

# INSULEUR VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE EUROPEAN ISLAND CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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## INSULEUR GENERAL ASSEMBLY: NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brussels, May the 4th



Some of the members of the new Board of Directors.

The last **4<sup>th</sup> May**, Insuleur celebrated its General Assembly in Brussels. During this meeting, with more than 20 representatives from Insular Chambers of Commerce, the new Board of Directors was elected for the coming three years. The president of the Majorca's Chamber of Commerce, Joan Gual de Torrella, will be responsible for presiding the network during this period. It is the first occasion in which a Spanish representative presides INSULEUR. Mr. Gual will be accompanied during its mandate by a team composed by six other members: 4 Vicepresidents, 1 Treasurer and 1 Secretary General. By nationalities, two Spanish, two Greeks, one French, an Italian and a Maltese will make up the new Board.

### **NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS INSULEUR**

- ❖ President: Joan **Gual de Torrella** Guasp (CCI Mallorca) - SPAIN
- ❖ Vicepresident: Arturo **Escuder** (CCI Tenerife) - SPAIN
- ❖ Vicepresident: Stylianos **Giakoumogiannakis** (CCI Chania) - GREECE
- ❖ Vicepresident: Giancarlo **Deidda** (CCI Cagliari) - ITALY
- ❖ Vicepresident: Eric **Magamootoo** (CCI Ile de la Réunion) - FRANCE
- ❖ Treasurer: Yiorgios **Benetos** (Professional Chamber of Piraeus) - GREECE
- ❖ Secretary General: Joe **Grech** (CCI Gozo) - MALTA

About twenty Chambers from the INSULEUR network met in Brussels to celebrate the General Assembly. The meeting was intense and several members had the opportunity to participate in the subjects that were treated, particularly in a debate concerning the economical crisis.

During his speech, **the new president of INSULEUR, Mr. Gual de**

**Torrella**, who also is President of the Majorca's Chamber of Commerce and the Commission of Tourism of the High Council of Chambers of Commerce of Spain (CSC), thanked the support received by the members of the network and exposed the main lines of action of its strategic program.





Gual replaces Raymond Ceccaldi, President of the Ajaccio's Chamber of Commerce (Corse, France), who has been the President of INSULEUR during the last three years. The previous presidents of the network were the Italian Romano Mambrini (2003-06), of the Chamber of Cagliari (Italy) and the Greek Elias Mikalakis (2000-03), of the Chamber of Chios (Greece). The new Insuleur President, proposed to Mr. Ceccaldi to become Honorific President from the network.

Gual and his team have proposed to work in two lines, the first one to continue with the action of lobbying before the national and European institutions developed to date and in second place, developing projects of cooperation in network through European Programs, in tourism, transportation, energy and management of the environment, like options of business development. In this new

phase, Gual has asked for an effort of coordination between the Chambers in order to give a greater visibility to the network addressed to the media and to the society in general and finally, to continue with the deepening of the know-how on development of the insular SMEs and of the economy of the insular regions in general.



## INSULAR COMPANIES FACING THE CRISIS

Debate coordinated by Giancarlo Deidda (CCI Cagliari)



During the Insuleur General Assembly, one of the new Vicepresidents from INSULEUR and **President from the Cagliari Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Giancarlo Deidda**, was in charge of coordinating a debate between the Chambers concerning the current economical crisis, that has destabilized the markets worldwide and that has left most insular regions and companies in a complicated situation that will require big efforts to be solved, also from the Governments.

Deidda, in tune with Mr. Gual, proposed the layout of a **common document** that would reflect the state of the economies of the whole European insular system. "We try to look at the crisis as an opportunity", he said, "to build a network that will make us able to transfer between us competences and experiences". The Assembly indicated the principal aspects of this document that should be presented to all the EU institutions: the step from global to regional economies, from big players to small actors. "We are at the beginning of a new society looking for a new economical model", observed Mr. Ceccaldi, "and **the step from globalization to regionalization** won't be easy".

By the end of his intervention, Deidda concluded as follows: "According to the Italian Government this economical crisis is only temporary, but if the situation should continue, this would be the Third economical World War. At this moment the cohesion between business networks is more than necessary".

The proposals of the Assembly to face the crisis include: to reinforce the development of quality tourism; to relaunch local specificities and details; to improve the transport infrastructures; to reinforce promotion and to permit access to credit for SME's, that composed the business network from the islands.

## THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE ISLANDS

Intervention by the President from EOAEN,  
Themistoklis Papatheofanous (CCI Samos)



One of the new Vicepresidents from the Board of Directors elected on 4<sup>th</sup> May is Mr. **Themistodis Papatheofanous**, **President of the Samos Chamber of Commerce and President from the EOAEN**. He participated in the debate concerning the economical crisis and he emphasized on the need for immediate support measures and the preparation of integrated development plans for the islands. Here is a resume of his intervention.

"The latest forecasts by the Bank of Greece speak of probable zero to negative rates of growth for the Greek economy in 2009. In many countries of the eurozone growth rates are already negative. Whatever the case, the islands are of primary importance. In 2010, and most likely 2011, our 'local economies' will have significant problems. The 'local growth rates' will certainly be negative.

**The island economies are dependent**, relying on the import of products and services. The consumption of products and services produced locally has fallen significantly over the last decades. Almost all the **islands of Europe are largely dependent on tourism**. Thus, zero rates of growth at a national level do not mean equal rates at a regional and or local level. On the contrary, given the chronic lack of development on the islands, we fear the result will be a long period of negative growth. And this is because a series of structural problems that the islands face – particularly the smallest of these, regardless of the crisis – will exacerbate the local consequences.

The first signs are already beginning to show: the number of new building licenses has fallen; agricultural income has collapsed; expectations from tourism are reduced; infrastructures which are basic for the local economy have stopped.

Therefore, we can conclude that a reduction in local consumption is happening as a consequence of the reduced income of important groups of the population and the expected reduction of income of other groups. In general, there is an **important lack of confidence**. The consequences are immediate and we have the feeling that other island regions of the EU have the same situation:

- ❖ Reduced liquidity and **financial problems for SMEs** also due to the policy of banks
- ❖ This situation creates **a vicious circle** that will lead to dismissals and an increase in unemployment, which will in turn exacerbate the above.
- ❖ The problems are intensified by the expected **reduction in tourism** and by the fact that funds that could give some reprieve are delayed.

In these conditions there is an urgent need to take initiatives on a local – national and European level to deal with the consequences of the crisis for our islands. The initiatives should be along **the following two axes**:

1. **Immediate measures to deal with the consequences of the crisis**
2. **Special development programs for the islands, which will lay the foundations for their sustainable economic and social development.**

Specifically:

**Firstly: Immediate measures to deal with the consequences of the crisis, which will aim to:**

- a. deal with the cash-flow problems of small island businesses.
- b. immediate special measures to protect the important sectors on each island from the consequences of the crisis. In particular, tourism, which is expected to suffer considerably, is obviously a common link and significant sector for many of our islands. However, on a number of islands there are also other sectors of the economy that are very significant for the local island economy. From this point of view, special local sector plans must be drawn up.
- c. bolstering local demand and *immediate strengthening of the purchasing power and feeling of confidence of the island inhabitants.*

**Secondly: Special development programs for the islands that will lay the foundations for their sustainable economic and social development.**

The axes of this development plan in our opinion must be the following:

- a. Protection and support for the modernization of the island's productive network for the purpose of manufacturing products and services with high added value. Strengthening of joint actions and local and inter-regional networking of island businesses.
- b. Improvement and modernization of infrastructure, which will also have beneficial effects on the living standard of the inhabitants.
- c. Strengthening and or creation of support mechanisms, development of innovation, transfer of know-how, and training and preparation of the work force.

## HERMES-ILES PROGRAM

In order to develop and reinforce the relationship between the Chambers from the network, INSULEUR has created a new program called **HERMES-ILES** to promote exchanges between technical staff from the chambers. This initiative will also give an incentive to the transfer of competences and experiences between institutions from different countries that have the same objectives, that are to promote the economical development from their regions and to defend the interests from the local companies.

Considering the differences between islands and chambers, this program will enable better technical staff, as they will be able to spend a period of time in another chamber from the network, learning about different projects and methods. The Chambers interested in this program should contact the member of the Technical Committee from each country and inform about the country chosen, the Chamber and the activity or department in which they would like to organize an exchange so that it will increase their knowledge.

