

# Communication, visibility and transparency

Key updates from DG REGIO's Communication Unit

**Slaven KLICEK**

Communication with Member States

INFORM EU team

Directorate-General for Regional & Urban Policy

European Commission

# Agenda

## **INFORM EU**

- Updates from the network
- Roles and responsibilities
- Plenaries
- Thematic seminars
- Training sessions
- Support tools and more

## **Communication campaigns & actions**

- Competitions and awards
- Media and press actions
- Campaigns



# Part one: INFORM EU updates

Visibility, transparency and communication from a regulatory point of view



# INFORM EU

An EU-wide network of communication officers responsible for communicating EU and Member State investments under shared management covering CPR EU funds, plus **Interreg** and RRF.

Serving 1.000+ members and offering exchange of practices, support in visibility implementation and cooperation between the funds.

One of the best networks out there, if you ask us.

(alongside ICON, of course)





# Communication coordinators & officers

Central role for communication

## Coordinators

Appointed at Member State level

27 MS + Interreg + Schengen countries

## Officers

Appointed at programme(s) level

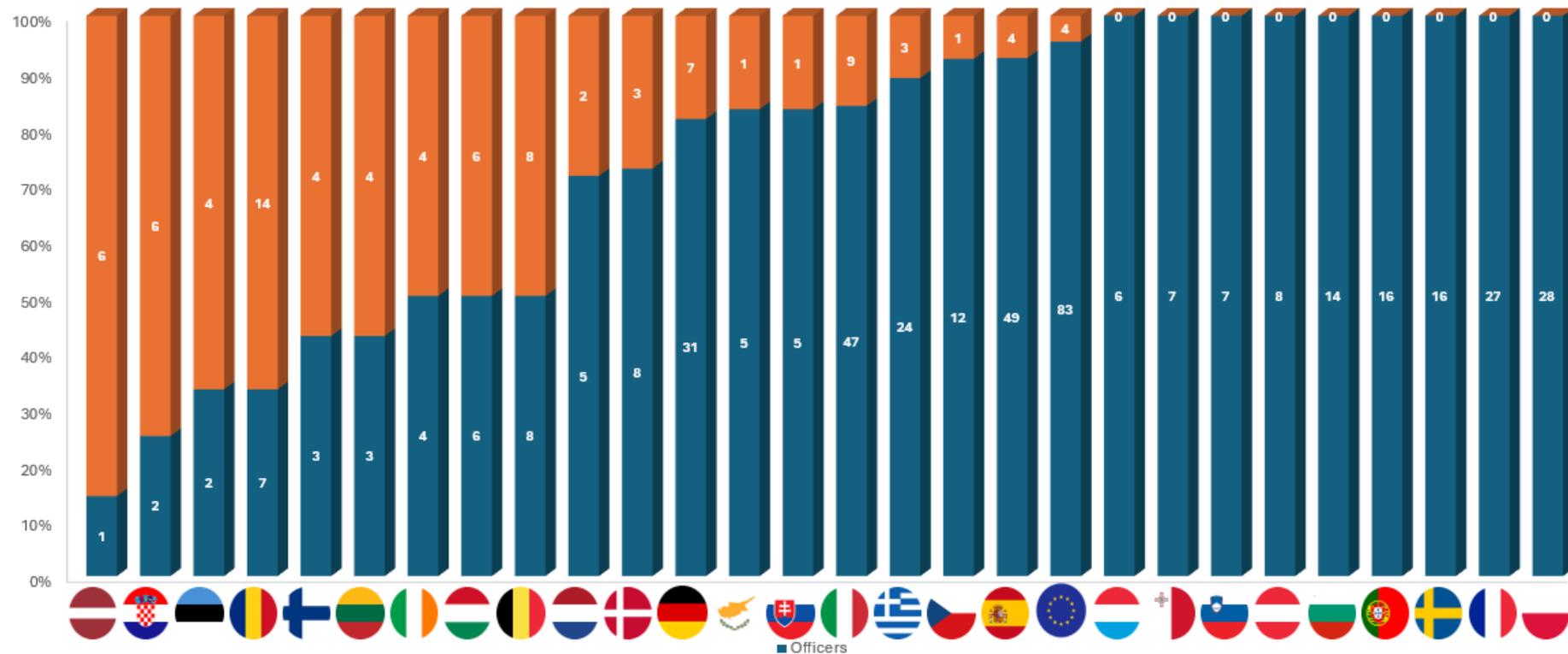
One CO per programme, covering all the Funds



# Communication coordinators & officers

How do we get the info?

