



European Institute of
Innovation & Technology

A body of the European Union



EIT RIS ACTIVITY
REPORT 2023

BUILDING A STRONGER EUROPE BY BRINGING ALL REGIONS INTO THE GAME

eit-ris.eu



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

ABOUT EIT RIS **Pages 4 - 7**

Get an at-a-glance introduction to the EIT RIS, its history, and its most important accomplishments to date

2

CLIMATE CHANGE **Pages 8 - 11**

Discover some of the top EIT RIS activities taking on climate change

Powered by
EIT CLIMATE-KIC

3

STRONG DIGITAL EUROPE **Pages 12 - 16**

Get a snapshot of what's being achieved in world-class digital innovation

Powered by
EIT DIGITAL

4

GREENER FOOD PRODUCTION **Pages 17 - 21**

From farm to plate, these EIT RIS activities are innovating Europe's food system

Powered by
EIT FOOD

5

BETTER HEALTHCARE **Pages 22 - 27**

Check out the EIT RIS activities dedicated to improving Europe's health systems

Powered by
EIT HEALTH

EIT
ACTIVE
REPORT

7

**SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY**

Pages 28 - 31

See what's being achieved by EIT RIS activities ushering in sustainable energy systems

Powered by
EIT INNOENERGY

8

**INNOVATIVE
MANUFACTURING**

Pages 32 - 35

Get examples of how Europe's manufacturing is becoming more sustainable in EIT RIS countries

Powered by
**EIT
MANUFACTURING**

9

**CRITICAL RAW
MATERIALS
RESILIENCE**

Pages 36 - 40

Learn more on how EIT RIS activities are improving the raw material value chain

Powered by
EIT RAWMATERIALS

10

**SMART CITIES AND
MOBILITY**

Pages 41 - 44

Explore ways our urban landscape is being changed in the EIT RIS region

Powered by
**EIT URBAN
MOBILITY**

11

EIT COMMUNITY

Pages 45 - 50

Our KICs join forces in the EIT RIS region for some of the most impactful EIT programmes on offer

12

CONCLUSION
Page 51

Our final word on progress towards reaching our goals and future outlook of the EIT RIS

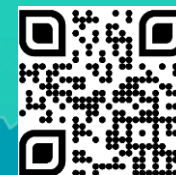
**EIT
ACTIVE
REPORT**

EIT RIS 2023

impact in a nutshell



ABOUT EIT RIS



eit-ris.eu

The EIT was established in 2008 to contribute to the sustainable economic growth and competitiveness of Europe by reinforcing the innovation capacity of the European Union (EU) and its Member States. The EIT has pioneered the integration of higher education, research, and business in Europe with a strong emphasis on entrepreneurial talent, business creation, and innovation skills.

EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) overview:

- **Purpose:** Launched in 2014 by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) to enhance innovation in modest and emerging countries of Europe and their regions.
- **Implementation:** Steering by the EIT and implemented by its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), with significant enhancements under the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2021-2027.

Key 2023 Activities:

- **Business Support:** Accelerating Start-up growth in the EIT RIS area.
- **Skills:** Over 84 000 participants upskilled in innovation and entrepreneurship.
- **Innovation:** Over 250 new innovations were launched
- **Local Engagement:** Collaborating with local players to strengthen ecosystems, 3 EIT Community Offices were launched in 2023 in such countries as North Macedonia, Latvia and Ukraine.


Impact:

- The EIT RIS has significantly contributed to the EIT SIA objective of improving the EIT's regional outreach to bridge innovation gaps.
- EIT RIS-based innovators now make up over 60% of all participants in EIT Community activities..
- Swift support was provided to Ukraine, a RIS-eligible country, amidst ongoing conflict.


**EIT Regional Innovation Scheme-eligible countries*

EIT COMMUNITY IN THE EIT RIS-ELIGIBLE AREA (2023)


Funded by the
European Union



53.4%
EIT supported ventures came from
the RIS area



78 973
talents upskilled in areas including digital
innovation, entrepreneurship, and advanced
technologies like AI.



360
innovations made in EIT RIS
were brought to market.



1185
partners from the EIT RIS region in the
network achieving successes

In 2023, the EIT Community continued to make significant strides in fostering entrepreneurship and innovation across Europe, **particularly in countries with moderate and emerging innovation capabilities.**

Key initiatives included support for start-ups through programmes like the [EIT Jumpstarter](#), EIT Health's Attract to Invest, and EIT InnoEnergy's business creation activities, which provided training, mentorship, and funding.

Success stories include health tech scale-ups, financial investments in the energy sector, and numerous new ventures.

Educational efforts, such as summer schools, fellowships, and professional training, enhanced skills and fostered entrepreneurial mindsets. **For instance, EIT Health's educational programmes upskilled over 200 talents, while EIT Food's programmes supported women leaders and deep-tech start-ups.**

These activities collectively strengthened the innovation capacity of local ecosystems and contributed to addressing societal challenges across Europe.

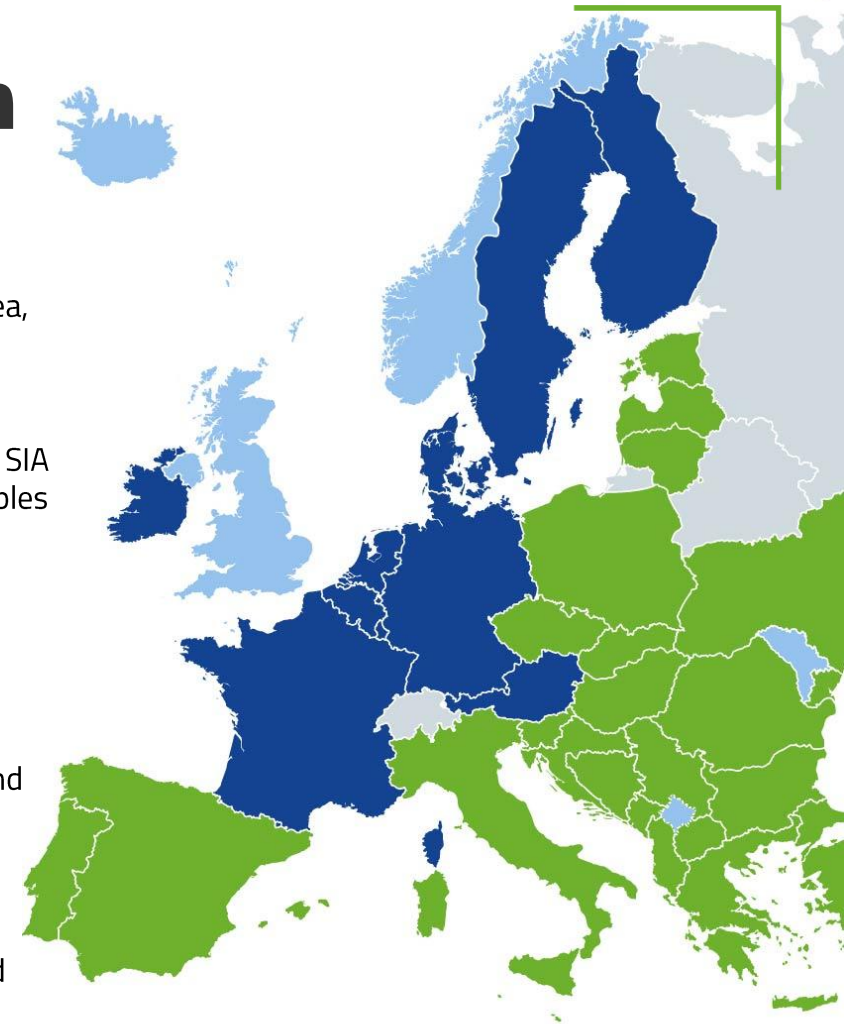
Place-based innovation support

EIT RIS Hubs, on-the-ground EIT offices present across the EIT RIS area, form the backbone of the EIT's "place-based" approach.

