

Shaping the Future of EUSAIR

in Šibenik

Convention Centre Šibenik - Amadria Park

15 – 16 May 2024





EU Strategy for the
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Croatian Presidency 2023-2024
Let's make green strategies for the future



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Official side-event of the 9th EUSAIR Forum

Tuesday 14 May 2024*

Interreg: developing a vision for the future

Organised jointly by the European Committee of the Regions, Interact and the Croatian EUSAIR Presidency, this conference will provide an opportunity to take stock of experience across all strands of European Territorial Cooperation to date, exchange views on optimising implementation during the 2021-2027 period, and help develop a vision for post-2027.

09:15 – 10:00

Registrations

Welcome note

10:00 – 10:30

- **Danijel Marušić**, President of the Croatian County Association Prefect of Brod-Posavina County and Member of the CoR.
- **Karsten Uno Petersen**, Councillor of Region of South Denmark
- **Petra Masacova**, Head of the INTERACT Managing Authority
- **Zrinka Raguž**, State Secretary at the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of Croatia

10:30 – 11:00

9th Cohesion Report: Key takeaways for Interreg

Presentation: **Slawomir Tokarski**, Director, DG REGIO, European Commission

11:00 – 11:30

Involvement of regions in Interreg

Presentation: **Ivana Lazić**, Interact

11:30 – 12:00

Coffee Break

* Informal gathering and networking for registered participants will be organised on 13 May 2024 at 20:00



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Interreg: 4 strands developing future perspectives and visions

This session is planned as panel bringing together the views of programmes and regions. Panel will gather representatives from the programmes covering four Interreg strands and several representatives of regions. Firstly, we want to initiate a vivid debate along the *why* for Interreg; secondly, we want to brainstorm about options to make it work better.

Moderated by **Ivana Lazić**, Interact

12:00 – 13:15

- **Martha Gärber**, Managing Authority of Interreg Italy - Austria
- **Friedrich Veider**, Regional management, CLLD area HEurOpen (Italian-Austrian border)
- **Martin Heibel**, Managing Authority of the Next Med programme
- **Erwin Siweris**, Director of the Managing Authority for Interreg Europe
- **Julián Zafra**, General Director of European Affairs, Government of the Canary Islands

The discussion will revolve along three key areas:

- 1) Initial reflections on the value added and meaning of cooperation for regions
- 2) Outlook to the coming decade: Interreg as a strategic instrument - What are the most pressing issues for cooperation?
- 3) Interreg as a cooperation instrument: How can we make it better and simpler? The audience is invited to raise questions to the panelists (either via Slido or in person).

13:15 – 14:30

Lunch and Networking Coffee

Why Interreg matters, and the views from regions and cities on its future

Discussion will be held with input from the participants present and those online

14:30 – 15:30

- **Sanda Šimić**, Acting Assistant Minister, Department for ETC, Ministry of European Integration, Government of the Republic of Serbia
- **Sandra Sodini**, Director of the International Relations and European Programming Service, Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia



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Panel discussion: The future of Interreg

Moderated by **Martin Guillermo Ramirez**, Secretary General of AEBR

- 15:30 – 16:30
- **Stella Arneri**, Director-General, Directorate for European Territorial Cooperation, Croatia
 - **Slawomir Tokarski**, Director of DG REGIO
 - **Pavel Branda**, Vice Mayor of Radlo, Member of the CoR, Czechia
 - **Andres Jaadla**, Mayor of Rakvere, Estonia

16:30 **End of conference - coffee and networking**

19:30
Dalmatian Ethno Village, Konoba
EUSAIR Governing Board Members' Dinner
(by invitation, standing members of the GB and remaining Members of Delegations only)

20:00
Dalmatian Ethno Village, Uljara
9th EUSAIR Forum Ministerial Dinner (1+1 per Head of Delegation), remaining Members of Delegations separate dinner at Konoba at 19:30



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9th EUSAIR Forum – Programme Wednesday 15 May 2024

09:00 – 10:15

Šibenik IX

Adriatic-Ionian Council / EUSAIR ministerial meeting (1+1 per Head of Delegation)

09:15 – 10:15

Registrations

(Coffee will be available to all participants throughout the day)

Official Opening of the 9th EUSAIR Forum

10:30 – 11:10

Šibenik I
(Main Hall)

- **Željko Burić**, Mayor of Šibenik
- **Marko Jelić**, Prefect of Šibenik-Knin County
- **Joze Tomaš**, Vice President of the Forum of the Adriatic Ionian Chambers of Commerce
- **Giovanni Castellaneta**, Secretary General of the All Permanent Secretariat
- **Elisa Ferreira**, European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms (by video message)
- **Šime Erlić**, Minister of Regional Development and EU Funds of Croatia
- **Gordan Grljić Radman**, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia, as host and on behalf of the Prime Minister of Croatia Andrej Plenković

Welcome and opening remarks by high-level officials. Speakers will be invited to address the current and future status of the EUSAIR and Adriatic and Ionian macro-region in general.

