REPORT

International Conference "NEW CHALLENGES IN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: THEORY AND PRACTICE"

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International conference "NEW CHALLENGES IN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: THEORY AND PRACTICE" took place in Naples on October 3-4, 2019 with the joint organisational participation of The University of "Parthenope", Sapienza University of Rome, Virtus Global Center for Corporate Governance and the publishing house "Virtus Interpress". The conference was also supported by Morrow Sodali (the leading business consultancy firm) and Pianoforte Group (Carpisa). The aim of the conference was to move the field closer to a global theory by advancing understanding of corporate governance, which combines insights from the literature on firm governance bundles with insights from the national governance systems

literature, investigating new perspectives and challenges for corporate governance and outlining possible scenarios of its development. Key focus of the event was on accounting systems, disclosure and transparency issues, board of directors practices and performance, corporate governance in family firms and financial institutions, corporate social responsibility and compliance, corporate ownership and control, directors' duties and liabilities, earnings quality environmental social governance disclosure, IT governance and blockchain technology, laws, regulations and corruption, shareholder right directive and effects on corporate governance



Conference co-chairs

processes, social norms and cultural values, earnings management, dividend policy, etc.

The conference took place in one of the most picturesque cities in the world at Villa Doria d'Angri. About 80 experts from America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania gathered at the conference venue to discuss relevant issues of corporate governance, ownership and control, share their most recent research and come up with the solutions of the existing academic and practical problems.

The conference started with welcome and opening remarks of the conference hosts and organizing committee: **Prof. Salvatore Esposito De Falco**, the conference co-chair, University of Rome – La Sapienza,

Italy; **Prof. Federico Alvino**, the conference co-chair, University of Naples "Parthenope", Italy; **Marco Esposito**, University of Naples "Parthenope", Italy; **Prof. Alex Kostyuk**, the co-chair of the conference, Virtus GCCG, Ukraine. The committee stated that this corporate governance conference became a good starting point for young researchers. Speakers greeted the participants and wished them efficient work expecting that everyone would contribute to the discussion of important issues, and this conference would strengthen the



Keynote speaker: Prof. Sibel Yamak

existing network of experts.

The floor was given to the keynote speaker of the first day of the conference. **Sibel Yamak**, Professor of Management, University of Wolverhampton Business School, the U.K., in her speech titled "Sustainability and corporate governance" stressed that there is a need to identify the forces leading to and constraining sustainable corporate governance. The initiatives of business and society influence new paradigms of director's duty in relation to sustainability, diving as an example the activities of World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the carbon disclosure project. In professor's opinion going beyond Agency Theory and embracing a wider variety of perspectives including the critical theory may help better assess the

existing domination and its underlying forces in the relationship between the organisations and the society. According to Prof. Sibel Yamak, this may certainly enlighten understanding of sustainable governance.

As it was announced previously, sponsors of the international conference have prepared two paper awards for the conference participants: *an award for young researchers* (*under 35*) sponsored by Morrow Sodali (500 EUR prize) and *best paper of the conference award* (no age limit) funded by Virtus Interpress (500 USD prize).

The awards were given to the studies which were selected by the conference committee among the presented papers. The nominees were evaluated with the blind peer review system.

Best Paper under 35 Morrow Sodali Award went to the paper "The relationship between minority directors and

earnings management: An empirical analysis in the Italian institutional setting" authored by **Pietro Fera**, **Nicola Moscariello**, **Michele Pizzo** and **Giorgio Ricciardi**. The authors examine the relationship between minority directors and the magnitude of abnormal accruals within the Italian listed companies over the period

2012-2017. Specifically, this paper analyses the Italian context since it offers a unique setting as it is the only country that, roughly a decade ago, introduced the slate voting system that aids the appointment of directors proposed by minority shareholders or, more generally, by non-controlling shareholders.