In 2023, there were 85 RIS Hubs were established across Europe. Reflecting the enhanced EIT RIS mandate and resources under the EIT SIA 2021-2027, the EIT published Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles for RIS Hubs which came into force in 2023.

KEY ELEMENTS:

- **Gradual launch of EIT Community RIS Hubs covering all eligible countries and territories by 2025**, continuing with Cyprus, Latvia and Montenegro in 2023.
- **EIT Community RIS Hubs serve as a one-stop-shop for local innovators**, providing a centralised information source on all EIT Community services and opportunities.
- **Existing EIT RIS Hubs will integrate, scale up ongoing activities** and jointly implement EIT Community Initiatives tailored to local needs under the EIT Community RIS Hubs.
- **Each Hub is managed by an EIT Community Officer (ECO)**, facilitating local engagement and information dissemination.
- **The establishment of four minimum functions for all EIT RIS Hubs ensures consistency and effectiveness**, supported by a common evaluation and performance-based financing systems.



- EU Member-State (not eligible for the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme)
- EIT Regional Innovation Scheme eligible country
- Associated country to Horizon Europe (non-EU Member-State)



EIT CLIMATE-KIC HIGHLIGHTS



Rural Spain ClimAccelerator event in Valencia, Spain.





ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

INNOVATION PROJECTS



EIT Climate-KIC ran **13**
Innovation activities
with **406 total participants**.



Supporting European coal regions in their transition away from coal

In 2023, EIT Climate-KIC has continued the **Post Coal Future Lab initiative** to address the complex challenges of the energy transition by facilitating collaboration within and between Europe's southern, central and eastern regions.

Together with the Industry Value Chain cluster team of EIT Climate-KIC and representatives from Just Transiti

The KIC created multiple Mini Labs and the Main Lab, tools similar to [UN Habitat's](#) urban labs. The Mini Labs stimulate ongoing collaboration among city authorities, mining unions, businesses, academia, NGOs and activists to get a wide range of viewpoints and approaches to the transition and help to strengthen understanding of the common challenges, goals and trust within these communities.

Populating NetZero Cities across emerging regions

Being engaged in the Just Transition Mechanism initiatives, EIT Climate-KIC has continued strategic support for the regions in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe in driving forward the Just Transition agenda. EIT Climate-KIC leads the NetZeroCities Pilot Cities Programme, currently supporting over 50 European cities in their quest for climate neutrality by 2030, as part of the [EU Cities Mission](#). Participating cities identify emissions sources, develop plans for mitigation and explore diverse solutions.

In 2023, five Polish cities with a total population of over 4M citizens, joined the programme with their NEEST initiative. It aims at preparing a set of innovative solutions for the revitalisation of 5 types of buildings, including multi-family buildings built massively during the communist period. The project focuses on reducing to zero all emission factors in these buildings.

Supporting Western Balkans early-stage innovations in cleantech and climate tech

Together with Impact Hub Belgrade EIT Climate-KIC joined forces to identify the most promising early-stage innovations of digital and green transition. The Western Balkan Winter Demo Day 2023 brought founders from the Western Balkans, who need support in fundraising, matchmaking with investors and further product/solution development.

BUSINESS CREATION



EIT Climate-KIC ran **7 Business**
Creation activities with a total
of **378 participants**.

New ClimAccelerator Partnerships

ClimAccelerator

In 2023 EIT Climate-KIC organised several [ClimAccelerator](#) editions together with Entrepreneurship Support Organisations. One was in Poland supported by one of the biggest Polish Bank – PKO Bank Polski and Accelpoint. Thanks to this partnership Climate-KIC supported accelerating 15 innovative solutions such as: turning coffee waste into sustainable chemicals, unique photocatalytic technology for air purification and disinfection, ready for versatile applications or waste reduction equipment which enable retailers and HoReCa to manage garbage smarter.



ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION



EIT Climate-KIC ran **30
education activities
with 1 653 total participants.**

How to move from old to new – a virtual Systems Innovation Learning Festival:

Together with SIDA EIT Climate-KIC has been running the Systems Innovation Learning Festival on an annual basis since 2021. In 2023 we involved more stakeholders from the emerging regions for learning, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas, all aimed at advancing the field of systems innovation and addressing complex societal challenges in a holistic manner. The last edition was held between June and December 2023 and brought together keynote experts including representatives of OECD, UNDP, Global Sustainability Fellows Programme and many more.



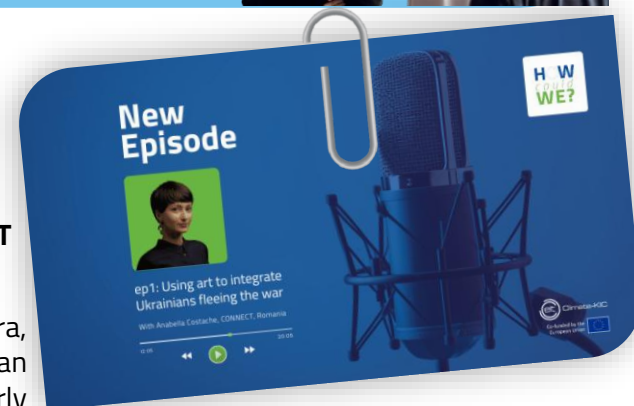
Other impactful initiatives

Integrating Ukrainian Refugees into Timișoara's Cultural Fabric through CONNECT as a part of the EIT New European Bauhaus Initiative

Anabella Costache, a cultural project manager at the Faber Cultural Centre in Timișoara, Romania, leads a remarkable initiative known as CONNECT within the EIT New European Bauhaus. This project focuses on integrating integrating Ukrainian refugees, particularly women fleeing the war, into the city's development through artistic gatherings and the sharing of cultural histories.

CONNECT fosters a supportive community by organising events that bring together local residents and Ukrainian newcomers, creating opportunities for cultural exchange and mutual understanding. Through these artistic gatherings, participants share their stories, experiences, and histories, enriching the cultural fabric of Timișoara and helping refugees find a sense of belonging in their new environment.

This initiative not only supports the immediate needs of Ukrainian refugees but also contributes to the long-term cultural and social development of the city, demonstrating the power of art and cultural projects in bridging communities and fostering inclusivity.



climate-kic.org



EIT CLIMATE-KIC ALUMNI SUCCESS STORIES

Mónica Villoslada Valbuena, Celia María Camacho Montaña, & Marina Pérez Fernández. This group of young climate enthusiasts were inspired by the smell of “azahar” that pervades all corners of their city of Sevilla, Spain when spring comes and the orange trees blossom. There are about 40 000 orange trees in Sevilla, making it the city with the most orange trees in the world. Every season, these trees produce about 5.7 million kilos of oranges. For Monica, Celia, and Marina, this means a huge amount of orange peels are wasted. Their idea is to transform orange peels into a locally made and ecological alternative to plastic that would not only be generated by renewable resources but also biodegradable.