High Level Panel: *Post-2027 Cohesion – what the EUSAIR macro-region needs?*

11:10 – 12:20

Šibenik I
(Main Hall)

Moderated by **Eleni Marianou**, Secretary General, Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)

- **Elvira Habota**, Director of the Directorate for European Integration of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Šime Erlić**, Minister of Regional Development and EU Funds of Croatia
- **Dimitris Skalkos**, Secretary General for Public Investments and PA, Ministry of Economy and Finance of Greece
- **Bojan Božović**, State Secretary at the Ministry of European Affairs of Montenegro and National IPA Coordinator



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- **Luca Beccari**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Economic Cooperation and Telecommunication of San Marino
- **Marko Koprivc**, State Secretary for Cohesion Policy, Ministry of Cohesion and regional development of Slovenia
- **Slawomir Tokarski**, Director, DG REGIO, European Commission

The year 2024 marks the start of debates on EU Cohesion Policy post-2027. The Croatian EUSAIR Presidency has set itself an objective to provide formats to support debates on this topic in the Adriatic and Ionian Region and to identify key messages in this respect.

11:10 – 12:20

Šibenik I
(Main Hall)

The aim of this High Level Panel is to provide room for debate and discussion on major trends and policy developments that will shape cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian Region in the future. Despite being one of the most successful trademarks of the European Union, the Cohesion Policy is constantly under pressure and underfunded, something that all of us should strive to change.

Panellists will be invited to discuss how the Cohesion Policy and related pre-accession policies could contribute best to enhancing cooperation in the Adriatic and Ionian Region on the identified challenges and potentials. Which policy fields and priorities are expected to gain importance at EU level in the years to come? What is their relevance for the Adriatic and Ionian Region? How can they be used to answer the cooperation needs?

12:20 – 12:30

Šibenik I
(Main Hall)

Handover of the EUSAIR Presidency from Croatia to Greece

12:30 – 12:35

Family Photo (Heads of Delegations)

Press Area

12:35 – 13:00

Press Area

Press Conference (Croatia, Greece, European Commission)



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12:30 – 14:00

Lunch for all participants

13:00 – 14:00

Ministerial lunch (1+1 per Head of Delegation)

Special EUSAIR Presidency Conference: *Embracing the Digital Era in the Adriatic and Ionian Region and beyond*

14:00

Uncover the potential of digital transformation in the public sector of the Adriatic and Ionian Region and collectively shape the future of governance. Discover future technologies for e-governance services. Learn about supercomputing, the “European processor” and digital sovereignty for Europe.

This conference aims to explore challenges, opportunities and best practices associated with digital transformation of public administration services, and stimulate discussions on potential joint projects among countries of the Adriatic and Ionian Region. Furthermore, it will present the status of activities in the supercomputing and digital diplomacy realms and offer space to discussions on how these can be used for the strategic benefit of Adriatic and Ionian Region countries.

14:00 – 16.45

Šibenik I
(Main Hall)

14:00

Panel 1: Digital Sovereignty for Europe

Introductory remarks by **Goran Štefanić**, Digital Diplomacy Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia

Moderated by **Mario Kovač**, Full Professor, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, Croatia

Panellists:

- **Daniel Opalka**, Head of Sector Research & Innovation, The European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking, Luxembourg
- **Panagiotis Tsarchopoulos**, Programme Officer, EC DG CNECT
- **Francesco Raphaël Frieri**, Director General for Resources, Human Resources, Organisation, Europe, Local Government, Innovation, ICT - CDO Emilia-Romagna Region
- **Boris Pogačnik**, VP for Business Operations, Infobip



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	14:00	<p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on how EPI can be used for the strategic benefit of Adriatic and Ionian region • Towards strategic digital sovereignty, chip technologies, and infrastructure • Sharing insights and experiences representing the current status of Activities
<p>14:00 – 16:45</p> <p>Šibenik I (Main Hall)</p>	15:30	<p>Panel 2: Transforming Governance in Digital Era: Success Stories, Challenges, and Future of Digital transformation</p> <p>Moderated by Katarina Moškato</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daniele De Bernardin, Institutional Relation and Communication, Department for Digital Transformation of the Italian Government, Italy • Nikola Modrušan, Deputy State Secretary, Central State Office for the Development of Digital Society, Croatia • Ivan Lupić, Business Development Manager, Ericsson Nikola Tesla, Croatia • Bojan Petrovski, Head of Business Development, Elikosoft Ltd, North Macedonia <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insights and experience from successful digitalisation initiatives in various domains of public administration • Upcoming plans - areas that will be the focus of digitisation in the field of public administration • Showcasing successful case studies and projects that demonstrate the tangible benefits of digitalisation in public administration services

EUSAIR Pillar 5: *Stronger Social Cohesion - A Response to the Challenges of the Future*

<p>14:00 – 15:00</p> <p>Šibenik XI</p>	<p>The time of economic and social challenges affects the entire Adriatic and Ionian region. In order to meet these challenges, it is important to strengthen social cohesion. The principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights are a roadmap towards a strong social Europe, Europe that is fair and inclusive. Encouraged by the launching of this new area of cooperation within EUSAIR, we believe that through joint action we can respond with clear vision and actions to the challenges ahead. Pillar 5 panel focuses on the newly established Pillar</p>
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5. What are the main topics of the Pillar, and how they are connected to the EU Cohesion Policy.

