



FORUM
of the Adriatic and Ionian
Chambers of Commerce

Newsletter 2/2008



The FORUM of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce in Europe

The Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce was officially presented to the European authorities on the 19th and 20th September 2007 during a mini-plenary session of the European Parliament held in Brussels.

In this instance, a delegation of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and the Forum met the Vice President of the European Parliament - MP Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou. Members of the delegation comprised President Jadranka Radovanić, the Forum Vice President as well as President of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce Giampaolo Giampaoli, the Ancona Chamber of Commerce Vice President Rodolfo Giampieri, and the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and the Forum General Secretary Michele De Vita. Mrs Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, on behalf of the entire European Union, expressed her appreciation of the work done by the Forum. The meeting took place in the European Parliament under the title "The Euro-Adriatic dimension. A case of excellence: the Forum of the

Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce". A number of authorities including European MPs, European Commission officials, representatives of institutional and regional delegations in Brussels took part in the meeting. In addition to the European Parliament Vice President, other MPs reported to the EU Parliament. Among them there were Pasqualina Napoletano, Luciana Sbarbati, Antonio Tajani, the EU Italian Ambassador Rocco Antonio Cangelosi, Simona Gatti (from the General Direction of the EU Enlargement) and Ann-Kerstyn Myleus (General Direction of the Regional Policy) both from the European Commission, the Director of Brussels Unionchambers Claudio Leone and, in the role of mediator, Enrico Tibuzzi, from Ansa Brussels. This event was very important because it has in fact begun the European accreditation of the Forum with the EU institutions. This achievement will allow closer relations with the EU institutions in Brussels and will enable the Forum to take part in the European integration procedures as a main player. This Body will be able to be

NEXT EDITION

8th FORUM of the Adriatic and Ionian
Chambers of Commerce
Makarska (Croatia)
22nd-24th aprile 2008

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Chamber of Commerce of Ancona
Communication Department



an independent and autonomous legal subject candidate for EU programs and thereby will be able to participate actively in activities regarding cross-border projects. Moreover, it will allow the Forum to take part in EU periodic consultations dealing with specific topics of mutual interest. Furthermore, the Association accreditation will strengthen the European role of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce as an active institution in terms of trans-national and cross-border cooperation. The acknowledgment of the body in Brussels has in fact anticipated EU objectives in terms of both, cohesion and neighbouring policy. In 2001, the Ancona Chamber of Commerce signed a protocol agreement with the Split Chamber of Economy, which gave birth to the Forum Body. Thus since 2001, the Ancona Chamber of Commerce has promoted close relations based on project partnership and has favoured project activities related to economic sectors considered strategic such as maritime traffic, women's entrepreneurship, fishery and the environment. This was made possible by national and European measures (Law N.84/01 on the Balkans, European Interreg programs). Active participation in EU policies, as well as the presentation of feasible project plans for programs funded by the EU pre-adhesion funds (IPA funds) allocated for the future EU enlargement towards East-Adriatic countries, will enable the Ancona Chamber of Commerce to budget for further projects aimed at developing enterprises in its provincial territory which operate within the Adriatic area.

Strategic bilateral meetings with official European institutions were held, together with the official presentation of the Forum Association to the European Parliament. During these meetings, the delegation received precious directives and technical suggestions as to the possibility of using financial opportunities offered by the EU for the 2007/2013 period. Among the people who attended these meetings were Giannantonio Ballette (European Commission – Enlargement General Direction – Contracts and Finance Unit), Fabrizio Di Michele (EU Italian Representative – Ministry of Foreign Affairs – referent for the Balkans) and Tania Friederichs (European Commission – Research General Direction – International Dimension for the VII Research Framework Unit).

During these bilateral meetings the Ancona Chamber of Commerce put the focus on those sectors considered to be a priority for the EU (i.e. technological innovation) and for which



the Body has already submitted some project proposals. The ITAC (Technological Innovation for Competitiveness in the Adriatic Area) project, which is aimed at promoting interchange between the research and the entrepreneurial worlds, attracted a lot of interests. This project is run by the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, in its role of being the representative of all Italian chambers, and is funded by the Interreg IIIA program. The Ancona Chamber of Commerce will be able to continue fostering the development of the technological sector by submitting further project plans funded by funds allocated for pre-adhesion policies and VII Research Framework Program (Cooperation program and Capability program). In this way, the Chamber will continue to apply the principles of the European industrial policy by helping and assisting enterprises in accordance with the EU directives stated in the European Charter for SMEs – the main European propulsive force of innovation, occupation and local and social integration. For the ITAC project, the Ancona Chamber of Commerce will not only collaborate with the academic world, but it will also try to export the entrepreneurial model of the Marche Region via a strong SME network. This model, which will be introduced to the other side of the Adriatic, should help the promotion of an efficient and successful system in other territories, as well as facilitating the exchange among different markets.

