 14 years of observation it was found that the probability of survival was 96% in those with 4 points and only 76% in those with no points.

(Khaw and others, Plos Medicine, 2008)

## Smoking

ISTAT data for 2005 revealed that 21.7% of Italians were smokers (27.5% of men and 16.3% of women); 19.7% were regular smokers (25.3% men, 14.5% women), 38% of these being heavy smokers consuming at least 20 cigarettes per day. The percentage of smokers among males aged under 14 is growing, and people are starting to smoke at a progressively younger age.

Life expectancy falls by 4.3 years for those who smoke 10 cigarettes a day and 8.9 years for those smoking

up, the greater the benefit. Those who stop before they reach 40 can hope to win around an extra 10 years of life, while those stopping at 50 and 60 can expect an extra 6 and 3 years respectively. Those who stop before 40 in general have similar survival curves to those who have never smoked. However, smoking cessation is very difficult to achieve. Studies reveal that a large percentage of smokers – up to 80% in some countries – try to stop every year, but few succeed in the long term. Nicotine dependency exerts a tight hold, and success rates depend

Just one year after Italy introduced legislation to ban smoking in workplaces and public places, the incidence of cardiovascular events fell by 11.2% in those aged between 35 and 64, and by 7.9% for those between 65 and 74.

Higher mortality rates among smokers cannot wholly be attributed to tobacco consumption. External causes related to behavioural traits in smokers, who are often more inclined to risk, also exert a small influence. Studies have shown that smokers tend to reach higher rates in a sensation seeking scale: they are more likely to drink more than average, take narcotics, and engage in other forms of potentially dangerous activity such as extreme sports.

These factors explain why a difference in mortality rates between smokers and non-smokers is already apparent at 20 years of age, too early for the effects of smoking on health to be evident.

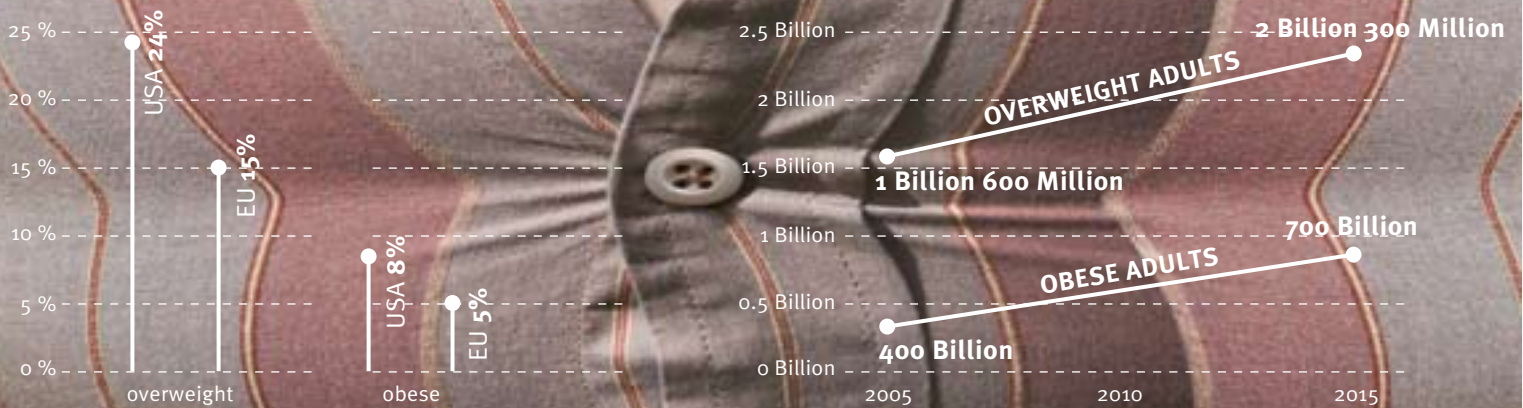
*the earlier smoking is given up, the greater the benefit*

30 or more. Furthermore, according to the Zutphen Elderly Study, the number of years of healthy life (i.e. without disease) falls by 2.8 years for those smoking 10 per day and 11 years for those smoking 30 or more. The earlier smoking is given

greatly upon psychological and pharmacological support; the best results are obtained by combining behavioural and pharmacological therapies, which can lead to 30% of those who stop smoking never starting again.







