

PRESS RELEASE

**Mortgages: mortgage payments have been suspended for families in need**

*An agreement was signed between the Umbria Region and ABI Umbria. A 1,365,000 euro guarantee fund was set up. Banks operating in the area are ready to implement the solution set out in the regional law.*

Mortgage payments, including principal and interest, have been suspended with respect to home loans for purchasing and/or renovating a primary residence entered into by workers who since January 1, 2009 have been impacted by or are still suffering from the jobs crisis or who work for firms in distress. This is the content of the Memorandum of Understanding executed today in Perugia between Vincenzo Riommi, Regional Councilor responsible for the Budget, and Alfredo Pallini, President of ABI Umbria.

The MOU refers to article 6 of Regional Law of 5 March, 2009, which sets out that the region may help families in need who have a mortgage for purchasing and/or renovating a primary residence and who find themselves in disadvantaged conditions due to the fact that one or more family members have lost their job or benefit from social security cushions.

To this aim, the Umbria region set up a 1,365,000 euro guarantee fund for this year to implement the measures envisaged by the abovementioned law; moreover, it initiated consultations with ABI Umbria to draft common implementing regulations and facilitate the regional measure's success.

In accordance with the agreement, the Umbria Region and the Regional Committee of ABI will also undertake to:

- favor the dissemination of information regarding the content of the Memorandum of Understanding and its implementing regulations with respect to banks and eligible families;
- promote the drafting of technical specifications to implement the regulations between the regional financial committee and banks;
- monitor, on a quarterly basis, the projects that have been implemented, so as to make the necessary changes, if any.

“The MOU – pointed out Vincenzo Riommi, Regional Councilor responsible for the Budget – is part of the discussions, regarding the measures to be taken to tackle the crisis, that the Umbria Region has initiated with social forces, leading market players and banks. Thanks to ABI Umbria's commitment to raising awareness of the project and convincing banks to join this initiative, measures aimed at supporting families in need were strengthened. The Region expects to be able to suspend mortgages for a total of 27 million euros by using the guarantee fund, thereby finding real solutions to the requests of 2500 families”.

Alfredo Pallini, President of ABI Umbria, said that he is “pleased with the agreement reached. During this crisis, it was necessary to prove, once again, that we are able to cooperate with regional institutions. In this respect – continued Mr. Pallini – our goal is to ensure that the families most impacted by the crisis are not completely damaged; therefore, we need to help them react and be ready for the economic upturn which will offer new employment opportunities”.

Perugia, 17 April 2009