INSULEUR will finance with a maximum amount of 1.000 Euros for each Chamber involved in the exchange according to this program. As a pilot project, for the year 2009 a maximum of three Chambers of Commerce will be selected to participate in the program.

## 2nd INSULEUR EXECUTIVE TRAINING PROGRAM

25-26 June, Heraklion (Crete, Greece)

The next **25 and 26 of June**, the Heraklion Chamber of Commerce organizes the **2nd INSULEUR Executive Training Program**, that will focus on particular items related to insular SME's. The new INSULEUR President, Mr. Gual, explained in Brussels how important communication between Insuleur members is and invited to all Chambers to participate in this Training Program, that is a perfect opportunity to constitute a solid technical group focused on insular needs. The objective of this Program is to help participants to familiarize themselves with issues of insular development and to offer them the necessary instruments to support their organizations to achieve a double mission:

- ❖ To take an active part in the European Union and National Policy Plans for the development of the insular areas of the European Union and;
- ❖ To contribute to the development of the insular regions under their jurisdiction, to take an active part in the realization of projects of insular development and to place at the disposal of their members the services of information and support.

This program is addressed to:

- ❖ Technical staff of INSULEUR Chambers of Commerce;
- ❖ Members of other organizations (CRPM, ESIF, etc);
- ❖ Experts/ technical staff of competent Ministries of Member States and Insular Regions, aiming to promote the sustainable development of the islands.

Please, remember **DEADLINE for inscription: 8th JUNE 2009.**

For any further information, please contact: **Ms. Yolanda Segui**

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Program: [http://www.insuleur.net/eng/doc/2009exec\\_training-agenda.pdf](http://www.insuleur.net/eng/doc/2009exec_training-agenda.pdf)

## Calls for proposals

### ENPI CBC-MED: First call for proposals for Standard Projects

The "ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme 2007/2013" is a multilateral cross-border cooperation programme co-financed by the European Union under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI).

The Program provides the framework for the implementation of cross-border and cooperation activities in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy, complementing efforts exerted within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, with the final aim of developing an area of peace, stability, prosperity and good neighbourliness involving EU Mediterranean Countries (EUMC) and Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC).

This program has launched its first call for proposals. Before submitting any project proposal, applicants are invited to consult the Joint Operational Program approved by the European Commission on August 14th 2008, the ENPI Regulation (EC) n. 1638/2006, the ENPI CBC Implementing Rules Regulation (EC) n. 951/2007.

Deadline for submission of project proposals: **September, 16th 2009.**

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.enpicbcmed.eu/en/index.php?xsl=866&s=29&v=9&c=5902&na=1&n=10>



## ECO-INNOVATION: projects 2009 call for proposals



Through the Eco-innovation funding scheme, the EU wants to support innovative products, services and technologies that can make a better use of our natural resources and reduce Europe's ecological footprint. With its objective to bridge the gap between research and the market, CIP Eco-innovation contributes to the implementation of the Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP).

This initiative is addressed mainly to organisations that have developed an environmental product, service, management practice or process which has a proven track record, yet is not fully marketed due to residual risks. The Eco-innovation initiative is intended to overcome those barriers to further market penetration and turn these products and processes into Europe's future eco-innovation successes!

There is nearly € 200 million available to fund Eco-innovation projects between 2008 and 2013. This Call is open to all legal persons that are based in eligible countries but the priority will be given to SMEs. Clusters of applicants and projects which demonstrate a European added value and have a high potential for market replication are strongly encouraged.

**The call 2009 is open.** Deadline for submission of project proposals: **September, 10th 2009**

For more information, please visit:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/application\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eco-innovation/application_en.htm)

## INSULEUR AGREEMENTS



INSULEUR network was created in 2000. During this period a lot of work has been developed so that INSULEUR is now considered and known in the European Institutions. A big part of this work has been done by one of our collaborators that leaves to join the Commission. We want to thank and say goodbye to Alexander Czmal! We hope that he will keep on thinking on the islands from his new job in the Commission. Of course Mr. Czmal has integrated the Technical Committee and they have all worked along well together in order to obtain the best results for the network. Congratulations!

INSULEUR would also like to thank the work that has been done by the previous Board of Directors, with Mr. Ceccaldi and his team, in order to achieve all the goals that INSULEUR has as an organization, that are to analyze and promote the needs from insular regions in Europe.

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