



# 17th European Week of Regions and Cities

Guide for Regional Partnerships 2019

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## 1. The European Week of Regions and Cities 2019

### 1.1 Introduction

The European Week of Regions and Cities is the key annual event for regional and local authorities. Organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), the European Week of Regions and Cities has become a unique stakeholders' communication and networking platform for regional policy, bringing together regions and cities from all over Europe and beyond. Over the last 16 years it has done much to promote policy learning and the exchange of good practices for the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF).

In 2019 the 17th European Week of Regions and Cities will take place from **7 to 10 October** in Brussels and will consist of 100 working sessions, exhibitions and networking activities, expected to attract some 6 000 participants, plus speakers and journalists. This guide for potential partners explains how the European Week of Regions and Cities will be organised in 2019 and defines the roles and tasks of the organisers and various partners in managing the event.

### 1.2 Purpose of the European Week of Regions and Cities

The event aims to:

- bring together political representatives, decision-makers, experts and practitioners of regional policy, as well as stakeholders from business, banking, civil society organisations, academia, the EU institutions and the media, to discuss common challenges for European regions and cities and to exchange ideas on possible solutions;
- provide a platform for capacity-building and the exchange of experience and good practice for those implementing EU cohesion policy and managing its financial instruments;
- facilitate cooperation and networking between regions and cities;
- feed into the debate on EU cohesion policy in a wider context, including recent research and views from third countries and international organisations.

### 1.3 Context: Regions and Cities: Pillars of the EU's Future

2019 will be marked by the European elections and the continuation of the inter-institutional negotiations on both the EU budget and the cohesion policy package for 2021-2027. In this context, EU regions and cities can play a key role in building a **strong cohesion policy for the future**, by emphasising the achievements of the policy over the 2014-2019 term and capitalising on them to feed into the debates with new ideas and projects. And this is where the 17th European Week of Regions and Cities can be a powerful sounding board, in particular for the **newly-elected Parliament**.

Building on the 8th Summit of Regions and Cities in Bucharest in March 2019, the European Week of Regions and Cities should be designed to attract regional and local politicians. This means heavyweight politicians (such as current presidents of regions), young elected politicians as well as members of the European Committee of the Regions. The new Commission will be less than three weeks from taking up office and this will be an important opportunity to interact with those who will

lead the EU into the next decade. This is of course important for all EU policies relevant to regions and cities, but particularly important for cohesion policy.

Regions and cities can build on an impressive record of tangible achievements in 2014-2019. Staying true to its roots, cohesion policy has continued to ensure that no region and nobody is left behind, and is ready to seize the opportunities of being part of the world's largest internal market. It supports economic, social and territorial cohesion in all EU regions, empowering them through over 120 smart specialisation strategies, which are helping them to identify their competitive advantages and find new growth opportunities, in many cases by boosting industrial transition. It has joined forces with the Juncker Investment Plan to accompany SMEs on their way towards a carbon-free economy and facilitated integration of migrants. The EU Solidarity Fund has provided tremendous support for regions hit by natural disasters, and strong efforts have been made to overcome obstacles to cross-border life and work. But this is not all: EU regions and cities have also become essential actors in simplifying cohesion policy, especially in the context of the work of the High-level Group on Simplification for Beneficiaries or the various partnerships of the Urban Agenda for the EU.

The challenge for the 17th EU Week of Regions and Cities is to capitalise on these exceptional achievements to demonstrate why cohesion policy must continue to be a pillar of the EU's future, as called for by the #CohesionAlliance. While the Commission proposals for 2021-2027 set the targets for our continent for the next decade, the EU Week in October 2019 should discuss the best way to translate these targets into tangible projects and ideas, and then into the achievements that are the landmarks of this policy. Stakeholders' contributions will be invaluable in cohesion policy for 2021-2027.

