

#11
2022

BRUSSELS' PULSE



HIGHLIGHTS

NEW PACT FOR SKILLS PARTNERSHIP TO BOOST DIGITAL SKILLS

With the support of the Commission, EU associations, companies, organisations, trade unions, universities, training providers and national federations set up a new partnership for skills in the digital ecosystem. This new partnership will enable the upskilling and reskilling of workers and attract more people to the digital industry. The partnership will help people and businesses acquire necessary digital skills, which will contribute to the objectives of the digital and green transitions of Europe's economy. It will focus first on improving the skills of the workforce of the partners of the digital sector. Partners will then develop common targets, for instance on the number of people to be reskilled and monitor future developments on upskilling and reskilling. More: [here](#).

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UKRAINE: COMMISSION PROPOSES FLEXIBILITIES ALLOWING TO CONTINUE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD CROSS BORDER AND INTERREG TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES

The Commission will 100% co-finance the cross-border programmes with Ukraine and Moldova to help implement the cooperation projects disrupted by the Russian military aggression against Ukraine. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, cross border cooperation programmes between Member States, Ukraine and Moldova have faced serious disruptions. With its proposal, the Commission introduces more flexible conditions to implement these EU-funded programmes which are crucial to support local schools, hospitals, social care and institutions (e.g., SOS rescue project on PL-UA border). Moreover, projects with Ukraine and Moldova addressing migratory challenges would also be retroactively eligible from 24 February 2022, the day of the Russian invasion. More: [here](#).

NEWS

AGRICULTURE

RURITAGE FINAL CONFERENCE - 9 & 10 JUNE 2022 AT UNESCO, PARIS

As a way of celebrating the achievements of the RURITAGE project, the conference “Sustainable Rural Regeneration in the European Agenda” was held on the 9 and 10 of June 2022 at UNESCO. The conference gathered practitioners and international experts from the European Commission and EU funded projects, as well as the rural communities participating in the project. It included an interactive workshop on rural future scenarios, discussions with leading European researchers and practitioners and an information session for Member States. More: [here](#).



INDUSTRY

EUROPEAN INNOVATION COUNCIL: €20 MILLION SUPPORT FOR UKRAINIAN START-UPS

The European Commission has launched an ambitious €20 million action to support the Ukrainian innovation community. This action is made possible through a targeted amendment of the 2022 European Innovation Council (EIC) work programme. The new initiative will support at least 200 Ukrainian deep tech start-ups with up to €60,000. In addition, the EIC will offer non-financial support, such as business advisory services and matchmaking. This action will enhance the capacity of Ukrainian innovators to interact with the European innovation ecosystem, enter new markets and benefit from the European financing instruments. To ensure greater impact, the €20 million support will be disbursed through a competitive call for proposals for a pan-European network of start-up associations, collaborating with at least one Ukrainian innovation stakeholder and seeking synergies with relevant EU initiatives, such as the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN). More: [here](#).



EDUCATION

THE INTEROPERABLE EUROPE ACADEMY

The Interoperable Europe Academy (IOPEU Academy) is an initiative started in 2019 to adhere to advanced digital skills and to promote interoperability. The IOPEU Academy offers actions to train everyone but is mainly targeted to public sector employees with specialised Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that could fit any Learning Management System (LMS). In addition, several actions run in parallel to increase awareness towards interoperability such as events, webinars, collaboration with universities, organisations, public administrations and other relevant actors that have an active role in digital transformation and interoperability. More: [here](#).



CULTURE

NEW EUROPEAN BAUHAUS: 20 SMALL AND MEDIUM MUNICIPALITIES TO RECEIVE SUPPORT FOR FRONTRUNNER PROJECTS

The Commission announced today the 20 winners of the first call of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) dedicated to place-based transformative projects led by small and medium-sized municipalities. The projects are embodying the values of the New European Bauhaus – sustainability, aesthetics, and inclusion – in one of four action areas: renovation of buildings and public spaces; preservation and transformation of cultural heritage; adaptation and transformation of buildings for affordable housing solutions; or regeneration of urban or rural spaces. Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa Ferreira, said: “20 great projects selected from over 80 applications from all over Europe – a clear sign of the New European Bauhaus going local. Cohesion policy is ideally placed to support small cities and towns and to engage public authorities to launch more New European Bauhaus projects at the regional level.” More: [here](#).

