



April 19th, 2021

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## Marine Spatial Planning as a tool to boost and support "Blue" entrepreneurship in Islands & General Assembly

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 the Network of the Insular Chambers of Commerce of the EU (INSULEUR) gathered a prominent panel of speakers during the virtual workshop that was organized in partnership with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and in collaboration with the Centre of Excellence on Blue Growth – Shipping - Marine Environment - Insularity of the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) with the support of notorious organizations such as the CPMR Island Commission, Greening the Islands, the European MSP Platform and EOAEN.

Based on the EU Directive 2014/89/EU establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning and the fact that Island entrepreneurship faces specific structural difficulties for the development of the new "green" and "blue" sectors of their economy but also on the potential of Islands which provide opportunities for the development of small-scale, 'bottom-up' initiatives such as community ownership of renewable energy schemes which can support the development of sectors in some contexts where local acceptance may otherwise be challenging, the Workshop proposed among other guidelines, principles and best practices examples to help National or Regional Authorities in elaborating their MSP and suggested keeping in mind the flexibility that is needed when developing public policy to boost island entrepreneurship. It was also highlighted that the "blue" economy can be an important niche for the eventual diversification of insular economies and for their revival, and long-term sustainability.

The Workshop gathered more than 60 participants which followed the interventions of Professor Serafeim Poulos, (Coordinator Center of Excellence on Blue Growth Shipping- Marine Environment – Insularity, NKUA), Mr Daniel Borg (Chief Executive Officer, GBC), Mrs Patrycja Enet (North Sea MSP focal point MSP Platform), Mr Jan Cornillie (project leader for the Clean Energy for the EU Islands Initiative: "Clean energy for EU islands – From island vision to energy action"). The workshop was introduced by the Representative of the EESC Mr. Javier Garat Pérez (NAT Section), the Rector of the University of Athens, Professor Thanos Dimopoulos, the President of INSULEUR, Mr. Joseph Borg, the President of the Network of the Small Greek Islands, Mr. Eleftherios Kechagioglou and the founder and Director of Greening the Islands, Mr Gianni Chianetta.

The workshop was then followed by INSULEUR's General Assembly gathering 19 of its members from France, Italy, Greece, Spain and Malta for discussing among other the activities of the Presidency for the last semester, Islands Economy status in the COVID-19 area, the Network's Cooperation on ongoing EU projects and institutional topics.