

#9
2022

BRUSSELS' PULSE



HIGHLIGHTS

RURAL PACT: EUROPEAN AND LOCAL LEADERS JOIN FORCES TO MAKE LOCAL COMMUNITIES STRONGER

On 15-16 June, over 450 participants representing EU, national, and regional policy makers along with local authorities, social and economic stakeholders gathered for the first Rural Pact conference. They agreed on the governance of the Rural Pact and committed to achieving the long-term vision for the EU's rural areas. Over these two days, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) together with other participants and members of the Rural Pact community started making commitments to make the EU's rural areas stronger, more connected, resilient and prosperous by 2040. More: [here](#).

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THE NEW UK REGULATORY REGIME FOR GOODS: NEW UKCA TRANSITIONAL MEASURES

The UK left the EU (European Union) single market at 11PM on 31st December 2020. The United Kingdom (UK) Conformity Assessed or UKCA mark is being phased in from 1st January 2021 to replace the CE (Conformité Européenne) mark in Great Britain, although for most goods the CE mark will remain acceptable for a transition period ending on 31 December 2022. The UK Conformity Assessed mark is a mandatory mark on a product to indicate that it conforms to GB (Great Britain) legislation. The manufacturer or, if mandated, their authorized representative will be responsible for affixing the UKCA mark to the product, which is the same principle as CE marking but for the GB market. More: [here](#).

NEWS

AGRICULTURE

FARMDemo TRAINING KIT

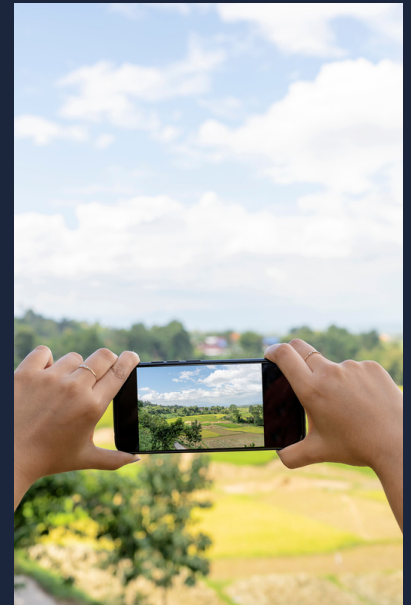
FarmDemo is a collaboration between Horizon 2020 projects working on peer-to-peer learning with a focus on farm demonstration as a tool to boost innovation uptake. Starting with PLAID, AgriDemo F2F and NEFERTITI, this collaboration is now federating NEFERTITI with IPMWORKS and future Horizon Europe demonstration projects to come. FarmDemo has recently produced a training kit to help farmers organise successful farm demonstrations. Tools, guidelines and videos are compiled on a dedicated website. There are materials for both online and on-farm demonstrations. More: [here](#).



INDUSTRY

TOURISM ORGANISATIONS TAKE CONCRETE STEPS FOR THE GREEN AND DIGITAL TRANSITION

As part of the Transition Pathway for Tourism, 112 tourism organisations have already committed to the transition of EU tourism. 186 pledges were published today and more should follow. With 186 pledges the first batch of commitments shows the strong interest and willingness of EU tourism players to work on the transition of EU tourism. Overall, 112 organisations from 20 EU countries, the United Kingdom and Switzerland have responded to the call to renew EU tourism. The pledges cover 25 out of 27 topics of the Transition Pathway for Tourism, including areas such as policy and governance, sustainable mobility, green transition, digital transition, skills, resilience and inclusion, and stakeholder support. More: [here](#).



EDUCATION

INCREASING ACHIEVEMENT AND MOTIVATION IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE LEARNING IN SCHOOLS

New insights into what education authorities across Europe can do to strengthen student motivation, raise achievement, and help those falling behind, especially in mathematics and science learning. The report 'Increasing achievement and motivation in mathematics and science learning in schools', published by the European Commission's Eurydice network, examines how mathematics and science teaching and learning are organised in Europe, how learning outcomes are assessed and how students are supported when facing difficulties in the learning process. More: [here](#).



