

# AIC Forum heading towards Eurochambres membership

**O**n 25th June last the Deputy President of the Eurochambres association Mr. Pierre Gramegna visited the Ancona Chamber of Commerce for a



meeting with AIC Forum representatives in view of the recent candidature of the AIC Forum as member of the prestigious European network of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

The ultimate goal of the meeting, which was formally requested by Eurochambres, was to openly discuss the actual motivations of the candidature and the organizational and economic tasks involved, should the request for membership in the network be positively accepted.

The meeting saw the participation of the Vice-President, Secretary and a representative of the Secretariat of the AIC Forum, as well as the official in charge of the Economic Development Department of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce accompanied by the official in charge of the EU Project Management and International Cooperation Department. The meeting also saw the participation of the AIC Forum President, who attended in videoconference mode from the Chamber of the Economy of Split. Interesting hints emerged from the meeting, which makes room for optimism with reference to the outcome of the candidature, in view of an ever closer collaboration between international networks and especially of a timely and particularly strategic institutional recognition of European macro-regions that are increasingly interesting for the chambers of commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian basin.

## Participation in the Ascame Arbitration Commission meeting



The 21st General Meeting of Ascame, the association uniting the Chambers of Commerce and Industry throughout the Mediterranean, is scheduled for 27th-30th October 2010. And along with the event, the ASCAME Arbitration Commission shall also meet, chaired by Mohamed Choucair, President of the Chamber of Commerce of Beirut. The items on the agenda include preparatory works to the setting-up of the Ascame Arbitration Centre. Ms. Frontini will also be attending the Commission meeting, presenting the experience of the International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian Area, set up with the main aim of facilitating businesses in cross-border transactions by providing them with suitable assistance and efficient support in the event of potential disputes. It also presents itself as an element of competitiveness and added value for the entire business system.



ASSOCIATION DES CHAMBRES DE COMMERCE ET D'INDUSTRIE DE LA MEDITERRANEE  
ASSOCIATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY  
جمعية غرف التجارة والصناعة للبحر الأبيض المتوسط

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### NEXT ISSUE:

**Patras (Greece), 13th December: Training session on "Conciliation and arbitration for dispute settlement in the Adriatic and Ionian Area"**

**Brussels, 14th October: European Parliament of Enterprises**

## HOW TO JOIN THE ASSOCIATION



**JOINED BY THE SEA**  
Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce

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.



## Participation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Economic and Financial Forum for the Mediterranean

On 12th July last the AIC Forum participated with one of its representatives in the 2nd Edition of the Economic and Financial Forum for the Mediterranean, which was held in Milan upon the initiative of the local Chamber of Commerce. Representatives of the European Union, the higher echelons of the Italian State, other institutional representatives and about 200 entrepreneurs from various Euro-Mediterranean countries participated in the event, which can now be rightly considered as a reference point for the "Union for the Mediterranean" initiative.



800 million inhabitants, a GDP growth ranging between 4 and 6%, also during the current period of international economic downturn, trade between the EU and the countries on the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean shore worth 250 billion Euros in 2009: these are just some of the major figures showing the high potential of the Mediterranean basin for the development of increasingly strong trade relations also with the enterprises of the Adriatic-Ionian Area.

It is thus particularly important also for the AIC Forum network to pay the utmost attention to this initiative in view of a possible future collaboration involving the system of chambers of commerce that can support the already ongoing process of economic and financial integration of the Euro-Mediterranean area, which can then lead to the implementation of a real free trade area also thanks the economic cooperation between micro-sized, small and medium-sized enterprises.

## WORKGROUP ON WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### 5<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Women's Enterprises of the Adriatic and Ionian Area



Under the auspices of:



With contributions from:



Provincia di Ancona

The 5th Congress of the Women's Enterprises of the Adriatic and Ionian Area will be held in Melugorje (Bosnia-Herzegovina). The Congress is promoted by the theme-specific Workgroup on Women's Entrepreneurship of the Adriatic and Ionian Area. The initiative goes under the title "Innovate to compete" and will take place on two days, i.e. 8th and 9th November 2010 with the participation of outstanding speakers who will focus on innovation as a major driving force for growth as well as main resource for global competition. The event will also be the occasion for the launch of the competition call for innovative women enterprises in the Adriatic-Ionian area. The contest, which has already been given the patronage of the Union of Italian Chambers of Commerce Unioncamere and sees the collaboration by the Province of Ancona, is in line with Community guidelines that have all too often highlighted the need to promote talents and encourage women's entrepreneurship. Statistics namely show that in the field of innovation women are faced with more difficulties. By way of example, the process innovation rate is 7.8% in men-run enterprises as against 4.1% in women businesses.

