



EUROREGIONE ADRIATICO IONICA
JADRANSKO JONSKA EUROREGIJA
ADRIATIC IONIAN EUROREGION
EURO RAJONI ADRIATIKO JONIAN
ΕΥΡΩΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑ ΑΔΡΙΑΤΙΚΗΣ ΙΟΝΙΟΥ



Adriatic Ionian Euroregion Contribution to the EUSAIR



January 2014

ADRIATIC IONIAN EUROREGION IN BRIEF...

The Adriatic Ionian Euroregion (AIE) is an association established on the 30th of June 2006 in Pula (Croatia) for the promotion of trans-national and inter-regional cooperation between regions and local authorities of the Adriatic and Ionian basin countries.

Today the association counts 26 members (Regional and Local governments from Italy, Greece, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania). All members are units of territorial self-governments and most of them are NUTS2 (the first level below State, in conformity with the European Community nomenclature NUTS, and with the administrative organization of each country).



The AIE is a non-profit-making association, which represents a model for cross-border and interregional co-operation aimed to promote the coordinated and integrated development between regions of the area. The total extension of the involved territories is about 200.000 square kilometers with an estimated population of around 20 Millions of inhabitants.

The AIE goals can be synthesized into the protection of the cultural heritage, protection of the environment, sustainable economic development in the field of SMEs, tourism, fishery, transport and infrastructure. Furthermore the association supports the members, especially those in the European accession process, to create joint initiatives and to prepare the regional stakeholders to be qualified in the implementation of the cohesion policy and to deal with the European financial instruments.

Another important aim is to support the European citizenship through actions that promotes the involvement of citizens by developing their sense of European identity and appreciating multilingualism and multiculturalism as common European heritage.

In particular the AIE members achieve their activities pursuing the following objectives:

- to establish and to develop mutual relations between inhabitants and institutions of this territory as precondition for the improvement of knowledge, understanding and collaboration;
- to create the conditions for the economic development respecting the environment;
- to determine common interests of development, preparation, definition and harmonization of a common development strategy;
- to achieve the cultural exchange programmes;
- to ensure the conditions for an effective exchange of experiences and implementation of EU programmes.

The AIE bodies are: the President, the Assembly, the Executive Committee and the Secretary General. The association has 6 committees, working on respective thematic:

1. Commission for tourism and culture
2. Commission for fisheries
3. Commission for transport and infrastructure
4. Commission for environment
5. Commission for economic affairs
6. Commission for Welfare and Youth.

Each Commission has its own yearly Working Programme – coordinated by its President or Vice presidents. The aim of the Commission's meeting and work is to define joint initiatives, proposals and projects in the Adriatic Ionian area.

AIE ACTIVITIES FOR EUSAIR

Since June 2011 the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion has promoted and organised, on the whole Adriatic and Ionian territory, several events and high level meetings to support the definition of EUSAIR.

With more than 15 events and 80 stakeholders involved from 26 regions, AIE has defined a common documents to contribute to the development of EUSAIR.

1. VI General Assembly - Campobasso, 30 June 2011.



Mr. Michele Iorio, President of Molise Region, was elected as President of the Adriatic Euroregion during the VI General Assembly held in Campobasso on 30th June 2011. Nikola Dubroslavić, President of the Region Dubrovnik-Neretvana, was elected as Vice-President. During the Assembly, the members of the Executive Committee, The Board of Auditors, as well as the Presidencies and the Vice-presidencies of the Committees were renewed too.

At the end of the Assembly, a round-table has been held; its title was: “The Adriatic Ionian Strategy along the European integration process”. The purpose of this round-table was to identify, by consensus between Local Authorities and the National Governments of the Adriatic Area, the next steps being taken to promote the adoption of the Adriatic - Ionian Strategy. The round table was attended by Croatian Ambassador in Italy, Ambassador of Serbia in Italy, the Albanian Ambassador in Italy, the Secretary of State of the Republic of San Marino, the Secretary General of the IAI - Adriatic - Ionian Initiative, an Adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the President of the Italian Delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, a Delegation of the European Commission and institutional representatives of Governments, Regional and Local Authorities of the States of the Adriatic area.

2. AIE Executive Committee in Dubrovnik and AIE General Assembly in Trieste.

During the meeting of the Executive Committee, held in Dubrovnik on 23 rd January 2012, regarding the Adriatic and Ionian Macro-Regional Strategy, it has been widely debated the Decision of the European Council of June 24 th 2011. The European Council, after approving the Danube macro-region strategy (the second approved in Europe after the EU Strategy for Baltic Sea), invited EU Member States to continue their collaboration to identify possible new macro-regions, with particular reference to the Adriatic Ionian macro-region. It will be the European Council, with one accord, to give a mandate to the European Commission to take up the actions, and approve a so-called “action plan” to actually carry out a macro-regional territory. During the meeting, the enlargement of the Adriatic Euroregion to the Ionian Sea Countries has also been discussed. The President, Mr. Michele Iorio, committed himself to formalize this territorial extension in the next and upcoming meetings.



The 1st General Assembly called by the Iorio Presidency, held in Trieste on 13th June 2012, was opened with a thought of solidarity for the Emilia Romagna Region for the earthquake that occurred a few weeks before the meeting. During this Assembly, the participating members had the opportunity to discuss important issues, in particular: the updates on the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Regional Strategy, the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme and the organizational and statutory issues. With regard to these two previous aspects, it has been deemed necessary from the President Iorio to provide Adriatic Euroregion of a Secretariat, committing Molise Region internal resources, in order to achieve, at best, the statutory objectives. It has been confirmed the demand of the membership which has to be paid by members, as established by the art. 28 of the Statute.

During the session the membership application of the Municipality of Ulcinj (Montenegro) was approved.

In addition to the broad debate on the issue of Macro-Region, due to the presence of Mr. Mario Ialenti - President of the National IPA Committee, the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme CBC has been introduced. Many important points have been highlighted, both the critical points, caused by the delay in spending and in the projects approval process, and the strengths which consist into developing project ideas on the theme of great interest of macro-regions.

3. Meeting with the Adriatic Fora - Termoli, 24 July 2012.

On 24th July 2012 in Termoli, at the Council Hall, an important meeting, focused on the processing of the Adriatic and Ionian Strategy has been held, with the participation of the Presidents, Vice-Presidents, General Secretaries and representatives of the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian Cities and Towns, of the UniAdriatic Network of Universities, of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce and of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative.



