



Cluster Collaboration Labs

@Clusters\_EU





# Challenges and project priorities in the Danube Region

Athanasios Konstandopoulos  
Professor, CHORUS, ECCP team member



# Challenges and project priorities in the Danube Region

**Athanasios G. Konstandopoulos** *PhD, KLH*

Chief Scientific Advisor, CHORUS Cluster

Co-Founder & Senior Partner SYNEST PC

Professor of Chemical Engineering, Aristotle University

Thessaloniki, Greece

[agk@auth.gr](mailto:agk@auth.gr) , [agk@sy-nest.com](mailto:agk@sy-nest.com)

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/athanasios-g-konstandopoulos-b42565a/>

# Overview of the Danube Region countries



Source: <https://danube-region.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/dmap.jpeg> (last access 21.09.2023)

# Pillars and Priority Areas of the Danube Region



Source: <https://danube-region.eu/> (last access 22.09.2023)

# Challenges and opportunities

Constantly changing including:

- Environmental threats (water pollution, floods, climate change)
- Untapped shipping potential and lack of road and rail transport connections
- Insufficient energy connections
- Uneven socio-economic development
- Uncoordinated education, research and innovation systems
- Shortcomings in safety and security

<https://doi.org/10.7767/dedo.2019.59.3-4.201> (last access 22.09.2023).

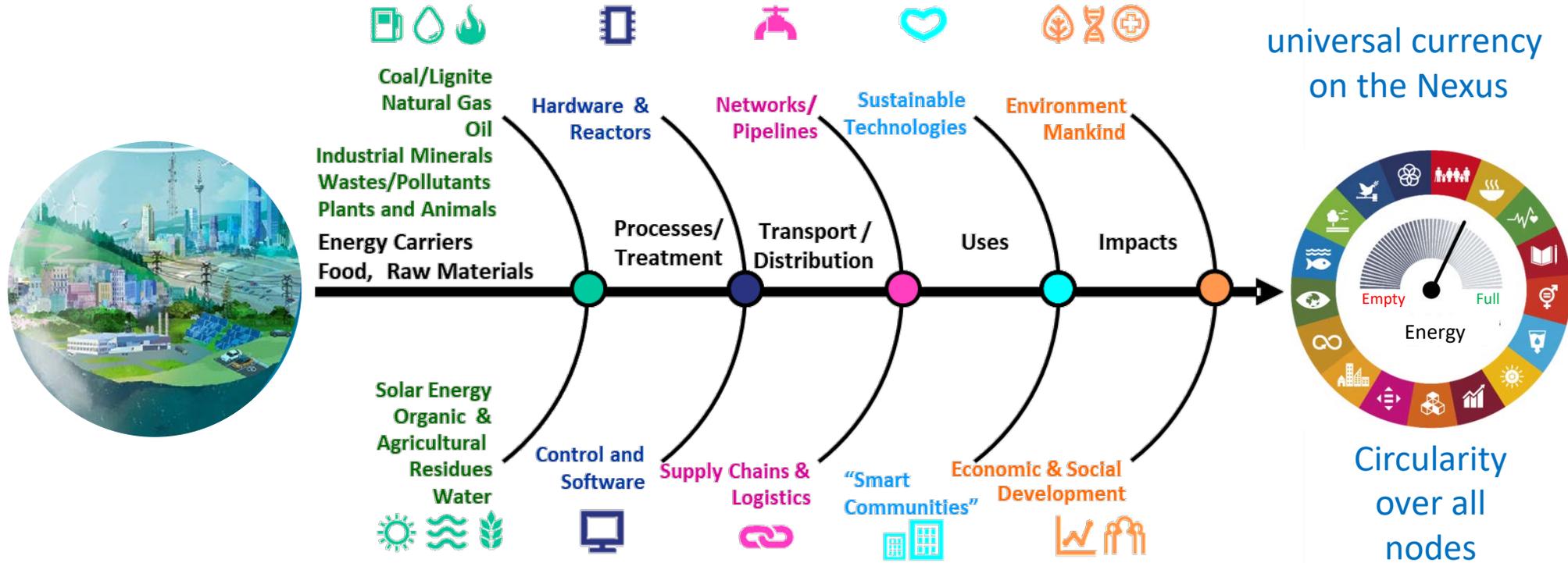
# Detailed Considerations

- Nexus nature of the challenges
- Interdependencies among the different priorities
- Need for a holistic/synergetic way

## For example:

*Improving mobility needs to ensure environmental compliance and access to sustainable energy*

# The Resource NEXUS as a framework for project building with a view towards sustainability and resilience



<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/20141021-certh-jrc-conference-konstandopoulos.pdf>

- **Unified view** of raw materials, increase **local sourcing**
- **Distributed** processing, "edge manufacturing", scale-up by **modularity**
- **Networks** & complexity science, latent potentials /criticalities, **resilience**
- Exploit **synergies** to foster sustainable use within **sybiotic** ("smart") communities
- Assess **multidimensional impacts** on environment, society and economy

© A. G. Konstandopoulos

# PA 1A Waterways Mobility

- **Improve the fairway conditions** and shoreside infrastructure along the Danube and its navigable tributaries.
- Ensure the **online provision**, availability and interoperability of up-to-date Fairway Information Services in the Danube Region.
- Foster frequent **transnational** business-to-business **(B2B) interactions**.
- **Modernize the vessel fleet** by mobilizing EU and national funding schemes.
- Facilitate the **implementation of EC directives regarding professional qualifications** in inland navigation in all Danube riparian states, including non-EU states.
- **Improve administrative procedures**, especially border controls, in inland navigation on the Danube and its navigable tributaries.

# PA 1B Rail-Road-Air Mobility

- **Integrate into the Trans-European Transport Network** the rail and road networks crossing the Danube Region.
- Address multimodal transport issues in synergy with Waterways mobility and solve operational and technical barriers for rail and road transport including support for the deployment of traffic management systems, as well as develop efficient multimodal terminals at sea, river and dry ports in the Danube Region and ensure their connectivity and access through the **creation of multimodal “hubs”** and efficient logistics services.
- Support the **full implementation of the Single European** Sky ATM Research (SESAR) program in the Danube Region.
- Identify relevant and **innovative approaches for safe and green urban mobility**, facilitate knowledge transfer and exchange of best practices and reduce traffic injuries.

# PA 2 Sustainable Energy

- Promote the sustainable use of biomass, solar energy, geothermal, hydropower and wind power to increase the energy independency and to **promote and support multipurpose cross-border RES utilization projects** that contribute to the collaborative target of EU 30% renewable energy in the overall use by 2030, while complying with the National Emission Ceilings.
- Promote energy efficiency and use of renewable energy in buildings and **transform/modernize fossil-fuel based district heating and cooling systems** and combined heat and power facilities, including identification of potential locations for subsurface energy storage.
- Promote defossilisation and reduction of air pollutants in the transport sector, by **developing the infrastructure for alternative fuels**.
- Reduce energy poverty and **increase the protection of vulnerable consumers**.

# PA 3 Culture & Tourism

- Develop **joint projects and tourism products** building on the **common heritage** of the people in the region, transversing diverse histories, cultures, ethnicities, religions, markets, societies and states.
- **Promote sustainable** tourism and create **better infrastructures** for tourism.

# PA 4 Water Quality

- **Prevent and reduce water pollution** from point and diffuse sources in the Danube Region (organic substances, nutrients, hazardous and emerging substances) by wastewater treatment and best management practices.
- Protect water resources and **safeguard drinking water** supply.
- Enhance **conservation** measures of **Danube migratory fish species**.
- Enhance **climate change adaptation measures** related to water quality, including a Danube Delta management plan.
- Develop integrated **monitoring, modelling and management of hazardous substances** pollution in the Danube.
- **Decouple pollution and water scarcity** from agricultural development.
- **Improve water demand management** in agriculture by smart irrigation and water reuse in order to reduce water abstraction needs.
- Identify means to **finance infrastructure projects**, especially in EU Member States that have joined after 2007 and non-EU countries.
- Focus on **investments in maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing infrastructure**.

# PA 5 Environmental Risks

- Address the challenges of water scarcity and droughts in line with the **Danube River Basin Management Plan** and the ongoing work in the field of climate adaptation.
- Support the implementation of the **Danube Flood Risk Management Plan**.
- Continuously **update the existing database** of accident hazard spots (AHS Inventory), contaminated sites and tailing management facilities.
- Support the assessment of disaster risks in the Danube Region, encouraging **actions to promote disaster resilience**, preparedness and response activities in line with the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism.
- Establish common minimum standards for civil protection organisations and fire and rescue services involved in **international or cross-border disaster response** in the Danube Region.

# PA 6 Biodiversity, Landscapes and Air & Soil Quality

- Develop a **Danube Masterplan** for the Conservation and Restoration of Biodiversity Values, including improved management of Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas through transnational cooperation and capacity building.
- Strengthen the efforts to **halt the deterioration in the status of species and habitats** occurring in the Danube Region and covered by EU nature legislation and in particular to continue the ongoing work and efforts to securing viable populations of Danube sturgeon species (sturgeons play an important ecological role as indicators of healthy ecosystems and the Danube River Basin preserves some of the most important wild sturgeon populations and functional habitats in the world today).
- **Reduce** the introductions and spread of **Invasive Alien Species** (IAS) in the Danube Region.
- Strengthen **horizontal knowledge transfer** and access to environmental data between national authorities responsible for nature conservation (especially those of neighbouring countries) and maintain and restore Green and Blue Infrastructure elements through integrated spatial development and conservation planning.
- Improve and/or maintain the soil quality in the Danube Region including **development of harmonised soil maps** for the Danube Region.
- Decrease air pollution in the Danube Region by developing an Air Protection Programme for the Danube Region, aiming to **develop and disseminate appropriate tools for air quality assessment and management**, and propose actions to enhance air quality.

# PA 7 Knowledge Society

- To **support education, research and ICT** in the Danube Region by improvement of framework conditions for building a knowledge society.
- To contribute to an increasing level and quality of **network activities**, strengthening the existing links and fostering new cooperation in the Danube Region.
- Promote investment in research and innovation infrastructures, capacities and skills, creating projects that aim at making the Danube Region more attractive for especially young and female researchers, to strengthen the realization of the European Research Area in the Danube Region, **revert brain drain and foster brain circulation**.
- To further **implement Smart Specialisation Strategies** in all Danube countries.

# PA 8 Competitiveness of Enterprises

- Foster **cooperation and exchange of knowledge** between SMEs, academia and the public sector in areas of competence in the Danube Region.
- Improve business support to **strengthen the capacities of SMEs** for cooperation and trade.
- Support enterprises through **high-performing training and qualification schemes**, such as improving digital skills of entrepreneurs.
- Prioritize the effective **implementation of measures** provided for under the **Small Business Act for Europe**.
- Improve the **competitiveness of rural areas** and in particular of the agricultural sector.
- **Eliminate cross border barriers** and bottlenecks to people and business.
- **Improve framework conditions** for SMEs in areas where competitive infrastructure is missing.
- Improve the current system and **overcome the current gap** between regional strategies and cluster strategies, especially in terms of S3 implementation.

# PA 9 People & Skills

- **Tackle youth and long-term unemployment** to increase employment rates in the region.
- **Improve educational outcomes, skills and competencies**, focusing on learning outcomes for employability, entrepreneurship, innovation, active citizenship and well-being.
- Increase **quality, efficiency and inclusiveness of education**, training and labour market systems with equal opportunities and non-discrimination as well as promotion of civic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Foster **closer cooperation between educational, training and labour market** and research institutions, strengthening regional exchange, peer learning and cooperation in projects and networks.

