

PRACTICES

From Open Port to North Tyrrhenian Port Center Network. A Synopsis of 15 Years Port-City Integration Strategy

Francesca Morucci – North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority, Italy – Contact: f.morucci@portialtotirreno.it
Massimiliano Barbera – North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority, Italy – Contact: m.barbera@portialtotirreno.it
Giles William Foster – North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority, Italy – Contact: g.foster@portialtotirreno.it

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic confirmed ports' role in the global economy but it highlighted that there is still a lot of work to be done to let it be recognized and preserved by the general public. The changes ports went through in the last century generated a physical distance between ports and the general public which had psychological consequences in ordinary citizen mindset and did not help to make the port attractive for future generations' employees. To achieve the community outreach and the license to operate social, public bodies – most of all port authorities – must engage themselves in restoring the contact with local communities, by showing them how ports work, to what extent their assets contribute to the city/region development, which are the added values and the cultural connotations of living in a port-city. After a brief recall of Italian new ports organization and a short overview regarding North Tyrrhenian ports-cities distance, this article aims to present some steps made by North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority to make the ports closer to their cities through a long-term project: the "Open Port" Project (since 2007), including the Livorno Port Center (since 2015) and the Port Centers' Network of the North Tyrrhenian (end of 2021/ beginning of 2022).

KEYWORDS

Port-Cities Culture; Soft Values; Community Outreach; "Open Port"; Licence to Operate

<https://doi.org/10.6092/issn.2612-0496/12815>

ISSN 2612-0496

Copyright © 2021 Francesca Morucci, Massimiliano Barber, Giles William Foster

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the essential functional role that ports, and related supply chains, play in the global circular economy. Like after other economic shocks, the disruption caused by the challenging pandemic period has tested the adaptability of ports and put pressure on the integrity and efficiency of the global supply chain. It has also highlighted the need to ensure traffic continuity and improve the resilience of maritime gateways, keeping supply chains moving, economies functioning, and people employed, contributing therefore to sustain cities and surrounding areas.

Although scholars agree that as crucial nodes of the economy, ports play an important critical role—both on material and on immaterial aspects of cities, landscapes and regions—they are still arguing on *how* ports bring a particular culture and in which way it contributes to port-city resilience. If the continuity of port operations has been assured also in challenging periods like during the pandemic, the multiple conditions composing the particular port-cities *status*, rather than being seen from a societal and cultural perspective, are most of all approached through the lens of economy and transport. In fact, not only is it difficult to define the particular port-city culture but also culture, and in general, immaterial issues, are often overlooked in contemporary maritime and port discussions and in practice. This is particularly true in the case of port players, but it also extends to port authorities and sometimes port-city/regional governments, interested exclusively in measuring the economic impact.¹ Sometimes the infrastructural impact drives the attention more than the economic one, but port-city integration in the general mindset is almost always a matter of local and regional material development and rarely of societal and cultural one.

Moreover, the changes ports went through in the last century (due to port expansion projects, mechanization, automation, economic transition, reduced workforce, connectivity with the hinterland, etc.) generated a physical distance, a barrier between them and the general public which had psychological consequences on the latter's mindset. Local port-city inhabitants misunderstood the *other side of the barrier*, failing to fully comprehend the positive—or negative—impact of living in a port-city context. This distance often triggers a number of conflicts that has gradually conditioned the port-city citizen's identity.

Nowadays, many politicians and practitioners agree on the fact that public communication has become indispensable for ensuring constant productive relations between the public administration and local communities and, like marketing and information strategies, it is part of the port

¹ Francesca Morucci, "Le principe d'intégration sociale du port de Livourne," in *Gouverner les ports de commerce à l'heure libérale*, ed. Éric Foulquier and Christine Lamberts (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2014), 211–26, <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.editions-cnrs.45082>.

authorities' sphere of activities. Nevertheless, in these first decades of the 21st century the need for the port to come back to the city, much more mentally than physically, is still evident.