During the meeting, a lot has been said about Adriatic and Ionian Macro-Region, about the fact that it is the 3rd European Macro-Region and about the necessity of an official recognition, in the next months by the European Commission. It was appropriate, and necessary, a comparison among the different fora of this big Macro-Region catchment area, on the decision making procedure from the Decision of the European Council to the elaboration of the action plan. It is necessary to provide the European

Commission with a precise orientation about this issue. Objective evidence of this cooperation has to be provided, and for doing this, availability and suggestions must be collected quickly, working with a bottom up approach and giving a concrete example of mutual capacity and availability. The most important issues must be identified, and it is necessary to move towards a more well-structured debate, starting with a decision that will be taken in a shared way. Vice-President of the Adriatic Euroregion, Dr. Nikola Dobroslavić established important and ambitious goals set out by President Iorio during the debate which have to be enriched by the contributions of the other participants. Therefore, the need to create a strong synergy among all the representatives of fora has been widely shared.

4. AdriGov Project – IPA Cross Border Cooperation Programme.



The Project “AdriGov”, submitted on the 2nd Call of IPA Adriatic CBC Programme , has been granted. Outcome of an excellent technical collaboration among the members of the Euroregion, it is a well-structured project,

essentially aimed at supporting the activities of the Adriatic Euroregion. It will provide the financial resources to finance the promotion of the association and the organization of events and meetings.

Within the project activities that will allow the functioning and maintenance of the financial committees are planned. It will be possible to combine the committees at least twice a year, in order to implement the exchange of the officers who can really promote the in-depth analysis of topics of interest for the macro area. Furthermore, some activities will be dedicated to a feasibility study of the EGTC. It requires an intense work in order to delineate the statutes and regulations. Therefore, the several meetings that there will be among Members of the Adriatic Euroregion, will be essential. This will help to identify further mechanisms of internal cooperation in order to identify projects which can detect the needs of each member of the Euroregion, as part of the Adriatic and Ionian Strategy.

5. Round Table "The new EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macroregion" - Termoli, 14 January 2013.



The Round Table has been organized in the framework of AdriGov Project. The project aims to strengthen the institutional cooperation in the Adriatic Ionian basin, creating common development initiatives and cross-border cooperation in the area.

AdriGov partnership is composed by thirteen institutional partners, (Italian regions and local authorities from the cross-border countries). Project lengths is 2 years and it aims to enhance good governance practices in the area. The project encourage and support the initiatives of cross-border cooperation in the field of culture, commerce, industry, tourism and fisheries as well as, the protection and preservation of the environment.

6. VIII General Assembly - Termoli, 15 January 2013.

Convened by President Iorio, the Eighth General Assembly took place in Termoli on 15 January 2013, exactly one month and one day after the mandate given by the European Council to the European Commission for the development of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region. The action plan will be concluded by the end of 2014, during the Italian Presidency of the European Union. In recent years there was a significant acceleration to that process, thanks to the Governments that have acknowledged the instances of Adriatic Euroregion and its territories.



Most of the objectives have been achieved. During this Eighth General Assembly has achieved also a major milestone. The Adriatic Euroregion have tried to identify its self with the model of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-region, allowing the access of Basilicata, Sicily and Calabria. Some changes has been approved in the statute of the association during the assembly, they affect various organizational aspects , but in particular, the main change regards precisely this point. The name of the Organization was changed from "Adriatic Euroregion" to "Adriatic Ionian Euroregion".

The Assembly also approved the proposal made in the previous months by the Executive Committee to establish its General Secretariat with the aim to support the governing bodies of the Euroregion, as well as, the scope to create a link between the political level and the technical level.

During the eighth AIE General Assembly, members have also decided to schedule the Thematic Commissions with the support of AdriGov project. Members has decide to create specific working groups with the aim to define common proposal on tourism, transports, safety, culture and higher education, fishing, environmental protection, territorial development and trade. At the end, the Assembly approved the proposal financial budget of the Euroregion.

7. AIE thematic sessions on maritime strategy - Commission Environment - Bologna, 6 -7 March 2013.



The two days event organized by Emilia -Romagna Region intended to illustrate the maritime strategy in the framework of the Action Plan of the new EU Adriatic Ionian Macro-regional Strategy.

The first day was dedicate to a workshop that allowed the AIE members to express their favorable opinions on the strategy and to define the new perspectives for a multi-level cooperation between the European institutions and the regional and local authorities, with the aim to ensure greater effectiveness/efficiency to the

wider Adriatic Ionian macro-regional strategy through an adequate territorial dimension. During the second day, there was a thematic session of the AIE Commission of Environment with the aim to propose, discuss and adopt a common position. A political statement representing the point of view of the Adriatic Ionian regions and cities has been voted by the member. The results of this debate among the AIE members and the European Commission - DG MARE, will be take into account as a key contribution to the definition of the macro-regional strategy. The two days were organised in the framework of the activities of AdriGov project led by Molise Region and financed under the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme.

8. AIE Executive Committee - Rijeka, 8 May 2013.



The AIE Executive Committee convened by President Iorio on 8 May 2013 in Rijeka (Croatia) outlined the steps done and to be done for the recognition of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-regional Strategy by the European Commission. This process will be completed by the end of 2014 with the Italian Presidency of the European Union.

The Committee proposed to arrange a meeting between the Presidents of the Regions trying to work in close collaboration with the European Union, as well as, an event to

put the emphasis on the access of Croatia into the European Union.

9. Commission on Transport and Infrastructure - Rijeka, 8 May 2013.



Convened by the President Krpan, the AIE commission was held on 8 May 2013 in Rijeka (Croatia). It was attended by the members of the Executive Committee and several representatives of political and administrative institutions of Balkan area.

The four-year working program of the Transport and Infrastructure Commission has been introduced to the AIE members. During the meaningful debate which involved most of the participants, the development phase of EU Adriatic Ionian strategy has been one of the main

topic and it was highlighted how the four-year working program presented by the AIE commission is very coherent with the EU strategy and it is an integral part of it.

10. Seminar “Intercultural dialogue in the year of European Citizenship: the value of skills and new careers in the Adriatic – Ionian Area” and “Thematic Session on Youth, Training and Employments” - Sarajevo, 27-28 May 2013.



