



Cyclades
Chamber
of Commerce
ESTABLISHED 1836

General Assembly & Annual Forum INSULEUR 2025 *17 October 2025*

Aegean Cuisine Symposium Cyclades 2025 *“The taste of authenticity”* *18 October 2025*

Under the Auspices and Support



With the Support



With the Institutional Support



European Parliament
Office in Greece

 **Dates: Friday 17 October 2025 & Saturday 18 October 2025**

 **Location: Hermoupolis, Syros**

Friday 17 October 2025

INSULEUR General Assembly & Annual Forum

Building Resilience in Island Economies through Sustainable Agriculture

Empowering Island Communities to Enhance Resilience

Organized by

The Network of the Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the EU (INSULEUR)

Hosted by

The Cyclades Chamber of Commerce

Interpretation in English, Spanish and Greek

The General Assembly is open only to members of the Network of the Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the EU (INSULEUR)

Saturday 18 October 2025

Aegean Cuisine Symposium Cyclades 2025

“The taste of authenticity”

The Symposium is organized by the Cyclades Chamber of Commerce and the Aegean Cuisine Network



Background

Island economies can be competitive—not only in agriculture but across multiple sectors—if they strategically leverage their unique assets while addressing structural challenges.

Due to geographic isolation, limited arable land, and vulnerability to climate change, island regions face significant barriers. These factors often lead to a high dependency on food imports, making resilience a critical priority.

Sustainable agriculture is key to enhancing resilience by reducing import reliance, improving food security, and fostering economic diversification.

Key Challenges:

- **Climate Change:** Rising sea levels, severe weather, and saltwater intrusion damage crops and reduce yields.
- **Food Import Dependency:** Global supply chain reliance exposes islands to disruptions and price volatility.
- **Resource Constraints:** Limited freshwater and arable land restrict agricultural growth.
- **Economic Volatility:** Heavy reliance on tourism makes island economies susceptible to external shocks.

Strategic Opportunities:

- **Reduced Import Reliance:** Enhancing local food production insulates islands from global market fluctuations.
- **Job Creation:** Agriculture supports employment and income diversification.
- **Food Security:** Promotes access to fresh, nutritious, locally grown food.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Regenerative practices restore ecosystems and biodiversity.



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Animal breeding, especially **sheep and goat farming**, plays a significant role in island agriculture, contributing to the production of unique dairy products and traditional cheeses.

The **European Union** supports sustainable agriculture through the **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**, with goals of **environmental sustainability**, **innovation**, and **rural development**. Tools include:

- **Eco-Schemes**
- **CAP Strategic Plans**
- **Farm to Fork Strategy**

Sustainable agriculture is essential for building resilient island economies, strengthening food systems, empowering communities, and securing long-term prosperity.



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INSULEUR General Assembly & Annual Forum

(Conference Room of the Cyclades Chamber)

Friday 17 October 2025

08:30 - 09:00 | Registration of participants

09:00 - 10:00 | INSULEUR General Assembly (members only)

10:00 - 10:40 | **Opening Session - Greetings from official guests**

Moderator: Giannis Roussos, President of the Cyclades Chamber and INSULEUR President

- **Roberta Metsola**, President - European Parliament (online)
- **Costas Kadis**, Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans
- **Seamus Boland**, EESC President-designate (online / pre- recorded intervention)
- **Themis Christophidou**, Director-General, DG REGIO (online)

10:40 - 11:45 | **Where Agriculture Stands in the Islands**

Moderator:

George Asonitis, Advisor EU-affairs, UHC and Member of INSULEUR Technical Committee

Keynote Speaker:

Gonzalo Piernavieja Izquierdo, Director of R&D+i, Instituto Tecnológico de Canarias (online)

Panelists:

- **Penelope Bebeli**, Professor of the Plant Breeding and Agricultural Experimentation Laboratory of the Agricultural University of Athens
- **Petros Kokkalis**, Vice-President, Kokkalis Foundation, MEP 2019-2024, AGRI-ENVI
«*Innovation in the Agri-food Sector in Greece: presentation of projects of the operational groups of the European Innovation Partnership*»
- **Dr Alexandros Stefanakis**, President and Scientific Director at BIOLAB CRETE