To achieve the community outreach and social acceptability, public bodies—most of all port authorities—must engage in restoring their contact with local communities, by showing them how ports work, to what extent their assets contribute to the development of the city/region, and the added values and the cultural connotations of living in a port-city. In other words: by communicating with them. As reaching local communities' "license to operate" is nowadays as important as having the city/regional government's approval, a communication strategy is as necessary as a development one.

The North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority's port planning strategy includes several projects supporting the port-city relationships and the long-term engagement with the local community. The "Open Port" Project (since 2007), the Livorno Port Center (since 2015) and the North Tyrrhenian Port Center Network—which will be officially put on the map with the inauguration of the Piombino Port Center set for the end of 2021/beginning of 2022—are developing an "involvement" philosophy to remove borders by creating socio-cultural flows in the Network's main port cities. The waterfront, increasingly conceived as a point of contact rather than a barrier, can contribute to "reinstalling" the port in the city; the interaction with the general public, at different levels, can facilitate port knowledge.

Which issues does the "Open Port" Project address and where did they take root? How does the interaction with the local community through long-term activities affect the renaissance of the port-city network? What solutions have been devised to give a new meaning to the port context and contribute to redesigning contemporary port-cities, especially after the Covid pandemic which has changed the conception of tourism but also of maritime traffic?

After a brief review of the new organization of Italian ports and a short overview regarding the distance between the North Tyrrhenian ports and their urban contexts, this article aims to present some steps made initially by Livorno Port Authority, and more recently by the North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority, to bring the ports closer to their cities.

Among disagreements, continuities and flexibilities, a double action—enhancing the port-city relationship and general public outreach—is very important as development policies by ports, port authorities, public bodies involved in port areas, maritime and port stakeholders, cities and communities have to be sustainable. Above all today, being in the middle of a paradigm shift, which has disrupted most aspects of our social lives and demonstrated that people need to adapt to following new rules in terms of working, travelling, consuming, going out, exercising, meeting friends, etc.

The Northern Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority: a never-ending relationship between ports and cities, a new network model at the service of a renewed port image

In 2016 the Ports Decree n. 169 reviewed the Italian port system, re-launching ports and logistics in Italy. Port Authorities have been re-organized into strategic decision centres managed by Port Network Authorities (PNA), based on the Italian “core” ports, as set out by the EU TEN-T Network (n. 1315/2013).² The new Port Authorities are in charge of 57 national ports and have a strategic role in policy, programming and coordinating the ports in their own area.

Following the Italian new ports’ law, since 2016 Livorno and Piombino port authorities have merged into a new network, the Port Network Authority comprising also Portoferraio, Rio Marina, Cavo on Elba Island and Capraia Island.³ Like the other PNAs, the Northern Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority is under the Ministry of Transport, with its own legal capacity in matters of public law and with administrative autonomy. It has financial, budgetary and administrative duties, and is in charge of planning, coordinating, promoting, controlling and providing guidelines on port operations and other commercial and industrial activities in ports. It can issue regulations and ordinances on port matters, including safety, accident-prevention and hygiene. The port reform law has led to a new emphasis on integration both for the ports belonging to the North Tyrrhenian Network and their cities/regional context.

Like in other cities, port-city interaction was more perceived in the past. In the last two decades of the 20th century, it started to be less visible not only for the two biggest network ports, Livorno and Piombino, which have become increasingly physically and mentally separated from their nearby cities, but also for the other ports belonging to the network, specializing in passenger traffic. Although passenger traffic is the last remaining type of traffic to directly involve the city centre, port cities have become places of transit, characterized by rapidity and volatility. Often passenger traffic, most of all cruise passenger traffic, does not stop in the port city but it is directed to other touristic areas in the region. Combined with other major changes port cities experienced in the last century, this material/physical and immaterial/psychological distance has led to an erosion of the public image of ports and an identity crisis which has necessitated placing increasing emphasis on disseminating an understanding of the port

2 The Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) concerning a Europe-wide network of railway lines, roads, inland waterways, maritime shipping routes, ports, airports and railroad terminals. Cfr. Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013. https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t_en

3 The ports of the Network Authority of the North Tyrrhenian Sea constitute one of the largest systems of Italian ports, accounting for over 14% of Italian Port traffic (over 42 million tonnes of goods and 9 million passengers every year).

among the local community of what the port sector has to offer (The North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority “Open Port” project, 2009). Moreover, the new administrative model of the last few years has made port public bodies realize that new solutions have to be found in order to facilitate a new relationship between the port and the city and to bring port into the daily active life. With this new approach, Port Network Authorities intend to broaden their philosophy and to attract more societal stakeholders to their ports.

