



## MONDAY

16.06.2025

20:00

### Welcome cocktail at the World's Oldest Grapevine

Old Vine House, Vojašniška ulica 8, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia

## TUESDAY

17.06.2025

8:30 - 9:30

### Welcome Coffee in the Minorite Church & Registrations in the Old Puppet Theater and in the Minorite Church

Maribor Old Puppet Theatre, Vojašniški trg 2A, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia

10:00 - 10:20

### Opening of the Maribor Innovation Forum

Room: Old Puppet Theater

#### Speakers:

- Aleksander Arsenovič, President of Development Council Eastern Slovenia and Mayor of Maribor
- Srečko Đurov, State Secretary for regional development
- AER President Albert Castellanos

#### Moderator:

- Nataša Briški, international journalist and editor-in-chief of Meta's List Institute

10:30 - 11:45

### Video-address by Themis Christophidou, Director-General of DG REGIO

### Political Roundtable: Regions Boosting Europe's Competitiveness

Room: Old Puppet Theater

#### Speakers:

- Andrew Boff, Vice President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
- Maja Schussler, Political Reporter at the Representation of the European Commission to Slovenia
- Rastislav Trnka, Chairman of the Košice Self-Governing Region, Slovakia
- Vladimir Prebilič, Member of the European Parliament (video message)

#### Moderator:

- Nataša Briški, international journalist and editor-in-chief of Meta's List Institute

12:00 - 13:00

**Lunch Break**



13:30 - 16:00	<i>Room: Judgement Tower</i> <b>Eurodysses Steering Committee</b> <i>*only for members of the Steering Committee</i>	
13:00 - 14:30	<b>Panel Discussion</b> <i>Drivers of technological innovation at national and regional levels</i> <i>Room: Old Puppet Theater</i> <b>Speakers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lilijana Madjar, AER Vice President for Public Services, Digitalisation &amp; Cohesion</li><li>• Małgorzata Jarosińska-Jedynak, member of Podkarpackie Regional Board, Poland</li><li>• Dr Simon Savšek, Head of EIB Group Office, Ljubljana</li><li>• Srečko Đurov, State Secretary for Regional Development</li><li>• Tamara Zajec Balažič, Acting Director at SPIRIT Slovenia Business Development Agency</li></ul> <b>Moderator:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matija Stepišnik, editor-in-chief at Večer</li></ul>	
14:30 - 14:45	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
14:45 - 16:00	<b>Roundtable Discussion</b> <i>International business practices for technological excellence</i> <i>Room: Old Puppet Theater</i> <b>Speakers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. Bálint Juhász, President of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, Serbia</li><li>• Mr. Marián Šefčovič, Director of Radenska (mineral water and beverages)</li><li>• Mr. Kristjan Magdič, Director of Paradajz (greenhouse tomato production)</li><li>• Dr. Zvone Simončič, Director of Pharmaceutical Research and Development, Krka d.d. (pharmaceuticals)</li><li>• Mr. Avgust Šibila, Assistant Chief Executive at Talum (aluminium)</li></ul> <b>Moderator:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matija Stepišnik, editor-in-chief at Večer (newspaper)</li></ul>	
16:15 - 18:00	<b>AER Executive Board Meeting</b> <i>(only for Executive Board members)</i> <i>Room: Wine Cellar</i>	<b>Workshop of the AER Working Group on Mental Health</b> <i>Room: Judgement Tower</i>



19:00

### 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**

14:30 - 16:30

### AER Spring Bureau Meeting

Room: Old Puppet Theater

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

19:00

### Gala Dinner at the Maribor Castle

(Grajska ulica 2, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia)

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





THURSDAY		19.06.2025	
9:00 - 10:30	<u>Parallel sessions</u>		
	<b>Panel on Sustainable Tourism</b>  <u>Room: Small Puppet Theater</u>  <b>Speakers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opening speech by Dubrovka Kalin, director of the Directorate of Tourism, Ministry of Economy, Tourism and Sport</li><li>• Marina Ferfolja, Head of Department Business Insights &amp; Sustainable Development, Slovenian Tourist Board</li><li>• Karmen Razlag, Head of Tourism at Regional Development Agency for Podravje, Maribor</li><li>• Baran Güneş, Deputy Mayor of Mudanya Municipality, Bursa, Türkiye</li><li>• Marine Zuber, Canton Fribourg (Switzerland)</li></ul> <b>Moderator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Andrej Vršič, Director of the Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia</li></ul>	<b>Panel on Bioeconomy</b>  <u>Room: Judgement Tower</u>  <b>Speakers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loles Vidal, Generalitat Valenciana, Spain</li><li>• Patrick Mülhauser, Canton Fribourg (Switzerland)</li><li>• Ellen Mulder, Director of International Relations and Public Affairs, Province of Gelderland (Netherlands)</li><li>• Nataša Ritonija, Chair of the AER Working Group on Bioeconomy</li><li>• Joaquín Villaplana, CIRCSYST – Circular Systemic Solutions, AIJU Spain</li></ul> <b>Moderator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nuša Lazar, Lead expert on Circular Economy</li></ul>	
	<u>Parallel study trips</u>		
10:45 - 17:30	<b>Study Visit on Good Practices in Sustainable Tourism: Green Horizons of Štajerska</b>  <u>Learn more <a href="#">here</a></u>	<b>Study Visit on Good Practices in the Circular Economy: the demonstration sites of Nigrad and Ptuj</b>  <u>Learn more <a href="#">here</a></u>	
	<b>Farewell Party under the Majestic Maribor Oak with DJ Set</b> ( <u><a href="#">Pristan 8, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia</a></u> )		