Which challenges does the Pillar 5 address, what are the obstacles and how to connect Pillar topics and EUSAIR Action plan with the mainstream programmes. Panel should also, give the insight into how the candidate country sees the opportunity to co-ordinate the Pillar 5. The objective of Pillar sessions is to show the stakeholders where they fit into the Strategy, because for most actions results can only be achieved in cooperation.

14:00 – 15:00

Moderated by **Filip Miličević**, Ministry of Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (MLPSFSP), Croatia

Šibenik XI

Panellists:

- **Naida Mekić**, Head of Sector for programming, financial management and implementation of financial instruments, Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Croatia
- **Krisela Hackaj**, Executive Director, Cooperation and Development Institute, Albania
- **Estelle Roger**, Programme Manager, DG REGIO, European Commission

Conclusions

Filip Miličević, Ministry of Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (MLPSFSP), Croatia

Simplified Cost Options Workshop

14:00 – 18:00

Šibenik II

14:00

The workshop is co-organised and moderated by Spatial Foresight and t33 and consists of two parts.

Moderated by and speakers:

- **Sabine Zillmer**, Spatial Foresight
- **Nicola Brignani**, t33
- **Paola Marinović**, Spatial Foresight
- **Dea Hrelja**, t33

Part 1: Simplified Cost Options in practice in Interreg IPA Programmes – Future potentials for Interreg IPA Programmes

Simplification is increasingly important in implementing Cohesion policy as means to tackle administrative costs and burden - to improve the access to the funds and their good use by public authorities, enterprises, universities, civil society organisations in Europe. Simplified Cost Options (SCOs) and



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	14:00	<p>Financing Not Linked to Costs (FNLC) are one of these simplification measures introduced in the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). Key findings of the study “Simplified Cost Options in practice in Interreg IPA Programmes” conducted for the DG REGIO will be discussed. The workshop will highlight practical, replicable examples of SCO applications in Interreg-IPA programmes to provide food for thought for further SCO applications in territorial cooperation programmes. In addition, there will be room to initiate thinking about the future of SCOs in territorial cooperation programmes – what are particularities and needs of Interreg IPA programmes to benefit from simplification options provided by SCO.</p>
<p>14:00 – 18:00 Šibenik II</p>	16:15	<p>Part 2: Simplified Cost Options in practice in Interreg IPA Programmes – From IPA to Cohesion Policy</p> <p>Referring to the Granada Declaration, one must take stock of preparations for enlargement and internal reforms considering that work on both tracks is advancing in parallel to ensure that both future Member States and the EU are ready at the time of accession. In this perspective, the Commission is taking work forward all possible short- and medium-term measures to reduce the administrative burden and to achieve simplification for EU projects’ implementers. And simplification is increasingly important in implementing cohesion policy as means to tackle such administrative costs and burden. Simplified Cost Options (SCOs) and Financing Not Linked to Costs (FNLC) are one of these simplification measures introduced in the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). Besides discussing findings of the study “Simplified Cost Options in practice in Interreg IPA Programmes” conducted for the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission, this workshop aims to bridge knowledge needs when moving from IPA to Cohesion Policy and preparing for EU accession. Participants are invited to discuss this shift and their questions related to this.</p>
<p>14:00 – 15:30 Šibenik V-VI</p>	14:00	<p>6th Adriatic Ionian Youth Organisations Forum (AIYOF6): EU opportunities for creating an ecosystem of informed young stakeholders to shape the future of the Adriatic and Ionian Region</p> <p>Organised jointly by the Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion (AIE), Croatian AII / EUSAIR Presidency, and the EUSAIR Facility Point, with active involvement of the Adriatic-Ionian Youth Network (On-site registration at 13:45).</p> <p>The AIYOF6 envisages active participation of the Adriatic Ionian Youth Network, the first transnational youth network in the region, committed to ensure deep and broad territorial coverage of the EUSAIR, in order to stimulate appropriation by youth of EUSAIR goals and opportunities and to</p>



