

Mega yachts, 8000 port-calls by the end of 2017

Genova - Italy's coastline has seen a boom in mega-yachts. Since the beginning of the year - according to preliminary data released to ***Secolo XIX/The MediTelegraph*** by Federagenti - visits by large pleasure crafts calling at Italian marinas has increased considerably; this is a very sought after segment

MATTEO DELL'ANTICO - OCTOBER 07, 2017



Genova - Italy's coastline has seen a boom in mega-yachts. Since the beginning of the year - according to preliminary data released to *Secolo XIX/The MediTelegraph* by Federagenti - visits by large pleasure crafts calling at Italian marinas has increased considerably; this is a very sought after segment, for the added value generated by catering to their services, and for the resulting spin-off for local economies. Forecasts by marina operators show that the sector - at the national level - will grow by double-digits by the end of the year, with a total of about 8,000 yacht visits in 12 months.

And, it's not just the arrivals, but also the average stay of pleasure boats which are rising, now close to four consecutive days per vessel; "The year that is about to end," explained Giovanni Gasparini, chairman of the Federagenti Yacht

section, "has been for the sector a year of strong growth, as evidenced by the data we collected from marine agents operating in the nautical sector."

By shipowner category, this year, a large majority of non-Italian customers was recorded, accounting for 96% of the total number of guests present on board big yachts, mostly Russians and Arabs.

Conversely, the percentage of crews of Italian nationality, which is close to 10%, is increasing, a testimony to the quality of Italian captains and officers who are very often employed on board foreign vessels: "We are recovering the ground lost in recent years to competing countries such as Spain and France," explains Gasparini, "thanks in part to the uniformity of the rules regulating this market, across all EU-member states."

Figures on the recreational boating sector collected by Federagenti will be presented on October 11, in Trieste, during a conference organized by the maritime agents of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region entitled: "The Adriatic treasure". Other associations operating in the sub-sector will also participate, including Ucina and Nautica Italiana. "During the meeting we will try to pay particular attention to the entire North Adriatic area, focusing the discussion on the new opportunities provided by areas such as Veneto and Friuli, as well as Slovenia and Croatia", emphasized the outgoing chairman of the Yacht division, who will give up his role in 2018: "In recent years," said Gasparini, "the economic importance of this sector has perhaps become more apparent; if properly supported, it can provide significant gains to the entire economic fabric of the nation. I believe that part of this success stems from work done by maritime agents throughout Italy."