

**Interreg
Europe**



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Webinar: Rural innovation ecosystems

Marc Pattinson and Laura Varisco
*Thematic Experts | Smarter Europe | Interreg Europe Policy Learning
Platform*

30 May 2024



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Rural innovation ecosystems

Interreg
Europe



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the European Union

Welcome!



Laura Varisco
Thematic Expert –
Smarter Europe
Policy Learning Platform



Marc Pattinson
Thematic Expert –
Smarter Europe
Policy Learning Platform



Rural innovation ecosystems: our speakers



Simone Sasso
Joint Research Centre



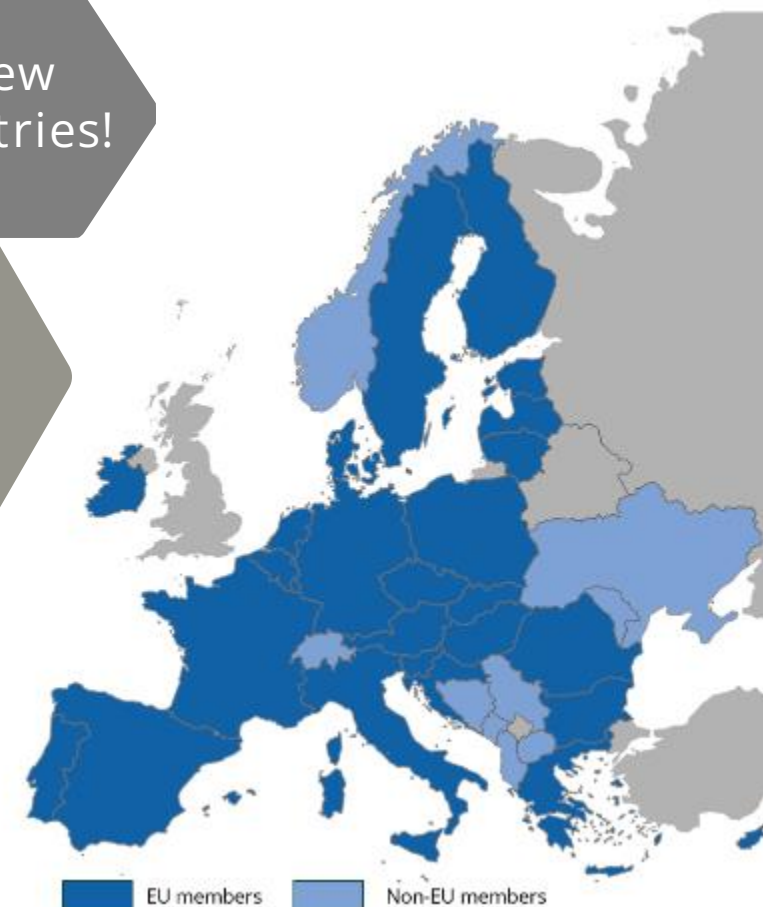
Marco Alves
Food Fab Lab - Tagus Valley, Portugal -
Agri Renaissance



Ingjerd Skogseid
Tech Hub Fosshaugane
Campus - Region Vestland,
Norway, P-IRIS



Sharing solutions for better regional policy



Interreg Europe objective

To improve **regional development policy instruments**
(including Investment for jobs and growth goal programmes)

How?

Through exchange of experience, innovative approaches and capacity building (in relation to the identification & transfer of good practices)

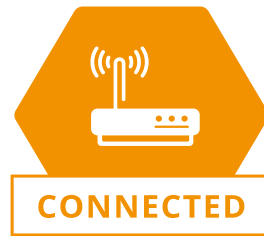
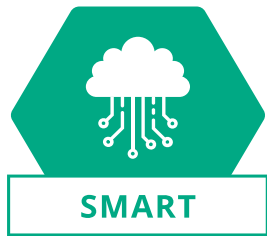
- Primarily dedicated to policymakers
- Focus on exchange of experience



