

# The Forum joins Eurochambres

The Eurochambres members approved the AIC Forum application for membership in the prestigious international network



During the last meeting of Eurochambres, i.e. the European Association of Chambers of Commerce that was established in 1958 and is one of the main pillars to represent the needs of chambers of commerce before European Union institutions, members approved the AIC Forum application for membership in this prestigious international network. This marked the successful conclusion of the process of membership that was started in November 2009, when a mixed delegation made up of Italian, Croatian and Montenegrin representatives visited Eurochambres in Brussels and met the association Secretary-General Mr. Arnaldo Abruzzini and his staff to enquire about the possibilities offered by the Eurochambres network. This first contact meeting was followed by the AIC Forum official application for membership to the Eurochambres network. After the official application for membership the long procedure envisaged for new members foresaw the appointment of a rapporteur who had the task to assess check that the AIC Forum mission and activities are in line with the ones of Eurochambres and then to draft a final in-depth report to submit to network members' meeting. The rapporteur appointed by Eurocham-

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bres was Mr. Pierre Gramegna, who is the General Director of the Chamber of Commerce of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Deputy President of Eurochambres. On 25th June he visited the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and had the occasion to meet talk the AIC Forum President, connected in videoconferencing mode from the Split Chamber of Economy, as well as with the AIC Forum Deputy President Mr. Rodolfo Giampieri, the Secretary-General Mr. Michele De Vita, the

Head of Unit for Economic Development of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce Ms. Luciana Frontini, the executive in charge of the EU Project Management and staff members of the AIC Forum Secretariat at the premises of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce. During the meeting Mr. Gramegna posed several questions concerning the AIC Forum mission, implemented and ongoing projects, annual editions and theme-specific workgroups, as well as regarding the body member structure and financial soundness. A very detailed and well-structured picture emerged from the discussion to the full satisfaction of foreign interlocutor.

The approval of the AIC Forum application for membership plays a particularly important role also in view of the fact that our body is the first network of crossborder local chambers of commerce that has been admitted as members within Eurochambres, with the latter representing European chambers of commerce acting at a regional level, i.e. the chambers of commerce of France or Germany. The AIC Forum will have the opportunity to take advantage of a number of services and assistance, i.e. support in the organization of International events, the creation of other networking opportunities to exchange information and best practices, lobbying activity within European institutions to better represent the interests of European enterprises, etc. These services and assistance are particularly relevant and essential important to provide greater visibility to the Adriatic and Ionian chambers of commerce, help consolidate the AIC Forum network and finally support the development of the AIC Forum project management activity in a more timely and effective way in line with the needs of the enterprises and territories of the reference basin.



# Međugorje 2010

## 5<sup>th</sup> Congress on women entrepreneurship

Publication of the Call for the concession of prizes to innovative women enterprises of the Adriatic and Ionian area



The 5th Congress on Women Entrepreneurship held in Međugorje (Bosnia-Herzegovina) on 8th and 9th November 2010 saw the participation of about 120 attendees gathered at the Herceg Etno Selo Conference Centre and discussing around the topic "Innovate to compete". Outstanding speakers of the Congress first day included the member of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Ms. Katica Čerkez, Mr. Ante Mišković from the Ministry for Development, Enterprises and Handicraft of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Head of the Economic Planning Directorate of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Ms. Ljerka Marić, as well as Ms. Branislava Crnčević Čulić from the Agency for Equal Opportunities of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Ms. Mary Ann Rukavina Čipetić. The second day of the Congress focused on the exchange of best practices implemented by Adriatic and Ionian women enterprises and saw the launch of the first call for the concession of prizes to innovative women enterprises of the Area. The contest, which was given the patronage of the Union of Italian Chambers of Commerce Unioncamere and sees the collaboration of the Province of Ancona and the Croatian Chamber of Economy, is in line with

Community guidelines that have all too often highlighted the need to promote talents and encourage women entrepreneurship.

The initiative is targeted to all women enterprises of the Adriatic and Ionian basin (Italy, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia, Greece and Albania) with legal headquarters in the territories of the chambers of commerce and the chambers of the economy members to the AIC Forum. The prizes to be won include money for the first three enterprises and free participation in training activities for all participating firms. Applications must be sent in English to the Secretariat of the Workgroup on Women Entrepreneurship at the Ancona Chamber of Commerce using the forms annexed to the call no later than 1st February 2011.

