

# PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE EU STRATEGY FOR THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN REGION

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

The overall objective of the [EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region \(EUSAIR\)](#) is to promote the sustainable economic and social prosperity of the Region through growth and jobs creation, and by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity, while at the same time preserving the environment and ensuring healthy and balanced marine and coastal ecosystems. The public consultation on the EUSAIR aims to reach relevant stakeholders and to gather their ideas in order to make sure that the Strategy is realistic in its starting point, appropriate in its objectives and responsive to the real needs of inhabitants of the Region. For additional information please download the [Scoping Paper](#) for the public consultation.

Please note it is important to keep in mind, when considering the following questions, that the actions and projects to be proposed should (a) concern the Adriatic and Ionian Region as a macro-region - as opposed to the national or EU level -, (b) have a positive impact on the citizens, enterprises, and the environment and (c) be feasible in the short to mid-term.

## Section I - BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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### 1. Please specify in which capacity you are completing this questionnaire:\*

- As an individual/private person
- On behalf of an International Organisation
- On behalf of a Private Enterprise
- Other
- On behalf of a Public Authority
- On behalf of a Civil Society Organisation
- On behalf of an Academic/research institution

Please specify\*

The European Straits Initiative is a network of 15 local authorities or grouping of local authorities bordering 8 straits of Europe, from the Baltic Sea to the Mediterranean. 1/3 of the partners are concerned by the EUSAIR: Regions of Vlora and Fier (Albania) and Province of Lecce (Italy) for the Strait of Otranto and provinces of Reggio Calabria and Messina for the Strait of Messina.

**2. Please provide your name, and where relevant the name of your organisation\***

Stéphane LOUHAUR, European Straits Initiative

**3. If your organisation is registered in the Transparency Register, please indicate your Register ID number. If your organisation is not registered, you [can register now](#). Responses from organisations not registered will be published separately.**

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**4. Please provide your country of residence / establishment\***

- |                                     |                                       |  |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Bulgaria      | <input type="radio"/> Belgique/België | <input type="radio"/> Česká Republika  | <input type="radio"/> Danmark      |
| <input type="radio"/> Deutschland   | <input type="radio"/> Eesti           | <input type="radio"/> Ellada           | <input type="radio"/> España       |
| <input type="radio"/> France        | <input type="radio"/> Ireland         | <input type="radio"/> Italia           | <input type="radio"/> Kypros       |
| <input type="radio"/> Latvija       | <input type="radio"/> Lietuva         | <input type="radio"/> Luxembourg       | <input type="radio"/> Magyarország |
| <input type="radio"/> Malta         | <input type="radio"/> Nederland       | <input type="radio"/> Österreich       | <input type="radio"/> Polska       |
| <input type="radio"/> Portugal      | <input type="radio"/> România         | <input type="radio"/> Slovenija        | <input type="radio"/> Slovensko    |
| <input type="radio"/> Suomi/Finland | <input type="radio"/> Sverige         | <input type="radio"/> United Kingdom   | <input type="radio"/> FYROM        |
| <input type="radio"/> Hrvatska      | <input type="radio"/> Norway          | <input type="radio"/> Iceland          | <input type="radio"/> Serbia       |
| <input type="radio"/> Türkiye       | <input type="radio"/> Brazil          | <input type="radio"/> China            | <input type="radio"/> Russia       |
| <input type="radio"/> Ukraine       | <input type="radio"/> India           | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Other |                                    |

Please specify the name of the country

The European Straits Initiative lead-partners are based in France and UK but the partners concerned by the consultation are based in Italy and Albania

**5. How well do you know the Adriatic and Ionian macro-region?\***

- |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Very well informed | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Fairly well informed | <input type="radio"/> Not very well informed | <input type="radio"/> Not informed at all |
|--|---|--|---|

**6. How well informed are you about the EU macro-regional strategies?\***

- |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Very well informed | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Fairly well informed | <input type="radio"/> Not very well informed | <input type="radio"/> Not informed at all |
|--|---|--|---|

**7. Please provide your e-mail address**

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## Section II - EUSAIR NEEDS

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**8. What are the main (economic, environment and social) challenges and opportunities in the Adriatic and Ionian Region which would benefit from a macro-regional approach?**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

