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ALIS magazine

**RIXI IN TURKIYE
FOR THE UNVEILING
OF GRIMALDI'S
GREAT ISTAMBUL**



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FROM MANDURIA TO ISTANBUL, THEN ON TO BRUSSELS: REFLECTIONS ON THE FUTURE AND THE CHALLENGES AHEAD FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

By Guido Grimaldi

Summer has always been a time for reflection, an opportunity to look back on what we have achieved and to look ahead to the challenges that lie before us. Once again, this year, our annual gathering in Manduria proved a remarkable success, not only because of the distinguished participation of representatives from institutions, businesses and the wider productive economy, but above all because of the quality of the debate and the constructive spirit that characterised the entire event. It offered compelling evidence of ALIS's continued growth and of our Association's increasing ability to serve as a platform for dialogue, forward-looking ideas and a shared vision. We are living through a particularly complex period. Geopolitical tensions, market uncertainty and the urgent need to accelerate the energy transition are confronting the logistics and transport sector with crucial choices. Our responsibility is to continue promoting growth that is sustainable, competitive and resilient. With this commitment in mind, ALIS has closely followed, and continues to follow, the ongoing review of the European Emissions Trading System (ETS), which is expected to have a profound impact on the future of maritime transport. The goals of decarbonisation are not in dispute. They represent both a shared responsibility and an investment in future generations. For many years, our member companies have invested extensively in increasingly efficient fleets, alternative fuels, intermodal transport and technological innovation. Precisely because we share these objectives, we firmly believe that environmental policies must support change without undermining the competitiveness of European businesses or producing unintended consequences. The revision of the ETS therefore offers an important opportunity to improve a system that, in its current form, still presents a number of shortcomings. These

include the risk of placing maritime transport at a competitive disadvantage compared with less sustainable modes of transport, the possible diversion of traffic to non-European ports, the impact on connections with the islands, and the need to align European policies with the framework that will be established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). These are issues on which ALIS will continue to engage constructively and responsibly. We continue to uphold one simple yet fundamental principle: the revenues generated by the ETS should be reinvested in the maritime sector to support fleet renewal, port infrastructure development, the wider adoption of alternative fuels and the further strengthening of intermodality. Alongside these priorities, enhancing Italy's strategic role in the Mediterranean remains equally important. In this regard, ALIS's recent mission to Istanbul, strengthened by its participation in the bilateral mission led by Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Edoardo Rixi, represented an important opportunity for institutional dialogue and international cooperation. It also enabled us to highlight the valuable contribution of our member companies to the development of maritime and intermodal connections between Italy and Türkiye, while laying the foundations for new opportunities for cooperation, investment and economic growth along one of the Mediterranean most strategic logistic corridors, an essential gateway not only for the region but for Europe's logistics system as a whole. Both our engagement in Istanbul and our meeting in Manduria reminded us once again of the importance of cooperation. The true strength of ALIS lies in its ability to bring together organisations united by a shared commitment to support the development of Italy's logistics and transport system. Every new member, every shared initiative and every opportunity for dialogue strengthens a collective asset that has been built over the

years through commitment, credibility and a genuine spirit of service. In the months ahead, we will be called upon to address a number of fundamental challenges: from the revision of the ETS and broader European policies aimed at enhancing competitiveness, to infrastructure investment, the energy transition and the opportunities created by emerging international logistics corridors. These are all crucial elements in shaping the future of sustainable transport and reinforcing Europe's strategic resilience. We will face these challenges as we always have, with pragmatism, openness to dialogue and confidence in our ability to deliver meaningful results. Because the future of Italian logistics is built every day, together. And ALIS will continue, with responsibility, determination and a forward-looking vision, to remain the home of businesses that believe that growth, innovation and cooperation are the true driving forces behind our country's economic and social development.