CULTURE

THE FESTIVAL OF THE NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS 2022

The Festival took place from the 9th to the 12th of June as a hybrid event—in Brussels and online. The Festival was the first of its kind since the European Commission launched the New European Bauhaus in 2021. The event aimed to bring people from across Europe to debate and discuss how to build a more sustainable, beautiful, and inclusive world. In order to do so, the Festival fostered synergies between the arts and science, politics and technology, as well as nature and society. 29 research and innovation projects managed by the European Research Executive Agency (REA) participated at the Fair section of the Festival. These projects were selected because they live up to the ideals of the New European Bauhaus: beautiful, sustainable, together. Some of the topics the 29 projects are researching include building a circular economy, reducing water and food waste, advancing public health, and regenerating urban areas. More: [here](#).

ENVIRONMENT

PAVING THE WAY TO COP 27: THE BONN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

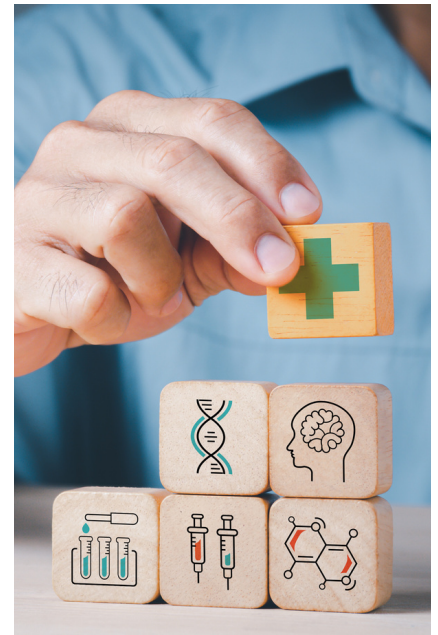
Delegates representing more than 100 Parties to the Paris Agreement met in Bonn, Germany, to prepare key decisions for the upcoming UN Climate Conference (COP 27) in Sharm el-Sheikh, and for the years to come. The meeting was the first time the international community has gathered since COP26 in Glasgow, where Parties committed to develop a work programme to speed up cuts in their emissions in this critical decade before 2030, with the aim of keeping global average temperature rise to below 1.5 degrees Celsius. More: [here](#).



HEALTH

EUROPEAN HEALTH DATA SPACE: INSIGHTS INTO SAVINGS, FINANCING, AND GOVERNANCE

The European Health Data Space will be a health-specific ecosystem. Practically speaking, the space covers a wide range of actions, including: Rules; Common standards and practices; Infrastructures; Governance. The European Commission's proposal for European Health Data Space has three main aims. The space aims to: support individuals to take control of their own health data; support the use of health data in four ways (for better healthcare delivery, better research, better innovation, and better policy making); enable the European Union to make full use of the potential offered by the safe and secure exchange, use and re-use of health data. More: [here](#).



DIGITAL

THE FIFTH WORKSHOP ORGANISED BY THE VIRTUAL REALITY AND AUGMENTED REALITY (VR/AR) INDUSTRIAL COALITION FOCUSED ON IMPACT OF VR AND AR IN THE MEDIA SECTOR

As announced in the Commission's Media and Audiovisual Action Plan, the Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality (VR/AR) Industrial Coalition is organising workshops with stakeholders from November 2021 to February 2022. During the 5th workshop, 20 participants from different segments of the creative and cultural and media industries got together to discuss current trends as well as desired industry and policy actions needed to strengthen the European VR/AR ecosystem. Many innovative VR/AR applications and areas for intervention were discussed, highlighting which actors between policymakers and industry are best placed to take action. More: [here](#).



MARITIME

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN GOVERNANCE: EU'S CONTRIBUTION FOR SETTING THE COURSE OF A BLUE PLANET

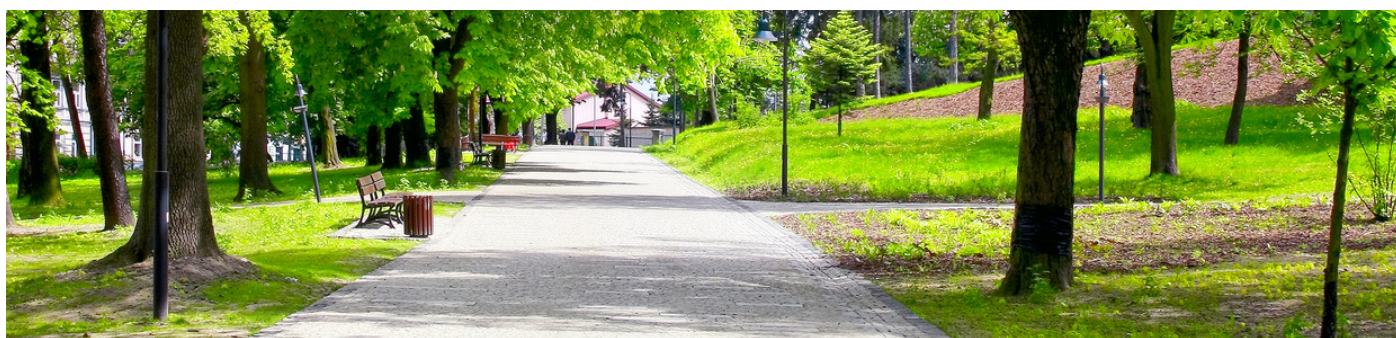
The European Commission and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy unveiled the renewed EU agenda on International Ocean Governance (IOG), proposing actions for a secure, clean and sustainably managed ocean. With this policy, the EU confirms its active role in international ocean governance and its commitment to strengthen implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goal 14 on Life Below Water. The new agenda has an important role in delivering on the blue part of the European Green Deal. More: [here](#).