NOMINATIONS OF COMMUNICATION OFFICERS & NATIONAL COORDINATORS  
STATE OF PLAY ACCORDING TO SFC2021 (FEBRUARY 2026)

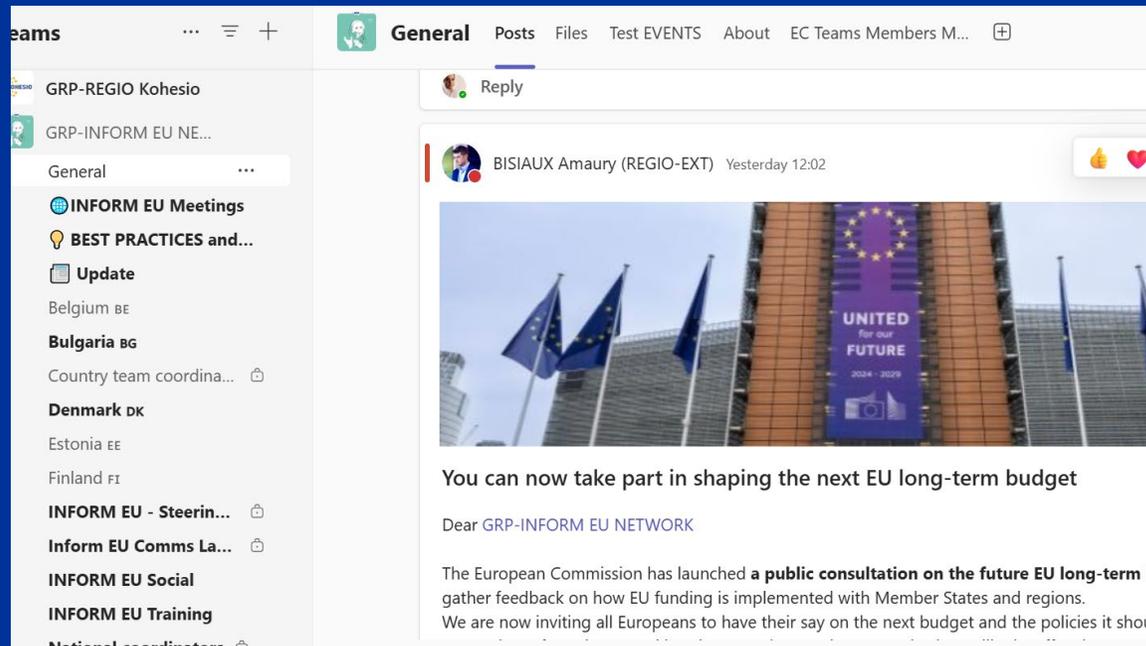


Numbers on blue parts of the graph refer to officers nominated via SFC2021, while the nb on orange parts of the graph refer to programmes that miss an appointed communication officer.



# INFORM EU: the digital side

1000+ communication stakeholders on one platform



MS Teams



Training sessions

# INFORM EU: Plenary meetings

In-person flagship events in Member States



Sevilla, ES

20-22 November 2024

**Communication & AI**



Talinn, EE

16-18 June 2025

**Truth and Trust:  
Communicators vs  
Disinformation**



Gdansk, PL

3–5 December 2025

**Communicating with  
projects**

Incoming:

## Kalamata, Greece

10th INFORM EU plenary

6-8 May 2026

Communicating with citizens

Photo by [Lefteris Stamatelepoulos](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# INFORM EU Regional

The REGIO-specific network of communication officers



## Gdansk example:

Part one: How DG REGIO uses project information

Part two: How Member States use project information

Part three: Project speed-dating

Photos: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/informeu/>



# INFORM EU Thematic seminars

Policy development with MS officers



**Paris, Jan 2025**

Topic: Financial measures



**Vienna, March 2025**

Topic: National coordinators' tasks



**Luxembourg, Nov 2025**

Topic: Networks & communication



Incoming:

**Communicating Financial instrument,  
Pilsen, CZ, March 2026**

Latvia, June 2026

Budapest, Hungary, September 2026

More to come

Photo by [Amie Johnson](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# INFORM EU Thematic seminars

## On previous episodes

### 2019

Communication strategies and rules in 2021-2027 | Warsaw, PL

Communication strategies and indicators in 2021-2027 | Zagreb, HR

### 2020

Visibility rules and requirements | Porto, PT  
Kohesio | online

### 2021

Eurobarometer | online  
Operations of strategic importance | Prague, CZ

### 2022

Regiostars awards | Valencia, ES  
EU in my region: communication in partnership | Burgenland, AT



# INFORM EU Thematic seminars

## On previous episodes

### 2023

Approach and framework |  
Berlin, DE

Networks and structures |  
Cluj, RO

Visibility and branding  
| Bari, IT

Transparency and data |  
Sligo, IE

Coordinator roles and tasks  
| Mechelen, BE

### 2024

Operations of strategic  
importance 2.0 | Nafplio, EL

### 2025

Financial measures | Paris, FR

Meeting with national  
coordinators | Vienna, AT

Networks & communication |  
Luxembourg, LU



# Country Teams

Member States & Commission joining forces

Meetings between Member States  
Communication officers and Commission  
(CPR DGs and RRF) to discuss country-  
specific communication issues.