In fact, the new Italian Port Networks are the result of a value chain that manifests itself in the port, in the surrounding area, on a national scale, in relations with Italy and the Mediterranean, and in Italy’s relations with the rest of the world.⁴ Their growth therefore depends significantly on the quality of the rapport that (port) governance manages to set up, including the indispensable relations with the various institutional levels, the port community and the local community. Pursuing the network logic, seeking the development of the local in the global, means developing programmes not only with the logistics and production system but with a network of local relationships that can trigger a collaborative, common strategy i.e. a sense of belonging to a “collective project”.⁵

In the 21st century the relationship between the port and the city is still a challenge- sometimes a potential conflict- for the governance of both ports and cities. That is the reason why, on the one hand, port authorities and city governments need to continue enhancing their relationship and, on the other, they have to enable local inhabitants and the general public to develop a general awareness of all the aspects regulating their symbiosis. The *sustainability* and *social legitimacy or social license to operate (SLTO)* of a port can be at stake if the social dimension of port activities is neglected.⁶ To achieve community outreach and social acceptability, public bodies—most of all port authorities—must engage in restoring contact with local communities, by showing them how ports work, and what it means to live in a city with a port, which are its assets. In other words: by communicating with them.

4 “Piano Portualità e Logistica | Mit,” accessed June 17, 2021, <https://www.mit.gov.it/node/5278>.

5 Luciano Guerrieri, *Strategie Di Sistema e Gestione Snella Nelle Autorità Di Sistema Portuale* (Piombino: La Bancarella Editrice, 2020).

6 Michaël Dooms and Alain Verbeke, *Crafting the Integrative Value Proposition for Large Scale Transport Infrastructure Hubs: A Stakeholder Management Approach*, 2010, <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10781887>.

Opening up the port to the local community: the Open Port project, a communication container' to remove the erosion of its public image

Nowadays public communication has become indispensable for ensuring constant, productive relations between public administrations and local citizens. Like marketing and information strategies, it is also part of the port authorities' sphere of activities. Ports must respect the same legislative guidelines that have reformed the public administration sector: transparency, dialogue, access to acts and procedures, understanding rights and opportunities, relations with the local community and surrounding area (city/province/region), affinity with the mass media and Internet. Besides, not only relations between ports and local citizens, but also between public bodies themselves involved in port activities have become indispensable for ensuring constant productive results. In line with this, since 2007, the Port Authority has been devising a series of initiatives designed to "communicate the port" to a non-professional audience known as the "Open Port" project. It celebrates its fourteenth edition in 2021 and has succeeded in increasing its public from 500 people a year to 4000. Moreover, the project has been devised with the contribution of the entire port community i.e. civil and military authorities operating in the port and port operators.⁷ Although each edition has represented a step forward, building tangible, strong ties between the Port Authority and stakeholders, collaboration with local and regional public bodies, in particular Tuscany's Regional Administration and Local Councils, as well as with local and national media, has been—and is still—fundamental for developing the project. Right from the first editions, the Port Authority realized that no single stakeholder can describe the port effectively. Contributions from all key players are essential as each one can offer his/her own personal professional experience. Hence the Port Authority is the driver of the communication policy, but the participation of all port stakeholders is indispensable. Without this synergy it would have been impossible to attain the results that have been achieved so far.