The 16th EU Week in October 2018 turned out to be the largest gathering ever of cohesion policy practitioners, with over 7 000 Partners coming to Brussels, following the opening by Mr Juncker. A similar gathering of knowledge, experience and good practice, albeit one more open to citizens, particularly in Brussels, and regional and local politicians, can really make a difference in building a strong cohesion policy for the future.

#### **1.4 Event organisers and Regional Partnerships**

##### **Organisers**

The European Week of Regions and Cities is co-organised by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO) and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR). The organisers are responsible for the design and structure of the conference and its programme, and for general coordination and communication with all partners.

On behalf of the organisers, the Conference Secretariat ([contact@euregionsweek.eu](mailto:contact@euregionsweek.eu)), provided by external contractors and coordinated by DG REGIO, will provide organisational support for the organisers and partners, particularly as regards the online programme and registration of participants, requests from speakers and participants and the media programme. The Conference Secretariat will be operational as of April.

## **Regional Partnerships**

A Regional Partnership is a **group of regions and cities organising a working session between 8-10 October 2019**, with the aim of exchanging experiences and good practice and facilitating cooperation and networking. The Regional Partnerships will contribute to the event programme through sessions in Brussels, for which they will be fully responsible.

The Regional Partnerships are asked to follow these guidelines when contributing to the event and to keep to the deadlines and any other obligations communicated by the organisers. Regional Partnerships undertake to organise their Brussels working session in accordance with the rules of this guide, as regards themes, timing and communication. The events must be free of charge for participants.

**The organisers invite regions and cities to become partners at the European Week of Regions and Cities and to set up Regional Partnerships, in line with the conditions laid down in this guide.**

**The organisers reserve the right to exclude an event partner should they fail to abide by the rules and obligations.**

### **1.5 Target audience**

The European Week of Regions and Cities and its sessions and networking activities are aimed at:

- members of the European Committee of the Regions, members of the European Parliament, and national, regional and local politicians;
- European, national, regional and local government officials and experts in the field of managing and evaluating cohesion policy programmes;
- representatives of private companies, financial institutions and European and national associations;
- journalists from European, national, regional and local media outlets;
- academics, researchers, PhD or masters students and practitioners in the field of European regional and urban policy.

## **2. Programme and conditions of participation for Regional Partnerships**

### **2.1 Programme overview and topics**

The European Week of Regions and Cities programme will take place in Brussels from 7 to 10 October 2019.

The event's official programme is structured together with the organisers and partners, around the topics identified through a public online survey carried out from 12 December 2018 to 11 January 2019 to which 2634 replies were received. The results of the survey show a clear interest in participating and organising sessions during the European Week of Regions and Cities, especially on the three first topics:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>The future of the EU and the roles of the regions and cities:</b> #EUBudget, #CohesionPolicy, #Post2020, #ERDF, #Subsidiarity, #Democracy, #Mayors, #RegionalParliaments, #LocalCommunities	61.92%
<b>A Europe closer to citizens:</b> #TerritorialCohesion,#Cooperation, #Interreg, #People, #Places, #Urban, #Rural, #AdministrativeCapacity	55.58%
<b>A greener Europe:</b> #EnergyTransition, #ClimateChangeAdaptation, #CircularEconomy, #RiskManagement, #EuropeanSolidarityFund	48.06%
<b>A more socially integrated Europe:</b> #Youth, #HealthyAgeing, #Migration, #Health, #Education, #Sport, #Culture	41.91%
<b>A smarter Europe:</b> #DigitalTransformation, #SmartSpecialisation, #SME	41.27%
<b>A more connected Europe:</b> #Transport, #DigitalConnectivity, #Mobility	26.65%

Priority (in terms of room capacity, interpreting and technical facilities) will be given to sessions organised under the three main topics. Please note that it does not exclude sessions organised under other topics.

