

Regional Innovation Valleys for Rural Impact

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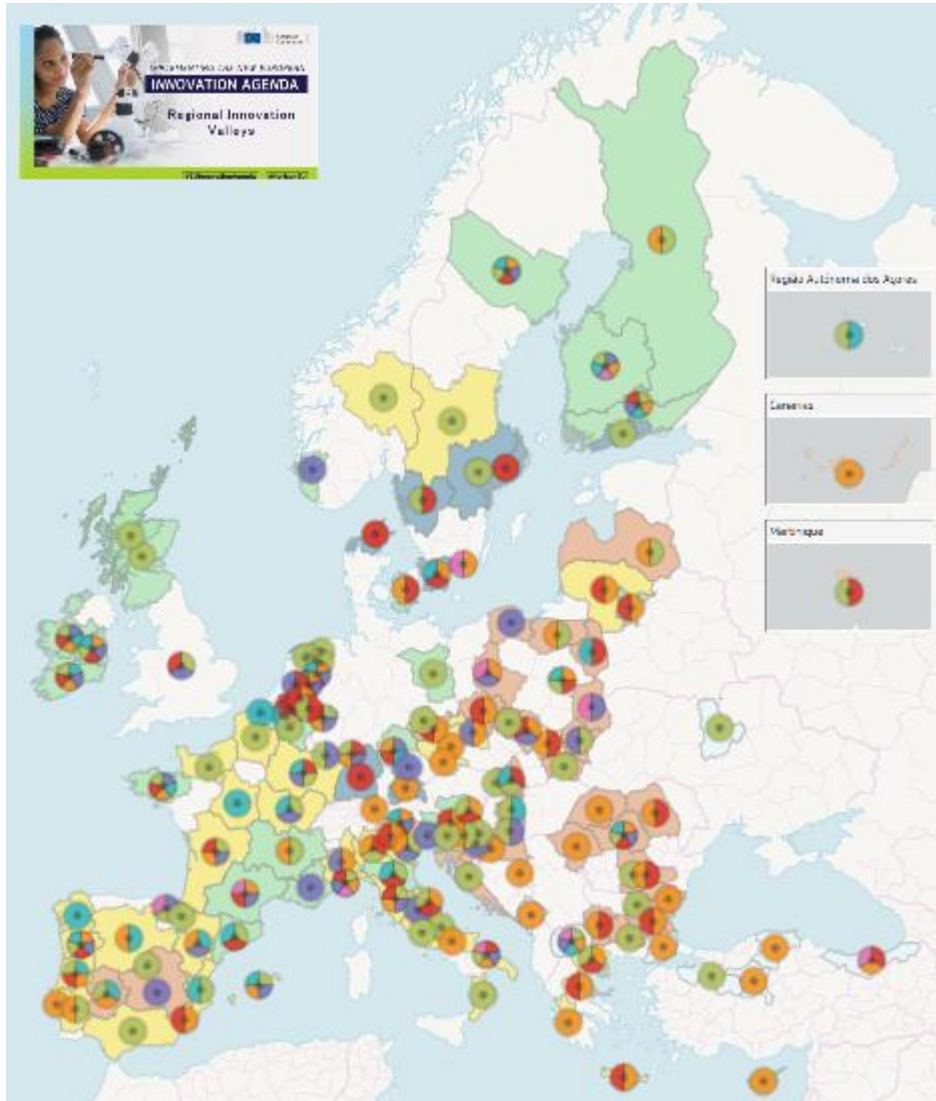
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Contact active regions:

Selected Regional Innovation Valleys - European Commission (europa.eu)



REGIONAL INNOVATION VALLEYS

147 REGIONS*

have been selected to receive a RIVs label and committed to:



Strengthen their Research & Innovation (R&I) ecosystem



Enhance the coordination and directionality of their R&I policy and investment towards key EU priorities



Engage in R&I collaboration between more and less advanced regions with complementary smart specialisations (S3).