Rapporteur: **Alicia Bueno**, Foreign Trade Officer Mallorca CCI & Member of INSULEUR Technical Committee

11:45 - 13:00 | Insular Voices for Sustainable Agriculture

Moderator: James Ellsmoor, CEO Island Innovation

Panelists:

- **Eleftherios Kechagioglou**, President, Greek Small Islands Network, Vice President, European Small Islands Federation (ESIN)
- **Maria Garcies-Ramon**, Acting Secretary General, Commission of Islands, CPMR (online)
- **James Ellsmoor**, CEO Island Innovation
- **Tasos Yapanis**, Secretary General, Agricultural Association of Cyprus
- **António Jardim Fernandes**, President, Chamber of Commerce of Madeira, Vice-President of INSULEUR
- **Mr. Guido Broggi**, Head of Strategy, Development & Partnerships at the Greening the Islands Foundation (online)
- **Ileana Coiana**, Member of the Women Entrepreneurs Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of Cagliari-Oristano

Rapporteur: Sofia Sotiriou, Project Manager INSULEUR

13:00 - 14:30 | Lunch Break

14:30 - 16:30 | European, National and Regional Policies to support the Primary Sector in Island Economies

Moderator: Manolis Koutoulakis, General Secretary, Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Insular Policy

Panelists:

- **Dionysios-Fredis Beleris**, Member of the European Parliament
- **Filip Reinhag**, President of the CPMR
- **Amalie Bjørnåvold**, European Commission, DG AGRI (online)
- **Evangelia Kazila**, European Commission, DG REGIO - (online)
- **Moschos Korasidis**, Member of the EESC, Director General of the National Union of Agricultural Cooperatives

Rapporteur: Daniel Borg, CEO Gozo Business Chamber and Member of INSULEUR Technical Committee

16:30 - 17:00 | Conclusions & Wrap-Up

Manolis Koutoulakis, General Secretary, Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Insular Policy



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17:00 - 18:00 | Agreement on a Joint Roadmap for Island Entrepreneurship within the new EU multiannual financial framework between the following organizations:

- *Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)*
- *Network of the Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the EU (INSULEUR)*
- *European Small Islands Federation (ESIN)*
- *Union of Hellenic Chambers of Commerce (UHCC)*
- *Hellenic Confederation of Professional Craftsmen and Merchants (GSEVEE)*
- *Hellenic Confederation of Commerce and Entrepreneurship (ESEE)*
- *Chamber Group for the Development of the Greek Islands (EOAEN)*

Organized, coordinated, and with the participation of the General Secretariat for the Aegean and Island Policy (Prassakaki's mansion - Cyclades Chamber premises)

20:30 | Flavours of the Aegean (Cocktails, Beers, Cycladic traditional pies) (Kyveli House)

Open event for all guests of the two-day program

You can watch INSULEUR's Annual Forum live
on the Cyclades Chamber of Commerce [YouTube](#) channel

The **Aegean Cuisine Network** is supported by the Chambers of Cyclades and Dodecanese with the aim of promoting Aegean gastronomy, offering visitors authentic experiences through local products and traditional recipes. The Network's members—restaurants and producers—act as ambassadors of local culture and hospitality, creating a unique gastronomic journey. In Cyclades, 190 restaurants across 23 islands have been awarded the Aegean Cuisine label, while the Aegean Cuisine Recommended Registry includes 506 products from 101 local producers. The Network aims to highlight the islands as gastronomic destinations, strengthening the connection between visitors and the cultural and culinary heritage of the Aegean.

Through the **Aegean Cuisine Network**, the goal of the Symposium is to bring together its members—restaurants and producers—and to showcase the authenticity, quality, and unique gastronomic identity of the Cyclades through agrifood and experiential activities, based on the Network's core values:

- **Authenticity** - flavors with history and identity
- **Island identity** - geographical and cultural unity of the Cyclades
- **Sustainability** - local production, small scale, environmental awareness
- **Connectivity** - synergies among producers, tourism, gastronomy, and culture

A journey through Time...