## 2.2 What's on offer for the 2019 programme? Events in Brussels

WHAT	ELIGIBLE PARTNERS	MANAGING ORGANISATION	GUIDE	VENUE
Working sessions	Regional Partnerships	CoR	Guide for Regional Partnerships	Regional offices, venues or CoR Meeting Place
	Partners	DG REGIO and CoR	Guide for Partners	The Square and CoR Meeting Place
Networking	All	DG REGIO and CoR	Guide for Partners	All
		Partners and Regional Partnerships are responsible for their own networking	Guide for Regional Partnerships	
Opening session	N/A	DG REGIO and CoR	N/A	European Parliament
Closing session				
Citizen dialogue		DG REGIO		The Square
Regiostars Ceremony and reception				
Political reception		CoR		CoR Meeting Place
Exhibition	Partners	DG REGIO	Guide for Partners	Agora Village at the Square
Tasting of regions and cities				
Master Class programme	Specific programmes	DG REGIO	Guide For Partners	The Square
University programme		DG REGIO and RSA (Regional Studies Association)		
Youth4Media		DG REGIO	Guide For Partners	Multiple venues in Brussels
Media Programme		DG REGIO and CoR	Guide For Partners	
Side Events	All	CoR	Guide For Partners	

### 3. Conditions of participation for Regional Partnerships

#### 3.1 Composition of a Regional Partnership

Regions and cities are welcome to establish Regional Partnerships. The following criteria should be met:

- Regional Partnerships must be composed of at least four and not more than 10 European regions or cities from at least four Member States;
- Partner regions must be from an EU Member State or from a country that is a member of the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement. Partner cities must be either (a) a capital of a EU Member State or of an EEA country; or (b) a capital of a NUTS 1, 2 or 3 region;
- Regions and cities from the same country should not represent more than one third of the partners of a Regional Partnership;
- Participating regions and cities should be involved in the management of programmes and projects co-financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds;
- Regions and cities can be part of only one Regional Partnership in a given year;
- Regions and cities are encouraged to cooperate with other regions or cities with whom they have not previously formed a partnership.

#### 3.2 Organisation of a session

##### 3.2.1 Organisational aspects

To guarantee the quality of the event, the partners must take the following organisational aspects into account:

- Regional Partnerships **organise a session in Brussels between 8-10 October 2019, during the European Week of Regions and Cities;**
- Regional Partnerships must be **headed by a lead partner** (session organiser). The lead partner is responsible for (a) managing the tasks within the Regional Partnership and (b) acting as a contact point for the organisers;
- Regional partners are responsible for the organisation of their session and its logistics and costs, but they must comply with the **thematic priorities, timeslots and quality standards** set by the organisers;
- Speakers and moderators must have both expertise on the topic and experience in public speaking. The session organiser is responsible for briefing the speakers and providing them with support;
- Content must be **transferable to other regions and cities**, and detailed project-specific/institutional examples should be avoided;

- **Gender balance** of the panels is strongly encouraged, and in any case panels must be composed of both female and male speakers. Male-only panels will not be accepted;
- The organisers of the European Week of Regions and Cities will look at the quality and relevance of the session proposed. The session should spur on debate, networking, capacity-building and the exchange of experience and good practice among partners and participants. It should involve **political representatives** and partners from the public, business and/or financial sectors and/or academia; and/or foster exchange on public-private partnerships in the field of regional and local development;
- Participants in the European Week of Regions and Cities may not be charged a fee under any circumstances. The partners are not allowed to conduct commercial activities in the context of these events;
- The co-organising of sessions between regional offices, the European Commission and the CoR is encouraged. This will make the programme more dynamic and lead to a better mix of politicians, high-level officials, academics and private sector entrepreneurs, leading to a unique event;
- Session organisers are strongly encouraged to schedule a **networking opportunity** after their event;
- In line with the EU's Eco-Management and Audit Scheme, the event organisers and event partners are encouraged to use environment-friendly materials before and during the event. The European Week of Regions and Cities aims to become a paperless event.