CITIES

GREEN DEAL GOING LOCAL: CITIES AND REGIONS PUT FORWARD ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MEASURES TO SUPPORT CITIZENS AND BUSINESSES TO OVERCOME THE ENERGY CRISIS

Following up on the Council adoption of its general approaches on key 'Fit for 55' files, the European Committee of the Regions adopted four opinions directly related to the role of cities and regions in delivering the European Green Deal – the EU's growth strategy to reach climate neutrality by 2050. From economic and financial measures to increase local green budgets, to the implementation of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) and the need to develop social measures to protect the most vulnerable and reinforce the role of citizens in the green transition. More: [here](#).



EVENTS

THIRD PCI ENERGY DAYS

The PCI (Projects of Common Interest) Energy Days is a policy conference and exhibition dedicated to the practical implementation of Projects of Common Interest.

After two years, the event resumes on 19 and 20 September in Brussels. The 3rd edition will provide the project promoters with the opportunity of showcasing their projects and sharing their experience on how to accelerate the development and construction of key PCIs for the achievement of our energy and climate goals. More: [here](#).

TRANSLATING EUROPE FORUM 2022

Translation and language technologies make it easier for people to access information. A tool for mutual understanding between cultures, translation is one of the invisible powers behind globalisation and economic growth.

The wide availability of virtually free MT engines has seen overall translation volumes go through the roof as the world becomes ever more interconnected. Yet despite this “technological revolution”, demand for skilled translation professionals is growing. Translating Europe Forum will show how technology, coupled with the specialist skills and knowledge of translation professionals, is making the world a more interconnected, accessible and user-friendly place. Register and learn more: [here](#).

SUPPORTING INNOVATIONS IN ROAD TRANSPORT: HORIZON EUROPE & ITS SYNERGIES WITH OTHER EU PROGRAMMES

Please save the date in your agenda for the online workshop “Supporting innovations in road transport: Horizon Europe and its synergies with other EU programmes” which will take place on 4 October. The objective of this half-day workshop is to inform road transport stakeholders about EU funding and financing opportunities beyond Horizon Europe, which can help new technologies and systems entering and scaling-up the market.