Different from cross-border or transnational cooperation

Programme scope

1 cross-cutting priority on capacity building → **six topics**



Two actions



Projects

Limited number of regions exchanging and transferring experience on a shared regional development issue



Third call closing on 7 June 2024



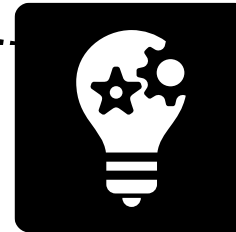
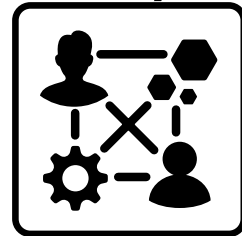
Policy Learning Platform

Further exploiting projects' achievements and opening up the programme benefits to all

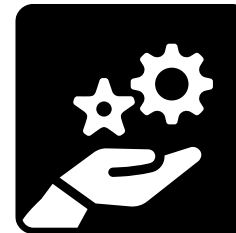
The Platform in a nutshell

Policy-learning opportunities through access to:

People
Meet our community



Knowledge
Find policy solutions



Expertise
Get policy advice

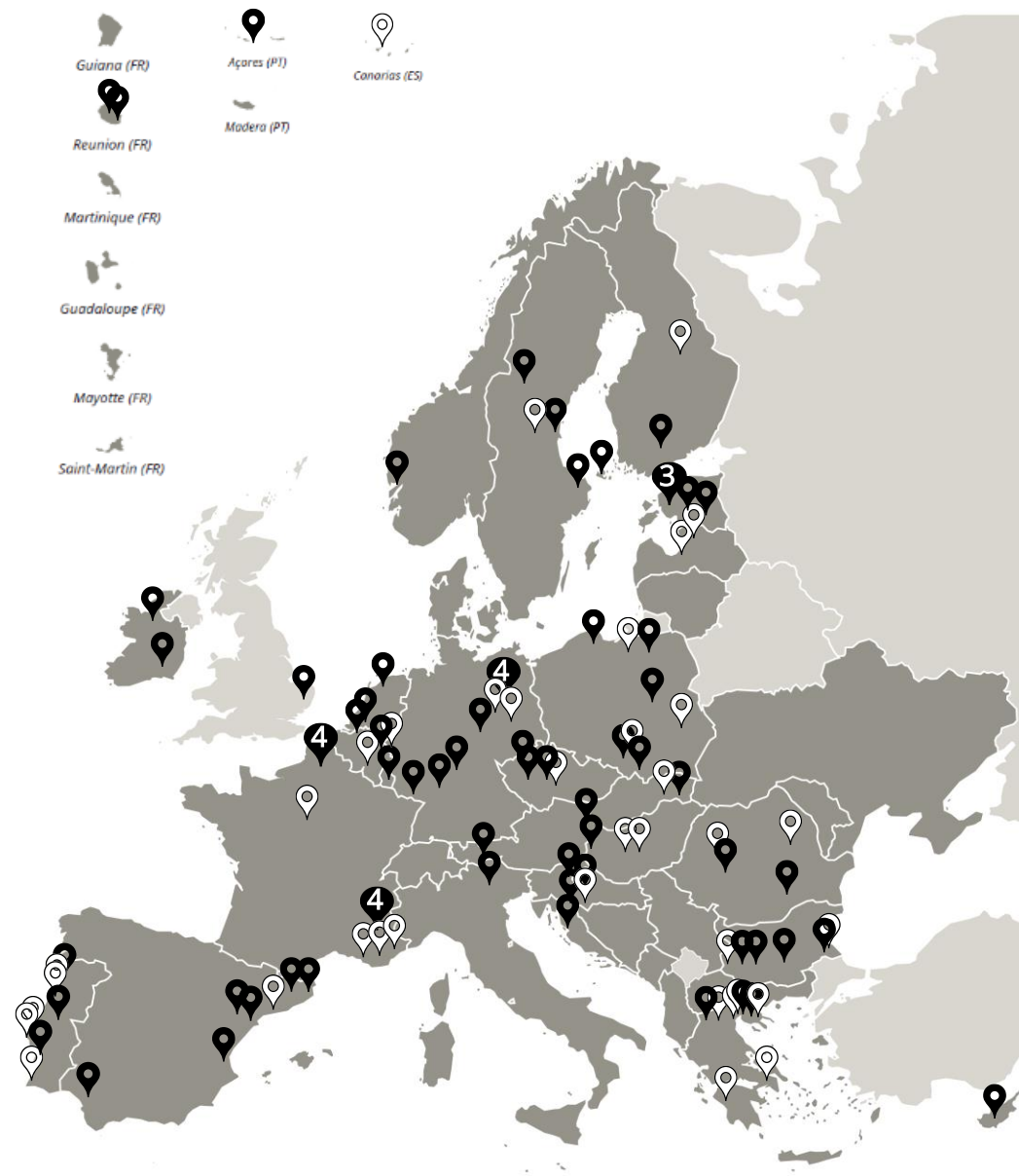
Peer learning **IN PRACTICE**

📍 **74 peer reviews** implemented since 2019
12 peer reviews in the pipeline

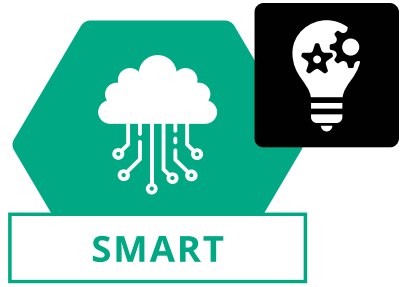
📍 **44 matchmaking** sessions

Apply to benefit from expert support any time

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/get-policy-advice>



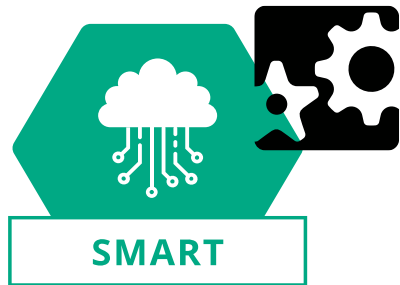
The Policy Learning Platform can help



Good Practices



Multi-fund development of digital hubs/co-working spaces in rural areas