The commitment shown by the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and the Forum Association will help to create a favourable background for enterprises via an action aimed at stimulating

entrepreneurial attitude and at using the many financial opportunities offered by the EU programs. More specifically, there are plans to hold a workshop in Ancona at the beginning of 2008 chaired by Ms. Tania Friederichs (European Commission – Research General Direction – International Dimension for the VII Research Framework Unit). She has already agreed to offer her technical support for the analysis of feasible project proposals in line with EU parameters. The institutional mission was meant not only to begin the process of the Forum accreditation in Brussels, but also to consolidate the relationship between the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and the European Commission started in the 2006. This is a fundamental achievement given that it has been the EU itself that asked the Chamber System to have a more active and strategic role in managing financial assets – for instance, the structural funds for the support of territories and enterprises.

The various institutional meetings that took place during 2006 and 2007 in Brussels were very useful in terms of information exchange. This information was necessary for the development of more efficacious actions, which would have had less of an impact on local territories if carried out singularly.

The participation of the Forum with the Ancona Chamber of Commerce to the Open Days (the European week dedicated to the regions) where the Unionchambers' Round Table is scheduled since 2006, proves the fact that the socio-economic development of territories is based on European polycentricism of the existing networks.

In this context the Chambers of Commerce with the Regions can and must work together for creation of new partnerships' model that considers the Europe as privileged seat for the development of common actions.

On the occasion of the 8th edition of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce which was held in Makarska (Croatia) from 22nd to 24 April 2008 this topic was further discussed and because of its relevance, the Forum was awarded the European Parliament patronage both for its 7th edition in Ancona and for its 8th edition in Makarska. The last edition of the Forum represented an ulterior session for strengthening the accreditation path started in Brussels.

The event, in fact, was held in Croatia, the first of the Countries members of the Forum that is proposed as candidate to the European Union. It represented an important occasion to alert the public authorities, the private sector and all the interested economic-social realities to the pre-adhesion strategy that each country of the area will have to adopt to become a member of the European Union.



The European Union in Ancona

Workshop "7th Framework Programme for Research and Development"

Ancona 29th february 2008



The European Union attributes a pivotal role to innovation for the competitive development of SMEs and supports the ITAC project to strengthen existing links between the world of research and the entrepreneurial world.

A large number of participants was registered for the workshop which was organized by the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona and the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce within the framework of the ITAC project that has been co-funded by the European Union for the Interreg IIIA-NPPA Programme.

Enterprises, the local Polytechnic University, the Marche Region, the Province of Ancona, the Chambers of Commerce of Durrës (Albania) and Eto-loakarnania (Greece), the Chamber of Commerce of Užice (Serbia), as well as research centres and professional associations actively participated in



the meeting, which provided a fruitful occasion for the exchange of ideas and experiences. The aim of the initiative was to offer enterprises, the research sector and public bodies the occasion for a detailed analysis of the main priorities set by the above community programme and of possible project proposals, which can be initiated in specific technological sectors and might have important repercussions on the economic system of the Marche Region and the Adriatic-Ionian area as a whole.

The 7th Framework Programme foresees investments in several fields: cooperation, health, biotechnologies and the food and wine sector, infor-



mation technology, nanotechnologies, alternative forms of energy, transports and security. The above are all sectors of strength for our territory, which however require more collaboration and coordination.

To date, SMEs, bodies and research centres have shown little participation in European projects. In order to bridge this gap the President of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce Mr. Giampaolo Giampaoli invited Ms. Tania Friederichs, reference person of the European Commission for research, who illustrated and encouraged participation in the EU framework programme. The European project ITAC (Innovation Technology for Adriatic Competitiveness) is a good example of programming. This project sees the Ancona Chamber of Commerce as the lead partner of a group of chambers of commerce from Italy and the countries of the Adriatic-Ionian area, which have committed themselves to enhance businesses' technological innovation. The increased collaboration between SMEs, universities and research centres can lead to a new competitive strategy for an important process of change.

It emerged from the meeting how necessary it is to work in synergy with all local players, in order to seize the various opportunities available and use the numerous financial possibilities offered by community programmes. The participation of Ms. Tania Friederichs was an important occasion to consolidate the process started in Brussels by the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and the Forum to establish systematic relations with the European Union.

The workshop has indeed strengthened relations with the EU and is the result of the presentation of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce to the European Commission, which took place in September 2007 last.

Giampaolo Giampaoli pointed out that: *"Today's meeting has been of fundamental importance and made us all aware of the resources made available by the European Union to favour the process of integration of the Balkans in the 2007/2013 programming period, as well as of the challenges that the Chambers of Commerce involved must face in view of the EU future*

enlargement to the Mediterranean. As for these ambitious objectives, I really hope that we can continue working in synergy with all local players and the entrepreneurial system, so that we can start together innovative initiatives that help increase the competitiveness of both local SMEs and the entire economic system".

Together with the ongoing initiatives and activities within the ITAC project, these issues were further investigated and dealt with on the occasion of the last edition of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce, which was held in Makarska in Croatia, from 22nd to 24th April 2008.



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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.