Promoting intercultural dialogue, development of new job opportunities and new types of youth entrepreneurship in the Adriatic Ionian area. This was the purpose of the international seminar entitled "Intercultural dialogue in the year of European Citizenship: the value of skills and new careers in the Adriatic Ionian area," organized in Sarajevo on 27 and 28 May 2013, and which is one of the initiatives envisaged by the project AdriGov (Adriatic Governance Operational Plan). The two-day debate was organized by the Molise Region, in collaboration with the Faculty of Political Science

of the University of Sarajevo and World Habitat. The seminar takes place right in the year dedicated to the theme of "European citizenship". This is one way to emphasize how to become European citizens, including an appropriate development of skills and knowledge, which should be integrated through a fruitful cultural exchange between all the countries that have already expanded - or intend to do so - the wider dimension of the EU. The seminar, hosted by the Faculty of Political Science of the University of Sarajevo, opened in May 27th, 2013. Moderator on the first day, Francesco Cocco, project coordinator of AdriGov. This is the program: after a general introduction, a discussion about education in a multicultural vision of relations between countries and about the actions to be promoted in order

to increase employment opportunities in the Adriatic Ionian Area. Later, the presentations about employment opportunities - which become more and more attractive - in the fields of sustainable economies and local development. The enlargement of the EU to the Balkans and the implications that this might have on youth employment, along with the role of Universities in the Adriatic Ionian Area, are the topics that close the first day of the conference. On May 28, the thematic session will focus on the virtuous circle young-training-employment and on the study of interactions, to be exploited by the Human Resources Committee, in the Strategy for the Adriatic Ionic territories.

11. Technical Meeting and Proposal for a Laboratory of Strategic Programming - Gorizia, 18 July 2013.



The technical meeting took place on July the 18th in Gorizia at the Coronini Cronberg palace. The meeting was between the Adrigov partners and their purpose is to support the implementation of macro-regional strategy in the Adriatic-Ionic area. This will be achieved through the establishment of a laboratory for strategic

planning that offers the opportunity to support the implementation of Adriatic Ionian Macroregional strategy. The aim of this activity is to contribute future Operational Programme drafting as for example “Gateway to South East Europe” (that is expected to substitute the present IPA Cross Border) and the forthcoming Italy-Croatia CBC programme.

Thanks to the wide partnership, covering almost all the area concerned by the Macro-regional strategy, this Laboratory may play a strategic role for the development of the Strategy itself, as far as all the project partners are at the same time members of the macro-regional internal commissions dealing with the different topics of strategy.

12. Workshop “Towards the Adriatic Ionian Macroregion: policies and tools for boosting territorial tourism attractiveness” - Bari, 25 September 2013.



The workshop took place in Bari, during the two-day event, organized by Puglia Region at Boscolo Hotel on 25 and 26 September 2013. The main focus was the EU strategies for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-region area and the collaboration with the local institutions, especially considering the forthcoming enlargement of the European Union to the Adriatic area. During the first part of the event, there were the contributions of representatives of European Commission and the working

groups from Croatia and Albania and Ministry of Foreign Affairs involved in the definition of the

"pillars " of the macro-regional strategies . The second part, introduced by Mr. Bernardo Notarangelo, Director of the Mediterranean Service of Puglia region, has been focused on the theme of European Territorial Co-operation and the contributions that the local network can provide to the implementation of the operational plan for the macro-regional strategy.

13. Thematic Committee on Tourism and Culture - Bari, 26 September 2013.



The Tourism and Culture Commission was opened by Ms. Silvia Godelli – Councillor of Puglia Region for the Mediterranean, Culture and Tourism and President of AIE Commission. She introduced to AIE members the best practices and excellences of Puglia region in the field of tourism and culture. In particular she talked about the experiences of some projects that aim to promote the culture and tourism in Puglia, such as "Teatro Pubblico Pugliese", "Puglia Sound" and "Apulia Film Commission". The aim of commission is to spread

the these successful experiences across the Adriatic Ionian area.

Furthermore Mr. Francesco Palumbo, Director of the Area "Policies for the promotion of the territory, knowledge and talents of the Puglia Region" outlined the success factors for the achievement of this results, as well as, he spoke about some specific considerations about tourism and culture in the EU 2014-2020 programming period.

14. AIE Commission on transport and infrastructure - Shkodra, 6 - 7 November 2013.



As one of the AdriGov partner, the Regional Council of Shkodra, organized the Workshop "The Adriatic-Ionian macroregion. transport and infrastructure" and the "AIE Thematic commission on transport and infrastructure" from 06/11/2013 to 07/11/2013 at Hotel Colosseo, Shkoder, Albania. The working group discussed about the Maritime Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Macroregion and common projects on transport and infrastructure that can be developed in the area.

The two days event was attended by AIE members, Albanian politicians and local administrators. Participants agreed that it is necessary to increase the investments in the field of transport, ports and regional airports. Common projects in this field could represent a driving force for our cooperation area.

15. IX AIE General Assembly – Bologna, 4 December 2013.



The ninth AIE General Assembly held in Bologna on 4th December 2013, at the premises of the Regional Assembly of the Emilia Romagna Region, has unanimously elected the Molise Region President, Paolo di Laura Frattura, as the new AIE President. The Governor thanked the outgoing President, Mr. Michele Iorio for the work of strengthening of the Association carried out in these last years. During his speech Frattura highlighted “ the significant moment and declared “ to make the

Euroregion the reference point for the common strategies which will be implemented to boost all the institutional and territorial cooperation activities”. Exploiting the opportunities that will arise during the next EU programming 2014-2020”.

The new President also thanked all the members of the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion who confirmed the presidency of the Molise Region. The Dubrovnik president, Mr. Nikola Dobroslavic. was re-elected as Vice president for a second term mandate.

During the Assembly, the participating Members had the opportunity to discuss important issues, in particular: the updates on the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Regional Strategy, the territorial cooperation in the new multiannual financial framework 2014/2020, the European grouping of territorial cooperation (EGTC) in the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion perspective and, finally, the Youth Adrinet project results.

16. Forum "EUSAIR - how to say it - Building a macro-regional awareness in the Adriatic-Ionian territories." – Bologna, 5 – 6 December 2013.