Organised two times a year, in April and  
October (in-person and online)

## Results so far

Implemented in all Member States + special  
format for Interreg

**Incoming**

April 2026



# Operations of strategic importance

## Flagships of 2021-2027

A set of requirements for ERDF, CF, ESF+, JTF & EMFAF programmes

Putting the most emblematic & key projects in the spotlight

### State of play

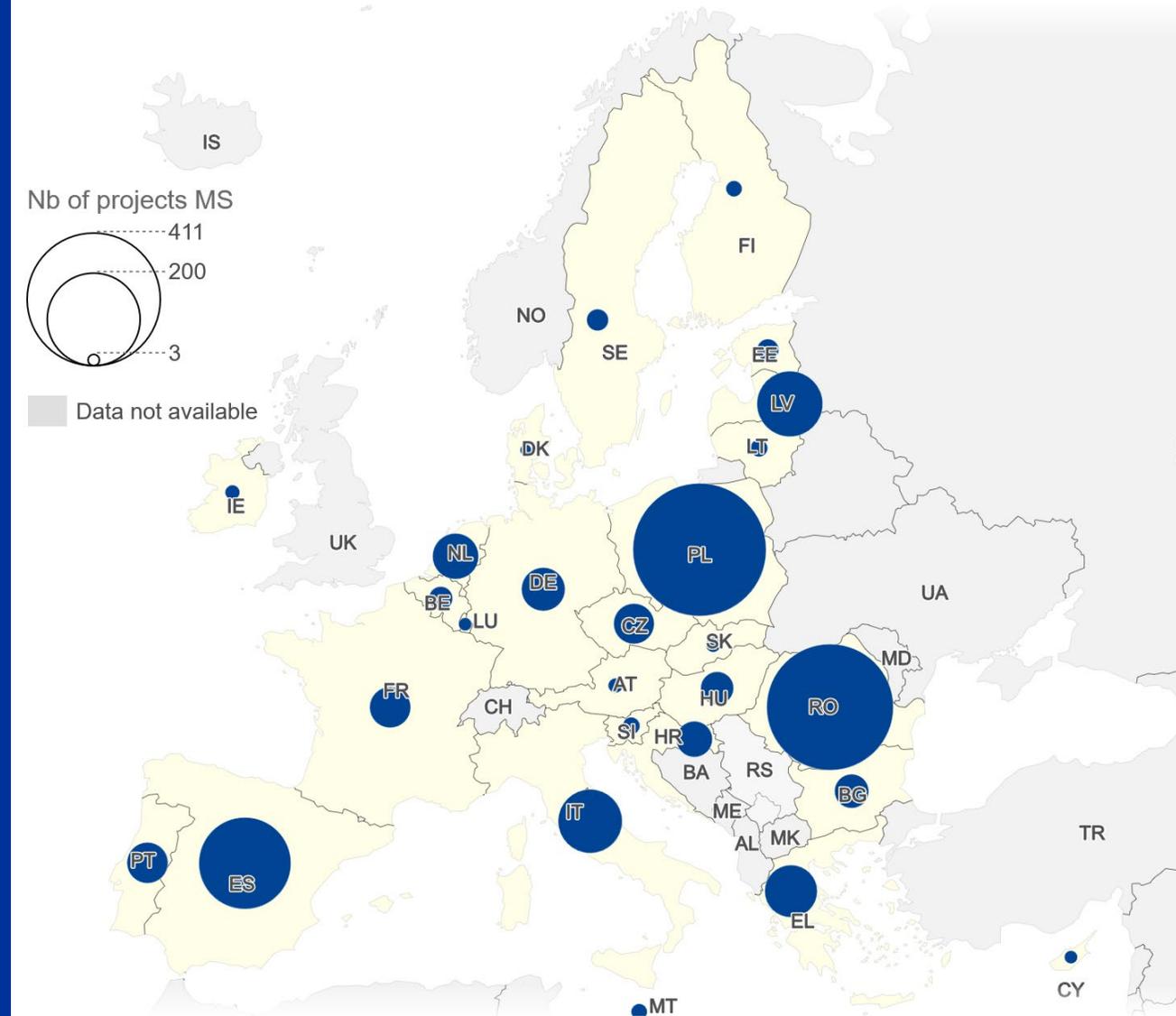
More than a 1.000 strategic projects in implementation (estimate based on SFC2021)

### Planning

Providing examples & good approaches on OSIs as part of regular INFORM EU activities, including the newsletter, training sessions etc

# Operations of Strategic Importance in the EU

Estimate based on SFC2021 data (Feb 2026)

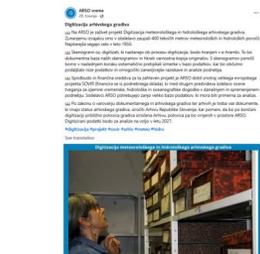


# OSIs in practice



**SOVIR**  
Slovenia's EU Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027

Aim: developing and upgrading new tools to inform and warn the local population about weather-related emergencies caused due to climate change



# OSIs in practice



**Connecting the Dots**  
Interreg Euro-MED

Aim: a programme-led opportunity where the programme's eight governance strategic projects showcased results of 2014-2020 & their missions for 2021-2027



