



FOR AN ITALO-GERMAN CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE
FONDAZIONE ALTAGAMMA and MEISTERKREIS companies meet to discuss
strategic priorities for the high end industry

Rome, July 8th 2016. 60 Italian and German companies, members of Altagamma and Meisterkreis, met on July 7th and 8th in Rome to debate on some of the most relevant issues of the high end industry. For the first time the companies exchanged views on the future of the industry, on the contemporary challenges and on concrete projects to be developed jointly, also within the European Union. On Thursday 7th, German Ambassador *Susanne Wasum-Reiner* hosted a Gala Dinner at her residence at Villa Almone. The meeting on Friday 8th was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Altagamma and Meisterkreis are part of the *European Cultural and Creative Industries Alliance (ECCIA)*, which represents the main Associations of the European high end industries, united together in sustaining the development of a sector which accounts for 4% of the EU GDP, for 17% of its export and 1,7 million jobs. Italian and German companies, in particular, represent together approximately 30% of the worldwide luxury market share.

The conference was participated by Andrea Illy, Chairman of Altagamma, by Clemens Pflanz, Chairman of Meisterkreis, and by several representatives of Italian and German Institutions: *Vincenzo De Luca*, Director General for the Promotion of the Economic System, *Antonio Tajani*, Vice President of the European Parliament, *Paola Amadei*, Deputy Director General/Principal Director for Multilateral Economic and Financial Cooperation, and Ambassador *Dr. Susanne Wasum-Reiner*. The Undersecretary to Economic Development, *Ivan Scalfarotto*, contributed to the debate with a video message.

Parliamentary State Secretary, Brigitte Zypries, commented: *"the Cultural and Creative High-end industries in both countries are important for competitiveness, growth and jobs. The diverse membership of Meisterkreis and Altagamma present a strong complementarity and a very promising base for positive cooperations."*

"We need more Europe, not less Europe. Especially after Brexit." said Undersecretary Ivan Scalfarotto. *"We need more free trade agreements and less barriers. To help people like you who produce nice and quality goods to spread always more products which are not only goods or products but they are our culture, our values and our identity. Our government is aware and very supportive of your industry and our interest in you will always be growing more and more."*

"Italy needs to promote those industries where we have a natural vocation, where taste, style and quality are the key to success" claimed Vincenzo De Luca, Director General for the Promotion of the Economic System. *"We are in a privileged position to be a global benchmark for consumers of high-end goods, provided that we meet two conditions: to seek always quality at all levels and to strengthen, also at European and international level, the efforts against counterfeit and "Italian-sounding" products"*.



"The member companies of Fondazione Altagamma and Meisterkreis are bound together by both tradition and the future, over generations of collective experience and future-oriented innovation", said Ambassador Dr.Susanne Wasum-Rainer. "These are companies with a modern and comprehensive sense of highest quality which are exemplary of an impressive and courageous entrepreneurial culture."

"Italy and Germany play a prominent role in the high-end industry, with their brands accounting together for about 30% of the global luxury market" said Andrea Illy, Chairman of Altagamma. "Our companies are trend-setter for the whole manufacturing of the first two European industrial forces, and they are cultural ambassadors of our Countries lifestyle. Thanks to this symbolic strenght, we can provide a positive contribution to the difficult integration of Europe."

"That's why this conference is an important opportunity to discuss the most relevant issues for a sector representing not only a key-driver for the growth of European economy, but also a distinctive element of the European cultural identity"

"Altagamma and Meisterkreis are a community of values" added Clemens Pflanz, Chairman of Meisterkreis. "All the members stand for the highest quality and creativity. Only if we combine our talents and strenghts, we will be able to generate our potential for our countries and for Europe."

The meeting was the occasion for a proactive discussion on the common key issues, through three private workshops focusing on *Craftsmanship, Digitalisation and Millennials, Young Talents*.

The workshops identified three initiatives for the Cultural and Creative Industries: fight against counterfeiting, encouragement of craftsmanship and strenghtening professional education, in collaboration with National Governments and the European Union.

The next meetings will be held in Berlin in the first semester 2017, among Altagamma, Meisterkreis, ECCIA and the EU and these areas will be on top of the agenda.

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