Guido Grimaldi
President of Alis
and author
of this editorial





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ALIS GATHERS INSTITUTIONS AND INDUSTRY LEADERS IN MANDURIA

At Bruno Vespa's Masseria Li Reni, with the participation of Deputy Minister Edoardo Rixi and Undersecretary Luigi Sbarra, discussions focused on the economic and energy landscape, the competitiveness of Italy's strategic supply chains, the pivotal role of Southern Italy, and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Confagricoltura

The Covered Hall

The venue hosting the event
at Masseria Li Reni

The evolving international geopolitical landscape, the competitiveness of logistics and strategic supply chains, energy security, the economic outlook for Southern Italy, and the strategic role of Apulia's logistics hubs in the development of the Mediterranean were at the heart of the ALIS event, "The Impact of Geopolitical Scenarios on Logistics and Industrial Supply Chains," moderated by Bruno Vespa, the event took place in the evocative setting of Masseria Li Reni in Manduria. Once again, ALIS brought together representatives from institutions, Government, the port sector, businesses and the productive system for a high-level discussion on the major transformations reshaping international trade and global logistics networks.

Following the institutional addresses by Domenico Sammarco, Mayor of Manduria, Giovanni Gugliotti, President of the Port System Authority of the Ionian Sea, and Kadir Çirkin, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Board of UND (Türkiye's leading road transport association), ALIS President Guido Grimaldi officially opened the proceedings by outlining the key themes of the event. "Once again, we chose Apulia because it represents one of Italy's principal maritime gateways to international markets and because Southern Italy continues to demonstrate an extraordinary capacity for growth," said ALIS President Guido Grimaldi. "For the fourth consecutive year, Southern has recorded GDP growth above the national average, and has made the largest contribution to employment growth. These figu-

“ The discussion focused on the new international geopolitical landscape, the competitiveness of logistics and strategic supply chains, energy security, the economic outlook for Southern Italy, and the pivotal role of Apulia’s logistics hubs in the development of the Mediterranean ”



Together
Guido Grimaldi,
President of Alis
with Massimiliano
Giansanti President
of Confagricoltura

Edoardo Rixi
Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport,
interviewed before the event



Bruno Vespa

Journalist and owner-host of the 17th-century Masseria Li Reni in Manduria, the venue for the event



“ALIS brought together representatives from institutions, government, the port sector, businesses and the wider productive community for a high-level discussion on the major changes reshaping international trade and global logistics networks”

res confirm the importance of continuing to invest in infrastructure, intermodality, innovation and skills development. This is why we remain committed to fostering dialogue between institutions and businesses, convinced that only a shared vision can strengthen Italy's competitiveness and create new opportunities for growth across our productive system. We also reaffirmed that investing in intermodality means supporting exports, attracting new investment, creating highly skilled jobs and enhancing the competitiveness and development of our businesses,” Grimaldi added.

“I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Bruno Vespa for his outstanding hospitality, and for once again bringing his authority and professionalism to the moderation of such an important event, held against the backdrop of a global en-

vironment marked by continuous geopolitical and economic transformations. I would also like to thank all our distinguished guests and eminent speakers for their valuable contributions to the discussion, including Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Edoardo Rixi and Undersecretary of State for Southern Italy Policies Luigi Sbarra. Together, we will continue to pursue a shared vision aimed at strengthening Italy's competitiveness and supporting the growth of our businesses,” President Grimaldi continued. The event continued with the panel discussion entitled “Infrastructure, Innovation and Competitiveness: Italy's Leadership in the Mediterranean,” featuring Luigi Sbarra, Undersecretary of State to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers with responsibility for Southern Italy Policies, Silvio Busico, President

**The venue**

The historic Masseria Li Reni, venue for the event organised by ALIS

of the National ITS Academy for Sustainable Mobility Supply Chains, Luigi D'Auria, Chief Executive Officer of Trans Italia; Fabrizio Mattana, Executive Vice President, Gas Assets, Edison; and Ugo Patroni Griffi, Director of the Executive Master's Programme in Economics, Law and Management of Major Logistics Infrastructures at the University of Bari. The programme then continued with the panel "Productive Supply Chains and Global Markets: Italy's New Strategic Priorities," featuring Edoardo Rixi, Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport; Admiral Sergio Liardo, Commandant General of the Italian Coast Guard; Sabrina De Filippis, Chief Executive Officer of FS Logistix; Marcello Di Caterina, Vice President and Director General of ALIS; Massimiliano

Giansanti, President of Confagricoltura; and Francesco Mastro, President of the Port System Authority of the Southern Adriatic Sea.

Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Edoardo Rixi highlighted the significant progress achieved through the Government reform of Italy's port system. "Port reform is a decisive challenge if we are to make our logistics system more efficient, modern and competitive. Greater coordination, simplification, digitalisation and governance capable of supporting growing freight volumes are essential to strengthening Italy's role in international trade. Investing in infrastructure means investing in the country's future."

"I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Bruno Vespa for his outstanding

“ Guido Grimaldi: we chose Apulia once again because it represents one of Italy's main maritime gateways to international markets, and because Southern Italy continues to demonstrate an extraordinary capacity for growth ”



Interview

Guido Grimaldi, President of ALIS, answers a journalist's questions before the start of the event



The Opening

A strong attendance marked the opening of the event organised by ALIS



Marcello Di Caterina

Vice President
& Director General, ALIS

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their valuable contributions to the discussion, including Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Edoardo Rixi and Undersecretary of State for Southern Italy Policies Luigi Sbarra. Together, we will continue to pursue a shared vision aimed at strengthening Italy’s competitiveness and supporting the growth of our



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We publish
in full
the opening
address
delivered
by ALIS
President
Guido Grimaldi
at the Manduria
event



Guido Grimaldi
President of ALIS



ALIS
ITALIA
IN MOVIMENTO

**L'IMPATTO DEGLI SCENARI GEOPOLITICI
SULLA LOGISTICA E SULLE FILIERE INDUSTRIALI**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Authorities, Dear Members and Friends, it is a pleasure to welcome you to ALIS's annual summer gathering here at Masseria Li Reni. My heartfelt thanks go to Bruno and Augusta for their generosity and for the exceptional care with which they welcome us each year, together with their entire staff. My sincere thanks also go to all our guests, our distinguished speakers and the institutional representatives joining us today:

- Edoardo Rixi, Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport;
- Luigi Sbarra, Undersecretary of State for Southern Italy Policies;
- Admiral Sergio Liardo, Commandant General of the Italian Coast Guard.

“From Brussels to Manduria, we continue to say loud and clear: “what comes from the sea should return to the sea” believing that ETS revenues should be reinvested in the shipping sector, to strengthen incentives for intermodality and support investment in sustainability, research and development”

A memento of the event

The commemorative plaque presented to participants in Manduria



Our decision to meet here in Apulia is no coincidence. This region is one of Italy's principal maritime gateways to the Balkans, the Middle East and Asia, and it is continuing to strengthen its role as a strategic logistics hub. The ports of Bari, Brindisi and Taranto handle millions of tonnes of cargo every year and provide connections with more than forty countries, supporting productive supply chains that are vital to Southern Italy. We are living through a period of continuous geopolitical and economic change. International tensions are having significant consequences: rising fuel and energy costs are placing an increasing burden on households, while the latest forecasts point to Eurozone GDP growth slowing to just 0.5%, with several countries facing the risk of a technical recession.

At the same time, Italy continues to record encouraging results in exports, which reached €643 billion in 2025, an increase of 3.3% compared with 2024. The Government has also set the ambitious objective of reaching €700 billion in exports. Behind these remarkable figures, which are particularly significant for our members as they continue to expand internationally, stand manufacturing companies that produce outstanding goods and logistics networks that ensure they reach markets around the world.

I would also like to emphasise the crucial contribution that logistics makes to both the economy and infrastructure. As highli-

ghted by a major study carried out by Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP), every €1 million invested generates €2.1 million in additional economic output.