# OSIs in practice



**Croatian safe steps CROSS**  
Croatia's Competitiveness and Cohesion OP

Aim: demining of over 83,2 million m<sup>2</sup> of forests and forest land, to improve safety, protect the environment and preserve public & private property

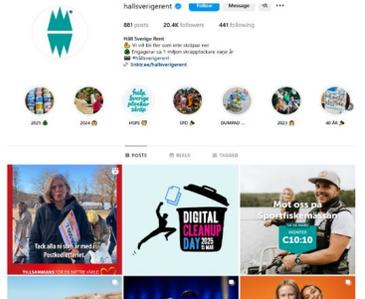


# OSIs in practice



**Re:Fish**  
Interreg Central Baltic

Aim: reduce the number of abandoned recreational fishing gear in the Baltic Sea and contribute to less pollution and more awareness of its environmental impact



# INFORM EU newsletter

## The Informer

### The Informer

Your periodical update from the world of the INFORM EU network



### Focus on strategic EU projects

Strategic EU projects are being implemented all around Europe - see details on a [little map](#) we created, based on inputs by programmes shared via SFC2021. For some spotlighted examples of strategic and other emblematic projects, see below.



#### Redeveloping the GSP Stadium

more



#### An aerospace school

more



#### National fisheries data

more

### A closer look at communication materials

If communication is the hammer, then materials are the nails. Here are some fine examples that nail down EU messages, combining visual storytelling with eye-catching design. Plus, an example from beyond our usual EU communications focus.



#### Graphics that bring projects alive

In a region of northern Croatia, projects adopted a shared, distinctive branding.

more



#### Storybooks, Romans & Romanians

Travelling across EU-funded heritage sites in Romania with an original storybook.

more



#### A rock n' roll leaflet

When Radiohead gave paper advertising a fresh spin.

more

### Humans of INFORM EU



We packed our bags, grabbed an espresso, and headed to Naples to talk with Annalisa and Paolo in search of our next EU story.

more

### Communication under the next MFF

On day 2, DG BUDG presented the simplification approach for communication rules, based on the EC proposals for the post-2027 MFF. See more details in the slides.

more



### INFORM EUrovision

After the INFORM EUro 2024 spectacle in Hannover, we came up with another way to engage (read: annoy) Member States with a fun competition highlighting the best in communication practices. Esteemed INFORM EU people, welcome to the Eurovision of EU communication!



Subscribe here >>>



# Support tools

Good approaches, best practices and visibility tips

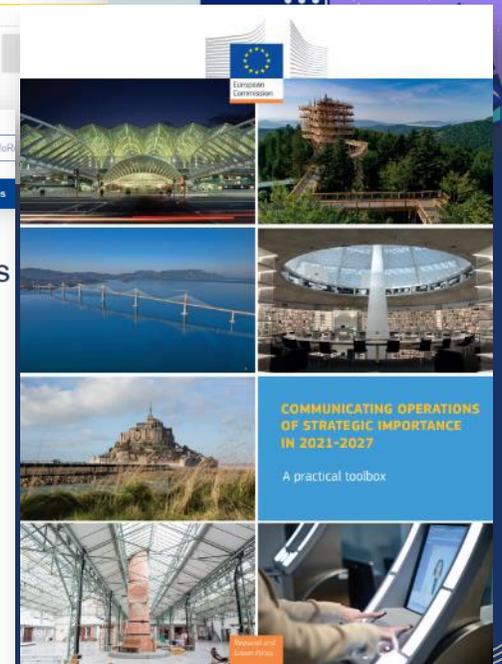
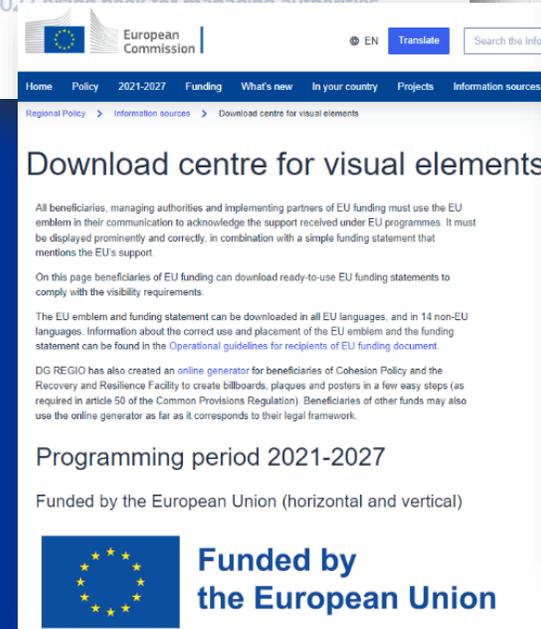
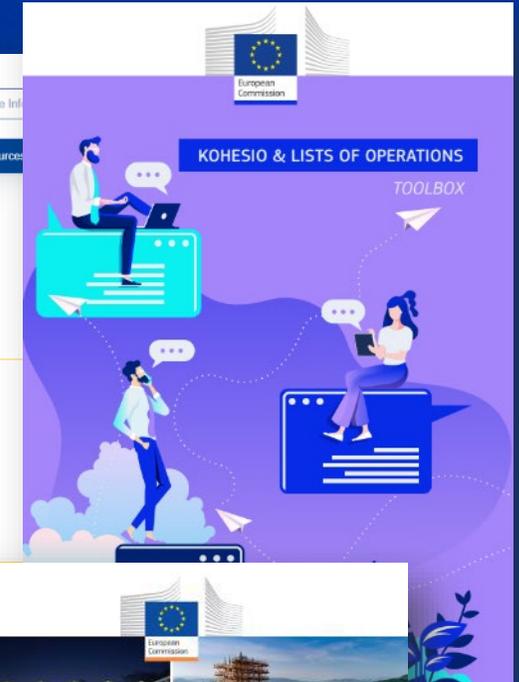
## Better implementation

