

ESIN & CE4EUI – Houtskär, Finland

Participant Information | 22–25 September 2026

Welcome to Houtskär!

We are looking forward to welcoming participants from islands and island organisations across Europe to Houtskär in the Finnish archipelago. The programme combines the joint Clean Energy for EU Islands (CE4EUI) and ESIN seminar, local visits and discussions, as well as ESIN's own member programme and Annual General Meeting.

Below you will find the programme and practical information for your stay.

Tuesday 22 September

Participants arrive in Houtskär during the afternoon. Please make sure that we have your correct arrival information, especially if you are arriving via Mossala or Galtby.

19:00 Dinner

20:00 Beer at the local pub Sybarit

After dinner, those who wish can join us for an informal evening at the local pub.

Wednesday 23 September – Joint CE4EUI & ESIN Seminar

08:00–09:00 Breakfast

09:00–09:30 Registration

09:30–10:00 Participatory Check-in

Where is your island on the map of Europe? What are your sustainability challenges?

We begin with an interactive session where participants locate their islands in the European context and identify some of the sustainability challenges they face.

10:00 Opening of the Event

Martina Cannata, Clean Energy for EU Islands Secretariat (3E)

Sandra Bergqvist, Chair of the Finnish Island Committee and Member of the Finnish Parliament

10:15 Tourism that Serves Local Communities

How can tourism contribute to local communities and long-term island sustainability rather than simply increase visitor numbers?

Benjamin Donner introduces Pargas as a unique archipelago city and presents its work on local development, tourism and the Archipelago Programme. Benjamin Donner and Robin Reuter then provide perspectives on Pargas as an archipelago municipality,

followed by a closer look at tourism through the Habitability framework and results from Pargas.

The session also includes early results from the Danish Habitability project concerning tourism and local quality of life.

11:00–11:30 Coffee break

11:30–12:45 World Café Workshop 1 – Tourism Growth vs. Island Resources

A participatory discussion about tourism growth, local resources, community needs and the carrying capacity of islands.

12:45–13:45 Lunch

13:45–14:45 World Café Workshop 2 – Sustainability Challenges

Participants explore sustainability challenges faced by island communities, identifying common themes, differences and possible areas for future collaboration.

14:45 Greening Ferry Transport in Finland

Ilmari Viljanen presents Finland's work to reduce emissions from ferry traffic, including electrification, energy efficiency and other developments in sustainable archipelago transport.

15:15 Greetings from the Archipelago Sea Biosphere Reserve

Katja Bonnevier

15:20–15:45 Coffee break

15:45 Panel Discussion – Can a Decarbonised Transport Sector Be a Driver for Sustainable Tourism?

The discussion looks at developments in ferry and island transport across Europe and asks whether the transition towards low-emission transport can also support sustainable tourism, stronger communities and more resilient island economies.

16:30 Participatory Check-out

We conclude the seminar by identifying:

- one idea to take home,
- one potential future collaboration,
- one action to explore.

17:00 Seminar ends

17:15 Optional guided walk with Ulla Mattsson-Wiklen

The walk introduces Houtskär and Näsby through stories about local history and archipelago life, including maritime traditions, emigration, archipelago women, buildings and people.

19:00 Dinner

For the starter, we would like to create a shared island table with contributions from the participating countries.

Please bring a small local speciality from your country or island to share.

The Finnish contribution will include crayfish and schnapps, pickled fish and other local flavours.

21:00 Sauna

Bring your **swimsuit**. Drinks will be available through a voluntary cash contribution, so please also bring some **cash/coins**.

Thursday 24 September – Houtskär and ESIN Program

08:00 Breakfast

09:00 Joint site visit to Houtskär

Bus departure from the campsite. The visit is hosted by Ulla Mattsson-Viklén.

The programme includes:

- Houtskär village school
- the grocery store museum in Björkö
- the local voluntary fire brigade (FBK) and rescue boat

The visits offer a glimpse into everyday life, services, heritage and preparedness in a small island community.

12:00 Lunch at Sybarit

13:00 Return to the campsite / CE4EUI program ends

ESIN program

13:15 Island Matters in Finland

Nina Söderlund, FÖSS, introduces current island and archipelago issues in Finland.

13:30 The Road Ahead: Bringing Island Realities into European Policymaking

How can the realities of island and archipelago communities be better reflected in European policymaking – and how can island communities strengthen their voice in EU decision-making?

Keynote:

Anna-Maja Henriksson, Member of the European Parliament (Renew Europe)

The discussion brings together perspectives from European politics and island organisations:

Anna-Maja Henriksson, Member of the European Parliament

Alexis Chatzimpiros, Samsø Energy Academy, Denmark

Tuuli Rantala, Irish islands

Lotten Hjelm, Skärgårdarnas Riksförbund, Sweden

Nina Söderlund, FÖSS, Finland

Moderator: Ivan Matic, Island movement, Croatia

15:00 Coffee break

15:30 ESIN Member Roundtable

Updates from ESIN member countries.

Please prepare ONE SLIDE from your country highlighting current developments, challenges or issues that would be useful to share with the ESIN network. Each country will have approximately five minutes.

16:15 ESIN and Our Own Strategy

A joint discussion about ESIN's future direction, role and priorities.

17:30 Programme ends

18:30 Festive Dinner

The evening includes reflections on ESIN's history, contributions from former Chair Bengt Almqvist and dinner together.

21:30 Music

Aspö Folk Musicians.

Friday 25 September – ESIN AGM and Departure

08:00–09:30 Breakfast

09:30 ESIN Annual General Meeting

11:00 ESIN Board Meeting

11:30 Lunch

12:45 Departure and visit to Korpoström

A chartered bus takes participants from Näsby to Korpoström. The visit includes an introduction to the centre, a guided visit to the exhibition and Knattelab, and an opportunity for discussion and exchange over coffee and sandwiches.

After Korpoström, participants continue according to their travel arrangements, either towards Turku (arrival in Turku 18:30) or onwards to Utö.

Before you leave home – remember

Please bring:

- a small local speciality from your country/island for Wednesday's dinner
- a swimsuit for the sauna
- some cash/coins for drinks
- **one slide per ESIN member country** for Thursday's Member Roundtable

Please also make sure that the organisers have your correct arrival and departure information.

We look forward to seeing you in Houtskär!