

Crédit Mutuel Arkéa: 96.4% vote in favor of autonomy

The group's three federations reassert their joint determination to protect their original decentralized cooperative banking model

Brest, October 21, 2016 – Following the ballots that took place between October 19 and 21, 2016, the three federations of Crédit Mutuel Arkéa (Bretagne, Massif Central and Sud-Ouest) came out overwhelmingly in favor of the project championed by the group. 96.4% of the 333 votes cast were in favor of creating Crédit Mutuel Arkéa's own central governing body. This vote, which shows the group's collective support for the management-led project, is a strong signal to the Confédération Nationale du Crédit Mutuel (CNCM) that it needs to find a solution that both complies with banking regulations and respects Crédit Mutuel Arkéa's autonomy.

In the view of Jean-Pierre Denis, Chairman of Crédit Mutuel Arkéa and Crédit Mutuel de Bretagne: "The vote of our local branches - which themselves fully own the group - provides unequivocal support for the position we have been taking for months, i.e. the creation, through legislation, of separate central governing bodies for Crédit Mutuel Arkéa and CM11-CIC. At the same time, we have also suggested that the role of the Confédération Nationale du Crédit Mutuel be redefined so that, in the role of an association, it can promote the Crédit Mutuel name, develop the professional branch and defend the collective interests of Crédit Mutuel in an entirely impartial manner. Our directors voted in favor of this proposal because it is the only realistic scenario - a solution that both complies with the ECB's requirements and respects the interests of all stakeholders, including the Confédération. The Confédération and the public authorities can no longer ignore the joint determination demonstrated by the representatives of Crédit Mutuel Arkéa. I hope that this historic and seminal vote will encourage the managers of the Confédération to begin talks on a constructive and open-minded basis.

This is the only reform that retains Crédit Mutuel's identity and originality - a multi-faceted, decentralized cooperative in which a number of autonomous groups have always co-existed - while meeting regulatory requirements.

The vote, which was held by secret ballot, enabled the chairs of the 334 local branches to express their views in a democratic manner, in keeping with the cooperative values of a mutual bank.

(.../...)

The votes were distributed as follows:

Crédit Mutuel Arkéa	Crédit Mutuel de Bretagne	Crédit Mutuel Massif Central	Crédit Mutuel du Sud-Ouest
Group Total	General Meeting of 10/19	General Meeting of 10/20	General Meeting of 10/21
96.4%	98.6%	80%	96.3%
i.e. 321 votes of the 333 votes cast	i.e. 218 votes of the 221 votes cast	i.e. 24 votes of the 30 votes cast	i.e. 79 votes of the 82 votes cast

These very positive results strengthen Crédit Mutuel Arkéa's position. For a number of years, it has called for legislative reforms to Crédit Mutuel's governance that would give Crédit Mutuel Arkéa its own central governing body.

Crédit Mutuel Arkéa emphasizes that it is an autonomous group of 9,000 employees with robust financial fundamentals, operating directly on the financial markets to manage its refinancing requirements. The group's credit rating is among the best in the market, as shown on a regular basis by investor appetite for Crédit Mutuel Arkéa's debt issuances.

With a solvency ratio of 15.3% as of 30 June 2016, Crédit Mutuel Arkéa has also experienced no difficulty in meeting the enhanced capital requirements imposed on it by the ECB since 2015, which, since that date, has considered that a split from CNCM is not only possible, but highly likely.

This historic vote for Crédit Mutuel Arkéa is evidence of the group's joint determination to retain its full autonomy and to protect jobs in its regions over the long term.