Download centre

Online generator for billboards

Support manual

Publications on specific topics



# Support tools

Good approaches, best practices and visibility tips

The screenshot shows the REGIO Wiki Extranet interface. At the top, there are dropdown menus for "2021-2027 Legislation" and "2014-2020 Legislation (ESIF)". Below these are two main columns: "2021-2027 Period" and "2014-2020 Period". Each column has sub-sections for "Regulations" and "Secondary Legislation".

2021-2027 Period	2014-2020 Period
<b>Regulations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)</li><li>European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) - Cohesion Fund</li><li>Interreg / ETC</li><li>Just Transition Fund (JTF)</li><li>European Social Fund+ (ESF+)</li><li>European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)</li></ul>	<b>Regulations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ESIF - Regulations</li><li>ENI</li><li>FEAD - Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived</li><li>EGF - European Globalisation Adjustment Fund</li></ul>
<b>Secondary Legislation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Delegated Acts</li><li>Implementing Acts</li></ul>	<b>Secondary Legislation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Delegated Acts</li><li>Implementing Acts</li></ul>

At the bottom of the 2014-2020 Period column, there is a green button labeled "Useful documents".

[REGIO Wiki Extranet](#)

### Communicating the EU

Examples of communication actions in European countries  
DG REGIO Inform EU team  
October 2025

### Estonia

#### Communicating the JTF

**What is it?** A visibility & communication approach adapted to the region's dependence on the oil shale sector and the socioeconomic indicators of the community.

**What kind of activities are planned?** A diverse set of measures aimed at raising awareness of the Fund: national steering committees, public consultation activities, an awareness survey, outreach activities towards local people, a dedicated central website, communication campaign, teaming up with local initiatives etc.

**First results are taking shape**  
The JTF has been established in the region. The first steering committee meeting was held in the region. The first steering committee meeting was held in the region. The first steering committee meeting was held in the region.

Source: slides from the Inform EU platform, Helsinki presentation

### Croatia

#### A 2021-2027 roadshow

**What is it?** A series of informative lectures planned throughout Croatia in order to present the funding opportunities as part of the new programming period.

**What kind of activities are planned?** Lectures – both technical and informative, panel discussions, presentations of funding opportunities adapted to the local setting with local stakeholders (e.g. funding for islands).

**Who is the organiser?** Managing authority.

**Who is it for?** Regions and cities, development agencies, applicants and beneficiaries...

Source: <https://eu.fondovi.gov.hr>

### How could the event & activity look like?

#### EC's expectations

**Media:** involvement of journalists will boost visibility

**Content:** related to achievements, such as visits to project facilities, field trips, guided tours, open doors, fairs, any other engaging format

