



WORKGROUP ON TOURISM FINAL DOCUMENT

Brindisi, 7th June 2012

Introduction

Following the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Commission drafted Communication 352 of 30th June 2010: *"Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination - a new political framework for tourism in Europe"*. According to the European Commission, we need to encourage a coordinated approach to the initiatives concerning tourism, defining and implementing a framework of action comprising 21 specific actions, to strengthen its competitiveness and its capacity for sustainable growth.

Actions aimed at developing sustainable, responsible, quality tourism include action 16 of the European Commission *"Propose a strategy for sustainable coastal and marine tourism"*, with reference to which it invites all stakeholders to act to help develop an integrated maritime policy.

In the concept of the sustainable growth of oceans, seas and coasts ("Blue Growth"), coastal and maritime tourism is playing an important role in view of the preparation of future communication of the European Commission on the *"Challenges and opportunities for the coastal and tourism sector in the EU"* for which the DG for Maritime Affairs has launched a specific consultation that will remain open until 9th July 2012.

Following on the experience accrued with the Adrion brand, on the strength of the collaboration initiated with other European networks, the Workgroup can act and schedule the forthcoming actions in line with Communication 352 of 30th June 2010 with specific regards to a strategy to encourage the development of coastal and maritime tourism, also optimising the cultural tourism heritage for the Adriatic and Ionian Macro-Region.

Activities carried out up until today

Activities carried out up until today relate to the following matters:

1. Adrion recognised as a good practice within the European tourism policy: institutional missions and activities
2. Project management
3. New collaborations with international networks
4. Promotional Activities

Below are the main activities implemented within the framework of each topic.

Topic 1 - Adrion recognised as a good practice within the European tourism policy: institutional missions and activities

Meeting with the Vice- President of the European Commission, Hon. Antonio Tajani (Milan, 15th-16th February 2012)

At the BIT, the International Tourism Exchange, a representation of the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona, also in representation of the Tourism Workgroup, participated in the interview-meeting with the MEP Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Commission, who was present at the stand of the European Commission Representation in Italy on Thursday 16th February and offered valuable indications on the European policy for tourism, confirming that the EU will be strengthening interest in this sector, providing for additional resources over the forthcoming 2014/2020 programming period. Priorities of the European tourism policy include the creation of "European Cultural Routes", i.e. a programme created in 1987 and promoted by the European Council, with the aim of creating cross-border cultural routes as a driver of cultural and tourism development in the territories involved.



The participation in the BIT also enabled to participate in the press conference of the Marche Region and promote the Italian Hospitality Brand. At the same time, the representation had the chance to promote, also through a specific desk made available at the stand of Croatia, the Adrion logo, i.e. the “umbrella brand” that encourages the creation of integrated tourist packages in the Adriatic and Ionian Area.

Meeting with the European Commission - DG Enterprise and Industry - Tourism Unit, Ms. Francesca Tudini (Brussels, 2nd March 2012)

The meeting proved to be a valuable opportunity to receive updates on the reference framework of the European tourism policy and on the progress made on the European Commission plan of action, with specific reference to the 4 axes specified below: 1. Competitiveness; 2. Development of sustainable, responsible and quality tourism; 3. The EU as a single tourist destination; 4. EU financial instruments for the development of tourism. The meeting revealed the central role played by the European Cultural Routes programme and the related financing tenders, the application of the model of indicators prepared by the NecstouR network to measure the sustainability of the tourism destinations, the European Charter for responsible tourism and the European Quality Brand. For the identification of the latter, the “Italian Hospitality” brand, promoted by Isnart, is an excellent model according to the Vice-President of the European Commission Hon. Antonio Tajani.

The activities carried out thus far have allowed us to recognise Adrion as a good practice on a European level:

- ✓ Adrion recognised as a good practice in the “*Branding Policy*” Regional Conference organised by NecstouR (Brussels, 9th May 2012)
- ✓ Adrion recognised as a good practice within the European Consultation of the European Commission, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries: “*Challenges and opportunities for the coastal and maritime sector in Europe*” (point 3.3 of the Consultation)

The candidature of Adrion to the assignment of the network prize “Parliament Assembly for the Mediterranean - PAM”.

