

XII EDITION OF THE FORUM OF THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

BRINDISI (ITALY) 6-8 June 2012

FINAL DECLARATION

The Forum's Commitment to the full recognition of the Adriatic – Ionian Macro-region

The Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce

met in Brindisi (Italy) for the XII Edition, to discuss on the topic "Towards the Adriatic Ionian Macro-region: a strategic plan for the competitiveness of the territories and enterprises"

Taking into consideration

the political and strategic value of the macro-regional system in the integration process and in policies of proximity and cohesion of local communities, in view of the enlargement of the EU;

the importance recognized by the European Union to the macro-regional strategy as an instrument which facilitates the participation of regional and local authorities at different levels of territorial co-operation in the fields of economic, social and cultural development and the protection of the environmental heritage;

the common and shared purposes pursued by both the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce, as reiterated in the memorandum of association of February 5, 2003, and by the Adriatic – Ionian Macro region;

the need to support the efforts and actions promoted by the Foundation of the Permanent Secretariat for the Adriatic - Ionian Initiative, of the Marche Region and of all the institutions involved in the process of recognition by the European Union of the Macro-region as a body representing the entire maritime area in the field of territorial cooperation;

the Brussels Declaration of 23 May 2011 by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the eight members of the All that confirmed that the recognition by the European Union of the macro-regional strategy for the Adriatic Ionian basins is a primary objective

the opinion of the Committee of the Regions initiative "Territorial Cooperation in the Mediterranean through the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region", unanimously approved by the C.o.R. (Committee of the Regions) plenary session, in Brussels on 11th of October 2011;

the results obtained by both the X and XI editions of the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce, respectively held in Ancona (Italy) in 2010 and in Budva (Montenegro) in 2011;

the approval on January 11, 2012 by the Italian Senate of a package of seven motions that commit the Italian government to agree with the European authorities the establishment of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-region;

Being aware that

the Adriatic - Ionian Macro-region, considered as an autonomous functional area, is an innovative way to promote and organize cooperation at the inter-territorial and transnational levels and is able to enhance coherence and coordination of policies in various sectors, by rationalizing the use of financial resources and enhancing the role and potential of regional authorities and of local communities;

the macro-regional approach given the ways and areas of action that characterize its working method - based on consultation, on the equal dignity of individuals and on the principle of subsidiarity - coherently matches other strategic policies of the European Union, as Europe 2020, the cohesion policy and the integrated maritime policy;

the macro-regional strategy contributes to fulfilling the objective of territorial cohesion strongly supported by the Lisbon Treaty and facilitates the procedures for the admission to the European Union of all the states bordering on the Adriatic-Ionian Basin and more generally the perspective of accession of the whole Balkan area, according to the intentions already affirmed in the Declaration adopted at Ancona (Italy) on May 5, 2010 by the representatives of the Governments of the eight member states of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative;

the macro-regional strategy contributes to strengthening the existing networks and to the common use of new entities, consolidating an operating mode and a joint action involving different actors, different policies and experiences which are present in our territories, and enhancing the cultural heritage, the richness of their diversity, the potential and the vocations which are present locally;

the creation of the Macro-region contributes to strengthening the role of local authorities in the representation of the instances which are closest to the needs and lives of citizens, and the capacity to provide proper instruments to expand the rights to citizenship, broadly involving the civil society organizations; the productivity of the economic world, social forces, associations, institutions of a territorial nature, schools, young people, citizens;

Confirms

the commitment to developing in the appropriate places and fora at a local, interregional and international level, with the social and productive forces, within citizens associations and the various networks active in the area (Chambers of Commerce, Cities, Universities, the Adriatic Euroregion), the useful initiatives to positive and speedy process of recognition by the European Union of the Adriatic - Ionian Macro-region Initiative

the will to play an active and proactive role in the process of construction and recognition of the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region, by supporting the initiatives taken to achieve this goal and the creation of supranational systems of partnership, by contributing to the construction of dialogue and collaboration systems among local, regional and central national and European governments;

the commitment to developing and implementing experience and the potential found in the fabric of economic productivity, as key strategic resources in the knowledge of a broad and shared territorial governance, in a European and Mediterranean dimension;

our will to promote large and shared project initiatives in the areas that are close to the institutional tasks of the Chambers in order to support:

- the strengthening and streamlining of the overall infrastructure system in the whole maritime area;
- the development of economic and social activities across integrated and complementary geographical areas;
- the sustainable development respectful of landscape, of architectural and historical traditions, of tourist and production vocations of the territories;
- the technological innovation;
- the protection of the environment and bio-diversity, together with the prevention and / or mitigation of the risks caused by climate change;
- the mobility, free circulation of people, goods and services;
- the education, training and knowledge and cultural system;
- the harmonization of welfare policies, for welcoming and inclusive communities;
- the promotion of "people-to-people" local actions to connect peoples, to stabilize international relations in a dimension of solidarity and peace.

Brindisi (Italy) 8th June 2012