



**European Committee  
of the Regions**

LAND  KÄRNTEN

**External ECON commission conference**  
*Sustainable and competitive regions in the EU*  
Veranstaltungszentrum Lakeside Spitz, Lakeside B11,  
9020 Klagenfurt am Wörthersee

19-20 June 2025  
Draft programme

Russia's war against Ukraine and increasingly volatile global politics have brought more uncertainty to the EU economy. This uncertainty impacts the EU's capacity to pursue its key objective of simultaneously improving both sustainability and competitiveness. The EU needs to adhere to the European interpretation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while at the same time revise its internal competitiveness policies to adjust to geopolitics characterised by increased tension, increased barriers to trade and increased state interventions in the private sector.

EU regions and cities are at the forefront of this fundamental change and the region of Carinthia has tackled it by applying an integrated SDGs approach that revolves around three bottom lines: social, environmental, and economic progress. By maximising all three bottom lines, Carinthia is striving to create a sustainable and competitive economy, with empowered people.

The conference will address the crucial balance of societal, economic and ecological concerns, while discussing the available EU support, notably future funding that has been announced in the Clean Industrial Deal and the Competitiveness Compass. The conference will also draw from the pioneering experience of Carinthia, considering multi-dimensional developments on social, economic and ecological innovations.

The conference will showcase regional innovation parks aiming to combine competitiveness and sustainability while at the same time boosting regional attractiveness and provide concrete examples from Carinthia, as well as other EU regions and cities, who have experience in building fair, sustainable and competitive regions.

Interpreting: 6/6 (ES/DE/EN/FR/IT/PL)

19 June

14:00 Introduction and Opening statements

Ms Gaby Schaunig, Deputy Governor of Carinthia, Austria

Mr Alberto Cirio, President of Piemonte, Italy, Chair of the ECON Commission, European Committee of the Regions

14:15 Keynote speech

Mr Salvatore Majorana, President of the European division of the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (IASP), Director of Kilometro Rosso, Innovation District in Lombardy

14:25 Session 1: European support for sustainable and competitive regions

In line with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the EU, the European Commission priorities include the decarbonisation of the economy while strengthening industry. The Clean Industrial Deal, the Competitiveness Compass and numerous other related initiatives aim to translate these priorities into reality. This session will explore the complexities of pursuing sustainability and competitiveness in parallel and how to best use the support framework proposed in the Clean Industrial Deal. The session will also present best practices from an EU region and an EU city.

*Q&A with the audience*

Ends at 15.30

20 June

08:00 Registration and Morning coffee

08:30 Session 2: A triple bottom line perspective on social, economic and ecological innovations

The triple bottom line is a framework to evaluate the overall well-being and sustainability of a community, region or nation, considering all three dimensions of sustainable development. It emphasises that social, environmental and economic progress are interconnected and achieving a balance among the three is key to a prosperous and sustainable future. This concept is the backbone of Carinthia's political agenda where detailed programmes on regional, social and ecological innovation are linked to the Sustainable Development Goals to strive for a well-balanced future.

This session will explore in more detail the central role of innovation to reach SDGs and be more competitive, looking at Carinthia's experience, as well as showcasing examples from other EU countries.

---

10:00 Showcasing best practices

On-site visits to Lakeside premises:

- drone hall
- robotics research centre

---

11:00 Transfer to Villach by shuttle

---

11:30 On-site visit of one of the major semi-conductor companies in Carinthia

- Infineon visit

---

12:45 Transfer to Klagenfurt airport

---