



## WORKSHOP ON WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### FINAL DOCUMENT

ANCONA, MAY 29<sup>TH</sup> 2007

#### **Introduction**

Today, Tuesday 29th of May 2007, a workshop (Table of Permanent Work) on Women Enterprises was held in Portonovo, as part of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce (VII edition). The table was directed and coordinated by Jadranka Radovanić.

The participants at the workshop comprised 35 representatives of Chambers of Commerce and women's associations from the countries that took part in the Forum. In addition, there were also representatives of two Italian Banks, which collaborate with the Chamber Committees and representatives of the Polytechnic University of Le Marche, Eurochambers – Bruxelles, the Regional Council and of the Ministry of Foreign Commerce.

#### **Proposals**

After a welcome message from the President, representatives of the various participant countries gave their contributes to the discussion. The following issues were discussed:

##### ***Croatia***

President Radovanic highlighted the importance of the entrepreneurial spirit that is particularly strong in women - more so than for men – and is accompanied by great energy and potential.

The results of research carried out after the Forum held in Durazzo, show that 14.5% of all Croatian businesses are run by women and their presence is spread across all economic areas.

The Croatian Government has created a fund addressed to all businesses managed by women which is meant to support various initiatives.

In the Split area records show that 7.500 people are employed by women entrepreneurs. This shows the importance of female entrepreneurship in terms of economic growth and development of the country.



A database was completed for all female enterprises, including those of the non-coastal Chambers on the basis of which the leaflet presented during the Durazzo Forum was updated.

The President recommended the introduction of any news relevant to the new joining chambers on the Forum internet portal. She also asked the participants to give their opinions on the opportunity to organise the III Congress of Women Entrepreneurship.

### ***Albania***

The Durazzo Chamber confirmed the idea that women represent a source in the development of Albania, even though it is not yet fully estimated.

18% of all businesses in Albania are managed by women.

One of the government's objectives is to work on the equal-opportunity issue, strengthening the role of women in terms of the process of decision making. For the first time in the history of the country, Albania has a woman Prime Minister who has set a wonderful example for the future.

Nevertheless, there are still difficulties in carrying out the mapping of all female enterprises due to administrative issues. However, the fact that Albanian Chambers of Commerce have been cut from 32 to 16 should allow easier coordination and therefore make the mapping easier.

The Ministry of Economy recommends intercepting funds destined for regional projects of common interest to all AIC countries.

### ***Montenegro***

From March a Committee for the promotion of female enterprises was created within the Chamber of Economy and represents 16% of the total. Currently, they are working towards updating the mapping over the whole country.

### ***Bosnia and Herzegovina***

They have worked to improve the legislation in favour of female enterprises and, on the basis of the new created software, are finalising the database.

### ***Greece***

The Chamber of Commerce of Preveza, as representatives of Greece, informed us that a network of female enterprises was created four years ago and comprises 59 Chambers coordinated by a centre, which promotes financial operations and sustainable development.



## ***Italy***

The Ancona Chamber of Commerce representing Italy organised the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of Women Entrepreneurship AIC. The event which included businesses from both sides of the Adriatic sea was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of May in Portonovo, Ancona.

The Italians have also been responsible for the creation and development of the "Shop Show" internet portal for women's enterprises AIC, which represents a place to exchange information, ideas, contacts and business plans. The portal will be presented tomorrow at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of Women's Entrepreneurship as part of the work done by the Committee for the promotion of women's enterprises of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce.

It is necessary to focus the attention on issues such as access to training and funds. Above all, it is important to discuss the possibility of cooperation with various government bodies over projects which would allow female entrepreneurs to improve their positions, strengthen the AIC network and, ultimately, work towards the creation of a Federation of AIC enterprises.

In the year of equal opportunities, the Basilea 2 treaty, which sees the modification of the Bank Rating system was also enforced. This should help AIC entrepreneurs towards the drafting of a programme aimed at assessing the feasibility of business plans for small activities.

The Ministry of International Commerce informed the workshop of a Forum for women's Entrepreneurship in the Balkans, the Caspian area and the Caucasus which will be held in Bari on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September.

## **Conclusions (agreed actions)**

By the 31<sup>th</sup> of July 2007 all Chambers which took part in this project will have to send a document containing the "tax benefits available to women's enterprises" to the service desk of the workshop in order to allow the free exchange of information and the listing of all available incentives, especially of those offered by various banks.

The Italian trust fund called "Prestito d'onore" (Honour Loan) is of particular interest and was explained in broad terms by the representatives of La Banca delle Marche.

The creation of a database for women's enterprises of all AIC countries is strongly recommended. Moreover, it is strongly advised that a coordinator for women's entrepreneurship be appointed; the person would need to coordinate all operations and organise the various parties in case of any delay.



The areas of interests and objectives are:

<b>Areas of Interests</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
Croatia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide the service desk of the workshop with a list of all available tax benefits adopted in each country in favour of women's enterprises.</li><li>• The database format should be made available to all those countries which have not yet created their database or updated the existing one.</li><li>• Appointment of a coordinator for women's entrepreneurship.</li><li>• Organisation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of Women Entrepreneurship.</li></ul>
Italy	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	
Albania	
Montenegro	