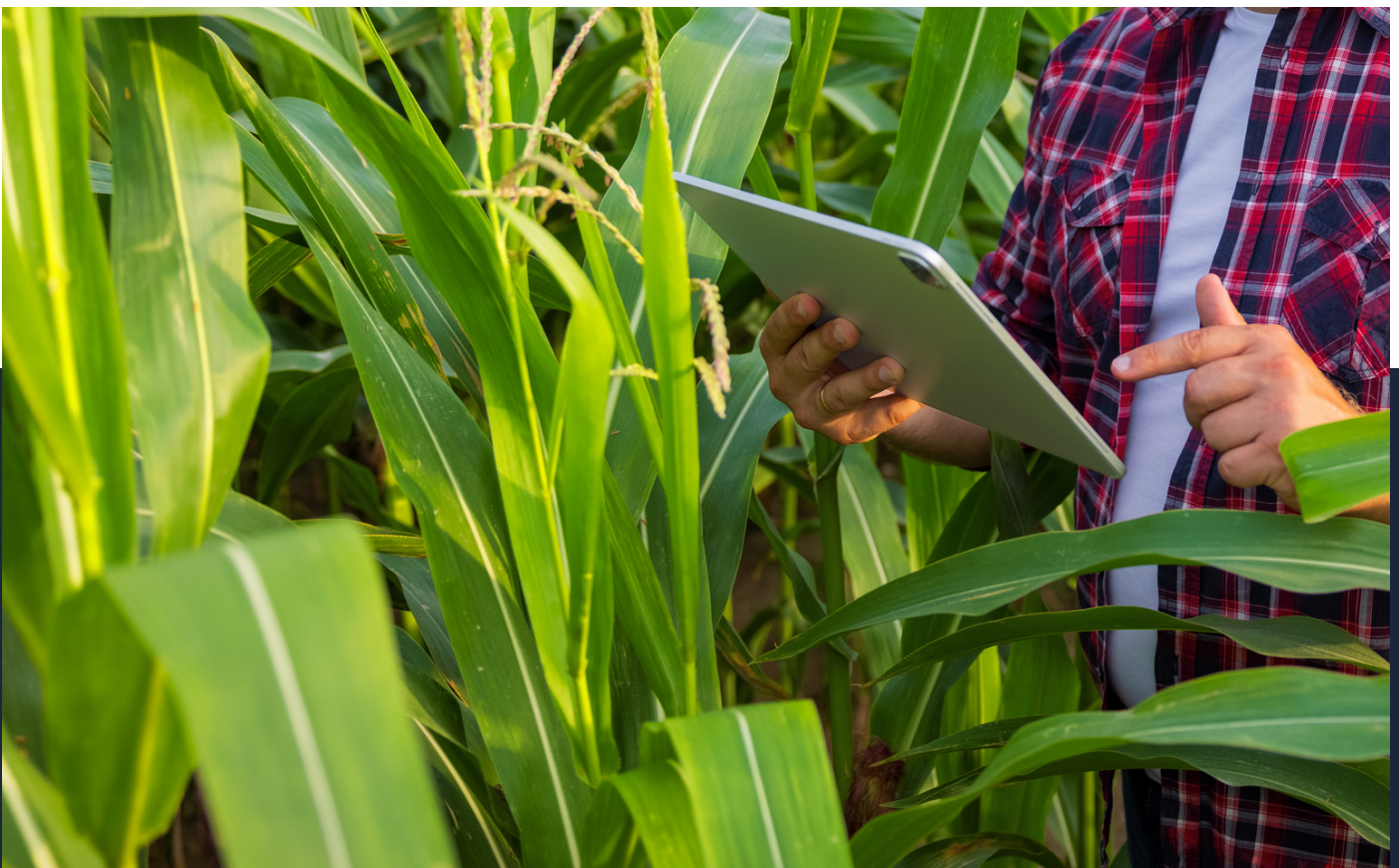
This workshop will also discuss how to improve synergies between Horizon Europe and other EU programmes, in order to increase the uptake and deployment of innovative road transport solutions deriving from R&I actions. The agenda of this workshop will follow. Register and learn more: [here](#).

HIGH LEVEL CONFERENCE: TOWARDS A LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ENABLING A DIGITAL EURO FOR CITIZENS AND BUSINESSES

The ECB has launched the investigation phase of a digital euro project as major jurisdictions are exploring options for central bank digital currencies. The Commission has announced a legislative proposal on a digital euro for early 2023. In this context, the conference will be an opportunity to discuss key regulatory and policy aspects of a digital euro. This high level conference will be the opportunity to listen to: EVP Valdis Dombrovskis; Commissioner Mairead McGuinness; Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni; Commissioner Thierry Breton; the President of the Eurogroup Paschal Donohoe; MEP and ECON Chair Irene Tinagli; ECB Executive Board Member Fabio Panetta and other high-level and industry speakers. More: [here](#).

SUPPORTING THE RURAL GREEN TRANSITION

On 13 September from 14:00 to 15:30 CEST, the Policy Learning Platform is organising a webinar on supporting the rural green transition. Rural areas make a unique and important contribution to our economy and way of life but are often left out of low-carbon planning and strategies. However, their transition must be supported taking into account also of their distinct challenges such as declining and aging populations, fewer economic and social opportunities, and low population densities which make infrastructure and service provision a particular challenge. Join this webinar to discover the main challenges faced by rural areas and learn from good practices identified by the Interreg Europe community and beyond. Register and learn more: [here](#).



OPEN CALLS

INNOVATION FUND'S SECOND SMALL-SCALE CALL FOR PROJECTS

Commission has launched on 31 March 2022 the Innovation Fund's second call for small-scale projects with capital expenditure between EUR 2.5 and 7.5 million located in EU Member States, Iceland and Norway.