The three of them met during a Climathon organised in Sevilla. Climathon is a place-based programme orchestrated by EIT Climate-KIC that encourages citizens to brainstorm local solutions to transform their city towards a net-zero carbon economy as well as mitigate and adapt to climate change. The idea was incorporated as Remonda Bio SL and is scaling its climate-positive impact as part of the New European Bauhaus programme. According to co-founder Marina Pérez Fernández *'Climathon was a key experience for us. It made us realize that we can turn our values and passions into a project with real impact in our community and the environment. EIT and New European Bauhaus programs have since 2021 guided us to make Remonda a reality, offering mentorship in essential topics and connecting us with other sustainable startups in the European Community.'*

New Episode



ep2: Inclusive playgrounds for neurodiverse children





Co-funded by the
European Union

EIT DIGITAL HIGHLIGHTS



EIT Digital Master School students at the 2022 kick-off in Tallinn.



eitdigital.eu



STRONG DIGITAL EUROPE

Seeking Innovative Solutions for Europe's Digital Challenges

- When it comes to innovation projects, **EIT Digital** is looking for world-class digital deep tech activities led by teams with powerful entrepreneurial drive to support the next generation of digital companies that can impact Europe and the world's challenges. A strong Innovation Activity proposal for EIT Digital will demonstrate a specific solution for a relevant business pain that can create or disrupt markets and that is aligned with EIT Digital's focus areas and should achieve the claimed market impact during the activity's timeframe. Focus areas include Digital Industry, Digital Cities, Digital Finance, Digital Wellbeing, and Digital Tech.

Empowering Early-Stage European digital Startups

- The **EIT Digital Open Innovation Factory** supports the boost of early-stage European startups interested in gaining market traction for their products and services.
- Specifically, the programme is looking for world-class digital DeepTech Activities developed by corporates, research and technology organisations and/or universities together with early-stage ventures that have demonstrated market and investor traction and can leverage the programme to boost their growth even further.

INNOVATION PROJECTS



EIT Digital ran **3 innovation activities** in 2023, reaching **211 participants** in all EIT RIS-eligible countries.

"With the help of EIT Digital we were able to connect together partners from different fields, such as banking, innovation and software development to launch our fast, secure and touchless multimodal biometric payment solution."

Csaba Kőrmőczy, PeasyPay,
OpenInnovationFactory 2020





BUSINESS CREATION



EIT Digital provided three
Business Creation activities,
**with 211 deep tech start-ups
supported** from EIT RIS-
eligible countries.



Digital



eitdigital.eu

EIT Digital Venture Programme: From MVP to Market Success

The programme supports early-stage entrepreneurial teams on their journey to the market.

Launched six years ago, the EIT Digital Venture Programme is designed to support early-stage entrepreneurial teams from the Baltics, Central, Eastern and Southern Europe in their journey to market.

In 2023, the programme has expanded its reach to include Italy, Spain and Hungary. It is now open to 22 European countries, with new partners like Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Dock3 and Lunar joining existing regional accelerators.

Selected teams are offered an intensive eight-week pre-acceleration programme; they are coached, in particular, on how to develop their Minimum Viable Product (MVP), establish their startup company, and raise funds with investors.

At the final “Pitch Days,” they get the chance to validate their business solution by presenting it in front of early-stage investors, potential clients, and experts from the tech community.

The 40 teams awarded represent some of Europe's most promising young ventures, and the final prize recognizes their accomplishments to date while empowering their future growth.

“An early-stage startup’s path from inception to real impact is a roller-coaster. EIT Digital’s Venture Programme helps founders take the first dozen steps along this difficult way. Our great incubation partners provide training and mentorship, while EIT Digital provides the initial financial support. This unrivalled pan-European initiative empowers entrepreneurs to turn their dreams into scalable business. Judging by the astounding quality of the graduates, this initiative continues to achieve strong results in catalyzing innovation and entrepreneurship.”

Dénes Csiszár, Acceleration Manager





ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION



EIT Digital ran **9 education activities with 155 participants.**

- [Master School Programme](#)
- [Summer School Programme](#)
- [Speed Master](#)
- [Professional School Programme](#)

Practical Learning for Innovators and Entrepreneurs

EIT Digital's education programmes offer a diverse range of learning opportunities aimed at fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and digital skills development across various target audiences. These programmes cater to different stages of professional and academic careers, providing tailored education to meet specific needs.

Commonalities across all programmes include a focus on digital technologies, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Each programme is designed to provide practical skills and knowledge that can be applied in real-world scenarios, emphasizing hands-on learning and real-life applications.

EIT Digital's education programmes target students pursuing double degrees, young professionals exploring tech entrepreneurship, start-up executives and founders aiming to scale their ventures, and seasoned professionals seeking to deepen their expertise in digital technology and innovation. Each programme offers tailored education to meet the specific needs of these diverse audiences, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship across Europe.

While the Master School and Summer School focus more on students and young professionals at the beginning or early stages of their careers, the Speedmaster and Professional School cater to more experienced professionals and entrepreneurs looking to deepen their expertise and navigate specific challenges in the tech industry. Together, these programmes create a comprehensive educational ecosystem that supports continuous learning and development across all stages of a professional journey.



EIT Digital Master School's
graduates



EIT DIGITAL SUPPORTED START-UP

A Spanish startup that is changing the way people consume by turning shoppers into renters has built on its early development with EIT Digital and is gearing up for greater international expansion.

Rentall's solution makes it easy to rent a range of products that people might not always want to purchase - from computers to scooters, and beyond.

EIT Digital has nurtured the growth of Rentall from the beginning. The collaboration with EIT Digital within the "i3 Lifestyle" innovation activity of the Open Innovation Factory helped the startup develop its platform - adding a biometric recognition tool that enables rapid customer identification, fraud management measures and a smart virtual assistant to enrich the customer experience.

The expansion from Spain into the rest of Europe has already begun in France, with rentals of Nerva e-scooters, and Italy is next in line. This will be followed soon after by expansion into the rest of Europe and then beyond.

The internationalization work is one area where Rentall will use its new EUR 1.25 million in funding. The funding will also support further development of the platform and integration of new partners, hiring the staff that Rentall needs to grow, and launching an online marketing campaign.





Co-funded by the
European Union

EIT FOOD HIGHLIGHTS



AgrifoodLabs by EIT Food, final event in Kyiv, Ukraine



eitfood.eu



GREENER FOOD PRODUCTION

EIT FOOD'S CO-CREATION LABS: LEADING THE WAY IN NEW PRODUCT AND SOLUTION DEVELOPMENT

EIT Food supports activities which aim to accelerate innovation towards creating positive change in the food system. In this regard the community seeks for new products on the market, introducing new and improved commercial processes and services, and achieving impact across our **3 missions: Healthier Lives Through Food, A Net Zero Food System, A Fully Transparent, Fair and Resilient Food System.**

EIT Food RIS Consumer Engagement Labs (CEL) support innovations in the European food system through co-creation processes focused on designing innovative food products and new packaging solutions in collaboration with local consortia consisting of industry and scientific organizations. Each programme edition addressed a specific, pre-defined societal challenge and enabled the collaboration between consumers and companies jointly co-creating new product ideas. The **2023 edition engaged 135 consumers from Greece, Latvia, Malta, Romania, Slovenia, and Türkiye.**

In 2023, **8 innovative products were designed and introduced to the market** as the outcomes of the EIT Food RIS CEL programme, the largest food co-creation initiative in Europe. **3 products exceeded the threshold of EUR 10,000 in product sales** before the end of 2023: Fresh spirulina with Nordic lemon/Latvian quince, Full Meal TRIO and Wrap falafel.