# PA 10 Institutional Capacity & Cooperation

- Strengthen institutional capacities to **improve decision-making and administrative performance.**
- Increase **involvement of civil society and local actors** for effective policymaking and implementation.
- Enhance coordination and knowledge for **better use of funding and to develop needs-based funding instruments.**

# PA 11 Security

- Enhance **police cooperation** with the aim of improving security and tackling serious and organised crime in Danube Region countries.
- Develop **strategic long-term cooperation** between law enforcement actors along the Danube river.
- **Improve the systems of border control**, document inspection management and cooperation on consular related issues in the Danube Region.
- **Promote the rule of law and fight corruption.**



# Danube Transfer Centre Network

**Miljana Cosic**

Senior Project Manager, Steinbeis Europa Zentrum

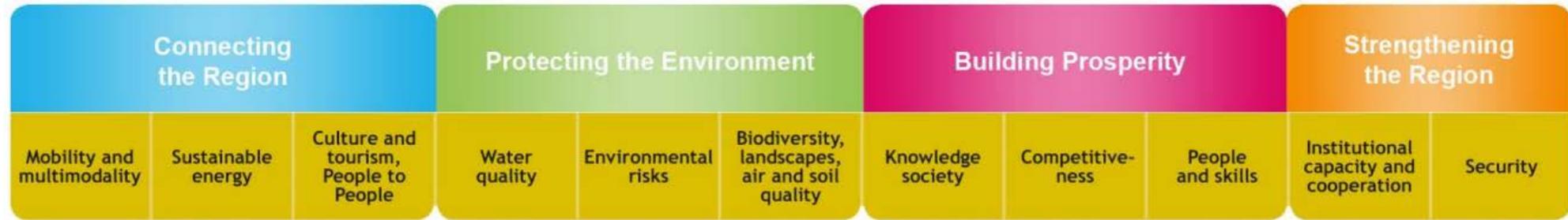


# Danube Transfer Centre (DTC) Network

Miljana Cosic  
Steinbeis Europa Zentrum  
Ljubljana, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023



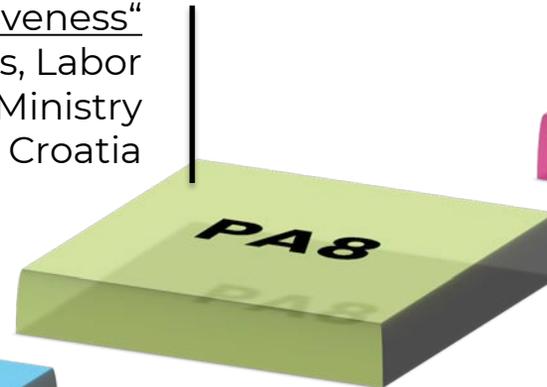
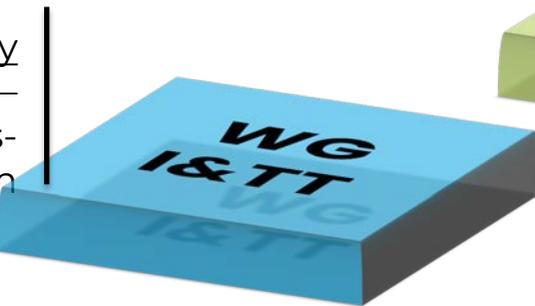
# EUSDR, PA8 and Danube Transfer Centre (DTC) Network



**11 priority areas, coordinated by a priority area coordinator**

„Competitiveness“ is coordinated by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labor and Tourism Baden-Württemberg and Ministry of Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Croatia

**WG Innovation and Technology Transfer** – is coordinated by Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum



focuses on innovation, information society, competitiveness of enterprises, education, labor market and marginalized communities



is an flagship project of the EUSDR PA8 WG I&TT. The initiative from Baden-Württemberg started as a pilot project in 2012

# Danube Transfer Centers



## Bridging the gap between research and innovation

Focusing on improving competences and cooperation between producers and users of knowledge

Supporting the innovation and technology transfer at the local and regional level

Danube Technology Transfer Centers (DTC)

**Organized as “one-stop-shops” mainly for SMEs in regard of  
Innovation & Technology Transfer**

3 Pilot DTCs (2012)

**DTC Nitra**, Slovakia, **DTC Novi Sad**, Serbia and **DTC Cluj-Napoca**, Romania



Baden-Württemberg  
STAATSMINISTERIUM



# Danube Transfer Center Network



Status 2023:

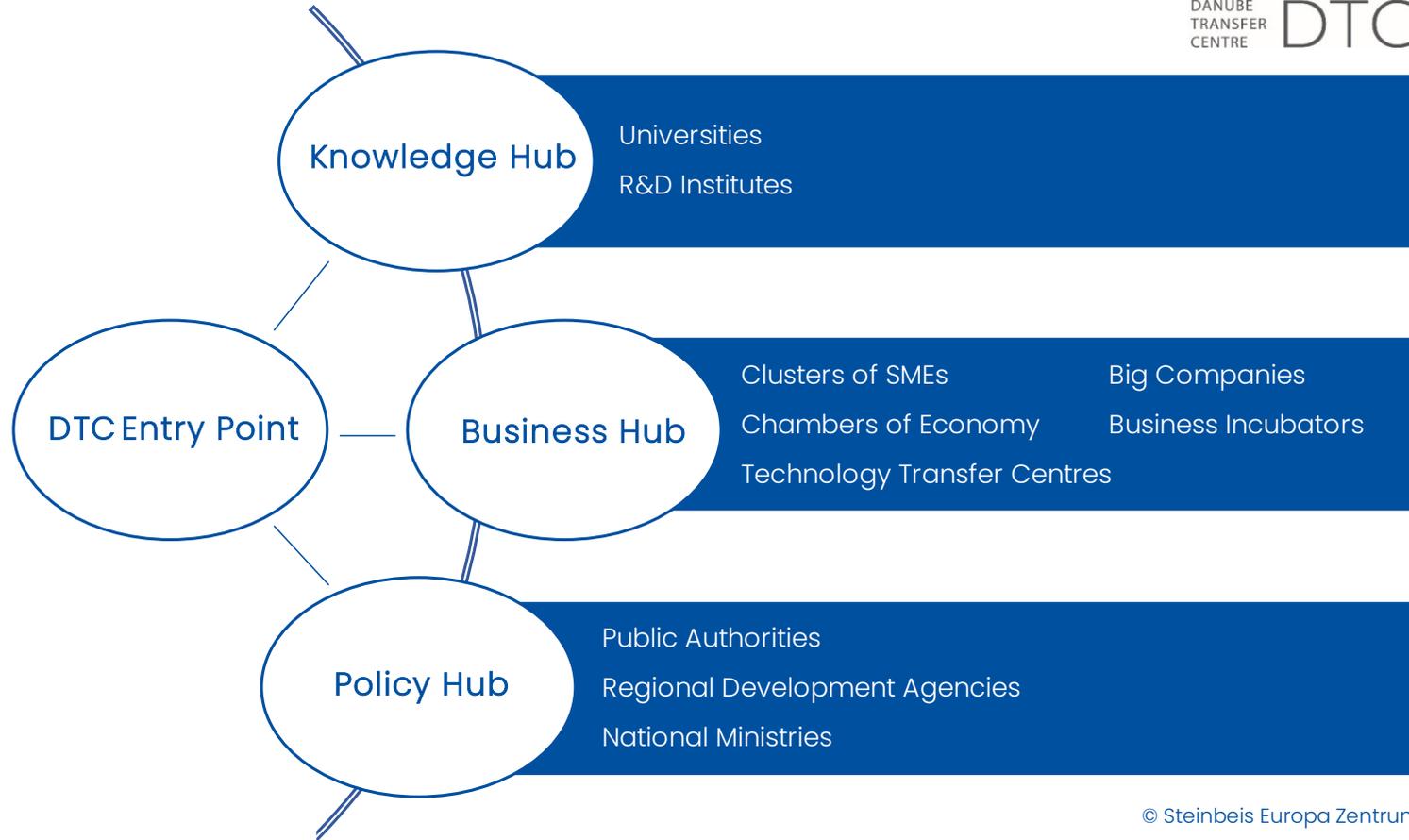
10 Danube Region Countries  
15 DTC Entry points  
33 DTC Hubs



Source: Adapted from Danube Region Programme, 2023.  
© Steinbeis Europa Zentrum

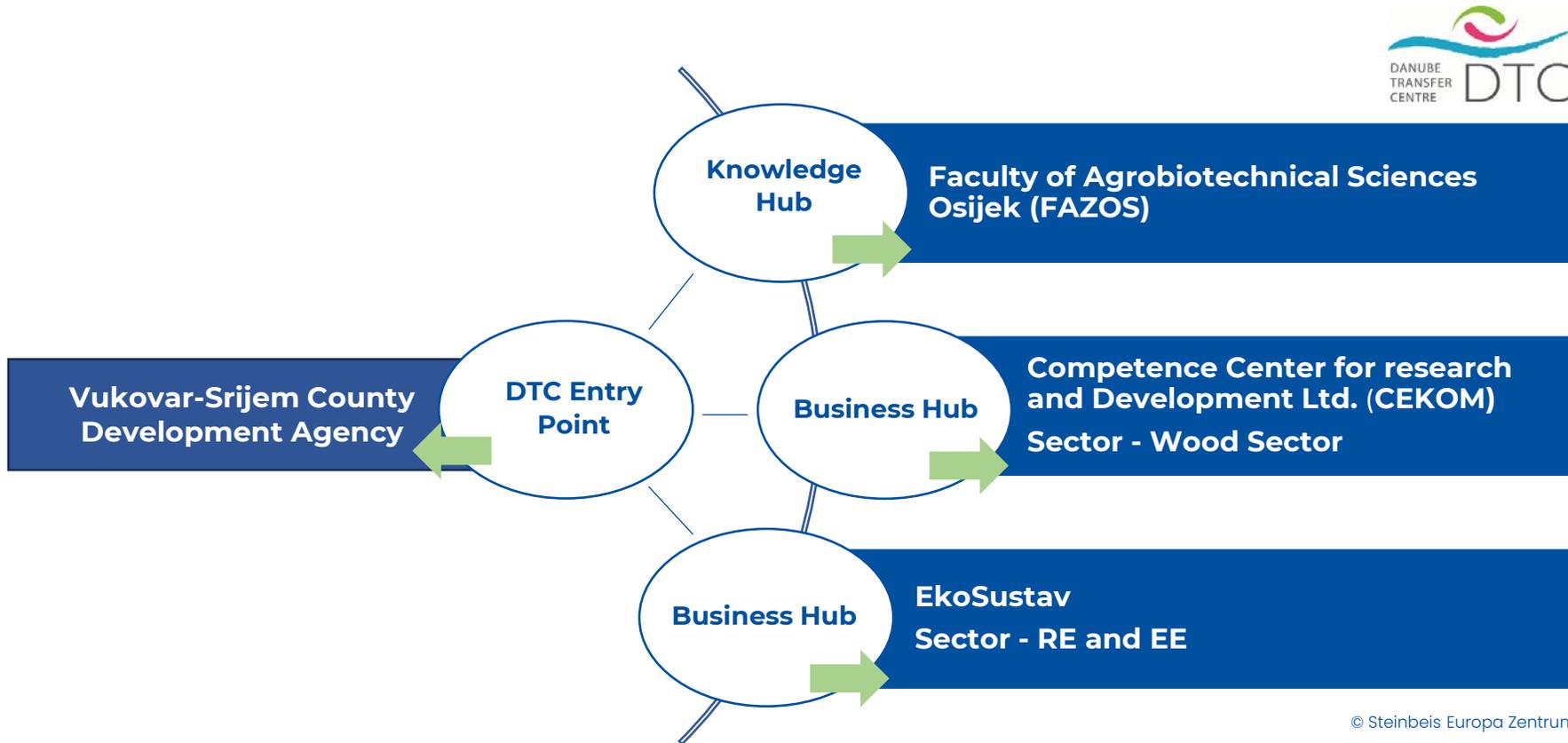


# DTC Entry point model



© Steinbeis Europa Zentrum

# DTC at Vukovar-Srijem County, Croatia



Jointly implemented EU projects:

- Danube INCONET
- Made in Danube
- ROSEWOOD
- ROSEWOOD4.0
- DaWetRest
- GOFORESTS

# DTC Network - Operational approach



## Sustainable partnerships

- Support in exploitation of the local & regional innovation potentials
- Networking and matching in the frame of the DTC network, on macroregional and international level
- Collaboration among the Quadruple Helix Actors
- Use of the specific support tools

Technology Offer  
Technology Request  
Innovation Audit

## Capacity building

- Trainings and WS on the specific Innovation related topics
  - Innovation Management
  - Technology Transfer
  - Marketing & Communication
  - Participation at EU funded projects

# DTC Network - Operational approach



## Developing and Implementing EU projects

- Proposals' development and applications for the EU-funded projects
  - FP7 / H2020 / Horizon Europe
  - Interreg (B and C)
  - COSME
- Implementation of the projects

## Policy Dialog

- Constructive exchange with policy makers and their inclusion in the project implementation
- Connection between the PA8 WG and among the PAs
- Policy dialogue workshops
- Policy papers

# DTC Network - EU funded projects



- **2** 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme Projects
- **6** Interreg DTP Projects (+ 2 DRP Projects)
- **1** Interreg Alpine Space Project
- **2** Interreg Europe Projects
- **4** Horizon 2020 Projects
- **5** Horizon Europe Projects

---

**Total Funding > 32 Million €**

# Success Story - DTC Entry Point Iasi



2020, TUIASI BrainTwin – H2020 Twinning – Topic: Neuroengineering (Frauenhofer IPA+SEZ)

Increased the visibility of the partner



## Building capacity at the international level for TUIASI

In summer of 2022, TUIASI counted 9 Horizon projects

No.	Acronym	Call
1	BI4E	HORIZON-WIDERA-2021-ACCESS-05
2	INGENIUM	European Universities Alliance
3	AI REGIO 5.0	HORIZON-CL4-2022-TWIN-TRANSITION-01
4	R3Group	HORIZON-CL4-2022-TWIN-TRANSITION-01
5	EDIH- DIZ	Digital Innovation Hubs



# Certificate

## DANUBE STRATEGY FLAGSHIP

*This certificate is proudly awarded to*

### **Danube Transfer Center Network - DTC Network**

Danube Strategy Flagships are projects or processes that contribute to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), have a clear macro-regional dimension and a multi-level governance approach. They are of high importance for the Danube Region's economic, social and territorial cohesion and for improving the quality of life in the Danube Region.