ENVIRONMENT

WATER SCARCITY: COMMISSION ADVISES ON SAFE WATER REUSE IN AGRICULTURE

The Commission published guidelines to help Member States and stakeholders apply the rules on the safe reuse of treated urban waste water for agricultural irrigation. With several Member States increasingly suffering from droughts, reusing water from urban waste water treatment plants can become an essential tool to ensure a safe and predictable source of water, whilst lowering the pressure on water bodies and enhancing the EU’s ability to adapt to climate change. The Water Reuse Regulation applicable from June 2023, sets out minimum water quality, risk management and monitoring requirements to ensure safe water reuse. The guidelines are complemented by several practical examples to facilitate the application of the rules. More: [here](#).



HEALTH

EU HEALTH POLICY PLATFORM

The EU Health Policy Platform is a collaborative online tool that makes it easy for European Commission services, health-related interest groups and stakeholders to communicate with each other. The European Commission's Directorate General for Health and Food Safety moderates the Web Platform and coordinates Commission's input. This initiative is funded through the EU's 4th Health Programme 2021-2027 and the platform's working language is English. In addition to running the Web Platform, which facilitates online discussion, collaboration and frequent webinars; the EU Health Policy Platform team also organises the EU Health Award. This Award recognises cities, NGOs and schools whose initiatives improve public health in the European Union. More: [here](#).



DIGITAL

SYNERGY FUNDING FOR EUROPEAN DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS

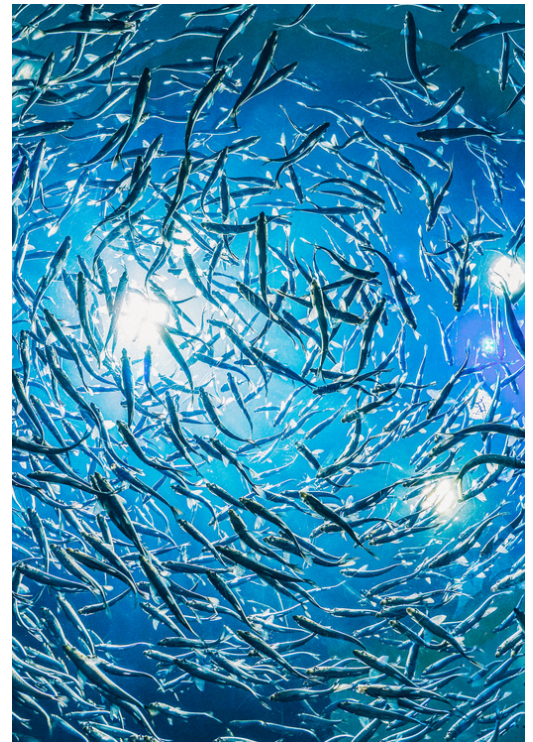
Rules and best practices to manage co-funding using DIGITAL and European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) for European Digital Innovation Hubs. Q&A and conclusions arising from the coordination meeting with management authorities of European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) for cumulative funding with European Digital Innovation Hubs in the Digital Europe Programme. Participants received information on aspects of co-funding including agreements on funding rates, duration of the grant and reporting periods. More: [here](#).