EIT Food RIS3 Guidebook - 'A call to action for agrifood policymakers and doers'

The EIT Food wants to become a catalyser of innovation activities in food system in EIT RIS countries. As part of cooperation with local actors, EIT Food with its EIT RIS Hubs initiated a series of roundtable events on the design and implementation of RIS within the agri-food sector. RIS3 Guidebook based on the innovation gap analysis of 17 EIT RIS countries was published to share results of data analysis, interviews and brainstorming session with experts from Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey. It shows best practices and presents the most efficient ways of aligning regional strategies with EU agrifood policy frameworks. The Guidebook provides practical guidance for regions seeking to develop and implement effective innovation strategies that support sustainable development and growth in the food sector and can be downloaded [here](#)



Industry involvement in implementation of Regional and National Smart Specialisation Strategies in agrifood sector, 26th June Riga, moderated by Anna Kubiak Ecosystem Manager with participation Enno Ence CEO at MILZU! Creator, Augustas Alešiusas, CEO at ART21 and Gonçalo Amorim, CEO at BGI



**INNOVATION
THROUGH
COCREATION**

In 2023 there were **15 innovation** introduced to the market within EIT Food RIS activities.



**Read the EIT Food RIS3
Guidebook**



EIT FOOD HIGHLIGHTS

BUSINESS CREATION



EIT Food ran 26 EIT RIS Business Support activities with a total of nearly 2000 participants.

Challenge Labs

EIT Food Challenge Labs are designed to tackle the big problems faced by the agrifood sector by bringing together diverse groups of people: graduate and postgraduate students, technologists and scientists, experienced professionals, consumers and companies. Challenge Labs builds also capacity among the participants to develop entrepreneurial skills and take their first step on entrepreneurial path.

In 2023 EIT Food successfully carried out 13 Challenge Labs together with local partners and RIS hubs engaging over 400 participants across Europe.



ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION



EIT Food ran 61 EIT RIS Education activities with a total of 2960 participants.

DeepTech Revolution

The primary aim of **this educational activity** is to delve into the cutting-edge applications of deep tech in the agri-food sector, especially emphasizing the digital twin ecosystem and its capacity to reshape the future of food systems.

Organized across four distinct RIS countries, this series aims to empower local professionals, budding entrepreneurs, and academically inclined youths with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives necessary to navigate the evolving landscape of agrifood tech.





EIT FOOD SUPPORTED START-UP

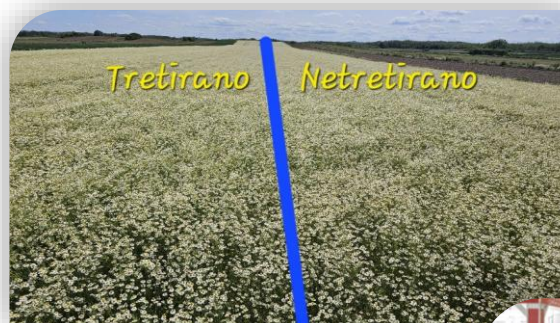
EKOLIVE ATTRACTED ALMOST EUR 0.5M OF EXTERNAL FUNDING

Slovakian start-up [Ekolive](#) began its exciting entrepreneurial journey with EIT in 2018 as part of the RawMaterials cohort of EIT Jumpstarter. The solution – processing of waste/low-grade minerals – was initially seen as a way of reclaiming mining areas. However, during the training, the business focus was changed to the fertiliser market, which was an excellent decision! The Slovakian start-up continued fast development, successfully testing in 2020 an organic fertilizer based on bioleaching, targeted especially for degraded land, during Test Farms. The next year, they were awarded the 2nd Prize in EIT Food TeamUp! And now they managed to join the EIT Food Raising Food Stars Association, the most significant community of highly innovative scale-ups in the European agrifood sector, after going through the whole journey of start-up support offered by EIT Food.

We noticed that grass was exploding in growth wherever we spilt the liquid residue. Instead of recycling the byproduct, which would be costly, we realised it could be a valuable product for the agriculture sector.

This led us to develop our bio fertiliser EkofertileTM, which contains plant growth promoting bacteria, organic acids, and dissolved nutrients. Through the use of EkofertileTM biofertiliser growers can double their yields without the use of chemicals and pesticides.

With over 30% of the world's farmland exhausted of key nutrients - and often contaminated - Ekolive's biofertilizer presents a more sustainable alternative for producers to increase yields without the need to use chemicals and pesticides.





EIT FOOD ALUMNI

Sira Mogas, CEO of KOA Biotech

In 2023, Sira, the founder of [KOA Biotech](#), was recognized as a member of the prestigious Forbes Spain 30 Under 30 list, further proving her leadership in the deep-tech startup sector in Spain.

KOA Biotech, now employing seven people, most of whom hold PhDs, continues to revolutionize the aquaculture industry. The company specializes in providing on-site disease monitoring for fish farmers, offering daily measures of relevant bacterial pathogens to anticipate potential disease outbreaks.

In their first round of private investment, KOA Biotech secured an additional EUR 700,000, building on the EUR 120,000 in grants they had previously received. These grants included EUR 20,000 from the Spanish NTT eAwards and EUR 60,000 from the Global NTT eAwards in 2022. The initial funding was crucial for the rapid development and success of the company.

KOA Biotech was founded as a spin-off of the University Pompeu Fabra in Spain, thanks to the EUR 40,000 prize won in the TeamUp programme. During the TeamUp programme, Sira matched with a business professional and learned how to run a start-up, setting the foundation for KOA Biotech's future success.



Sira Mogas

 **KOA BIOTECH**

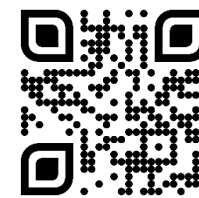


Co-funded by the
European Union

EIT HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS



RIS Validation Track 2023, the programme developed by EIT Health Innostars



eithealth.eu



BETTER HEALTHCARE

EMPOWERING HEALTHCARE INNOVATIONS: EIT HEALTH INNOSTARS AND RIS SUPPORT

EIT Health defines an innovation project as a solution that solves a clearly defined need that falls within one of the Flagship areas. Specifically, the proposed solution must be relevant to the healthcare system in the EU, address a real problem or unmet need, demonstrate innovation with patient-centric technologies, and align with one or more of EIT Health Flagship area.

Ultimately, what makes a health innovation project a success is an innovative idea that uses technology to deliver value to healthcare systems and patients alike; a knowledgeable and invested consortium, prepared to take on the challenge; and a solid business plan that maps out the journey from idea to market success.

Ten promising consortia backed in the RIS Innovation Call 2023

This innovation call supports the development of local healthcare projects in the EIT RIS area that target one or more of the focus areas.

EIT Health InnoStars aims to bridge the funding gap in several moderately progressing EU countries, as well as to support participants in the proof-of-concept phase and to guide them in their EIT Health innovation journey. The programme offers access to funding up to €75.000, mentoring, training services, and networking opportunities.