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		propose, structure, design and implement youth-led engagement, advocacy, awareness raising and capacity building actions.
		Welcome addresses
		Moderated by Maria Luisa Esposito , AIE Project Officer
14:00		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nikola Dobroslavić, AIE President, Prefect of Dubrovnik-Neretva County • Representative of the City of Šibenik • Lidija Pansegrau Hadrović, Senior National Coordinator, Croatia EUSAIR Presidency, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia • Representative of Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Department of Cohesion Policy • Simona Mameli, Head of Section of Regional Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy
14:00 – 15:30		Roundtable 1: EU Opportunities for the Adriatic Ionian Youth
		Moderated by Mira Lepur , DEMY-Coop Project Manager, Udruga Emedea
Šibenik V-VI	14:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gilles Kittel, Team Leader – Instrument for Pre-Accession, Enlargement Negotiations and EUSAIR, DG REGIO, European Commission • Maria Luisa Esposito, AIE, DEMY-Coop Communication Manager • Natalino Barbizzi, <i>Gear Up!</i> Project Manager, Marche Region
		Round table 2 Youth engagement in the EUSAIR: Networking Talks
		Moderated by Benjamin Tendžerić-Knežević , Anthropologist, AIYN
	14:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milan Stojanović, jr. expert in Circular Economy • Milena Pallotta, jr. expert in Cultural and Creative Industries, Giovanichimere • Rahim Jata, jr. expert in Communication, <i>Let's do it!</i>, Albania • Daniele Sabato, jr. expert in Social Digital Innovation • Suela Tahiraj, jr. expert in Sustainable Tourism • Representative of a local Youth Organisation
	15:25	Conclusions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Luisa Esposito, AIE Project Officer



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All Round Tables: Preservation and Promotion of the Mediterranean Diet in the Adriatic and Ionian Region: Well-being, Sustainability and Culture, organised by Forum AIC and FAIC and Addressing Transportation Challenges in the Adriatic-Ionian Region

14:00 In 2010 UNESCO declared the Mediterranean Diet an Intangible Cultural Heritage. Its concept is not restricted to just a set of products and eating habits, but has a much broader meaning: Mediterranean Diet is a lifestyle that is profoundly oriented towards health, environmental sustainability and emphasizing its cultural and social roots. There is a strong need to promote and safeguard the Mediterranean Diet in the Adriatic and Ionian Region by involving new generations, citizens and market players in order to ensure that traditional food production and consumption patterns are not eroded by globalization. This All Round Table, organised by Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce (Forum AIC) and Cities (FAIC), lays the groundwork for an integrated and collaborative approach to promote a sustainable food model that respects the environment and health, as stated in the Joint Declaration of 3 civil society Fora (Split Declaration).

Institutional communications

14:00 – 17:00

Moderated by **Francesco Buoncompagni** - City of Ancona, FAIC

Šibenik X

- **Fabio Pigliapoco** , Head of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative Permanent Secretariat
- **Gino Sabatini** , President of the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian of Chambers of Commerce (FORUM AIC)
- **Davide Frulla** , Representative of the city of Fano (city with presidency of the Forum of Adriatic and Ionian cities – FAIC)

Panel Preservation and Promotion of the Mediterranean Diet in the Adriatic and Ionian Region: Well-being, Sustainability and Culture

Moderated by **Alma Harašić Bremec**, Head of the Association of Chefs from Mediterranean and European Regions (ŠKMER), *Pearl of the Sea* Culinary Festival

14:30

- **Sanela Grujo Vrkljan**, Croatian Institute for Tourism (IZTZG) affiliated member of UNWTO, EUSAIR gastro tourism handbook
- **Lindita Elezi**, Marche Region Councillor - Law No. 23 of December 7, 2023, focused on *enhancing Marche as a land of Wellness and quality of life*
- **Joze Tomaš**, President of Split Chamber of Economy, Vice-President of Forum AIC, Member of AMIS (Mediterranean Tourism Foundation)



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14:00 – 17:00

Šibenik X

15:30

- **Vesna Milanović**, Representative of Educational Experimental Agricultural Company "Pasquale Rosati" (UNIVPM)

Addressing Transportation Challenges in the Adriatic-Ionian Region

Welcome by **Fabio Pigliapoco**, Head of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative Permanent Secretariat

Keynote address by **Mirjana Čagalj**, Vice President for Construction, transportation and Connectivity, Croatian Chamber of Economy

Moderated by **Pierluigi Coppola**, EUSAIR Pillar 2 Coordinator

- **Aleksandar Radovanović**, Head of the Centre for Regional Cooperation, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia (tbc)
- **Saša Subotić**, Senior Expert Advisor, Transport and Communications Sector, Croatian Chamber of Economy
- **Francesco Baldelli**, Councillor for Roads, Infrastructures, Territorial Government, Public Works, Policies for Mountains and Internal Areas, Marche Region
- **Dejan Lasica**, Rail Policy Coordinator Transport Community Permanent Secretariat

Final remarks and closing

16:45

- **Gino Sabatini**, President of Forum AIC - President of Marche Chamber of Commerce

EUSAIR Pillar 4: Navigating the green and digital transition – creating a sustainable future for the Adriatic and Ionian Region

15:15 – 16:15

Šibenik XI

Green and digital transitions are core priorities of the European agenda. Pillar 4 session will focus around the updated Action Plan and newly suggested topics and actions aimed at fostering a green, digital, and resilient future for tourism within EUSAIR. The session will serve as a platform for discussion on the policy challenges involved in shifting towards sustainable tourism models. Conclusions of this panel will help direct us to work towards a brighter, more sustainable future for tourism.