Made in Italy travels by sea, air, rail and road. It passes through logistics hubs before reaching destinations across the globe, carrying with it the quality, innovation and tradition that distinguish our country. Within this context, Apulia continues to demonstrate a remarkable level of competitiveness.

The ports of Southern Italy also occupy a strategic position in relation to major infrastructure projects such as the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), launched as an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative and in response to India's growing economic importance.

If completed within an appropriate time-frame, the IMEC Corridor could create new trade routes and open up new markets between Asia and Europe. For Italy and for our member companies, this represents an extraordinary opportunity. To seize it, however, targeted infrastructure investment will be essential, particularly in strengthening intermodal connections between Southern Italian ports and the country's main industrial hubs in Central and Northern Italy.

It is in this context that the intermodal maritime corridor between Italy and Türkiye represents one of the first major development projects in the eastern Mediterranean, an initiative in which the Grimaldi Group and

ALIS member companies strongly believe. Today, the Motorways of the Sea connecting Italy and Türkiye carry thousands of cargo units every week, shifting freight that would otherwise travel by road across Italy and the Balkans.

Every truck transferred from road to sea saves approximately 600 kilometres of road transport, delivering tangible benefits in terms of lower emissions, improved safety and reduced wear on transport infrastructure.

For this reason, I consider the institutional mission to Türkiye led by Deputy Minister Edoardo Rixi, in which we had the honour of participating, to have been particularly important. It highlighted the outstanding commitment of our member companies in delivering concrete environmental and economic results. Speaking of ALIS's European and international engagement, I would also like to mention our recent mission to Brussels, where we brought the voice of businesses directly into the European legislative process.

As we know, in mid-July the European Commission will present the revised ETS Directive, and this will be a crucial moment for all of us as we seek to address the serious shortcomings that, over the years, have affected both businesses and citizens.

From Brussels to Manduria, we continue to say, loud and clear, "what comes from the sea should return to the sea." We firmly believe that the revenues generated by the ETS should be reinvested in the shipping sector, in strengthening incentives for intermodality, and in supporting investment in sustainability, research and development.

For ALIS, safeguarding the competitiveness of Italy's logistics and productive system has always been a priority, as has promoting new sea-rail intermodal solutions capable of generating significant economic opportunities. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sabrina De Filippis, Chief Executive Officer of FS Logistix, with whom we are working closely on concrete initiatives to further develop intermodality. Today also provides the ideal opportunity to highlight the added value of Italy's strategic supply chains.

In this regard, I am particularly proud that, together with Massimiliano Giansanti, President of Confagricoltura, we will sign the Memorandum of Understanding between



ALIS and Confagricoltura. This agreement creates a strong bridge between two sectors that share important and increasingly complex challenges:

- the agri-food sector, Italy's leading export industry by value, generating around €64 billion each year;
- the logistics sector, which accounts for approximately 10% of Italy's GDP and, thanks to the commitment of responsible entrepreneurs and workers, provides reliable and efficient services every day.

Together, we will work to develop proposals, projects and innovative solutions that will contribute to the growth of Made in Italy and further strengthen Italy's role as a strategic platform within Europe. In this context, I believe it is equally important to reflect on the significance and continued growth of Southern Italy, a region that is home to outstanding excellence in both logistics and the agri-food sector. As Un-

dersecretary Luigi Sbarra also pointed out, the latest figures mark a clear break with the past: for the fourth consecutive year, Southern Italy has outperformed the rest of the country, recording 0.6% GDP growth. It has also made the largest contribution to employment growth nationwide. Unlocking this potential means investing in connectivity, skills, innovation and sustainability, creating the conditions for local excellence to continue generating jobs, attracting investment and strengthening the competitiveness of Italy's economic system. The growth of Southern Italy is a fundamental driver of Italy's balanced and long-term development. Thanks to its geographical position, ports and logistics platforms, as well as its expertise, traditions and internationally recognised Made in Italy champions, the region has every opportunity to play a leading role.