### 3.2.2 Venue

Regional Partnerships must organise their session in Brussels:

- in a **joint venue that they provide** with a minimum capacity of 90 seats;

OR

at the **Meeting Place** (European Committee of the Regions premises). The session organised at the Meeting Place must include **an elected politician component**, e.g. by dedicating a part of the session to a political discussion with elected political representatives. Meeting rooms and interpreting facilities will be provided according to availability.

### 3.2.3 Sessions: dates and timeslots

The sessions run for three days, starting at 9:15 on 8 October and ending on 10 October 2019 at 17:00 (On Thursday 10 October 2019, sessions taking place at the European Committee of the Regions premises will end by 13:00). For organisational reasons, all sessions must fit into the following **timeslots**:

	Timeslots
08-10 October	9:15 – 10:45
	11:30 – 13:00
	14:30 – 17:00 *

\* This timeslot will be given in priority to Participatory labs and/or 90 minutes sessions followed or preceded by networking

### 3.2.4 Type of sessions/activities

The sessions are aimed at **exchanging political strategies, experiences and good practice** as well as facilitating cooperation and networking between different regions and cities.

Session format	Duration
Workshop	90 minutes/150 minutes
Participatory Labs	90 minutes/150 minutes
Presentations & Q+A	60 minutes
EU Regions Talks	30 minutes

#### Workshops:

- Present information and offer training
- Focus on **sharing political strategies, experience** and good practice and facilitating cooperation and networking, including contributions from the audience
- A maximum of **four speakers and one moderator** may be invited to each workshop. Ideally, one of the speakers should be tasked with spurring on discussion
- Minimum of 90 minutes (AM) to a maximum of 150 minutes (PM)

#### Participatory Labs (e.g. world café):

- Seek opinions, exchange knowledge and solve problems by using **participatory techniques**
- collaborative and creative environment, facilitated tables of active participants wishing to share experiences
- Design of the session to be defined according to the expected outcomes;
- A maximum of **two storytellers and one moderator**
- Minimum of 90 minutes (AM) to a maximum of 150 (PM)

#### Q&A, with experts, on presented theme

- Questions for 1-2 experts on a specific issue
- A small presentation of the issue could be part of the Q&A
- 1 moderator
- Maximum of 60 minutes

#### EURegions talks:

- Delivered without notes, from memory – not spontaneous but scripted and rehearsed
- Professionally visualised with slides (pictures only), videos, animations or props on stage
- Concise, brief (from 10 to 30 minutes)
- One single speaker

**Networking at the Meeting Place:** networking in designated areas can be organised upon request and following the working session. It is the responsibility of the Lead Partner to inform participants about the networking session in advance. The Lead Partner may also invite other interested parties to its networking event. There is no registration for networking (same participants as for the working session).

#### 4. Submission of application

**Deadline for all partners: Friday 29 March 2019**

The lead partner of the Regional Partnership should submit their proposal for their Brussels session by 29 March 2019 via the online application form available on the event website.

Lead partners may use the table available on the website in order to facilitate the collection of details from their partners before finalising the application.

The [partner search tool](#), which aims to help regions and cities look for partners or join a partnership, can be completed by **18 February** at the latest. An overview will be published on the event website.

If the application has been selected, a detailed **description of the session** (in English) including a list of speakers, moderator and their respective organisation must be sent to the Conference Secretariat [contact@euregionsweek.eu](mailto:contact@euregionsweek.eu) by **Friday 7 June 2019** for publication on the event website.

Each region or city in a Regional Partnership may also apply **individually** as an event partner to organise another session (workshops, participatory labs, Q&A sessions, EURegions Talks) or activity (exhibition or tasting). In this case, the '**Guide for partners**' should be consulted (see part 2.3.1) and a **separate application form** should be filled in (specifying 'partner' as the type of event partner).

The organisers reserve the right to exclude partners from the list of event partners or the event programme should the required tasks not be completed on time.

