

23rd

EUROPEAN WEEK of REGIONS and CITIES

13-15
OCT
2025

Shaping Tomorrow, Together

13 October
-30 November
Close to You
2025

**STAY
in
Sicily**

- ★ SUSTAINABLE
- ★ TERRITORIES
- ★ ACTIVATING
- ★ YOUR POTENTIAL



★ SUSTAINABLE
★ TERRITORIES
★ ACTIVATING
★ YOUR POTENTIAL

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Side event #EURegionsWeek Close to you

14 October 2025 | Representation Office of the Sicilian Region in Brussels
12, Rue Belliard B - 1040 Brussels, Belgium

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Event abstract

From 13 to 15 October 2025, on the occasion of the **23rd edition of the European Week of Regions and Cities (EURegionsWeek)**, the Sicilian Region - through the Regional Department for Programming - will take center stage with two initiatives showcasing Sicily's excellence and its commitment to sustainable development.

With "**A Taste to... STAY: sustainable flavors of Sicily celebrating the #RightToStay**", visitors will embark on a journey through the island's authentic tastes, with a particular focus on food sustainability, culinary tradition, and innovation inspired by the Mediterranean Diet. This initiative is part of the activities linked to Sicily's designation as **European Region of Gastronomy 2025**, offering a glimpse of the island's identity and attractiveness.

In parallel, as part of the EURegionsWeek "**Close to you**" program, the event "**STAY in Sicily - Sustainable Territories Activating Your potentials**" will take place at the Representation Office of the Sicilian Region in Brussels.

This initiative aims to highlight emblematic experiences and projects funded by the **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Sicily**, demonstrating how sustainable territorial development can provide citizens - particularly young people - with concrete opportunities to remain, return, or invest in their own land.

Organized under the thematic framework "**The Right to Stay: unlocking the potential of every territory**", the event will feature an exhibition and seminar pathway highlighting public-private projects in Sicily in the fields of digital connectivity, housing, sustainable mobility, innovative industry, and circular economy.

STAY in Sicily is not conceived as just a thematic event, but as a **strategic initiative** affirming the **#RightToStay in Sicily** through a sustainable, inclusive, and innovative development model supported by the **European Cohesion Policy**.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE | To present the Sicilian Region as a *laboratory of territorial cohesion and sustainable innovation*, drawing on projects and testimonials that reinforce the right to remain through connectivity, local industry, mobility, and inclusion.

CENTRAL THEME | **BUL Sicily** "*Connected to stay: ultra-fast broadband as a future infrastructure*"

The BUL Sicily project is the largest infrastructure initiative designed to bring connectivity to



peripheral areas at risk of digital exclusion. It serves as a strategic lever to:

- counter depopulation,
- attract businesses and workers,
- ensure equal access to digital services,
- position Sicily as a “smart” and competitive territory.

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SUPPORTING PROJECTS

- **Social Housing in Sicily** Inclusion and urban regeneration: dignified living in the territory
- **Treni POP Trains** Modern and sustainable regional mobility for commuters
- **Magicmotorsport** “Glocal” industrial and technological excellence, born and remaining in Sicily
- **OMER Spa** Advanced railway industry driving jobs and innovation
- **BioTrak** Innovation and traceability in connected rural environments



Format and central theme

Within European policies for cohesion and sustainable territorial development, an essential principle is gaining ground: *“The Right to Stay”*. This concept affirms the right of people - especially younger generations - to **remain and thrive in their homeland, without being forced to leave in order to build their future elsewhere**.

The initiative pursues several strategic objectives:

- **Showcasing** projects and practices that foster permanence, attractiveness, and vitality in Sicilian territories, demonstrating how local development can be sustainable, inclusive, and future-oriented
 - **Strengthening** ties between the Sicilian Region and European institutions, fostering opportunities for dialogue, networking, and visibility in an international context
 - **Connecting** stakeholders, youth, businesses, public authorities, and policymakers, encouraging collaboration and the exchange of good practices
 - **Positioning** Sicily as a European laboratory of territorial cohesion, environmental sustainability, urban regeneration, and social innovation
- To strengthen ties between the Sicilian Region and European institutions, fostering opportunities for dialogue, networking, and visibility in an international context.

EVENT FORMAT

Date 14 October 2025

Location Representation Office of the Sicilian Region in Brussels | 12, Rue Belliard B - 1040 Brussels, Belgium

Time full day (10:00 - 15:30)

The event will take the form of an **Open Day at the Sicilian Region's Brussels Office**, structured as a **hybrid format** combining exhibition, institutional sessions, and participatory moments:

- **Thematic exhibition with six corners**, each dedicated to a key dimension/project within STAY in Sicily (e.g. environment, innovation, enterprise, inclusion...)
- **Plenary session** with institutional speakers, European representatives, and testimonials from the territories
- **Tasting and networking lunch**, creating informal opportunities for exchange among participants



Thanks to the “*distributed event with thematic corners*” format, each project will have its own **dedicated narrative space** within the logical framework of “*TheRightToStay*”. The audience will be **free to interact**, choosing their own pathway, exploring, engaging in dialogue. The **plenary seminar** will provide a central moment of collective reflection and institutional talks.

Additionally, the **variety of formats** (videos, graphic installations, info-points...) will make the initiative more engaging and accessible.