The "Open Port" project is based on various actions designed to communicate the port to the general public, focusing in particular on youngsters, in order to illustrate the complexity of the port system. Through actively involving the local community, it aims to facilitate people's awareness and to foster the port-city relationship. After Livorno and Piombino Port Authority merged in 2016, the project has been extended to the other ports

⁷ Livorno, Piombino and Portoferraio City Councils, Livorno City Council's Educational & Teaching Resources Centre, Municipality of Capraia Island and of Rio, Collesalveti town Council, the Harbour Authority, Livorno Customs Agency, Livorno District Council, *Porto di Livorno 2000* (the company managing the Port's Cruise & Passenger Terminal), Livorno port terminals A. *Vespucci* Logistic Platform. All these public bodies and private ports and intermodal operators have taken part since the project devising phase.

FIG. 1 Presentation of the book *Storia illustrata di Piombino* by M. Paperini (An illustrated history of Piombino), 15 April 2021- (Graphic material produced by the North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority).

in the North Tyrrhenian Network and it has become a *communication container* of events dedicated to opening up ports to local communities [Fig. 1].

The main aim of the “Open Port” project is in fact to promote the image of ports by opening not only their gates but also offering local citizens new sector dissemination tools:

- the *Livorno Port Centre*, inaugurated in 2015 and located in Livorno’s Old Fortress, with its website www.livornoportcenter.it, its Facebook page and the Old Fortress Facebook page;
- the *North Tyrrhenian Port Centre Network* project, which will be developed at the end of 2021/ beginning of 2022 with the inauguration of Piombino Port Center;

- the series on the local TV network discussing all the various aspects of port work and life;
- the *Port News* web TV video clips on the Port Network website;
- the Twitter account @AdspAltoTirreno.

“Open Port” is therefore an integrated project, a sort of umbrella that brings together different projects interacting with each other in view of promoting long-term involvement with the local population. The main program runs every year for a period of 8 months, from October to May. It consists of a series of events (port centre and port visits for all kinds of public, meetings at school to create a specific program for each type of school, preparatory meetings tailor-made to fit specific requests from teachers, TV programs, exhibitions, performances and concerts during the European Maritime day on 20th May, etc.). In each edition, citizens, above all youngsters and the school sector, are invited to take part in a program designed to allow them to become familiar with the port and to participate in the activities of their city’s most important economic reality. Through a series of completely free events, they can come inside the ports, beyond their customs gates, to get to know the world that represents their city’s main economic driving-force. Ports are ready to reveal their secrets: not only their inaccessible areas, their protagonists, the mechanisms that regulate them, but also their particular language and lifestyles that, over time, have permeated the entire cities [Fig. 2].

Accepting the challenge of disseminating port knowledge—experiences, aims and culture—and of reducing the gap between young people and the job market linked to the logistic chain and port operations, the Port Authority plays an important educational role, attracting students and teachers from different types of regional secondary and technical schools,⁸ but also investing in the field of University-Research and Development. In 2009, the Port joined an alliance among public authorities, namely the Municipality, the District Council and the local Chamber of Commerce, to support, both financially and operationally, Pisa University’s new logistics faculty in Livorno. It offers a degree in Logistics Economics designed as an interdisciplinary course (Engineering, Law, Business Economics, Information Technologies). Likewise, aware of the importance of reducing the gap not only with young people but also between research and its application on the work cycle, the Port Authority has also set up strong ties with the TeCIP laboratory (Institute for Communication, Information and

8 In two editions (2015 and 2016) a new part of the “Open Port” focused on the education theme to encourage youngsters from the local Nautical Institute to explore maritime professions and understand the wide range of employment opportunities. This part took the name of “Shipping and maritime jobs project,” a job-orientation program with courses related to technical nautical maritime professions structured to get a wide experience on the everyday working life in ports. This initiative has been recognized by the University of Pisa, offering students specific credits (from 5 to 10 points) to access the Logistics Advanced research faculty of the University. After two years of testing, the course is now run by the Port Authority’s Training Department. At European level, the Port Network vocational training center works with STC Group of Rotterdam, Valencia Port Foundation and Antwerp APEC Institute.






