



Since its creation, the WSBI has become the global voice of retail banking and the platform for savings and retail banks.

It works to promote the savings and retail bank model throughout the world by raising awareness of its importance and by advocating an enabling environment with national and international policymakers and institutions that favour private savings, the recognition of the importance of pluralism in banking and the implementation of sound monetary and structural policies.

About WSBI (World Savings Banks Institute)

Today, WSBI is one of the largest and oldest international banking associations and the only global representative of savings and retail banks. Founded in 1924, 80 years later in 2004, it represents more than 1,100 financial intermediaries from 89 countries. At the start of 2003, assets of member banks amounted to €7,600 billion, non-bank deposits amounted to €4,750 billion and non-bank loans to just over €4,000 billion. WSBI member banks operate circa 200,000 branches and employ close to 2.3 million people.

WSBI members are typically savings and retail banks with a customer-oriented, socially responsible approach and a market focus of individuals, households, SMEs and local authorities.

WSBI seeks to promote:

- A pluralist and diverse banking system, in which the owners or guarantors of both private and public financial institutions are free to choose the legal structure they consider most appropriate for their institutions;
- The principle of subsidiarity, so that national and regional specificities can be preserved and regions/nations are given the flexibility to adopt the legislation most suited to their needs;
- The recognition that small and medium-sized credit institutions should not necessarily be subject to the same degree of regulatory supervision as large financial players;
- The recognition by regulatory authorities that profitability is the "life blood" of any bank. All savings and retail banks' activities – of both financial and social nature and including those aimed at creating employment opportunities – can only be performed on a permanent basis if the bank is profitable.

WSBI's activities:

- Interest representation
- Facilitation of cooperation
- Financial sector development

From ISBI to WSBI

Today, WSBI represents more than 104 members from over more than 89 countries throughout the world:

- Africa: 31 members from 29 countries
- Americas: 18 members from 12 countries
- Asia-Pacific: 18 members from 16 countries
- Europe: 37 members from 32 countries

The World Savings Banks Institute was founded in 1924 as the International Savings Banks Institute (ISBI). Its name changed to the World Savings Banks Institute in 9 June 1994, since which time it shares a secretariat with the European Savings Banks Group (ESBG).

Former WSBI (ISBI) Presidents

Over its 80 years in existence, WSBI's evolution has been guided by the following Presidents:

1924-1945

- **Marquis Guisepppe De Capitani D'Arzago**
President of Cassa di Risparmio delle Provincie Lombarde, Milan, and Casse di Risparmio Italiane, Italy

1945-1948

- **Albert Lombard**
President of the Caisse d'Epargne de la République et Canton de Genève, Switzerland

1948-1960

- **André de Guchtenèere**
General Manager of the Caisse Générale d'Epargne et de Retraite, Belgium

1960-1969

- **E. Athelstan G. Caroi**
Administrator of the Liverpool Trustee Savings Bank, President of the Trustee Savings Banks Association, United Kingdom

1969-1973

- **Giordano Dell'Amore**
President of the Associazione fra le Casse di Risparmio Italiane and the Board of Administration of the Cassa di Risparmio delle Provincie Lombarde, Italy

1973-1975

- **Friedrich Adamek**
General Manager of the Erste Österreichische Sparkasse and President of the Österreichischer Sparkassenverband, Austria

1975-1978

- **Grover Ensley**
Executive Vice-President of the American National Association of Mutual Savings Banks, USA

1978-1984

- **Helmut Geiger**
President of the Deutscher Sparkassen- und Giroverband, Germany

1984-1987

- **José Joaquín Sancho Drona**
President of the Confederación Española de Cajas de Ahorros and General Manager of the Caja de Ahorros de Zaragoza, Aragón y Rioja, Spain

1987-1990

- **Ake Janson**
President of the FöreningsSparbanken and General Manager of the Savings Bank of Mälardalen, Sweden

1990-1997

- **Alain Le Ray**
President of the Supervisory Board of the Centre National des Caisses d'Epargne, France

1998

- **Nibhat Bhukkanasut**
Chairman of the Government Savings Bank of Thailand, Thailand

1998-2000

- **Manuel Pizarro Moreno**
President of the Confederación Española de Cajas de Ahorros, Spain

2000 - Present

- **Dr. Holger Berndt**
Executive Member of the Board of the Deutscher Sparkassen- und Giroverband, Germany

FROM ISBI TO WSBI THE WORLD SAVINGS BANKS INSTITUTE CELEBRATES ITS 80TH ANNIVERSARY

October 2004, Brussels

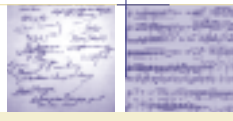


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1925



1928



1957



1960



1973



1989



1994



2003



2004



1924

On the occasion of the first International Thrift Congress organised in Milan, the first world-wide savings banks organisation – ISBI, is founded (26-31 October).

