

Press release

A TEAM OF TALENTED UNDER-30S LEADS UNHATE FOUNDATION'S COMMITMENT TO YOUNG PEOPLE

- ✓ The Foundation imagined by Alessandro Benetton in 2011 is entering a new phase. Irene Boni has been appointed as Managing Director to coordinate the strategic plan, together with a Scientific Committee consisting of startupper, sports personalities, artists, actors, content creators, academics and representatives of the nonprofit sector, most of whom are under 30.
- ✓ Social mobility, education, culture, and research will be the four main areas of intervention for the Foundation.

Rome, February 20, 2025. With a view to helping build a future where hatred no longer finds fertile ground, the Unhate Foundation has recently been established as a nonprofit organization, thus starting a new chapter of a project launched by **Alessandro Benetton in 2011**. The Foundation seeks to engage the younger generations in opportunities to grow and develop their potential, by promoting solidarity, social inclusion and sustainability through innovative projects.

Specifically, the Foundation aims to combat the culture of hatred by tackling its root causes, focusing on training young people and offering them new opportunities. The four key areas of action are:

- **Social mobility:** turning merit into opportunities, nurturing unexpressed talents and promoting merit and commitment;
- **Education:** improving the quality of learning environments by creating inclusive and dynamic spaces to encourage learning;
- **Culture:** leveraging cultural heritage to promote intergenerational dialogue and bonding;
- **Studies and research:** promoting innovative research to bring about positive changes in communities.

For a generation of change: under-30s leading the drive for change

The Foundation is led by **Irene Boni**, in the role of Managing Director. Formerly CEO of Talent Garden and General Manager of YOOX, she has tried-and-tested experience in the educational and digital sectors, primarily gained as a leader of teams of under-30s.

To assist the six-member Board of Directors in its efforts, the Unhate Foundation has appointed a Scientific Committee - mainly consisting of young professionals, and a few elders in the interests of intergenerational dialogue - tasked with identifying medium-to-long-term priorities and project guidelines to underpin the Foundation's strategy. The Scientific Committee brings together talented people with diverse experiences and backgrounds, ranging across the world of start-ups, academia, art, sport, digital communication and the nonprofit sector:

Huda Lahoual, 21, podcaster and author of *Huda, nessuna e centomila*, a podcast that tells the stories of young second-generation immigrants in Italy, produced by Chora Media;

Chiara Schettino, 23, co-founder of Rosso, a start-up created to reduce waiting times for blood recipients and to raise awareness about the importance of donating blood among Gen Z;

Roberto Celestri, 23, content creator and art populariser, has worked with MAXXI, the Vatican Museums, the Galleria Colonna, the Capitoline Museums, the Galleria Borghese, and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection;

Francesco Di Napoli, 23, actor, who made his cinematic debut in 2019 playing a starring role in the movie *La paranza dei bambini*. He then acted in *Romulus*, *Mina Settembre* and *Hey Joe*, making a name for himself in both cinema and TV;

Valentina Galli, 24, a university student specialising in public security policies, designed a project to encourage voter participation and active citizenship in high schools;

Irma Testa, 27, a featherweight bronze medallist at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, and a gold medallist at the 2023 World Championships in New Delhi;

Gabriele Segre, 37, a political scientist and columnist specialising in public policy, involved in promoting a culture of coexistence between different identities;

Vanessa Benelli Mosell, 37, an internationally acclaimed conductor and pianist, who has collaborated with some of the most prestigious musical institutions in Europe and the rest of the world;

Claudio Burgio, 55, a clergyman, who is the founder of the Kayros community and the chaplain of the Cesare Beccaria Youth Detention Centre in Milan.

Hatred is currently being amplified by a host of causes

Nowadays, hatred spreads even faster than in the past, including via the internet. According to several studies, while in Italy 40% of young people aged 15 to 19 had been involved in fights or brawls in 2023, at European level almost half (49%) of young people aged 16 to 29 had witnessed hate incidents on the internet, which generated tangible repercussions on their psychological well-being and social relationships. One in two young Italians aged 18 to 25 (49%) said they had suffered from anxiety and depression in their lifetime.

The causes are manifold and widespread: economic uncertainty, isolation, insecurity, psychological malaise, inequalities and educational poverty. The latter in particular deprives boys and girls of the resources they need to develop their potential, which generates frustration and exposes them to the risk of social exclusion. The narrative of hatred often becomes normalised, creeping into everyday language, through words and actions that hurt and cause division.

"Hybrid" governance that harks back to the past and looks to the future

The Unhate Foundation grew out of the personal vision and business culture of Alessandro Benetton who, in the wake of a project originally launched by the Benetton Group in 2011, wanted to give fresh impetus to cohesive and systemic social action. Supporting him in his role as Chairman of the Board of Directors, the Institutional Supporters Edizione, Mundys and Aeroporti di Roma have recognised that the Foundation's mission and their own ESG programmes share the same values. They are participating in the project by providing the Foundation with funding, know-how and expertise for its day-to-day operations and project development. The hope for the future is that other companies, institutions, organisations, associations and foundations, both in Italy and overseas, will also be able to support the Foundation's projects and initiatives.

*"We aim to create a highly innovative project, in which young people would decide on behalf of young people," said **Alessandro Benetton**, creator and Chairman of the Unhate Foundation. "So we set up a Scientific Committee whose members' average age is 30, including several people in their 20s. I expect to see their passion, creativity and a desire to build positive experiences for their peers. We will work with them, alongside the professionals who have taken on this challenge, to turn the projects we think are strategic into reality. To do this, we have engaged a number of entities within our Group, under an approach that also opens the door to working with other companies, organisations and institutions. We intend to focus all our efforts on using culture, art and sport to promote dialogue and solidarity," Mr Benetton continued. "We want to nurture a new sense of community, provide opportunities to eliminate obstacles that prevent genuine inclusion and reward merit. As an entrepreneur and as a father," he concluded, "I feel a great responsibility to promote a business culture that puts young people first."*

*"Hatred is a complex issue that unfortunately occurs daily in many forms, with repercussions that go beyond ethics and profoundly impact the social and economic dimension," added **Irene Boni**, Managing Director of the Unhate Foundation. "This has led us to adopt a combined approach, by bringing together different forces, including profit and nonprofit organisations, in order to build a relational infrastructure that can bring about concrete and lasting change. Rather than just talking about eradicating hatred we want to achieve our goal through co-designed, multi-disciplinary initiatives, in which young people are not just recipients but also play leading roles in an Unhate movement. We believe in the power of dialogue between generations and different worlds, and we believe in the generative power of opportunities, as this is the only way to create a space where young people can build a future they can finally believe in."*