Domenica 17 Giugno 2018

*In occasione del **Port Day** promosso
dall'Associazione dei Porti Italiani*

Porto Aperto



Portoferraio

Ore 8:30, Molo Alto Fondale
Saluto in musica per i passeggeri delle navi da crociera *Seabourne* e *Seadream* e dei traghetti provenienti da Piombino da parte del gruppo di rievocazione storica *Petite Armée* e della *Fanfara Militare Napoleonica* (a cura della Filarmonica Elbana "Giuseppe Pietri")

Ore 12:00, Piazza Cavour
Concerto aperitivo a cura della Filarmonica Elbana "Giuseppe Pietri" in collaborazione con i *The Horn Project* e con il *Quintetto di Ottoni Gabrieli*

Ore 18:00, Piazza Cavour
Concerto della Filarmonica Elbana "Giuseppe Pietri"

FIG. 2 *Italian Port Days* in Portoferraio- (Graphic material produced by the North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority)

Perception Technologies) of Pisa's *Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna*, specialized in the design and implementation of training simulators for specific port equipment, and the CNIT (National Consortium for Telecommunications).

After 14 editions, the Port Network Authority has succeeded in rekindling a fascination and interest for the port world that had hitherto lost its appeal for the general public. At the same time, it has now become very clear that the port needs to constantly stimulate the interest of the general public.

To give just an example: if the revitalization of waterfront, in the case of Livorno, has consented an urban re-integration of part of the port area that had lost its appeal to the general public—the so called "Sea Gate"





PORTO APERTO

In occasione del 30° Trofeo Accademia Navale e Città di Livorno, il Porto di Livorno vi apre le porte: venite a scoprire l'anima della città e il fascino dei Cantieri Benetti e Lusben.

<p>VISITE GUIDATE AI CANTIERI</p> <p>20 Aprile 2013</p> <p>Dalle ore 10:00 alle 18:00</p> <p>Ingresso libero per tutta la durata dell'evento.</p> <p>www.benettiyachts.it</p>	<p>VISITE GUIDATE IN PORTO</p> <p>21 Aprile - 1 Maggio 2013</p> <p>Feriali: ore 17:00 Festivi: ore 10:30 e 16:00</p> <p>Per info e prenotazioni: Stand Autorità Portuale, Villaggio Tuttovela.</p> <p>www.porto.livorno.it</p>
---	--









FIG. 3 The "Open Port" Programme at the "Sea Gate" - (Graphic material produced by the North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority)

operation⁹—the creation of social and economic benefits, after over 20 years, is still not well perceived. It is, in fact, an area once linked to the port that local citizens are very familiar with, as a result of the large number of people working at the shipyard. Nowadays, however, the new activities based in this area are only partly known to the general public. The indisputable waterfront revitalization still needs to be constantly accompanied by a cultural discovery in order to gain a general understanding which is part of the general port awareness strategy the "Open Port" project is promoting.

This long-term policy—not only an event but a series of activities throughout the year in order to avoid an "event approach" and to establish a constant rapport with the local community—facilitates the port-city's renaissance and helps also to prevent a) the local community' detachment b) social conflicts c) the waterfront becoming a sort of folkloric setting [Fig. 3].

⁹ It regards the areas where the old "F.lli Orlando" shipyard once ran its activities where, after the shipyard folded up in 1999, a new part of the city has been developing. The "Sea Gate" operation is an industrial reorganisation combining the manufacture of luxury yachts, marine services, facilities, berths, and residences for citizens and tourists. Nowadays this area is privatised and owned by the Azimut-Benetti shipyard, a world leader in the construction of yachts, and the "Medicean Gate" company, more involved in real estate development, but the quays and berths belong to the Port Authority which is totally involved in this part of the city's renovation.

