



PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE EU STRATEGY FOR THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN REGION

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

The overall objective of the [EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region \(EUSAIR\)](#) is to promote the sustainable economic and social prosperity of the Region through growth and jobs creation, and by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity, while at the same time preserving the environment and ensuring healthy and balanced marine and coastal ecosystems. The public consultation on the EUSAIR aims to reach relevant stakeholders and to gather their ideas in order to make sure that the Strategy is realistic in its starting point, appropriate in its objectives and responsive to the real needs of inhabitants of the Region. For additional information please download the [Scoping Paper](#) for the public consultation.

Please note it is important to keep in mind, when considering the following questions, that the actions and projects to be proposed should (a) concern the Adriatic and Ionian Region as a macro-region - as opposed to the national or EU level -, (b) have a positive impact on the citizens, enterprises, and the environment and (c) be feasible in the short to mid-term.

Section I - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Please specify in which capacity you are completing this questionnaire:*

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> As an individual/private person | <input checked="" type="radio"/> On behalf of a Public Authority |
| <input type="radio"/> On behalf of an International Organisation | <input type="radio"/> On behalf of a Civil Society Organisation |
| <input type="radio"/> On behalf of a Private Enterprise | <input type="radio"/> On behalf of an Academic/research institution |
| <input type="radio"/> Other | |

Please specify*

2. Please provide your name, and where relevant the name of your organisation*

Gian Angelo Bellati, Secretary General at Unioncamere Veneto

3. If your organisation is registered in the Transparency Register, please indicate your Register ID number. If your organisation is not registered, you [can register now](#). Responses from organisations not registered will be published separately.

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4. Please provide your country of residence / establishment*

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Bulgaria | <input type="radio"/> Belgique/België | <input type="radio"/> Česká Republika | <input type="radio"/> Danmark |
| <input type="radio"/> Deutschland | <input type="radio"/> Eesti | <input type="radio"/> Ellada | <input type="radio"/> España |
| <input type="radio"/> France | <input type="radio"/> Ireland | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Italia | <input type="radio"/> Kypros |
| <input type="radio"/> Latvija | <input type="radio"/> Lietuva | <input type="radio"/> Luxembourg | <input type="radio"/> Magyarország |
| <input type="radio"/> Malta | <input type="radio"/> Nederland | <input type="radio"/> Österreich | <input type="radio"/> Polska |
| <input type="radio"/> Portugal | <input type="radio"/> România | <input type="radio"/> Slovenija | <input type="radio"/> Slovensko |
| <input type="radio"/> Suomi/Finland | <input type="radio"/> Sverige | <input type="radio"/> United Kingdom | <input type="radio"/> FYROM |
| <input type="radio"/> Hrvatska | <input type="radio"/> Norway | <input type="radio"/> Iceland | <input type="radio"/> Serbia |
| <input type="radio"/> Türkiye | <input type="radio"/> Brazil | <input type="radio"/> China | <input type="radio"/> Russia |
| <input type="radio"/> Ukraine | <input type="radio"/> India | <input type="radio"/> Other | |

Please specify the name of the country

5. How well do you know the Adriatic and Ionian macro-region?*

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Very well informed | <input type="radio"/> Fairly well informed | <input type="radio"/> Not very well informed | <input type="radio"/> Not informed at all |
|---|--|--|---|

6. How well informed are you about the EU macro-regional strategies?*

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Very well informed | <input type="radio"/> Fairly well informed | <input type="radio"/> Not very well informed | <input type="radio"/> Not informed at all |
|---|--|--|---|

7. Please provide your e-mail address

bxl@ven.camcom.it

Section II - EUSAIR NEEDS

8. What are the main (economic, environment and social) challenges and opportunities in the Adriatic and Ionian Region which would benefit from a macro-regional approach?

1,500 character(s) maximum

The main bottlenecks that could benefit from a macro-regional approach are the lack of awareness of a common natural and cultural identity and of an adequate infrastructural accessibility. A macro-regional approach should heighten the specific effects related to the economic, environmental and social aspects that towards common actions. The environmental and economical challenges in the Adriatic and Ionian region can be considered as complementary, since their main aim attains to the creation of an integrated transport system for the whole area (economic challenge), as well as making this integrated transport system widely sustainable (environmental challenge); the transport of goods will be a key issue. Moreover, enterprises have to face the challenge of the market enlargement in an highly-competitive context, which is nowadays spreading outside of territorial and district borders, to which SMEs were accustomed to. In this perspective, networking among SMEs can represent a chance to spread in the international context through a successful model of commercial development. Pulling down the economic barriers in the Balkan area would lead to a stronger social cohesion, not just at the EU level but also at the EU/non-EU countries level. A Macro-regional approach would thus strengthen the role of the Adriatic-Ionian basin, not only as an important part of the Mediterranean Sea, but also as a cross-cooperation strategy between the Southern and the Central European area.

