

The Cassa Centrale Group begins negotiations for the definition of a strategic partnership agreement with Worldline Merchant Services Italia

Trento, 23 February 2024 – The Board of Directors of Cassa Centrale Banca, following a selection process that involved leading groups operating in the sector, resolved to conduct exclusive negotiations for the launch of a strategic partnership with the objective of innovating the e-money sector.

From the bids received, Worldline Merchant Services Italia S.p.A. ("**Worldline**") was identified as the strategic partner with whom to start negotiations for the definition of arrangements for the provision of services along the value chain for international digital payment acceptance and *acquiring* for the Group Banks.

Worldline Merchant Services Italia is a subsidiary of the French group Worldline SA, the world's fourth largest provider of payment and transaction services.

The project involves the supply and management of POS terminals, and exclusive agreements for international circuits.

The Cassa Centrale Group's *merchant acquiring* activities involve more than 90,000 POS terminals, which in 2023 generated transaction volumes of over EUR 9 billion. The initiative aims to further improve the quality of POS services offered to customer merchants, relaunching the offer with innovative products and services that are more market competitive.

Finalisation of the negotiations phase will allow the Group to generate medium-term benefits and implement one of the initiatives envisaged in the Group's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.

The Cassa Centrale – Credito Cooperativo Italiano Group includes 66 Cooperative Banks - Rural Banks - Raiffeisenkassen and 1,480 branches across Italy, more than 12,000 employees and over 470,000 cooperative partners. With balance sheet assets of EUR 89.6 billion as at 31 December 2023, the Group ranks among Italy's top 10.