Virtus Interpress Best Paper of the Conference Award went to Chloe Ho, Eliza Wu and Jing Yu with the paper "Negative CSR events and demand for new equity issues: An international study". In this study, the authors investigate the impact of firms' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the form of negative environmental and social (E&S) incidents on corporate equity raisings via seasoned equity offerings (SEO). Chloe Ho, Eliza Wu and Jing Yu study a global firm



Prof. Salvatore Esposito De Falco and the winners of the Best Paper under 35 Morrow Sodali Award— Pietro Fera and Giorgio Ricciardi



Prof. Alex Kostyuk and the one of the winners of Virtus Interpress Best Paper of the Conference Award— Eliza Wu

sample drawn from 21 countries over the period from 2009-2017 to take into account cross-country variations in CSR performance. This paper extends the long-standing literature that investigates the equity value relevance of CSR activities.

After the plenary session and the networking break, the conference continued in four parallel sessions

devoted to various issues of corporate governance. The first parallel session titled "Corporate board: Theory and practices" was chaired by **Prof. Eric Pichet**, Kedge Business School, France. The first speaker **Prof. Sven-Olof Yrjö Collin** from Free University of Scania (Sweden) & Kharkiv University of Humanities 'People's Ukrainian Academy' (Ukraine) talked about independent directors in Sweden and their influence on earnings through accounting and cash flow management. The research explores the relationship between director independence and monitoring in AM and CFM domains. The empirical results indicate that the share of independent directors is positively correlated with AM and negatively with CFM and remain consistent against several robustness checks. The theory suggested by the authors and empirical results



Prof. Sven-Olof Yrjö Collin presenting his report



put into question the generally accepted notion that AM is an indicator of opportunism. It could be suggested, on the contrary, that the positive correlation with AM could be an indicator of directors' performing their fiduciary duty of reducing information asymmetry.

The next presentation was delivered by **Silvia Sergiacomi**, Niccolò Cusano University of Rome (Italy) and **Francesco Mercuri**, University of Rome – La Sapienza (Italy) who reviewed the main organisational theories identifying the significant roles of the board of directors in order to analyse how the board composition influences both CSR activity and disclosure. The study aims to contribute to the debate on CSR by providing insights for future research.

Guadalupe del Carmen Briano Turrent from Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí (Mexico)



presented her research that investigates the effect of female participation on the board on ethical behaviour in Latin America. The study has practical implications for policymakers, companies and boards since our findings show that firms with women on their boards tend to be more ethically responsible, suggesting the necessity to increase their representation on the private sector.

Further on **Aditi Gupta** representing King's College London (the U.K.) studied the role of the media in executive pay in the U.K. To analyse the impact of media coverage on executive compensation the researcher used a large sample of FTSE All-Share companies between 2002 and 2013. Based upon the results gained it was concluded that the media acts as an effective watchdog in

reporting excess pay but does not act as an effective governance mechanism in curbing it. The first part of the session was ended with the report titled "Gender diversity in sport governance: A



portrait of Italy" presented by Prof. Luisa Varriale from University of Naples "Parthenope", Italy. This exploratory study aimed to investigate the Italian sport context providing a brief portrayal of this country outlining the still existing gap also through a description of the current situation of women in leadership positions, above all in corporate boards, in the Italian sport setting. Prof. Varriale believed that this research could contribute to understand the allocation governance in Italian sport Governance and could activate larger debates about implementing gender quotas in sport governance. The scholars suggested adopting measures and initiatives in order to promote cultural change in the roles of men and women in society and to balance out women's underrepresentation in sport governance.

The session afternoon part was chaired by **Dr. Gabriella D'Amore** (University of Naples "Parthenope", Italy) and began with the presentation delivered by **Prof. Eric Pichet**, Kedge Business School (France). Prof. Pichet talked about duties of independent directors in listed companies in 2019. The paper contained a short review of the progress over the past 30 years in the governance of listed companies, manifested in the increasing board members' professionalisation and the growing collegiality resulting from boards' collective intelligence. The focus was made on the specific role of the Audit Committee and the particular duties of its members.