There is quite a lot of ship traffic flow which makes the Otranto strait a very sensitive area. Due to very dense maritime traffic flowing in and out from Mediterranean Sea to the Adriatic Sea, especially in northern part where are located the biggest ports, this area is very sensitive to pollution caused by ships. For this reason is established the Adriatic Traffic Report System, to monitor all ships sailing in and out of the Otranto strait. It is very important to the economic development of the region. The maritime transports in the Messina strait is also of paramount importance and could be organized and planned in order to ensure not only the connection between the two shores, but also to become a reference point for the connections between regions and between countries of the same area: the Messina Strait as a "Mediterranean doorway". So it would have a relevant value for tourism and the social field, in addition to an economic and commercial relevance too. Besides, it is necessary to focus attention on strategic sectors such as tourism, infrastructure (including ports), blue economy and environment as well as on cross-cutting themes such as research and innovation and capacity building, promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship in an intercultural, social cohesion. Finally, the EU priority on growth should not prevent from having actions on other fields as culture in a very important region in terms of history, arts and legends.

**9. What are the main administrative and governance challenges in the region (in particular with focus on macro-regional cooperation)?**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

One of the main challenges is to promote the establishment of transnational systems, partnership and structures for dialogue and discussion. The macro-regional strategy will help to give greater political and strategic value in the integration process and policies of proximity and cohesion of local communities. A challenge is to strengthen the region's growth through international coordination and cooperation between different levels of government (local, regional and central administration). Another challenge is to reduce inconsistency between EU system and non-EU system. These two challenges are interlinked.

**10. How can the cooperation and coordination across national borders / at transnational level be improved in the region?**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

European policies and funding for the period 2007-2013 but also 2014-2020 should encourage cooperation and improve the road infrastructure, airports, railways and ports system, trade and tourism, improvement of multi-modal connections. As regards processes, regular meetings between the stake-holders from the region are important for a good cooperation. A strong political will at different levels (local, national, European) is a prerequisite. The Mediterranean Action Plan may be a good framework (with the constitution of a sub-regional group) provided that local communities are well involved.

**11. What are the needs in terms of funding and how to improve the use of existing financial instruments to achieve the objectives of the EUSAIR?**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

It is important to allocate more resources to overcome the current economic crisis to create jobs and growth. We must plan very well our priorities and clearly identify our goals. European policies should focus on improving the infrastructures roads, air, rails, and maritime transports, which will strengthen cooperation between countries of the region and therefore increase and improve the economy. To this, it is important to mention a project through the European Commission of a new Interreg Cooperation Program 2014-2020 between Italy- Albania- Montenegro. This is a useful way to find the financial resources in order to realise the project of cooperation among partnerships. Exchange of experiences and the development of joint projects in the field of tourism development among the countries and local authorities of the region are key in this context. So are the regional social policies which would lead to the reduction of live human trafficking, narcotics trafficking, immigration and crime reduction. This implies a strong political will for cooperation at various levels of governments (local, regional, national and international). The topics concerned may be: Protection of the environment, biodiversity conservation, sustainable energy, development of tourism, ports, economic growth, creation of new jobs. The instruments to be used may be: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, Interreg programmes, Life plus, fundings from the European Investment Bank...

## Section III - EUSAIR SOLUTIONS

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**12. What are in your views the main topics on which the EUSAIR should concentrate? (please indicate max. 2 topics per Pillar)**

I Driving innovative maritime and marine growth

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maritime clusters and research | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue bio-technologies | <input type="checkbox"/> Aquaculture              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Seabed exploration    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human capital |

## II Connecting the region

- Waterways, air, road and rail systems
- Security and safety of sea and inland transport modes
- Increased use of renewable and clean energies, energy efficiency and savings
- Intermodal nodes
- Energy systems and security of supplies

## III Preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment

- Marine environment
- Mitigation and adaptation to climate change
- Quality of water, air and soils
- Natural risks
- Biodiversity and landscapes
- Spatial planning

## IV Increasing regional attractiveness

- Adriatic-Ionian Region identity natural and cultural heritage
- Human capital
- Tourism
- Inclusion of disadvantaged groups

### 13. Please indicate any other topic that should be addressed by the EUSAIR

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

One important topic is the recognition of the specificities of the straits (eg Otranto, Messina). Straits deserve particular attention because they concentrate marine and coastal activities: shipping, fisheries, port operations, tourism, environmental conservation, and so on. They form an important link between the land and the sea. They provide a testing ground for integrated marine policy, marine spatial planning and integrated coastal management and more precisely for the EUSAIR. Besides some straits are special in the sense that they form marine and coastal territories sometimes straddling two countries, whose local authorities are engaged in intense cross-border cooperation. NOSTRA (Network of STRAits), an Interreg IV C project, is the European Straits Initiative's first major venture and promotes the sustainable cross-border governance of straits. Another important objective is to promote creativity, research, innovation, including entrepreneurship at all levels of the process of education and training, in line with the local development strategies; creation of an integrated, open, dynamic, and shared system of education, shared between the European Partner of the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