Danube Strategy Flagships strengthen internal and external communication of the Strategy and the visibility of the topics, initiatives and prospects in the Danube Region. They illustrate the progress achieved in implementing the EUSDR and demonstrate exemplarily significant improvement in the Region that is induced by cooperation.

EUSDR National Coordinators and Priority Area Coordinators with the respective Steering Groups, in their capacity as representatives and key implementers of the EUSDR, as well as the Danube Strategy Point, are committed to contribute to and promote Danube Strategy Flagships in accordance with the Guidance Paper for identifying and listing Danube Strategy Flagships.

Date: 19 July 2023



EUSDR Priority Area(s): PA 8 Competitiveness of Enterprises

# Thank you!

**Miljana Cosic**

**Senior Project Manager**

**Team Manager Regional Transformation and Macroregional strategies**

**Steinbeis Europa Zentrum | Steinbeis 2i GmbH**

 [miljana.cosic@steinbeis-europa.de](mailto:miljana.cosic@steinbeis-europa.de)

 +49 721 93519 138

 <https://www.steinbeis-europa.de/>





# European programmes and opportunities

**Marek Przeor**

**Team Leader – Cluster Policy, DG GROW, European Commission**



# Around 400 in Danube regions 1500 cluster organisations in ECCCP (digital, health, renewables, agri-food)



- Leading the green transition
- Accelerating the digital transition
- Building resilience



# EU funded projects should implement EU priorities

## Lead Green Transition

Emission reductions  
Resource efficiency  
Clean energy and mobility  
Circularity  
Waste prevention  
Bioeconomy/Biomaterials  
Renewables  
Biodiversity  
Green procurement  
.....

## Accelerate Digital Transition

Artificial Intelligence  
Industry 4.0/5.0  
Internet of Things  
Blockchain  
Data/Cybersecurity  
Chips Act  
Digital Service/Market Acts  
E-government  
E-skills  
Broadband/5G  
.....

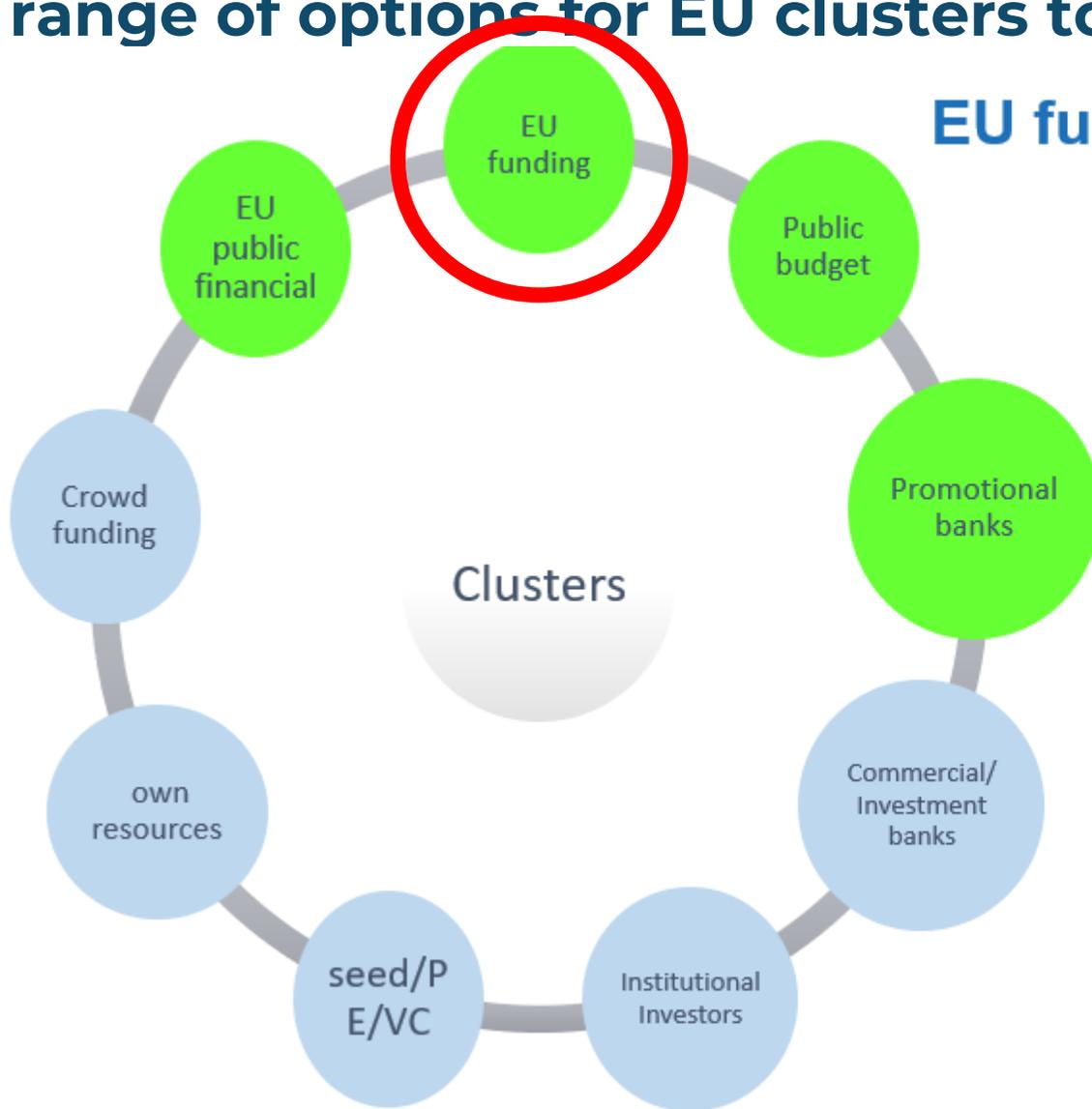
## Build Resilience

Industrial ecosystems  
Single Market  
Global Value chains  
Strategic dependencies  
Critical raw materials  
Critical Technologies  
Supply chains disruptions  
Diversified Markets  
Reskilling/Upskilling  
Access to Finance  
.....

# A range of options for EU clusters to engage in projects development

## EU funding can be used:

- **THROUGH** clusters channelled to final recipients, in particular SMEs (like Innosup-1 projects with cascade funding) (like Euroclusters)
- **WITH** clusters to provide specialised services to any economic actor in need e.g. technological advise, upskilling , access to finance)
- **BY** clusters to mix private and public, align local, regional, national and EU funding, reach out to financial providers across EU territory
- **FOR** clusters to build their capacity to facilitate collaboration, capitalise technological and market intelligence, offer services



# Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027



## Single Market, Innovation and Digital

149.5 (+ 11.5 from NGEU)

## Cohesion, Resilience and Values

426.7 (+ 776.5 from NGEU)

## Natural Resources and Environment

401 (+ 18.9 from NGEU)

## Migration and Border Management

25.7

## Security and Defence

14.9

## Neighbourhood and the World

110.6

## European Public Administration

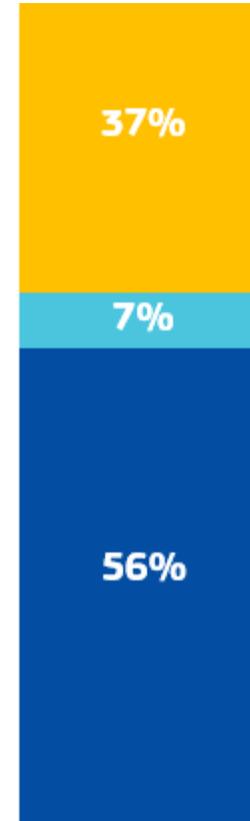
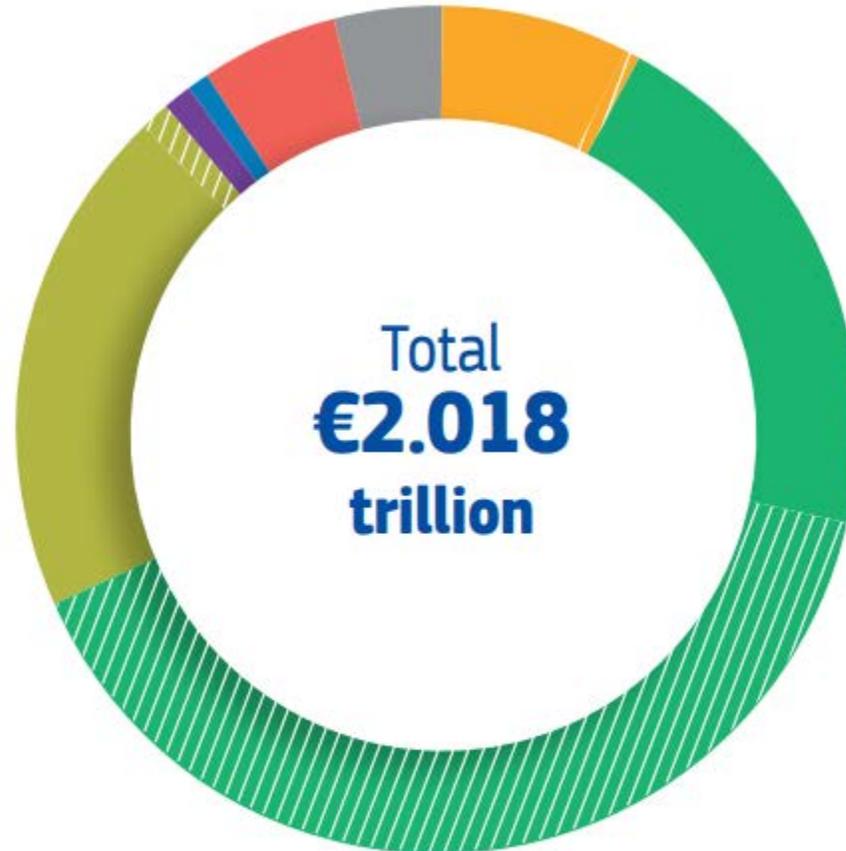
82.5

## Total: €2.018 trillion



NextGenerationEU  
806.9

Long-term budget  
1 210.9



(without RRF)

Direct management

Indirect management

Shared management

# EU funding opportunities

[Funding & tenders \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

## EU Programmes

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)	Border Management and Visa Policy Instrument (BMVI)	Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV)	Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)	Creative Europe Programme (CREA)	Customs Control Equipment Instrument (CCE)
Customs Programme (CUST)	Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL)	Erasmus+ (ERASMUS+)	EU External Action (RELEX)	EU4Health Programme (EU4H)	Euratom Research and Training Programme (EURATOM)
Europe Direct (ED)	European Defence Fund (EDF)	European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)	European Parliament (EP)	European Social Fund + (ESF)	European Solidarity Corps (ESC)
Fiscalis Programme (FISC)	Horizon Europe (HORIZON)	Information Measures for the EU Cohesion policy (IMREG)	Innovation Fund (INNOVFUND)	Internal Security Fund (ISF)	Interregional Innovation Investments Instrument (I3)
Just Transition Mechanism (JTM)	Justice Programme (JUST)	Pilot Projects and Preparation Actions (PPPA)	Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)	Programme for the Protection of the Euro against Counterfeiting (PERICLES IV)	Promotion of Agricultural Products (AGRIP)
Research Fund for Coal & Steel (RFCS)	Single Market Programme (SMP)	Social Prerogative and Specific Competencies Lines (SOCPL)	Technical Support Instrument (TSI)	Union Anti-fraud Programme (EUAf)	Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)
Union Renewable Energy Financing Mechanism (RENEWFM)					



# EU direct management programmes finance R&I, SMEs, green, digital transition, health...

**Horizon Europe**: Scientific, technological, economic, environmental and societal impact; support to all forms of research and innovation.