Some solutions devised to link the port to the city

In all “Open Port” activities, visitors are “virtually” accompanied along a path where Man is the protagonist: S/he who lives in the city, S/he who works in the port, and S/he who explores this reality. *Man* as the key player and his project ideas are therefore at the heart of the issues being discussed. These are divided into 5 main themes that are recurrent in every initiative:

- 1st theme: the port in history
- 2nd theme: the port at work and its professions
- 3rd theme: the port and the shipping goods’ routes
- 4th theme: the port of the future
- 5th theme: the city in the port

Apart from the main objective of encouraging local citizens to participate in the life of the port, the project is designed to disseminate the port culture at different levels, starting from an early age and involving port workers and port operators by making themselves guides to their professions and *ambassadors* of the project. An activity that creates a sense of belonging to the port community and promotes a safety and quality culture, providing local citizens and students with the opportunity to experience the multiple facets of the port ecosystem. An integrated communication program regarding the whole project has been devised since the beginning in 2007 with a coordinated package designed every year (posters, informative brochures, publicity in local newspapers and sector press). Likewise, dedicated web pages and e-mail addresses and campaigns on social tools have been created. These communication tools have always been supported by press conferences and numerous press reminders providing information on the project and related events [Fig. 4].

Besides these main activities, another big part of the “Open Port” creative communication strategy is related to the contemporary use and disclosure of the ports’ heritage. The Northern Tyrrhenian Ports belonging to the Network Authority share a special bond with their cities and, as we already mentioned, were commonly seen as an expression of the city’s urban expansion, at least until the 19th century. Their cities can all be seen as a *Gateway to Tuscany*, a region that, thanks to its famous and extensive cultural heritage, monuments, historic towns and typical food and wine products, is one of the most important international tourist and cultural attractions. In this context, the North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority, in unison with local institutions (City Councils, Local Chamber of Commerce and Region of Tuscany) has long been pursuing an objective that goes beyond the albeit important sphere of economic development: namely, to revive the relationship between the port and the surrounding area by



FIG. 4 Two "Open Port" Poster Programmes - (Graphic material produced by the North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority)

accompanying citizens and tourists on a walk down memory lane, conserving the soul of the port and city. This strategy, in an attempt to contextualise the new and the old, aims to enhance the various historical landmarks through cultural and tourist activities. It is also designed to combine the virtual with the real and fathom what the city and its port may and will look like in the future. A journey from past to present to the ambitious plans for tomorrow. The solutions devised in the "Open Port" project to achieve port-city integration by promoting the ports' heritage are also to be seen in the iconic value and contemporary use of monuments inside and around the port area. In particular, the four monuments in Livorno: the *Fortezza Vecchia* (Old Fortress), the ideal interface between the city and port, next to the passenger terminal, which hosts also the Livorno Port Center, the *Forte della Bocca* (Bocca Fortress), the *Fortezza Nuova* (New Fortress), the *Torre del Marzocco* (Marzocco Tower).

The Old Fortress, located in an area under the Port Authority's jurisdiction, is the city's most representative monument, not only from a historical point of view. One of the most ancient ramparts designed to defend the port and city, it was used initially as its trade centre, It represents a *continuum* between land and sea, past and future. Thanks to a cooperation agreement between the State Property Dept., the Regional Directorate for Tuscany's Cultural Heritage, the City Council, the Local Chamber of Commerce and the Port Authority signed on April 2013, (the Port Authority manages the



FIG. 5 Livorno's Old Fortress- (Photographic material owned by the North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority)

Fortress) all the public bodies mentioned above have committed themselves to putting together a program of cultural and tourist initiatives to let the fortress continue to be considered as a centre for a variety of organized events. They include business conferences, trade fairs, exhibitions, festivals, leisure and sports, open-air cinema and film festival dedicated to port and city.¹⁰ It is located close to the docks, a short distance away from the city centre and the business district known as *Venezia*, the point of departure for the major public transportation services (15 mins from Livorno railway station, 30 mins from Pisa Airport). The Fortress—a transit point for tourists arriving by sea—is strategically positioned to serve as a key location from which tourists can embark on excursions or enjoy shopping sprees. In the light of the above and in terms of the port-city's tourist and cultural development, the location of the Fortress, logistically and strategically, serves as a “business card” to anyone arriving in Livorno by sea, a natural link between the port and the city and between Tuscany and the rest of the world [Fig. 5].

In addition, we should add the city leisure program related to the part of the city linked to the port i.e., the “Venezia” district. This area takes its name after its Venice-style canal network used in the past for maritime purposes and nowadays for local boating activities. Thanks to daily boat trips along the waterways and the canals running throughout the year, the local community, but also tourists, not only live the Livorno port heritage but also can better understand the city's history and urban planning.

