



Forum of the European Entrepreneurial Regions

14 October 2026, 16.00 – 17.30
Square Conference Centre, Brussels
Hall 300

Clusters bridging place-based policies with Europe's industrial ambitions

As the European Union advances on its competitiveness agenda, there is a need to anchor the EU's industrial strategy within the practical realities of regions and cities and SMEs operating in their territories.

This session will examine how regional and local authorities can leverage clusters to better connect place-based innovation with the EU's evolving industrial policy priorities. Discussions will focus on three key dimensions: strategic partnership between public authorities and clusters, the alignment with EU industrial policy priorities and clusters' interregional cooperation to scale innovation and reduce disparities.

The session will involve regions from the European Entrepreneurial Region (EER) network and representatives of cluster organizations to share their experiences on how clusters can act as engines of competitiveness and resilience of SMEs and as a vehicle for a structural transformation of regions.

[INFO & REGISTRATION](#)

Interpretation

English, Italian, Romanian

Agenda

Session moderated by Thomas Wobben, Director for Legislative Works, European Committee of the Regions

Opening

- Anna Athanasopoulou, Director for Simplification and Networks, DG GROW, European Commission
- Emma Blain, Dublin City Councillor, Member of the ECON commission, European Committee of the Regions

Panel discussion on building strategic partnerships between regions and clusters and EU-level support

- Prof. Rasmus C. Beck, CEO Duisburg Business & Innovation
- Giorgia Padiglioni, Director of the Production Systems, Technology Transfer, and Innovation Clusters, Umbria regional government
- Vasile Asandei, Director of the North-East Romania Regional Development Agency
- Kristina Šermukšnytė, Vice-President of the European Cluster Alliance
- Wolfgang Munch, Deputy Head of Unit for Smart and Sustainable Growth, DG REGIO, European Commission

Q&A session

Closing remarks

- Thomas Wobben
- Anna Athanasopoulou