The RIS Innovation Call supports the development of healthcare innovations in the proof-of-concept phase while boosting regional cooperation on the ground. The programme is open to all legal entities, such as business organisations, academic, research and healthcare institutions in Central, Eastern and Southern European regions, where EIT Health InnoStars has registered hubs or partners.

INNOVATION PROJECTS



In 2023 there was a total of **3**
innovation activities with
50 participants.





BUSINESS CREATION



There was a total of **4 business creation activities** with **56 total participants**.

InnoStars Awards: The programme helps transform prototypes and MVPs into health solutions or products and brings them to the market. It is suitable for micro and small enterprises, spin-offs and start-ups with a prototype or an MVP, but the product/service is not on the market yet (they do not have any income yet).

18 early-stage innovations participated in six-month-long journey with InnoStars. Altogether 107 eligible applications from 18 European countries were submitted in 2023. Among them, Poland stands out with its 20 applicant start-ups. The InnoStars Awards also attracted considerable interest in Romania, Spain, Hungary, Italy, and Portugal, with at least 8 candidate companies from every country.



ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION



There was a total of **7 educational activities** with **849 participants** in 2023.

HelloAI RIS Advanced and HelloAI RIS Professional

HelloAI was founded as an EIT Health-supported education activity driven by GE Healthcare to prepare and involve future talents in tackling healthcare challenges with the support of AI applications and learn about future opportunities. These programmes help to introduce healthcare professionals, healthcare IT managers, practising medical experts, healthcare managers and entrepreneurs with products addressing the healthcare IT domain to the operationalisation of AI, to unveil and discover its challenges in healthcare.





CAPACITY BUILDING



There was a total of **13 capacity building activities with 1 838 total participants.**



FOSTERING INNOVATION IN MODEST REGIONS: EIT HEALTH INNOSTARS AND RIS INITIATIVES

EIT Health InnoStars defines capacity building as the process of developing and strengthening the abilities, skills, and resources of organisations and individuals to enable them to participate effectively in innovation and entrepreneurial activities. Specifically, the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS) involves supporting entities from less-represented regions to become valuable partners in KICs. The EIT Health RIS Innovation Capacity Building Activities are designed to ignite innovation-supporting activities within the healthcare field in regions with emerging and moderate innovation capacity, as defined by the European Innovation Scoreboard. Through these projects, the aim is to enhance collaboration among actors of the Knowledge Triangle and provide high-quality support for innovators to increase the creation and diffusion of healthcare innovations in targeted countries.

EIT Health DRIVE

The EIT Health DRIVE training programme has been designed for organisations that provide incubation and acceleration services for innovators and aims to establish a specialised, comprehensive support programme for health and life science start-ups. The first cohort completed the DRIVE training in 2022 (first phase). In 2023, the participants were implementing their local healthcare start-up support programme (second phase) that was designed in the frame of the DRIVE 2022 training programme.



PROVEN METHODOLOGY



STUDY VISITS



NETWORK



CO-FUNDING



EIT HEALTH SUPPORTED START-UPS

CROATIAN STARTUP ANIBIOME SECURES EUR 1.2M PRE-SEED FUNDING FOR AGE-TECH INNOVATIONS

Anibiome, a Croatian age-tech startup founded in 2022 and headquartered in Zagreb, is personalising fermentation metabolites to improve gut health, reduce inflammation, and increase health span. The team participated in the EIT Health InnoStars programme Attract to Invest. By enhancing their knowledge and refining their investment strategy, they successfully closed a **pre-seed investment round valued at €1.2 million** in 2023. Ani Biome leverages non-invasive diagnostics, including daily psychobiosocial questions, tongue and skin scans, and wearable data, to gather comprehensive health information. Employing AI algorithms, Ani Biome develops personalized monthly plans that incorporate a range of metabolites produced through their multi-level fermentation methodology.

ANI BIOME



How Ani Biome works?

STEP ONE



CHOOSE YOUR PLAN

Select your plan for a monthly bundle of 30 AgeBiotics™, daily dose of personalised micronutrients.

STEP TWO



PERSONALISED FROM DAY 01

Download the Ani Biome app, create your profile, and complete the setup to receive your first AgeBiotics™ bundle.

STEP THREE



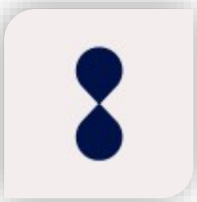
ONGOING TAILORED CARE

Continue with 1-min Daily Scan through the app, earn rewards and receive customised AgeBiotics™ monthly.



EIT HEALTH SUPPORTED START-UPS

SPANISH STARTUP AILIN RAISES EUR 800,000 TO REVOLUTIONIZE REMOTE LAB TESTING



Ailin brings a new remote diagnostic solution to foster prevention and better quality of life through patient empowerment (DIY; anytime, anywhere). **Ailin** enables access to lab testing, allowing practitioners, businesses, and end-users to overcome key barriers to early diagnosis. The team participated in the 2022 edition of Attract to Invest. By improving their knowledge and investment strategy they closed a successful pre-seed investment round with a value of EUR 800,000 in 2023.





Co-funded by the
European Union

EIT INNOENERGY HIGHLIGHTS



Celebrating Innovation in the Portuguese Energy Ecosystem

innoenergy.com



SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

BUSINESS CREATION



EIT InnoEnergy ran 19
business activities
benefiting 8 578 individuals

THE BUSINESS BOOSTER 2023 – CONNECTING INNOVATIONS WITH BUSINESS

The Business Booster is EIT InnoEnergy's annual two-day international networking event that showcases 150+ sustainable energy technologies under one roof. Each year event gathers more than 1500 participants, more than 150 exhibitors, and provided more than 3200 business meetings during the event. About 1/3 of the exhibitors were startups from RIS countries. Also, a large number institutions and corporates were representing the region making it an important part of European innovation ecosystem.



ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION



EIT InnoEnergy ran 7
education activities with a
total of 248 participants

ACCELERATING HYDROGEN ADOPTION IN EUROPE

KICstartH2 aims to accelerate hydrogen uptake throughout Europe through education and innovation, targeting students and industry professionals. The project brings forward niche educational methodologies that not only tackle content on hydrogen technologies but also innovation methods in business and management.

By combining these aspects of education, research and business, the project: caters to the needs of academics and industry groups; supports the creation of key knowledge; fosters business developments that will build on these new ideas; brings together the spheres of learning and commerce to activate new insights and future societal growth towards a sustainable energy future.

One of the concrete results is creation of First Hydrogen School in Ukraine.



EIT INNOENERGY SUPPORTED START-UP

EIT InnoEnergy invests 1mln. EUR in Catalyco to support a sustainable production of zinc oxide

EIT InnoEnergy has invested in [Catalyco](#), a company focused on sustainable zinc oxide (ZnO) production, with a goal of scaling green solutions for this essential material. Zinc oxide is crucial for industries like rubber, ceramics, glass, and cosmetics, and over half of the world's ZnO is used in tire production. The company's innovative technology recovers ZnO from industrial waste streams, promoting a circular economy by reducing environmental contaminants like chlorides and chromium.