Moderated by Tina Biluš, Association of tourist guides Mihovil Šibenik

Key note address by Tonči Glavina, State Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism of Croatia

- **Georgios Emmanouil**, Policy Officer, DG REGIO – Unit D.1 Macro-regions, Transnational/Interregional/External Cooperation, Enlargement



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- **Jelica Grujić**, Head of Tourism Department, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Davide Frulla**, Head officer of EU project management and International cooperation Unit, Municipality of Fano, Marche Region

Conclusions

- **Senka Daniel**, Pillar 4 Coordinator, Ministry of Tourism and Sport, Croatia

EUSAIR Youth Council event: Navigating our Future: Empowering Youth to shape the Adriatic and Ionian Region through EUSAIR Youth Council

The objective of this panel session is to explore the intersection of youth engagement and regional development within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR). By integrating young people's voices into the discussion, we aim to highlight the relevance of EUSAIR's objectives to youth and societal challenges, emphasizing the need for mechanisms such as the EUSAIR Youth Council in regional development. The session will highlight how the Youth Council can play a pivotal role in promoting youth employment in sustainable industries, enhancing digital literacy and green energy initiatives, advocating for sustainable transportation systems, and pushing for fairer access to future job markets. The discussion intends to foster a dialogue between youth and other relevant stakeholders around the challenges in the region, and their perspective on them.

15:30 – 17:00

Šibenik V-VI

Moderated by **Eva Omahen**

Key note address by **Gaby Hagmüller**, Programme Manager Cross-border Cooperation, DG Regional and Urban Policy European Commission and **Luka Vujnović**, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia

Panellists:

- **Nikolla Pulla**, Auleda Vlore, Albania
- **Iosifina Pitouli**, Greece
- **Vladimir Perazić**, Montenegro
- **Dino Subašić**, Slovenia

16:30 – 17:30

Šibenik XI

EUSAIR Pillar 3: Blue and Green Corridors: implementation of TSG 3 EUSAIR flagships, with Interreg IPA ADRION

EUSAIR Flagship projects are designed to support and demonstrate the progress of the Strategy, and may serve as pilot examples for desired action in an EUSAIR



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<p>16:30 – 17:30</p> <p>Šibenik XI</p>	<p>Pillar. As such, the flagship projects aim at supporting participating in achieving resilience and growth enhancing reforms and outstanding cooperation of all countries on the particular challenge. Flagships projects of Pillar 3 are: Sustainable development of the coastal and maritime zones (ICZMandMSP), Protection and enhancement of natural terrestrial habitats and ecosystems (PET HAB ECO), Monitoring and management of marine protected species (3MSP), and Transnational Contingency plan in the event of accidents at sea (ASOSCoP).</p> <p>Moderated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitja Bricelj, Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, EUSAIR Pillar 3 Coordinator, Slovenia • Senad Oprašić, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUSAIR Pillar 3 Coordinator, Bosnia and Herzegovina • Helena Sundblad-Schäfer, EC DG REGIO <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stefano Filacorda, Department of Agricultural, Food, Environmental and Animal Science, University of Udine, Italy • Anna Marconato, Central European Initiative - Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES), Italy
<p>17:00 – 18:30</p> <p>Šibenik X</p>	<p>UNIADRION: Civic Engagement of Students: Collaborating with Universities for Global Impact - The Best Practice of ESN-AIR</p> <p>17:00</p> <p>This event will focus on the vital nexus of civic engagement among students and their collaboration with universities, spotlighting their unique contributions to global societal advancement. With a specific emphasis on the participation of students, it will seek to illuminate innovative strategies, exchange best practices, and address pertinent challenges in fostering their civic engagement within university environments. Through interactive discussions, case studies, and practical insights, participants will explore avenues for enhancing the integration, empowerment, and active involvement of students in local and global community initiatives. Let's explore how collaboration between universities and students can amplify social impact and contribute to building inclusive, interconnected, and resilient societies worldwide!</p> <p>Opening Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dragan Ljutić, President of the Association of Adriatic and Ionian Universities (UNIADRION) • Fabio Pigliapoco, Head of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative Permanent Secretariat



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<p>17:00 – 18:30</p> <p>Šibenik X</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrea Perna, Secretary General of the Association of Adriatic and Ionian Universities (UNIADRION) <p>Panel - Civic engagement: where we are on both sides of the Adriatic Sea</p> <p>Moderated by Silvia Mangialardo, Università Politecnica delle Marche (ESN-AIR Lead Partner), Head of International Relations Office</p> <p>17:15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on the theory of student civic engagement (tbc) • Presentation on the state of the art of civic engagement in the Western Balkans (tbc); • Ava Ghasemi Manjili (ITA), ESN Ancona, Outgoing President, presenting with Danijela Bilonić (ESN Split) and Merima Selimović (ESN Sarajevo)
	<p>17:45</p> <p>Interactive session: Empowering university students in civic engagement – sharing experiences and facing challenges</p> <p>Moderated by: Ava Ghasemi Manjili and Silvia Mangialardo Active participation of panel participants and conference attendees</p>
	<p>18:15</p> <p>Recap on the Interactive session – lessons learned</p>

POPRI - Entrepreneurial Meetup and networking event: *Is Entrepreneurship Your Next Adventure?*

18:00 – 19:30

Šibenik V-VI

The best way to learn is to meet with experienced entrepreneurs and listen to their stories. Young people have the opportunity to meet Dr. Aleš Ekar and Nella Slavica, both successful entrepreneurs and managers. They will both share their knowledge and experience in the field of entrepreneurship, because we know that success stories can be an inspiration for young people; but failures are also part of our lives. Maria Mesarić, young POPRI ambassador, will present her entrepreneurial experience and share it with her peers.

