

## WORKGROUP ON TRANSPORT FINAL DOCUMENT



Brindisi, 7th June 2012

This year, the Workgroup on transport has enjoyed significant success in terms of participation, quality and quantity of interventions. It is a year, which as we know, has been marked by the economic and financial crisis, which very much affects a great many Member States of the Forum in the Mediterranean area.

Below is a brief mention of some of the interesting points that have emerged from the workgroup works:

- 1) The quality of infrastructures is important and absolutely essential not only for transport in itself, but for territorial development in general. Infrastructures raise the level of transport, create employment, add value and therefore come fully under the scope of the instruments for territorial development policy.
- 2) It is essential to stress that correct transport system development is today above all obtained through the effective integration of infrastructures comprising all transport methods: air, road, train and rail transport.
- 3) From this viewpoint, the role of dry ports is crucial as an inter-connection point mainly between road and rail transport, also with a view to assuring sustainable development, as required by the European Union. And that is not all: in addition to intermodal transport systems, the role of logistics must also be strengthened, the real driving engine of employment development and the generation of income.
- 4) As concerns ports, the need has been stressed for the basin to make a leap in quality in terms of innovative services to welcome new generation ships and make the most of the opportunities offered by the growing markets, such as the Far East and Russia.
- 5) Special attention must be paid to Information and Communication Technology systems with specific reference to all tools enabling the streamlining of customs activities and bureaucracy in general, in accordance with European Directives within the Single Window approach.
- 6) The most innovative approach on the front of our infrastructural and transport system is essential as a response to the current basin traffic dynamics:
  - Only the cruise segment continues to grow systematically and strongly (+600% in the last 10 years). In the ferry segment, on the other hand, the dive by the Greek market (-17% passengers in the Adriatic-Ionian in the last four years and -28% HGV) is only partially offset by the excellent growth of the Croatian route (+26% pax since 2008) and the stability of the Albanian market. Streamlining procedures and computerising administrative activities may be useful to facilitate the development of this short sea shipping traffic.
  - The good growth observed in container traffic (+15%) is very much driven by those ports such as Koper or Trieste, which have built their current success on the development of new intermodal services, whilst they are still lacking in a great many other ports of the basin.

### *Conclusions (agreed actions)*

The container market is growing strongly worldwide and may represent a significant development opportunity for our ports too, as long as high quality, inter-connected infrastructures are guaranteed; dry ports and logistics services and a complete transport network.

Short-sea shipping traffic in the Adriatic remains a key part in the communication routes between the countries of the Union, in particular between Greece and the countries of central and northern Europe, substantially helping integrate people and cargo.

The Italian Adriatic ports are real gateways into the countries bordering with the Union. The development of traffic with Croatia, Albania and Montenegro, of which the ports of the central South (Ancona, Bari and Brindisi) are leaders, and the consolidation of traffic with Turkey from Trieste show the growing role played by these ports in stabilising economic relations with neighbouring countries.



In this sense, the Adriatic Baltic Corridor should be extended along the backbone of the Adriatic railway, the only high capacity network in North-South Italy connections and an essential tool to encourage the rail-sea inter-modal method at the heart of sustainable growth policies of the European Union.

At present, the Corridor stretches as far as Ravenna and over the next few days, the possibility is being discussed of its potential extension to include the ports of Apulia. By next autumn, the European Council will be giving the definite structure to the new transport networks and action will therefore be necessary to ensure that the requests made by the territories facing on the medium and low Adriatic are upheld.

From this viewpoint, the European Union is asked for greater transparency in defining criteria, based on which infrastructural priorities will be defined, as well as a greater sensitivity in evaluating the needs expressed by the territories, today at the edge of Europe, like the area that faces onto the Mediterranean according to a prospect of social cohesion that the same EU puts right at the heart of its value system.