This reduces Europe's reliance on ZnO imports, which currently account for about 38% of its demand. EIT InnoEnergy's support aligns with Europe's climate-neutrality strategy, and Catalyco's technology has already caught the attention of global players, underscoring its potential for stable, sustainable ZnO supplies within Europe. In addition to ZnO, the company's methods allow the recovery of other valuable materials like copper and nickel, further supporting resource sustainability





EIT INNOENERGY ALUMNI

CLIMATIZE: LEADING CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH INCLUSIVE INVESTMENT

William Wiseman and Alba Forns who come from Spain, are co-founders of Climatize, and have been recognised by Forbes 30 Under 30 2023 Social Impact for their work on climate finance. Their mobile app is revolutionizing the way individuals and organizations invest in climate projects that support underrepresented communities.

Climatize, founded in 2021, has already made significant strides towards achieving its goal of becoming the people's financial network for climate action. Their app enables users to invest in profitable climate projects starting from as little as \$5. Additionally, the app supports donation campaigns for climate nonprofits. The team's dedication to fighting for climate justice, social justice, and financial inclusion has landed them a partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy.



As EIT InnoEnergy Master's in Renewable Energy graduates, Will and Alba credit their education for providing the necessary renewable energy background, entrepreneurship foundation, and invaluable industry connections to start their own company. Their vision for Climatize has already raised \$735,000 from angel investors, government grants, and venture capital, and they have sourced \$155 million worth of projects in their pipeline.

EIT InnoEnergy alumni William Wiseman and Alba Forns, co-founders of Climatize, have been recognised by Forbes 30 Under 30 2023 Social Impact



Co-funded by the
European Union

EIT MANUFACTURING HIGHLIGHTS



Awarding ceremony of the EIT Manufacturing RIS Leaders 2023 competition



eitmanufacturing.eu



INNOVATIVE MANUFACTURING

EIT MANUFACTURING : TOWARDS FAIR, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE MANUFACTURING

EIT Manufacturing's purpose is to support breakthrough innovations that have reached sufficient maturity and need an extra push to be launched as a product or service in the market, resulting in real economic, environmental, and societal impacts. With such purpose, EIT Manufacturing aims to transform Europe's manufacturing to become socially and environmentally sustainable.



In 2023 EIT Manufacturing launched the second edition of **EVolution of RIS Innovations (EVO-R)**, a program which supports activities undertaking innovative manufacturing solutions from the demonstration stage (TRL 7) through to market uptake (TRL 8-9) with a 30k€ grant and in-kind support from EIT Manufacturing. A total of 83 applications were received from 21 different countries. Two individual applicants and 23 teams from 13 different EIT RIS eligible countries were selected and currently scaling-up their innovative solutions in the field of Flexible production systems for competitive manufacturing, Low environmental footprint systems & circular economy for green manufacturing, Digital & collaborative solutions and Human-machine co-working for socially sustainable manufacturing.

RIS Inlusiveness Call

Making manufacturing in RIS more inclusive!
5 June to 4 August, 2023



Co-funded by the
European Union



INNOVATION PROJECTS



There was a total of
6 Innovation activities with 355 participating individuals or organisations.

In 2023 EIT Manufacturing launched **RIS Inclusiveness** call, with the aim to attract, select and support entities coming from EIT RIS countries towards developing innovative solutions to make the work in the manufacturing industry more inclusive for individuals with disabilities. A total of 14 applications were received from 11 countries. Five teams from 4 different EIT RIS countries have been selected to participate in the RIS Inclusiveness Programme and are currently developing their innovative solutions with the support of EIT Manufacturing which will bring and marketed innovations in RIS countries and an enhanced place of work for people with disabilities in the manufacturing sector.



BUSINESS CREATION



EIT Manufacturing had a total of **7 business creation activities** with **184 participants** over the course of 2023.

Pre-accelerator Ukraine powered by EIT Jumpstarter

This programme aims to support Ukrainian innovators as they turn their concepts and discoveries into thriving businesses. Sixteen teams were selected from over 150 applicants to obtain dedicated training and mentoring to develop their ideas into businesses. At the end of the programme, EIT Manufacturing organized a Pitch competition for the 16 participants, each hoping to impress with their pitches an expert jury of industry leaders and secure one of the top three spots and the corresponding monetary prizes. The power of innovation was on full display on this occasion.



ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION



EIT Manufacturing ran **5 activities** with a total of **207 participants**.



Best Practice Classes on Innovation Policy for Authorities (BPC)

The Best Practice Classes on Innovation Policy for Authorities (BPC) is a tailored training for public authorities aimed at providing regional and national policy makers with insights and best practice examples that will ultimately allow them to strengthen the design, implementation and assessment of their innovation policy mix for the manufacturing sector.

In close cooperation with the authorities of the relevant country, the objective of this training is to identify bottlenecks within the local ecosystem and equip participants with the tools and resources necessary to foster an innovation-friendly ecosystem that promotes smart and sustainable manufacturing.

During the training, participants explore various tools for the enhancement of innovation policies. Building on the corresponding Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3), best practice examples have a focus on leveraging the innovation potential in EIT RIS countries.



EIT MANUFACTURING ALUMNI

Martina Ivanova, founder of **Peelo**, has achieved significant success as an EIT Community alumna. She won the [EIT RIS Leaders Competition](#) in 2023, receiving EUR 10,000 and pitch training. Previously, she participated in the 2020 [EIT Food RIS Innovation Prizes](#) in Slovakia and the 2021 [EIT Manufacturing Evolution of RIS Innovations](#). Martina co-founded Peelo in 2019 to reduce household food waste with reusable food packaging solutions. Peelo's innovative wax coating technology enabled the shift from handmade to automated production, allowing the company to meet global demand. One Peelo product can replace over 300 meters of plastic wrap, and with over 150,000 products sold, Peelo has significantly reduced food waste and plastic use.

„The RIS LEADERS programme has been a fulfilling experience as well as a great networking opportunity and a beautiful initiative of supporting women in manufacturing, which opened new doors for me. It showed us all that – no matter what your geographical or academic background, with a great idea or a product, – you can have a huge impact on the world around you, despite a lot of stigma and prejudice about women in manufacturing businesses.”

Martina Ivanova



peelo



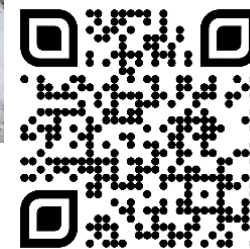


Co-funded by the
European Union

EIT RAWMATERIALS HIGHLIGHTS



Red pavers from bauxite residue, applied in parking area – a product of the GEORIS EIT RawMaterials innovation project, Greece.



eitrawmaterials.eu



CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS RESILIENCE FOR EUROPE

Pioneering a New Era in Raw Materials Innovation

The efficiency of electric motors and wind turbines are almost entirely dependent upon permanent magnets (PMs) for their energy conversion. This makes the economic importance of Rare Earth-PMs and their value chains a matter of urgent concern and opportunity for EU's rare earth-based industries. The highest magnet grades of N>50 are currently produced only in China, and EU industrial leaders in e-motors and wind power generators are heavily dependent on foreign suppliers, almost exclusively from China. Only a few producers of sintered NdFeB are left in EU, one of them is project partner Magneti Ljubljana – producing moderate magnet grades (N30-40). The RIS Capacity Building KAVA Project RECO2MAG consortium achieved HRE content below 1 wt.% (0.45 wt %) with achieving grades of N45(S)H. Further a successful trial batch of 30 Nd-Fe-B PMs with Dy content <1 wt % was performed by Magneti Ljubljana via improved milling and conventional sintering with grades N48-48M. With that they successfully achieved one designed and tested innovation for Nd-Fe-B permanent magnets of different grades N42, 44 and 48 produced in Slovenia.

