



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION



ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE
CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
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PROGRAM OF THE CROATIAN CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE 2007/2008

The Adriatic and Ionian Initiative, seven years after the adoption of the *Ancona Declaration* in May 2000, today gathers eight countries of the Region: **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia.**

The political dialog and constant mutual co-operation fosters the Adriatic and Ionian Sea area as a region of peace and security, of political and economical stability. Fundamental conditions for progress of social welfare, sustainable economic development and implementation of European standards are secured.

With Croatia's Chairmanship of the Adriatic and Ionian Initiative begins a new cycle of chairmanships on rotational bases of the AII Member States. This fact imposes the need to review the present co-operation in the Initiative.

In the final statements of the AII Member States, in the course of the last seven years, the importance of strengthening good-neighbourly relationships was constantly emphasized, as well as the importance of intensifying bilateral co-operation and coordination of activities with other regional organizations and initiatives. The Member States repeatedly emphasized the need to exchange experiences on the level of experts, to deal with mutual problems of illegal migrations and other forms of organized crime. The environmental protection has gain constantly on importance. The cross-border co-operation in the field of small and medium sized enterprises, tourism and rural development, as well as economic co-operation in general are indicated as key elements of stabilization and overall progress of the Region. Permanent is as well the support for the accession to the Euro-Atlantic integrations for all countries in the Region, who have the willingness and abilities to accomplish it. The participation of the European Commission in regional projects is indicated as welcomed and it is stressed out the necessity for a prompt adjustment of national legislation to the EU-standards. The importance of inter-university, cultural and science co-operation is emphasized and it is given the support to inter-parliamentary co-operation of the AII Member States.

The development of South-East Europe and geo-political changes in wider region and the necessity to adjust regional co-operation to new circumstances in all of the organizations and initiatives of regional character are reflected as well in the conclusions and statements of the Member States on the meeting of the Adriatic and Ionian Council, held in Sarajevo in June 2007.

The Member States agreed on the necessity to specify the co-operation based on projects. Economy, tourism, environmental protection and transport are determined as co-operation priority fields and of common interest. The establishment of a Permanent Secretariat of the AII has received a common support, and considered a stimulating measure for a better organization and coordination of activities in the AII. The co-operation with other regional organizations and initiatives is highlighted as a necessity especially in order to enhance coordination of activities between them and avoid overlapping.

It is Croatia's belief that the co-operation within the AII should be focused on specificities of the coastal and littoral area of the Adriatic and Ionian Sea.

With the interaction of co-operation between two or more priority fields would be enabled a better co-ordination of activities within the Initiative and it would open a larger space for implementing concrete projects as well as increase financing possibilities.

Within the framework of a co-operation review and determining guidelines for future activities of the AII, the Republic of Croatia in its Program of Chairmanship proposes following topics for political dialog and discussion:

- **Redefining of co-operation goals in the AII**
- **Positioning of the AII in relation with other regional organizations and initiatives; specifying fields and modalities of co-operation between countries of Adriatic and Ionian Sea**
- **Revising of the current division of the round tables in accordance with priority fields of co-operation and common interests of the Member States**
- **Adoption of the Rules of Working-procedure of the Round Tables**
- **Establishment of the Permanent Secretariat of the AII**
- **Coordination of co-operation with other regional organizations and initiatives; defining of co-operation with EU/EC**

In the framework of the co-operation fields of the existing round tables, the following fields and topics of co-operation are proposed:

I.) FIELDS OF CO-OPERATION FOR EACH ROUND TABLE:

Round Table on Fight against Organized Crime

Field of Combating all Forms of Organized Crime:

- Abuse use and smuggling of drugs and psychotropic substances
- Trafficking and smuggling in human beings
- Theft and smuggling of motor vehicle
- Counterfeiting of currencies and payment means
- Financial investigation, money laundering and computer crime

Organizer: Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Croatia

Round Table on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development

Field of Environmental Protection:

- Protection and conservation of marine environment/ecosystem (prevention of the pollution from land based sources and integrated coastal zone management)

Organizer: Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction of the Republic of Croatia

Round Table on Economy, Tourism and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

Field of Tourism:

- Significance of research in the field of tourism for drafting tourism policy and private sector activities – introducing the *Institute for tourism Zagreb* and similar Member States' entities