**Audience:** up to the project, but it is strongly suggested that it is open to citizens (or part of it)

**Dissemination:** via social media, media relations and other channels

Good communication examples, part of the Country Teams



# Planning 2026

## Main INFORM EU activities this year

### Plenary meetings

Kalamata, Greece

6-8 May 2026

### Thematic seminars

Communicating Financial  
instrument, Pilsen, CZ,  
March 2026

Latvia, June 2026

Budapest, Hungary,  
September 2026

More to come

### Training sessions

Twice a month, online

Next one: REGIOSTARS, 24/2

Repository

### MS Teams community

Ongoing updates



# INFORM EU 2026



January	February	March	April	May	June
			← COUNTRY TEAM MEETINGS →		
1 Th <small>New Year's Day</small>	1 Su	1 Su	1 We	1 Fr <small>Labor day</small>	1 Mo <small>23</small>
2 Fr	2 Mo <small>6</small>	2 Mo <small>10</small>	2 Th <small>Maundy Thursday</small>	2 Sa	2 Tu <b>Interreg ICON 2026</b> Turku, Finland
3 Sa	3 Tu	3 Tu <b>EU Social rights Forum</b> Brussels, Belgium	3 Fr <small>Good Friday</small>	3 Su	3 We <b>Training Eurobarometer</b>
4 Su	4 We	4 We	4 Sa <small>Easter</small>	4 Mo <small>19</small>	4 Th
5 Mo <small>2</small>	5 Th	5 Th <b>INFORM EU Social meeting</b>	5 Su <small>Easter Sunday</small>	5 Tu	5 Fr
6 Tu	6 Fr	6 Fr	6 Mo <small>Easter Monday</small> <small>15</small>	6 We <b>10th INFORM EU Plenary meeting</b> Kalamata, Greece	6 Sa
7 We	7 Sa	7 Sa	7 Tu	7 Th	7 Su
8 Th	8 Su	8 Su	8 We	8 Fr	8 Mo <small>24</small>
9 Fr	9 Mo <small>7</small>	9 Mo <small>11</small>	9 Th	9 Sa <b>EUROPE DAY</b>	9 Tu
10 Sa	10 Tu <b>Training Thematic seminars</b>	10 Tu <b>Training Comm. 101</b>	10 Fr	10 Su	10 We <b>Thematic Seminar</b> in Latvia
11 Su	11 We <b>REGIOSTARS call</b> ↓	11 We <b>Thematic Seminar</b> Communicating Financial Instruments Pilsen, Czechia	11 Sa <small>20</small>	11 Mo	11 Th
12 Mo <small>3</small>	12 Th	12 Th	12 Su	12 Tu	12 Fr
13 Tu	13 Fr	13 Fr	13 Mo <small>16</small>	13 We	13 Sa
14 We	14 Sa	14 Sa	14 Tu <b>Training Content creation</b>	14 Th <small>Ascension Day</small>	14 Su
15 Th	15 Su	15 Su	15 We	15 Fr	15 Mo <small>25</small>
16 Fr	16 Mo <small>8</small>	16 Mo <small>12</small>	16 Th	16 Sa	16 Tu
17 Sa	17 Tu	17 Tu	17 Fr	17 Su	17 We
18 Su	18 We	18 We	18 Sa	18 Mo <small>21</small>	18 Th
19 Mo <small>4</small>	19 Th	19 Th	19 Su	19 Tu <b>Training Comm. examples</b>	19 Fr
20 Tu	20 Fr	20 Fr	20 Mo <small>17</small>	20 We	20 Sa
21 We <b>NCC meeting in Brussels</b>	21 Sa	21 Sa	21 Tu	21 Th	21 Su
22 Th	22 Su	22 Su	22 We	22 Fr <b>End RS call</b> ↑	22 Mo <small>26</small>
23 Fr	23 Mo <small>9</small>	23 Mo <small>13</small>	23 Th	23 Sa	23 Tu
24 Sa	24 Tu <b>Training REGIOSTARS</b>	24 Tu	24 Fr	24 Su <small>Pentecote</small>	24 We
25 Su	25 We	25 We	25 Sa	25 Mo <small>Whit Monday</small> <small>22</small>	25 Th
26 Mo <small>5</small>	26 Th	26 Th <b>Training Behavioural science</b>	26 Su	26 Tu	26 Fr
27 Tu	27 Fr	27 Fr	27 Mo <small>18</small>	27 We	27 Sa
28 We	28 Sa	28 Sa	28 Tu <b>Training Audiences</b>	28 Th	28 Su
29 Th <b>Training Hard to reach</b>		29 Su	29 We	29 Fr	29 Mo <small>27</small>
30 Fr		30 Mo <small>14</small>	30 Th	30 Sa	30 Tu
31 Sa		31 Tu			

[Access the calendar in the INFORM EU group.](#)

# Part two: communication campaigns & actions





***APPLICATIONS***  
***are***  
**OPEN**



# Key features



- **Launched on Tuesday, 10 February**
- **Deadline to apply 22 May**
- **Training on 24 February**
- **Familiar categories**
- **MA endorsement needed**
- **Applications done via EU survey**
- **Communication kit/visuals available**

**Inforegio - REGIOSTARS Awards**



# REGIOSTARS 2026 timeline

## Phase 1: Application & Finalist Selection

### February 10 Competition Launch

The official start for projects to submit their entries for consideration.



### July 14 Finalists Announced

Successful projects are revealed following the official eligibility check.



### May 22 Application Deadline

The final date for all project submissions to be completed.

## Phase 2: Voting, Pitching & Winners

### October 13-14 (tbc) The Grand Finale

Finalists pitch to jurors before the official REGIOSTARS Ceremony takes place.



### September 3 Public Voting Opens

The community begins voting for their favorite regional projects online.



### November 1 Winner Campaigns

Local promotional campaigns begin to celebrate and showcase the winning projects.

# Follow up actions to promote the 2025 winners

- Smart Regions episodes by Euronews - supported by social media campaign
- First episode is out – [link here](#)
- REGIOSTARS plaques to enhance visibility on the ground
- Photo shooting

euronews.