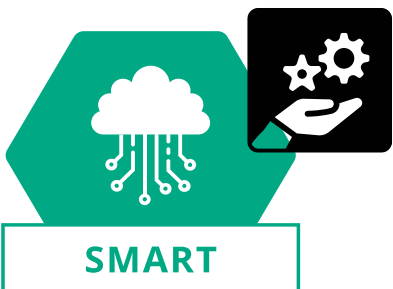
Policy Briefs

- The challenges and necessity of rural innovation
- Innovation network



A Policy Brief from the Policy Learning Platform on Research and innovation

January 2019



Peer Review

Building European Value Chains for the Green Industrial Transition, Jämtland-Härjedalen, Sweden



Rural innovation ecosystems in a nutshell

- Rural Innovation Ecosystems refer to the networks and environments in rural areas that foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic development and greater cohesion – both social and economic.
- These ecosystems are crucial for revitalising rural economies, structuring key sectors (food/agriculture/crafts), enhancing quality of life, and reducing the urban-rural divide.
- Ecosystems and networks must also adapt to changing societal needs/ opportunities : home working, access to housing, population growth, access to public services (health, education ...)

Benefits



- Economic Growth
- Sustainability
- Social Inclusion

Challenges



- Resource Limitations
- Brain Drain / Skills / Talent
- Infrastructure / Digital Gaps

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Presentations!

