



FORUM and ASCAME signed the Memorandum of Understanding



On the occasion of the ASCAME's 25th Anniversary (Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry), that took place in Barcelona (Spain) from 11th to 13th November, the Memorandum of Understanding by the above mentioned Association and the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce was signed.

This agreement aims at fostering the bilateral cooperation between the two associations aiming the initiation of activities in favour of socio-economic development in the Adriatic-Ionian area and in the whole Mediterranean basin, in accordance with their mutual Charter purposes also in view of joined promotion initiatives through transnational and transborder cooperation instruments provided by the European Union institutions.

The Memorandum of Understanding represents an occasion for the economic and strategic growth of the concerned basin, in accordance with the EU trends and constitutes a concrete application of the EU Neighbourhood Policy. The relations with ASCAME, started on the occasion of the 18th General Assembly held in Istanbul on July 3rd 2007 with participation of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, member of the Association, were further strengthened

thanks to the presence of Mr Eren Paykal as ASCAME's representative to the 8th Forum edition in Makarska from 22nd to 24th April 2008.



NEXT EDITION

- 9th Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce
Agrinio (Greece) 27th-29th April 2009

Layout: Valeria Mozzicafreddo
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“Settlement of disputes in the Adriatic-Ionian area through mediation and arbitration” Training course

On 12th December 2008 in Zagreb, a training seminar on “Settlement of disputes in the Adriatic-Ionian area through mediation and arbitration” took place at the seat of the Croatian Chamber of Economy. The initiative arises from a collaboration between the Arbitration Chamber “Leone Levi” of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and the Permanent Court of Zagreb, for a long time involved in drawing up training plans at a high level about Alternative Dispute Resolutions (ADR) both national and international. The aim of both the Chambers is to share the acquired experience and moreover to give a contribution to the development of a conciliation and arbitration culture as well as to enhance the best practices gained in management of very complex cases. The initiative - directed to Chambers’ officers in charge of law and contract matters - was an important occasion to come to a closer look at conciliation and arbitration proceedings, considered as invaluable instruments for quick and valid settlements of trans-border controversies as well as value added drivers for

increasing transactions among the Adriatic-Ionian operators. The training joined theoretical analysis with concrete cases management and the solution of the main controversies in an international context. In order to achieve this goal, the teachings were delivered by highly experienced and well prepared scientific professionals, assuring a methodology marked by the debate and confrontation among the participants.



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The accreditation of the FORUM in Brussels goes on

On March 16th and 17th a Forum delegation met in Brussels some representatives both of European Parliament and European Commission. The mission has represented the chance to go on with the accrediting action of the A.I.C. Forum to the EU institutions, started since 2007, on the occasion of the formal introduction of the Association to EU Parliament. At the meeting with the Hon. Catuscia Marini, representative for MAGHREB Countries, the Memorandum of Understanding with ASCAME was illustrated. The mentioned agreement aims at promoting initiatives and programmes addressed to the development of the Countries operating in the Balkan and



Mediterranean area.

As for the meetings with European Commission representatives, targeted to go thoroughly the chances given by the means of the Adriatic territorial transborder co-operation (IPA), appointments were made with Mr Ballette, operating point of contact for IPA, Ms Fausta Corda, for the Directorate General Regional Policy and Mr Francesco Ianniello, Chief of the Tourism Unit – DG Enterprises.

The last meeting was particularly interesting in order to get acknowledgement of the EU policies about sustainable tourism under the economic, environmental and socio-cultural point of view.



AIC FORUM & ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE

Presentation of the AIC Forum to the Committee of National Coordinators of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative

The meeting of the Senior Officials Committee of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (A.I.I.) took place in **Athens on 28th January 2009**.

The Initiative established on the occasion of the Conference for Development and Security in the Adriatic, which was organized in Ancona on 19th and 20th May 2000 and saw the participation of Italy, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece and Slovenia, contributes to promote political and economic stability and thus creates a solid base for the European integration process.

The Initiative decision-making body is the Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs (i.e. Adriatic-Ionian Council), whose works are prepared by periodical meetings of the Senior Officials Committee in charge of

coordinating all A.I.I. activities.

The meeting of Athens involved the presentation of the programmes and activities of all Adriatic and Ionian Forums and was an excellent occasion to officially present all organisms.

