



WORKGROUP ON TOURISM FINAL DOCUMENT

Ancona, 27th May 2010

Foreword

Activities carried out so far:

The Adrion brand

The idea of the brand dates back to 2007 with the aim of making a first operational step towards the implementation of the main objective of the AIC Forum Workgroup on Tourism, i.e. promoting the Adriatic-Ionian tourist area. The objective is to have this logo become a distinctive single tourist brand for the Adriatic and Ionian area, which can be recognized in international tourist circuits and serve as the starting point to plan effective territorial and tourist marketing actions in partnership with the institutions and private players of the countries of the Adriatic and Ionian area.

The logo graphic symbolic and cultural elements recall this idea of territorial unity and identity: the “Adrion” name is a sort of acronym between “Adriatic” and “Ionian” and in a metaphorical sense it recalls the union between the two seas. But this union is also, and above all ideally, the union between the lands bordering with these two seas, hence the phrase “Adriatic and Ionian Lands”.

Set of regulations

A set of regulations has been defined and approved for the use of the brand. They represent the rules governing its use and reaffirm and reinforce its aims, protect the trademark itself, as well as those who use it and the image of their products. Licences are granted to private tourist operators promoting multi-country vacations and organizations carrying out joint initiatives for the promotion of the Adriatic-Ionian area. A Management Committee of the Adrion trademark was established – it is composed by the representatives of the chambers of commerce member to the AIC Forum. The Committee is in charge of granting the licences for the use of the trademark and carries out a monitoring and control activity over its use.

Brochure

The new pay-off “3000 years cultures on the sea” for the promotion of the Adriatic-Ionian tourist destination was launched on the basis of the indications emerged from a 2009 survey carried out on tourist agencies, which showed that culture is a distinctive element of this area as well as an important factor for attracting tourists. The pay-off appears on the brochure cover, which features inside some “themes” of interest connected through pictures to form a pathway that outlines the “typical” nature of the Adriatic-Ionian identity for each of the themes identified. In doing so special emphasis was put on cultural tourist themes:

- as for the sea, a series of the most beautiful and most typical beaches of our coasts was proposed with a special focus on the typical Adriatic-Ionian habit of “living on the sea”, which thanks to its calm waters has made it possible over the centuries to build small villages oftentimes placed close to the shore;
- as for culture, visual evidence of all the artistic movements that have characterized the various historical periods and geographical areas of Adriatic-Ionian countries has been collected;
- as for faith, images depicting the most well-known places and the most widespread religious representations in the area;
- a new typical element was also looked for, which could be able to represent a new and original aesthetic-cultural tourist attraction key, i.e. “outdoor style” with nice views on exterior architecture;
- another interpretation key of the Adriatic-Ionian tourist destination offered by the brochure refers to popular culture, typical uses and customs, popular music and dances, artisanal handmade products;
- another section is devoted to the many natural beauties and parks that the Adriatic-Ionian area is rich in;
- the brochure ends with a section on “sports” tourism with an overview of the many outdoor sports possibilities available, as well as with a section devoted to food and wine tourism with a presentation of the traditional dishes and food and wine products of the countries of the area.

AdrionTour seminars (25th-30th January 2010)



3 separate meetings were organised in 3 different countries (Albania – Montenegro – Bosnia-Herzegovina), specifically in the cities of Durrës, Podgorica and Mostar with private operators and public bodies as participants. These meetings were the occasion to present the activities already carried out for the tourist promotion of the Adriatic-Ionian area: the Adrion brand was presented and interesting ideas were put forward for the creation of theme-specific multi-country holiday packages.

On-line Forum (February 2010)

After the seminars the participating travel agencies were contacted again and a web-based communication system was created using an on-line platform. This platform is a virtual place for travel agencies to meet and exchange ideas and has led to the creation of 10 multi-country tourist packages attached to the Adrion brand.

Tourist packages (February 2010)

The tourist packages developed have later on been printed in graphics and illustration cards indicating the contact details and reference websites of the travel agencies that contributed to their creation. These digital cards were then published on the Adrion website.

ITB Berlin (10th – 15th March 2010)

All the work carried out so far was given great visibility at the ITB trade show, which took place in Berlin from 10th to 15th March 2010. The Workgroup on Tourism participated in the fair with a 37 sqm stand accommodating some of the travel agencies that had participated in the January seminars. The trade fair was also the occasion to distribute the AIC Forum material, i.e. the brochure and the tourist packages, and to display material coming from each single agency and linked to the tourist promotion of Adriatic-Ionian destinations.

Educational tour (September-October 2010)

A planned education tour will bring foreign tour operators to the Adriatic-Ionian area to let them familiarize and test the multi-country tourist packages. Within the framework of the initiative a workshop is planned to help agencies meet foreign tour operators in order for them to best illustrate the tourist potential for the area and offer the multi-country tourist packages associated to the Adrion brand.

