
Forum on EUSAIR and the Adriatic - Ionian Universities
"EUSAIR - how to say it - Building a macro-regional awareness
in the Adriatic-Ionian territories"

On the 5th and 6th December 2013 was held in Bologna the *Forum of the Adriatic Ionian Universities*, launched under the initiative of the *EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)*.

The conference, organized by the Emilia-Romagna Region, has been a remarkable opportunity to debate about the potential role of Academia within the perspective Adriatic Ionian Euroregion. Higher education and scientific development has represented the central issue to most of the distinguished guest speakers.

Scholars invited to the Forum, among which the chairmen Prof Stefano Bianchini and Prof Francesco Privitera, have assessed the academic institutions to be a potential leverage for a joint strategy based on the development of human capital and scientific progress as strategic tool of integration. Therefore, research networks and mobility programs at all level of learning, together with a wider cooperation in the field of tourism and environmental protection, have been highlighted as undisputable pillars for the promotion of a macroregional aware citizenship. These crosscutting priorities have been emphasized with the aim to prevent their marginalization at political level, a potential fault that would weaken the bases of the macroregional project itself.

The Forum has also represented a significant occasion to host an interdisciplinary analysis of the main assets and criticisms of the macroregional territory as a whole. The speakers have offered an in-depth examination of significant opportunities for common development as well as the major weaknesses which, if underestimated, may jeopardize the realization of the EUSAIR project.

Among the speakers there was also the **Iecob Research Team**, a junior research unit launched by the initiative of Prof. Stefano Bianchini and focused on the analysis of the *Adriatic Ionian macroregion*. The Research Team, composed by **Veronica Favalli**, **Maria Caterina Ghobert**, **Eleonora Erittu**, **Tomislav Jurisc** and **Adriano Remiddi** has addressed a speech entitled "*Education, Culture and Mobility: building awareness and human capital in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion*".

Therefore, on behalf of Iecob the Team has formally contributed to the "*Public Consultation on the EUSAIR*" promoted by the European Commission – Regional Policies (DG Regio).