Prof. Eugenio D'Angelo from Pegaso Online University (Italy) presented his report titled "Corporate governance and corporate social and environmental performance: Does financial slack have a moderating role? Evidence from the food industry". The researcher stated that the relation between CG and CSR engagement had been widely investigated however, there was a lack in previous studies concerning how the mentioned pillars influence each in the food industry. This empirical research has the purpose to shed more light on the relation between ESG pillars in this specific setting.

The following presentation was made by **Dr. Tariq** Tawfeeq Yousif Alabdullah, University of Basrah (Iraq). The aim of this study is to explore the link of board characteristics as a feature of corporate governance



Dr. Tariq Tawfeeq Yousif Alabdullah

perspective and firm financial performance. This empirical study focuses on non-financial listed firms covering 65 industrial ones of the Jordanian non-financial sector.

The scientist from University of Salento (Italy), Andrea Vacca, investigated the role of a different composition of board of directors on firm's performance. The study is based on the analysis of 149 Italian listed firms over the 2011-2017 period. The results of the study showed that gender diversity, independent directors and CEO gender are associated positively respectively with ROE, ROA and TobinQ, while size board is negatively associated with ROE and TobinQ.

The representative from Belgium, Abigail Levrau (Ghent University; The Belgian Governance and Directors Institute - GUBERNA), delivered her report on board dynamics and directors' personality. The research addresses one specific antecedent of directors' behaviour, namely personality. The findings also suggest that personality characteristics may matter when studying

chair. The study sheds some light on the complex and intertwined outcome of individual-level attributes and group-level activities being key in creating effective boards.

The final presentation was delivered by **Prof. Flaviano** Moscarini and Federica Ricci, University of Rome - La Sapienza, Italy. The paper reviews and critically evaluates the extant academic research employing the concept of board capital, which was introduced earlier, in order to explain the antecedents of effective board functioning and the resulting impact on firm performance. This research also highlights the need for qualitative studies examining the actual process of board monitoring and advising on strategic issues. Additionally, findings revealed a scarcity of empirical studies addressing certain national contexts, including Italy.



Abigail Levrau presenting her report

group polarization within a board setting, the influence of minority directors, and the role of the board



Participants of the first parallel session

The second parallel session "Corporate Governance: Regular issues" was led by Prof. Nicola Cucari from University of Rome - La Sapienza (Italy). The session was opened by Prof. Paola Briganti (University of Naples "Parthenope", Italy). In this explorative study the scholar investigated the status quo of gender diversity within Italian companies, focusing the attention on the relationship between gender diversity within



Prof. Elisabete Vieira

corporate boards and the corporate performance of Italian companies.

Then the floor was given to **Prof. Nicola Cucari** and **Prof. Salvatore Esposito De Falco** (University of Rome – La Sapienza, Italy). In the research a question arises whether the effectiveness of public intervention for funding development and business innovation could be influenced by the differences in the various socio-political and institutional contexts in which they are applied. The aim of the paper is to analyse the motivations of public grants policies and their influence on the behaviour of firms. In this way the scholars want to identify a solutions scheme able to recover efficiency and effectiveness of public actions to support development.

The next speaker **Elisabete Vieira** (University of Aveiro, Portugal) presented her report on corporate governance mechanism in the context of Portugal. This



Prof. Mireille Chidiac El Hajj

study analyses the board of directors' specificities in the context of Portuguese corporate governance. The results show that the Latin Model (Two-Tier Model) is the most (least) adopted by Portuguese firms. The percentage of executive members is higher than that of non-executive members. In the year of 2014, women held only 9.5% of positions on board, which is very low. With this research, the authors contribute to the state of art of corporate governance in a country in which investigation is still scarce.