9. What are the main administrative and governance challenges in the region (in particular with focus on macro-regional cooperation)?

1,500 character(s) maximum

The administrative and governance capacity of the different regions, municipalities and authorities involved in the area are currently uncoordinated, unbalanced and sometimes contrasting with each other. Due to the cultural, linguistic and historical barriers separating countries and regions facing the Adriatic and Ionian shores, EU targeted instruments, such as EUSAIR, could actually embody the crucial point of convergence in order to solve the main challenge presented by the hardship of joining administrative labels and regulations, creating a stronger regional governance and shaping a shared identity. In this regards, for what concerns the challenge presented by an Adriatic and Ionian governance, a major focus on a convergent and coordinated communication strategy should allow a better macro-regional cooperation, with joint coordination mechanisms and communal decision making on projects. From the point of view of Veneto Region, the most relevant administrative and governance challenges in the Adriatic and Ionian macro region would therefore derive from a widened cooperation, exchange of information, best practices and mutual control.

10. How can the cooperation and coordination across national borders / at transnational level be improved in the region?

1,500 character(s) maximum

The bottom-up approach is necessary to identify the problems and needs of the area. To strengthen coordination and cooperation between stakeholders, the creation of a network (or the interconnection of different networks) seems essential from a macro-regional point of view. This network shall include stakeholders from the private and public sector (Chambers of Commerce, the Enterprise European Network, professional associations, local authorities, etc). Furthermore, the required improvements are considered to be necessary for the attainment of the general objective of the strategy reported on the “discussion paper” on a EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region (EUSAIR): “administrative simplification and harmonization; good governance; mutual recognition of key common rules; identification of skills need and related vocational training education and life-long learning; research, technological development and innovation [...], environmental standards [...]; and a qualified and mobile workforce”. In some sectors, such as the transport one, workforce should not be referred to as a “knowledge level” but it shall be paired with physical infrastructures. Regarding logistics of the transport sector, we intend to suggest a stronger coherence with the Ten-T policy transport sector – where transport infrastructure is fundamental for the smooth operation of the internal market, for the mobility of people and goods and for the economic social and territorial cohesion of EU.

11. What are the needs in terms of funding and how to improve the use of existing financial instruments to achieve the objectives of the EUSAIR?

1,500 character(s) maximum

As the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region is composed by different actors and different levels of governance, the financial instruments will have to be heterogeneous. The Cohesion Policy and Regional Policy (in particular through the INTERREG instrument) might represent an important funding opportunity, but since the Macro-Regional Strategy involves also non-EU countries it is important to stress the possibility of a link with the EuropeAID funding opportunities (under the Neighborhood Policy Instrument or the Enlargement Instrument). The funding schemes should privilege the building (or renewing) of the infrastructures needed and the capacity building toward the non-EU members. Even the management of the four pillars of the Strategy (each of them managed by a Member State and by a non-EU Country) suggests the use of the Twinning scheme. Furthermore some proper financial instruments, tailored for the EUSAIR, shall be studied by the EIB and the EIF. To conclude, also the foreseen Horizon 2020 programme could be helpful regarding some environmental, transport and energy production challenges, as well as the COSME programme, which could be used to promote some projects on the sustainable tourism aspects. We underlined again the importance of the synergy with the TEN – T policy, in order to create the conditions for a competitive industry generating growth and job, through the implementation of new project proposals.

Section III - EUSAIR SOLUTIONS

12. What are in your views the main topics on which the EUSAIR should concentrate? (please indicate max. 2 topics per Pillar)

I Driving innovative maritime and marine growth

- Maritime clusters and research
- Blue bio-technologies
- Aquaculture
- Fisheries
- Seabed exploration
- Human capital

II Connecting the region

- Waterways, air, road and rail systems
- Intermodal nodes
- Security and safety of sea and inland transport modes
- Energy systems and security of supplies
- Increased use of renewable and clean energies, energy efficiency and savings

III Preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment

- Marine environment
- Quality of water, air and soils
- Biodiversity and landscapes
- Mitigation and adaptation to climate change
- Natural risks
- Spatial planning