MARITIME

COMMISSION PROPOSES FISHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2023 IN THE BALTIC SEA IN AN EFFORT TO RECOVER SPECIES

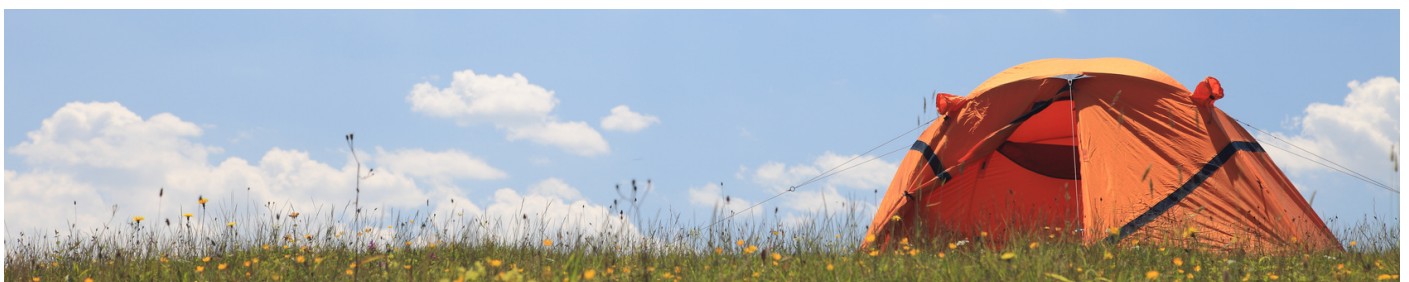
The European Commission adopted its proposal for fishing opportunities for 2023 for the Baltic Sea. Based on this proposal, EU countries will determine the maximum quantities of the most important commercial fish species that can be caught in the sea basin. The Commission proposes to increase fishing opportunities for central herring and plaice, while maintaining the current levels for salmon and the levels of by-catch of western and eastern cod, as well as western herring. The Commission proposes to decrease fishing opportunities for the four remaining stocks covered by the proposal, in order to improve the sustainability of those stocks and to allow them to recover. More: [here](#).



CITIES

SUMMER CAMPS IN EU PROVIDE A SAFE PLACE FOR UKRAINIAN CHILDREN

President of the European Committee of the Regions and Mayor of Kyiv praise solidarity shown by EU regions and cities organising summer camps for Ukrainian children. The presidents of the European Committee of the Regions and the Association of Ukrainian Cities have congratulated cities and regions that are organising summer camps in the European Union for Ukrainian children, saying that this is an act of solidarity that offers a sense of normality to some of the millions of Ukrainian children whose lives have been shaken by the war. The summer camps are part of a broader show of solidarity by the EU's cities and regions, ranging from humanitarian aid to twinings and commitments to support the reconstruction of Ukraine. Children welcomed at the summer camps organised by members of the European Committee of the Regions number over five hundred, come from both primary and secondary schools, and are currently displaced within Ukraine. The camps have lasted from 10 days to three weeks. More camps will be hosted by European local and regional authorities over the course of the summer. More: [here](#).



EVENTS

MAKING MARKETS WORK FOR PEOPLE

On 27 October, 2022, Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager will host Making Markets Work for People, a conference that will review and debate the impact of competition policy on people's lives. Competition policy also has an important social dimension – it creates a fairer distribution of new opportunities, while keeping prices low. In a nutshell, it makes markets work for people, not the other way around. Never has this insight been more important than today, with the negative effects of inflation and high energy bills impacting the daily life of millions of households in Europe. Register and learn more: [here](#).

HPP WEBINAR – OPEN VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE "SUPPORTING UKRAINE, NEIGHBORING EU MEMBER STATES AND MOLDOVA"

The Co-Chairs and Liaisons of the "Supporting Ukraine, neighboring EU Member States and Moldova" Health Policy Platform Network are pleased to invite you to an open virtual meeting on Tuesday 13 September 2022 from 15:00 to 16:30 CEST.

The aim of this meeting will be to review the work and progress made in the recent months and to discuss together actions and priorities for supporting Ukraine and neighboring countries in the season ahead. Four priority areas will be discussed: Supporting patients and patient organisations, including support on EU Member State to Member State transfers, removing bottlenecks and harmonisation of rules in different Member States; Partnerships and funding support for civil society organisations in Ukraine, Moldova and impacted EU Member States; Mental health support for refugee patients and healthcare professionals; Recognition and support for healthcare professionals arriving in EU Member States and Moldova, e.g. professional qualification recognition. More: [here](#).

