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Banking for the Common Good: a case study

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on Italian mutual credit cooperative banks, as ethical banks, managed according to the principles of economic and social profitability. The aim is to investigate the way through which Italian mutual cooperative banks contribute to the fulfilment of the Common Good, as Catholic social teaching characterizes it. Notably, the Common Good is theoretical in nature and it is a complex task to identify what it consists of in practical terms. Thus, to verify if it is realized by entities it is important to look at the management action, and for this reason we refer to *Economia Aziendale*, which is a Common Good driven entity theory. This theory has the merit of translating in practice the founding principles of the Catholic social teaching, and is used for the purposes of this paper as a lens to analyse the case of the Banca di Credito Cooperativo di Napoli. The case study provides a detailed picture of the practices and values of the bank that lead to the achievement of the Common Good for the local community of Naples, through the reduction of financial exclusion and the funding of projects with social and environmental relevance. Moreover, the findings elucidate the concrete contribution of *Economia Aziendale* from both, the theoretical and the practical perspective, to the international debate on ethics in finance.

Keywords Azienda, Common Good, Corporate Social Responsibility, *Economia Aziendale*, Ethical Banks.