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THE PUBLIC DEBATE IN LIVORNO

One year on from the end of the Public Debate that attempted to involve as many citizens as possible in deciding the future of the port of Livorno in about hundred meetings held in the Tuscan city, the *Autorità Regionale per la Garanzia e la Promozione della Partecipazione* (Regional Authority for the Promotion of Participation), the regional commission of “Public Debates” gathered local institutions and more than 200 citizens in the Ancient Fortress of Livorno to take stock of the situation about the state of play of two important infrastructural works: the European Platform, that is a game changing opportunity for the port and the new project for the building of a maritime station, that promises to change the face of waterfront.

There is no doubt that the debate has helped to reduce bumps and scrapes, which have been few in number cause these two projects are impacting on the environment. “Good communication with the community is not only important but appropriate whether it is to explain what port leaders do, or to understand their role in the economic and social life of the city: more dialogue is the best way to solve problems”, Mrs. Guillain, the person charged from the Regional organization, said.

The Europe Platform

After months of talking in meetings and debates about the project financing for design, construction and operation of the new “big ship ready” facility, Italian Government, Tuscany Region and Port System Authority of Northern Tyrrhenian Sea have decided to turn over a new leaf.

The 1.6 m TEU container terminal project will still offer 1200 m of quay and 62 ha of yard space, but it will be developed on a new design, build and finance basis. 200 mln euros of savings; less time for building it (five years); new certainties arising both from a specific law that eases port dredging activities for sediment land reuse, both from the new Public Procurement Code, that speeds up the works as referring to the PF procedures. This is the news. Europe Platform will cost now 662 mln including port expansion and equipment. The Tuscany Regional Administration and the Italian Government still are on the game, together with the Port Authority agreeing to invest € 450 mln, while the remaining amount has to be searched in the private sector.

The tender procedure launched at the beginning of 2016 had been withdrawn in September: Port Authority officers are looking into the technical and economic feasibility of developing such a plant and they will present a new tender asap.

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The new Maritime Station

Porto di Livorno 2000, the operator that coordinates the passengers in the port of Livorno by managing two Terminals, three parking and 13 docks spread over the entire port area of the port, providing high quality services to passengers and to ships coming in the city, bucked the national trend last year to post strong throughput for passengers in both segments of the business.

As in April 2017 Sinergest, Moby, LTM and Marininvest won the tender for the 66% stake in the society, discussions over the construction of new extra cruise berths to accommodate more vessels and increase facilities to handle passengers are going to rise to the top: Citizens and institutions are getting involved in thinking of the future for a port whose number of passengers boarding cruiseships in Livorno for many destinations has grown at a staggering 12% per annum.