IV Increasing regional attractiveness

- Adriatic-Ionian Region identity natural and cultural heritage
- Tourism
- Human capital
- Inclusion of disadvantaged groups

13. Please indicate any other topic that should be addressed by the EUSAIR

1,500 character(s) maximum

Since the strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region focuses the debate on tourism, sea economy, environment and transport, as well as two cross-cutting themes (innovation and capacity building), a higher level of cooperation is needed for a limited well-defined objectives, with appropriate tools to measure progress. The topic of conservation of the marine bio-diversity is pivotal in addressing the several economic activities to guarantee their sustainable continuity. In the field of tourism, the integration of the territorial resources, cultural heritage and environment are needed. The overall reinforcement of the accessibility of the area is peculiar, alongside integration processes among enterprises. Reinforcing the role of the macro-region improving the south-eastern European access through the elongation of the Baltic-Adriatic axis is fundamental for boosting attractiveness of the transport system, to favour the repositioning of the macro-region as a unique regional hub. The creation of clusters, platforms and maritime research networks should be encouraged, as well as the formulation of research strategies to promote innovation in the maritime transport, including energy saving, nautical sector efficiency, intelligent transport systems and traceability of products. Furthermore, the definition of a shared approach for the strategic planning of the coastal and maritime space should be coherent and inclusive, based on the regional needs of the included areas.

14. Which of the above topics might benefit from being considered together in an integrated approach?

1,500 character(s) maximum

Environment, clustering, transport, tourism and fishing might all benefit from being considered together in an integrated approach. More specifically, transport can directly influence and be influenced by a stronger and more efficient clustering and from a better management and tourist marketing targeting the overall area. In addition, a blue economy governance in the area, following common guidelines dealing with the environment would add additional relevant benefits. Additionally, transports are strongly related to all the other topics. If the transport sector collapses it would create a domino effect. In this particularly difficult time, we have the chance to reap the benefits of the institution of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region that could connect the area of 450,000 km², with approximately 60 million people from Italy, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. In order to facilitate the overall development of the Adriatic and the Ionian Sea, it is thus necessary to provide more and qualitative integration of transport in the area.

15. What are the main concrete actions and projects, which in the short to medium term, could contribute to fulfilling the objectives of the EUSAIR. (Please indicate max. 4 actions/projects)

Please select relevant pillar for action/project 1:

Pillar I Pillar II Pillar III Pillar IV

Action/project 1:

6,000 character(s) maximum

#1 LOGISTIC. 1. Reinforcing the role of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region improving the south-eastern European access through the elongation of the Baltic-Adriatic axis is fundamental for boosting competitiveness and attractiveness of the logistic and transport system, to promote the repositioning of the macro-region in the international context as a unique regional hub; 2. Infrastructures and procedures should be simplified in order to ease trade with south, central and eastern Europe, thus guaranteeing the rapid implementation of a maritime transport space with no barriers; 3. The energy-related dimension of the environmental impact of the transport system must be considered, since a macro-regional approach could have a positive impact on the overall accessibility; 4. Cooperation among national and regional maritime authorities and the European Union should be improved with the establishment of mechanisms to guarantee the exchange of information. 5. To improve the competitiveness of the logistics services offered by stakeholders of the different logistics communities located across the Adriatic basin as well as the accessibility of people and goods with a special focus on isolated and marginalized areas. In order to obtain this, an improvement of the HR skills should be sought with capacity building procedures; 6. Creation of networks (and/or clusters) dedicated to transports in order to strengthen and integrate regional transports systems in the Adriatic-Ionian basin and to promote, even through direct investments, intermodal connections; 7. Reinforcement of the intermodal connections. Connecting local ports with their hinterlands might represent a perfect solution for making transportation of goods faster; in this regard, involved regions still have many options to improve the logistic situation of the area. For example, Koper (SI) has one of the biggest railway nodes of the north-Adriatic basin; As a matter of fact, connecting the railway node of Koper to the other neighbouring Croatian and Italian nodes (Primorje-Gorski Kotar County and Friuli Venezia-Giulia), would improve the economical situation and infrastructure status quo of the whole area. Railway connections across regions would be reinforced: this would help in obtaining a strong, fast and more sustainable transportation of goods in the hinterland of the above-mentioned regions. "Transport on wheels" should not be considered the only solution for the hinterland transportation of goods in the planning stage of the macro-regional strategy. Airports as well should be well-connected to all the other transportation nodes; 8. Reinforcement of the connection between neighboring airports, to better distribute flights on a destination basis, having at least one airport exclusively focusing on local flights while other larger ones managing international and/or intercontinental flights. In this regard, the peculiarity of the Marco Polo airport in Venice would emerge as the biggest international hub of the whole Adriatic area. 9. Due to the consistent growth both in the number of passengers and freights, airports are becoming an increasingly important logistic hub. The valorization of passengers traffic in the area would rely on the reconstruction/adjustment of the airports affected by the project (Venice, Istria, Mostar, etc.), particularly highlighting the technical and infrastructural features, available services, connections among with cities, etc. ; the intensification and classification of existing traffic passenger flows, as well as the involvement of airlines and tour operators with the collection of feedbacks on the assessment of market potentials would also play a pivotal role; currently, no airline operates direct flight from Venice to Pula – Mostar and/or vice versa, therefore the launching of new routes would allow an overall revival of the market; As a matter of fact, the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of a possible tourist product and the development of strategies for future marketing need to be carried forward; 10. LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas): considering the Sulfur Cap that will be imposed to member States from 2020 on, and considering both the already existing LNG stations in Veneto and those the north-Adriatic basin will have in future (from one to five more LNG terminals), a common LNG strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region should be created. It is likely that this