86,1



**Single Market Programme**: Empowering and protecting consumers; ensuring food safety, enabling EU small and medium-sized enterprises to thrive

4,2



**Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)** To achieve the shift towards a sustainable, circular and resilient economy, protect and restore the environment, halt and reverse biodiversity loss.

5,4



**Digital Europe Programme**: Aims to accelerate the recovery and drive the digital transformation of Europe.

7,6



**Connecting Europe Facility**: Supporting the delivery of key energy, transport and digital infrastructure cross Europe.

20,7



**EU4Health**: Investing in resilient, equitable and modern health systems, improving the health of EU citizens and protecting people from cross-border health threats.

2,4



All amounts are in billion EUR

# ... space, education, culture, decarbonization, defence and international cooperation

**European Space Programme**: EU space policy; satellite technology and innovation; data, navigation, and communication services; fighting climate change; disaster response.

14,9



**Erasmus+**: Support the educational, professional and personal development of people in education, training, youth and sport.

24,6



**Innovation Fund** To bring to the market solutions to decarbonise European industry and support its transition to climate neutrality while fostering its competitiveness.

40



**Creative Europe**: Creative Europe is the European Commission's programme for providing support to the culture and audiovisual sectors.

1,8



**European Defence Fund**: Commission's key initiative to support, with the EU budget, collaborative research and development of defence capabilities.

7,95



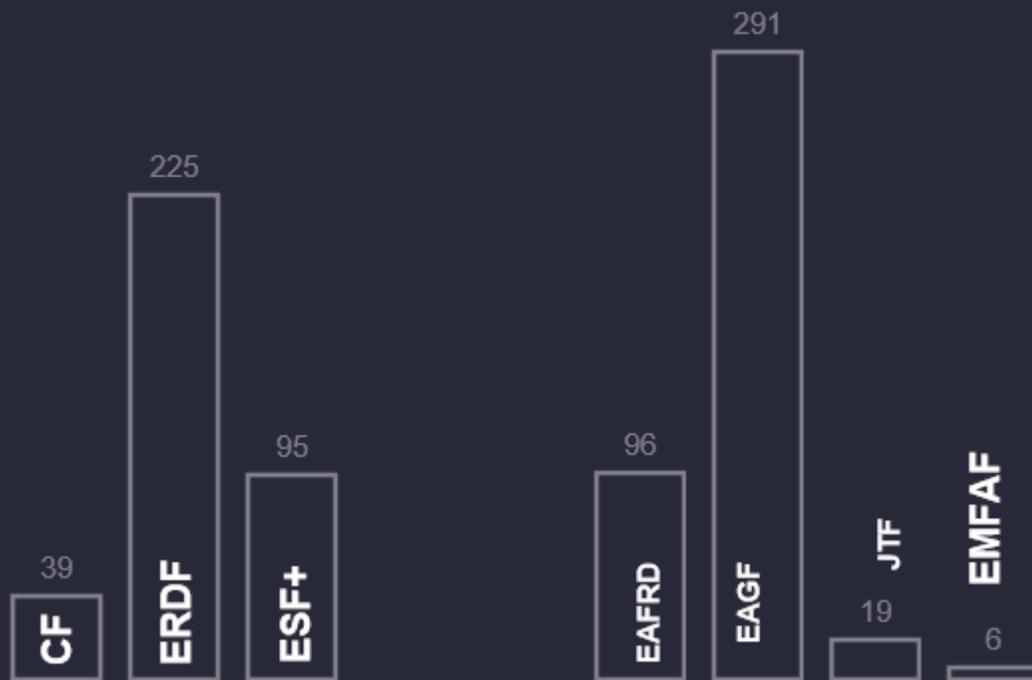
**Global Europe**: Support the educational, professional and personal development of people in education, training, youth and sport.

79,5



All amounts are in billion EUR

# Shared management supports economic, social and territorial cohesion, maritime and rural areas



- Cohesion Fund (CF)
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)
- European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF)
- Just Transition Fund (JTF)
- European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)

## Member States

Organise calls & select projects  
([national portals](#))



SMART



GREEN



CONNECTED



SOCIAL



CITIZENS



GOVERNANCE

All amounts are in billion EUR

## Explore data by Programme

Country:  Fund:  Funding Period:  Text Search:

Using the filters above, you can find EU funded programmes and explore the financing and achievements.



# Other direct management programmes

**European Solidarity Corps** : For young people wishing to volunteer to help the disadvantaged, provide humanitarian aid, contribute to health and environmental action,

**Justice Programme**: Strengthening democracy, rule of law, and fundamental rights.

**Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme**: Protection and promotion of the rights and values as enshrined in the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

**Union Civil Protection Mechanism ( rescEU)**: Strengthen cooperation between the EU Member States and 6 Participating States in the field of civil protection.

**Internal Security Fund** : Security of the Union; tackling radicalisation, terrorism, cybercrime, organised crime; protecting victims of crime.



# NextGenerationEU: Implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility firmly underway

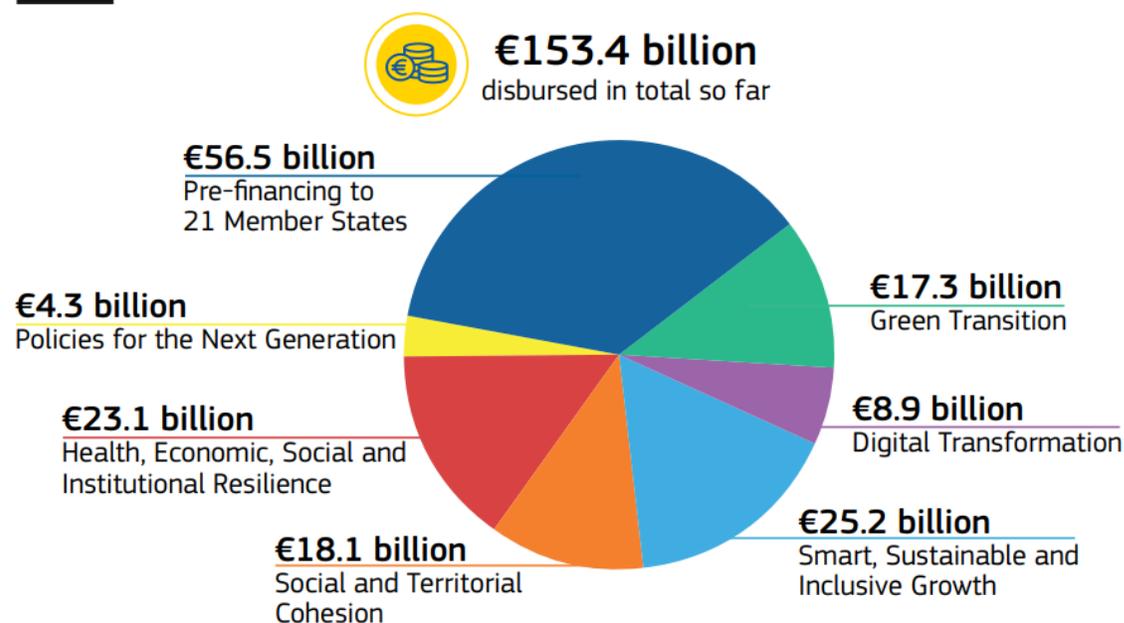
Publication of the second annual **report** on the [implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility \(RRF\)](#), the €800 billion reform and investment tool at the heart of NextGenerationEU

The report shows the progress made with the RRF to increase Member States' economic and social resilience and deliver on REPowerEU, the EU's response to the hardships and global energy market disruption caused by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Commission launched an [online interactive map](#) of **RRF-supported projects** in each Member State.



## Funds flowing towards RRF objectives, projects being rolled out





# Usual steps in a programme's implementation

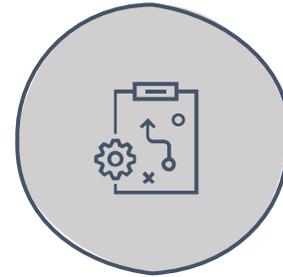
LAUNCHING THE CALLS  
FOR PROPOSALS



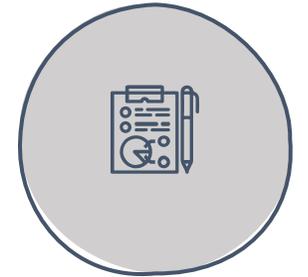
SIGNING GRANT  
AGREEMENTS



ASSESSING  
THE RESULTS



REPORTING ON THE OVERALL  
IMPLEMENTATION



EVALUATING SUBMITTED  
PROPOSALS



MONITORING PROJECT  
IMPLEMENTATION



MAKING  
PAYMENTS



# How to apply?



- **Before you apply:** What you should know before you start applying for EU funding?
- **Eligibility: who can get funding?** Beneficiary profiles and the funding opportunities available to them.
- **The application process:** How to apply for EU funding under direct management?
- **Award procedure and contract signature:** Each project proposal is scrutinised before funding is granted.
- **Managing your project:** What to expect once you are awarded a contract: reporting, deliverables, audits and communication.
- **Results:** Find out about the impact of EU programmes on citizens' lives and the results of EU-funded projects.

# Toolbox on interregional investment



TOOL #1 “Inter-regional and collaborative governance’

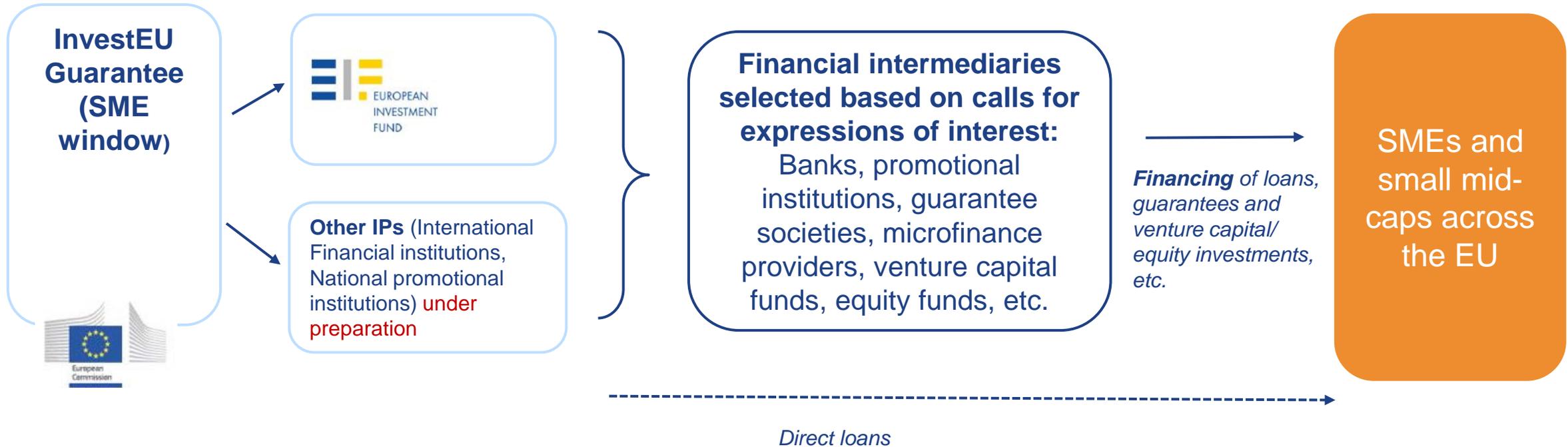
TOOL #2 “Undertaking market research”

TOOL #3 “Defining your offer”

TOOL #4 “Basics of financial planning”

TOOL #5 “Determining your target funding mix” i

# InvestEU – implementation scheme



# Online Training Session: InvestEU in action

The EEN Thematic Group Access to Finance, in collaboration with DG GROW, DG ECFIN, EIF and EISMEA is pleased to announce the **Online Training Session focusing on the implementation of the framework programme InvestEU.**

The **training** will focus on:

- Overview of the programme and its facilities
- The SME Window of InvestEU
- InvestEU implementing modalities: role of implementing partners and of financial intermediaries
- Supporting and advisory services for potential beneficiaries
- Update on sustainable finance and reporting requirements

The training will take place on **27 October 2023** from 09:30 to 11:45 via Webex.