The call for competition therefore aims to be a useful tool to identify, support and stimulate, also indirectly, the value created by "enterprising women" in their business activity.

The Congress will also be the occasion for the approval and official launch of the Charter of Values of Women Enterprises, i.e. a voluntary tool available for women enterprises in the Adriatic-Ionian area for the promotion of ethical and responsible entrepreneurship. Also those chambers of commerce willing to enhance their initiatives and good practices in favour of enterprises can sign the Charter of Values. Both the contest and the charter of values to be launched during the 5th Congress of women enterprises are to be framed within the broader objective of sustainability and inclusive growth, with the aim of achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion.





Istanbul, 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> September 2010

# Participation in the first Forum for South East European Women Entrepreneurs



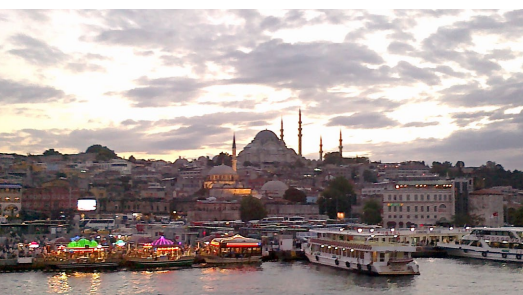
On 21st and 22nd September, Istanbul (Turkey) a representative of the AIC Forum attended the first Forum devoted to women entrepreneurs in South East Europe. The event was organised within the framework of the Greek Presidency of the South-East European Cooperation Process – SEECP, and was sponsored by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), the United

Nations – Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the KOSGEB.

The Meeting falls under the scope of the various activities envisaged by the project “Women’s Entrepreneurship – a job creation engine for South East Europe”, again promoted by RCC and UNECE and which was discussed during the event.

The various contributions made during the two days highlighted the desire to face up to the main issues encountered by women entrepreneurs of South East Europe on several different levels, both in institutional and entrepreneurial terms. Such issues include: a lack of support by government institutions, excessive administrative procedures, and lack of trust by women in their own entrepreneurial skills, difficulty in accessing information and credit, cultural barriers and the scarce possibilities of networking. And it

was precisely on this latter aspect that the intervention of the representative of the AIC Forum focussed, who, highlighting the situation of entrepreneurial relations in the Basin of reference in the speech entitled “Women’s Entrepreneurship – State of Affairs in the Adriatic and Ionian Area”, launched the Forum network and the works carried out within the Workgroup on women entrepreneurs as a real ‘best practice’ to all intents and purposes, declaring willing to share activities with other associations and/or institutions of other countries of the SEE in attendance. Important contacts were therefore made with the FYROM, Bulgaria and Serbia, in view of an involvement of these countries in the coming activities of the AIC Forum as from the next Congress on women entrepreneurs, scheduled for November 2010.



## 3<sup>rd</sup> “Giro d’Italia” of women entrepreneurs

The city of Cagliari, Sardinia, marked the official start of the third “Giro d’Italia” of women entrepreneurs on 15th September 2010, i.e. the itinerant event coordinated by the Union of Italian Chambers of Commerce Unioncamere and with the collaboration of Italian chambers of commerce and local committees for entrepreneurship, which aims at enhancing, supporting and promoting women enterprises. This year’s programme of the initiative foresees nine stages, all focussed on business transfer and generational turnover linked to internationalisation. The Pesaro stage on 30th September 2010 was organised under the slogan “Continuity, modernisation and internationalisation” in business management, with special focus on the role of women entrepreneurs. The event also saw the participation of a delegation of the Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area.

## INTERNATIONAL COURT OF THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN AREA Coming activities

Since December 2008, when the Cooperation Agreement was signed for the promotion of conciliation and arbitration in the Adriatic-Ionian Area, a great many activities have been carried out aiming to encourage not only the promotion of arbitration and conciliation procedures within the Area, but also the coordination of existing national operators in this territory, with a view to spreading use of ADR tools on an international level too, by involving the International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian Area.