The call aims to support projects that deploy highly innovative technologies, processes, business models or products/services, are sufficiently mature and have a potential to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Deadline date: 31 August 2022, 17:00, Brussels time. More: [here](#).



EUROPEAN CITY FACILITY - FOURTH CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The European City Facility (EUCF) aims to support municipalities and local authorities in developing Investment Concepts related to the implementation of actions identified in their climate and energy action plans. The ultimate objective of the EUCF is to build a substantial pipeline of sustainable energy investment projects across municipalities in Europe. Applicants have to demonstrate political commitment to the development of the Investment Concept through a letter of support, signed by the Mayor or other relevant political representative. Deadline date: 30 September 2022, 17:00, Brussels time. More: [here](#).

€120 MILLION AVAILABLE FOR ADVANCING EUROPE'S CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY

CBE JU published its first call for project proposals. A total of €120 million will be dedicated to advancing competitive circular bio-based industries in Europe across 12 topics.

The Call's funding supports three CBE JU objectives defined in the CBE JU's Strategic Innovation and Research Agenda: accelerate the innovation process and development of bio-based innovative solutions; accelerate market deployment of existing mature and innovative bio-based solutions; ensure a high level of environmental performance of bio-based industrial systems. Deadline date: 22 September 2022, 17:00, Brussels time. More: [here](#).

CRAFT - CREATING ACTIONABLE FUTURES: CREATING ACTIONABLE FUTURES

CrAFT is an EU-funded coordination and support action for New European Bauhaus transformations towards climate-neutral, beautiful and inclusive cities, and is looking for 70 CrAFT Cities that want to test and share models of transformation, receive implementation support and become role models for cities across Europe.

The CRAFT (CReating Actionable FuTures) will support all five selected projects, as well as future NEB lighthouse projects, with €2 million in funding. CRAFT will test collaborative local models for NEB transformations in three 'sandbox cities' (Amsterdam, Bologna and Prague) and guide the 100 cities selected under the 'Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities' Mission. More: [here](#).

EIT DIGITAL CHALLENGE

Apply to the 9th edition of the EIT Digital Challenge, the leading pan-European competition for digital deep tech scaleups and become the next European success story! The top 20 companies will be invited to an exclusive event to pitch in front of a panel of experts and investors as well as participate in the matchmaking sessions with invited corporates and investors.

The winners will receive waived entry into the 12-month Accelerator Program worth €50,000. They will get dedicated services in international Access to Finance and Business Development by the EIT Digital Accelerator team.

The EIT Digital Challenge aims to identify the best European deep tech entrepreneurs and help them scale up internationally, supporting the European deep tech ecosystem. Deadline date: 19 September 2022. More: [here](#).



"... AND MORE"

COMMISSION ASSESSES CURRENT CULTURAL POLICY COOPERATION AND PROPOSES NEW PRIORITIES

Recovery and resilience of the cultural sectors, the effects of climate change, culture's role for societal transformation and wellbeing, combating illicit trade in cultural goods are among the proposed future priorities detailed in the report on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-22.

The European Commission's report on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-22, published on Wednesday, gives a positive assessment of the implementation of the Work Plan.

It also acknowledges the relevance of its priorities, the actions carried out with the support from and in cooperation with the Commission, and the working methods used to implement them. More: [here](#).



THE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE

In Brussels, from the 09th to 12th June took place the first Festival of the NEB – New European Bauhaus. The NEB introduces a cultural and creative dimension in the Green Deal aligning sustainable innovation with the creativity and liveliness of concrete and positive experiences in communities and regions. With the participation of Alentejo, through the University of Évora, the EU Design Days occurred in the same week. In this 2022 edition, stakeholders from various European regions debated the role of design in responding to various European challenges. This is the case of the Bauhaus Rural Network, in which the Alentejo participates, sharing with other regions a vision of rebalancing access to innovation between metropolitan regions and those of low density. Culture, creativity, arts, expression and the business of expression are of critical importance to the European Union.



The Alentejo representation in Brussels contributes to this by ensuring leadership of the European RICC network, the Regional Initiative for Culture and Creativity. The European expression of Alentejo remains active and attentive to the opportunities offered to the region to deepen the path of ambitious and leading European positioning. H2020-AURORAL focus on delivering a digital environment for smart objects and services' interoperability triggers dynamic ecosystems of smart applications and services across European regions and cities.

MARCOS ANTÓNIO NOGUEIRA.

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