Moderated by **Ana Vlahov**

Welcome note:

- **Tanja Kožuh**, CEO of Primorski tehnološki park, Slovenia
- **Frane Šesnić**, CEO of ZICER, Croatia
- **Mojca Aljančič**, Director-General Cohesion Policy Directorate, Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development, Republic of Slovenia



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Discussion with **Aleš Ekar**, **Nella Slavica** and **Maria Mesarić**

END OF SESSIONS DAY 1

20:00 – 22:00
Mediterranean
square

Welcome cocktail for all participants



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Thursday 16 May 2024

8:00 – 10:00 **Registrations**
(Coffee will be available to all participants throughout the day)

B2B Forum - ([separate registration here](#))

Organised by the Croatian Chamber of Economy, with support of the Enterprise Europe Network – EEN and the Croatian EUSAIR Presidency.

This brokerage event brings together small and medium-sized enterprises, research institutions, universities, development organisations, associations and other organisations from the Adriatic and Ionian region.

9:00 – 13:00
Šibenik I
(Main Hall)

B2B meetings represent a unique opportunity to find partners or new contacts for business, technological and project cooperation aimed at connecting regions, improving quality of life and environmental protection, as well as areas of blue and green growth, sustainable tourism and improved social cohesion.

B2B meetings are the most effective way to identify and find international partners - choose your partners according to your needs!

Focus on:

- Meeting new business partners and customers
- Discovering new products and services
- Meeting new suppliers and project partners
- Learning about the latest business trends

Procurement challenges and opportunities for Interreg IPA Programmes – Final Conference

9:00 – 12:00
Šibenik II

The workshop will be organised by PricewaterhouseCoopers, supported by DG REGIO services, as part of an EU-funded project that aims to improve quality and transparency of public procurement in non-EU countries, especially when participating in Interreg IPA programmes. It is addressed to Interreg stakeholders dealing with procurement and builds on conclusions from a first workshop organised on 22 January 2024.

The workshop will present good procurement practices, roadmaps and lessons learnt in Interreg IPA programmes, and allow participants to share comments and experiences. An e-library of Interreg IPA public procurement practices will be presented.



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Sharing of public procurement good practices should yield a number of tangible benefits for those involved (contracting authorities, economic operators, managing authorities etc.) leading to improved efficiency and effectiveness, better value-for-money, price indexations where necessary, less irregularities and less administrative burden. Doing so will help IPA beneficiaries' management and control systems. In this context, the national authorities should also build stronger partnerships among programmes' stakeholders, particularly with beneficiaries, including through more customised approaches.

9:00 – 12:00

Šibenik II

Moderated by and speakers

- **Gilles Kittel**, Team Leader – Instrument for Pre-Accession, Enlargement Negotiations and EUSAIR, DG REGIO, European Commission
- **Gaby Hagmüller**, Programme Manager Cross-border Cooperation, DG Regional and Urban Policy European Commission
- **Marina Jurišić**, PwC Croatia
- **Jelena Drndić**, PwC Croatia

EUSAIR Pillar 2 Subgroup Energy: *Renewable Energy to Confront the Climate Change Challenge - Projects, Opportunities for Cooperation and Action for the Adriatic and Ionian Region*

While *shaping the future of the EUSAIR* participating Countries have a leading objective in their energy policies and programmes which is the accelerated transition towards decarbonised energy systems to confront the global climate change challenge. This transition should happen by enhancing security of energy supply and delivery, granting affordable and equitable energy access for all citizens and consumers.

9:00 – 10:00

Šibenik XI

According to the energy goals of The European Green Deal, REPowerEU, the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans the effort and drive on renewable energies should be immense during the next decade with implications for industry, economy and energy governance through the Adriatic and Ionian Region.

The Session will focus on these aspects while trying to highlight opportunities for an improved co-operation between and amongst Countries from the Adriatic and Ionian Region. New technologies and market structures would imply a new organisation of the energy systems and new forms of public acceptance and involvement.

Moderated by **Biljana Ramić**, EUSAIR Pillar 2 Coordinator; Head, Unit for Strategies, Programmes and Plans, Ministry of Mining and Energy, Belgrade, The Republic of Serbia.