Emilia-Romagna Region, the DISCi Department of Bologna University and the IECOB – Institute for the Central Eastern Europe and Balkans, have created a Regional lab on macro-regional issues, as part of the project AdriGov, with the financial support of the IPA Adriatic CBC Programme 2007/2013. The Regional lab intends to enhance quality, efficacy and efficiency in public policy making, and foster innovation, integration and democratic participation in the multi-level strategic programming and planning for territorial sustainable development purposes.

The Regional lab on macro-regional issues organized the Forum of the Adriatic-Ionian Universities in Bologna on December 5th and 6th.

The Forum aims to involve the academic world of the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-Regional area in the EUSAIR consultation process. The scope is to understand what the universities think about the

structure and the contents of the draft EUSAIR Action Plan. This initiative is intended to give an adequate territorial dimension to the policy-making process of the EUSAIR and to the implementation of the principles of subsidiary and democratic participation.

The Forum allowed a debate between the regional and local authorities from the Adriatic Ionian Countries; the two days event was attended by academic institutions, public administrations of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-regional area, Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion Members (26 local and territorial entities that represent 7 of the 8 EUSAIR Countries) and partners of the AdriGov project (13 partners from 6 EUSAIR countries).

The Forum aims to support the creation of a macro-regional "community of knowledge", to share a common understanding about the possible benefits of a macro-regional strategy in the Adriatic-Ionian territories, and compare the views of the scientific community with the public administrations on EUSAIR.

We have debated the objectives and shared challenges, the key words for an integrated framework for sustainable and harmonic development of the area, how to organize a unitary approach to the needs of the areas and Adriatic-Ionian communities, reconciling, protecting and promoting the diversity that characterize the macro-area to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the public.

We have also discussed about:

- macro-regional design, governance and methodology, aspects of qualification and innovation at a macro-regional issues;
- a macro-regional approach to the sustainable territorial development;
- the macro-regional research and knowledge community: a common education basis as a crucial leverage for common awareness;
- a manifold cultural and historical identity as an added value for the attractiveness of the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region.

EU STRATEGY FOR ADRIATIC IONIAN REGION: Background



The European Council of 13-14 December 2012 requested the European Commission to present a new macroregional strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region before the end of 2014.

Objectives and scope

Building on the experience gained in the macroregional strategies for the Baltic Sea region and the Danube region, the Commission is now proceeding to draw up an EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region (EUSAIR). The new Strategy will integrate the Maritime Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, adopted by the Commission on 30 November 2012. The EUSAIR (as the Maritime Strategy) will cover eight countries: four EU Member States (Croatia, Greece, Italy, Slovenia) and four non-EU countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia).

The general objective of the new Strategy is to promote economic and social prosperity and growth in the region by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity. The Strategy should also play an important role in promoting the EU integration of Western Balkans.

In line with the conclusions of the Report on the evaluation of the macroregional strategy concept (adopted in June 2013), the new Strategy will have a limited focus on areas of mutual interest with high relevance for the Adriatic Ionian countries. It will be build on four thematic pillars:

1. Driving innovative maritime and marine growth
2. Connecting the region (transport and energy)
3. Preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment
4. Increasing regional attractiveness (tourism)

Moreover, "Research, innovation and SMEs development", as well as "Capacity Building" are two cross-cutting aspects which come across each and every area.

Stakeholders' Consultation

From September to December 2013, a stakeholders' consultation on the content of the future Action Plan of the Strategy is being conducted across the region by the participating countries.

The Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy has launched a public consultation on the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region, inviting all those interested, e.g. private individuals, public organisations, enterprises, civil society, etc. to send their contributions.

In the framework of this extensive consultation, the eight countries involved are organising events and launching sectorial consultations for the different pillars:

- Pillar 1 "Driving innovative maritime and marine growth"
- Pillar 2 "Connecting the region"
- Pillar 3 "Preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment"
- Pillar 4 "Increasing regional attractiveness"

PILLAR I: 1. DRIVING INNOVATIVE MARITIME AND MARINE GROWTH



Fisheries and aquaculture represent a strategic sector for the development of the Adriatic and Ionian Area. Within the framework of the work carried out by the AIE thematic commission on fisheries, chaired by the County of Zadar, the AIE has identified several needs for a sustainable development

and the protection of this strategic sector of whole South East Europe.

In this framework, AIE, in this context, calls for a sustainable development model in order to preserve capable the sustainability of natural resources for the economic exploitation and a long-term integrated policy to involve and include the rural communities.

Fisheries policy is regulated by National Governments, although for the next future it is necessary a better involvement of intermediate and peripheral governments in order to define a bottom up strategy for the sector.

Only through a systemic involvement of all the stakeholders who contribute to the development of this sector can be ensured a sustainable development of natural resources increasing, also, economic competitiveness.

Objectives

The objectives of the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion, for this pillar aims to:

- To Create a common framework of reference, able to guarantee the sustainable development of natural resources;
- To Increase the competitiveness of enterprises through inclusive development policies, which can involve all the stakeholder directly or indirectly affected by this sector.
- To Strengthen and transfer knowledge through the development of common strategic framework for research and innovation, involving Universities, Research centers and SMEs.
- To harmonies horizontal and vertical decision-making process.
- To transfer and enhance skills and competences improving vocational and training policies for this sector.

PILLAR II: CONNECTING THE REGION



Establishment of Adriatic Ionian Macroregion would connect the area of 450,000 km² with approximately 60 million inhabitants from four current EU member states (Italy, Slovenia, Croatia and Greece), and EU candidate states and EU potential candidate states – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania and Serbia.

Adriatic Ionian Euroregion currently comprises 26 members – units of regional and local administrations from Italy, Croatia, Bosnia and

Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania and Greece.

One of the fundamental goals of the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion is to solve transport and infrastructural issues, which are within purview of the Commission for Transport and Infrastructure.

Main EU priority for financial perspective 2014 – 2020 is the smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. European Union highlighted seven initiatives to be used in the attempt to achieve economic growth and employment objectives over its entire area. Each of the seven initiatives may, indirectly, be used within activities of the Commission for Transport and Infrastructure, whereas the initiative “Digital Agenda for Europe” is in its entirety linked to the work of the Commission for Transport and Infrastructure.

Development of EU will depend on the ability of the regions to integrate well into the global economy. The EU has, therefore, recognized the transport sector as one of the pillars of economic growth and employment. It is expected that the unified and integrated transport market (all types of transport) should increase efficiency, reduce costs and strengthen sustainability of the European transport system.