#### 5. Specific programmes

This section of the guide aims to inform each potential partner of the Regional Partnerships about other activities taking place during the European Week of Regions and Cities.

##### 5.1.1 University programme

The sessions within the European Week of Regions and Cities University, organised by DG REGIO, present research on regional and urban development, enabling academics, practitioners, EU officials and other participants to exchange views and test new academic concepts in the field of regional and urban policies. It facilitates networking between students, academics, EU institutions and regional partners, and raises awareness of EU cohesion policy among students and young researchers.

The University will involve European academic networks specialising in regional development, with an emphasis on the policy dimension (such as the Regional Studies Association, the European Regional Science Association and the Association of European Schools of Planning), as well as academics and researchers in the field of EU cohesion policy and related policy fields.

### **5.1.2 Master Class**

The Master Class is a unique format connecting aspiring researchers with the making and implementation of EU cohesion policy. It will include presentations of papers by the participants as well as lectures and panel debates with policy makers, EU officials and senior academics to improve understanding of and research on EU cohesion policy. In particular, the Master Class will serve to:

- discuss recent research on European regional and urban development and EU cohesion policy;
- enable PhD students and early career researchers to exchange views and network with policy makers, EU officials and senior academics;
- raise awareness and understanding of the research potential in the field of EU cohesion policy.

The Master Class will be organised and led by DG REGIO, in cooperation with RSA Europe, the European foundation funded by the Regional Studies Association, in cooperation with the European Regional Science Association (ERSA), the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP), and the European Parliament's Research Service (EPRS).

### **5.1.3 Side events**

An event which could not be included in the official programme may become a side event of the European Week of Regions and Cities. Side event organisers are entirely responsible for the organisation of their event.

To qualify as a side event, the event has to take place in Brussels during the European Week of Regions and Cities and be directly linked to one of the Week's thematic priorities. Applications for side events must be sent in before the deadline of 6 September 2019.

Side events will be announced on a dedicated section of the event website and may be advertised in the electronic newsletter, but cannot be included in the official programme or in the online registration system.

## **5.2 Media programme**

A joint media programme, including working facilities and interviewing possibilities, will be organised for journalists from local, regional, national and European media outlets.

The media programme will include:

- press conferences, press panels, technical briefings and other events;
- production of press material, such as documents and audiovisual material;
- other media facilities.

The organisers (REGIO and CoR) may cover travel and accommodation expenses for a number of journalists.

## **5.3 Youth4Media programme**

Youth4Regions is a programme for journalism students and young journalists from the EU. It aims to encourage the target group to learn about regional policy and to communicate on specific projects co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund Cohesion Fund, providing the framework and conditions for young and future journalists to specialise in regional and urban policy.

Participants will be selected following a competition open to EU and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) citizens as well as candidate and neighbourhood countries. The selection is based on articles or video reports. The participants will receive training in journalism and communication on regional policy, and mentorship from professional journalists. They will also cover EURegionsWeek and have their reports published on the event website.

The application period for journalism students and young journalists opens on 8 April. Each partner is invited to promote #Youth4Regions from this date onwards.

If partners know of potential applicants, they can contact [EURegionsWeek@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EURegionsWeek@ec.europa.eu) for more information.

## 6. Timeline 2019

<b>30/1</b>	Kick-off meeting and opening of applications
<b>18/02</b>	Partner search deadline
<b>29/3</b>	Deadline for applications
<b>30/04</b>	Results of the selection procedure announced
<b>21/5</b>	Event partner meeting
<b>7/6</b>	Deadline for submitting final descriptions and details of chairs and speakers Side events application opens
<b>8/7</b>	Online programme available, registration opens
<b>6/9</b>	Deadline for applications for the side events in Brussels
<b>20/9</b>	Deadline for submitting presentations and abstracts
<b>27/9</b>	Closing of registration
<b>7-10/10</b>	The 17th European Week of Regions and Cities in Brussels

## 7. Registration and communication

### 7.1 Registration of participants and access to venues

**Registration** for the European Week of Regions and Cities will open on **8 July**, with free admission, via the event website: [www.regions-and-cities.europa.eu](http://www.regions-and-cities.europa.eu).