specific type of fuel will be increasingly used in the future, especially after 2020, and a macro-regional approach could be a good opportunity to anticipate future changes during the planning stage.

Please select relevant pillar for action/project 2:

Pillar I Pillar II Pillar III Pillar IV

Action/project 2:

6,000 character(s) maximum

#2 TOURISM. 1. A specific action in the improvement of tourism in the macro-region would be the creation of a common branding for the Adriatic Ionian macro-region in line with recent European guidelines on the subject of tourism brands (EC COM (20 109 352 final) (following the input provided by the already existing common brand “Adrion”), which would consolidate a common image of sustainability and quality even through the sustainment to forms of cooperation and intercultural dialogue. This marketing program of the tourist product of the Adriatic Ionian macro-region should be also promoted through new technologies and social networks and through match-making strategic actions on target areas, such as the BRICS. It is clear that the success of a tourist destination (being it a single destination, an archipelago or a whole country) depends, nowadays, on the use of modern ways of communication: therefore, a study for an effective marketing campaign promoting a common quality brand for tourism in the whole Region might represent a chance to convince emerging social classes from enriched countries (above all: India, Russia and China, but also Brazil and some other Asiatic Country) to choose the macro-regional territory as their tourist destination. The success in such a promoting campaign could represent a real turning point for a sector suffering, at the moment, of the impoverishment of the “classic” customers, and, therefore, of the tourist offer, especially in the historically tourist destination such as the whole eastern coast of Italy. 2. Specific actions for the valorization of the most relevant clusters should be taken with the aim of increasing the interest of tourist for the products of the area of the Region. 3. Relevant specific actions for the valorization of the cruise and nautical tourism should be taken in order to build permanent linkages and sustainable processes of local development, developing smaller ports as new cruise ports as well as considering the growing dimensions of cruise ships, which might be a problem for the future of the Adriatic basin. 4. Creative and cultural industries should be sustained, stimulating the specialization of smart communities through the creation of Adriatic-Ionian thematic tourist platforms that would foster collaboration among the scientific community, public authorities and companies. 5. Promotion of policies of clustering between enterprises of the tourism industry at cross border level supporting the increasing quality and effectiveness of the tourism promotion to better harmonize different regulations. 6. To promote a cross-border open system of Administrations (at any levels), Institutions, and private enterprises for the tourism promotion of the Adriatic-Ionian basin as a whole. Creating the conditions in terms of services and tools for implementing member States – CC/PCC joint approach to the tourism promotion in a long term perspective. 7. To boost tourism stakeholders’ management capacities with specific regard to the tour operators of the Ionian-Adriatic basin Regions; 8. To increase the visibility of minor tourism destinations: - With micro-marketing networking activities, especially for cultural and natural landmarks, supported by the use of new technologies and the application of e-commerce tools in line with the new trends of holidays and trips’ buying procedures; - With shared micro-marketing regional actions alongside the existing macro-marketing policies related to tourism. 9. We recognize that the labelling and the quality system in tourism is characterized by fragmentation and by a lack of coordination. Therefore, we welcome the initiatives of the Commission aimed at finding new solutions to this problem. However, we also believe that a possible EU system in this field should not be opposed to local/regional labels. This is very important in order to guarantee the respect of the identity of tourism areas at local and regional level. These identities, in regions like Veneto, are very deep-rooted and they represent an important instrument of marketing.