Additional information, the regulation of the call and the form to participate in the contest are available in Italian, English and Croatian on the website of the AIC Forum Workgroup for Women Entrepreneurship <http://womeninbusiness.forumaic.org> under the "Initiatives and events" section or directly applying to the Secretariat of the Workgroup for Women Entrepreneurship of the AIC Forum – Tel. 0039 071 5898218; e-mail address: [segreteria.forum@an.camcom.it](mailto:segreteria.forum@an.camcom.it).



## 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the European Parliament of Enterprises

Brussels: Forum AIC bilateral meetings

On 13th and 14th October a delegation from the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, comprising the Chamber of Commerce President Mr. Rodolfo Giampieri, Secretary-General Mr. Michele De Vita and the Head of Unit for Economic Development Ms. Luciana Frontini went to Brussels for bilateral meetings held on the occasion of the second edition of the European Parliament of Enterprises. On 13th October the delegation met the Head of the Tourism Unit of the DG Enterprises and Industry of the European Commission Ms. Francesca Tudini; the Member of the European Parliament Mr. Francesco De Angelis from the delegation for relations with Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo; the First Advisor of Italy's Permanent Representation to the European Union Mr. Maurizio Greganti, who is in charge of "Western Balkans"; and the First Secretary of Italy's Permanent Representation to the European Union Mr. Alberto Petrangeli, in charge of "Enlargement". The meetings focussed on the presentation of the activities and projects of the Forum Association of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area, which were strongly appreciated for a number of reasons: they have not only been considered an example of best practice in the Adriatic-Ionian area and they have anticipated the guidelines of the European proximity and cohesion policy ever since 2001, but they have also shown the AIC Forum tangible participation in the IPA Programme calls for projects. The Brussels visit went on with the delegation attending the second edition of the European Parliament of Enterprises. The President of the Ancona Chamber



# Budva: All Round Table on SMEs

## AIC Forum participates in the Adriatic and Ionian Initiatives' Round table in Montenegro

The All Round table for the development of SMEs was organised in Budva (Montenegro) on 23rd and 24th November 2010 within the framework of the CIP (Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme). The Secretary-General of the Chamber of the Economy of Montenegro Mr. Pavle Radovanović, who was delegated to participate in the meeting on behalf of the AIC Forum, presented the latter as a major promoter of the economic development of the Adriatic and Ionian area in its capacity of network of chambers of commerce from crossborder countries. On the same occasion he also stressed the need to favour legal and administrative cooperation to harmonize the administrative procedures of the various countries in order to create the most favourable conditions for the development of a real entrepreneurial culture involving all local players. Mr. Radovanović also spoke about the activities promoted by the International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian Area.

The meeting aimed not only to reinforce

cooperation between All countries and Adriatic and Ionian SMEs, but also to share experiences and good practices. The Round table agenda also listed the assignment of a "Focal Point" role to the AIC Forum for the application of the All protocol on SMEs cooperation. Such a sought-after recognition helps the AIC Forum become the reference player of the All Workgroup on SMEs for the information activities concerning EU calls for projects and territorial cooperation programmes that might be relevant to the topics of interest for SMEs, as well as the promoter of partnerships between players who represent the interests of businesses, with special attention to the system of chambers of commerce and the economy, in order to develop working projects financed with resources from the European programmes of interest for the Adriatic-Ionian area. Within the All Workgroup on SMEs the AIC Forum can furthermore promote topics of interest for enterprises based on ideas emerged during its annual edition and theme-specific workgroups.

of Commerce and Deputy President of the AIC Forum Mr. Rodolfo Giampieri drew the attention of participants, and specifically of the Vice-President of the European Commission Mr. Antonio Tajani, who is in charge of the DG Enterprises and Industry, on tourism, which is a topic of major importance for the would-be Adriatic-Ionian macro-region. According to Mr. Giampieri, "we believe it necessary for European business players to be present on the markets outside Europe with an integrated image. In particular,



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we have stressed the importance of a single promotion activity of the European territory and of a European policy of tourism quality labels, which might contribute to promote high standards for services and the entire potential of the tourist system." The Forum of the Chambers of Commerce of the Adriatic and Ionian Area was referred to as a good example of the joint work of various European realities, as it is currently promoting the tourist identity of Adriatic and Ionian countries with the "Adriatic" multicountry tourist label at an international level. Mr. Tajani's reply focussed on a number of aspects of the European tourist policy, which aims at achieving the tourist integration of the various Member States, so that Europe can be considered as an international tourist destination especially by major countries like China and Russia. Mr. Tajani's reply confirms that the AIC Forum actions in the field of tourism are correct and reinforces the establishment of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region, which might serve as an incentive for the economic development of the countries of the area.



