**Conference *"Smart Policies for Smart Islands"***

**(6 November 2015, Malinska ̶** Island of Krk, Croatia)

As a kick-off event for its Smart Islands project, the European Economic and Social Committee, in cooperation with the INSULEUR network and with the support of the CRPM´s Commission of Islands and the European Federation of Small Islands, organised a conference entitled "***Smart policies for smart islands*". This event, which took place** on **Friday 6 November 2015 in Malinska** (Island of Krk, Croatia), brought together some one hundred policy makers and stakeholders, including Ivan Jakovčić, MEP, Nikolaos Isaris from the European Commission´s DG CNECT, high-level local political representatives and presidents and representatives of partner insular organisations. The EESC was represented by a delegation of six members led by Pierre Jean Coulon, the TEN section president.

Participants were able to listen to a number of expert presentations and to discuss good practices and policies that make insular regions "smart". This covered a broad range of issues such as energy, transport, the digital agenda, smart specialisation, trade, entrepreneurship and taxation, agriculture and health policies.

As concluded by Vidoje Vujić, director of Rijeka County Chamber which was hosting the event, the presentations and discussions clearly show that islands have specific features and that while islands have always been smart, what they need is smart policy at all political levels. Further conclusions include the following: support should be given to the primary sector as well as to the standardisation and implementation of ICT; there is a need for specific tax cuts on islands (especially VAT) and to invest money in mobility and the promotion of greener forms of transportation. Furthermore, investment in health care and prevention contributes to higher living standards and economic growth; islands need to play an important role in EU cohesion policy and EU funds should focus on educational and innovative centres and smart communication.

For more detailed information, please see the speakers´ presentations and/or contact the TEN section secretariat.