



# FORUM

delle Camere di Commercio dell'Adriatico e dello Ionio  
of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce  
Gospodarskih Komora Jadransko-jonskog područja

## Newsletter 2/2010



Under the patronage of the European Parliament



# Tenth anniversary of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce Forum

**Ancona, 26th-28th May: Portonovo, Mole Vanvitelliana and Loggia dei Mercanti**

Ten years after its foundation, the Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area, international association with its secretariat at the Ancona Chamber of Commerce (which brings together economic bodies of the Adriatic macro-region), has celebrated its plenary anniversary with a particularly well-attended meeting with a wealth of content. Here are a few numbers from 2010 edition of the AIC Forum, which took place in Ancona: 37 the number of member Chambers of Commerce, representing 7 countries and almost 300 participants.

The Bay of Portonovo, the Mole Vanvitelliana, decorated for the occasion, and the Loggia dei Mercanti, symbolic places which sum up the cross-border vocation of the city, were much admired by foreign guests.

Marking of the Ancona Forum, which has only just ended, was not only the opening to the sea and the socio-economic integration between people and countries who came along, but also the European spirit, the awareness of being part of a Union which offers possibilities for growth



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In our next issue:  
The AIC Forum participates in the 3rd "Giro d'Italia of women entrepreneurs"  
Certification sessions for olive oil tasters – Split and Rovinj (Croatia)





and visibility, and in which we must present as a compact Macro region.

Moreover, the AIC Forum association has been close to Europe ever since its debut and has justified itself within European institutions by managing to participate as a protagonist in integration processes and community programmes as an independent legal person. The tenth edition of the AIC Forum obtained the patronage from the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the European Commission – Italian Representation Office. Numerous were the European parliamentarians and representatives of other European institutions

present at the Ancona meeting, beginning with the President of the EESC, Mario Sepi (who requested a specific meeting on the subject of credit and innovation), and Eurochambres; it is no coincidence that this tenth plenary session of the Forum has seen the beginning of the work of a specific working group dedicated to EU project management.

If the link with Europe is stable and growing, the relationship with national and local institutions is also strong and decisive. The tenth meeting of the AIC Forum has seen the participation of national Unioncamere, represented by the President Ferruccio Dardanella, of representatives of other

partnership networks (the Uniadriion network of universities, the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns, Ascame, the Secretariat of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative) in addition to representatives from territorial institutions. Present were Gianmario Spacca, President of the Marche regional board, and the Mayor of the town of Ancona, Fiorello Gramillano, as well as the President of the Province of Ancona, Patrizia Casagrande, who on the final day of the Forum work officially announced the intention for the province she is heading to join the AIC Forum too.

"The idea for this Forum sprang up in the year 2000, following the signing of the Declaration of Ancona, i.e. the final document of the first meeting between Heads of State and Government and Foreign Office Ministers from the countries of the Adriatic and the Ionian Area. Ten years ago, at the first plenary meeting there were six of us. The meetings held over these last days and recent figures on the bodies and institutions that have recently joined the AIC Forum show the extent of our growth and of the new perception of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region, as a territorial, tourist and economic unicum" – these were the words pronounced by the President of the AIC Forum, as well as President of the Split Chamber of Economy, **Jadranka Radovanić**.

**The eleventh plenary meeting will take place in Montenegro in the spring of 2010.**



*"It has been a great pleasure and a privilege to accommodate the tenth meeting of the Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area" - this was the comment of the President of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and Vice-President of the Forum, Rodolfo Giampieri "Two five-year periods have passed, many things have changed, the international situations of today are very different from those that saw the birth of our association. The reality of our association has likewise changed; it has a greater number of participants and is more complex. Over the years it has developed and moved on, obtaining significant results and recogni-*



tion, even from European institutions, which today are our point of reference.

To our great satisfaction, the 2010 AIC Forum edition has been put on the calendar of initiatives that, on a European level, comprise the "European SME Week", i.e. a campaign developed by the European Commission, DG for Enterprise and Industry, with a view to encourage and support small and medium-sized enterprises in this particular time of crisis. The presence of the AIC Forum in our city is a valuable opportunity for our region, the opportunity to think of ourselves as a link for the area and to measure up with a vocation of historical crossroads benefiting from differences, which are compared and enrich one another.

There has been much interest on the part of the delegates to whom we have shown the production and economic quality of the region, organising visits to companies with sizeable production in the nautical and vine-growing sectors. Moreover, we also accompanied the foreign representatives

to the inland parts of the province, in particular to Montecarotto and to Jesi where the delegation was welcomed with an accordion concert in the tradition of Castelfidardo.

We consider it to be of prime importance to continue to present the macro-region as a whole to the European Union, informing the Brussels-based institutions of the characteristics and needs of our SMEs, and also committing ourselves to developing specific projects."

**Satisfaction was also expressed by the President of national Uniocamere, Ferruccio Dardanella:**

"The ten-years experience of the Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area, the results obtained, the participation in the work of this latest meeting in Ancona, confirm what we strongly maintain: the system of chambers of commerce can and must

function as an engine of cooperation and development between economies and territories, even outside national borders.

This is the aim and spirit which runs through even the recent reform of the Chambers of Commerce, begun with decree 23/10 last February, which has recognised Chambers of Commerce as "functional autonomous bodies", reinforcing specific jurisdictions, including actions in favour of internationalisation of businesses.

We must therefore be aware of our new identity, if we are to play an active part in the economic life of the Country and of Europe. With the reform a new legal reference came into being. It is not only the Chambers of Commerce, regional Unions, the national Unioncamere and the system structures which form part of it, but also the Italian Chambers of Commerce abroad and foreign ones in Italy. To play an active part therefore means to commit oneself to developing a continuous and collaborative dialogue, not only with the institutions but with all the other 'worlds' around us."





