

Press Release

Astypalea, June 2nd 2021

Greek Prime Minister **Kyriakos Mitsotakis** and Volkswagen CEO **Herbert Diess** met on the island of Astypalea today to mark the completion of the first phase of the “Smart and Sustainable Island” project, seven months after the signing of the relevant MoU between the Greek government and the mobility company. The visit is being hosted by the island’s mayor **Nikos Komineas** and **Costas Fragkogiannis**, Greek Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Today’s events, attended by a long list of Greek government officials and Volkswagen executives, included a brief ceremony for the official donation of the first all-electric public utility vehicles by Volkswagen, as well as the inauguration of twelve charging stations installed by the Hellenic Electricity Distribution Network Operator (HEDNO). The Greek Prime Minister also announced that the digital platform **e-astypalea** is now open to Astypalea residents and businesses that wish to apply for government grants should they choose to purchase electric vehicles.

This ambitious innovative project aspires to turn Astypalea into the first ‘smart’ and ‘sustainable’ island of the Mediterranean and is centered on the following pillars:

- Electric mobility, with an aim to gradually replace all conventional vehicles on the island with electric ones
- Car sharing services and on demand public transportation
- Displacing fossil fuel usage and diesel generators by producing energy with a hybrid Renewable Energy Source system on the island

The Astypalea project involves cutting-edge technology, as well as a strong commitment to minimize red tape by implementing fast-track procedures. In the past seven months, many Greek ministries and other government entities have been working closely with Volkswagen to get the project going. Deputy Minister Costas Fragkogiannis presented a detailed progress report and project timeline at the Chora High School in the early evening, with statements made from both government and Volkswagen stakeholders. Among those attending today’s events were: Minister for the Environment and Energy **Kostas Skrekas**, Alternate Minister of the Interior **Stelios Petsas**, Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Transport **Yiannis Kefaloyiannis**, Deputy Minister of State **Akis Skertsos**, Ministry of Environment and Energy Secretary General **Alexandra Sdoukou**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Secretary General **Yiannis Smyrlis**, local Members of Parliament: **Manos Konsolas**, **Vasilis Ypsilantis**, **Tsambika Iatridi**, and **Yiannis Pappas**, Southern Aegean Regional Governor **Yorgos Hadjimarkos**, University of the Aegean Rector **Chryssi Vitsilaki** and HEBNO CEO **Tasos Manos**. **Dr. Ernst Reichel**, German Ambassador to Greece was also present, along with Volkswagen executives **Lucas Casanovas Garcia** (Seat CEO), **Nicole Mommsen** (Head

Volkswagen Communications), **Dr. Thomas Steg** (Head of Public Affairs) and **Maik Stephan** (Head of Business Development). The official Volkswagen dealer in Greece, Kosmocar, was represented by Vice Chairman **Antonis Mavridoglou** and CEO **Steven Sirtis**.

Statements:

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis

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Volkswagen CEO Herbert Diess

“Astypalea will be a future lab for decarbonization in Europe. We will be researching in real time what motivates people to switch to e-mobility and which incentives are needed to transition to a sustainable lifestyle. The learnings will help to accelerate the transformation towards sustainable mobility and green energy in Greece. Worldwide, climate protection is gaining enormous traction. Volkswagen has been driving this change, offering the full range of sustainable mobility – from cars, to charging to sustainable energy solutions. Astypalea can become a blueprint for a rapid transformation, fostered by the close collaboration of governments and businesses.”

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs **Costas Fragkogiannis**

“This project symbolizes the realization of our vision for Greece in the years to come, a snapshot of the future before the future. Our country has become a reliable investment destination and the public and private sectors are working together in an exemplary way.”

“Astypalea: smart and sustainable island” is scheduled to run for the next six years. The Greek government is committed to take action aiming to reverse climate change by transitioning to innovative energy production solutions and achieving sustainability. Long-term projects like this one will help the country face global challenges and remain competitive in the years to come.