**Register** until 25 October: [https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/EENTGA2F-InvestEU\\_in\\_Action\\_27Oct2023](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/EENTGA2F-InvestEU_in_Action_27Oct2023)



# Find EU business finance in 3 easy steps



01

**www.access2finance.eu**  
to find financial institutions that  
provide EU finance in your country.



02

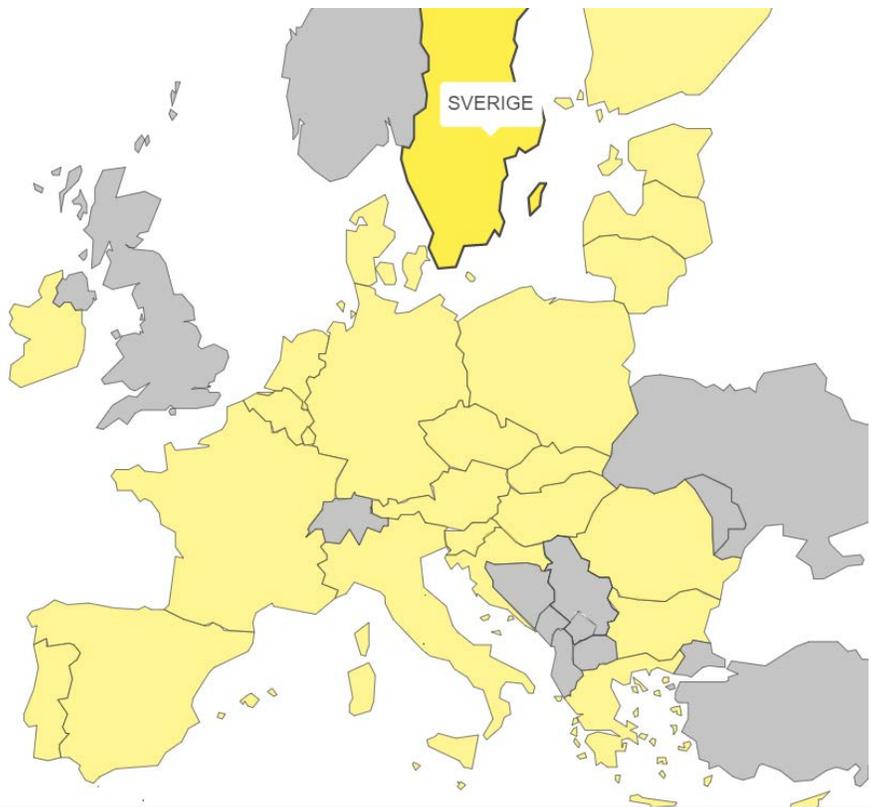
**Contact a financial institution**  
that provides financing for  
your investment needs.



03

**Apply for EU financing**  
directly at the local  
financial institution.

[www.access2finance.eu](http://www.access2finance.eu)



Region

SVERIGE

- Any -

Type of finance

- Any -

Investment focus

Select

Advanced filter ^

Amount of Finance

- Any -

Company category

- Any -

Sources of finance

Select

Implementing Partner

- Any -

# Strategic Technologies Europe Platform (in progress)

## **Reinforce, leverage and steer EU investment in:**

- Deep and digital technologies
- Clean technologies
- Bio technologies

## **Sovereignty seal**

- EU quality label awarded to high-quality projects contributing to the STEP objectives
- Facilitates funding through visibility and special flexibility to fund such projects

## **Sovereignty portal**

- One-stop-shop for projects' promoters
- Brings together information about the calls for proposals from the different funds

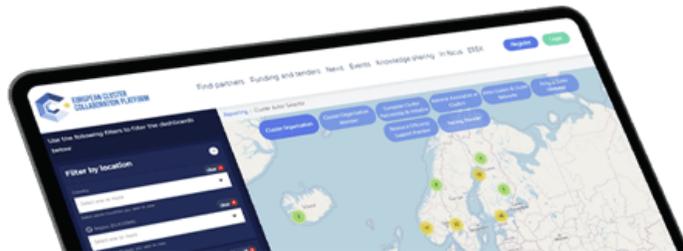
# Register on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform!

<https://clustercollaboration.eu/>

Strengthening the European economy through collaboration



The European online hub for industry clusters  
Strengthening the European economy through collaboration



Find partners per country, region,  
sector or industrial ecosystem

# Thank you



[https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/cluster\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/cluster_en)  
<http://www.clustercollaboration.eu>

[@EU\\_Growth](#)

[@ThierryBreton](#)

[@Clusters\\_EU](#)



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-cluster-collaboration-platform-eccp/>  
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/resource-efficient/>

**ECCP's European Cluster Panorama and Policy Toolkit - YouTube**



**Read more**

[Long-term EU budget and Next Generation EU](#)

[The EU's 2021-2027 long-term budget & Next Generation EU facts & figures](#)

[The EU budget in motion](#)

[EU as a borrower](#)

[Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard](#)



Visit the new [ECCP](#), create/update your profile



© European Union 2022

Unless otherwise noted the reuse of this presentation is authorised under the [CC BY 4.0](#) license. For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EU, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective right holders.



# Seed money facility (SMF) of the Danube Region Programme

**Carmen Hawkins**  
Coordinator of PA8 of the  
EUSDR, Ministry of Economic  
Affairs, Labour and Tourism  
Baden-Württemberg

**Helia Kovačević Grčić**  
PA8 of the EUSDR,  
Croatian Ministry for Economy  
and Sustainable  
Development



# Seed Money Facility / Danube Region Programme

Information by  
PA 8 Competitiveness of Enterprises

Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> 2023

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

SMF = tool for kick-starting development of strategic projects and largescale initiatives for the EUSDR

- Open call for proposal for all priorities
- Thematic scope will be defined by PACs → suggestions, proposals?
- one-step application via Jems
- two step assessment (PACs and then MA)

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Project details

- Duration of project max. **12 months** (shorter duration possible)
- Minimum **2** and maximum **5** partners
  - At least **2 Danube Region Programme** (DRP) participating countries of which at least **1 is an EU member state**
  - Programme will also cover the entire territory of Ukraine

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Partnership requirements

- Types of partners possible are
  - Local, regional, national public bodies
  - Bodies governed by public law
  - International organisations acting under the national law of any DRP Partner State or under international law
  - Private bodies (NGO's, private enterprises, private profit-making organisations)
- Each project partnership shall appoint one lead partner
  - Private enterprises cannot be lead partners!

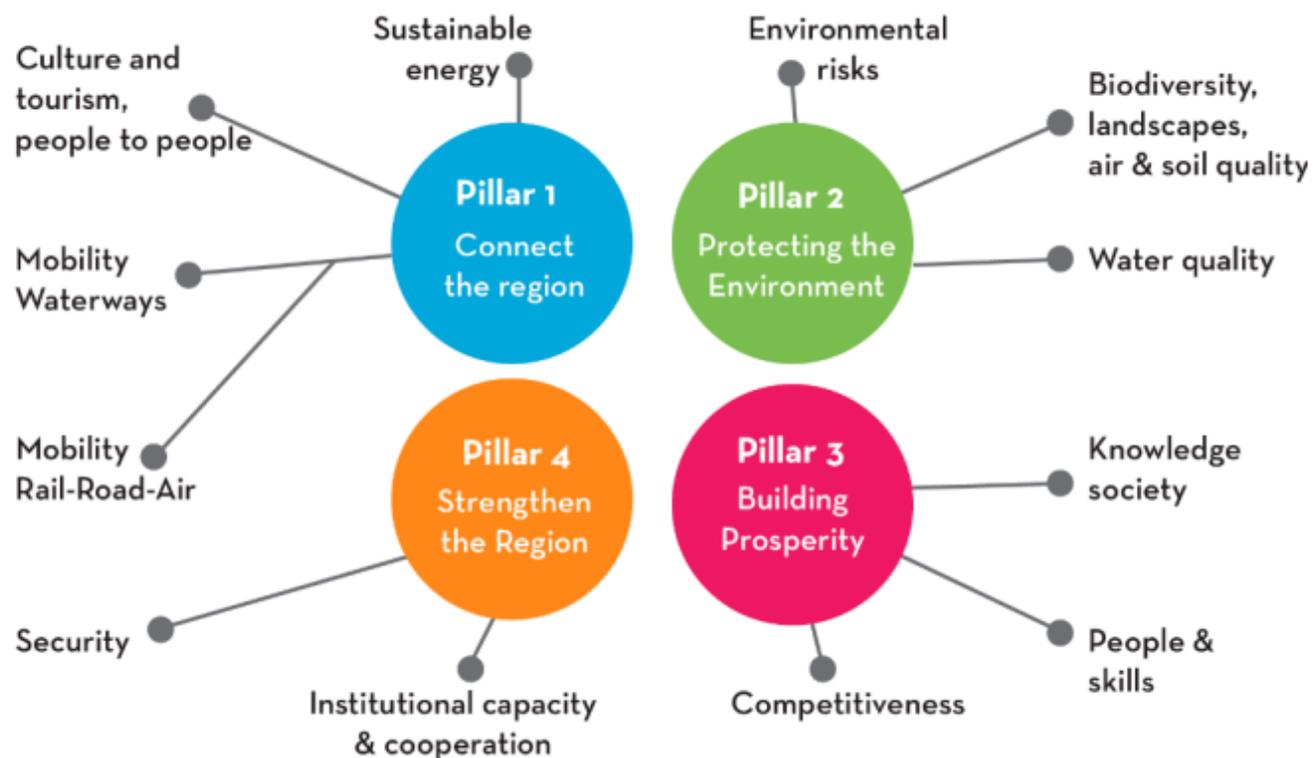
# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Partnership requirements

- The involvement of relevant organisations from DRP non-EU Partner States is highly recommended.
- Project must have a transnational dimension (Envisioning the transnational outreach and macroregional dimension and impact)

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Content specifications



(Illustration from the action plan)

- Project topics must be aligned with the EUSDR Action plan
- Find detailed information in the [action plan](#) PA 8, see pages 59 ff
- Cohearance with the work plan

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Partnership composition

- Partnerships should be suitable to the approached output of the project
- Envisioned activities
- Address target groups
  - Awareness of the target groups must be proven
  - Explain in detail, how the target groups will be involved

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Content specifications

- Projects to be supported shall be in line with
  - The EU objective of promoting sustainable development
  - EU and national regulations
  - The UN Sustainable Development Goals
  - The Paris Agreement
  - The “do no significant harm” – principle

→ Projects are ideally expected to have **positive direct or indirect contributions to sustainable development** and within that to the **environmental and climate objectives**

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Budget

- Total budget of **4.5 million €** (including self-contribution)  
→ **300 000€ maximum** EU contribution per Priority Area
- Maximum co-financing amount is **80% of the total budget**
- Staff costs are reimbursed on real cost basis. The other budget lines are reimbursed as flat rate of up to 40% of eligible direct staff costs

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Project co-financing

- Maximum project co-financing amount is 80% of the total budget
  - **50 000€ per project** if only mandatory outputs (*workplan, information on funding programme, needs analysis*) are developed (62 500€ total budget)
  - **100 000€ per project** if additional activities (*workshops etc.*) are included (125 000€ total budget)

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

Besides the mandatory outputs the programme finances **additional preparatory activities** that are necessary for development of complex projects (with funding up to € 100.000) with impact in the Danube region.

