



THE GOZO BUSINESS CHAMBER

13th INSULEUR FORUM

**8th November 2013
in Gozo, Malta**

**Grand Hotel
St. Anthony Street, Ghajnsielem GSM 9026**

**EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY IN INSULAR
REGIONS THROUGH ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**

Final Programme



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Objective of the debate:

Europe 2020 is the European Union's main strategy aiming to put European economy back to growth. The main objective is for European economy is to become smart, sustainable and inclusive.

The European Union has set five ambitious objectives – in the fields of employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy – which are to be achieved by 2020. Each Member State should adopt its own national targets in each of these areas.

The strategy rests on three interconnected and mutually reinforcing priority areas:

- smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;
- sustainable growth: promoting a low-carbon, resource-efficient and competitive economy;
- inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

Progress to growth will be evaluated against five measurable headline EU-level targets, which Member States have to translate into national targets.

To monitor the progress made and quantify the objectives to be met by 2020, five headline targets have been agreed at EU level which are translated into national targets within each EU country, reflecting different situations and circumstances.

Employment

- 75% of 20-64 year-olds to be employed

R&D / innovation

- 3% of the EU's GDP (public and private combined) to be invested in R&D/innovation

Climate change / energy

- greenhouse gas emissions 20% lower than 1990 (or even 30%, if the conditions are right)
- 20% of energy from renewables
- 20% increase in energy efficiency

Education

- Reducing school drop-out rates below 10%
- At least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing tertiary education

Reducing poverty and social exclusion

- Lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion

In order to meet these targets, the European Commission proposed a series of seven flagship initiatives: "A Digital Agenda for Europe", "Innovation Union", "Youth on the



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Move", "Resource Efficient Europe", "An Industrial Policy for a Globalisation era", "An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs" and "The European Platform Against Poverty".

Islands and insular regions of the European Union constitute disadvantageous regions and face special problems. These problems arise from the relative isolation of the islands and their regional place, the small size of their domestic market, the dynamics of their population, the traditional structure of their economy, the insufficient or lack of social services, the intraregional inequalities, etc. This phenomenon, known as "Insularity" is permanent with altered intensity, and the problems that create are not simply coincidental but structural, and have their origin in the geographic discontinuity and the market fragmentation. Moreover, the insular regions are also characterized by the exceptional sensitive balance of the triple bottom-line economy, society and environment, which in many cases threatens the viability of the entire ecosystem.

The challenge, however, for the implementation of Europe 2020 in islands is to overcome the distinct territorial differences that exist across the EU. There exist strong differences in the opportunities, vulnerabilities and risks for regions from the contemporary challenges of globalisation and the economic downturn, demographic change and social inclusion, climate change and energy.

Islands should develop integrated and tailored solutions to meet such territorial challenges as well as create future opportunities. The Europe 2020 Strategy should play an important role in these regions as they provide a range of intervention tools that can be tailored to the specific territories themselves, dealing with a range of territorial characteristics.

From an insular business perspective, it is essential that all policy measures under the framework of the strategy are developed and implemented on the basis of the 'think small first' principle, think "islands second".

The means for achieving this aim are a more efficient use of resources, a greater inter-connectivity of infrastructures and the application of new, greener technologies in all islands.

Examples:

- Broadband: digital inclusion for European Islands of minimum broadband speed of 10 mbs by 2020 and increase it to 20 mbs by 2030)
- Transport: Create an integrated transport network, taking in consideration insular regions.
- Energy: Improving existing energy infrastructures, connecting islands between them and on EU level (inter-connectors).
- Education: Help innovation, creativity and research in islands.

Insular Chambers, as part of the European Governance, have a variety of different responsibilities in terms of designing and delivering specific policy responses to the three high level European challenges identified in the following sections (i.e. smart, sustainable and inclusive growth). They are responsible for areas linked to the Europe 2020 strategy such as entrepreneurship, education and training.



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08h30 Registration

09h00 Formal Opening of the INSULEUR FORUM

- **Juan Gual de Torrella**, President of Insuleur Network
- **Michael Grech**, President of The Gozo Business Chamber

09h15 Welcome speeches

- **Anton Refalo**, Minister for Gozo
- **Samuel Azzopardi**, Mayor of Victoria & President of Gozo Region

09h30 **Key speakers: EUROPE 2020 AND ISLANDS**

- **Merja Haapakka**, Policy officer, DG REGIO, European Commission
- **Gordon Cordina**, University of Malta
- **Thanos Kontargyris**, Expert, Technical Coordinator of the SMILIES MED project

10h00 **1st Plenary Session. EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION ON ISLANDS**

*Chaired by **Manuel Tabone**, Director, Tourism & Economic Development, Ministry for Gozo*

- **Kostas Vlachos**, Ministry of the Economy, Greece
- **Eleftherios Kechagioglou**, Representative of ESIN
- **Evarist Bartolo**, Minister for Education and Employment, Malta

Questions from the floor

11h30 Coffee break



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12h00 **2nd Plenary Session. FLAGSHIP INSULAR CHAMBERS INITIATIVES**

*Chaired by **John Magro** Former President CCI Gozo. Managing Director, Magro Group*

- The Digitalized islands **Giannis Roussos**, President of the Cyclades Chamber of Commerce
- The Green Island **Olivier Lemerle**, Islands of Guadeloupe Chamber of Commerce
- The Innovative Island **Silvia Delgado**, Director of Innovation of the Mallorca Chamber of Commerce
- The island product **Sanda Filipovic** Chamber of Rijeka
- The Light Industry Island **Yiorgos Giakoumakis**, President of the Rethimno Chamber Of Commerce

Questions from the floor

13h30 Buffet lunch

15h00 **3rd Plenary Session. THE RESPONSE OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS**

*Chaired by **Joyce Dimech**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Gozo*

- **Merja Haapakka**, Policy officer, DG REGIO, European Commission
- **Roberta Metsola**, Member of the LIBE Committee, European Parliament
- **Anna Maria Darmanin**, President of the Single Market Observatory (SMO) of the European Economic and Social Committee, CESE

Questions from the floor

16h30 **Closing speech**

- **Joseph Muscat** Prime Minister of Malta