Please select relevant pillar for action/project 3:

Pillar I Pillar II Pillar III Pillar IV

Actions/projects 3:

6,000 character(s) maximum

#3 AQUACULTURE. 1. A stronger multilevel governance for fishing, aquaculture and related activities for the development of the blue economy is an important strategy that should be pursued through an integrated approach. Accordingly, a shared management of fishery resources through best practices sharing and pilot actions planning would reinforce cooperation among the shores of the Adriatic and Ionian area, transferring strategic know-how. This would be possible thanks to the harmonization of decisional processes, rules and managing systems of the actors involved for the tutelage of the fishery resources with particular reference to the nursery areas. The traceability of the Adriatic-Ionian fishery products would benefit local and European consumers; The “use” of the sea as a resource should definitely be improved with a special focus on fishery. Furthermore the DG MARE presented a communication (COM(2013) 229 final) stressing the need of improving the aquaculture field in the immediate future. The project, putting together different shareholders of the Adriatic Ionian basin, would aim at raising the awareness on the use of the sea and promote a common regulation for the aquaculture. Therefore, the project should largely promote aquaculture: as indicated in the “discussion paper’ on a EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region (EUSAIR)”, “the development of a strong, high-quality aquaculture sector that is environmentally and economically sustainable has the potential to contribute to the creation of jobs and to the supply of healthy food products, respecting the EU and international rules”. Aquaculture might represent one of the most valuable ways to obtain that “sustainable economic and social prosperity [...] through growth and job creation”, addressed in the foretold ‘discussion paper’ as the general objective of the strategy. 1. Things that could be done to improve the situation: - To boost innovation in this quite traditional sector, in order to allow benefits for all the States of the basin, enhancing productivity and reducing the costs per unit of product. - To homogenize the red tape requested from the States of the region in the aquaculture sector. The region could be the first to obtain such an homogenization in the aquaculture sector, since the legislation of this sector is, nowadays, very different between the States of the Adriatic-Ionian basin. 2. Side-effects obtainable with the improving of the aquaculture sector: - The reduction of the amount of fish catches in the Adriatic-Ionian region, making the exploitation of resources more sustainable. - The creation of jobs, and the possibility for fishermen to convert their activities related to aquaculture in something more sustainable and, eventually, more profitable. This would help to fight the overcapacity issue of the fisheries sector in the Adriatic-Ionian basin. 3. Further considerations: - Aquaculture is a wide sector which involves different kind of farming fisheries. Not all of these fisheries have the same needs, and, therefore, the same sustainability: in particular, traditional farmed fishes need other fish to be fed with, and consequently have an impact (less or more relevant depending on the fish), on the fish stocks of European waters. Shellfish farming, on the contrary, don’t rely on fish resources, and shall thus be considered more sustainable than the other kind of aquacultures. North-eastern Italy and in general the northern area of the Adriatic sea have a very strong shellfish farming sector: especially Veneto and Emilia Romagna are the biggest producers of farmed shellfish of the whole region. Considering the very low impact of the shellfish farming on the environment the diffusion of this type of aquaculture in the Region might represent a good solution for producing fish proteins with low costs, both economically and environmentally speaking. Furthermore, the farming of unusual species of shellfish (e.g. clams) could result in a high volume of export of these species in the European territory and in the world.

Please select relevant pillar for action/project 4:

Pillar I Pillar II Pillar III Pillar IV

Action/project 4

6,000 character(s) maximum

16. Which are the main actors in the region that need to be involved in the implementation of the EUSAIR to ensure that it will run successfully (incl. issues such as relevant decision makers, project actors, financing sources)?

1,500 character(s) maximum

At the initial planning stage, both public and private stakeholders should express their opinions: while for the private sector a bottom-up approach could help to ensure the involvement of all actors, in the public sector a top-down approach is considered to be sufficient. All the public authorities involved in the Adriatic-Ionian region should participate in the discussion for the improvement of the EUSAIR strategy: in particular Transport, Tourism and Energy Ministries, Chambers of Commerce through the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chamber of Commerce, the Enterprise European Network, professional associations, Port Authorities and cities. Brussels Offices of the above-mentioned public authorities might help in connecting Macro-regional public stakeholders and EU institutions. It is essential a strong political leadership by the participating countries. As a matter of fact, participating countries have to recognize macro-regional strategies as the horizontal responsibility of the governments concerned. The Maritime Strategy for the Adriatic And Ionian Seas, adopted on November 30, 2012 will be thus integrated in the broader macro-regional strategy. Furthermore, DG REGIO and DG MARE will closely work together, the first one leading the macro-regional strategy while the second being responsible for the maritime component.

