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## **Interview with Emma Ursich, Head of Corporate Identity and The Human Safety Net of Generali Group**



The Press Office of the Global Campus of Human Rights had the opportunity to interview Emma Ursich, Head of Corporate Identity and [The Human Safety Net](#) of Generali Group, about her views on the

importance of the collaboration with networks of NGOs from all over the world to the sustainable futures of Venice.

### **What does the city of Venice mean for The Human Safety Net and for Generali?**

Generali opened its first offices in 1832 in Venice in the Procuratie Vecchie, a few months after the Company was founded in Trieste. For many decades, its business operations across Italy were conducted from this incredible location, overlooking St Mark's Square. The time has now come to revitalise these roots and revamp the presence in the lagoon city, which shares the symbol of the winged Lion with Generali. As insurers, our mission is to care for the future and ensure a better quality of life for people. Making urban spaces more accessible means also creating a sense of well-being, which is particularly important for the future of Venice, its residents, and its visitors from all over the world. The restoration project launched in St Mark's Square is intended to make Venice an even more dynamic city that encourages people to reflect, to work and to enjoy culture and, at the same time, to support the city to unlock its full potential. Venice is a fragile city in a lagoon environment, protected by UNESCO. It aims to become a world capital of sustainability. Generali, together with the Venetian community, is committed to supporting this ambition.

### **How could Venice become more efficient, attractive and prepared to host co-working spaces like your future headquarters in St Mark's Square?**

For many years, Venice has been a crossroads of different cultures worldwide. We hope to build on this tradition through our initiative The Human Safety Net and our movement of people helping people. The beauty and the history of Venice is a source of inspiration for the world, and Generali is very proud to enrich the city's heritage by restoring the area of St Mark's Square. The Human Safety Net and its future home inside the Procuratie Vecchie bring together knowledge and inspiration for the common good.

By opening the Procuratie Vecchie to the public for the first time in its history dating back nearly five centuries, we are creating new and vibrant spaces that will serve as a platform for international debates around social issues. An interacting exhibition space will allow Venetians and visitors to experience The Human Safety Net directly and get involved. It aims to generate an incisive understanding of the human potential to engage more people to amplify the movement.

To do this, world-renowned architect [David Chipperfield](#) has been selected to renovate and restore this 16th-century Venetian building - known as the largest in Venice - and transform this historic landmark into a new venue.

The building was initially completed in the sixteenth century by Jacopo Sansovino. It featured a monumental façade that would establish the classical language for the subsequent developments on the southern and eastern sides. Behind the 150 meters of its façade, centuries of modifications from multiple occupants had severely compromised its internal structure.

The renovation plan focuses on reunifying the interiors and introducing clarity to the building, with suitable spaces for The Human Safety Net activities, and improving circulation by re-establishing the historical paths and flow around St Mark's Square.

### **With Venice's 1600-year anniversary, how do you view the relations between the non-profit networks with artists, universities, academic networks like the Global Campus of Human Rights, local and international authorities? Do you see any areas of collaboration?**

Generali sees Venice as a universal symbol of imagination, open-mindedness and an inclusive city open to different contributions - the ideal site for a wide-ranging project that can catch everyone's interest. We

want to help turn Venice and the area surrounding St Mark's Square into a place where people seek new stimuli, share ideas and work together, unlocking the city's full potential.

The renovation and enhancement project will create a new permeability of the square, offering a new way of travelling, living and experiencing the square and its attractions. In partnership with The Venice Garden Foundation, Generali has already renovated and opened to the public both the Royal Gardens and The Human Garden. This greenhouse hosts the Archive of the Roots, a collection of wooden tiles coming from all the countries where The Human Safety Net is active. The installation enables the discovery of the stories of families and refugees we support. It expresses the connection between people and cultures at the centre of our mission.

This commitment to social and cultural causes lies at the heart of Generali's vision: to position Venice as an innovative hub where many diversified players can take action, drive advocacy and take a key role in solving global challenges that affect the future of us all.

### **How is human rights education relevant to the non-profit sector and the achievement of the Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?**

The spirit of the Universal Human Rights Declaration is certainly a fundamental building block and an inspiration for all institutions, social enterprises, and companies active in the social sector. At The Human Safety Net, we believe no one should be held back from reaching their potential. Our mission is about unlocking the potential of people living in vulnerable circumstances so that they can transform the lives of their families and communities. Working with a network of over 50 NGOs in 23 countries where Generali is active, we aim to give equal opportunities to every family with children aged 0 – 6 years or every aspiring refugee entrepreneur we support "without distinction of any kind".

The United Nations Global Sustainable Development Goals are a lighthouse for everyone, not only companies, wishing to live as active and aware citizens.

By contributing to early childhood development in the For Families we support Good Health and Quality Education goals for parents with children up to six years. Because if we change the beginning of the story, we can change the whole story, one family, one child, one parenting centre at a time. With the Refugee Start-ups programme, we help to create jobs and more Sustainable Cities and Communities, working side-by-side with refugees to implement their business ideas up to serving their first customers or supporting them with professional training for jobs needed in the community.

The Human Safety Net is a net, and we activate the partnership with many NGO partners, governments, and local and global institutions, with Venice being the open node of this international network. Our aim is to make our small but growing contribution to a more inclusive society, starting from the communities where we live and work.

### **Could you share a message with the Global Campus of Human Rights community?**

I believe it is essential to continue working together to make Venice a lively community of international exchanges and dialogues and create new opportunities to experience the city on sustainability issues.

For more information contact our [Press Office](#)

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