Organizer: Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development of the Republic of Croatia in association with Institute for Tourism

Field of Energetics:

- Issues of natural gas supply in countries of AII and new directions of gas supply
- Development of regional gas projects: “ Adriatic gas ring”, gas pipeline project TAP (Trans Adriatic Pipeline), Ionian-Adriatic gas pipeline, LNG terminals, underground warehouses of gas

Field of Entrepreneurship:

- Clusters – networking of business entities

Organizer: Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Croatia

Round Table on Transport and Maritime Co-operation

Field of Transport:

- Regional co-operation in determination and implementation of Places of refuge
- Protection of the marine environment from ship source pollution through exchange and effective utilization of VTMIS data, e. g. Mandatory Ship Reporting System in the Adriatic Sea (ADRIREP) etc.
- Co-operation on designation of the Adriatic Sea as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) in accordance with Guidelines of the International Maritime Organization
- *Short Sea Shipping and Motorways of the Sea:*
 - ❖ possible directions Rome – Pescara/Ortona–Ploče – Budapest, with alternatives
 - ❖ possible directions Rijeka – Split Ploče – Bar – Durres, with alternatives
 - ❖ development of *Short Sea Shipping* concept in the Adriatic (regional *single window* concept)
 - ❖ project proposal for implementation of Motorways of the Sea concept in the Adriatic
- *Adriatic Vessel Traffic System (VTS):*
 - ❖ establishment of Adriatic VTS
 - ❖ establishment of Traffic Separation Schemes in Central and Southern Adriatic
 - ❖ consideration of the possibility of bilateral agreements on exchange of data from national systems of Automatic Identification of Ships (AIS)

Organizer: Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development of the Republic of Croatia

Round Table on Culture

Field of Cultural Co-operation:

- Redefinition of aims of cultural co-operation within Adriatic and Ionian Initiative
- Linkage of the AII with other regional organizations
- Revision of non-implemented projects such as: Agreement on film co-production and co-distribution among member countries on the AII; cultural paths; library co-operation; co-operation in field of underwater archaeology
- Intercultural dialog and cultural diversity in the Region
- Cultural heritage, with special review on underwater archaeology

Organizer: Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia

Round Table on Education and Inter-University Co-operation

Field of Education:

- Exchange of experiences in evolution and application of university programs in English with the aim to enhance mobility within *Bologna process*
- Intercession for participation of university representatives in the work of all AII round tables

Organizer: Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia

II.) FIELDS OF INTERACTIVE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN TWO OR MORE ROUND TABLES

Round Table on Transport and Maritime Co-operation – Round Table on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development

Field of Environment Protection:

- Regional co-operation in determination and implementation of Places of refuge
- Making of the Regional Contingency Plan for Accidental Marine Pollution (which would include Montenegro and Albania)
- Protection of the marine environment from ship source pollution through exchange and effective utilization of VTMIS data, e. g. Mandatory Ship Reporting System in the Adriatic Sea (ADRIREP) etc.
- Strategy and measures of ballast water management in the Adriatic Sea

Organizer: Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development of the Republic of Croatia – Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction of the Republic of Croatia

Ad Hoc Round Table on Protection Against Fire

- Tourism resources protection and guests' safety in tourist destinations

Organizer: Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development of the Republic of Croatia – Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Croatia - National Protection and Rescue Directorate – Croatian Fire-fighters Union

Sub-Table on Tourism – Sub-Table on Small and Medium sized Enterprises

Field of Tourism:

- Entrepreneurship in tourism – strategies, incentives, training -exchange of experiences

Organizer: Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development of the Republic of Croatia – Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Croatia – Association of Family and Small Hotels of Croatia

Sub-table on Tourism – Round Table on Education and Inter-University Co-operation

Field of Tourism:

- Education, training and skills improvement programs for qualifications in the tourism industry – partnership development

Organizer: Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development of the Republic of Croatia – Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia

Sub-table on Tourism – Round Table on Culture

- Thematic itineraries - prerequisites for setting up All Member States joint tourism products

Organizer: Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development of the Republic of Croatia – Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia – Croatian National Tourist Board and with the participation of associations of travel and tourist agencies of the Member States

Sub-Table on Tourism – Round Table on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development

- Sustainable tourism development in the coastal area

Organizer: Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development of the Republic of Croatia – Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction of the Republic of Croatia