The meeting was also attended by a representative of the Ansa press agency, who presented a proposal concerning the creation of a communication platform for the Adriatic and Ionian area, as well as by a representative of the Greek Civil Aviation authority. The latter illustrated a network project on air transport and by a representative of the European Commission in order to identify possibilities of interaction between the same Commission and the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative.

International Conference for an Adriatic-Ionian development strategy The AIC Forum presents its activities

The Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce was invited to give its contribution to the "International Conference for an Adriatic-Ionian Development Strategy", which was held in Corfu on 13th February 2009. The conference was organized by the Greek Presidency of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative and gathered representatives of the governments of the A.I.I. member countries (i.e. Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia), as well as businessmen and academics, in an effort to identify international cooperation methodologies and promote them among people working in the field.

The invitation to the AIC Forum enabled the Association to present its activity, which has always been focussed on international cooperation, communication and dialogue among the countries on both shores of the Adriatic and Ionian seas. In particular, the AIC Forum reference person

Mr. Davide Frulla highlighted the recent developments of the programming activity carried out within the Workgroup for Tourism.

The philosophy pursued by the AIC Forum is perfectly in line with the objectives of the conference, i.e. the adoption of ever closer collaboration strategies between the A.I.I. countries, in order to guarantee a more effective link to the European policies devoted to the development of the entire region.

Italy was represented by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Alfredo Mantica, who stressed once again the importance of decentralized cooperation, especially as regards the cooperation between the local bodies of the Adriatic-Ionian area, universities, chambers of commerce and their networks. The above are therefore the guidelines, which will be followed by the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative starting from next June, when Italy will succeed Greece in the A.I.I. Presidency.

A.I.I. Secretariat and Adrlon Project

Last March 23rd, the Adriatic Ionian Initiative Secretariat called a meeting to open a discussion on the follow up of ADRLON Project, arisen at the Workgroup on Tourism of the A.I.C. Forum.

The idea of identifying and utilizing a tourist brand representing the whole area was introduced to the Senior Officials Committee during the I.A.I. meeting held in Athens last January 28th and it achieved a widespread consent by all the Members.

As a matter of fact, the proposal of the Adrlon brand is strictly tied up to one of the I.A.I. priorities, that is the sustainable tourism development in the Adriatic-Ionian area. On account of the interest came out either from

the Members and the economic and tour operators during the meetings, the I.A.I. Senior Officials Committee welcomed the project and stated to study it as well as to submit it to every Member State for a financing.

On account of 2007-2013 EU programmes and the concerned instruments for the Adriatic area – in particular the mean IPA-CBC on the Adriatic territorial trans-border co-operation –, the 23rd of March meeting focused on the chance to introduce the ADRLON Project as a shared one by the Italian Regions and to get contribution and proposals by the participants as well.



WORKGROUP ON TOURISM

AdrionTouR project takes off

On 30 January 2009, the AdrionTouR (Adriatic Ionian Tourist Routes) kick-off meeting took place at the Ancona Chamber of Commerce. The project, financed by the Marche Region (Law n.9/2002), sets its goals in the boosting of the Adriatic and Ionian area tourist offer, in the promotion of a new-unique image of the Adriatic-Ionian area as well as integration among the tourist offers on the opposite side of the Adriatic and Ionian Sea, in the development of tourism-bound economics in the target Countries (Italy, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Greece,

Croatia and Slovenia).

The activities of the project include lay out of a standard system of rules to qualify the tourist offer under the Adrion trademark, setting of a promotion plan for the circulation of the trademark, and support for the organization of seminars to improve tourist operators' skills.

Speaking at the meeting, Mr Alessandro Grafini, Secretary General of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative, former Ambassador of Italy in Croatia, showed his interest on AdrionTouR project and shared the project plan of action completely.

Milan: the AIC FORUM presents the results of a study on the promotion of the ADRION tourist brand at BIT

A conference on the promotion of tourism in the Adriatic-Ionian area was held at the Marche Region stand on the occasion of the International Tourism Exchange BIT on Friday, 20th February last. The conference was attended by the Forum Workgroup on Tourism.