Cooperation with the Government of Albania

The Cooperation agreement between the Albanian Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy and EIT RawMaterials was signed in Q4 2023 to establish an EIT RawMaterials Regional Innovation Center in Albania in early 2024 which will be funded fully by national funds. This partnership marks the first of its kind between EIT RawMaterials and a Western Balkan government, laying the groundwork for future collaborative initiatives in the region.

The EIT RawMaterials Regional Innovation Centre is set to become the main contact point for raw materials sector stakeholders in Albania and will be dedicated to forging robust partnerships between the EIT RawMaterials and Albanian innovation ecosystems. Albania will become EIT RIS eligible in 2025.

INNOVATION PROJECTS



In 2023 there were **11 innovation activities** with **978 participants**.



Raw materials deposit in Albania



BUSINESS CREATION



EIT RawMaterials ran 23 business creation activities with 1 793 participants

EIT RAWMATERIALS ACCELERATOR AND BOOSTER PROGRAMMES

EIT RawMaterials Accelerator targets scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs to bring their innovations into market-readiness level. The programme has 3 phases (ACP1, ACP2, ACP3) with a total grant of €90 000. There are 2 calls for new cohorts in 2023 (ACP1.1 and ACP1.2). These cohorts will enter ACP2 and ACP3 after they pass the graduation of the previous stage.

EIT RawMaterials Booster supports mature start-ups and young SMEs to reach the next milestones in their development. The programme runs for 12 months with a grant of up to EUR 200 000.



BOOSTERCALL
SCALE UP
YOUR BUSINESS



ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION



EIT RawMaterials ran 35 education activities with more than 38 093 participants

EIT RAWMATERIALS ACADEMY MASTER'S PROGRAMMES

EIT RawMaterials Academy offers students a unique opportunity to learn in a dynamic environment, focusing on real-life challenges. Awarded by the EIT, the EIT Label is a certificate of quality that is granted only to excellent educational programmes at the master's and doctoral level.

A student in EIT RawMaterials Academy is part of the largest European raw materials network with more than 300 organisations as partners, including higher education professionals, researchers, and industry experts from over 20 European countries. 53 students from RIS eligible countries graduated from EIT RawMaterials EIT Labelled Programmes in 2023.





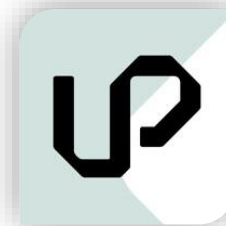
EIT RAWMATERIALS SUPPORTED START-UP

ESTONIAN STARTUP UP CATALYST PIONEERS SUSTAINABLE CARBON NANOMATERIALS

Estonian start-up UP Catalyst in securing a EUR 4 million seed investment to help it on its mission to revolutionise carbon material production in December 2023.

Having developed innovative technologies to turn CO₂ emissions into carbon nanomaterials and graphite, UP Catalyst has become a pioneer in sustainable carbon material production.

With the new funding, the company will build an industrial pilot reactor capable of processing 100 tons of CO₂ annually and producing 27 tons of carbon materials, making UP Catalyst the world's largest provider of green graphite. The new reactor will have a production capacity ten times larger than the current setup, marking an important milestone before the construction of a full-scale industrial reactor unit.





EIT RAWMATERIALS SUPPORTED START-UP

INNOVATIVE NOISE CONTROL: PHONONIC VIBES' BREAKTHROUGH IN MINING SAFETY

Phononic Vibes developed an innovative system to enhance health and safety conditions in mining and processing by reducing noise in the working environment. Their technology, originating from research at Politecnico di Milano and MIT, utilizes recycled materials and patented technology to achieve unprecedented performance in vibration and noise control. **Phononic Vibes** raised EUR 6 million in 2022, promoting eco-compatibility and sustainability in challenging environments.





EIT URBAN MOBILITY HIGHLIGHTS



DIGITALBUS: The Portuguese city of Loule revolutionises transportation with the launch of the app called “Apanha-me!”



eiturbanmobility.eu



SMART CITIES AND MOBILITY



INNOVATION PROJECTS



EIT Urban Mobility ran **3 projects** with **24 RIS Project partners**, **5 RIS demo cities**, and a large number of testing citizens.

RAPTOR PROGRAMME: FAST-TRACKING SOLUTIONS FOR URBAN MOBILITY ISSUES

Europe, one of the world's most urbanised regions, faces numerous challenges, such as road congestion, emissions, last-mile connectivity, and micro-mobility solutions. Traditionally, cities had to address these issues internally, hindered by lengthy bureaucratic processes. However, innovative solutions from start-ups and SMEs can significantly contribute to overcoming these challenges. By partnering with these agile start-ups, cities can test and scale solutions for greater impact. This is the idea behind **EIT Urban Mobility's Rapid Applications for Transport (RAPTOR) programme**. The challenge-based programme invites cities to identify niche urban mobility challenges, and start-ups and SMEs propose solutions. Winners receive funding and customised mentoring to develop and pilot their solutions over five months.

EIT Urban Mobility looks for innovative projects whose entry into the market is realistic within one or two years at the latest. These projects should provide innovative answers to the challenges defined by the cities of the City Club, work with an international project team, and fit the strategic development directions supported by the company. Project participants must agree to some form of commercial agreement as this ensures that the support fund is replenished.

During the pilot of the innovation project, the operation of the solution must be demonstrated in real life, which in this form gives interested cities and other entities the opportunity to get to know the solution and evaluate it.



BUSINESS CREATION



One business creation activity was implemented with **8 start-ups participating**.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF MOBILITY SOLUTIONS

EIT Urban Mobility address urban mobility challenges through partnerships with key industry players. The KIC provides financial support and value to its equity portfolio companies, helping them scale their impact. While EIT Urban Mobility is not an accelerator, it run start-up support programmes to assist companies in structuring investment rounds, scaling operations, and attracting talent. The KIC invests in pre-seed and seed-stage mobility companies that can deliver both impact and financial returns. Additionally, it actively promotes gender diversity and inclusion, supporting female-led start-ups and maintaining a balanced gender ratio within our organization. **Women lead 37% of the participating start-ups in the business support activities.**



ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION



There were **4 main education projects with a total number of 637 participants**.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION: EIT URBAN MOBILITY'S DUAL-CITY SUMMER SCHOOLS

When studying with the EIT Urban Mobility Master School, the students also participate in a Summer School between the first and the second year of the programmes. EIT Urban Mobility Summer Schools are a two-week intensive course taking place in two different cities in Europe. Students travel by train and switch to a new city halfway through the course.

So far, the students could choose between two different Summer Schools focused on different topics. Both are built around a full agenda of lectures, visits, business case projects, and thematic social events.

The KIC organises several such activities in the RIS countries, including a summer School with Poznan School of Logistics (two editions) called "City Logistics: resent and Future" and one Training course with the title "Sustainable City: Challenges for the Transport Sector"





EIT URBAN MOBILITY SUPPORTED START-UP

EIT ALUMNI DELIVERY COUPLE STRENGTHENS POSITION WITH GERMAN COMPETITOR ACQUISITION

Polish last-mile delivery start-up Delivery Couple announced in February 2024 its acquirement of German competitor THEO, in turn increasing its fleet size by 260% by the end of 2024. Both startups are EIT Urban Mobility alumni, Delivery Couple being selected for funding in the first cut-off date of 2023 in the framework of the RIS Funding Support to Startups Open Call in 2023. Shortly thereafter, Delivery Couple became part of the equity portfolio of EIT Urban Mobility

Focused on providing effective, safe, and semi-autonomous deliveries, the company is currently operating in four cities across Poland, having piloted the solution across 14 cities. This acquisition indicates a significant step towards becoming a European last-mile leader.