Registration for all events at the European Week of Regions and Cities in Brussels is free of charge and done exclusively via the online registration system hosted by the European Commission.

The session organisers are responsible for accepting or rejecting registration requests for their event. Lead partners will be trained to use the online registration system before the opening date for registrations. If a lead partner wishes to delegate the task of registering participants to the Conference Secretariat, they must provide clear acceptance criteria. Speakers and moderator will be registered automatically by the Conference Secretariat provided that their contact details are submitted by the 7 June deadline.

The regional partners who are holding their session on their own premises are responsible for generating their lists of participants, organising suitable registration checks and monitoring the number of participants wishing to attend their sessions.

The event is managed in accordance with the European Commission's privacy statement and disclaimer, published on the event website. All speakers and participants will be asked if they wish to make their e-mail addresses available to participants for networking purposes. In compliance with current legislation on the use of personal data, none of the participants' data may under any circumstances be stored after the event or used for purposes other than identifying event participants. Lists of participants may not be given to third parties.

To access the events, all participants, speakers and media representatives must collect their badge (stating full name and organisation) in person at the registration points at the European Committee of the Regions or at the Square Conference centre. The badge must remain visible throughout the event. The organisers may impose obligatory security checks on entry. The regional partners organising a session at other premises are asked to lay on any necessary security measures.

## 7.2 Communication, promotion, media relations and branding

The main communication platform for all the latest information on the European Week of Regions and Cities is the event website: [www.regions-and-cities.europa.eu](http://www.regions-and-cities.europa.eu) and the hashtag to be used on social media is **#EURegionsWeek**.

Partners will receive credentials to access a "**reserved for partners**" section of the event website, where information and communications can be consulted.

- Regional Partnerships must provide a **communication strategy** on how they will promote their session in Brussels before, during and after the event, with information about who does what, timeline, tools used including social media platforms, target group and desired outcome.
- For promotional purposes, one representative **photo** from each partner region/city should be provided. The photo should be: copyright-free, in colour, landscape format, .jpeg, .tif or .eps format (avoid .png format), not have been resized, minimum 300 dpi and a size of minimum 1 MB, not feature any text or logo, and not be a photomontage. The photo should carry the name of the partner region/city and should be sent via the online application form or via email to [EURegionsWeek@cor.europa.eu](mailto:EURegionsWeek@cor.europa.eu).
- The event language is English. The event's promotion and communication campaign will be run both online (via event website, social media, electronic newsletter, etc.) and using traditional tools. To attract media attention, the organisers will provide regular news on the event via press releases, social media posts and updates on the website. All event partners are asked to follow the event website and to **promote their events**. The partners are also encouraged to coordinate their media-related activities together with the organisers to ensure consistency in the messages.
- The European Commission will tweet about the event from the @EUinmyRegion account and the European Committee of the Regions from the @EU\_CoR account.
- The partners agree to adopt a **common visual identity**, including the use of the event logo (according to the branding guidelines), available on the event website.
- They may use the heading "European Week of Regions and Cities" and the visual identity of the event, in accordance with the branding guidelines, as well as any promotional material produced by the organisers.

## 8. Contact details

- Website: [www.regions-and-cities.europa.eu](http://www.regions-and-cities.europa.eu)
- European Committee of the Regions: [EURegionsWeek@cor.europa.eu](mailto:EURegionsWeek@cor.europa.eu)
- DG REGIO: [EURegionsWeek@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EURegionsWeek@ec.europa.eu)
- Conference Secretariat : [contact@euregionsweek.eu](mailto:contact@euregionsweek.eu)

Postal addresses

**European Commission, DG for Regional and Urban Policy**

Rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels

**European Committee of the Regions**

Rue Belliard 101, B-1040 Brussels