The Forum presented the results of a study on tourist flows in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region and highlighted the extraordinary capacity of the area to attract international tourists. A recent survey on multi-country tourist packages has furthermore shown that there already exists a good offer of this kind of integrated holidays in the same area.

These packages, which have already been experimented on the market, mainly consist of itineraries in the Eastern Adriatic area or cruises along the coast. The survey also

highlighted tourist operator's strong interest in participating in the communication activities linked to the promotion of the Adrion brand, which in their opinion should aim at a differentiated tourist offer based especially on cultural and food and wine tourism, as well as on nature/adventure tourism.

The conference was also the occasion to present the future activities of the financed "AdrionTouR" project, which aims at the promotion and diffusion of the Adrion brand: initiatives include an educational tour, which will see the participation of journalists from foreign specialized magazines and international tour operators, in order to better promote the territory and make it more well-known in the foreign press and among foreign journalists.

Workgroup on Tourism meets the Adriatic and Ionian tour operators

Forum Workgroup on tourism met in Split (Croatia), on 6th February 2009, tour operators from the opposite shore interested in the development of multi-country journeys in the Adriatic and Ionian area.

The aim of the meeting was to work out jointly a plan to

promote integrated tours under the "Adrion- Adriatic and Ionian Lands" trademark. The Workgroup on tourism explained to the attendants the guidelines for the brand adoption and presented the schedule of the following months starting - brand promoting projects.

WORKGROUP ON FISHING AND AQUACULTURE

The Forum promotes the meetings of the ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea)



On the occasion of the 69th edition of the International Fishing Fair from 18th to 23rd May 2009, the city of Ancona will be the venue of important meetings organised by ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea). ICES is the most important international body worldwide, which deals with the coordination and promotion of sea research and specifically focuses on fisheries. The ICES scientific community can boast over 1,600 researchers from more than 20 different countries. The scientific opinions provided by ICES workgroups are used both by member states and management bodies, like the European Commission, in order to guide community mana-

gement policies in the drawing up of new regulations. The ISMAR Institute for Marine Sciences at the Italian Research Council, Ancona office, is working together with the regional trade fair company Ente Regionale Fiera della Pesca for the organization of the following two meetings: WGFTFB (Working Group of Fishing Technology and Fishing Behaviour) and WGFASST (Working Group of Fisheries Acoustics, Science and Technology). The Forum is promoting this initiative and promotes participation by major researchers from the Adriatic and Ionian area, who are invited to present their contributions within the Working Group of Fishing Technology and Fishing Behaviour.

“Incentives and contributions for fishing enterprises and cooperatives. 2007-2013 European Fisheries Fund EFF and 2007-2013 Instrument of Pre-Accession – IPA”



The Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce and the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with the Marche Region, organized a free-of-cost training day, which will be held at the premises of the Ente Fiera Marche trade fair centre on 28th February 2009 under the title: “Incentives and contributions for fishing enter-

prises and cooperatives. 2007-2013 European Fisheries Fund EFF and 2007-2013 Instrument of Pre-Accession IPA”. The initiative aims at promoting and raising awareness on the opportunities for the fishing sector in the Adriatic-Mediterranean area, with special reference to the European IPA programme.





WORKGROUP ON ENVIRONMENT

Ancona Chamber of Commerce signs a Memorandum of Understanding with ARPAM

On 26 January 2009, Ancona Chamber of Commerce and ARPAM (Marche Regional Agency for the Environment Safeguard) signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

Both the subscribers have pointed out mutual interests on environment and have carried out joint initiatives and collaborations for a long time for the spreading of an environment friendly culture by the entrepreneurs. The Permanent Workgroup for Environment of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers FORUM and the Local EMAS School Committee give evidence on this.

With the signature of the agreement the bodies intend to continue the relationships set up in the past in order to support and promote a sustainable development pattern. It is a shared assumption that the Memorandum will keep the economic growth abreast of the environmental safeguard. The AIC Forum activity will give its support on the awakening of the FORUM member countries sensitivity on ambient through the projects of the Workgroup on Environment.



WORKGROUP ON AGRICULTURE

Course on Physiological Eligibility for the Tasting of Virgin Olive Oils



The 8th edition of the AIC Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Economic and Ionian Area held in Makarska (Split) highlighted the need to train expert professional olive oil tasters and establish cultural and economic relations between Italian and Eastern Adriatic olive oil producers, thereby enhancing the exchange of know-how on good practices between entrepreneurs who are active on both shores.