Delivery Couple, a trailblazer in the last-mile delivery landscape, specialises in designing and deploying innovative sidewalk delivery robots. Their cutting-edge technology addresses environmental concerns and ensures the company's financial viability starting from a small scale. Unlike many competitors, Delivery Couple has already achieved operational profitability.





EIT RIS Innovation in Action 2023: EIT Community Highlights



EIT Jumpstarter Grand Final 2023



eit-ris.eu



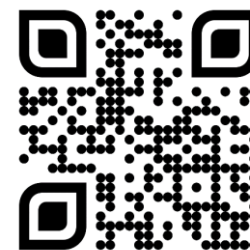
FROM IDEAS TO IMPACT: HOW EIT JUMPSTARTER IS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN START-UPS

EIT Jumpstarter aims to equip young innovators with the tools and knowledge to transform their early-stage ideas, secure the necessary funding, and, ultimately, build self-sustaining and profitable ventures.

Today, start-ups that have emerged from EIT Jumpstarter and pursued further development employ around 1,000 individuals. From 2017 to 2022, start-ups that graduated from EIT Jumpstarter and persevered to develop profitable businesses have successfully attracted an impressive EUR 56 million in prizes, grants, and investments.

Starting with an inaugural joint call in 2023, **210 teams progressed to the programme's first phase this year: the Online Bootcamps**. This encompassed online courses, mentorship, and coaching. Subsequently, **90 teams advanced to Local joint training**, they are creating their first business plans, and then **54 teams are making their way to the Grand Finals**. At least half of the finalist teams are expected to establish a company.

Supporting female innovators is one of the founding principles of the EIT Community, Europe's largest innovation ecosystem, and this is no different in the case of the EIT Jumpstarter. We are proud to present the growing number of women entrepreneurs applying and winning some of our programme's different categories. In 2023, two female-led start-ups dominated the competition in their categories and took home first prize. **Between 2019 and 2021, the annual number of female applicants hovered around 30; however, in 2022, it first tripled to 102, and this year, it peaked at 201.**



eitjumpstarter.eu



EIT JUMPSTARTER AT A GLANCE



JUMPSTARTER



Community
Strategic Regional Innovations

Funded by the
European Union



New talents
trained

1180



New start-ups
created

124



New jobs
created

>2100



Money attracted
by start-ups

€120M



1€=30€*



2017-2023, based on the data currently available

*EUR 1 invested into the programme brought EUR 30 raised/founded by the startups created



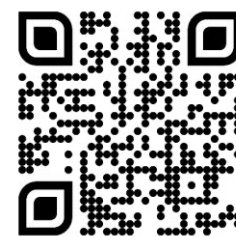


SPOTLIGHTING RESILIENT WOMEN: EIT RED KALYNA'S SUPPORT FOR UKRAINIAN INNOVATORS

At the EIT Community, we believe in the power of diversity and gender equality. We are convinced that for innovation to thrive, we need more women innovators, entrepreneurs, and more women in decision-making. Diversity powers us to bring the best solutions to pressing global challenges and enables us to make innovation happen.

In 2023 we launched the EIT Red Kalyna - initiative which showcases Ukrainian female innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers, and leaders who persist despite facing various challenges. We strive to create a supportive community and equip them with the knowledge and contacts necessary to develop their start-ups and organisations.

During the EIT Jumpstarter Grand Final in Athens, we recognised 9 amazing female leaders from Ukraine, all of whom received the Red Kalyna Award. We support them because they are the engine of Ukraine's economy today. We put them in the spotlight because we believe that the innovations and the companies these women provide their nation with will increase the competitiveness of the Ukrainian economy. They will make a positive difference in the lives of their fellow citizens.



eit-ris.eu

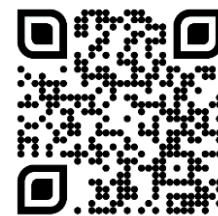


OPTIMISING RESEARCH ASSETS: EIT INFRABOOSTER'S ROLE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

In 2023, we launched a flagship initiative designed specifically for research institutes with laboratory infrastructure in the Western Balkans and neighbouring countries: **EIT InfraBooster**. This programme aims to optimise the use of publicly funded research infrastructures owned by universities or research institutes, aligning them with the R&D needs of private sector companies and startups.

EIT InfraBooster offers a modular training programme for representatives of scientific organisations that own research infrastructures. It provides capacity building and support in designing infrastructure-based services that can be offered to companies.

At the closing event of the programme's cycle in 2023, **8 research infrastructures from 6 countries in the Western Balkans presented their projects**. These showcased how they intend to leverage existing assets and enhance their connections with European markets.



eit-ris.eu



EIT COMMUNITY RIS HUBS: BRIDGING LOCAL INNOVATION AND EU NETWORKS

The EIT Community RIS Hubs serve as a one-stop shop for local stakeholders in the countries in which they are established. Its main mission is to ease access to Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) support and identify synergies between the EIT Community and local actors. They strengthen local entrepreneurship and build bridges between local and EU innovation networks.

In 2023, EIT Community RIS Hubs were established in North Macedonia, Ukraine, Latvia, Montenegro, Cyprus and Malta. By the end of 2025, such hubs will be operational in all RIS-eligible countries, including covering Europe's Outermost Regions.



CONCLUSION

In 2023, the EIT Community focused on strengthening the performance of the EIT RIS, building on the successes of 2022. Between 2021 and 2023, EIT RIS countries registered a participation rate of over 60% in EIT Community activities, one of the highest such rates amongst Horizon Europe instruments. This establishes the EIT as one of the most active and impactful instruments in Horizon Europe widening countries and beyond.

Reflecting this, in 2023, the EIT placed a major emphasis on reinforcing the EIT's place-based innovation approach, including by establishing the first six EIT Community RIS Hubs. By the end of 2024, the number of such Hubs, which will help foster local collaboration and connect regional ecosystems to the broader EIT pan-European network will reach a total of 18. All EIT RIS eligible countries will be covered by EIT Community RIS Hubs by 2025.

Additionally, 2023 saw the launch of key initiatives, including EIT InfraBooster for Western Balkans research infrastructures, EIT Red Kalyna to support Ukrainian female innovators, and EIT Founders2Founders for Ukrainian start-ups entering EU markets. Existing programmes, such as EIT Jumpstarter, continued to attract a record number of applications from RIS countries in 2023.

In 2024, the EIT RIS will celebrate its 10th anniversary, reflecting on its impact and future potential. A mid-term evaluation is planned, which will inform future strategic adjustments. Special efforts will also be made to engage more with EU Outermost Regions through a dedicated strategy, increasing their participation in EIT Community activities. Finally, in 2024, the EIT will carefully study the mid-term impact of the EIT RIS and update its strategic guidance to the EIT KICs with a view to ensure that the Scheme can deliver deeper impact in a growing number of EIT RIS-eligible countries from 2025 and towards the next EU multiannual financial framework.