Topic 2 – Project management

Through its Workgroup on Tourism the AIC Forum is currently involved in various different projects, as specified below.

Projects currently managed (2), respectively:

1. *The tourism chain: cooperation between Emilia Romagna and Marche with Albania, Croatia and Montenegro*, project managed by Promec (Special Agency of the Modena Chamber of Commerce) as lead partner, under the scope of Italian Law no. 84/01 (so-called “Balkan Law”). The project aims at promoting the exchange of best practices for the creation of paths of excellence aimed at encouraging the growth of tourism flows in low season.

2. *Tech-Tour: Technology and Tourism: augmented reality for the promotion of the Roman and Byzantine Itineraries*, project managed by the Veneto Euro Info Centre, as lead partner, under the scope of the CIP programme with calls for proposals directly managed by the DG Enterprises of the European Commission. The project aims at mapping two cultural routes, connecting Venice - Aquileia and Croatia to Slovenia on the Roman and Byzantine historical-cultural heritage, applying innovative technologies.

Projects being evaluated (no. 4), respectively:

1. *BRAND – Business Relations for Adriatic koiné as a New Touristic Destination* (IPA CBC Programme): the objective is to promote the Adriatic-Ionian tourist area as a single destination, optimising the shared historic and cultural heritage of the Adriatic;

2. *Odyssea Tour in Med* (ENPI CBC): presented by the Ministry for Tourism of Tunisia, the project aim is to create a network of the port cities in the Euro-Mediterranean area to optimise the shared historic, cultural, tourist, maritime and social-economic heritage;

3. *Econautic in Med* (ENPI CBC): presented by the Ministry for Tourism of the Region of Andalusia, the project objective is to optimise the nautical chain of the Mediterranean basin;



4. *Innovative Skills and competences for entrepreneurs in order to promote a new sustainable tourism in the Adriatic and Ionian Area.* The project was presented by the AIC Forum as lead partner under the scope of the AII call for proposal - Regional cooperation, with the objective of creating an on-line portal (wholesaler) for the tourist promotion of packages characterised by a sustainable approach to tourism both in social and environmental terms. The project foresees that these micro-marketing activities are flanked by an activity aiming to raising the awareness of local public authorities on the importance of macro-marketing tourist actions focussed on the idea of the Adriatic as a single tourist destination, characterised by the "Adriatic koine".

Topic 3 - New international collaborations with international networks

NecsTouR - Network of European Regions for Competitive, Sustainable Tourism:

In 2011 and 2012, the relationship with the NecsTouR network was consolidated both through a meeting in Brussels (2nd March 2012) and by participating in the consultation activities in order for the AIC Forum to make its own contribution to the preparation of the European tourism policy.

In particular, the focus should be on the joint contribution of the Italian, Spanish, French, Greek and Insuleur systems of chambers of commerce concerning the European Consultation "*European Charter for sustainable, responsible tourism*" (20th April 2012) and the recognition of Adrion as a good practice in the "Branding Policy" Regional Conference organised by NecsTouR in May 2012.

Council of Europe (Venice department) and Marco Polo System E.G.E.I.:

In 2011, during the 12th edition of the Tourism Workgroup, fruitful collaboration began with a view to creating a future European Cultural Route in the Adriatic-Ionian area on the Topic: "Venetian commercial routes".

Odyssea:

European Territorial Cooperation Group with which the Tourism Workgroup has begun a new collaboration, precisely during the 12th edition of the Forum, as the first network that was recognised as a European Cultural Route in the Mediterranean, based on a sustainable territorial development model for ports, port cities and their related rural territories.

Insuleur – network of EU Insular Chambers of Commerce:

On the basis of the agreement protocol stipulated in Brindisi on 8th June 2012 between the Forum and the Insuleur network, tourism has been identified as a priority matter, as indicated in the agreement protocols drawn up with Ascame (on 18th November 2008) and Ince (on 11th May 2011). The identification of tourism as a strategic sector will enable the Forum, also through the application of agreements, to create a system of all the networks, experience and excellences thus far identified under the scope of tourism.