I would like to conclude with a reflection that is particularly meaningful to me. People often ask why we continue to meet in the

same place, at the same time each year, suggesting that perhaps it is time for a change. It is a fair question, but I believe that true value does not always lie in change itself. Sometimes, it lies in the ability to remain consistent with one's choices.

The consistency, coherence and continuity that a person, an organisation or an association demonstrates over time, through seemingly simple gestures and annual gatherings that are renewed year after year, are the clearest expression of discipline, reliability, integrity and vision.

That is why, since 2018, we have chosen to meet here and to return every summer. This gathering has become a defining milestone in our journey: a valuable opportunity for open dialogue and shared growth. Allow me, therefore, to end with a special word of thanks. I thank you, Bruno, for your hospitality, your professionalism, your trust, and for always believing in me and in our Association. Thank you all, and I wish you a wonderful evening.



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1. Comscore, marzo 2024
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TRADE BETWEEN ITALY AND TÜRKİYE IS A STRATEGIC ASSET

Kadir Çirkin, Deputy Chairman of UND's Executive Board, Türkiye's leading logistics organisation, highlighted that exports from Türkiye to Italy have exceeded \$15 billion



Together

Kadir Çirkin
alongside
ALIS President
Guido Grimaldi

Among the first speakers to take the stage was Kadir Çirkin, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Board of UND, Türkiye's leading logistics organisation, which plays a key role in trade connections and Motorways of the Sea services between Türkiye and Europe. Çirkin outlined the current state of relations between his country and Italy: "Exports from Türkiye to Italy have exceeded \$15 billion, demonstrating that our trade with Italy is a strategic asset that must be protected through reliability and a long-term vision. Waiting times at border crossings can sometimes reach 120 hours. Imagine a product that takes four days to manufacture having to wait another four days at the border. This means risking the loss of customers, creating difficulties for factories and increasing costs for transport operators. In logistics, uncertainty itself is a real cost. An efficient logistics system makes delivery times predictable. This is why intermodal transport is a necessity. A system connecting ships, trucks and trains protects the environment, eases the burden on drivers and gives trade the room it needs to grow. I would like to express my gratitude to the Grimaldi Group for its investments in Türkiye and for the connections between the Marmara region and Trieste, operated by four environmentally friendly vessels. This is an investment in the green transition, sustainable logistics and our shared future. Our governments must work together. We need to speed up bureaucratic procedures, and customs authorities must facilitate trade rather than slow it down. I find it difficult to accept that, in 2026, we are still talking about quotas for road transport."

“Waiting times at border crossings can sometimes reach 120 hours. Imagine a product that takes four days to manufacture having to wait another four days at the border. This is why intermodal transport is a necessity”

Kadir Çirkin
Deputy Chairman
of UND's Executive
Board, Türkiye's
leading logistics
organisation



PORT REFORM IS ESSENTIAL TO BUILDING AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM

Edoardo Rixi, Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, answers Bruno Vespa's questions in the interview that concluded the ALIS event at Masseria Li Reni in Manduria

The Interview
Edoardo Rixi
answers
Bruno Vespa's
questions
on stage
at Masseria
Li Reni



Edoardo Rixi
Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport



“ We need both private and public operators, as well as agreements between countries that allow us to maintain a physical presence and close cooperation. Europe fails to recognise that the market is global, and decisions such as the ETS are distancing us from other markets. Italy has exceptional resources, but we need to invest them in services ”

With Guido Grimaldi

Edoardo Rixi and Bruno Vespa alongside ALIS President Guido Grimaldi following the interview



Edoardo Rixi, Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, took to the stage at the ALIS event “The Impact of Geopolitical Scenarios on Logistics and Industrial Supply Chains” and answered questions from Bruno Vespa, beginning with port reform. “The Government’s objective is to complete the reform within this parliamentary term. The amendments will be fi-

nalised by the end of July, after which the reform will be put to a vote. We are a highly individualistic country, so introducing the concept of a ‘system’ through this reform means recognising that what matters is making the system as a whole work. Rotterdam handles more containers than all 50 Italian ports combined.