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Keynote
speaker:



Simone Sasso

Joint Research Centre



Enhancing innovation ecosystems in European rural areas

Simone Sasso, Economist and Policy Analyst
European Commission, DG Joint Research Centre

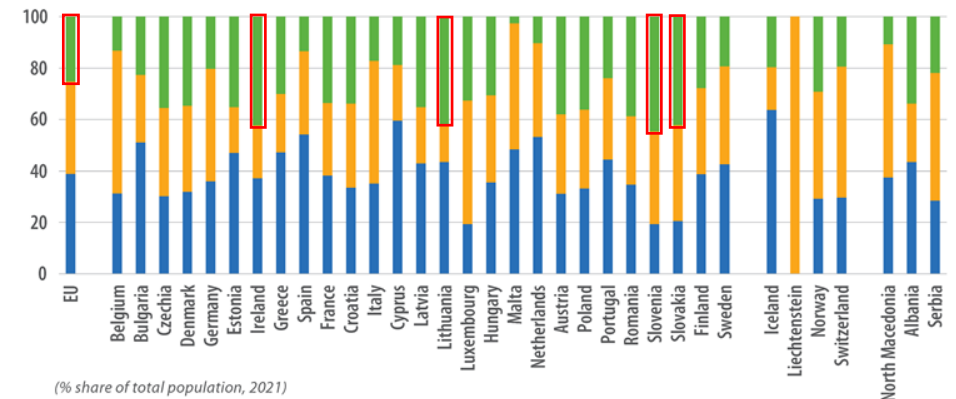
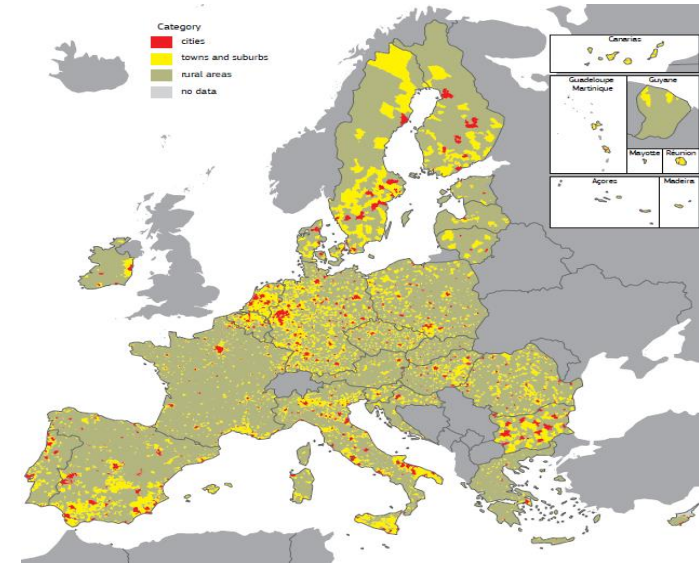
Interreg Europe, 30 May 2024

Introduction

Rural areas comprise **over three quarters of the EU's territory** and are home to over one quarter of its population (EC, 2024)

Widening disparities in productivity, wages, and demographic trends (depopulation and aging) between rural and urban areas (EC, 2024; EC, 2021; OECD, 2020)

Innovation may contribute to mitigate these gaps and address the increasing geographies of discontent (Kulesa and Gliniecka, 2024; Rodríguez-Pose et al., 2023; McCann, 2019)



(% share of total population, 2021)

Source: European Commission, 2024; 2021

● Cities ● Towns and suburbs ● Rural areas



Evolving narratives on innovation in rural and peripheral regions

“No innovation”

Innovation mainly happens in the core but may spill over to peripheries

Diversity is inherent to cities and absent from rural areas → attracts creatives and entrepreneurs

Peripheries suffer from organizational and institutional “thinness” (e.g. infrastructure, networks)

“Innovation despite”

Peripheries must focus on absorptive capacity

Dependent on external information sources and other linkages

Can benefit from mobile professionals, temporary linkages

Can support (or foster) certain types of innovation: slow, secretive

“Innovation because”

Certain types of innovation can only occur in the periphery → place-specific, local knowledge

Some types of cross-fertilization occur more readily: organizational nimbleness and diversity

Partial disconnection from the core can foster “unconventional” innovation

Based on Glucker *et al.* (2023)

EC strategic framework

Long-Term Vision for EU's Rural Areas (LTVRA)

Several areas of action to make EU rural areas stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous by 2040.