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Key note address by **Davide Tabarelli** , President, **Nomisma Energia**, Italy

Panellists:

9:00 – 10:00
Šibenik XI

- **Peđa Bulić**, Managing Director, South-East Europe Consultants, Serbia
- **Alberto Biancardi** , Head, International Relations, Managing Agency of the Energy System (GSE SpA), Italy
- **Michele Giovenali**, Coordinator, EUSAIR Stakeholders Platform, Italy

Conclusions

- **Biljana Ramić and Sergio Garriba** , EUSAIR Pillar 2 Coordinators

IPA ADRION Event: Driving Digital Transformation in the Adriatic and Ionian Region: ADRION and IPA ADRION Programmes' Response to Territorial Challenges

Under this event, the Programme aims at raising awareness on the progress made in three specific sectors (cultural heritage, maritime sector and health) thanks to Interreg cooperation. The event will inform about the role played by innovation, and specifically by digitalization, to the identification of solutions at local and transnational level based on common gaps and needs. Possible follow up – e.g. replicability / scalability / capitalization - within IPA ADRION 2021-2027 Programme as well as links with EUSAIR Pillars will be also presented.

Moderated by **Giovanni Vale**, journalist at Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso Transeuropa

9:00 – 11:00
Šibenik X

- Key note address – **Gilles Kittel** , Team Leader – Instrument for Pre-Accession, Enlargement Negotiations and EUSAIR, DG REGIO, European Commission

Participants:

- **Darja Šemrov** , University of Ljubljana, Slovenia – Project SI4CARE
- **Miodrag Miljković**, Special hospital for treatment and rehabilitation Merkur, Serbia – Project SI4CARE
- **Ilaria Ribichini**, Municipality of Macerata, Italy – Project ADRINETBOOK
- **Vesna Meštrić**, Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb, Croatia – Project ADRINETBOOK
- **Toni Maričević**, Ministry of the Sea, Transport, and Infrastructure, Croatia-Project EUREKA
- **Cosmo Forte**, Ministry of infrastructures and transport - Coast Guard Headquarters, Italy – Project EUREKA



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9:00 – 11:00

- **Barbara Di Piazza**, IPA ADRION Programme JS Secretariat (tbc)

Šibenik X

Conclusions

- **Lodovico Gherardi**, IPA ADRION Programme Managing Authority

POPRI – Youth Business Model Competition

EUSAIR POPRI competition is an opportunity for young participants to introduce their ideas and contribute to the common good, live a sustainable, quality life, respect the principles of the circular economy and offer solutions to the problems of different people. The young participants prove to be responsible, ambitious members of society who should be listened to. Each business idea is a personal, national, but also international potential that can contribute to the growth and development of the region.

9:00

Welcome and introduction:

9:00 – 13:00

- **Petra Česen Čatar**, EUSAIR National Coordinator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovenia
- **Sanjin Vlastelica**, EUSAIR National Coordinator, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Croatia
- **Maria Mesarić**, Software developer, Economist, Executive assistant

Šibenik V-VI

9:15

Presentation of business ideas - University students of EUSAIR countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, North Macedonia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia

11:00

Presentation of business ideas – High School students of EUSAIR countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, North Macedonia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia

EUSAIR Pillar 2 Subgroup Transport: *Interoperable rail infrastructure and services to increase the rail connectivity in the Adriatic and Ionian Region*

10:15 – 11:15

Transport plays a fundamental role in the enlargement of the European Union. The integration of transport networks reduces trade barriers and facilitates the movement of people, goods and services, thus promoting competitiveness and stimulating economic growth and prosperity for all parties involved.

Šibenik XI

The recent creation of the Western Balkans European Transport Corridor has paved the way upgrading rail connections in the Western Balkans. However, despite the tangible benefits offered by this initiative, their implementation remains a formidable challenge, whose success requires significant investments by the EU to improve connectivity and accessibility and, considerable efforts by IPA Countries to aligning regulations to EU standards.



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The transport session at the 9th EUSAIR Forum intends to stimulate a debate around some issues of concern, primarily of technical and temporal nature.

Moderated by

10:15 – 11:15

Šibenik XI

- **Jasminka Kirkova**, EUSAIR Pillar 2 Sub-group Transport co-coordinator, North Macedonia
- **Pierluigi Coppola**, EUSAIR Pillar 2 Sub-group Transport co-coordinator, Italy

Panellists

- **Dejan Lasica**, Transport Community Treaty Secretariat, Serbia
- **Franc Žepič**, Danube strategy, Slovenia
- **Paolo Dileo**, Central Europe Initiative – Executive Secretariat, Italy

[Interreg IPA ADRION, Italy-Croatia and EUSAIR Stakeholders Consultation: Shaping Cohesion Post-2027](#)

11:20 – 13:20

Šibenik X

Join us for a dynamic session driving discussions on the future of Cohesion Policy beyond 2027 moderated by INTERACT. Interreg, a cornerstone of Cohesion Policy, fosters cross-border and transnational and interregional cooperation across Europe, addressing territorial needs and promoting joint development. In partnership with the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR), this session is organised jointly by Interreg Italy-Croatia and Interreg IPA ADRION Programmes and aims at collecting ideas for future cooperation in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region.

EUSAIR Pillar 1: *Towards a sustainable, human-centric and resilient Adriatic and Ionian Maritime Industry*

11:30 – 12:30

Šibenik XI

In these years of rapid socio-economic transformation, evidence has emerged of the central role of skills and capabilities in achieving the green and digital transition of the economy; the human-centric paradigm pushes us to recompose technological innovation and education in a unitary effort.