EVENT STRUCTURE

Corner 1 - Digital Future (BUL Sicily)

Corner 2 - Housing and Community (Social Housing)

Corner 3 - Sustainable Mobility (POP Trains)

Corner 4 - Local Enterprise, Global Impact (Magicmotorsport)

Corner 5 - Industry and Territory (OMER Spa)

Corner 6 - Circular Economy (BioTrak)

PLENARY SESSION

Title **BUL Sicily | Connected to Stay: policies and good practices for sustainable territories**

Expected participants:

- EU Institutions (European Commission, CoR, European Parliament...)
- Companies and technical partners
- Cohesion and innovation experts
- Young Sicilians abroad
- Journalists
- Local administrators and territorial stakeholders
- Representatives of other European regions and institutions present at #EURegionsWeek

BUL - Ultra-Fast Broadband Sicily - CENTRAL THEME

Why?

- **Enabling infrastructure:** without modern connectivity there can be no territorial development; no one can “stay” competitively (students, businesses, public administration, digital health, etc.)
- **Multiplier effect:** BUL enables all other projects (industrial innovation by Magicmotorsport, smart accessibility of POP trains, improvement of Social Housing, etc.)



- **Territorial inclusivity:** marginal areas become connected and integrated into the global network
- **Economic resilience:** connected territories can retain young talent, attract smart workers (appealing also for non-Sicilians) and support businesses.

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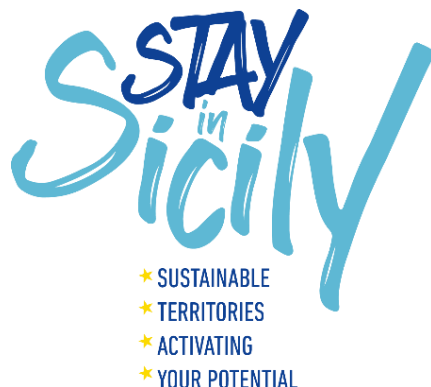
BUL Sicily is not simply *"another project"*, **it is the project that allows all others to thrive.**

It connects the entire Region- from cities to small villages - bringing the network where it was previously absent. **It reaches hundreds of municipalities, including depopulated and isolated ones**, creating a digital backbone that supports other initiatives: from Social Housing to sustainable mobility (POP trains), to innovative companies also active in international markets (e.g. Magicmotorsport, Omer, BioTrak).

It aligns with **European objectives of digital transition and territorial inclusion**. In a disadvantaged region, reducing the digital divide has a concrete and strategic impact.



Detailed Programme



Side event #EURegionsWeek Close to you

Representation Office of the Sicilian Region in Brussels

12, Rue Belliard B - 1040 Brussels, Belgium

14 October 2025

10:00 - 15:30

10:00 - 10:30 | Welcome Coffee & Registration

- Participant Registration
- Distribution of informational and promotional materials
- Institutional greetings and opening of thematic corners

10:30 - 12:30 | Thematic Tour across the 6 Corners

(Free or guided visit in small groups)

12:30 - 13:30 | Light Lunch & Networking

- Tasting and networking lunch
- Informal exchange space among companies, institutions, and guests



13:30 - 15:20 | PLENARY SESSION – SEMINAR

“Connected to Stay: policies and good practices for sustainable territories”

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13:30 - 13:40 | Institutional greetings

- **Margherita Rizza**, Director General of the Regional Department for Extra-Regional Affairs - Head of the Representation Office of the Sicilian Region in Brussels
- **Alessandro Aricò**, Regional Minister for Infrastructure and Mobility of Sicily

INTRODUCTION TO THE SESSION

by the Communication Service of the Regional Department for Programming - Presidency of the Sicilian Region

13:50 - 14:10 | PANEL *Rethinking Regional Attractiveness in Europe*

- **Regional attractiveness and economic development: new trajectories for European areas with Cohesion policies** by **Francesco Molica** Director at EURADA (European Association of Development Agencies), PhD, Researcher in Economics at ULB
- **Attractiveness and EU funds: insights from the 2025 Eurobarometer survey** by **Matteo Salvai**, Head of Press and Media, European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy

14:10 - 14:30 | PANEL *The Attractiveness of Sicily*

- **Measuring Sicily's Attractiveness: data and territorial perspectives** by **Giuseppe Lecardane**, PhD, Researcher Territorial Office Southern Area - ISTAT
- **Rethinking Sicily's Attractiveness: OECD insights and perspectives** by **Claire Charbit**, PhD, Head of Unit Regional Attractiveness and Migrant Integration, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities, Regional Development and Multi-level Governance Division - OECD

14:30 - 15:20 | THE STORIES... from the territory

PITCH | visual presentations (max 5 minutes each)

- **Social Housing e Treni POP** | Regional Department for Infrastructure and Mobility
- **BUL Sicilia** | **Francesco Rotunno**, Specialist of European Affairs - Open Fiber



- **Magicmotorsport** | **Carmen Ancione**, *HR Director - Magicmotorsport*
- **Omer** | **Salvatore Giosuè**, *Chief Financial Officer and Investor Relations Officer - Omer Group*
- **BioTrack** | **Biagio Tuvè**, *Technology and safety of animal productions Expert*

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Interactive audience participation

Q&A

15:20 - 15:30 | Conclusions

*STAY in Sicily tells the story of a region in transformation, looking towards the future. A tangible experience addressed to Europe, with the ambition of inspiring other regions. Because “**Shaping tomorrow, together**” means building strong communities, where staying is both a right and an opportunity.*