Rosa Palladino from University of Naples "Parthenope" (Italy) followed with the presentation of the work co-authored by **Prof. Luigi Lepore, Prof. Assunta Di Vaio**, and **Prof. Marco Sorrentino** (University of Naples "Parthenope", Italy). The purpose of this work is

linked to the institutional structures of the countries in

to present the results of a systematic review of the literature on the subject, proposing a possible innovative interpretation of the relationship mentioned above that takes into account additional interaction variables



Dr. Daniele Stanzione presenting his report

which the investigated companies operate.

Prof. Mireille Chidiac El Hajj from Lebanese University (Lebanon) delivered the report titled "Collaborative governance against corruption". The purpose of this paper is to study the benefits of the Blockchain, if properly applied in the near future in Lebanon. It offers an understanding of the roots of corruption in Lebanon and a holistic approach of how to fight it. A particular focus of the research is on arriving at a better understanding of the potential of the Blockchain technology to vastly improve the quality of life in Lebanon.

The second session continued with the presentation performed by **Dr. Daniele Stanzione** from Roma Tre

University (Italy). The scientist talked about benefit corporations and reformed class action in Italy. The research refers to the introduction of benefit corporations in 2015 and to the reform of the class action tool in 2019. The paper presented is a background for the further investigation.

Prof. Eduardo Esposito (University of Rome – La Sapienza, Italy) and **Francesco Mirone** (University of Naples "Parthenope", Italy) explored the influence of generational shift on sustainability practices. The study

focuses on a preliminary analysis based on text-analysis of "I Centenari's" websites. The scholars analyse the historical section of these 25 long-lived family businesses' websites as a metric for the family business behaviour toward the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social and environmental) through the text-analysis program LIWC.

Floriana Iannone and Prof. Alessandra De Chiara from University of Naples "L'Orientale" (Italy) investigated the relation between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and innovation in the Italian fashion system. The objectives of the paper is to study the sustainable innovation in the Italian fashion industry, through the analysis of the degree of the social and environmental standards in the fashion system. The research intends to explore this relation in order to contribute to the debate on this topic.



The concluding talk was delivered by Prof. Francesca Magli and Prof. Alberto Nobolo from University of

Milano-Bicocca, Italy. In their study the authors analyse dualistic and monistic systems and theirs application in Italian quoted companies, especially in the banking sector. They illustrate an important case in depth, namely the governance system at UBI Banca.

The third parallel section titled "Corporate governance mechanisms" was chaired by Prof. Luigi Lepore, University of Naples "Parthenope", Italy. The first presentation in the session was delivered by Prof. Tracy Xu from University of Denver (the U.S.). Together with her colleagues, Prof. Hugh Grove and Prof. Mac Clouse (University of Denver, the U.S.) she studied artificial intelligence and gentrification and their implication for boards of directors and corporate governance. The major research issue in this paper is to develop strategies for companies and boards of directors to seize opportunities from emerging technological advances.

Dr. Gabriella D'Amore, Prof. Luigi Lepore, Prof. Sabrina Pisano, University of Naples "Parthenope" (Italy) and Prof. Carmela Di Guida, University of Campobasso (Italy) presented their paper "Board independence and voluntary financial disclosure: The moderating role of ownership structure". This paper aims at investigating the relationship between board independence and quality of voluntary financial disclosure and how previous relationship is moderated by the level of ownership concentration. The analysis has been conducted on a sample of Italian non-financial listed companies and the results show that there is a significant positive relationship between board independence and the quality of voluntary financial disclosure. The findings reveal that ownership concentration plays a relevant moderating role in that relationship, highlighting the necessity to consider the

Prof. Tracy Xu presenting the report



interaction effects of different governance mechanisms when studying corporate governance effectiveness. The next report was delivered by Prof. Luigi Lepore, Dr. Gabriella D'Amore and Prof. Matteo Pozzoli. The aim of the paper is to study the interaction effect corruption play in the relation between ownership structure and firm performance. This paper analyses whether and how the Corruption Perception Index affects the relationship between corporate performance and ownership structure in 2,035 firms operating in eight European countries during 2010-2017 period. The research offers interesting insight for corporate



Prof. Mac Clouse delivering the report

of directors and corporate executives for improving both their financial and corporate governance



Prof. Simone Terzani

 So-Yeon Lim

stream of previous research by investigating the

governance scholars since it evidences the necessity to consider context variables that strongly impact internal governance mechanisms functioning.