Topic 4 - Promotional activities

Exhibition under the scope of the initiative: "Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Region for the development of Europe" (Ancona, 27th August 2011-1st September 2011)

The Forum participated in the initiative with its own stand, having contributed with numerous projects and proposals since its establishment in 2001, in the process of social and economic approach of the two shores of the Adriatic Sea.

Adrion on board Costa Crociere (13th November 2011)

During the last mooring in Ancona of Costa Crociere for the 2011 season and the Bicentenary celebrations of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, the Bicentenary/Adrion corner was set up on the ship Costa Victoria, which, leaving the port of Ancona on 13th November 2011, travelled for seven days on the Adriatic, Ionian and Aegean Sea: after Ancona, the Greek island of Mykonos, Athens (Piraeus), Corfu, Dubrovnik and Venice were reached.

The information desk set up on board the ship proved to be an excellent tool for promotion, including of the Adrion logo: statistics collected by the Ancona Chamber of Commerce have shown that around 62% of passengers travelling on Costa Victoria during the 2011 cruising season were foreign nationals.



th edition of the Euromeeting (Florence, 14th December 2011) - 10th edition of the Euromeeting (Florence, 19th May 2012)

Participation of a representation of the Tourism Workgroup in the 2011 Euromeeting, the annual appointment organised by the Region of Tuscany in collaboration with the NecsTouR network on regional policies for European sustainable, competitive tourism, provided for an update on the progress made on the Action Plan of the Tourism Unit of the European Commission, highlighting both tenders to be published in 2012 and the opportunity of identifying new European cultural routes. In this context, in particular, the AIC Forum can put itself forward as a network to encourage the identification of a cultural itinerary in the Adriatic-Ionian area, thereby promoting a themed cross-border tourism product as a tool for the development of sustainable, competitive tourism, as identified by the European Council in its study presented on 28th June 2011 in Brussels, entitled: *"The impact of European Cultural Itineraries on the innovation and competitiveness of the SMEs"*. The 2012 edition of the Euromeeting instead focussed on the issue of the *"Sustainable management of tourism of art and culture"* and the participation of the Tourism Workgroup enabled important updates on the European tourism policy dedicated to cultural tourism.

Habitat Biennale 2012 (Rome, 9th May 2012)

The project, which was officially opened in Rome on 9th May 2012 during the Festival of Europe, is a laboratory for research and the optimisation of the cultural, economic and social heritage represented by the Adriatic-Ionian region, a "HABITAT" of great historic value that is worthy of attention and recognition. A delegation of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, comprising the President and Secretary General, attended the event. The next appointment will be a Workshop in Ancona in autumn 2012 on sustainable tourism.

Considerations and Conclusions emerging from the Workgroup

On the basis of the achievements developed thus far and the valuable points that emerged during the many, qualified presences intervening this year within the Workgroup on Tourism, which have provided authoritative contributions to the matter of optimising the cultural and maritime tourism heritage for the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Region of the Adriatic and Ionian, it is believed that the forthcoming activities can be planned in line with the European tourism policy.

The Tourism Workgroup:

in a context where the strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Region focuses on the major issues connected with "Blue Growth", presents itself as a tool for the European Union to encourage cross-border promotional initiatives, as required by point 3.3 of the Public Consultation on the *"Challenges and opportunities for the coastal and maritime sector in Europe"*, in order to facilitate the spread of awareness and knowledge of the European integrated maritime policy;

- will continue an increasingly strong collaboration as an operational arm for economic issues both with the Round Table on Tourism of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative and with the Unit for the Countries of the Balkans, Ince and All of the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs;
- will encourage awareness of the potential of the Adriatic-Ionian basin in view of its effective candidature towards becoming a European Cultural Route with a view to achieving inclusion of this area in the official programme of European Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. More specifically, the itinerary of the "Venetian Commercial Routes" was identified as a project with great potential and which meets the requirements of the Council. To this end, the Tourism Workgroup will actively participate in the activities of the project promoter committee;
- agrees on the possibility of marking the future Cultural Route concerning the Adrion brand area to make the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Region more visible and recognizable to international tourists, particularly those from outside Europe, thereby also facilitating a quicker identification of a tourism product characterised by a shared historic and cultural identity;
- will encourage the application of the NecsTouR network method for measuring the sustainability of destinations, thereby supporting the promotion of the Adriatic-Ionian System, in an integrated logic on the one hand focussing on shared traditions and, on the other hand, on the optimisation of the individual territorial and cultural excellences in order to capture and attract the demand coming from the globalised market;



