

PRESS RELEASE

ADRIATIC SEA FORUM: potentials for development of ferry traffic and boating tourism, and challenges facing, and strategies of, cruise destinations - as the main focus of the last day of Adriatic Sea Forum.

“The Adriatic deserves a concrete project to develop the touristic vocation of the area and to enhance its recognisability at international level” declares Francesco di Cesare, president of Risposte Turismo, company that conceived and organised the forum.

The potentials for development of ferry traffic as ideal option for tourists wishing to reach destinations in the Adriatic area.

In addition, the prospects for boating tourism within the broader context of the Mediterranean, and the challenges facing, and strategies of, Adriatic Sea cruise destinations.

Lastly, the present and future of maritime tourism in this area, with particular attention paid to the role of Montenegro.

These are, in a nutshell, the main topics of the last day of the international event dedicated to Adriatic maritime tourism, Adriatic Sea Forum – cruise, ferry, sail & yacht. The event, taking place in Budva in Montenegro, was organised by Risposte Turismo in partnership – for this third edition – with the National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro, the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism of Montenegro, and the authority charged with management of Montenegro’s coastline.

The morning’s first sessions were dedicated to *“The ferry route to discovering destinations in the Adriatic: from the sea to the land”* and *“From maxi yachts to small boats: how can Adriatic guide the Mediterranean?”*.

The first round table was attended by Emil Bilić, General Manager of the Port of Zadar, Matteo Della Valle, Business Development Manager GNV, and Rodolfo Giampieri, President of the Central Adriatic Port Authority and Andrea Ntais, President and Managing Director, Igoumenitsa Port Authority, who dealt with the possible benefits to present the Adriatic destinations during the navigation and with the importance to sustain the ferry traffic outside the summer season, that is already positive in Adriatic.

Among the other topics discussed, also emerged the need to enhance the port services in the area (like refuelling) in order to reduce operative costs of companies and, consequently, to support the development of this segment of maritime tourism in the Adriatic area.

A stronger cooperation among countries and at local level, a new approach for the realisation of boats that could take care of the raise of yachtsmen’s age, new initiatives tailored for young people and the enhancement of marinas’ service to satisfy the needs of charter companies clientele, were among the main topics discussed during the second round table dedicated to boating tourism in the area. The meeting was attended by Zoran Brkić, CEO, Adriatic Sailing, Srećko Favro, President of Adriatic Expert, Piero Formenti, President of European Boating Industry, Vittorio Impallomeni, Advisor to the Board of Directors of Assomarinas, Kristijan Pavić, as President of ACI Club, and Ivana Petrović, Senior Adviser, Maritime Safety Department – Montenegro Ministry of Transportation.

Then, after an address by Anastasios Konidaris, Cruise Department Manager, Municipality Port Fund of Thira – Santorini, concerning the choice of the Port of Santorini for management of cruise tourism, the forum proceeded with the round table, *“Cruise Destinations in the Adriatic: challenges, opportunities and strategies”*.

ADRIATIC SEA FORUM

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During the session, which saw the participation of Vladimir Jokić, the Mayor of Kotor, Kostantinos Nikolouzos, the Mayor of Corfu, Zoran Srzentić, the Mayor of Bar and Jana Tolja, international affairs adviser to the Mayor of Koper, the topic dealt with was the specific initiatives for cruisers realised by the protagonists of the session, organisations already affirmed or recently entered within the Adriatic cruise geography.

During the round table has been also underlined the importance, for destinations, to better know the peculiarities of cruisers and the economic impacts that they generate on territories, in order to reach the best dialogue with the cruise industry.

Adriatic Sea Forum 2017 has then hosted an address by Joan Gual de Torrella, President of the Port Authority of the Balearic Islands, on how to manage (cruise and ferry) passenger traffic, ensure efficient activities of shipping liners and further the development of tourism in areas impacted by such phenomena, and concluded with the round table, *"The present and future of maritime tourism: Montenegro as a strength for the Adriatic"*.

The forum's closing session has been attended by representatives of associations, public organisations and international bodies operating in the sector of maritime tourism, and also by other players: Aleksandar Bozovic, Adviser, Environmental Protection Agency of Montenegro, Marco Digioia, Director Governmental Affairs, CLIA Europe, Nikola Dobrosravić, President of Euroregione Adriaticolonica, Linda Haydon, Group Tourism Manager ETOA (European Tour Operators Association), Christos Lampridis, Secretary General, "Ports, Port Policy and Maritime Investments" – Hellenic Ministry of Shipping Maritime Affairs & Insular Policy and Thanos Pallis, Secretary General of MedCruise.

"The debate that has taken place during this edition of the Forum," declared Francesco di Cesare, "underscores the general desire of operators to create a path toward collaboration and joint promotion for the benefit of all parties, based on a project with clear intentions, directed toward concrete objectives and results."

"By means of this project," he continued, "and the resources required and pooling of goals and objectives, the Adriatic may aim to enhance its recognizability worldwide and work toward generating demand in markets further afield, without neglecting the European catchment basin, for increased results in terms of incoming tourists, economic impacts and attention paid to the needs of the area and of the local communities."

"Adriatic Sea Forum," concluded di Cesare, "is the natural starting point for this process and project, and we at Risposte Turismo shall continue to work toward assigning to the Adriatic its role as a protagonist of international maritime tourism."

"It's our great pleasure to have the third edition of Adriatic Sea Forum in Montenegro" affirmed Željka Radak-Kukavičić – Managing Director of Montenegro National Tourism Organisation. First of all, because it is a significant event which get together the most important players of these sectors; secondly, for the importance of these sectors for Montenegro, which is trying to position itself as an attractive destination for cruise, ferry, sail & yacht. This event was very important for sharing ideas and getting to know the trends."

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