## Theme-specific workgroups: the results of the work

### Tourism

The effectiveness was noted of the “Adrion” project for the promotion of tourism and territorial marketing. This is a common umbrella trademark in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-area, which consists of multi-country package holidays distinguished by themed itineraries – from food and wine to spiritual journeys, from culture to sport – developed over the course of the last Forum meetings and started last March. It was decided to expand and develop the brand name Adrion to support private operators, sharing a reciprocal marketing strategy also with local comparator institutions, with the view of also supporting areas with less tourism and of facilitating faster identification of the Adriatic-Ionian tourist product characterised by a common historical and cultural identity. Participating at the Group was Jean Pierre Faure representing the European Economic and Social Committee. The project was enhanced with new tourist itineraries dedicated to the Environment, Sustainability and Social Integration, consistent with the priorities identified by the European Union.



### Women entrepreneurship

The Workgroup, coordinated by President Jadranka Radovanić saw the valuable evidence of Anna Danti of the European Commission for the development and promotion of Women Entrepreneurship and of the representative of the Regional Cooperation Council, Nand Shani. The workgroup announced the introduction of a competition aimed at innovative women enterprises of the Adriatic and Ionian Area, which will see the collaboration of the Province of Ancona and the patronage of national Unioncamere. Furthermore, women entrepreneurs have confirmed their acceptance of the Charter of Values. The assembly decided to organise the 5th Congress of Women Enterprises of the Adriatic and Ionian Area in Bosnia and Herzegovina, next Autumn: the initiative will be run under the title “Innovate to compete”.



### Transports

The Observatory on Transport has supplied interesting data on sea traffic in 2009 within the area of reference, also in light of the international economic crisis. Passengers' traffic has, surprisingly, maintained the volumes of previous years with +10% for cruises being achieved; on the other hand, as far as goods are concerned, there has been a reduction in traffic. Rail-sea intermodality has been identified as a tool to develop the ports of the basin with the aim of reaching consumer and internal production markets which are further away: a strategic choice in an environment where competition between port areas, both within the Mediterranean and outside, is noticeable.





## Fishing and Acquaculture

At the workgroup there was talk of sustainability and the reduction of energy consumption in the new light of Community, national and regional law, faced with problems that besiege the sector. The debate focussed on the possible solutions and technological innovations, which could be useful in reducing consumption and improving energy efficiency in professional fishing. Moreover, the presence of numerous obsolete fishing boat fleets and the problem of high fuel costs were highlighted. The spokes people for the Workgroup supported the adoption of sustainable criteria for fishing techniques, the defining of common regulations for the two Adriatic shores with a permanent System for integrated cross-border management, as well as the creation of a cross-border Governance in line with the principles of the Common Fisheries Policy and respect for local peculiarities.



## Environment

Workgroup on Environment, in which the representative of the Union of the Baltic Cities, Björn Grönholm, participated, a heated discussion developed from the illustration of the new European strategy for 2020; the debate highlighted how (economic, social, environmental) sustainability is today the driver for development and requires managerial models and innovative businesses, founded on collaborative judgement. The need emerged to develop innovative partnerships able to involve businesses, public players, civil societies and, where appropriate for the characteristics of the production line, international players too. Reflection developed on models of energy saving and efficiency in businesses: in this respect suggestions emerged relating to the achievement of company energy check ups and to the creation of specific credit lines for energy efficiency activities.



## Agriculture

The Workgroup on Agriculture tackled the theme of Italian and Dalmatian excellence and of their promotion and food safety. At the next course for wine and oil sommeliers a new training activity will be placed alongside; this will be dedicated to pork-butchery. The organisation of an advanced level course for education of a panel leaders has also been scheduled. The aim of the course is the creation of an officially acknowledged olive oil tasters group and the encouragement of different ways of collaboration that aims a diffusion of culture of a conscious high-quality olive oil consume. Moreover, a further project is about to begin. This is for the assessment and spread of awareness of the therapeutic and curative use of ancient medicinal herbs which abound in the region.







## Workgroup on credit

The President of the European Economic and Social Committee (an advisory body of the European Union), Mario Sepi, met with some representatives of trade associations and the banking world. The meeting highlighted the decisive role carried out in the province of Ancona by Confindi, i.e. the Credit Guarantee Consortia, and small banks whose market share increased by 4% in the Marche region in the last year, compared with a reduction in the market share of the large banks equal to 10%. The representatives of trade associations expressed the need for an assessment of the companies. This should be based, not on quantitative data, but rather on those intangible values represented by the history of the business and entrepreneur, the network of connections, the capacity to innovate and recognition in the markets. President Sepi declared that he would spread the main requests which had emerged throughout Europe, and in particular on the question of the difference between large and small banks (and the different effects produced by administrative norms aimed at the whole banking system) and on the need to make it easier for SMEs in relation to their own financial management.



## International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian Area

The International Court is an organ of the Forum, i.e. an institution created to meet the specific needs of the macro-region and guaranteed by the Chambers of Commerce of all the countries in the basin. It offers services of conciliation, arbitration, arbitrage and contractual surveying for the settlement of economic and commercial disputes. The Court met officially during the last plenary session of the Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area; it decided to continue with training activities already undertaken in previous years by organising an international course for arbitrators and conciliators which will take place in Greece, in Patras. Moreover, the Court announced a large international meeting on the subjects of Alternative Dispute Resolution. This will be held in Ancona on the occasion of the bicentenary of the founding of the Chamber of Commerce in the main town of the Marche region.



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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.