Flagship action on *Research and Innovation for Rural Communities* acknowledges the role of innovation to revitalize rural areas and transform them into places of opportunity.

- **New European Innovation Agenda (NEIA)**

Aims to position Europe at the forefront of the new wave of deep-tech innovation and start-ups, by bringing together policies, investments and instruments to drive systemic change and impact.

Flagship on “*Accelerating and strengthening innovation in European Innovation Ecosystems across the EU and addressing the innovation divide*”

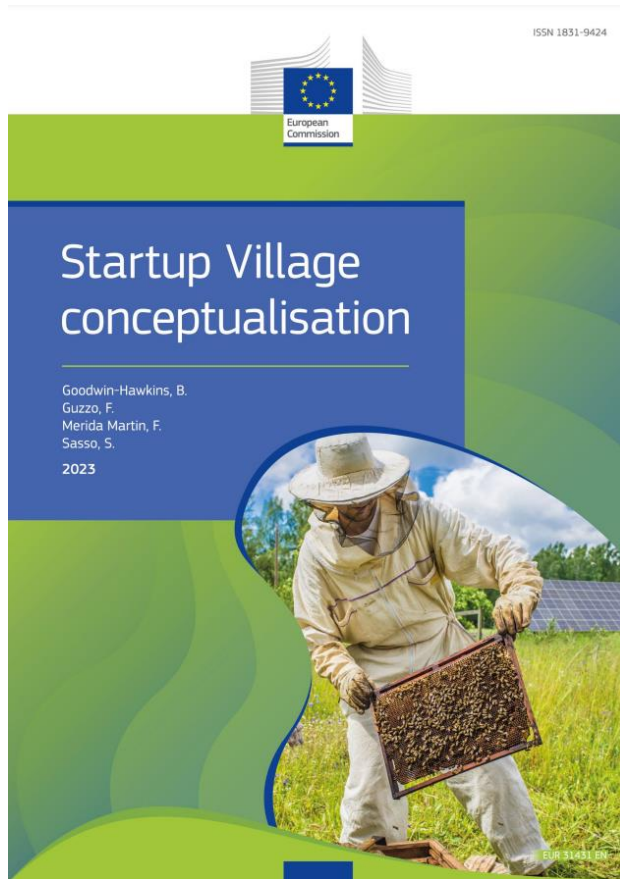
The EU Startup Village Forum initiative

The **SVF** seeks

- to develop new evidence and a deeper understanding on the factors that drive **innovation and entrepreneurship in rural areas**
- to be an **open and inclusive** space for rural stakeholders for sharing and learning from each other
- to strengthen territorial ecosystems and contribute to **accelerate the spread and adoption of innovation** in rural areas



What is a Startup Village?