- will promote the identification of topics of interest for the participation in joint projects of interest to the Adriatic-Ionian system of chambers of commerce, starting from the priorities identified by the Italian system of chambers of commerce also in collaboration with other networks operating in the Adriatic, such as the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns and the Uniadriion Universities network;
- will encourage the spread of the enormous wealth of information available to chambers of commerce as players collecting and processing statistical information on the state of the economy in the various European regions. This data may be made available to the European institutions because, based on the SEC 95 system (European accounting system that national statistical institutes are required to send to Eurostat), there is no obligations for States to send regional data to the European Commission;
- agrees in considering that additional value of the macro-regional strategy comes in the form of the opportunity to reinforce regional cooperation in territories also coming under the vaster area of the Mediterranean basin and to help cause them to progress along the route toward European integration: in this context, the Tourism Workgroup sets itself the aim of encouraging international collaboration with networks such as Marco Polo System E.G.E.I., Insuleur (Association of the Chambers of Commerce of insular areas), Ascame (through the chair of the Tourism Commission - Malaga Chamber), Odyssea and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), in order to encourage a cross-border theme-specific product based on excellent tourism services;
- intends to contribute to the documents discussed by the workgroups of the European institutions on the players connected with coastal and maritime tourism, and will therefore process a joint position to be provided as contribution of the NecsTouR network or as joint contribution with the Insuleur network;
- will promote the spread of culture as an attraction intended not only as all tangible assets, but also intangible assets such as knowledge, traditions and experience to exalt the extraordinary heritage of systems that marks the Adriatic-Ionian area (wine and food heritage, cultural, musical, theatre, etc.): the diversification and transversal nature of the cultural offer of several countries may represent a major opportunity for economic development. Investing in culture and art in all its highest expressions, means investing in quality and excellence, considering it as a tool to open up to development in connection with other sectors, starting precisely from tourism and the optimisation of the territory. To this end, we would particularly point out the participation in the Habitat Biennale 2012 as laboratory for research and as a way to optimize the cultural, economic and social heritage represented by the Adriatic-Ionian region, i.e. a "Habitat" of great historic and cultural value;
- intends to jointly promote and optimise the wealth and diversity of the territories of the area according to themed approaches and integrated multi-country packages, starting from marine and coastal tourism, as the catalyst of economic development, activating public-private partnerships and assisting tour operators seeking to identify some tourism routes that can, due to their tourism and themed vocation, be traced to "Adrion". Future projects will concentrate particularly on both the promotion of existing packages with a view to not losing the assets constructed over the years, and on identifying new operators interested in using the Adrion brand to ensure a greater dissemination in the various regions;
- records the importance of creating a system of all the networks, experiences and excellences thus far identified in tourism, in order to strengthen the image of the whole area with consequent concrete, operative actions to strengthen the image of the area as a whole and effectively promote the "tourism product". To this end, the initiative promoted by the Italian system of chambers of commerce is worth mentioning, which concerns the "Italian hospitality" quality brand, which, with more than 6,000 tourist businesses certified in Italy and more than 1,000 ones abroad, is a strategic network by which to take concrete action in promoting and marketing, becoming a privileged showcase to promote tourism packages and specific itineraries in the Adriatic-Ionian area to Italian and foreign customers;
- highlights the possibility of Italian and European institutions meeting the demands for stability put forward by micro and small coastal tourism businesses operating in the maritime territory, in accordance with European Parliament Resolution of 27 September 2011, considering their specific nature and the importance of them, particularly in Italy, in optimising the sea and coast.

Finally, the Tourism Workgroup hopes to see ever greater participation and active collaboration of the chambers of commerce member to the AIC Forum to spread awareness and use of the Adrion brand in the territories concerned and to provide concrete, active institutional and operative support with a view to achieving the objectives set annually by the Workgroup in a unitary, increasingly integrated fashion.