The Symposium presents the gastronomic and cultural wealth of the Cyclades. It connects **tradition - innovation - sustainability** and offers an experience that goes beyond speeches and immerses visitors through flavors, music, and stories.

Food is not just taste. It is memory and history...

Through this journey in time, the “**Taste of Authenticity**” becomes the thread that unites past, present, and future.

Aegean Cuisine Symposium Cyclades 2025

“The Taste of Authenticity”

(“Apollon” Theater)

Symposium Coordination: Dina Nikolaou, Chef

Saturday, 18 October 2025

09:00 - 09.30 Arrival - Registration

09:30 - 10:15 Greetings from Officials guests

10:15 - 11:00 Presentation of the Aegean Cuisine Network, its vision and objectives

Speakers:

- **Giannis Roussos**, President of the Cyclades Chamber of Commerce and President of the Network of Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the EU (INSULEUR)

Participation: Zoi Chatzigiannaki, Artist

- **Thaleia Tsihlaki**, Food and Wine Journalist - *“Tradition - Preserving Authenticity”*
- **Giannis Gavalas**, Akraleia Restaurant, Member of the Aegean Cuisine Network - *“Iraklia - A Gastronomic Destination”*

11:00 - 11:15 Presentation of the new updated Aegean Cuisine Network website

Speaker:

- **Thanos Testempasis**, Head of Business Development, EU & International BU Director - Knowledge S.A.

11:15 - 12:00 Traditional Cyclades Cheesemaking on the road to UNESCO

Speakers:

- **Ioanna Tzavara**, Executive of the Directorate of Modern Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Culture
- **Ioannis Chatzigeorgiou**, Emeritus Professor, Agricultural University of Athens
- **Dimitris Rousounelos**, Author, “Gastronomos” Magazine Collaborator

12:00 - 12.30 Coffee Break (*Apollon Theater Courtyard*)

12:30 - 14:00 Resilience Lessons from the producers of the Aegean Cuisine Network

Speakers:

- Katerina Moschou, “To Parion” Dairy Producer
- Pantelis Rigoutsos, “Tyrosyra” Dairy Producer
- Stefanos Vakondios, “Zozefinos” Dairy Producer
- Manolis Kovaïos, Fava Producer of Schoinoussa
- Petros Vamvakousis, Director, “Venetsanos” Winery
- Gerasimos Skordilis, “MeliSyros” Honey Producer
- Marinos Souranis, “Marathia” Restaurant
- Kostas Prekas, Producer of Traditional Products

14:00 - 15:00 Challenges and Development Opportunities for Agricultural Cooperative Unions

Speakers:

- Matthaïos Dimopoulos, CEO, Union of Santorini Cooperatives - Santo Wines
- Iakovos Valeris, Vice President, Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Naxos - EAS Naxos
- Dimosthenis Diamantis, Vice President, Serifos Agricultural Beekeeping Cooperative
- Giannis Mandalas, CEO, MastihaShop

15:00 - 17:00 (*Cyclades Art Gallery*)

- Cyclades | Wine and Cheese in Harmony: Presentation by George Loukas, Sommelier Trainer & Founder of Genius in Gastronomy
- Light Lunch with Traditional Products

17:00 - 20:30 Free time

20:30 GALA Dinner (*Cultural Centre of the Municipality of Hermoupolis*)

with creations from Chefs of the Aegean Cuisine Network, accompanied by live music

The Aegean Cuisine Symposium 2025 will be livestreamed
on the [YouTube](#) channel of the Cyclades Chamber of Commerce



TOUR PROGRAM

Saturday, 18 October 2025

11:30 - 12.30 A walk through the emblematic sites of Ermoupolis that characterize its historical identity

Meeting point: Statue of Victory, Petros Ralli Beach (Ermoupolis Beach)

 <https://maps.app.goo.gl/PFLK1egHrtQUwFJz8>