SAVE THE DATE: SEMIC IS COMING BACK ON THE 6TH OF DECEMBER

The Interoperability Unit of DIGIT in the European Commission, in collaboration with the Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU, proudly presents the 2022 edition of SEMIC: Data Spaces in an Interoperable Europe. After two digital editions, the annual semantic interoperability conference will be back completely physically on the 6th of December 2022 at the Square Meeting Center in Brussels! The central focus of #SEMIC2022 revolves around the implementation of data spaces, bringing together concrete use cases from both the public and the private sector. More: [here](#).

EUROPEAN ONLINE WEEK OF ACTIVE HEALTHY AGEING

The European Week of Active & Healthy Ageing aims to become THE European networking & exchange platform for providing innovation support and inter-disciplinary cooperation for active & healthy ageing. It brings together collaboration partners from around Europe (from industry and academia to care providers and the older people themselves), who have a stake in promoting & supporting healthy ageing to innovate new service models, such as in health & care, lifelong learning and employment. Its third edition will take place between 18 and 20 October 2022 in Gdansk, Poland, consisting of interactive workshops, discussions, plenary sessions, exhibitions and match-making activities. The event will build on 10 years of legacy of the AAL Association's AAL Forum, sharing knowledge and showcasing innovation at all levels in the active and healthy ageing sector. More: [here](#).

MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN CLUSTER ASSOCIATIONS AND NETWORKS - SIDE EVENT, EUROPEAN CLUSTER CONFERENCE 2022

As part of the European Cluster Conference 2022, this meeting will gather, for the first time, 70+ representatives from European cluster associations and networks, and organisations across Europe to exchange experiences and collect ideas on how EU cluster initiatives can best support the EU actions toward a more green, more digital and more resilient economy. Representatives from the national cluster associations, including those which are teamed up in the European Cluster Alliance, representatives of the cluster sectoral networks and officials from the cluster team in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) will join the discussions too. The additional aim of the event is to build direct contact between different players of the European cluster landscape to be continued through the European Cluster Collaboration Platform. Register and learn more: [here](#).



OPEN CALLS

ACCESS CITY AWARD 2023 COMPETITION

Across Europe, cities are breaking down barriers for persons with disabilities. Is your city one of them? Then apply for the 2023 edition of the Access City Award. Participating in the Award is an opportunity to gain European recognition and a unique chance to review the current situation in your city. It also allows you to share experiences with other European cities, helping you to become an even better city to live and visit. It also allows you to share experiences with other European cities, helping you to become an even better city to live and visit. Deadline date: 08 September 2022, 23:59, Brussels time. More: [here](#).



WOMEN IN THE BLUE ECONOMY

The actions funded under this call will help sustainable blue economy sectors e.g; fisheries, aquaculture, shipbuilding, maritime transport, offshore renewable energy, blue bioeconomy, inland and offshore aquaculture, etc., to embrace a deep and structural change to facilitate and promote the inclusion of women in the wider maritime economy. Each project should however focus on at least three sectors so as to mainstream and expand good practices and activities, from sectors where data is already available and actions have already been taken in terms of gender equality (e.g., shipping, fishing etc.) to sectors where data availability and actions are still limited (e.g., offshore renewable energies, blue bioeconomy, robotics, etc.). Deadline date: 22 September 2022, 17:00, Brussels time. More: [here](#).

OPEN CALL: TRANSFORMATION OF PLACES OF LEARNING

We are looking for projects focused on the transformation of places of learning that connect a tangible place with innovative pedagogical methods and the local community. We are interested in ongoing or new projects in the fields of education, training, youth, and knowledge that reflect the values of the New European Bauhaus (sustainability, aesthetics, inclusion).