## Examples of additional preparatory activities (non-exhaustive list):

- community and stakeholders consultations
- socio-economic studies
- participative planning
- preliminary designs

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Assessment and Scoring

- Two step assessment
- Projects assessed and evaluated according to specific criteria
  - Only projects meeting at **least 60%** can be considered and **strategically discussed**
  - Projects scoring **over 75%** will automatically be made **available for selection**
  - Between 60 and 74 % will be discussed by MC

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Time limits

- Call is expected to open from **End of November 2023**
- Call is expected to close **End of March 2024**

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

## Webinars for interested Lead partners

- Managing Authority and Joint Secretariat will organize Webinars for interested Leadpartners, explaining the rules of the scheme
- PACs can organize thematic Webinars as well as face to face seminars, where MA/JS can be present

# EUSDR Seed Money Facility (SMF)

- SMF will be published on website soon
- Info paper will be published
- Matchmaking platform will be established

# THANK YOU!



# Case study: Successful project application to Interregional Innovation Investment (I3)

**Niko Natek**  
Project Work, KSSENA



# CASE STUDY: Successful project application to Interregional Innovation Investment (I3)

## **Greet CE** (Green transition in Central Europe)

Niko Natek

Energy agency of Savinjska, Šaleška and Koroška (KSSENA)

Brdo Congress Centre (Predoslje, Slovenia)

25.10.2023

# Overview:

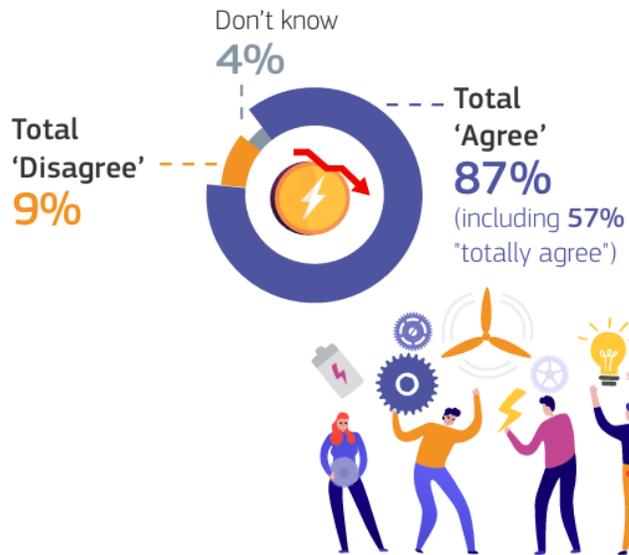
## HOW TO PREPARE A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION?

- I. Challenges of the EU and the role of interregional cooperation
- II. Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument
- III. Greet CE project (what is it and why is it relevant?)
- IV. Conclusions



# Challenges:

More than half of Europeans “totally agree” that **the EU should reduce its dependency on Russian sources of energy as soon as possible...**

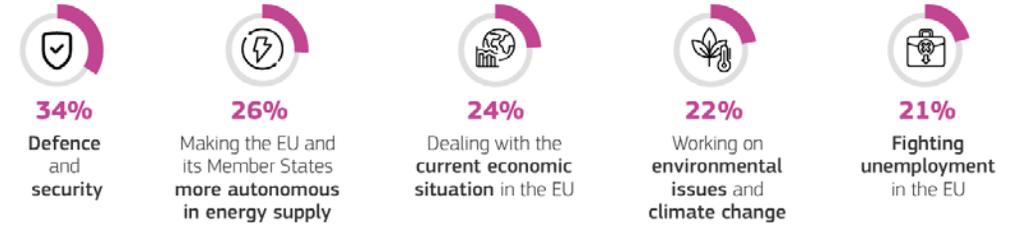


Catalogue number  
NA-07-22-483-EN-N

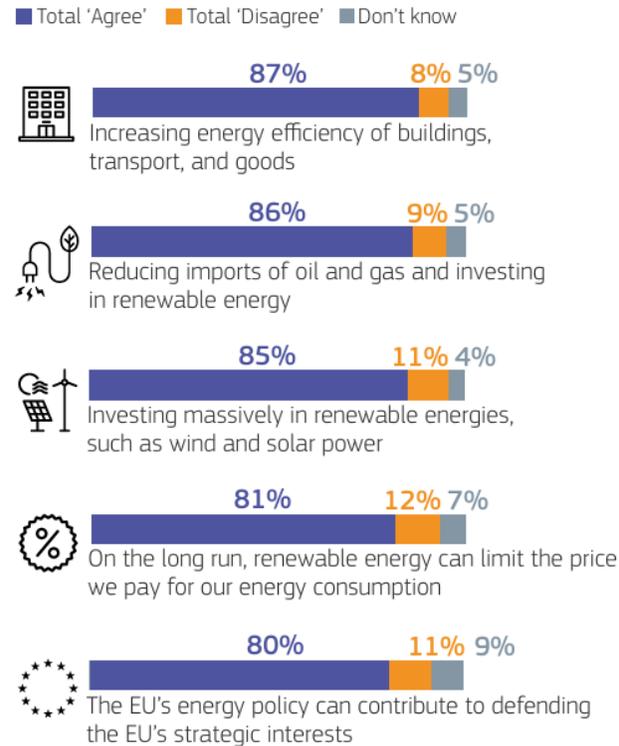
ISBN  
978-92-76-53427-3

DOI  
10.2775/003857

Europeans consider the **EU's top 5 priorities for 2022** to be:



...taking the following actions to do so:

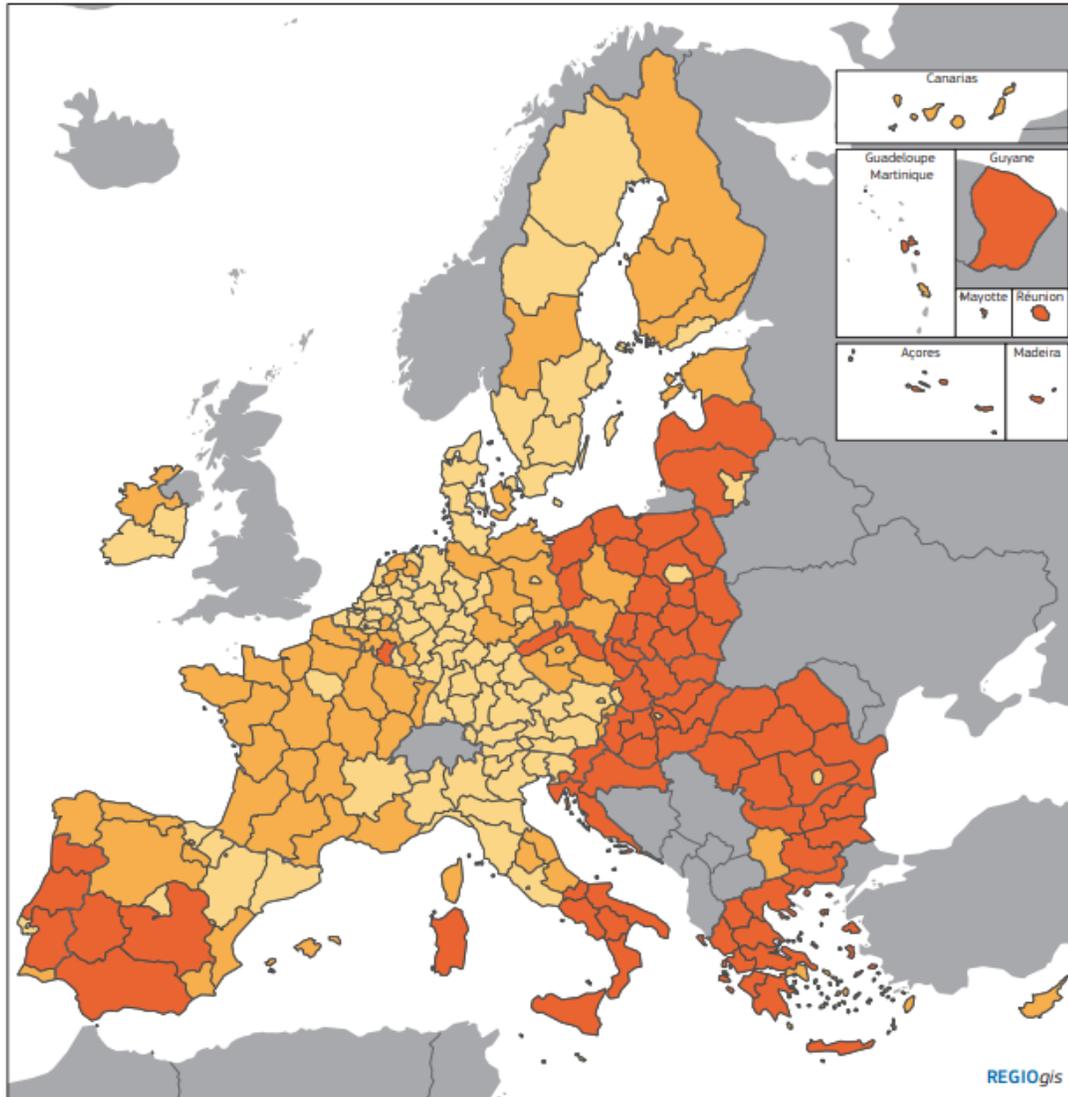


## The IEA Reiterates Its Peak Oil Demand Prediction

By [Irina Slav](#) - Oct 24, 2023, 2:25 AM CDT

- ▶ In its latest World Energy Outlook, the International Energy Agency has reiterated its claim that crude oil, natural gas, and coal will peak before 2030.
- ▶ The agency sees the emergence of a new clean energy economy as providing hope for the way forward, emphasizing the economic case for clean energy technologies.
- ▶ The report focuses on the importance of resilience and energy security, particularly due to the geopolitical developments currently disrupting energy markets.

# 13 Instrument – Cohesion Policy



Category of regions for cohesion policy (ERDF and ESF+), 2021–2027

- Less developed regions (GDP per head (PPS) less than 75% of the EU-27 average)
- Transition regions (GDP per head (PPS) between 75% and 100% of the EU-27 average)
- More developed regions (GDP per head (PPS) above 100% of the EU-27 average)

*Cohesion Policy targets all regions and cities in the European Union in order to support\* job creation, business competitiveness, economic growth, sustainable development, and improve citizens' quality of life.*

\* € 392 billion for Cohesion Policy in 2021-2027

# I3 Instrument

## Funding & Management

- ≡ Integral element of the **Cohesion policy** - European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
-  Budget of **EUR 570 million**
-  Directly managed by the **European Commission** - Directorate-General for EU Regional and Urban policy (**DG REGIO**) and European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (**EISMEA**)

## Specific Objectives

-  **Accelerate** innovation, transformation, and commercialisation of products and services
-  **Strengthen** EU-wide collaboration
-  **Mobilise** and optimise investments to reshape EU value chains
-  **Support** the replication of I3 project outcomes and their further funding from national and regional levels, notably ERDF and Interreg programmes in EU member states and regions



# I3 Dimensions – Interregional – Innovation – Investments



## INTERREGIONAL

- Creating links between EU regions around **shared or complementary smart specialisation (S3)** areas and involving all components of the regional or national innovation ecosystems
- Supporting the development of value chains in less developed regions

“ *The interregional component provides a unique opportunity to cross-fertilise actual instruments and facilitate the market uptake of the solutions developed.*

● Myriam Martin, HealthChain project



## INNOVATION

- Testing, demonstration, piloting, large-scale product validation and market replication, adaptation of existing prototypes
- Accelerating innovation, bringing innovative solutions and new products in:
  - **Digital transition**
  - **Green transition**
  - **Smart manufacturing**

“ *The programme helped us establish the first interregional green hydrogen value chain in South Estonia and Northern Latvia for activating the emerging hydrogen and providing a blueprint for setting up green hydrogen ecosystems in other regions.*

● Jaanus Tamm, H2 Value project project



## INVESTMENTS

- Financial and advisory support for joint innovation projects
- Smart economic transformation by moving from investment ideas to actual implementation
- Direct investment to companies (mainly SMEs)

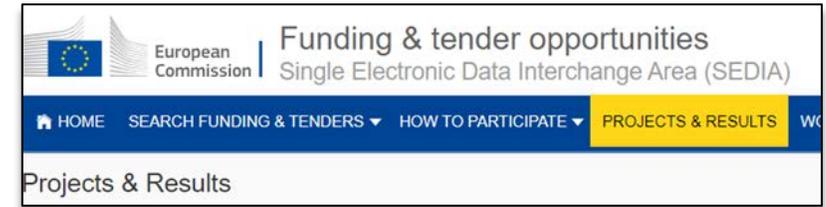
“ *I3 Instrument supports SMEs to be internationally competitive whilst at the same time addressing actual pan-European unmet needs and unlocking cross-sectoral and inter-regional markets.*

● Magnus Wallengren, Digit Pre project

# 13 Instrument Overview & Achievements

## Calls Launched:

-  **Nov 2021:** Innovation Support – 2 calls: Strands 1&2a
-  **Dec 2022:** Capacity Building – Strand 2b
-  **May 2023:** Innovation Support – 2 calls Strands 1&2a



## Upcoming Calls:

-  **Nov 2023:** Capacity Building – new call for Strand 2b (with two cut-off dates in 2024)
-  **2024:** Innovation Support – new calls for Strands 1&2a



## Achievements:

-  **34 running projects:** Granted from the 2021 & 2022 calls (with an average consortium size exceeding 14 partners)
-  **€133M:** Funds allocated for innovation investments projects
-  **€13M:** Funds allocated for interregional innovations capacity-building
-  **>800** participants from almost all EU countries applied for May 2023 calls, with nearly 50 proposals submitted

# About the project



- **Programme:** Interregional Innovation Investments Instrument (I3)
- **Type of project:** Capacity Building - Strand 2b
- **Project acronym:** Greet CE
- **Project title:** Green transition in Central Europe
- **Duration:** 24 months (to start on 1.11.2023)
- **Project budget:** 1.397.959,63 €
- **Project coordinator:** (LP): KSSENA - Energy Agency of Savinjska, Šaleška and Koroška



The Greet CE project is supported by the European Unions Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument.