¹⁰ Livorno's film tradition is quite prestigious, with some of its directors and actors having won international acclaim, as well as being a source of inspiration and stage setting of many films, old and new, with its port and city.

The canals reveal the soul of the old merchant, maritime city and allow visitors to get a taste of what it is like to live here today.¹¹

Finally, it is important to emphasize that, to improve its societal integration with its urban context and with the local communities, the North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority takes part in a number of European projects focusing on the need to devise innovative ways of developing co-operative synergies with cities and devising a program of best practices relating to port workers based on two actions. First of all, the management of port professions through a database known as the “Observatory of Port Professions”, used to elaborate the data necessary for monitoring the training needs of authorized workers in Livorno Port. Secondly, basic training courses for new port workers, devised in agreement with port companies and trade unions, whose successful completion is required to be authorized to work in the network ports and validated by the Port Authority.

Conclusion

Ports have always been in direct contact with port users and the port community mostly in terms of information on port operations, commercial and passenger traffic, military operations, rescuing boats in peril on the open sea. Nowadays, ties with the areas around the port are constantly strengthening also from a communication standpoint, to improve a process of development of the geographical area, respectful of the local population and their heritage. The COVID-19 pandemic has confirmed the role of ports in the global economy, but it has also highlighted that there is still a lot of work to be done in terms of getting ports recognized and defended by the general public. The location outside the citizens “sight of its main terminals, the loss of employment due to automation, the general lack of knowledge of ports” fundamental contribution to their local economy and society in general, still risk isolating the port from the city. Besides, not all these factors help attract newcomers to the sector in the future.

The North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority has been organizing the “Open Port” initiative since 2007, bringing together different projects based on several actions, to: a) gain a better understanding of the port by its local community; b) keep people constantly aware of the ever-changing port dynamics c) disseminate a new image of the port as a place to experience with impressive infrastructures that are the results of a rich and multiple cultural heritage; d) let students and citizens understand that the city and port’s identity is a result of their cultural heritage and that living in a port-city offers an added value for their future; e) make youngsters aware that

11 This part of the city is a sort of “zip” between port and city which, during the summer, is the backdrop for different initiatives (concerts, shows, exhibitions mostly during the *Effetto Venezia* summer event program) binding more people to port-city environment. This program is organized by the City Council, but the Port Authority works in strict contact with it, as the canals are under the Port Authority’s jurisdiction.

port offers employment opportunities not only in terms of its traditional professions but also new ones dictated by current port scenario requirements; f) allow public bodies to become proactive in land development strategies, starting from the port as a key component of the city's identity; g) strengthen the collaboration with institutions and with the ports main protagonists in order to better organise the new initiatives devised as part of the new phase of development the ports are going through; h) develop a specific recognition and a common strategy to preserve the forms and features of historical monuments located in or around the port area which are important for the local community; i) generate public support.

The level of interest shown from the beginning of the project has been far greater than expected:

- from a *cultural* point-of-view, participants discovered areas they had never had the opportunity of visiting prior to this initiative, due to security restrictions;
- from an *educational/vocational* point-of-view, participants have been introduced to the working reality of the port, discovering possible employment sectors;
- from an *institutional* point-of-view, the strategic collaboration among the most important public bodies related to the port and with port stakeholders has led to a common philosophy to develop the port and the city together, based on dialogue and co-habitation.

Following the idea that "we can better appreciate when we understand" ("Open Port" project 2009), the *North Tyrrhenian Port Center Network* will pursue the long-term creative mission of the "Open Port" project. It will be interesting to investigate to what extent it will offer stimulating frameworks to reflect on the future planning of the port-city network. Most of all, setting up the North Tyrrhenian Port Centre Network will demand an additional effort to prepare a solid basis for its development. The new project mission could be summarized with the following sentence: "no better way to live in a port-city than by understanding its benefits, no better way to discover them by visiting the port". The port as a place to experience, live and work and as an added value for the future.