Presentation of a joint project proposal within the IPC CBC Community Programme

With reference to the future activities linked to the Adrion brand and the tourist proposal of the Adriatic-Ionian area a project proposal benefiting from the IPA Adriatic Cross Border Cooperation Community funds has been presented. The proposal passed its first stage of formal evaluation and is waiting for the final outcome of the call.

Strategic guidelines

Considerations emerged from the Workgroup proceedings:

- 1) The new Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force on 1st December 2009, defines tourism as a new political priority for the European Union, as it is one of the economic activities with the highest potential to generate growth and employment in the European Union. In April 2010 the Ministers for Tourism of the EU approved the Madrid declaration and proposed a series of recommendations to the European Commission, including the promotion of social tourism, the stress on the importance of innovation, the diffusion of information and the use of modern communication technologies, as well as the integration of sustainability in tourism-related sectors.
- 2) These activities can be carried out through actions of coordination between the various member States to be specifically dealt with by the Round Table for Tourism of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, with which the AIC Forum intends to establish an even closer collaboration acting as its operational arm for economic issues.
- 3) Adrion has anticipated the current national political trend, which focuses on the recognition of the area concerned as Adriatic-Ionian macro-region and represents therefore a tangible and significant example of this trend.
- 4) The EU has identified a basic strategic approach for policies targeted to tourism development in the principle of (economic, social, territorial, environmental and cultural) sustainability. Following this line it is possible to identify further ideas for the development of the Adrion brand and the support provided by the AIC Forum of the Chambers of Commerce to this key topic of major importance for the would-be Adriatic-Ionian macro-region.



5) As regards marketing-related issues it appears to be necessary to find a single strategy for the diffusion of the brand concerning the whole area, thereby defining a policy based on a “single brand” and a communication strategy that is differentiated for internal and external customers. The various options include a strategy that promotes brands, which are specific and different and yet linked to a unifying territorial brand, thereby paying special attention to the issues of awareness and knowledge (“brand awareness”), the factors enabling the recognition of the brand (“brand identity”) and the associations evoked by the brand (“brand image”). Brand declination goes hand in hand with coordination. To this end it is necessary to involve the public and private players involved and identify the tools and different action modalities, thereby discussing the possible interventions with the various players involved. The strategy will finally have to identify times, expected results and sources of financing, and monitor the implementation of the actions.

6) Private operators have all declared to be in favour of the project, they have acknowledged its strength and potential and urged all public players to commit themselves to support it and implement its declination in various specific themes.

Conclusions (concerted actions)

The Workgroup on Tourism has agreed to

- define a strategy for the diffusion of the Adrion trademark as a single brand, thereby declining its application on specific themes and identifying the most adequate tools and ways for its implementation;
- develop and strengthen the Adrion brand to support private tourist operators, thereby sharing a common marketing strategy also with the reference local institutions in view of supporting also the areas that are less well-suited for tourism and enabling a more rapid identification of the Adriatic-Ionian tourist package characterized by a common historical and cultural identity;
- favour public-private partnerships with a stronger use of new technologies for the promotion and diffusion of the Adrion brand, in particular involving each chamber, which is member to the AIC Forum or interested in its activities, in the brand-related activities, in order to optimize available resources and effectively and thoroughly coordinate all the promotional activities of the Adriatic-Ionian tourist area;
- plan actions in line with European policies after the entry into force of the new legal base provided for by the Lisbon Treaty, thereby working to align the AIC Forum tourist promotion policies with European Union guidelines towards the development of social and sustainable tourism and consolidating the image of the area as a whole of quality destinations that care about social and environmental issues;
- develop and promote the definition of shared quality standards, which should be associated with the Adrion trademark on the basis of the experience made by the Italian system of chambers of commerce through the Italian Research Institute on Tourism ISNART;
- plan pilot actions to develop cooperation and dialogue between the member chambers of commerce in order to favour the mutual exchange of knowledge and competence and implement actions for the promotion of the Adriatic-Ionian territory, like educational tours, meetings between tourist operators and B2B encounters;
- promote specific training pathways for tourist operators and awareness-raising actions focussed on the importance of the joint promotion of the area as a single tourist destination, with special attention to socially responsible tourism and deseasonal tourist forms also in order to increase the quality of services and enhance the culture of hospitality;
- monitor European political trends and (Community, national and regional) financing lines, within which it is possible to put forward project proposals aimed at promoting interregional, transnational and cross-border cooperation;
- give visibility and support to initiatives like “*Appuntamento in Adriatico*”, i.e. meeting in the Adriatic, organized by the Italian Nautical Association *Assonautica*, characterized by multi-country pathways with the sea as their unifying element.