“We need to be able to supply our own markets, while also having sufficient additional capacity to serve Eu-

ropean markets. The success of individual ports must not remain merely local; it must become a success for the entire system. I favour a confederation of Italian ports, rather like Switzerland, whose strength lies in being a confederation.

“We also suffer from inefficiencies in the allocation of resources. Unspent resources may appear limited, but when accumulated across the port sector over five years, they are equivalent to having

an additional year’s budget. I have the utmost respect for the rules of our Republic: as far as I am concerned, a parliamentary term lasts five years. In such a volatile geopolitical environment, this is fundamental.”

The Deputy Minister then addressed criticism from the Democratic Party:

“The Democratic Party talks about a centralisation of power, but the only real reform that took autonomy away from ports was intro-

duced by Graziano Delrio, a member of the Democratic Party, when ports were merged without making the system work any better. I remember that Vincenzo De Luca, who was Mayor of Salerno at the time, and Delrio almost came to blows during a meeting with all the Regions over the proposed merger of Naples and Salerno.

"We must not undermine structures that already work. We have created a two-tier system that preserves the autonomy of individual ports while allowing us to plan far more effectively at national level and on a multi-year basis. The plan will also be signed off by the Ministry of Economy and Finance, so that I do not find myself in November with a queue of people asking me for money that I simply do not have."

Responding to a question from Vespa, Rixi also addressed the issue of Chinese investment in ports around the world:

"These investments are designed to increase trade between China and the countries in which China invests, often at the expense of others. If we fail to respond, we will eventually find ourselves facing markets that are closing to us."

"We need both private and public operators, as well as agreements between countries that allow us to maintain a physical presence and close cooperation. Europe fails to recognise that the market is global, and decisions such as the ETS are distancing us from other markets. Italy has exceptional resources, but we need to invest them in services." Rixi then clarified the role of the proposed national ports company:

"The national ports company will be entirely publicly owned. We will introduce the reform without causing unnecessary disruption. But in Italy, there always seems to be a reluctance to play an attacking game, we tend to favour a more defensive approach. Yet this is a moment when markets have opened up: either we use our ability to enter and compete in those markets, or sooner or later they will close and we will find ourselves shut out."

"That is the major challenge behind the reform. Take, for example, the €260 million investment in digitalisation, which

On stage
Edoardo Rixi with Bruno Vespa



will bring together the systems of 16 port authorities that until now have each operated separately. Clearly, this is a long-term process, but it is not about taking powers away from local authorities. The Regions will also be involved in the planning process, but once infrastructure projects have been agreed, they must become part of a national strategy. "How can a country seeking to build international credibility tie its infrastructure projects to whoever happens to be sitting in the Ministry at a given time, without a multi-year perspective and therefore leaving everything vulnerable to being brought to a standstill? These are difficult situations to explain internationally."

"We need to make life easier for the authorities, including when it comes to the green transition, which cannot be achieved simply by imposing more taxes. If I impose more taxes, I drive shipowners away. By contrast, we are moving forward on energy production in ports, cold ironing and the harmonisation of tariffs. These are decisions that need to be taken centrally."

"Each individual territory can then decide whether it wants more berths or more marinas, but as a country we need to know what port infrastructure we require, what capacity is available and what our overall logistics capacity is. This allows us to make greater use of one area rather than another, while coordinating with the railways and other transport networks. We therefore

need a planning framework that ensures political instability does not become an obstacle to infrastructure projects."

According to the Deputy Minister, Italy and Türkiye can play different roles and, by working together, contribute to greater stability.

"Türkiye today is a completely different country from the Türkiye of twenty years ago. It once wanted to be part of Europe; today, it is quite happy not to be. That should make us ask ourselves some questions. Türkiye is not bound by the same stringent European rules, and that gives it a competitive boost."