Francesca Morucci. Head of Promotion and Public Relations office. She has a PhD in "Territorial management, urbanism", a Master degree in « History and semiology of the text and of the image » and a Master degree in « Communication and information in Public Administrations » from Siena University. Her work experience covers three main areas : international cooperation in the port and maritime sector, promotion and communication, port urbanism, with a specific interest in port-city integration, Port Centers and (re)territorialization of port heritage areas. She represents NTPN on several bodies such as ESPO « Cruise and ferries network », AIVP board, and the MedCruise Association.

Massimiliano Barbera. Promotion and Public Relations Office - Employee. He has a Degree in Classics and a PhD in "Linguistics and Communication" from the University of Pisa. After eight years in the University research, he began his professional career in the Public Administration. Since 2015 he works in the port sector: he is in charge of general administration, promotion, communication and Port Center management.

Giles William Foster. Communication & Promotion officer. Born and brought up in England, after graduating from Warwick University with a First Class Honours Degree in Italian & European Literature, he left for Italy in 1988. After working as a teacher in Brescia for 5 years, he moved to Livorno, to work at Livorno Naval Academy as a professor of Maritime English/English teaching program coordinator. He has been employed at the North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority, formerly known as Livorno Port Authority since 2001, working initially a training officer, specializing in designing technical English training packages for the port and logistics sector, before joining the Communication & Promotion Office, where he is responsible for the English version of the Port Network Authority's sector webmagazine « Port News » , preparation and publication of contents on the Authority's website, plus collaborating in national and international promotion initiatives.

References

- Dooms, Michaël, and Alain Verbeke. *Crafting the Integrative Value Proposition for Large Scale Transport Infrastructure Hubs: A Stakeholder Management Approach*, 2010. <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10781887>.
- "ESPO Code of Practice of Societal Integration of Ports" Accessed June 17, 2021. <https://www.espo.be/media/espopublications/ESPOCodeofPracticeonSocietalIntegrationofPorts2010.pdf>.
- Guerrieri, Luciano. *Strategie di sistema e gestione snella nelle autorità di sistema portuale*, Piombino: La Bancarella Editrice, 2020.
- Hein, Carola. "Port Cities and Urban Wealth: Between Global Networks and Local Transformations". *International Journal of Global Environmental Issues* 13, no. 2/3/4 (2014): 339. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJGENVI.2014.064510>.
- Hein, Carola, and Dirk Schubert. "Resilience and Path Dependence: A Comparative Study of the Port Cities of London, Hamburg, and Philadelphia". *Journal of Urban History* 47, no. 2 (March 2021): 389–419. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144220925098>.
- Hoyle, Brian Stewart. "The Port—City Interface: Trends, Problems and Examples". *Geoforum* 20, no. 4 (January 1989): 429–35. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-7185\(89\)90026-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-7185(89)90026-2).
- Moeremans, Bruno, and Michaël Dooms. "An Exploration of Social License to Operate (SLTO) Measurement in the Port Industry: The Case of North America". *Sustainability* 13, no. 5 (February 26, 2021): 2543. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13052543>.
- Morucci, Francesca. "Le principe d'intégration sociale du port de Livourne". In *Gouverner les ports de commerce à l'heure libérale*, edited by Éric Foulquier and Christine Lamberts, 211–26. CNRS Éditions, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.editions-cnrs.45082>.
- "North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority's 'Open Port' Project 2009/2013/2018". Accessed May 22, 2021. <https://sustainableworldports.org/project/port-network-authority-of-the-north-tyrrhenian-sea-livorno-open-port-project/>.
- "North Tyrrhenian Port Network Authority's Three-Year Port Operational Plan 2021-2023". PortSEurope, February 1, 2021. <https://www.portseurope.com/three-year-operational-plan-for-adsp-del-mar-tirreno-settentrionale-livorno-approved/>.
- Pereira, Luís. "Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T)". Text. Mobility and Transport - European Commission, September 2, 2019. https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t_en.
- "Piano Portualità e Logistica | Mit". Accessed June 17, 2021. <https://www.mit.gov.it/node/5278>.