Prof. Hugh Grove and **Prof. Mac Clouse** (University of Denver, the U.S.) presented two papers. The first presentation was devoted to activist investors and implications for corporate governance. The key research of this paper is to explore the implications for both financial and corporate governance performances from the emergence of activist investors. This paper uses a case study of one specific activist investor's role, Barington Capital Group, in analysing the public company, L Brands. The scientists concluded that this activist investor's approach and recommendations in this case study could be used as operational guidelines by boards

performances. Another presentation "Contemporary financial reporting and intangible resources: Implications for corporate governance" delivered by **Prof. Mac Clouse** concluded the first part of the session. The research analysed issues of asset value migration to intangibles, five major future business value drivers, forward-looking measures for intangible resources, market gaps for "old economy" versus "new economy" companies, hidden intangible values made visible, international views on contemporary financial reporting, and conclusions.

The second part of the session led by **Prof. Mac Clouse** was proceeded by **Prof. Simone Terzani** from University of Perugia (Italy) who explored environmental, social, and governance disclosure and the role of religiosity at a cross-country level. The study extends the

relationship between religiosity and ESG disclosure at the cross-country level, more preciously, by arguing that the salience of the religious social norms in the local community affects corporate behaviours, thus the extent of the ESG disclosure.

Vladimiro Marini, University of Rome "Tor Vergata" (Italy) investigated the effect of different types of sponsors' previous experience on the target's performance (ROA) and whether this relation changes in syndicated versus stand-alone deals.

The representative from Xiamen University (China), **So-Yeon Lim** studied multi-family cofounders and firm value. The paper shows that higher valuation of family firms occurs only for family firms founded by several nonrelated people (multi-family cofounding firms). The paper shows that only multi-family cofounding firms have a

higher valuation than non-family firms. In this research, however, the scholars interpret this phenomenon from the perspective of corporate governance.

The last speaker of the third session was **Francesco Drigo** (Assicurazioni Generali Group, Italy) presenting the paper titled "The link between say-on-pay vote and share performance". The paper examines the relation between corporate voting on say-on-pay and variation of stock market pricing. Preliminary findings suggest a further extend of the analysis, e.g., to companies who succeeded by a narrow vote and to companies which

would have failed the say-on-pay vote unless helped by the voting power of their main/controlling shareholder.

The fourth parallel session was titled "General corporate governance framework" and chaired by Prof. Eduardo Esposito. The session started with the presentation corporate governance ratings change investor "Do expectations? Evidence from announcements by institutional shareholder services" delivered by Prof. Paul Guest and Marco Nerino from University of Cambridge (the U.K.). This paper examines effect of commercial corporate governance ratings on share returns. The authors show that the influence and impact of ISS extends beyond proxy recommendations and subsequent voting outcomes.

The next presenter was **Prof. Francesco Greco** from Niccolò Cusano University of Rome (Italy) who reported on communication in corporate governance behavioural and distortion. The scholar studied a cognitive approach to the management of the company.

Francesco Di Tommaso, University of Rome – La Sapienza (Italy), followed with his presentation titled "Corporate governance: How fiscal and industry revolution in Italy can change the labour market?" The intent of the paper is to understand which new scenarios and future figures could emerge with the Corporate Governance Industry Revolution 4.0, but also which professional figures could disappear, decrease in number or transform; also prefigure what changes could occur in the way of work performance, of new and old professions, in relation to the inevitable changes in production processes that will be introduced by this new industrial revolution.

