



Interreg Leaders Forum

7 May 2026

Brussels | Belgium

Final Agenda

Thursday, 7 May 2026

Venue: European Economic and Social Committee premises

- 08.30 – 09.00** **Registration**
- 09.00 – 09.05** **Welcome and practical information**
Jelena Stojovic, Interact Secretariat
- 09.05 – 09.15** **Opening remarks**
Penelope Papavassiliou, Permanent Secretary of the Directorate
General Growth, Cyprus EU Presidency
- 09.15 – 09.25** **Video address**
Raffaele Fitto, Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms,
European Commission
- 09.25 – 09.45** **Keynote speech**
Younous Omarjee, Vice-President, European Parliament
- 09.45 – 11.15** **Panel 1 - Interreg in 2028-2034: Interreg looking ahead to
support Europe's strategic priorities**
*To explore how Interreg can be positioned within the broader strategic
context, ensuring its continued relevance and impact in a changing political
and financial landscape*

Moderator: Eleni Marianou, Cyprus EU Presidency

Panellists:

- Hugo Sobral, Deputy Director General, DG Regio
- Vasco Alves Cordeiro, Chair of the Commission for
Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget, Committee of
the Regions
- Elena Calistru, President, Economic and Monetary Union
and Economic and Social Cohesion (ECO) Section,
European Economic and Social Committee

11.15 – 11.30 **Coffee Break**

11.30 – 13.00 **Panel 2 - Ensuring the impact of Interreg in the Post 2027 context**

To consider how Interreg's impact can further contribute to wider EU objectives, such as competitiveness, resilience, security and territorial cohesion - within a more integrated and performance-driven policy framework

Moderators: Helena Jarviste, Head, Interact Office Viborg
Ivana Lazic, Head, Interact Office Vienna

Panellists:

- Vladimir Prebilič, Member of the European Parliament
- Rasmus Andresen, Member of the European Parliament (online)
- Marcos Ros Sempere, Member of the European Parliament (Invited)
- Irene Mc Master, European Policy Research Centre, University of Strathclyde
- Moray Gilland, Head of Unit, Macro-regions, transnational/interregional/external cooperation, enlargement, DG Regio

Exchange with programme representatives

13.00 – 14.30 **Networking lunch**

14.30 – 15.30

Panel 3 – Navigating New Territorial Directions - strategic perspectives with regard to the Mediterranean Strategy and the EU Strategy for Islands

To introduce a forward-looking EU territorial agenda reflecting evolving geopolitical, economic, and environmental dynamics

Moderator: Tomasz Petrykowski, Head, Interact Office Valencia

Panelists:

- Marie-Antoinette Maupertuis, President of the Assembly of Corsica
- Mr Ioannis Vardakastanis, Vice-President, Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion (ECO) Section, European Economic and Social Committee (online)
- Aldo Puleo, Programme Manager, Interreg NEXT MED
- Katerina Themeli, Programme Manager, Cooperation Programme Interreg VI-A Greece-Cyprus 2021-2027
- Gina Apostolaki, Associate Project Manager, Dialogue4nature project, Interreg Euro-MED, Europe Direct Region of Crete

15.30 – 15.50

Key takeaways for Interreg Post 2027

Nathalie Verschelde, Head of Unit, Interreg, cross-border cooperation, internal borders, DG Regio

15.50 – 16.00

Closing Remarks

Petra Masacova, Head, Interact Managing Authority, Bratislava



The Interreg Leaders Forum is organised under the auspices of the Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union.



The venue for this event is provided by the European Economic and Social Committee