17. How can the administrative and governance capacity in the region be improved and what kinds of organisational arrangements are needed to implement the EUSAIR? (partnerships, coordination mechanisms, monitoring & evaluation, communication & visibility, decision making on projects ...)

1,500 character(s) maximum

Governance capacity can be conceived as a set of skills and resources that enable reform policies geared to the strategic aim of democracy and market economy. Nowadays the administrative and governance capacity of the different regions are very inhomogeneous and an effort should be taken to foster improvements of such situation. For what concerns the Veneto Region, in our opinion, improvements are needed in particular in the fields of communication, coordination mechanism (bottom up approach) and decision making on projects. In this regards, the adoption of online services and e-government solutions, including the production and utilization of open data, would be an asset. Moreover we suggest a strongly coordination concerning the Italian position of the main four thematic issues of the macro regional strategy. The role of the civil societies (in particular of Municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, the European Enterprise Network and Universities supported by the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative and by its Permanent Secretariat) can be of crucial importance both in the preparatory and in the implementation phase of the “European Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

Section IV – ADDED VALUE

18. How would the EUSAIR improve the situation? Please specify what results you expect from implementation.

1,500 character(s) maximum

The EUSAIR would improve the overall situation providing the region with frameworks based on the best practices of the different stakeholders involved, allowing a relevant step forward in the fields of communication, coordination mechanisms and decision making on projects. In this regards, EUSAIR would help recovering the cross-cutting function of culture as a peculiar instrument for local and regional development of urban regeneration, rural development and employment, towards the goal of promoting creativity and new innovative processes. Furthermore the EUSAIR could be the perfect framework where several forms of cooperation could be established. These would not just involve governmental institutions, but also the civil society, promoting exchanges and activities shared by the Chambers of Commerce, the Enterprise European Network, Universities and Municipalities. The whole strategy would have strong social effects: the renovation and connection of the different structures would reduce costs and improve the economic flow, providing a deep breath of fresh air to the local economy (which is to be considered one the final goals of the EUSAIR) and, hence, creating new jobs.

19. What would be the added value of the EUSAIR? Please specify the expected added value of the Strategy, as compared to individual actions to be taken in the countries or regions.

1,500 character(s) maximum

The Adriatic-Ionian macro-region would constitute a development of transnational and cross-border policy, to promote consistency between existing initiatives and enhance the strategic and structural content of projects. The conditions for the emerging of a macro-region in a European scenario exist because States and regions would engage common difficulties concerning transport, energy and innovation, which, so far, were unsolved. The EUSAIR would allow a deeper and wider cooperation between the actors involved. Thanks to the EUSAIR framework it would be possible to integrate the proposal for programs of transnational cooperation for the period 2014 – 2020, including a specific sub-program, which could directly support the strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-region. Last but not least, the involvement of four non-EU countries could represent the perfect occasion for them to reach EU standards for becoming a Member State, considering also that the specific non-EU area in which those countries are is, by now, surrounded by EU countries.

20. Please specify what extra benefits are there at the European Union level?

1,500 character(s) maximum

Due to the existing cultural, linguistic and historical barriers among regions facing the western and eastern shores of the Adriatic and Ionian seas, the European Union, through the enactment of targeted instruments for regional convergence for a more functional and balanced governance, can definitely represent a pivotal point of juncture for an improved exchange of information, as well as for the reinforcement of mutual cooperation at all levels. The major “extra benefit” for the EU consists on the fact that this kind of macro-regional strategy could be a first step towards a more inclusive Mediterranean strategy. It is not to be forgotten, by the way, that four out of eight of the Countries involved in the strategy are not part of EU, and this would boost their entering process in the European Union, harmonizing the whole area. A Mediterranean approach is surely recommended in the future, but the current situation of the North African States does not allow the EU to schedule a setting-up plan for this kind of strategy. For this reason, the Adriatic-Ionian strategy should be helpful for further cooperation on similar topics.

Section V – FURTHER THOUGHTS

21. Any further comments of relevance for the development and implementation of the EUSAIR?

1,500 character(s) maximum