**14. Which of the above topics might benefit from being considered together in an integrated approach?**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

Marine and coastal issues are par excellence a field to be addressed in an integrated, cross-sectoral approach, more particularly in straits areas (Messina and Otranto) where activities are concentrated with important impact on the environment. Maritime clusters and research, Biodiversity and landscap, Tourism, are also topics which might benefit from an integrated approach. The Italian Government, including through community funds and/or partnerships with other countries of the European Community, should undertake relevant actions for developing a transport system in the Messina strait, in order to create efficient connections both in Italy and with other nations. The strategic position of the Strait in the Mediterranean sea could be better used.

**15. What are the main concrete actions and projects, which in the short to medium term, could contribute to fulfilling the objectives of the EUSAIR. (Please indicate max. 4 actions/projects)**

Please select relevant pillar for action/project 1:

Pillar I    Pillar II    Pillar III    Pillar IV

Action/project 1:

*6,000 character(s) maximum*

Fisheries: preservation and evaluation of ecosystems and the creation of new cross-border markets.  
Human capital: human capital investment and their skills through education and training.

Please select relevant pillar for action/project 2:

Pillar I    Pillar II    Pillar III    Pillar IV

Action/project 2:

*6,000 character(s) maximum*

Waterways, air, road and rail systems: improvement of infrastructure. Security and safety of sea and inland transport modes: Increased security through periodic control of the means of shipping.

Please select relevant pillar for action/project 3:

Pillar I    Pillar II    Pillar III    Pillar IV

Actions/projects 3:

*6,000 character(s) maximum*

Biodiversity and landscapes: Preservation of biodiversity and marine protected areas, environmental risk management, the protection of ecosystems.

Please select relevant pillar for action/project 4:

Pillar I    Pillar II    Pillar III    Pillar IV

Action/project 4

*6,000 character(s) maximum*

Adriatic-Ionian Region identity natural and cultural heritage: promotion of common values of the European tradition Tourism: preparation of packages and tourist guides shared among the euro region, improvement of tourist attractions.

**16. Which are the main actors in the region that need to be involved in the implementation of the EUSAIR to ensure that it will run successfully (incl. issues such as relevant decision makers, project actors, financing sources)?**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

States and NGOs are used to being taken into account in that kind of processes related to marine and coastal issues. However, local authorities must be heard because of their role in these issues. The private sector should also be more involved. A multi-stakeholder process is needed. In Italy, the Government, Regione Sicilia, Municipalities, Provinces, SME organizations, Stakeholders, Banks. The same in Albania.

**17. How can the administrative and governance capacity in the region be improved and what kinds of organisational arrangements are needed to implement the EUSAIR? (partnerships, coordination mechanisms, monitoring & evaluation, communication & visibility, decision making on projects ...)**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

The regional activity center of Split from the Barcelona Convention could be given a role of coordination for the implementation of the EUSAIR, if agreed by the relevant parties. Anyway dialogue and cooperation is of utmost importance.

## Section IV – ADDED VALUE

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**18. How would the EUSAIR improve the situation? Please specify what results you expect from implementation.**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

EUSAIR would improve the situation by facilitating communication between all the stake-holders involved in marine and coastal issues and particularly between each level of decision-making (from local to regional), each one being complementary. This could bring more synergy and efficiency. Working together can bring better results for a sustainable growth and overcoming the economic crisis.

**19. What would be the added value of the EUSAIR? Please specify the expected added value of the Strategy, as compared to individual actions to be taken in the countries or regions.**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

The added-value would be - to promote cooperation between states and local authorities - to add consistency among different policies - to solve common problems through the exchange of good practice - to draw public's attention to a specific territory within the Mediterranean sea, having its own identity with several elements constituting this overall identity (islands, straits)

**20. Please specify what extra benefits are there at the European Union level?**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

The EU level allows exchange of experiences with other programmes, a harmonisation of the rules, and a better integration between the European regions.

## Section V – FURTHER THOUGHTS

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**21. Any further comments of relevance for the development and implementation of the EUSAIR?**

*1,500 character(s) maximum*

Importance of the straits as specific territories deserving a special attention. Importance of the local authorities in a macro-regional perspective. It is necessary to increase the debate on these issues.