



<div><div><div>4</div><div>AER</div><div>Assembly of European Regions</div></div><div><div>DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF COHESION REGION VZHODNA SLOVENIJA</div></div><div><div>REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA MINISTRY OF COHESION AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT</div></div></div>	
<div><div><div>MONDAY</div><div>16.06.2025</div></div></div>	
<div><div>20:00</div></div>	<div><div>Welcome cocktail at the World's Oldest Grapevine</div><div>Old Vine House, <a href="#">Vojašniška ulica 8, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia</a></div></div>
<div><div><div>TUESDAY</div><div>17.06.2025</div></div></div>	
<div><div>9:00 - 10:00</div></div>	<div><div>Registrations in Catacombs of the Old Puppet Theater &amp; Welcome Coffee in the Minorite Church</div><div>Entrance for participants: <a href="#">Maribor Old Puppet Theatre, Vojašniški trg 2A, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia</a></div></div>
<div><div>10:00 - 10:20</div></div>	<div><div>Opening of the Maribor Innovation Forum</div><div>Room: <a href="#">Old Puppet Theater</a></div><div>Speakers:</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Aleksander Saša Arsenovič, President of Development Council Eastern Slovenia and Mayor of Maribor</li><li>Srečko Đurov, State Secretary for Regional Development</li><li>Albert Castellanos, President of the Assembly of European Regions (AER)</li></ul></div><div>Moderator:</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Nataša Briški, international journalist and editor-in-chief of Meta's List Institute</li></ul></div></div>
<div><div>10:30 - 12:00</div></div>	<div><div>Video-address by EU representative</div><div>Political Roundtable: Regions Boosting Europe's Competitiveness</div><div>Room: <a href="#">Old Puppet Theater</a></div><div>Speakers:</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Andrew Boff, Vice President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities</li><li>Maja Schussler, Political Reporter at the Representation of the European Commission to Slovenia</li><li>Rastislav Trnka, Chairman of the Košice Self-Governing Region, Slovakia</li><li>Vladimir Prebilič, Member of the European Parliament (video message)</li></ul></div><div>Moderator:</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Nataša Briški, international journalist and editor-in-chief of Meta's List Institute</li></ul></div></div>
<div><div>12:00 - 13:00</div></div>	<div><div>Lunch Break</div></div>



# AER 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary | 2025 General Assembly Maribor Innovation Forum

Room: Judgement Tower

13:30 - 16:00

## **Eurodissey Steering Committee**

*\*only for members of the Steering Committee*

13:00 - 14:30

## **Panel Discussion**

*Drivers of technological innovation at national and regional levels*

Room: Old Puppet Theater

### **Speakers:**

- Lilijana Madjar, AER Vice President for Public Services, Digitalisation & Cohesion
- Małgorzata Jarosińska-Jedynak, member of Podkarpackie Regional Board, Poland
- Dr. Robert Drobnič, Director-General, Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development
- Tamara Zajec Balažič, Acting Director at SPIRIT Slovenia Business Development Agency

### **Moderator:**

- Matija Stepišnik, editor-in-chief at Večer (newspaper)

14:30 - 15:00

## **Coffee Break**

15:00 - 16:30

## **Roundtable Discussion**

*International business practices for technological excellence*

Room: Old Puppet Theater

### **Speakers:**

- Mr. Juhasz Balint, President of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Serbia
- Mr. Marián Šefčovič, Director of Radenska (mineral water and beverages)
- Mr. Kristjan Magdič, Director of Paradajz (greenhouse tomato production)
- Dr. Zvone Simončič, Director of Pharmaceutical Research and Development, Krka d.d. (pharmaceuticals)
- Mr. Avgust Šibila, Assistant Chief Executive for Talum (aluminium)

### **Moderator:**

- Matija Stepišnik, editor-in-chief at Večer

## **Parallel sessions**

16:35 - 18:35

**AER Executive Board Meeting**  
*(only for Executive Board members)*  
Room: Wine Cellar

16:35 - 18:15

**Workshop of the AER Working Group on Mental Health**  
Room: Judgement Tower



19:30

### AER 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reception

Vinag 1847 (Trg svobode 3, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia).

Hosted by the Assembly of European Regions

## WEDNESDAY

18.06.2025

### AER General Assembly 2025

Room: Old Puppet Theater

9:00 - 13:00

**\*8:00-9:00  
welcome coffee and  
registrations**

The General Assembly 2025 will mark the election of the AER new political leadership: President, the Executive Board and the Bureau.

*Further information on the agenda [HERE](#).*

13:30 - 14:30

### **Lunch Break**

### AER Spring Bureau Meeting

Room: Old Puppet Theater

14:30 - 16:30

The Spring Bureau meeting will kick-start the new mandate for 2025-2027. Members will be invited to discuss and vote on the AER Political Priorities 2025-2030.

*Further information on the agenda [HERE](#).*

16:45 - 18:15

### AER Focus Group on Ukraine

Room: Old Puppet Theater

19:30

### Gala Dinner at the Maribor Castle

(Grajska ulica 2, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia).

Hosted by the Mayor of Maribor, Aleksander Saša Arsenovič, and the director of Regional Development Agency, Nataša Ritonija.



# AER 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary | 2025 General Assembly Maribor Innovation Forum

**THURSDAY**

**19.06.2025**

## Parallel sessions

### Panel on Sustainable Tourism

Room: Old Puppet Theater

#### Speakers:

- Opening speech by Dubravka Kalin, Director of the Directorate of Tourism, Ministry of Economy, Tourism and Sport
- Marina Ferfolja, Head of Department Business Insights & Sustainable Development, Slovenian Tourist Board
- Karmen Razlag, Head of Tourism at Regional Development Agency for Podravje, Maribor
- Baran Güneş, Deputy Mayor of Mudanya Municipality, Bursa, Türkiye
- Marine Zuber, Canton Fribourg (Switzerland)

#### Moderator

- Andrej Vršič, Director of the Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia

### Panel on Bioeconomy

Room: Judgement Tower

#### Speakers:

- Patrick Mülhauser, Canton Fribourg (Switzerland)
- Ellen Mulder, Director of International Relations and Public Affairs, Province of Gelderland (Netherlands)
- Nataša Ritonija, Chair of the AER Working Group on Bioeconomy
- Joaquín Villaplana, CIRCSYST – Circular Systemic Solutions, AIJU Spain

#### Moderator

- Nuša Lazar, Lead expert on Circular Economy

**9:00 - 10:30**

## Parallel study trips

### Study Visit on Good Practices in Sustainable Tourism: Green Horizons of Štajerska

Learn more [here](#)

### Study Visit on Good Practices in the Circular Economy: the demonstration sites of Nigrad and Ptuj

Learn more [here](#)

**10:45 - 17:30**

**20:00 - 23:00**

**Farewell Party under the Majestic Maribor Oak with DJ Set**  
([Pristan 8, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia](#)).