The scientist from Ministry of Education, University and Research (Italy), **Assia Liberatore** analyses school governance. Main purpose of the research work is to draw out the role of state schools in effective governance. The author reviewed the various reforms of school governance in order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each reform and based upon the empirical results analysed how school governance reflects social culture, students' wellbeing and educational outcomes. In the conclusion of the study policy suggestions to Italian Ministry of Education are provided.

Prof. Vincenzo Sanguigni, University of Naples "Parthenope" (Italy) delivered his presentation "SPACS as an instrument of beneficial change in corporate governance, aimed at company growth: The first Italian insurtech-based insurance company". The research focuses on the peculiar aspects of the SPAC as an instrument of beneficial change in corporate governance, aimed at company growth.

The presentation delivered by **Niketa Mehmeti** from Catholic University of the Sacred Heart (Italy) opened the second session part led by **Prof. Sabrina Pisano**, University of Naples "Parthenope" (Italy). The study investigates the effect of ESG Scores on cost of equity; firm's profitability for a sample of firms operating in the Oil & Gas sector. In term of future research, the scholars would like to expand this



Francesco Drigo presenting his report



Marco Nerino



Francesco Di Tommaso presenting his report



Prof. Vincenzo Sanguigni



Prof. Giuseppe Calabrese



Alfredo Celentano delivering the presentation



Prof. Antonio Renzi



Dr. Christos Kallandranis

analysis in other sectors in order to check whether the degree of materiality of ESG scores changes among different industries and different value chains.

Prof. Giuseppe Calabrese (University of Foggia, Italy) followed with his report titled "Corporate governance in family firms: Towards a model based on degree of institutionalization (DI), structuring change (SC) and destructuring change (DC)". The research aims at proposing a different point of on the corporate governance dynamics in family business and a different path to understand the change processes into this organisations adopting a Situationist View of the Organizations (SVO) that is focused on the continuous work of two processes: action and institutionalization, that build, break and rebuild social reality.

Alfredo Celentano, Prof. Federico Alvino, and Prof. Sabrina Pisano, University of Naples "Parthenope" (Italy) studied the relationship between corporate governance and voluntary disclosure on key financial performance indicators. The aim of the paper is to empirically analyse how different corporate governance mechanisms impact on the level of voluntary disclosure on key financial performance indicators (KFPIs) released by firms.

The lively interest was raised by the report of **Prof. Antonio Renzi** and **Prof. Salvatore Esposito De Falco** from University of Rome – La Sapienza (Italy), where the scholars talked about enterprise risk management, corporate governance and systemic risk. The research idea is to enlarge traditional studies about interrelations between corporate governance and ERM. The paper aims to find new research areas by combining micro and macro issues tied to corporate governance, ERM and systemic risk.

The second part of the fourth parallel session ended with the presentation "Can the viable systems approach represent a lens to interpret barriers and enablers to the integration of sustainability? Evidence from an empirical experience" delivered by **Prof. Massimo Battaglia** (University of Rome – La Sapienza, Italy). This study aims to propose the contribution of adopting a systems perspective to researching sustainability in terms of inclusivity and holistic view, by means of the experience of action research carried out in a big Italian retailing cooperative. In this paper, viable systems approach emerges as a theoretical framework useful to provide new insights on the decisional processes of the companies, in particular those focused on complex issues such as that of sustainability.

At the end of the first day of the conference the participants had a possibility to continue discussing the topics of the conference and establish new contacts at the gala dinner.

The second day of the conference was no less fruitful than the previous one and was divided into two parallel sessions.

The first parallel session "General corporate governance framework" was chaired by **Prof. Antonio Renzi.** The session started with the presentation of **Dr. Christos Kallandranis** from Regent's University London (the U.K.). The scientists studied executive authorities in Euroland during the financial crisis comparing European commission and national governments. The purpose of this study is to shed light on this debate for a homogeneous number of democratic in the EU and to provide evidence that tight economic conditions serve as a hastening mechanism of distrust in institutions.