After one year the project has been implemented with the organization of a double professional course for virgin olive oil tasters (see below for related details).

These courses do not only provide participants with professional skills that can be adequately used on the international market, but they also provide for a moment of analysis and an occasion to elaborate a common strategy to meet the needs

of the sector.

The olive oil production sector has always been particularly interesting for the Province of Ancona, as well as for all economic entities of the Adriatic-Ionian basin. The main objective today consists in the firm decision to turn these productions into certified quality productions, as certified quality is undoubtedly the most important tool to safeguard the agriculture (and thus also the economy and the traditions) of the countries of the area, as well as a fundamentally important competitive leverage. As a matter of fact, the opening of Balkan markets to the nearby EU poses problems of direct competition between European and domestic productions; yet, it is Europe that brings very interesting opportunities in this field: the European "neighbourhood policy" favours cross-border and territorial cooperation between bordering areas.



The objective of an Adriatic Euro-region has been set for the new programming phase of European structural funds, which have also focussed on rural development as one of the objectives to achieve, and on the agricultural firm as one of the most important drivers for development.

Hence the need for a targeted and direct training pathway in the sector, as well as of a correct food education for the consumption of olive oil, thereby enhancing the growth of the relevant sector in those countries that, like Balkan countries, can boast a strong tradition in the production of olive oil as well as good economic development prospects in this sector.

The Chamber of Commerce of Ancona, together with the Marche Regional Board, the Province of Ancona and the Association for Adriatic Promotion and Economic Deve-

lopment PromAdria, as well as the Chambers of the Economy of Zadar and Split have organized two professional courses for olive oil tasters within the framework of the Workgroup for Agriculture of the AIC Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce, also thanks to the fundamental contribution given by OLEA (i.e. the Laboratory Organization of Experts and Tasters), specifically:

1) Basic course on physiological eligibility for the tasting of virgin olive oil – 2009 edition: in line

with what was organized last year, a new edition of the basic course has been organized with the aim of training additional professional tasters. This course was held between 1st and 5th April 2009, at the premises of the Chamber of Commerce of Split (Croatia).

2) Advanced 2nd level course and no. 20 certification sessions:

The course is targeted only to individuals, who have already received the 1st level tasting certificate; this initiative represents the second phase of the basic course organised last year in Zadar at the end of March. The advanced course was held at the Chamber of the Economy of Zadar (Croatia) between 29th and 31st March 2009;

It should be pointed out here that both courses have been carried out in compliance with the community norms under EC 2568/91 and 796/2002 regulations, and with the Italian Circular no. 5/99 of the Italian Ministry for Agriculture.

Course official languages: Italian and Croatian (simultaneous translation).

Organization:

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9th edition

Agrinio (Grecia)

27th - 29th April 2009



CHAMBER OF AETOLOAKARNANIA

The annual 2009 edition of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce will take place in Agrinio (Greece) at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Aetoloakarnania from 27th to 29th April.

The choice of Greece as the country to host the 9th edition of the Forum will make it possible for the AIC Forum Association to increasingly project itself into the Mediterranean.

The 9th edition of the AIC Forum will see the participation of representatives of European institutions, of the partnership networks with seat in Ancona (Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns and Uniadriatic Network), of the Permanent Secretariat of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative (A.I.I.), of the Marche Region, of the Province of Ancona, of representatives of

bodies and associations, as well as of consultants expert in the traditional topics dealt with by the AIC Forum Workgroups.

The three days of the event will be organised, according to tradition, as follows:

- **Meeting of the Forum bodies:**
Board of Governors, International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian Area, Board of Auditors;
- **Plenary session:**
 - Influence of the world's crisis on the Adriatic and Ionian countries
 - The opportunities for creation of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area.
- **Meeting of the Workgroups;**
- **General meeting of AIC Forum members.**

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HOW TO JOIN THE ASSOCIATION



JOINED BY THE SEA
Adriatic and Ionian Chambers Forum

Bodies and Organizations can join the Association as fixed in art. 2, par.3 of the Charter, by forwarding the Application Form through post, fax or e-mail, accompanied by the relevant decision of the competent body.