# International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian area

## Patras: Training session on conciliation and arbitration

A training seminar on "Conciliation and arbitration for dispute settlement in the Adriatic and Ionian Area" was held on 13th December 2010 in Patras, Greece with the participation of 17 people including lawyers, expert professionals in fiscal matters, enterprises and chamber of commerce staff members. The initiative stems from the collaboration between the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce and the Chambers of Commerce of Ancona and Patras and aims at contributing to the development of a conciliation and arbitration culture in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region. The training day was an important occasion to gain a deeper understanding of mediation and arbitration procedures, which are valuable tools for the quick and effective settlement of crossborder disputes and provide added value to the enhancement of transactions between business players from the two shores of the Adriatic and Ionian seas. Speakers at the seminar were able to combine theory with the illustration of how cases can be managed in practice and the most frequent problems in an international context can be solved and raised considerable attention from participants.

## Zagreb: Planning of future activities

The Croatian Chamber of Economy was the venue for a meeting, held in Zagreb on 28th October 2010, between a delegation of the AIC Forum, Ms. Jasminka Trzun from the Croatian Chamber of Economy and Mr. Mihajlo Dika from the Croatian Arbitration Court. The aim of the meeting was to update and plan the future activities of the International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian Area. Participants expressed their willingness to provide a decisive drive during 2011 towards a collaboration agreement

between the three signatories of the agreement protocol of 11th December 2008, i.e. Croatian Arbitration Court and Mediation Centre together with the Leone Levi Arbitration Court of Ancona. This collaboration is considered a necessary preliminary step towards the promotion of the International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian Area. The following is a short overview of the main topics dealt with and the commitments undertaken during the meeting:

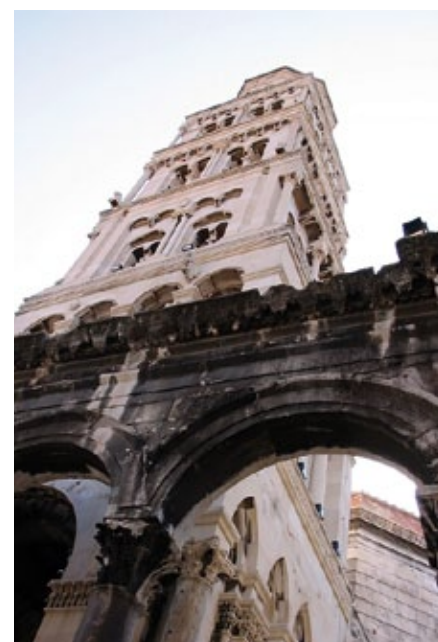
- following the request of the Croatian Arbitration Court, its official Regulation, which was approved in 2002, will be translated into Italian and the Ancona Chamber of Commerce will subsequently start an information campaign targeted to the enterprises/business consultants of the Marche Region;
- mutual commitment by the Croatian Arbitration Court and the Leone Levi Arbitration Court of Ancona to promote specific "clauses of reciprocity" in their own respective territories, the draft of which will be initially provided by the Croatian Arbitration Court; these clauses will then be entered in the transnational commercial agreements signed by the enterprises of the courts' reference areas (with special attention to the agreements signed between Italy and Croatia, Italy and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Italy and Montenegro, Italy and Serbia);
- the intention is confirmed to refer at least two international arbitration cases to the International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian Area during 2011, starting from the cases currently pending between Italy and Croatia, both with and without relevant international arbitration clause in the agreements;
- participants in the meeting agree to carry on the training and awareness-raising activities on ADR related issues during 2011, thereby working on the basis of a joint planning of said activities and the exchange of the results obtained through specific reports. Participants in the meeting agree on an action plan to be drafted and presented by the AIC Forum by the end of 2010 to implement the above mentioned proposals.



## 12<sup>th</sup> Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns

On 21st and 22nd October 2010 the city of Split hosted the 12th edition of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns. The AIC Forum participation follows the collaboration established with this network of municipalities, who was in turn present in the AIC Forum 10th edition in Ancona in the person of its Secretary-General Mr. D'Alessio reporting on the role of macro-regions. The 12th edition of the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns was organized on two days and focussed on the role of local authorities in search for better quality of life in view of implementing the "Europe 2020" strategy. Participation in the Split event helped reinforce cooperation between the network of chambers of commerce and the network of cities and towns, with the common aim of favouring the process of growth of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region.