Future development of transport system should take the following direction:

- Improvement of energy efficiency in all types of transportation vehicles, development and use of sustainable fuels and power systems,
- Optimisation and quality improvements to multimodal logistic chains,
- Use of infrastructure and transportation in a more efficient manner by using improved information systems for traffic management, improved logistics services, market measures, full development of integrated European railway market, removal of limitation in cabotage, barriers by short sea shipping, market price policies.

EU will stimulate building of the basic network of corridors for the transport of goods and passengers, with the use of multimodal transport, advanced technologies and clean fuels.

The basic transport network should ensure multimodal connectivity between urban centers and all types of terminals and zones, as well as key border crossings. The focus should be on completing the missing links – cross-border linkages, bottlenecks and ring roads, upgrades to the existing infrastructure, construction of multimodal terminals at sea ports and inland ports, as well as city logistics centers.

In its strategic document on transport “White Paper on Transport“ the European Union proposed 40 initiatives with the associated activities in various segments of transport system that will represent the basis and the framework for Adriatic Ionian Euroregion Commission for Transport and Infrastructure activities.

Objectives

In order to facilitate the overall development of the area of the Adriatic and the Ionian Area, it will be aimed to provide high quality transport integration of the entire area.

The basic objective of the work of the Commission for Transport and Infrastructure is as follows:

Development of transport system and infrastructure of the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion, in order to increase economic competitiveness within EU.

Here follows the priorities proposed by AIE Commission for Transport and Infrastructure:

- Increase accessibility of people and goods, with a special focus on isolated and marginalized areas
- Development of intermodal, efficient transport system and relative services that can compete with EU transport system
- Increase in traffic safety in accordance with the highest European standards
- Promoting transportational networking in order to strengthen and integrate regional transport systems in the Adriatic Ionian area

To attain high-quality accessibility and connectivity of the entire Adriatic Ionian area it is necessary to:

- Provide prerequisites of transport system development in a timely manner in the strategic development documents, including priorities, objectives and measures for their realization (in accordance with the EU strategic objectives),
- Actively promote and request inclusion of primary transport corridors of the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion into TEN-T network (such as Adriatic Ionian transport corridor, ...)
- Ensure mutual integration with other objectives and initiatives (e.g. CPMR, CETC, SETA, ...) and
- Prepare and implement projects that will ensure quality accessibility of all areas, which rely on established priorities and measures from European, national, regional and local development documents also in line with the EU macro-regional strategic approach..

In order to ensure prerequisites of the overall development of the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion transport system, EUSAIR shall primarily refer to:

- Active participation in the development and implementation of EU strategies related to maritime affairs, transport and infrastructures, energy networks and supply, networking of technological and research poles and fostering collaboration with enterprises;

- Active participation in preparation of Adriatic Ionian Macroregion Strategy with special emphasis on improving access of south-eastern Europe to the rest of the world, including the Mediterranean area, by prolonging the Baltic-Adriatic corridor along the Adriatic ridge (from Ancona to Bari) and increasing the competitiveness and attractiveness of the logistic and transport system;
- Enhancement of the existing infrastructural assets and the existing IT networks,
- Developing intermodal transport systems and the related services for goods and passenger transport, even trans boundary; searching for the relevant aid to the workers involved in the sector;
- Developing public-private partnership by promoting the aggregation between the various stakeholders of the transport sector, also through the creation of clusters;
- Supporting mobility and training of the workforce, according to qualification certificates at recognised at international level;
- Active participation in preparation and implementation, as well as mutual adjustments of national strategic documents related to transport;
- Active participation in the preparation of regional development documents (regional spatial plans and development strategies) and their harmonization with the basic EU and national objectives in the transport sector





In the framework of Environment thematic commission, chaired by Emilia Romagna Region, the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion has discussed several themes about the environment, climate changes and sustainable development and elaborated a thematic report on this issues.

The document represent a repository of main EU policies affecting the Adriatic Ionian Area and that Adriatic Ionian Euroregion support its implementation.

1. Integrated Maritime Policy

The Integrated Maritime Policy seeks to provide a more coherent approach to maritime issues, with increased

coordination between different policy areas (it seeks to coordinate, not to replace policies on specific maritime sectors).

Specifically it covers these cross-cutting policies: Blue growth, Marine data and knowledge, Maritime spatial planning, Integrated maritime surveillance, Sea basin strategies.

Objectives

- To take account of the inter-connectedness of industries and human activities centred on the sea. Whether the issue is shipping and ports, wind energy, marine research, fishing or tourism, a decision in one area can affect all the others;
- To save time and money by encouraging authorities to share data across policy fields and to cooperate rather than working separately on different aspects of the same problem
- To build up close cooperation between decision-makers in the different sectors at all levels of government. Many countries are recognising this need and move towards more structured and systematic collaboration.

The IMP is born to create a framework which would facilitate the development of diverse and sometimes conflicting sea-based activities, with a view to

- ***maximising the sustainable use of the oceans and seas, in order to enable the growth of maritime regions and coastal regions as regards***
 - shipping: improving the efficiency of maritime transport in Europe and ensuring its longterm competitiveness, through creation of a European Maritime Transport Space without barriers, and preparation of a maritime transport strategy for 2008-2018,
 - seaports: issuing guidelines on the application of environmental legislation relevant to ports and proposing a new ports policy,
 - shipbuilding: promoting technological innovation and a European network of maritime multi-sectoral clusters,
 - maritime jobs: enhancing professional qualifications and studies in the maritime field to offer better career prospects in the sector,

- environment: reducing the impact and adapting to climate change in coastal zones, and diminishing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from ships,
 - fisheries management: eliminating discards, destructive fishing practices (such as bottom trawling in sensitive areas) and illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries, as well as promoting environmentally safe aquaculture.
- ***building a knowledge and innovation base for the maritime policy, through***
 - a comprehensive European Strategy for Marine and Maritime Research,
 - joint cross-cutting calls under the 7th Research Framework Programme for an integrated approach to maritime affairs,
 - support of research on climate change and its effect on maritime activities, marine environment, coastal zones and islands,
 - a European marine science partnership aiming to establish dialogue between the scientific community, the industry and policy makers.
 - **improving the quality of life in coastal regions, by**
 - encouraging coastal and maritime tourism,
 - preparing a database on Community funding for maritime projects and coastal regions,
 - creating a Community Disaster Prevention Strategy in coastal regions,
 - developing the maritime potential of Outermost regions and islands.
 - **promoting EU's leadership in international maritime affairs, through**
 - cooperation in maritime affairs under the Enlargement Policy, the European Neighborhood Policy and the Northern Dimension, to cover maritime policy issues and management of shared seas,
 - projection of the EU's Maritime Policy based on a structured dialogue with major partners.
 - **raising the visibility of Maritime Europe, by**
 - launching the European Atlas of the Seas, as a means of highlighting the common European maritime heritage,
 - celebrating an annual European Maritime Day on 20 May, for promoting links between maritime communities and organisations, and increasing awareness for the importance of Europe's oceans and seas to economic development, environmental sustainability and quality of life throughout Europe's vast coastal area.