SMART  
REGIONS

In association with



# A reminder on last year's winners



**Satellite radar-based fertilisation maps**

Poland



**AGEO - Atlantic Geohazard Risk Management**

Portugal, Spain, France, Ireland, United Kingdom



**MONOCAB OWL - New mobility on old tracks**

Germany



**Early support for families at risk**

Czechia



**Shankill Shared Women's Centre**

United Kingdom, Ireland



# EU in my region & school



## Umbrella campaign encompassing several strands:



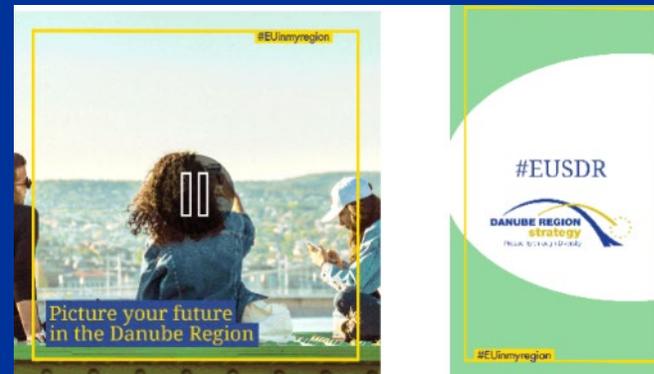
Regional campaigns



EU in my school partnerships



Strategic support for project milestones/ inaugurations



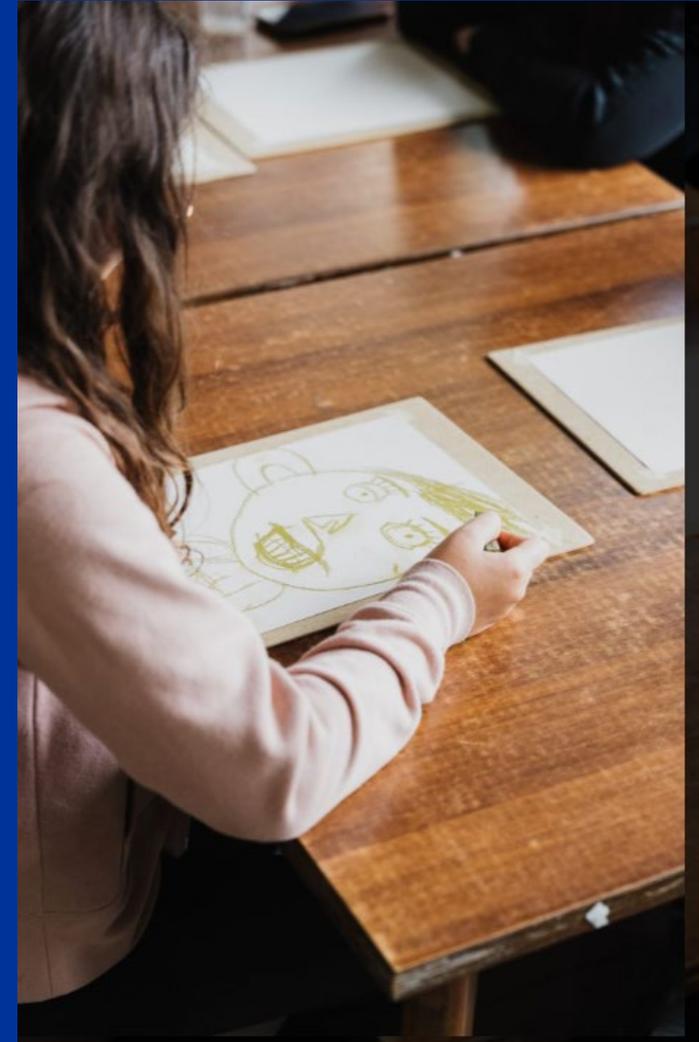
Social media support service (ongoing)

# Île-de-France



[https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/whats-new/newsroom/11-02-2026-is-the-earth-cubic-eu-in-my-school-helps-students-fight-disinformation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/whats-new/newsroom/11-02-2026-is-the-earth-cubic-eu-in-my-school-helps-students-fight-disinformation_en)

# Slavonia, HR





## Ongoing

**Expressions of interest** currently on hold

**Social media services** open until mid April – [drop a little email here if interested](#)

**General inquiries:** [REGIO-EUROPE-IN-MY-REGION-CONTACT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:REGIO-EUROPE-IN-MY-REGION-CONTACT@ec.europa.eu)



# Media actions



# Eastern Border Regions

Strategy published yesterday on supporting EU's eastern regions bordering Russia, Belarus and Ukraine.

A set of actions covering five priority areas:

- Security and resilience
- Growth and regional prosperity
- Building on local strengths
- Connectivity
- People

Interreg is recognised in contributing to cross-border security cooperation and resilience.

Contact: [REGIO-PRESS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:REGIO-PRESS@ec.europa.eu)

[Press release, with factsheet and Communication.](#)



**EU'S EASTERN REGIONS  
BORDERING RUSSIA,  
BELARUS AND UKRAINE**

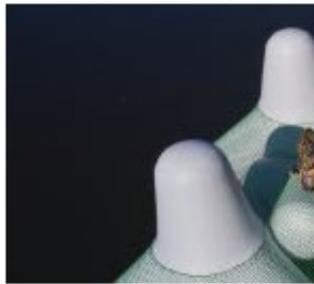
**Strong regions for a safe  
Europe**

# New European Bauhaus prizes

New edition of the awards starts tomorrow, including the NEB Boost for Small Municipalities.

