

# The Women in Sailing Project, Generali and Barcolana together to promote mixed sailing among young people. SWG research for a new strategy to support sailing clubs and federations presented

→ Carried out under the patronage of the Italian Sailing Federation and World Sailing, the research looks at the sporting and relational advantages of mixed teams and the limits to their diffusion

Trieste – Promoting youth sailing through the creation of mixed classes, forming the basis for future team building. This is the focus of the Women in Sailing project, promoted by Generali in 2019 with the dedicated Trophy and which, from the Barcolana experience in Trieste, is now embarking on a new phase to ensure that the number of women in decision-making roles on board is increased not only in the world's largest regatta, but in all sailing competitions.

The new Women in Sailing by Generali and Barcolana initiative was launched with a research commissioned by Generali and Barcolana, carried out by SWG and under the patronage of the Italian Sailing Federation and World Sailing, and will form the basis of a toolkit to be created by the end of 2024 by sports psychologists, coaches and female winners of past Generali Women in Sailing Trophy editions, intended for coaches and technicians to support them in training mixed youth teams.

The project and the results of the survey were presented today in Trieste by the **Chairman of Generali, Andrea Sironi**, and the **President of the Società Velica di Barcola e Grignano Sailing Club, Mitja Gialuz**.

Also announced is the **Generali Women in Sailing regatta**, to be held on **Friday, 11 October**, and the **fourth edition of the Generali Women in Sailing Trophy**, which will be awarded to the first mixed team to cross the finish line with a female skipper during Barcolana on 13 October in the Gulf of Trieste. The winner will also be rewarded with a coaching and leadership course customised to her needs by Generali Academy.

**Generali Chairman Andrea Sironi** said: *"Generali promotes a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. Sport is an extraordinary tool for education as well as physical and mental well-being, contributing to the development of individuals and collective growth. With this in mind, we are committed to taking concrete actions such as the Generali Women in Sailing Trophy, part of a project which, from the enhancement of a single person's commitment in Barcolana, is now expanding to a wider audience, with the provision of new tools to benefit sailing clubs, athletes, and coaches. Addressing the obstacles holding back the youth mixed sailing experience today means ensuring more mixed crews made up of adults in the future, as well as a more complete sporting and social experience."*

**The president of the Società Velica di Barcola e Grignano, Mitja Gialuz**, underlined: *"The development of 'Women in Sailing by Generali and Barcolana' outside the regatta to a broader context is a great satisfaction and an important commitment for Barcolana."*

*The work done so far 'Women in Sailing by Generali and Barcolana' demonstrates how relevant the role of sailing clubs is in guiding young people towards mixed teams: yacht clubs have the opportunity to nurture athletes not only from a sporting perspective but also by providing them with skills and expertise that they can apply in various contexts, enhancing communication and relationships in teams beyond the sporting sphere, in education, and in the workplace. We are proud to carry this project forward, hoping that both girls and boys can advance in the culture of inclusivity."*



## THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The first in Italy to be conducted in the field on a large sample of participants, the research was carried out on 246 sailors from all over Europe, 197 boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 25 years old who are competing, and 49 coaches of mixed and non-mixed teams, who participated in the European Open 420 Championship in Portorož (Slovenia) and the World Youth Sailing Championship in Riva del Garda (Trento) in July 2024.

And what emerges, in the opinion of both athletes and coaches, is that **mixed teams have strong educational and skill-building potential**. Despite these advantages, however, there is still no major push to create mixed teams. In fact, **2 out of 3 sailors have so far not been given the opportunity to be part of a mixed team**.

All the people interviewed share the opinion that, in order to succeed in a mixed team, it is **necessary to develop communication and conflict resolution skills**, as there are greater differences to be overcome than in same-sex teams, relating both to different expectations and skills, and to different physical strength, where athletes in mixed teams suggest individualised training.

Moreover, among athletes, those who have never been in a mixed team tend to overestimate the relationship difficulties they might encounter, while those who have experienced this tend to emphasise that the best quality they acquire is dialogue to compensate for differences.

Coaches recognise that **mixed sailing has both sporting and interpersonal benefits**, encouraging flexibility and greater team spirit. In the technical field, it contributes to a variety of strategies, skills, and navigation styles, and in addition to teaching team spirit and mutual respect, it encourages collaboration and boosts creativity. Among the disadvantages, coaches recognise the difficulty in managing different physical strengths and arranging training that is customised to different needs.

Of those currently working in a mixed team, 77% are satisfied with their experience. The experience in mixed teams is also successful among coaches. It is evaluated positively by almost 80% of the coaches surveyed and is a source of motivation and satisfaction.

For the contents of the survey, click [here](#)

## GENERALI AND SPORT

Generali, *presenting sponsor* of Barcolana, supports sport, viewing it as fundamental to the quality of life and well-being of people of all ages and at all levels, from competitive to amateur. Through this, healthy lifestyles and opportunities for community sharing and growth are instilled. Sailing, in particular, encourages athletes to challenge themselves and others and nurture team spirit. For this reason, raising awareness of the value of creating mixed teams plays an important role.

It was on these premises that, in 2019, the **Women in Sailing** project was born, which over the years has explored the themes of integration and inclusion with testimonies by internationally renowned and socially committed female sailors such as Francesca Clapcich and Isabelle Joschke, as well as initiatives such as the "Generali Sea Talks", conversations with two famous female sailors, Dee Caffari and Vicky Song.

Furthermore, spreading the message of equity and inclusion, Generali is giving away the **Generali Women in Sailing Trophy**, now in its fourth edition and awarded to the mixed team that first crosses the finish line with a female skipper, who will be rewarded with a glass trophy made by Barovier and a coaching and leadership course customised to the person's needs by Generali Academy.

Previous editions were won by female sailors Federica Tuniz, Wendy Schmidt, and Claudia Rossi.



## BARCOLANA ACTIVITIES

Sharing and inclusion will also be at the heart of the free-access workshops for children that [The Human Safety Net initiative](#), the Generali Foundation whose aim is to support vulnerable families with children aged 0-6 and promote the inclusion of refugees through work and entrepreneurship, will offer on **10,11,12 and 13 October** in the **Generali space in Piazza Unità d'Italia**.

The **Centre for Child Health (CSB)** will offer **workshops for children and families**, guiding participants in the **rediscovery of traditional games and reading**. Generali volunteers, divided into half-day shifts, will support CSB educators to welcome families with young children, organise readings, musical activities and talk about the activities taking place at The Human Safety Net family centre in Trieste.

## THE GENERALI GROUP

Generali is one of the largest global insurance and asset management providers. Founded in 1831, it is active in more than 50 countries with a total premium income of €82.5 billion in 2023. With 82,000 employees serving 70 million customers, the Group has a leading position in Europe and a growing presence in Asia and Latin America. At the heart of Generali's strategy is its Lifetime Partner commitment to customers, achieved through innovative and personalised solutions, best-in-class customer experience and its digitalised global distribution capabilities. The Group has fully integrated sustainability into all of its strategic choices, with the goal of creating value for all stakeholders and building a more equitable and resilient society.