Current troubling rates of excess weight and obesity in 15-17 year olds

Rising rates of excess weight and obesity predicted worldwide by 2015

## Excess weight and obesity

Obesity and excess weight form a growing worldwide threat to public health and therefore a challenge to be faced. They are becoming increasingly common at an alarming rate, in developed and developing countries alike, with obesity assuming the proportions of a pandemic that is likely to seriously impact health. The fundamental cause is an energy imbalance in which fewer calories are expended as energy, in an age of reduced physical activity, than are ingested in high calorie foods that are rich in fats and sugars and poor in minerals and micronutrients, and are commonly eaten in increasingly large portions. According to ISTAT figures for 2005, 9.8% of adults were obese and 34.2% overweight. The obesity rate in Italy is among the lowest in Europe, the highest being in the United Kingdom at 23%. But obesity is becoming more common everywhere, as shown in the chart above, which is based on body mass index

(obtained by dividing a person's weight in kilograms by the square of his/her height in metres; WHO considers that a figure of 25 or more indicates

a week or vigorous aerobic physical exercise for at least 20 minutes 3 times a week, or a combination of both. The WHO considers that an energy balance requires an

*obesity is associated with a range of medical conditions that can increase the risk of cardiovascular and metabolic disease*

excess weight, and 30 or more obesity). Obesity is associated with a range of medical conditions that can increase the risk of cardiovascular or metabolic disease. Obese people are more likely to suffer from conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular pathologies, hypertension, osteoarthritis and various types of tumour. On average, obesity reduces life expectancy by 9 years.

## Physical exercise

The recommendations of the American College of Sports Medicine and the American Heart Association state that adults aged between 18 and 65 should take moderate aerobic physical exercise for at least 30 minutes 5 times

adult to take 10,000 steps a day, and a young person 12,000. Physical exercise promotes the growth of capillary blood vessels, clears blood vessels of atherosclerotic obstructions and improves endothelium function in both healthy people and those with coronary disease. Improved functional capacity can lead to a reduction of up to one-fifth in the risk of developing a cardiovascular event, while mortality rates are approximately one-fourth lower for those who are capable of sustained physical activity compared to those who have very restricted movement. Similar considerations apply to those already suffering from cardiovascular disease.

## The Mediterranean diet

The Mediterranean diet is characterised by an abundance of fresh, natural products in meals containing a wide variety of foods: vegetables, fruit, cereals, fish (particularly if rich in omega 3 acids), olive oil, especially extra virgin, moderate and regular consumption of wine, limited meat (especially red meat) and animal fats. A varied and well balanced daily diet can help to reduce many disorders, particularly when combined with an active lifestyle. The EPIC study on the Mediterranean diet, conducted by Antonia Trichopoulou on persons aged over 60 in 9 European countries, revealed the relationship between reduced death rates and adherence to such a diet. An increase of 2, 3 and 4 points on a scale of adherence ranging from 1 to 9 was found to reduce mortality rates by 7%, 11% and 14% respectively.

Diet can also be a major factor in preventing obesity in young children. The WHO recommends a daily fruit and vegetable consumption of 400g, a level attained by only 17% of children. The current average is 385g, predicted to fall to 360g by 2010 if current trends continue. The European Commission has proposed that the 30 year old school milk scheme should be replaced by a fruit and vegetable scheme backed by 90 million Euros of funding, in contrast to a proposal in the USA to supply children with statins.

## A challenge for the future

United Nations projections of life expectancy in 2020 and 2050 indicate further improvements in industrialised countries but at a lesser rate than has been seen in the last 30 years. Most of the improvement will derive from lifestyle changes, and obesity is considered to be the major factor likely to limit any increase in life expectancy. In 2004 the US Surgeon General (Head of the US Public Health Service) declared obesity to be a greater risk than weapons of mass destruction.

Cardiovascular disease prevention is one of the major challenges potentially impacting public health and life expectancy, and lifestyles play a fundamental role in the matter. Personal health can be best improved, and the risk of early death best averted, through changes in personal behaviour. It is commonly said that the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the century of the cigarette and that we are now in the century of obesity, albeit much remains to be done to reduce smoking rates. There can be little doubt that the battle against obesity will require at least as much commitment as is necessary against smoking.

*Patrizia Marocco*