2. Blue growth.

Blue Growth is a long-term strategy to support growth in the maritime sector as a whole. It aims to:

- Identify and tackle challenges (economic, environmental and social) affecting all sectors of maritime economy
- Highlight synergies between sectoral policies
- Study interactions between the different activities and their potential impact on the marine environment and biodiversity
- Identify activities with high growth potential in the long term and support them by removing the administrative barriers that hamper growth, fostering investment in research and innovation, promoting skills through education and training.

Blue growth focuses on existing, emerging and potential activities such as: short-sea shipping, coastal tourism, offshore wind energy, desalination, use of marine resources in the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries.

3. Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)

ICZM means a dynamic process for the sustainable management and use of coastal zones, taking into account at the same time the fragility of coastal ecosystems and landscapes, the diversity of activities and uses, their interactions, the maritime orientation of certain activities and uses and their impact on both the marine and land parts.

ICZM is a strategic approach to the management of the Member State coastal zones, based on:

- protection of the coastal environment, based on an ecosystem approach preserving its integrity and functioning, and sustainable management of the natural resources of both the marine and terrestrial components of the coastal zone;
- recognition of the threat to coastal zones posed by climate change and of the dangers entailed by the rise in sea level and the increasing frequency and violence of storms;
- appropriate and ecologically responsible coastal protection measures, including protection of coastal settlements and their cultural heritage;
- sustainable economic opportunities and employment options

4. New EU Environment Action Programme to 2020 - "Living well, within the limits of our planet"

Objective: to guide EU environment policy up to 2020; to protecting nature, stimulating sustainable growth, creating new jobs and setting Europe on a path to prosperity and health within the limits of the planet.

Responsibility for achieving the programme's goals is shared by the EU and its Member States. Concrete steps to be taken include phasing out environmentally harmful subsidies, shifting taxation from labour to pollution, drawing up partnership agreements between Member States and the Commission on implementation of EU environmental law, and developing a system for tracking environment-related expenditure in the EU budget.

In the Action Programme the Commission identifies nine priority objectives:

- to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital;
- b) to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy;
- c) to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing;
- to maximise the benefits of the Union's environment legislation;
- to improve the evidence base for environment policy;
- to improve environmental integration and policy coherence;
- to enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities;

- to increase the Union's effectiveness in confronting regional and global environmental challenges.

The Programme sets out a framework to support the achievement of these objectives through, inter alia, better implementation of EU environment law, state of the art science, securing the necessary investments in support of environment and climate change policy, and improving the way that environmental concerns and requirements are reflected in other policies.

The programme also aims to boost efforts to help EU cities become more sustainable, and improve the EU's capacity to meet regional and global environment and climate challenges.

5. EU biodiversity strategy to 2020.

Strategy to protect and improve the state of Europe's biodiversity over the next decade. It includes six targets which address the main drivers of biodiversity loss, and which will reduce the main pressures on nature and ecosystem services in the EU by anchoring biodiversity objectives in key sectoral policies.

The strategy has six priority targets:

- Full implementation of EU nature legislation to protect biodiversity
- Better protection for ecosystems, and more use of green infrastructure
- More sustainable agriculture and forestry
- Better management of fish stocks
- Tighter controls on invasive alien species
- A bigger EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss

As an integral part of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the biodiversity strategy will contribute to the EU's resource efficiency objectives by ensuring that Europe's natural capital is managed sustainably, as well as to climate change mitigation and adaptation goals by improving the resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide.

6. A resource-efficient Europe – Flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The flagship initiative for a resource-efficient Europe under the Europe 2020 strategy supports the shift towards a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy to achieve sustainable growth. Natural resources, from raw materials to food, water, air and ecosystems, are fundamental to the functioning of our economy and our quality of life. But global strains on them are increasing. Building a more resource-efficient Europe is therefore crucial to the EU's economic and ecological security. This initiative set out its views on a strategic framework that should deliver a more sustainable use of natural resources and the shift towards resource-efficient, low-carbon growth in Europe.

This flagship initiative provides a long-term framework for actions in many policy areas, supporting policy agendas for climate change, energy, transport, industry, raw materials, agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity and regional development. This is to increase certainty for investment and innovation and to ensure that all relevant policies factor in resource efficiency in a balanced manner. It establishes

resource efficiency as the guiding principle for EU policies on energy, transport, climate change, industry, commodities, agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity and regional development. By using synergies across these policy-areas, the strategy will be instrumental in reaching a variety of EU objectives, from reducing European greenhouse gas emissions by 80 to 95% by 2050 to reforming the agricultural and fisheries sectors, from reducing food insecurity in developing countries to making the Union more resilient to future rises in global energy and commodity prices.

7. Energy 2020 Strategy for a competitive, sustainable and secure energy.

It defines the energy priorities for the next ten years and sets the actions to be taken in order to tackle the challenges of saving energy, achieving a market with competitive prizes and secure supplies, boosting technological leadership, and effectively negotiate with our international partners.

