

# University students compete for cash in financial markets

Academic trading challenge focuses on investor literacy

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(ANSA) - Milan, October 31 - Post-secondary students in Italy and across Europe are gaining hands-on experience in financial markets through the University Trading Challenge.



The competition, organized through online broker **Directa**, began this week and continues for seven months through early May 2014.

Now in its fourth edition, the competition sees teams given 5,000 euro grants that can be leveraged to as much as 25,000 for investments through online trading on financial exchanges.

In this year's competition, students can also trade in foreign currency markets for the first time. Teams will be allowed to keep their investment while losses will be borne by **Directa**.

For business students, the competition represents a kind of gym that allows them to exercise their market acumen, says Mario Fabbri, chief executive officer (CEO) of **Directa**.

"In addition to curiosity about a new experience, there is also the desire to get in touch, in a real way, with financial markets that may be the subject of their future work," said Fabbri.

For Raffaele Jerusalem, the CEO of the Italian Stock Exchange, the competition represents a "very interesting initiative that brings together students, even from other countries, to the Italian market".

Projects of this kind are positive forces for increasing financial literacy, which "is not very high," he added.

Registration of teams is open until Dec. 13, with early entrants including 25 Italian teams, three from the Czech Republic, 11 from Germany, three French, one Spanish, one English and one from Belgium.

The winning team will be selected based on market performance, and will be awarded a 20,000 euro prize for teaching and research.

The most recent winning squad from Germany achieved a market gain of 124% in seven months.

Italian teams won the previous two years.

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