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**Sustainable Mobility AND TOURISM as DriverS**

**for Economic Growth in European islands**

**A Public Hearing organized by the**

Network of the Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the EU (INSULEUR)

and the Technical University of Crete (TUC)

**in partnership with the European Economic and Social Committee**

*with the support of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)*

*and the Hellenic Small Islands Network (HSIN)*

*Friday, 8thof June 2018 from 10.00 to 13.00*

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

**Rue Belliard 99, 1040 Brussels (Room JDE 63)**

“Greening” of the European Islands is crucial for building a more sustainable future and a competitive local economy. Furthermore, islands consist a major tourism destination for all Europeans, so the potential minimization of their carbon footprint is important for the success of the Paris Agreement[[1]](#footnote-2).Europe's 2400 islands**.**

As transport is responsible for 23% of global energy-related GHG emissions, island communities should seek an incremental shift away from fossil fuel-based transport systems and for the adoption of new and innovative low-carbon solutions.

However, European islands face a number of challenges for their smooth operation and sustainability as concerns mobility:

* Energy use, space use, road safety, air quality and noise pollution are some transport related issues that islands have to cope with.
* Islands, as touristic destinations feature a high pressure from tourism and need to provide the high quality, sustainable environments desired by tourists;
* The seasonal fluctuation in their operation (winter/summer), impacts to the design of their necessary infrastructure (ports, roads, energy supply systems)
* Although they should comply with the most recent directives of the Clean Energy Package[[2]](#footnote-3), they are missing capacity, resources and society preparation for these changes.

In that frame, the EU's Clean Energy for EU Islands initiative[[3]](#footnote-4)launched on the 18th of May 2017 in Malta (during the Informal Energy Council) and adopted by the European Commission, together with 14 EU countries (Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden) aims to put in action a long term framework to mobilise support and resources and to help islands towards a sustainable, low carbon and low-cost energy future.

Fostering a sustainable mobility approach in islands may also support the development of innovative, quality tourism products and services to make destinations even more attractive. Sustainable transport options like cycling, walking and public transport can be tourist products by themselves. There is a large potential for synergies between the local mobility and tourism sectors for new tailored services that can help to provide cost-effective mobility solutions and a better way to address the mobility needs of citizens and visitors.

European Islands, where15 million Europeans live,have the potential to be frontrunners in the clean energy transition by adopting new technologies, implementing and demonstrating innovative solutions, also in transport.

**Provisional programme**

**10.00-10.30 Opening Session**

* Luca Lahier, President, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)*(invited)*
* Violeta Bulc, European Commissioner for Mobility and Transport *(invited)*
* Dominique Ristori, Directorate-General for Energy, European Commission*(invited)*
* Georgios BENETOS, Joe Gregh, INSULEUR Presidency
* Camille Dressler, President, European Small Islands Federation (ESIN)
* Nektarios Santorinios, Greek Ministry of Shipping and Insular Policy*(invited)*

**10.30 – 11.50 The voice of insular communities and businesses**

**Moderators**: George Asonitis (Insuleur), Professor Theocharis Tsoutsos (TUC)

* Representative of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation-UNWTO, *“Sustainable Tourism Mobility trends and sustainability – best practice and global perspective”*
* Claudio Mantero, Coordinator of CIVITAS DESTINATIONS “*Sustainable Transport and Mobility in Touristic Insular Destinations”*
* Sotiris Raptis, Senior Policy Advisor for Environment and Safety, EcoPorts Coordinator, ESPO “*Decarbonisation of ports and airports in islands*-Challenges and Opportunities”*(invited)*
* Sylvia GAUCI, Executive Secretary, Malta Council For Economic and Social Development
* Representative of CPMR/Islands Commission
* Representative of Eurochambres,
* Eleftherios Kechagioglou, President, Hellenic Small Islands Network (HSIN)

**11.50-12.45 The European Strategy for Islands - EU Institutions responses**

**Moderator**: **Pierre-Jean Coulon,**President of the Section for Transport, Energy, Infrastructure and the Information Society (TEN) of the EESC(invited)

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| * Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE),European Commission *(invited)*
* Brendan Devlin, Advisor/Counsellor, Clean Energy for Islands Initiative, Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER)*(invited)*
* Anna ATHANASOPOULOU, Head of Tourism Unit, DG Grow, European Commission *(invited)*
* Georges-Stavros KREMLIS, Head of the “Mainstreaming and Environmental Assessments” Unit, DG Environment (DG ENV), European Commission *(invited)*
* Representative, DG REGIO European Commission *(invited)*
* Claudia MONTEIRO DE AGUIAR, Member of the European Parliament, Transport and Tourism Committee, SMEs Europe Vice President *(invited)*
* István UJHELYI, Member of the European Parliament, Vice-chair of the Tourism Task Force at the Committee for Transport and Tourism *(invited)*
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**12.45-13.00 CLOSING SESSION - Conclusions**

1. [httpυ6β://unfccc.int/paris\_agreement/items/9485.php](http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-strategy-and-energy-union/clean-energy-all-europeans> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-strategy-and-energy-union/clean-energy-eu-islands [↑](#footnote-ref-4)