



Comité économique et social européen
Groupe des Employeurs



In collaboration with :



ENERGY UNION AND SMART ISLANDS

A Public Hearing organized by the Network of the Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the EU (INSULEUR)

In collaboration with the Islands Commission of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) and the European Small Islands Federation (ESIN)

Friday 10th of July 2015 from 11.00 to 13.00

**European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
Brussels**

Rue Belliard 99 (Room JDE 70)

Defined as one of the top ten priorities of the European Commission, the Energy Union is willing “to give EU consumers - households and businesses - secure, sustainable, competitive and affordable energy.”

According to the Commission, the European Union has energy rules set at the European level, but in practice it has 28 national regulatory frameworks. An integrated energy market is needed to create more competition, lead to greater market efficiency through better use of energy generation facilities across the EU and to produce affordable prices for consumers.

In its Communication, the Commission only refers metaphorically to insular territories when it stresses that “energy islands continue to exist as many markets are not properly connected to their neighbors.”

Yet, some 4% of the European population lives on islands. The situation of these Europeans in terms of energy supply is quite different from the rest of the EU population. As such, it deserves specific attention.

The Energy Union, summarized in fifteen points, shall also concern the insular territories. Especially in the matters related to the existence of the *right infrastructure, that is a precondition for completing the energy market, integrating renewables and security of supply* (point 4), *creating a seamless internal energy market that benefits citizens, ensuring security of supply, integrating renewables in the market and remedying the currently uncoordinated development of capacity mechanisms in Member States call for a review of the current market design* (point 5) or when the Commission stresses that *regional approaches to market integration are an important part of the move towards a fully integrated EU-wide energy market* (point 7).

One shall not forget that islands represent a unique opportunity. Thanks to their isolated and small integrated power systems they have the potential to become places of demonstration, as a test-bed for energy solutions. They represent microcosms of the larger European energy system in which new projects such as smart grids or electric transport can be tested quickly and effectively.

11.00h First panel – THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY: EU INSTITUTIONS’ POINT OF VIEW

- **Dominique RISTORI**, Directorate-General for Energy – European Commission
- **Rudy AERNOUDT**, Chief of Staff of EESC’s President
- **Georgios BENETOS**, President of INSULEUR
- **Alexis CHATZIMPIROS**, Adviser Energy/Islands, CPMR

12.00h Second panel – OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ISLANDS: STAKEHOLDERS’ POINT OF VIEW

- **Michael STEURER**, Advisor EU Affairs, Energy/Environment, Eurochambres
- **Renzo CURMI**, Council Member of Gozo Business Chamber
- **Eleftherios KECHAGIOGLOU**, President of Hellenic Small Islands Network and Board Member of the European Small Islands Federation

Interpretation is provided from/to Greek, Italian, French, Spanish and English