

SEArICA Conference on Islands and Cohesion Policy

Organised with the support of the [Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions](#)

Thursday 28 April 14.00-16.00 CEST

Online with interpretation in **English, French, Spanish and Italian**

Registrations: [CLICK HERE](#)

The COVID-19 crisis has had a severe impact on the islands of the European Union, whose economies were already vulnerable on account of their insularity and other permanent structural challenges. Characterised by a physical 'disconnection' from the mainland, islands are in fact dependent on maritime and air transport and their economic markets concentrate in the primary and tertiary sectors. EU islands are also on the front line of climate change and are particularly exposed to natural disasters. The islands of the European Union, although legally recognised as disadvantaged territories, do not always benefit from the specific aid provided for in the Treaties.

The Committee on Regional Development of the EU Parliament (REGI) is preparing an INI report on EU islands and Cohesion Policy, calling for a better response to their demographic, economic and environmental challenges. After the vote within the REGI Committee and in view of the plenary debate (foreseen for June), this SEArICA webinar will focus on the following key points:

- Characteristics and specificities of islands that generate additional costs;
- State Aid schemes and measures to reduce the development deficit;
- The need to protect a unique biodiversity and to fight against climate change and natural disasters: islands as pioneer territories of the EU;
- Possible creation of an Islands Pact, with a view to defining a common EU policy on island matters.

Hosted by **MEP François Alfonsi**, SEArICA Vice-Chair for Islands, the webinar will bring together the main supporters of the INI report within the EP and insular regions to provide insightful contributions and discuss the follow-up of the report. The Conference will be held online using ZOOM, **interpretation will be provided in English, French, Spanish and Italian**, and information on how to connect will be sent to registered participants.

DRAFT AGENDA

Moderation by **Francesco Molica**, Regional Policy Director, CPMR

14.00-14.10 Opening: Tonino Picula, SEArICA Chair

14.10-14.45 Presentation of the main features proposed by the REGI INI report:

- **Younous Omarjee**, REGI Chair and Rapporteur of the INI report
- **François Alfonsi**, SEArICA Vice-Chair for Islands
- **Josianne Cutajar**, SEArICA Vice-Chair for SMEs and Digitalisation
- **Stelios Kypouropoulos**, SEArICA member

14.45-15.00 Intervention by the CPMR Islands Commission Presidency:

- **Rosario Sanchez Grau**, Regional Minister for Finance and External Relations of the Government of Balearic Islands (Spain), Presidency of the CPMR Islands Commission

15.00-15.45 Reactions by CPMR regions on the proposed measures and support of the legislative procedural follow-up of the file:

- **Gaetano Armao**, Regional Minister for Economic Affairs and Vice-President of Sicily region (Italy), CPMR Islands Commission region
- **Nanette Maupertuis**, President of the Assembly of Corsica & Rapporteur for the CoR own-initiative opinion on "Enhancing Cohesion Policy support for regions with geographic and demographic handicaps (art 174 TFEU)
- **Christian Solinas**, President of Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy), CPMR Islands Commission region
- **Jesper Skalberg Karlsson**, Deputy Mayor and first Vice-Chair of the Regional Executive Board of Gotland (Sweden), CPMR Islands Commission region

15.45-15.50 Reactions by SEArICA MEP:

- **Alicia Homs**, SEArICA Vice-Chair for Biodiversity and Ocean Literacy

15.50-16.00 Concluding remarks by François Alfonsi, SEArICA Vice-Chair for Islands

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