"While we debate the Bridge over the Strait of Messina, they have built five bridges across the Bosphorus. The world is moving forward, and Italy must decide whether it wants to move forward with it. This is not simply an issue for our generation; it is an issue for future generations."

"The world can do without Italy when it comes to trade and manufacturing, and we need to start recognising that. Türkiye is developing a railway line towards Berlin as an alternative to the Suez Canal. It is positioning itself as a bridge between the Middle East, Asia, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean."

"Türkiye is one of our competitors, but we can become two complementary hubs: Italy within the European continent and Türkiye outside it. If we strengthen our cooperation, we can create a degree of stability that is more necessary today than ever."

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28.000 mq frazionabili (tagli da 6.000 | 7.000 mq)

Disponibilità Q2 - 2027 Casello A11 | 5 km



OSPITALETTO (BS)

28.000 mq frazionabili (tagli da 13.000 | 15.000 mq)

Disponibilità immediata Casello A4 | 2 km



CASTEL GABBIANO (CR)

22.000 mq frazionabili (tagli da 11.000 mq)

Disponibilità Q3 - 2026 Casello A35 BreBeMI | 8 km



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BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA, THE DIPLOMACY OF THE SEA: EDOARDO RIXI'S MISSION TO TÜRKİYE REVITALISES THE MEDITERRANEAN LOGISTICS AXIS

From the Istanbul Maritime Summit to the Grande Istanbul's first call at a Turkish port: ALIS alongside the Italian Government

By Antonio Errigo



The Venue

Participants at the fifth edition of the Türkiye Maritime Summit, one of the world's leading events dedicated to the maritime economy

Travelling around the world, one comes to realise that some cities, more than others, tell the story of history. And then there is Istanbul, a city that continues to write it. For more than sixteen centuries, Istanbul served as the capital of three empires, the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman, and today the metropolis on the Bosphorus remains one of the world's most significant geopolitical crossroads. Here, Europe meets Asia, the Mediterranean meets the Black Sea, NATO meets the Middle East, while energy routes intersect with trade corridors that are set to reshape the global economic balance. It was against this backdrop that Edoardo Rixi, Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, embarked on his institutional mission to Türkiye, a visit that quickly went beyond the boundaries of a conventional diplomatic agenda to become a political statement in its own right.

Rixi was the only European government representative to attend the ministerial session

of the 5th Türkiye Maritime Summit, one of the world's leading events dedicated to the maritime economy. Organised by the Turkish Government, the Summit brought together Minister Abdulkadir Uraloğlu, IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez, UNCTAD representatives and senior figures from the international shipping industry. Rixi's presence carried a clear message: to strengthen dialogue between Rome and Ankara at a historic moment when infrastructure cooperation has itself become an instrument of economic diplomacy.

From the very first hours, the agenda was intensive and firmly focused on results. Following the opening of the Maritime Summit, the Deputy Minister met Ahmet Olmüştür, CEO of Turkish Airlines, and representatives of the Italian institutional and business community in Türkiye. He then held talks with Turkish Deputy Minister of Transport Durmuş Ünüvar at an extended meeting involving companies from the sector, including prominent repre-

sentatives of our own cluster. These were not simply formal meetings, but discussions centred on concrete priorities: the development of maritime connections, infrastructure modernisation, intermodality, the digitalisation of logistics, supply-chain security and industrial cooperation. In a Mediterranean that is becoming increasingly central to trade flows between Asia and Europe, Italy and Türkiye share a common responsibility: to turn their geographical position into a competitive advantage. This is a challenge that concerns not only their ports, but the entire European logistics system. If the first day was devoted to diplomacy, the second spoke the more tangible language of investment. Its name is no coincidence. Naming a ship after Istanbul means recognising the strategic role that Türkiye has come to play in international trade and in the future of Mediterranean logistics.