The strategy identifies five top priorities which in the base for concrete legislative initiatives and proposals

- **Energy savings:** The AIE in line with the Commission proposes to focus its initiatives on the two sectors with the biggest energy saving potential: transport and buildings. To help house owners and local entities to finance renovation and energy saving measures, the Commission will propose investment incentives and innovative financial instruments by mid 2011. The public sector should take energy efficiency into consideration when buying works, services or products. In the industrial sector, energy efficiency certificates could be an incentive for companies to invest in technology which uses less energy.
- **Pan-European integrated energy market with infrastructures:** The AIE in line with the Commission sets a target date for completing the internal energy market. By 2015 no Member State should be isolated. Over the next ten years, overall energy infrastructure investments in the EU of Euro 1 trillion are needed. To speed up essential EU strategic projects, the Commission proposes simplified and shorter building permits, setting a maximum time frame until final authorisation and EU funding. A "one-stop shop" should coordinate all the permit requests needed to realize a project.
- **27 States, one voice on energy in the world:** It is proposed that the EU coordinates its energy policy vis-à-vis third countries, especially in its relation with key partners. Within the neighbourhood policy, the Commission proposes to extend and deepen the Energy Community Treaty to further integrate countries willing to participate in the EU's energy market. A major cooperation with Africa is also announced, which aims at providing sustainable energy to all citizens of this continent
- **Europe's leadership in energy technology and innovation:** Four major projects in key areas for Europe's competitiveness will be launched, such as new technologies for intelligent networks and electricity storage, research on second-generation biofuels and the 'smart cities' partnership to promote energy savings in urban areas.
- **Safe, secure and affordable energy through active consumers:** The Commission proposes new measures on price comparison, switching suppliers, clear and transparent billing.

8. Energy Roadmap 2050: a secure, competitive and low-carbon energy sector is possible.

Energy Roadmap 2050 answer to the question: How to achieve the goal of cutting emissions by over 80% by 2050, Europe's energy production without disrupting energy supplies and competitiveness. The document describes the consequences of a carbon free energy system and the policy framework needed. This should allow member states to make the required energy choices and create a stable business climate for private investment, especially until 2030.

The Energy Roadmap 2050 identifies a number of elements which have positive impacts in all circumstances, and thus define some key outcomes such as:

- Decarbonisation of the energy system is technically and economically feasible.
- Energy Efficiency and renewable energy are critical.
- Early Investments cost less.
- Contain the increase of prices.
- Economies of scale are needed.

9. Strategy Innovating for Sustainable Growth: a Bioeconomy for Europe.

Strategy to shift the European economy towards greater and more sustainable use of renewable resources. With the world population approaching 9 billion by 2050 and natural resources finite, Europe needs renewable biological resources for secure and healthy food and feed, as well as for materials, energy, and other products. This strategy (and action plan) outlines a coherent, cross-sectoral and inter-disciplinary approach to the issue. The goal is a more innovative and low-emissions economy, reconciling demands for sustainable agriculture and fisheries, food security, and the sustainable use of renewable biological resources for industrial purposes, while ensuring biodiversity and environmental protection.

The plan focuses on three key aspects: developing new technologies and processes for the bioeconomy; developing markets and competitiveness in bioeconomy sectors; and pushing policymakers and stakeholders to work more closely together. The term "Bioeconomy" means an economy using biological resources from the land and sea, as well as waste, as inputs to food and feed, industrial and energy production. It also covers the use of bio-based processes for sustainable industries. Bio-waste for example has considerable potential as an alternative to chemical fertilizers or for conversion into bio-energy, and can meet 2% of the EU renewable energy target.

10. Strategy on climate change: "Winning the battle against global climate change".

A strategy to combat climate change represents a four-fold challenge: the climate risk itself and the political will to face up to it, international participation in efforts to tackle climate change, the innovation needed for changes in the production and use of energy, and adaptation of countries to the unavoidable effects of climate change.

Actions proposed:

- immediate and effective implementation of agreed policies in order to meet the target of the 8% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (compared with 1990 levels) agreed in the Kyoto Protocol.
- increased public awareness to encourage people to change their behaviour, i.e. through the launching of an EU-wide awareness campaign;
- more and better focussed research to further improve knowledge on climate change and its global and regional impact and to develop cost-effective climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies (in particular in the energy and transport sectors, but also in agriculture and industry);
- stronger cooperation with third countries at the scientific level and through climate-friendly technology transfer as well as through specific measures with developing countries to draw up climate-friendly development policies and strengthen the adaptive capacity of the most vulnerable countries;

11. Water protection and management.

Water is essential for human, animal and plant life and is an indispensable resource for the economy. EU water legislation was transformed by the adoption in 2000 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD); the main objective of which is to establish a framework for the management of surface water and groundwater based on the river basin. The WFD is supplemented by international agreements and various pieces of specific legislation related to water pollution, quality and quantity.

Achievements

- ***Water Framework Directive (WFD)***
 - Groundwater
 - Drinking water
 - Bathing Water
 - Quality standards for shellfish waters and freshwater fish
 - Urban waste water treatment
 - Discharges of substances, limit values and nitrates
 - Flood protection, water scarcity and drought
- ***EU international agreements on regional waters***
- ***Conservation and protection of the marine environment***
 - Thematic Strategy (TS) on the marine environment
 - Marine pollution
 - Integrated Maritime Policy

PILLAR IV: INCREASING REGIONAL ATTRACTIVENESS



The AIE represents an area of thousand-year old heritage and civilization where people from all over Europe have lived and have brought their own traditions throughout the centuries.

Archeological sites, churches, castles, theaters, literature and music constitute, along with the climate and gastronomic local products. attractors without equal.

All these attractors should be networked and offered to the tourists as unique and woven package.

The tourism development should be therefore boost through the integration of environment, cultural, artistic and historical resources.

The strategic priorities settled out by the European Union for Financial Planning 2014/2020 in the Culture and Tourism sector will be supported by:

- increasing the innovative capacity of the cultural industry.
- supporting actions in order to modernize and to integrate infrastructural and communicative networks, in particular in the disadvantage areas.
- enhancing cultural resources as a key element for the valorization of natural resources.

Adriatic Ionian Euro-region in line with the work done by the Tourism and Culture thematic commission chaired by Apulia Region, proposes the implementation of a transversal culture strategy as a key tool for the development of urban and rural areas.

An inclusive strategy with the aim to create new skills and new job in the cultural industry and to promote creativity and innovative process to integrate cultural and natural heritages.

The proposed strategy:

Should take into account the experiences and best practices of each AI region.

- must go beyond the enhancement of individual attractors , albeit national and international, to extend the results and actions also to the local context of the Euro-region , from the point of view of landscape and identity to the characteristics of the cultural and environmental heritage;
- should consider the cultural events / attractions that are an indisputable added value to the cultural heritage.
- must overcome the fragmentation of the operators, behind its international competitors , (too expensive for the management of lodging facilities and attractors / sites / places to visit.
- must work for the ' accessibility and availability of international connections to prevent a few operators to condition the tourist development of the area.