The Bodies signing the Agreement (Leone Levi Arbitration Chamber, Ancona, Permanent Centre for Mediation and Zagreb Permanent Court), points of excellence in the tangible administration and management of arbitration and conciliation procedures in their respective countries,

undertook a structured training path in 2008. This aimed to spread the use of recourse to extrajudicial tools by which to solve commercial disputes on both a national and international level. On a secondary level, it also aimed to provide technical-legal information on conciliation and arbitration in order to make the assistance of operators dealing with disputes with their commercial partner, more efficient. After the first seminar held in Zagreb in December 2008, further meetings followed in nearby countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Montenegro and Albania) in 2009 and the first half of 2010. The success enjoyed by the last course held in Durrës (Albania) in December 2009 has encouraged the Forum to pursue the path undertaken. The next seminar is scheduled for 13th December 2010 in Patras (Greece).



## WORKGROUP ON AGRICULTURE

# International training course for panel leaders off to a good start

The training pathway for expert professional olive oil tasters developed within the AIC Forum Workgroup for agriculture has now reached its final stage.

After the organisation of basic courses on the physiological eligibility for the tasting of virgin olive oils, advanced training courses and the necessary training sessions to be awarded the second level certification as olive oil tasters held in both Zadar and Split, the Croatian Chamber of the Economy of Split in collaboration with OLEA (Laboratory Organization of Experts and Tasters – International School for Sensory Analysis and Food Culture) organized a training course for panel leaders in the period between 3rd and 7th September 2010. These are fundamental professional profiles for the correct guidance

of the group of judges carrying out the sensory analysis of virgin olive oils. The course was granted the patronage of the Croatian Ministry for Agriculture, the City of Split, the Province of Ancona and the Ancona Chamber of Commerce. Its aim is to provide training for panel leaders in compliance with the norms currently in force of the International Olive Oil Council, i.e. Doc. T20, thereby providing all the necessary technical and practical tools for the acquisition of specific knowledge

Panel leaders are expected to have consolidated professional skills and experience in the tasting of the various olive oil varieties. They are furthermore responsible for the Panel, i.e. of the official and professional tasting committee, its organization, functioning, preparation, coding



and presentation of samples to tasters, as well as of the abstract of data, their statistical processing and the drafting of the official tasting certificate. Panel leaders furthermore select tasters and provide for their training and the control over their actions, so as to guarantee and adequate level of abilities.

Lecturers in the proposed course included Panel Leaders and highly qualified national and International experts and university professors. The teaching methodology included theoretical lectures, practical classes and selection tests for the assessment of participants, as already envisaged by the International Olive Oil Council programmes, as well as in-depth lectures on topics of current interest.

## EU PROJECTING ACTIVITIES

# Final termination of the ITAC project following the financial extension granted by the European Commission: An example of best practice for the AIC Forum

In compliance with the European Commission's decision of 14th July 2009 authorizing for an extension in the final term for the eligibility of expenses related to projects financed within the Interreg IIIA Community Initiative – NPPA to 30th June 2010, and following the formal request by the Ancona Chamber of Commerce acting in its capacity of lead partner of the ITAC project (cod 151), in May 2010 the competent Managing Authority granted a time extension and subsequent financial extension for the implementation of new activities in view of the good spending performance of the project in comparison to the overall initial budget (with a final spent and reported amount equal to 899,659.41 EUR).

The ITAC project has been and still is an extremely positive example of how well an international network of chambers of commerce can work, indeed on a fundamental issue for SMEs competitiveness, i.e. innova-

tion and technological transfer.

The time extension of the project and the corresponding financial extension have made it possible to implement a series of activities, which can be seen as real follow-up actions of the original project that was initially terminated on 30th June 2009.

The final objective of the extension project has remained unchanged in comparison to the original one, i.e. establishing new forms of networking collaboration between chambers of commerce, public and private bodies active in the field of research and enterprises, thereby stimulating new projects, new innovative ideas, experimentation, development and the pre-engineering of new products and processes

All implemented activities were carried out in the first six months of 2010 and made it possible to actively involve some of the most important Italian and foreign project partners, as well as some of the local public and priva-

te stakeholders, both Italian ones like Unioncamere Veneto, Chambers of Commerce of Trieste, Ravenna, Teramo, L'Aquila; and foreign ones like Chamber of the Economy of Split (Croatia), Podgorica (Montenegro) and Durres (Albania).

Other partners followed, both chambers of commerce and other organizations. All of them shared the spirit of the project and more tangibly the implemented activities in view of a future collaboration and a constant technical exchange of views on the specific topic of innovation and technological transfer. It is worth mentioning here that this was possible also thanks to the fact that some of the initiatives carried out could be organised within the wider international framework of the AIC Forum 10th Edition, which took place from 26th to 28th May 2010.

Details over all implemented activities are available on the updated project website: <http://itac.seadriatic.net/>.