# About the project



- **Project consortium:** Project partners from 7 regions of 6 Central European countries - (HR, HU, PL, RO, SI, SK) including 4 less developed regions (from HR, RO, SI, SK)
- **Type of organizations:** 1 research institution, 2 municipal energy agencies, 1 business association, 2 clusters, 2 SMEs



- **Experience and skill:** proven track record in business, social, technology innovation, EU projects and financing, sustainability policy innovation
- **Associated partners:** Altogether 21 Letters of Support received from 5 universities (from 4 countries), 9 industry associations / clusters, 2 public bodies, 1 research institute and 4 SMEs from 6 countries



The Greet CE project is supported by the European Unions Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument.



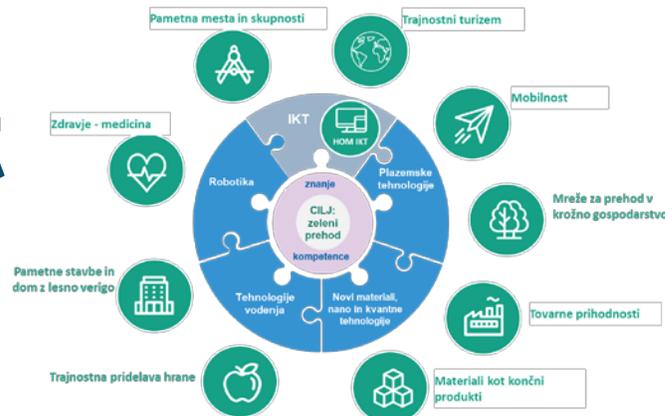
# About the project

- **Project focus:**

To increase the capacity of regional innovation ecosystems, especially SMEs in less developed Central European regions to connect and interoperate in EU value chains, participate in partnerships with other regions.

The goal is to unlock the innovation potential, facilitating the subsequent participation of SMEs in calls for proposals under I3 Strand 1 and Strand 2a. The project will also assist in creating other ERDF, Interreg & crowdfunding opportunities.

Greet CE aims to create the preconditions for **successful interregional cooperation and investments in shared smart specialization areas**, especially in Green Transition having a specific focus on the energy and bioeconomy sector.



# About the project

- **Approach:**

Within the Green Transition thematic area and bioeconomy, specific domains and niches will be addressed in pilots.



**Digital (sustainable)  
energy.**



**Eco-construction** using  
sustainable materials.



**Regenerative farming**



**Renewable gases**

# CONCLUSION

- I. **Project relevance** (targeted and tailor-made measures for relevant target groups)
- II. **Partner consortium capacity and references** (relevant to their long-term ambitions)
- III. **Wide stakeholder outreach** (e.g. large network of associated partners)
- IV. **Ambitious scope of intervention** (number of S3 Partnerships in which regions are actively participating, number of companies involved, number of engaged intermediaries, etc.).

# Project Creation Methodology

**Athanasios G. Konstandopoulos** *PhD, KLH*

Chief Scientific Advisor, CHORUS Cluster

Co-Founder & Senior Partner SYNEST PC

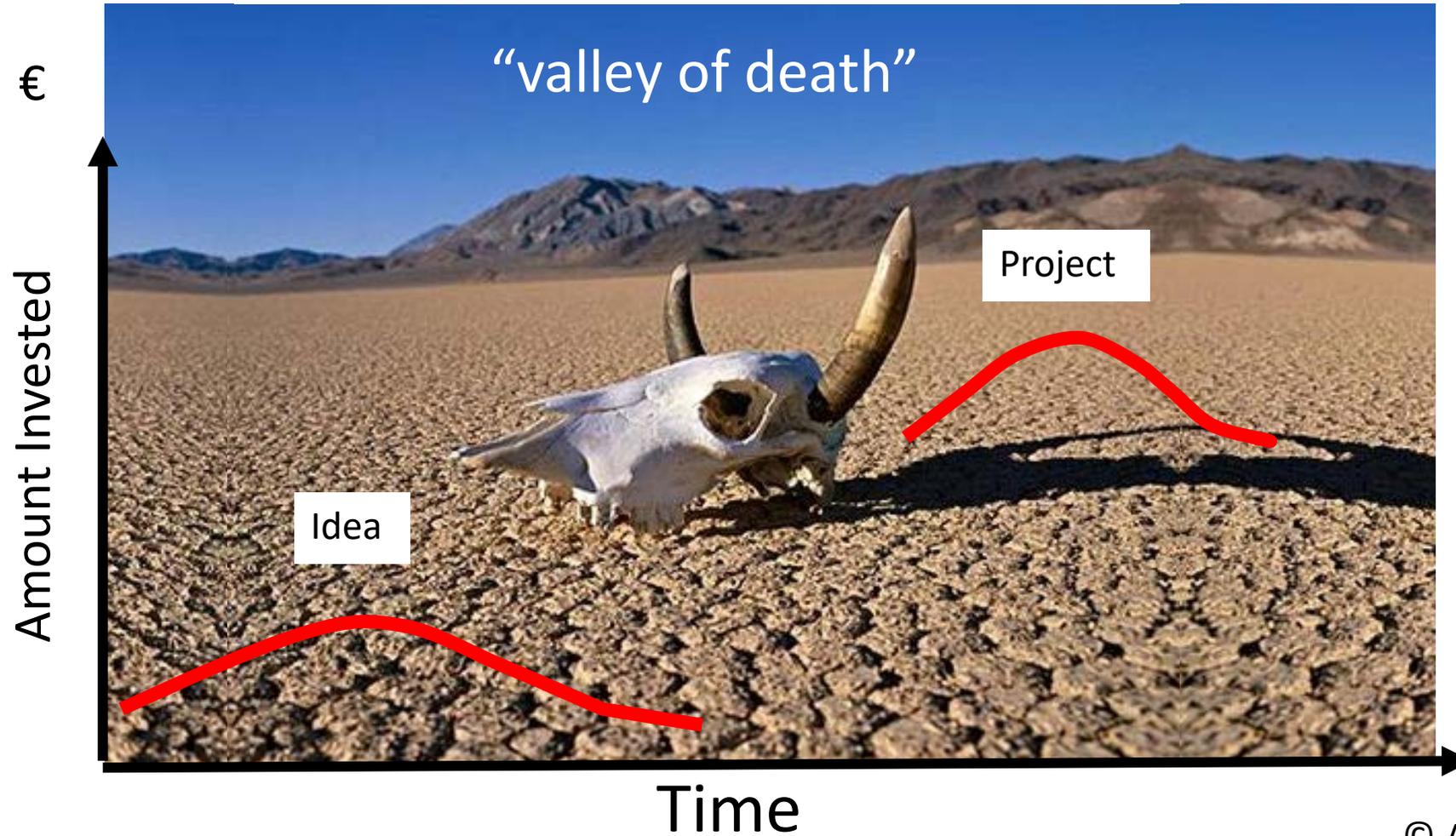
Professor of Chemical Engineering, Aristotle University

Thessaloniki, Greece

[agk@auth.gr](mailto:agk@auth.gr) , [agk@sy-nest.com](mailto:agk@sy-nest.com)

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/athanasios-g-konstandopoulos-b42565a/>

# From Idea to Project



© A. G. Konstandopoulos

# Determinants of Success...



Talent



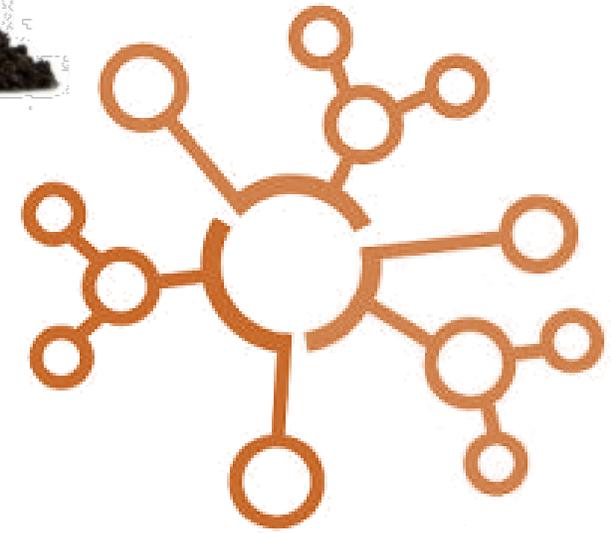
Culture



Capital



Regulations

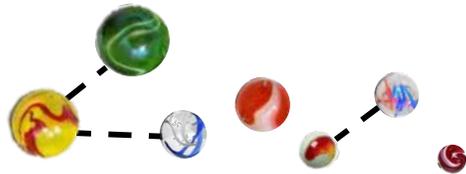


Density

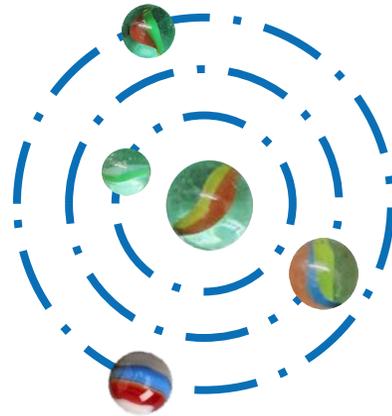


# Transitions/Evolution of Organizations

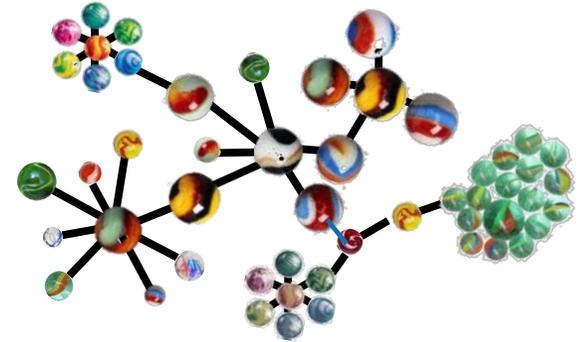
**Stage 1:**  
Islands of Excellence  
(driven by individuality)



**Stage 2:**  
Centers of Competence  
(driven by specialization)



**Stage 3:**  
Co-Evolving Ecosystems  
(driven by synergy)



**Private Sector**

▪ Companies



**Public Sector**

▪ Individual  
Agencies/Offices

▪ Clusters  
▪ Industrial Associations



▪ Municipal Authorities

▪ Meta-organizations  
(e.g. Cluster Networks)