Against this backdrop, ALIS's presence played a significant role that went well beyond institutional participation. The

At the Port of Kocaeli (Izmit)

Guido Grimaldi and Deputy Minister Edoardo Rixi in front of the Grande Istanbul

Antonio Errigo

Deputy General Manager of ALIS, is also Coordinator of the ALIS Europe Department and Head of International Relations



ALIS
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“The Türkiye Maritime Summit, one of the world's leading events dedicated to the maritime economy, was attended by Minister Abdulkadir Uraloğlu, IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez and senior figures from the international shipping industry”



“Grande Istanbul also provides a powerful illustration of the technological transformation currently reshaping maritime transport. With a capacity of more than 9,200 CEU, the vessel is ammonia-ready, designed for the future use of ammonia as a zero-emission fuel, and equipped with the most advanced technologies to reduce fuel consumption and emissions. The ship embodies a new generation of European shipping”

The Maiden Call

Guido Grimaldi during the ceremony marking Grande Istanbul's maiden call in Türkiye, at the Port of Kocaeli (Izmit). The Grimaldi Group's new vessel is one of the world's most advanced ships for the transport of vehicles and rolling cargo



delegation led by President Guido Grimaldi, accompanied by Vice President Marcello Di Caterina and myself, provided a tangible example of the model of cooperation between institutions and businesses that remains one of the key strengths of Italy's logistics system. ALIS has now become a key stakeholder in European policies on intermodality, sustainability and industrial competitiveness. Its participation in the Deputy Minister's mission confirms the extent to which public-private dialogue has become an essential element in shaping international infrastructure strategies. Today, a country's competitiveness is measured not only by the infrastructure it builds, but also by its ability to connect institutions, businesses and territories. The ceremony marking the arrival of the Grande Istanbul also provided an opportunity to look back on an industrial history that began almost half a century ago. The Grimaldi Group has maintained a permanent presence in Türkiye for around fifty years, and today its operations connect the country's main ports with the Group's global network. The figures speak more clearly than words about the scale and value of this investment: around 20 ro-ro and car carrier vessels operating regularly in the country; more than 750 calls at Turkish ports in 2025 alone; connections with more than 60 countries across five continents; a market share expected to rise to 62% of short-sea traffic between Italy, Greece and Türkiye by 2026; and total investment exceeding €1.2 billion.

These figures describe far more than a shipping operation: they reflect a long-term industrial

With the Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Transport
Marcello Di Caterina with Edoardo Rixi



“Deputy Minister Rixi’s visit to Türkiye sends a clear message. In the emerging global order, logistics is no longer merely an economic function: it is foreign policy, security and industrial policy”

strategy that has contributed to the growth of Türkiye’s automotive industry, the expansion of bilateral trade and the creation of a genuine logistics bridge between the Eastern Mediterranean and Europe. Grande Istanbul also provides a compelling illustration of the technological transformation currently reshaping maritime transport. With a capacity of more than 9,200 CEU, the vessel is ammonia-ready, designed for the future use of ammonia as a zero-emission fuel, and equipped with the most advanced technologies to

With the IMO Secretary-General
Antonio Errigo with Arsenio Dominguez



reduce fuel consumption and emissions. The ship embodies a new generation of European shipping, tangible proof that sustainability and competitiveness are no longer competing concepts, but two sides of the same industrial strategy. Deputy Minister Rixi’s visit to Türkiye sends a clear message. In the emerging global order, logistics is no longer merely an economic function: it is foreign policy, security and industrial policy. It is about the ability to build lasting relationships between countries that share strategic interests.

Against this backdrop, ALIS’s presence alongside the Italian Government and leading industry operators confirms the Association’s growing role as a platform for dialogue between institutions and businesses, capable of supporting the international growth of Italy’s logistics system. Because, as Istanbul’s history teaches us, the strongest bridges are those built on vision, trust and cooperation. And it is precisely across this bridge that Italy and Türkiye now appear determined to move forward together.

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