The event, in the form of panel discussion, aims to take inspiration from ongoing initiatives at European or local level to focus on the possibility of building on them a unitary and distinctive element of the AI macroregion. The panellists will be asked to propose ideas and type of actions to build on their experience a synergy in the AI macroregion for the benefit of citizens skills and capabilities growth.

Moderated by Eleni Hatziyanni, Policy officer - DG MARE, Sea basin strategies, Maritime Regional Cooperation and Maritime Security

Panellists:



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- Carlo Krascovic, Senior Project Manager, Maritime Technology Cluster FVG, Italy
- Ana Odak, President - Maritime Innovation Cluster - MarInn, Croatia
- Maria Boile, University of Piraeus and Centre for Research and Technology (CERTH), Greece

Conclusions

- Georgios Emmanouil, Policy Officer, DG REGIO – Unit D.1 Macro-regions, Transnational/Interregional/External Cooperation, Enlargement

12:30 – 14:00

Lunch for all participants

13:45 – 14:15

Šibenik I
(Main Hall)

EUSAIR Pillar 5 – Meet and Greet (TSG 5 Members Only)

SP4EUSAIR - Workshop (TSGs and NCs Only)

14:15 – 16:15

Šibenik I
(Main Hall)

This introductory workshop is intended to present the EUSAIR project “Support to Development and Implementation of Strategic implementation Formats – SP4EUSAIR” to the TSGs and NCs as well as to define and streamline the activities that are anticipated within the Project’s WP1 – Development of strategic implementation formats.

CDI: Unlocking the Cohesion Policy toolbox for South East Europe 6

14:30 – 16:00

Šibenik XI

Contributing to the discourse on the future of EU policies post-2027, Cooperation and Development Institute (CDI) is organising this workshop aimed at drawing attention of Cohesion and Enlargement stakeholders to the challenges and opportunities confronting youth in SEE6. The event shall serve as a platform to present, assess, discuss and come up with proposals on how the EU Cohesion Policy toolbox can be put at the benefit of SEE6 accession to EU.

Moderated by **Krisela Hackaj**, Executive Director, Cooperation and Development Institute, Albania



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Key note address by **László Andor**, FEPS Secretary General, former EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, Member of Group of High-Level specialists on the future of Cohesion Policy – Video message

Panellists:

- 14:30 – 16:00
Šibenik XI
- **Sanda Šimić**, Acting Assistant Minister, Department for ETC, Ministry of European Integration, Government of the Republic of Serbia
 - **Anna Vezyroglou**, Deputy Head of unit Western Balkans Policy and Regional Strategy, DG NEAR, European Commission (tbc)
 - **Ionut Sibian**, European Economic and Social Committee, Rapporteur Opinions *New growth plan and Reform and Growth Facility for the WBs and Youth Policy in the WBs, as part of the Innovation Agenda for the WBs*
 - **Dafina Peci**, Executive Director, National Youth Congress, Albania

Conclusions

- **Gilles Kittel**, Team Leader – IPA, Enlargement Negotiations and EUSAIR, DG REGIO, European Commission

AWARD CEREMONY - Young POPRI Award

- 15:00 – 16:30
Šibenik V-VI
- **Gilles Kittel**, Team Leader – Instrument for Pre-Accession, Enlargement Negotiations and EUSAIR, DG REGIO, European Commission
 - **Tanja Kožuh**, CEO Primorski tehnološki park, Slovenia
 - **Vassilios Tselios**, Expert Minister Counselor, EUSAIR National Coordinator Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic

16:30 Wrap up and Closing of the Forum

- Šibenik I
(Main Hall)
- **Lidija Pansegrau Hadrović**, Croatian EUSAIR / All Presidency
 - **Mislav Kovač**, Croatian EUSAIR Presidency

END OF SESSIONS DAY 2

- 17:30
Barone Fortress
- Project Visit – Barone Fortress, Šibenik.
A recognisable monument of cultural heritage in the city of Šibenik, whose renovation was co-funded by EU funds, including the European Regional and Development Fund, in 2016. Enjoy a breathtaking sunset over the Šibenik channel with a glass of local wine and melodies of Croatian traditional *Klape* ensemble.



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Friday 17 May 2024

10:00 – 15:00

National Park
Krka

Optional visit to National Park Krka

A visit to one of Croatia's most beautiful national parks was offered on a first come first served basis. The registrations are now closed.

11:00 -12:30

Šibenik historical
centre

Optional sightseeing tour of the historical centre Šibenik

Visit the historical centre of Šibenik and explore all its beauties – from numerous renaissance portals to the UNESCO World Heritage St James Cathedral. Transfers from the venue to the city centre will not be provided, participants are advised to use public city transport (bus line number 5 or other means)

9th EUSAIR Forum organisation is supported by strategic project *EUSAIR FACILITY POINT – Supporting the EUSAIR governance for improved cooperation*, co-funded by the European Union through the Interreg IPA Adrion Programme 2021-2027