The next presenter **Elisa Raoli** from Catholic University of the Sacred Heart (Italy) investigated females on corporate boards and firm acquisitiveness. The aim of this study is to focus on the impact of female presence on corporate board and the M&A activities, questioning if the presence of female on corporate boards has a role in the M&A occurrence or not. Furthermore, it investigates on the M&A occurrence in case the company present a female CEO, and differentiates between family and nonfamily firms. Elisa made several very interesting conclusions which provided a strong link between the gender issue and family firm acquisitions. The role of females has been fixed properly that was supported by the conference participants during the process of discussion.

Prof. Nicola Cucari, Giorgia Tapino (University of Rome – La Sapienza, Italy) and Francesco Drigo (Assicurazioni Generali Group, Italy) delivered the report titled "How to improve the pension fund engagement: A research proposal for Italian pension funds". The aim of the study is to understand what key issues that prevent PFs from being active owners and what possible solutions PFs could adopt in order to play an active role in the corporate governance of investee companies. Starting from pension funds' difficulties, this paper develops a research proposal for describing and analysing the behaviour taken by pension funds and aims to present possible best practice.

Vjollca Istrefi presenting University of Strasbourg, France, explored corporate governance in Islamic financial institutions. The study takes a theoretical approach, and reviews the existing literature on traditional and Islamic corporate governance, analysing the set of rules and processes, which form the governance mechanism of a firm, in each of these models. It analyses the causes of failure of the non-Islamic economy, and the connection with the recent financial crisis. It was quite solid focus of attention toward the concepts of corporate governance. The conference participants provided very interesting comments how to put this conceptual issues on the ground of further empirical research.

The final presentation "A right to set-off ousted in all credit agreements regulated by the National Credit Act" was delivered by **Dr. Hlako Choma** from University of Venda (South Africa). The paper critically analyses the decision in







Giorgia Tapino presenting the report



Vjollca Istrefi



Dr. Hlako Choma



Domenico di Prisco presenting his report



Prof. Roberto Moro Visconti



Giulia Cartei delivering her report



National Credit Regulator vs. Standard Bank of South Africa Limited in view of the application and interpretation of the principle emanating from *audi alteram partem* rule. Dr. Choma provided a very clear insight in the issues of recent practices in South Africa. It was delivered both from the point of view of legal and economic perspectives. Participants of the conference concluded that this case study is well-grounded and can be used for further referencing in the field of research by researchers worldwide.

The second parallel section "Corporate governance and technology issues" was led by **Prof. Roberto Moro Visconti**, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart (Italy). **Domenico di Prisco** from University of Rome – La Sapienza (Italy) talked about the technological revolution's impact on corporate governance relationships. This paper aims to analyse the possible implications of the adoption of these technologies within the corporate governance relations, supporting how they can constitute effective and necessary support to the current organisational systems and, at the same time, how they are not yet able to replace them completely.

Prof. Roberto Moro Visconti presented his paper titled "Network corporate governance: Information and risk-return sharing of connected stakeholders". According to the professor the connection between traditional corporate governance issues and network theory properties is however still under-investigated, hence, the importance of an innovative reinterpretation that brings to "network governance". The research question of this study is concerned with the possibility to represent the interactions among stakeholders – a core corporate governance concern – through network patterns and properties.

Giulia Cartei (Prometeia s.p.a., Italy) proceeded with her study on the impacts of MiFID II product governance requirements on financial intermediaries and a Blockchain solution to face POG requirements. The goal of this paper is to underline the main impacts of MiFID II Product Governance requirements on corporate governance of financial institutions and the necessary efforts to make intermediaries compliant to the new regulatory framework. At the same time, the research wants to provide an insight into future research on a fintech solution, to let intermediaries face POG requirements.

