

# *Protocol on the accession to the Network for the promotion of the innovation in the Retail Sector*

## CONSIDERING THAT

- Local economy's growth is based on innovation and the inclusion of new technologies at all stages of development and that the retail sector, particularly, requires a public-private cooperation system that makes it more efficient.
- The retail sector is changing and this transformation is demonstrated by blurring distinctions between wholesale and retail, by diversity across horizontal branches, and by a diversity of organizational and strategic concepts. Regarding the geographical distribution of innovative activities, it was found that companies in Southern Europe more frequently introduce innovations – in particular in the domain of supporting activities - than companies in Northern and Eastern Europe. This might well be due to the relatively high levels of expansion of the retail and wholesale sector in South Europe.
- Small and medium enterprises and self-employed workers are the real driving force of local economy and that they need policies that reinforce the competitiveness and coordination of the activities of the retail sector.
- The Mediterranean is a homogeneous and singular space within the European Union where the retail and commerce in general are their main driving tools for economical development.
- The Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce have a long cooperation background and that many of them have already developed joint projects and actions to boost economical growth in their own territories.
- The Mediterranean space, both in its intra-European approach and in relation with its neighbouring countries from the Balkan Area, is considered a strategic space for the harmonious development of Europe, and that there are more and more financing programs in all fields to structure economical and social cooperation among its agents.
- The new European regional development policy is linked to the objectives of the 2020 Strategy and that Europe has reinforced the investments in the fields of the innovation, the sustainability and the public-private cooperation, basis of the origin of Retail.

- The Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce face common challenges and difficulties within a space of great growth and development potential such as: the innovation, business development, sustainable growth, training and employment; and that the Chambers of Commerce are the promoters of this retail cooperation platform.
- From the European Commission and other community institutions, a participation process in the management of funds has been opened to other public law organizations and, especially, considering the possibility to create their own “European Territorial Cooperation Group” in the future that would allow the development and execution of their own innovation investments in retail program supported by European funds both from the ERDF and the ESF and HORIZON 2020.

### IT IS AGREED

- 1) The setting up of the **“Network for the promotion of the innovation in the retail sector”**, that, in its first stage, will be composed of all the partners that have participated in the REINPORETAIL project, financed by the EU Interreg MED Programme.

The network is composed of the following agents as founder partners:

- The Chamber of Commerce of Castellón
  - Andalusian Council of Chambers of Commerce
  - Abruzzo Region
  - Chamber of Commerce of Naples
  - International Telematic University UNINETTUNO
  - Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Drama
  - Chamber of Commerce of Heraklion
  - Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Lyon
  - University development Center and university incubator of Primorska (UIP)
- 2) The **main purposes of the network** settled up are the following:
    - Promoting the reciprocal knowledge of the partners in everything related to the economical development associated of the retail sector, favouring the transfer of knowledge, ideas and projects in line with the general objectives of the project.
    - Favouring the **participation** of the members of the network in European projects that cover the main purposes of the network: new technologies, development of the retail sector and innovation, among others. Promoting the implementation of communication and lobby actions both at a regional

and local level with the aim of obtaining funds from regional programs for the development of activities within the network.

- Promoting the objectives and the values of the network to achieve the **progressive incorporation of new agents** such as: chambers of commerce, business associations, institutes and research centres with lines and projects related to the objectives of ReinpoRetail, regions and public administrations, organizations, foundations and associations both of local and European and International nature with competence in the development of retail sector or competence in the promotion and innovation of the sector.
  - Representing, defending and promulgating the interests of the network before the European institutions with the objective of making them aware of the importance of the retail development and the competitiveness associated to the sector.
- 3) In addition, for the development of the main objectives of the network, its members have reached the following agreements:
- **Maintaining the virtual platform and the website of the project active**, becoming the working space of the members, both present and future, of the network.
  - **Creating four working groups of informal nature**, that will organize their work informally, inviting as many members as they consider adequate to the network, to analyze the possible incorporation of new services to the working fields already analyzed and offered on the web platform generated during the project.

**Working area:**

- ICT'S
- COMMERCE AND INNOVATION
- GREEN COMMERCE
- INNOVATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW BUSINESS INNOVATIONS

At any time, and according to the needs and evolution of the network, new working groups could be created or substitute the previous ones. In principle, the responsible for each working group assumes the engagement to keep the web platform updated and promote the cooperation and the transfer of knowledge between partners.

- Keeping the commitment of promoting this protocol at a local and regional level for the following five years, with the possibility to revise all collaboration aspects contained in the text.

With this subscription, joined the networking:

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*Signature*

*Date and Place*

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*Name of the Signatory*

*Function of the Signatory*

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