Also incoming: the NEB festival, planned for June 2026 in Brussels, Belgium.

Keep track of updates on the webpage: [New European Bauhaus Prizes 2025](#)



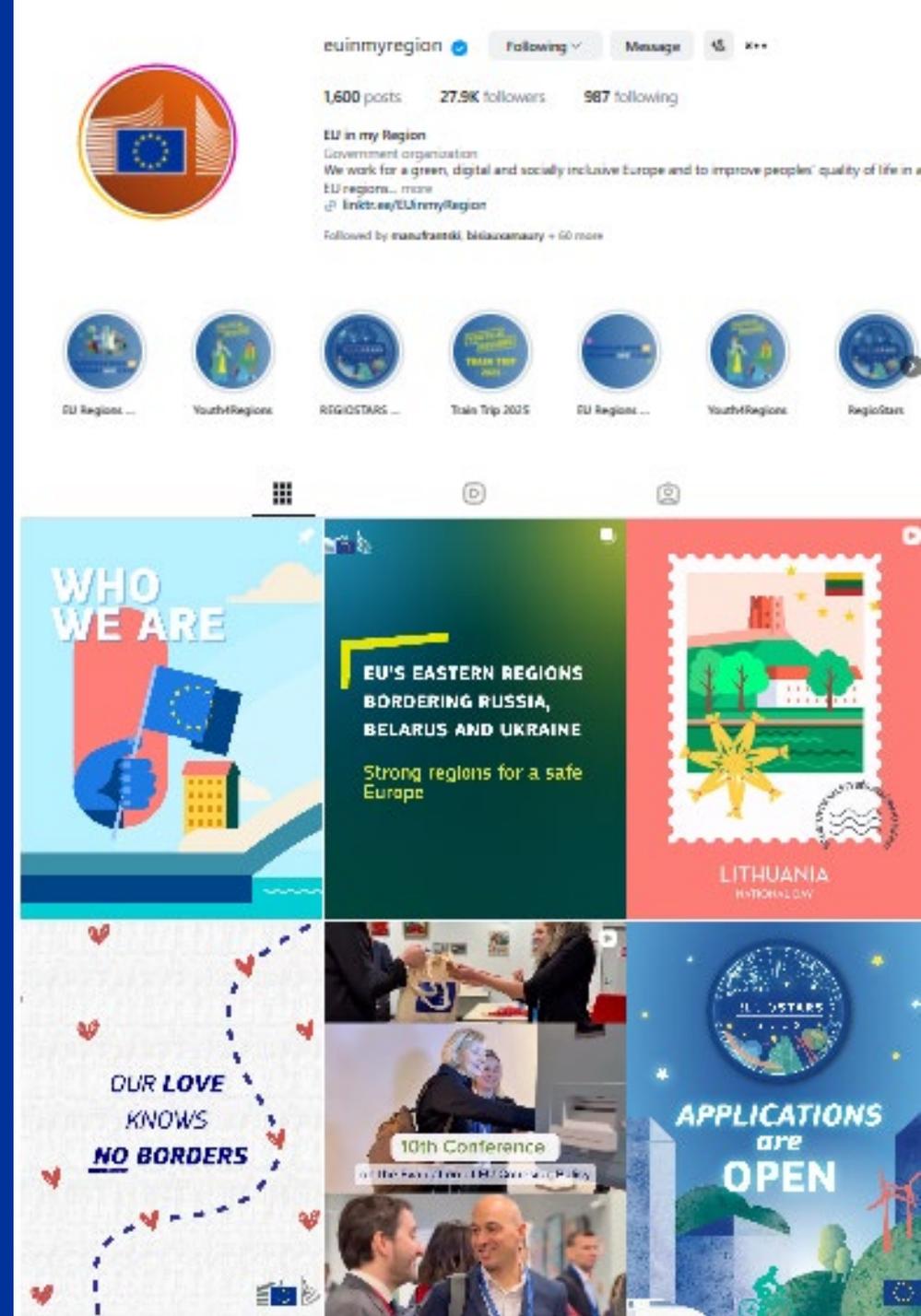
# Social media

Share your Interreg stories with us!

We'd be happy to hear more about Interreg projects in 2026, in particular on projects fitting REGIO's communication priorities:

- Eastern Borders
- Islands and coastal communication
- Outermost Regions
- Right to stay

Tag us, share with us, reach out.



## Other actions and events

**EU Regions Week – Oct 2026**

**Youth4Regions** programme for aspiring journalists – planned for April 2026 (tbc)

**Media trips** in Brussels and MS.

10th EUSAIR Annual Forum, May 2026, North Macedonia

**EU Strategy for the Danube Region, October 2026, Sofia, Bulgaria**



Photo by [Headway](#) on [Unsplash](#)



GAME OVER

Thank you!

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