While the ultimate objective is to combine these three dimensions of transformation, projects developed around two of them are also welcome. We invite you – experts, thinkers, doers, neighbours, ministers, students, educators or researchers – to join us in making waves for beautiful, sustainable, and inclusive spaces that shape our future ways of learning and thinking. Deadline date: 31 December 2022. More: [here](#).

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO PARTICIPATE IN A PILOT ACTION ON MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE AND CO-DEVELOPED CROSS-BORDER STRATEGIES

Under this call, DG Regional and urban policy seeks expressions of interest from cross-border legal entities involved in cross-border issues wishing to improve their multi-level governance and establish (or improve) co-developed, cross-border strategies. Work will be carried out in the framework of a pilot project.

The Commission will contract the OECD to provide expertise to the selected pilot cross-border regions. The OECD will work with these regions individually and as a group, as well as with other cross-border stakeholders and institutions, to build the evidence and knowledge bases. The experiences will be disseminated and will feed into reflections on how to improve cross-border governance. Deadline date: 30 September 2022. More: [here](#).

GREEN DEAL GOING LOCAL: NEW CALL FOR BEST PRACTICES AND CLIMATE COMMITMENTS

The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) is launching a new call for best practices to its members and alternates, Young Elected Politicians (YEPs) and members the CoR network of local and regional councillors to collect and promote low-carbon and sustainable projects as well as climate commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from local and regional authorities across the EU.

Does your region or city have a specific project that targets the objectives of the European Green Deal? Has your region or city set a target to reduce GHG emissions by 2030 or 2050? Then this new call is right for you. More: [here](#).



"... AND MORE"

MEET THE FACES OF INTERREG EUROPE AND THEIR VISION FOR INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION 2021-2027

The nine European Outermost Regions are often associated with periphery and remoteness, but they are getaways for engagement with surrounding regions. INTERREG programmes enable beneficiaries to share knowledge, structure economic sectors, strengthen trade and develop access to targeted markets, and encourage the emergence of a network of partners.

This first publication by Interact aims to raise awareness on the achievements of the European Union far from its continental area. More: [here](#).



COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

Deepening the role of regions in the European framework is a fundamental pillar of the Union's institutional strengthening. Each member state brings to the Union the organic specificities of its regional units, within the sovereignty of its states, in accordance with its historical tradition, democratic heritage and transformative ambition. The diversity extends from the primacy of municipalistic freedom, in the Portuguese case, to the German federal states, independent not more than decades ago. In the framework of Europe, all regions are equal in duties and rights; in ambition and responsibility; in legitimacy and in challenges. All of them bring to the European level the coveted proximity to citizens, sensitivity to environmental issues, institutional innovation, geographic identity, specific cultures and their own challenges.



Alentejo – unique and happy – is an example of this among the 333 European NUTS/II regions.

Therefore, the regions are a vital element in the democratic deepening of the Union. Alentejo, aware of this responsibility and historic opportunity for the European regions, organized in September 2013, the first European congress of Emerging Regions, with a participation that includes most of the member states and a significant presence of European networks that address regional issues. The pioneering spirit was rewarded with the recent adoption, by the European Commission, for regions that, like us, aspire to transform their structural challenges into opportunities for innovation of “Emerging Regions” designation.

Subsequently, Alentejo has played, on a European level, a necessary and useful leadership role in emerging European regions. On the Committee of the Regions' Reghub Platform, topics contributing to the legislative agenda, on the initiative of the European Commission, have been recently shared, prioritizing the themes of common base regulation of sustainability, environmental, climate and heritage protection, as well as improving the regulation of the use of geographical indications of regional cultural interest, the comprehensive sustainability of the Blue economy, water management, road safety and Smart Communities, among others. On this, as in other areas of European intervention, Alentejo's continued leadership has been an important vehicle for political, European, and emerging regions.

MARCOS ANTÓNIO NOGUEIRA.



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