Objectives

- Promotion of IT shared platform for the service integration (new technologies and social network)
- Integration of the heritage management and fruition
- Innovative ways of involvement among public and private sectors
- Valuing and implementing of the available Research and innovation platforms on behalf of the companies in the sector
- Valuing and implementing the available research and innovation platforms on behalf of cultural and creative companies with the aim to transfer the contents within the processes of the tourism sector.
- Stimulating competitiveness through the diversification of the tourism offer; developing innovation in the sector; encouraging the extension of high season in the summertime, improving the professional capacities
- Promoting the development of a sustainable and responsible tourism
- Maximizing EU policies and financial tools for the sustainable development
- Consolidating the image of Europe as a place of sustainable and high quality destinations

Objectives to intercept Euro-region area needs

- Public/private integration to enhance the quality and evaluate tourism offer and services
- Innovation of communication models, monitoring and analysis of products and results
- Digitalization of communication and data storage

Moreover the Adriatic Euroregion developed a new strategic proposal, promoted by Molise Region, which aims at valuing the importance of energy management for the tourism structures. It is proposed an innovative model that manages the energetic issues in all respects, and that will bring lasting benefits to tourism and employment and an increase of the scientific know-how in the area

The project phases are:

- Identification of the activities on which to implement the proposed management model
- Model implementation
- Monitoring, analysis and result dissemination
- Model review

Management tools:

- Creation of an IT platform
- A Smart Meter systems
- A Web Portal to share and spread the results

Activities:

- Energy management on behalf of the monitored structures
- Creation of databases for the identification of performance benchmarks
- Specific training activities

- Research and development of products and systems
- Information activities

Specific objectives and expected results:

- Creation of a tested model to apply to different actors in the Macroregion area.
- Implementation of an IT platform, like “map GIS” which constitutes the main management tool for all the stakeholders involved
- Creation of a network of tourism activities, committed to a continuous improvement of the system
- Promotion of a scholastic/academic tourism based on the intercultural exchange among different areas

OTHER KEY FACTORS FOR EUSAIR



Welfare and youth.

The economic crisis in Europe has produced new social exclusion phenomena. It is necessary to set up, new priorities in order to tackle the growing youth unemployment. It is important to identify a transversal policy for youth employment that involves all strategic sectors, such as environment, transport and infrastructure, culture and tourism, etc.

Objectives

The Adriatic Ionian Euroregion intends to improve social cohesion through the growth of transnational networks and fostering the development of community leadership. In this sense, the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion can play a catalytic role of resources and activator of subsidiary welfare projects shared by the community. The strengthening of the bonds of civil society through support to community welfare can then become a target in which the life of the individual is integrated into the size of a common social welfare.

The Adriatic Ionian Euroregion propose to develop a transnational plan to boost the youth employment in the Adriatic and Ionian Area with the following strategic and transversal priorities:

- To increase cultural and professional youth growth promoting transnational mobility and specialized training activities;
- To promote and support integration and cooperation between decision makers and other stakeholders (local administrations and civil society) as a basis to generate and increase the share of youth policy;
- Promote concrete opportunities for young people to be directly involved in the definition of youth activities and projects;
- Creating an Integrated Educational System



Capacity Building.

It is important to share and transfer experiences and best practices among AIE members in order to generate a sustainable growth.

The AIE propose to support the development an International Training Institute for Adriatic and Ionian Public Administrations able to promote the creation and development of projects on the basis of interregional and transnational cooperation (with a particular focus on the exchange of best practices), for the activation of pathways and networks of

cooperation at community level, within the policies for training, employment and innovation, growth and development.

Through the improvement of a centre of advanced training in the Adriatic Ionian Area, an operative instrument will be created to coordinate all training and employment policies in the Adriatic Ionian area, which also promotes local development policies, employment and innovation, increasing and improving the administrative and professional skills in transnational cooperation. The Adriatic Ionian Regional Public Administration School – through training and information courses, exchange of good practices, sharing of problems and finding solutions – will provide assistance to public authorities (at European, regional and local level), businesses, young people in the countries of the Adriatic Ionian area, encouraging mobility and the matching of demand and supply of labour in the area.



Communication. A detailed Communication Plan could represent a key element for the success of the strategy. It is necessary to inform civil society and local communities about the opportunity and the added value that the strategy could generate on AIE territories. It is important to set up a strong territorial marketing campaign with the creation of a brand for the Adriatic Ionian territories. The definition of a clear visual identity could help territories to promote excellences and peculiarities. This action is actively supported by the Presidency of

Italian Government and is in line with the priorities settled up for the semester Italian Presidency of EU Council.

Moreover, the Adriatic Ionian Euroregion, in line with the document elaborated by the Adriatic Ionian Interregional Group of the Committee of the Regions, supports the improvement of an information and communication system in the whole area. The creation of an Adriatic Ionian Cloud could represent a tool for connecting the existing platforms in order to standardise shared processes, protocols for an efficient intermodal transport of passengers and goods and supply of services, environmental preservation, maritime security. Adriatic Ionian Cloud can also represent a networking tool of information between scientific and technical platforms and setting up an open database of knowledge.



Research and Innovation. The AIE support the development of an Adriatic Ionian Innovation strategy to create an innovation-friendly environment that makes it easier for great ideas to be turned into products and services that will bring our economy growth and jobs. This could represent the added value to increase competitiveness of SMEs. It is important to build up an integrated research and innovation system in order to improve science and technology excellence in the whole Adriatic and Ionian area.

CONCLUSION

The Adriatic Ionian Euroregion as one of the main stakeholders operating in the area with experience in the promotion of trans-national and inter-regional cooperation between regions and local authorities of the Adriatic and Ionian basin countries, it aims to play a crucial and active role in the multi-level governance of the EUSAIR strategy.

In this framework the AIE could be used also as an operative tool for the management and implementation of specific policies and programmes.

Campobasso, 16/01/2014



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The IPA Adriatic CBC Programme is co-financed by the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

This document has been realised in the framework of AdriGov, a project co-founded by IPA Adriatic CBC Programme 2007-2013, with the support of project partnership and AIE members.