The first International Thrift Congress sees its roots in an Italian national Conference to celebrate 100 years of the 'Cassa di Risparmio delle Provincie Lombarde' and includes 350 participants from over 27 countries representing more than 7000 savings banks.

The Congress Resolution states that the creation of a permanent International Savings Banks Institute is: "advantageous and indispensable for the better mutual acquaintance of all savings banks and for the increased development and co-ordination of their activities."

1925

The statutes of the Institute are approved 28 June in Milan, Italy appointing Marquis Capitani d'Arzago as its first President and setting an objective to organise the International Savings Banks Congress at 5-yearly intervals. Furthermore, 31 October is proclaimed as 'World Thrift Day.'

1928

The first hymn on thrift is composed, from which time an annual competition is launched and led by a different country each year.

1942

Due to the breakdown of international relations during World War II, a temporary office was established in Bern, Switzerland.

1948

The General Assembly of 23-25 September, Brussels resolves new statutes and re-establishes the ISBI in Amsterdam. It establishes a new contribution system and new forms of collaboration by creating several committees, working groups and conferences of experts.

1950

The first international summer school is established with the goal to establish contacts between practicing savings banks' managers to promote the exchange of best practices. About 60 to 80 participants from 10-15 different countries gather on a yearly basis.

1953

The International Publicity Committee is established to organise both the World Thrift Day and several parallel events at national level.

1954

The 4th International Thrift Congress was finally held in Wiesbaden, Germany, following postponement of the event originally planned in Berlin in 1940.

1956

The International Publicity Committee establishes a study group for savings by young people to educate and to gather information about youth saving habits.

1957

The first International Award to stimulate the study on savings banks issues is launched.

1969

The Institute is again relocated, this time to Geneva, where it remains until 1994.

1971

Major restructuring of the Institute establishes 5 permanent committees:

- The Business Organisation and Automation Committee organises international automation conferences, publishes 'Automation Trends' and presents the results of their regular international survey on automation
- The Savings Banks Central Banks Committee promotes the exchange of ideas between savings and central bank institutions
- The Publicity Committee contributes to the promotion of savings banks views
- The Education Committee organises training and workshops
- The Development Cooperation Committee facilitates development cooperation activities, training programmes in developing countries, collaboration with the United Nations, World Bank, Unido

1972

The 1st Top Management Seminar is held in Massachusetts, USA. These seminars were provided for Chief Executive Officers, covered general bank management issues and were undertaken for 20 years until 1992.

1973

The International Summer Schools are replaced by Basic Management Seminars, organised by the Education Committee. These seminars were organised in different working groups and went on till 1978.

1978

A Development Aid Fund is established to facilitate voluntary financial aid to developing countries by industrialised savings banks members.

1983

GRULA, the Latin American regional group holds its first meeting in Brazil. Its structure is established through the Carthagena Act (1986/1987).

1984

ISBI celebrates its 60th anniversary with its World Congress in Singapore.

1984

ISBI establishes the African regional group.

1986

The Asian and Pacific regional group is established.

1989

ISBI establishes the Audit and Control Committee.

1990

The Lusophone Group is created to facilitate cooperation with the Portuguese-speaking members.

1994

On 9 June, the ISBI is moved to Brussels and changes its name to the WSBI (World Savings Banks Institute).

1995

The WSBI is admitted to the general category of non-governmental organisations consulted by the Trade and Development Council of UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development).

1996

The first Postal Savings Banks Forum is inaugurated by the WSBI together with the Japanese Postal Savings Banks (JPSB).

1997

As a result of the Postal Savings Banks Forum, a Technical Cooperation Fund is launched together with JPSB.

1999

While during the early '90s the WSBI worked mainly on projects funded by EU Phare and Tacis, in 1999 this cooperation is extended to the World Bank and EBRD.

2000

WSBI signs an agreement with the UPU (Universal Postal Union) for the performance of modernisation and institutional reform projects for postal savings banks.

2001

A high level meeting takes place with the Basel Committee to discuss the impact of the new Capital Accord on small and medium-sized credit institutions.

2001

In cooperation with the European Commission and the European Central Bank, Europe's savings banks undertake a wide reaching information campaign about the launch of the euro.

2002

WSBI signs a memorandum of understanding with ILO (International Labour Organisation), the first of its kind signed by this international organisation for cooperation in the field of savings promotion, micro-and SME finance.

2003

At the 20th World Congress of Savings Banks in Madrid the WSBI adopts the Madrid Declaration underlining the crucial role of access to finance and the importance of variety and pluralism in the financial sector.

2004

WSBI endorses the Inter-American Development Banks' statement on remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean.