

NETWORK INSULAR CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- **INSULEUR – Position on the Atlantic Maritime and Macro regional Strategy**
- Formal Written Submission on Behalf of INSULEUR (Network of Insular Chambers of Commerce of the EU) -

Date: October 16th, 2026

INSULEUR welcomes the European Commission's initiative to develop an **Atlantic Maritime and Macro-regional Strategy**, which represents an important opportunity for the islands of the Atlantic region. The proposed strategy strengthens territorial cohesion across **coastal, island, rural, urban and outermost regions**, ensuring that Atlantic islands are explicitly recognised as key actors in the future macro-regional framework.

Atlantic islands face unique structural challenges—geographical isolation, limited connectivity, demographic pressures, climate vulnerability and dependence on maritime sectors. A macro-regional approach can significantly enhance coordination between EU, national and regional policies, helping islands benefit from better alignment of funding instruments, improved governance, and stronger strategic visibility within the European agenda.

The initiative's emphasis on **resilience, security, sustainability and competitiveness** is particularly relevant for island territories. Enhanced cooperation can support climate adaptation, energy transition, maritime safety, innovation in the blue economy, and diversification of local economies. The strategy's link with other EU initiatives—such as the **EU Strategy for Islands**, the **EU Strategy for Coastal Communities**, and the **European Ocean Pact**—creates a coherent policy environment that can amplify the impact of investments in island regions.

INSULEUR also welcomes the commitment to **multi-level governance and stakeholder participation**, which is essential for ensuring that island Chambers of Commerce and local authorities have a meaningful role in shaping and implementing the strategy. Stronger participation will help ensure that island-specific needs—transport connectivity, digitalisation, SME competitiveness, and sustainable tourism—are fully integrated.

At the same time, INSULEUR underlines the need for adequate support mechanisms so that smaller island administrations can effectively participate in the governance structures of the macro-region. Capacity-building, technical assistance and clear coordination frameworks will be crucial to avoid administrative burdens and ensure equitable participation.

Overall, INSULEUR considers the Atlantic Maritime and Macro-regional Strategy a timely and promising initiative that can deliver long-term benefits for Atlantic islands. We encourage the Commission to ensure that island priorities remain central throughout the design and implementation of the strategy, and we stand ready to contribute actively to this process.