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# Seminar on Macroregions

## Ancona: The AIC Forum confirms its commitment in the field of crossborder cooperation

On 27th October 2010 the Loggia dei Mercanti in Ancona was the venue for an important seminar on the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region, which was jointly organised by the Marche Region and the ALDE-Committee of the Regions and saw the active participation of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, with the chamber President Mr. Rodolfo Giampieri e Secretary-General Michele De Vita as official speakers within the Workgroups on cooperation and the role of the economy, civil society and the academic world. The initiative was attended by well-known representatives of European institutions, the ALDE European group, the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Permanent Secretariat of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, the Region of Istria, the Forum for the development of the Baltic region, the Forum of universities Uniadriion, etc., and proved to be a successful event with remarkable coverage on local and national media.

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The aim of the seminar was to convey a strong message to European institutions concerning the Marche Region commitment in the field of crossborder cooperation, in close synergy with the other three existing networks (the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce, the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns and the Forum of Universities) and the All. This commitment has been maintained for several

years with strong determination and professionalism in view of the creation of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region. The 12th Adriatic-Ionian Council, which is made up of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the All members countries, met in Ancona on 5th May 2010. On this occasion the Council adopted a declaration confirming the willingness of All member countries to enhance cooperation in the region through the launch of a specific EU strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region, thereby entrusting the EU Member States Italy, Greece and Slovenia, which are also All countries, to promote said initiative in Brussels with the support and full consensus of all All member countries. The macro-region is thus a strategic approach that can develop not only the institutional political potential, but also the operational potential existing among the economic and social players of the area. Within this context, networks like the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce represent fundamental and privileged interlocutors for the implementation of sector-specific programmes and community policies through forms of active and qualified partnership, which can tangibly implement projects of local cooperation and especially of crossborder cooperation. The initiative marks the Adriatic-Ionian area's request for recognition, which is a long and complex procedure that involves several EU, national, regional and local bodies and is expected to end by 2014. At the end of the seminar a draft resolution was adopted, with which the members of the Committee of the Regions-ALDE asked the European Commission to consider macro-regions as effective and efficient tools for the use of resources and to define criteria and procedures for the approval of macro-regional strategies within the framework of the new programming period after 2013.

## ASCAME

### Opatija: Forum AIC participates in the meeting of the ASCAME

A delegation from the AIC Forum participated in the 21st General Meeting of ASCAME (Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry) in Opatija (Croatia) on 29th and 30th October 2010.

Besides the General Meeting of members, which was attended by the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, delegates participated in the Workgroups on trade, international relations and arbitration. Along with the event, the ASCAME Arbitration Commission met. It was 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. The Head of Unit for Economic Development of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce Ms. Luciana Frontini participated in the Commission meeting and presented the experience of the International Court of the Adriatic and Ionian Area.

A number of studies promoted by the ASCAME Network and discussed during the event proved to be of particular interest for the AIC Forum. They concerned the creation of a brand for the tourist promotion of the Mediterranean area and the establishment of a Mediterranean Arbitration Centre.



# Workgroup on Tourism participates in Euromeeting 2010

Florence: In-depth analysis of regional policies for sustainable and competitive European tourism

On 9th and 10th December 2010 the secretary of the AIC Forum Workgroup on Tourism participated in Florence (Italy) in the 8th edition of Euromeeting, a major event for an in-depth analysis and application of regional policies for sustainable and competitive European tourism. Along with the event the meeting of the Necstour Network also took place, which has seen the AIC Forum as one of its members since 2010. This was the occasion to discuss the cooperation projects currently being defined and the agreements signed by Necstour with the Council of Europe for the promotion of European cultural itineraries and the Chinese Tourism Academy for the identification of mutually satisfactory benchmarks for the development of sustainable and competitive tourism respectively. Necstour objective to promote the creation of a European tourism quality label is particularly important for the AIC Forum Workgroup on Tourism. This activity has seen Isnart, which belongs to the Necstour network, as a lead partner since the publication of an action plan identified by the European Commission in its communication of 30th June 2010 that goes under the title: "Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe".



## How to join the Association Forum AIC

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.

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### FORUM

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of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce  
Gospodarskih Komora Jadransko-jonskog područja