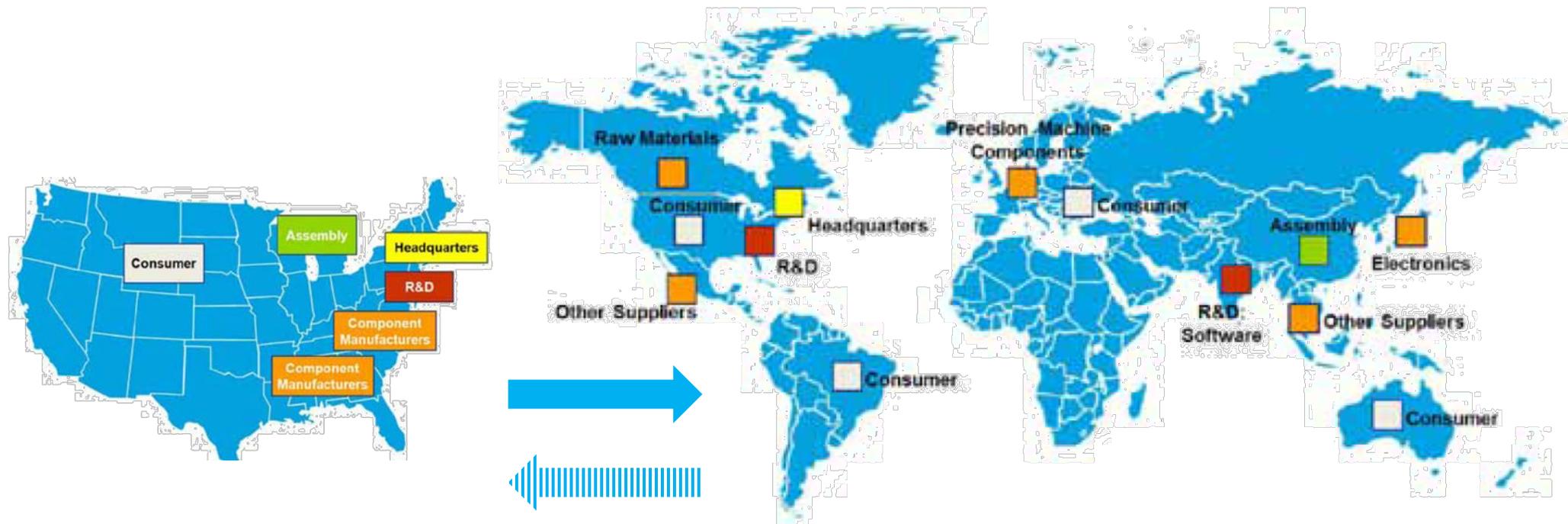


▪ Regional Authorities  
▪ Government

© A. G. Konstandopoulos

# Globalization Reversing...

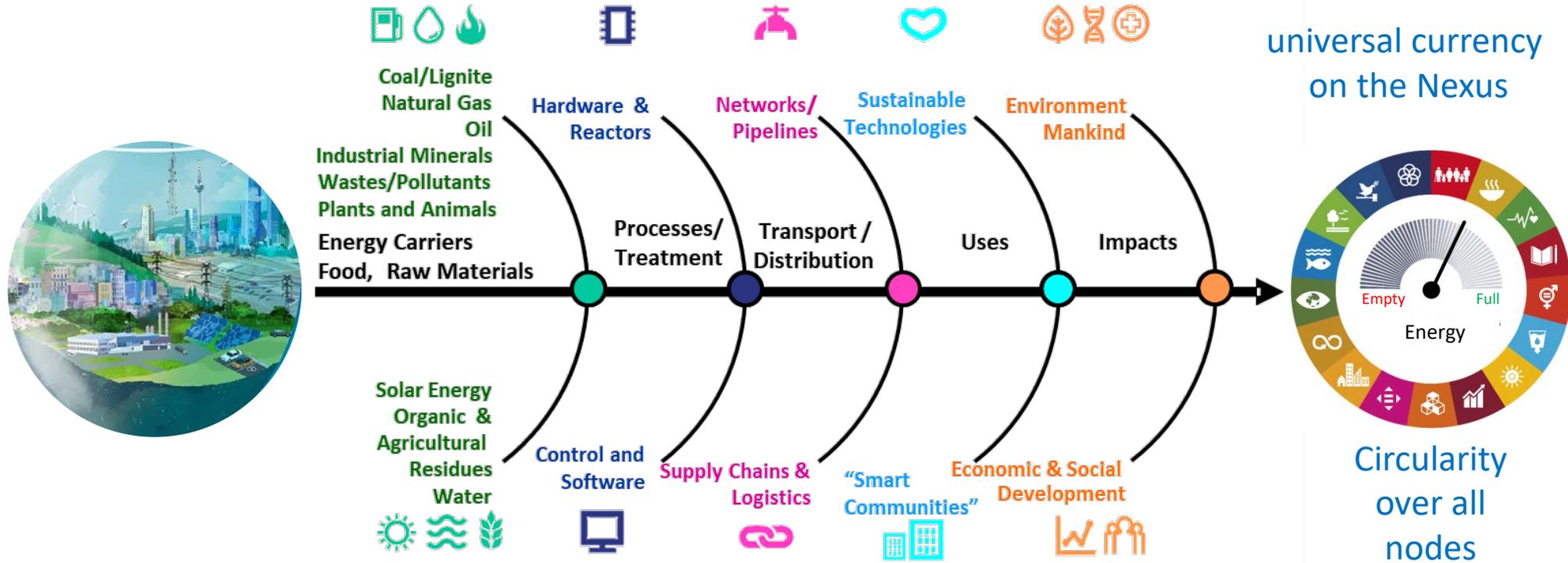
Global Sourcing of Value Chain Used to Offer Opportunities to All Countries but Trend is Reversing...



Source: Deloitte analysis

© A. G. Konstandopoulos

# The Resource NEXUS as a framework for project building with a view towards sustainability and resilience

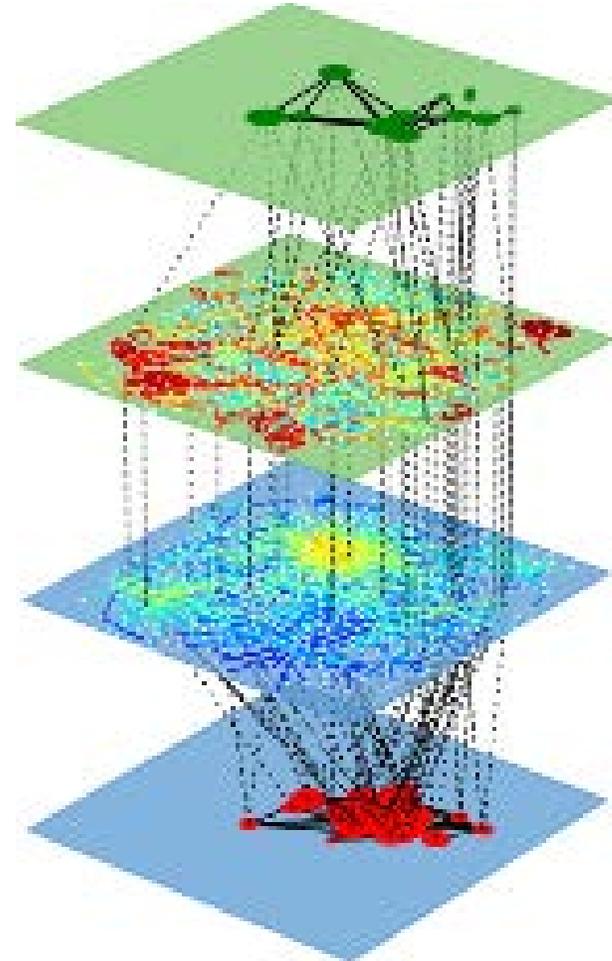


<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/20141021-certh-jrc-conference-konstandopoulos.pdf>

- **Unified view** of raw materials, increase **local sourcing**
- **Distributed** processing, "edge manufacturing", scale-up by **modularity**
- **Networks** & complexity science, latent potentials /criticalities, **resilience**
- Exploit **synergies** to foster sustainable use within **symbiotic** ("smart") communities
- Assess **multidimensional impacts** on environment, society and economy

© A. G. Konstandopoulos

# Synergies over Multiple Domains



**Entrepreneurship**

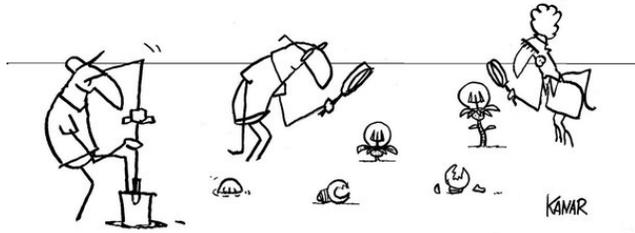
**Innovation**

**Research**

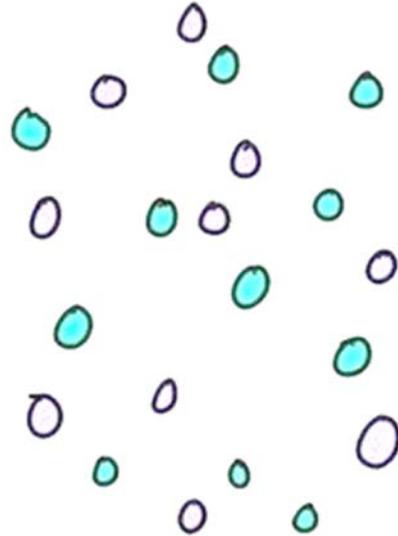
**Education**

© A. G. Konstandopoulos

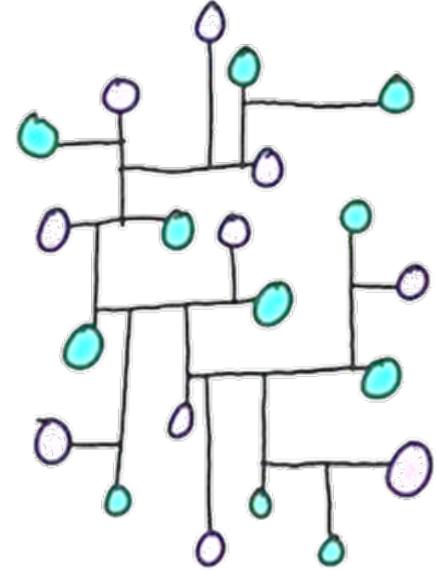
# Actors, Roles, Resources, Relations



**Actors and Roles**



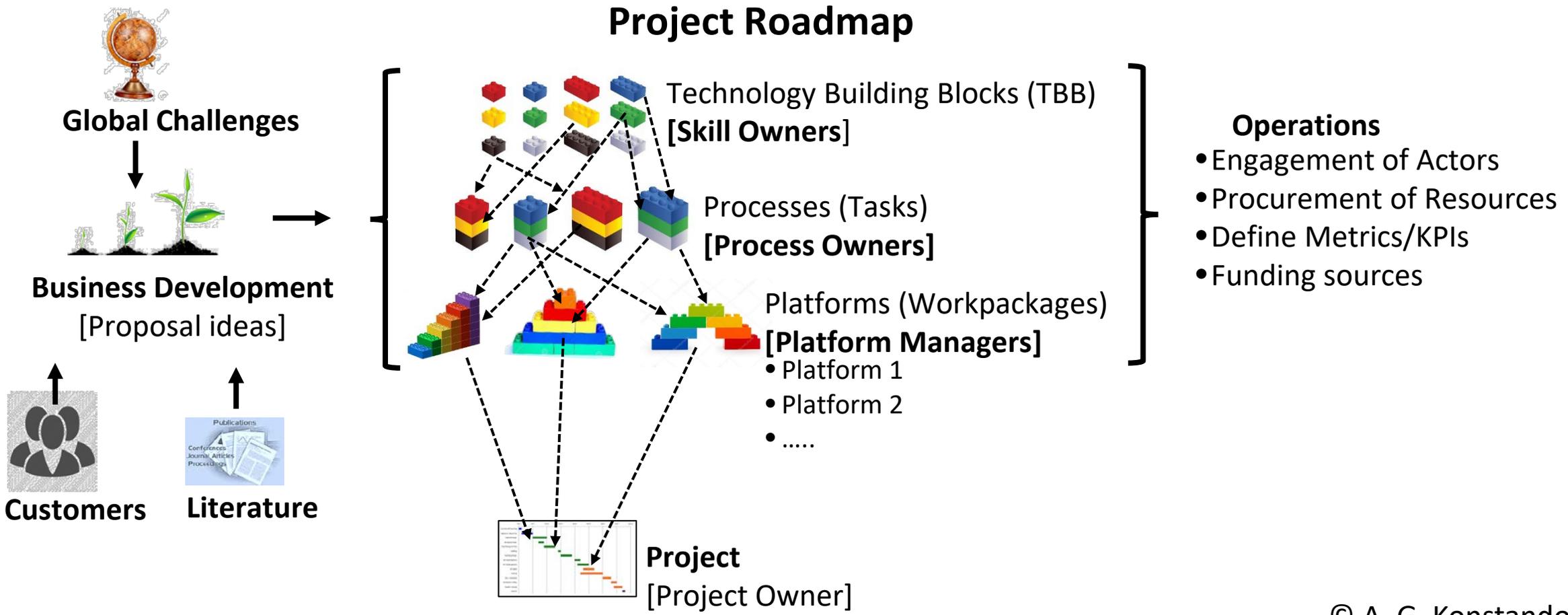
**Resources  
(aka "Data")**



**Relations  
(aka "Knowledge")**

© A. G. Konstandopoulos

# Project Creation Methodology



© A. G. Konstandopoulos

# Project Creation Methodology

- Initial interactive discussion on questions posed by the moderator
- Writing and visualisation of the ideas and proposals in a large screen
- Search of points of convergence, synergies, syntheses and new proposals (mapping on the resource nexus)

© A. G. Konstandopoulos