The next presentation titled "From information transfer to knowledge sharing in corporate governance: The challenging role of Blockchain technology" in this session was delivered by **Pietro Vito** (University of Rome – La Sapienza, Italy). The paper proposes conceptual reflections about the ways in which corporate governance could overcome traditional issues related to information asymmetry and agency problems and shift from an information transfer-based view to a knowledge-sharing approach thanks to the contribution provided by the

information technologies. The Blockchain technology is used as an example for building a conceptual model able to explain the potential advantages of the proposed change in perspective for corporate governance.

Antonio La Sala from University of Salerno (Italy) followed with his report where the scholars examined the role of technology for building resilience thinking in corporate governance. Viable Systems Approach (VSA), with its conceptualization of information variety, highlights the importance of requalification of knowledge endowment owned by an organisation, in order to adapt and absorb the variability of its internal and external environment. The paper underlines, through the methodological lens of the VSA, the need to foster the information variety endowment of an organisation,



through the contribution of new information units or the use of different interpretative schemes, with the aim

of lending a resilient thinking. The application of ICT tools, also in the area of corporate governance, could amplify the information variety of subjects involved, becoming effective support to the decision-making processes.

The report "The Italian way towards environmental, social and governance (ESG) disclosure: Insights from a sample of listed companies" delivered by **Silvia Cosimato** from University of Naples "Federico II" (Italy) concluded the second parallel session. This study is aimed at providing some insights about the Italian listed companies approach to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) disclosure. The study pointed out some specific characteristics of the Italian companies' approach to ESG disclosure, which still suffer from voluntary and, therefore, somewhat a variety of practices. In this sense, policy and science should better support companies through specific laws and regulations as well as through learning/

<image>

enhancing projects towards more effective ESG reporting and communication. The analysis offers interesting insights for public institutions, academy and companies on the way to further exploit and supporting ESG disclosure.

The parallel sessions were followed by the plenary where the floor was given to the keynote speaker of the second day of the conference, **Marina Brogi** (Professor of International Banking & Capital Markets, University of Rome—La Sapienza, Italy). Professor's research focuses on corporate governance in banks. The quality of corporate governance is one of the requirements for the stability of the banking system. Therefore, bank corporate governance has some important peculiarities linked to the specificities of banks. Based upon the observations the attention to corporate governance and to bank corporate governance has been recently increased and the debate in this regard will remain lively in the incoming years. According to the Prof. Brogi corporate governance is a broad and important topic: broad, as the field of investigation, extends beyond



Keynote speaker: Prof. Marina Brogi

the research relating to the Board of Directors; important, as academics can make a contribution to the debate engaging principle setters, policymakers and practitioners.

After the plenary session was over the **Roundtable** was arranged (in Italian language) with companies and investors sponsored by Morrow Sodali.

According to the comments of the participants who attended the conference it was well organized and provided a nice venue to exchange research ideas and establish new contacts.

Organisational committee of the conference would like to express their gratitude to all participants and supporters who joined our international network to make their deposit by the high quality presentations and interesting discussions.

Organisers and sponsors of the conference were:









MORROW SODALI



Sapienza University of Rome currently offers over 270 degree programmes (Bachelor's and Master's) – among which over 30 are taught in English — over 200 vocational master courses and almost 80 PhDs.. The University is organized into 11 faculties, one School for Advanced Studie, one post-degree School for Aerospacial Engineering, 59 departments, as well as numerous research and service centres. Core mission is to contribute to the development of a knowledge society through research, excellence, quality education and international cooperation. http://www.uniromal.it/en

The University of Naples "Parthenope" was established in 1919. The current number of students ranges from about 1,000 in 1985 to about 16,000. Among the University's core aims, it is worth mentioning the promotion, development, direct application, enhancement and use of knowledge to contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of society. <u>http://en.uniparthenope.it/</u>

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Vesuvius view from the conference venue Villa Doria d'Angri

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