AGRITECHVALLEY: Connected Regional Innovation Valleys for Resilient Agriculture

Duration: 1 Nov 2026 – 31 Oct 2031 (5 years)

Budget: €15,949,882.25 (50% co-fund) | Max EU Grant: €7,974,941.13

- Pan-European initiative building Regional Innovation Valleys across 7 regions: South Scotland (UK), Serbia, Hungary, Georgia, Eastern Macedonia & Thrace (Greece), Canary Islands (Spain), Ireland
- Goes beyond primary agriculture: precision/smart farming, vertical farming, blockchain traceability, climate-smart agriculture, rural social economy & circular bioeconomy
- Connects strong innovators (Ireland, S. Scotland) with moderate/emerging ones (Serbia, Hungary, Georgia, Canary Islands) via Regional Living Labs
- Will fund **12–20 interregional SME/social economy projects** (TRL 6–8) through Financial Support to Third Parties (FSTP)
- Targets: +40% digital adoption among smallholders; 400+ farmers/stakeholders trained; investor portal & policy support for rural innovation ecosystems



Building Rural Innovation Ecosystems

- Rural innovation ecosystems = networks of actors (individuals, organizations, institutions) collaborating to drive innovation, entrepreneurship & local economic development
- Key success factors: strong community engagement, supportive policy, access to capital, culture of experimentation
- **InnovationGUIDE** aligns with the EU's New European Innovation Agenda: connecting under-represented regions/actors into a stronger European ecosystem
 - Partners: Netherlands, Spain, Malta, Turkey: linking stronger and moderate innovator ecosystems
 - 12-month project to map partner regions and design roadmaps/bi-annual plans closing the rural–urban ecosystem gap
 - Audience: policymakers, researchers, practitioners focused on inclusive, sustainable rural growth



Regional Insights & Policy Evidence

Leading regions: Jämtland (Sweden) and Viseu Dão Lafões (Portugal) stand out for rural innovation performance

Jämtland is a benchmark for skills development infrastructure and cooperative, well-connected industrial clusters

JRC Policy Brief: "Entrepreneurship in the EU: business dynamics in rural regions"

- Space-intensive sectors (energy, robotics, semiconductors) are over-represented in rural areas
- Diversification sectors away from agriculture (travel, wellness) also show strong rural presence
- Confirms rural innovation extends well beyond agrifood



Upcoming opportunities: EIE Work Programme

	Projects	Cascade calls planning - open for participating regions (R&I actors)	Timeline / update
1	ECIV	Budget: 15.3 m euro - 2 calls for interregional projects / 12 projects (1 st call: ~9 m euro) - Circular Economy Budget: 1 m euros - 1 call for experimentation; 15-30 experiments / <50 k euro each)	1st call: 22 December 2025 , closed 16 March 2026, 22 proposals submitted (117 applicants) 4 projects selected with total EUR 4.7m (industrial symbiosis, resource efficiency, waste reduction and circular design) 2nd call: expected in October 2026
2	PRECISEU	Budget: 11.57 m € - 1 call / 4 projects / 3 m € per project - Deep tech innovation, including Advanced therapy medicinal products (ATMPs) and Health Data	Call : 13 April 2026, closed 14 June 2026 36 proposals submitted (185 applicants) 8 projects selected with total EUR 9.4 m (awaiting final decisions from coordinator due to pending budget changes).
3	RIVCIRCULAR	Budget: 14,3 M€ - 1 call, circular economy + deep tech - <u>1st call</u> 3.5 m euro, 1-3 projects / 1,5 - 2,5 M€ per project	Call : 20 April 2026, closed 17 September 2026
4	SYSTEMEU	Budget: 7.55 m € - 1 call / Up to 2.2 M EUR/flagship, up to 1.1 M EUR / 750 K for medium/small projects - Digital Transformation, Healthcare, Energy, Mobility.	Call: 15 September 2026, close 16 November 2026
5	UNITE	Total Call Budget Call 2: 6 m € · 6 projects / 1 m € per project · Digital transformation in Healthcare	1st call: 15 October 2025, closed 15 January 2026 19 proposals submitted, 3 projects selected, with total EUR 3.8 m (health data, personalised remote care) 2nd call opening: 10 September 2026, close 10 December 2026





REGIONAL **INNOVATION VALLEY**

CONNECTING ECOSYSTEMS,
POWERING COMPETITIVENESS IN EUROPE





Thank you! Questions?

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