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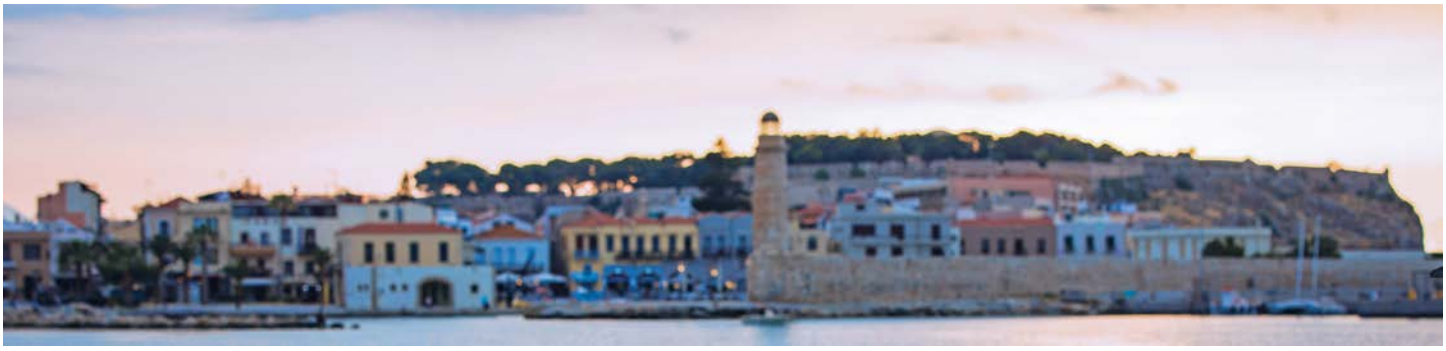
CO2 PACMAN | Interreg Euro-MED | Co-funded by the European Union

TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF CRETE
SCHOOL OF CHEMICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING
RENEWABLE AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS LABORATORY

PRESS RELEASE for the Open Event

"Co-designing a climate-neutral city - Rethymno 2030"



The Laboratory of Renewable and Sustainable Energy Systems of the Technical University of Crete, in collaboration with the Municipality of Rethymno, invites the citizens of Rethymno to the open event "Designing a Climate-Neutral City - Rethymno 2030", which will take place on **Wednesday, October 9, 2024, from 17:30 to 21:00 in the "Pantelis Prevelakis" Hall (Conservatory), Emmanuel Vernardou**.

The event is part of a three-day participatory workshop that will take place from October 9 to 11, 2024, in Rethymno, within the framework of the innovative European project CO2 PACMAN (**Cooperation and Codesigning Partnership for Climate Neutrality**), which aims to support energy autonomy and climate neutrality in island regions of the Mediterranean, focusing on Crete, specifically Rethymno, Croatia, and Italy. It includes brief presentations but mainly interactive discussions with representatives from recognized academic institutions, local and regional authorities, NGOs, entrepreneurs, the tourism sector, CO2 PACMAN partners from 7 European countries, and the city's citizens, addressing critical issues for the city and island regarding the climate crisis, emission reduction, and transitioning to an energy-autonomous and climate-neutral Crete.

CO2 PACMAN[1], co-funded by the European Commission under the Interreg Euro MED program, highlights sustainable energy solutions for Europe's islands, offering useful tools for assessing the ecological footprint and designing policies and measures to address climate change. It aspires to co-create appropriate solutions for the transition to Climate-Neutral cities and island regions through active community participation. The CO2 PACMAN team includes 10 collaborating entities (recognized universities, municipal/regional authorities, innovation and

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[1] **ABOUT CO2 PACMAN**
The CO2 PACMAN project – COoperation and CO-designing Partnership for CliMAte Neutrality, which is co-funded by the European Union under the Interreg Euro-MED program - aims to support energy autonomy and climate neutrality in Mediterranean island regions, with a focus on Crete, Croatia, and Italy. Through smart interactive tools, co-design workshops, and innovative actions at local and regional levels, the project empowers local communities to develop suitable scenarios, measures, and policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve climate neutrality. The project involves recognized academic institutions, such as the Technical University of Crete and the Universities of Siena and Florence, regional authorities from Croatia, non-governmental organizations like European Public Law Organization, the Center for Energy, Environment and Resources from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the International Centre for Sustainable Development of Energy, Water and Environment Systems Green Industry, Foundation of Innovation and Technology Transfer from Bulgaria, organizations supporting entrepreneurship, such as the European Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Valencia, etc.. Associate partners include the Municipality of Rethymno, the Region of Crete, and the Hellenic Small Islands Network.

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entrepreneurship centers, non-profit organizations) from 7 European countries: Spain, Italy, Croatia, Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, and Cyprus. The goal of this collaboration is to transform the green transition from a theoretical concept into a tangible reality.

The Laboratory of Renewable and Sustainable Energy Systems of the Technical University of Crete has taken on a central role in the project, contributing specialized expertise to the design and implementation of its actions. Its participation in CO2 PACMAN is directly linked to the enhancement of the Sustainable Energy Planning toolbox (COMPOSE toolbox), developed by the laboratory team to support local authorities in their transition to low-carbon communities. This connection enables the application of tested practices in island regions, such as Crete, offering solutions to reduce dependence on imported energy and food while enhancing their climate neutrality and autonomy. Additionally, the research team actively participates in awareness-raising and educational initiatives, organizing educational activities for the local community, schools, and local authorities.

In this context, we invite you to:

- **discuss the challenges** of transitioning to a sustainable and climate-resilient city and participate in shaping measures that will influence the future of our region.
- **learn** about critical issues related to climate change and the low-carbon economy for our city and Crete.
- **identify strategies** and measures to strengthen sustainable entrepreneurship and energy autonomy.
- **envision the city we want to live in**, work in, create in, and enjoy in the future!