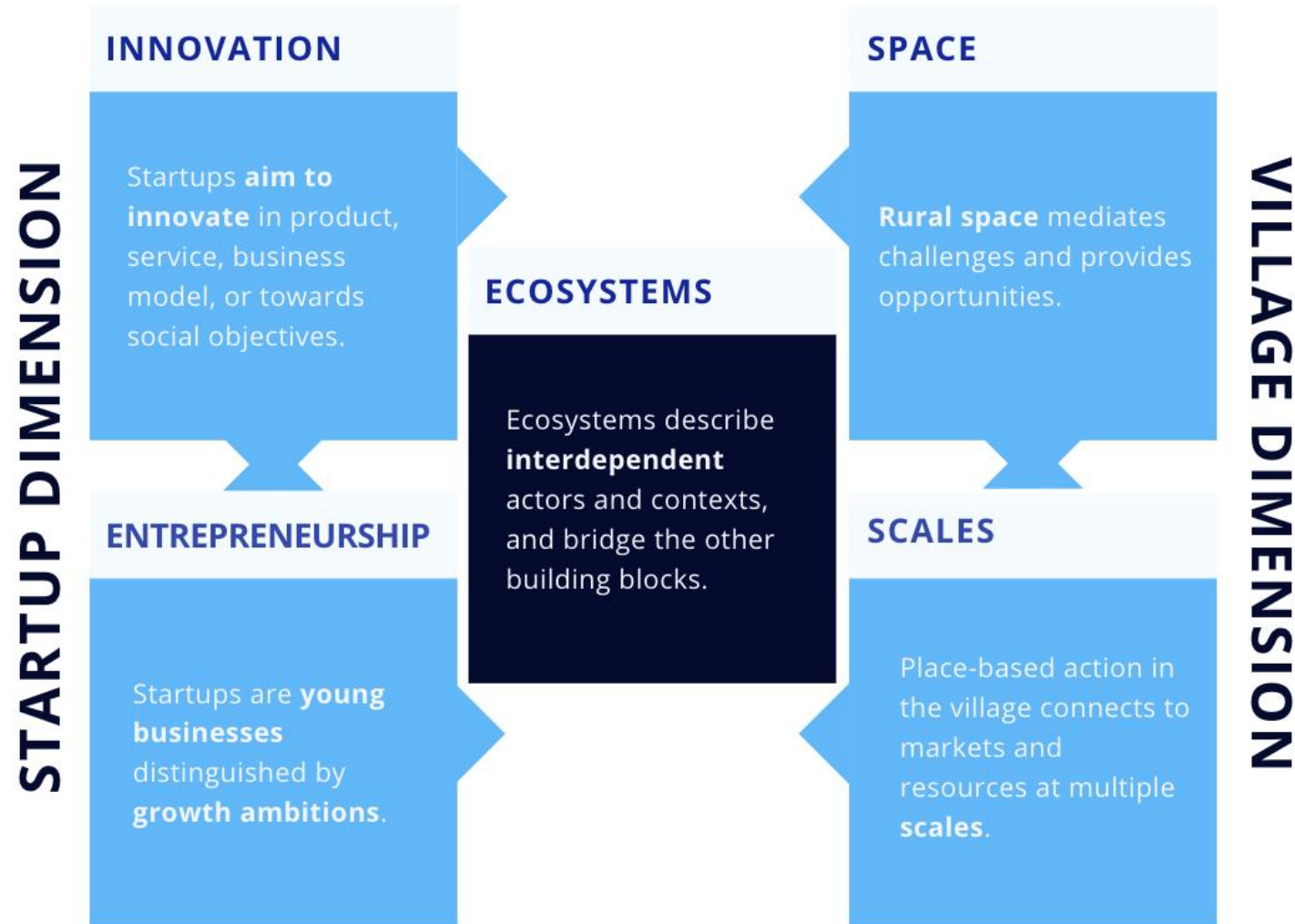


*A place (or a network of small places) that embraces **innovation** and **ambitious entrepreneurship** as a way to unlock development potential and support wellbeing in rural areas.*

*By combining local **place**, **people**, and **purpose** with external **knowledge**, **resources**, and **markets**, a Startup Village strives to provide favourable conditions for entrepreneurial and innovative **ecosystems** to flourish.*

<https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC132646>

CONCEPTUAL BUILDING BLOCKS



Ongoing and future JRC research on rural innovation and entrepreneurship

- Conceptualisation and development of **indicators to measure rural innovation** and entrepreneurship, taking into account their specific features
- Empirical studies on **drivers and obstacles to rural innovation** and entrepreneurship
- Exploratory study on the geographical distribution of startups in European rural areas and the relationship between **regional specialisation and startup emergence**.
- Analysis of **good practices and initiatives** to strengthen the **enabling factors** for rural entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems
- **Startup Village Mapping Tool** to gain a better understanding on the functioning of Startup Villages and assess their degree of readiness

Startup Village Mapping Tool

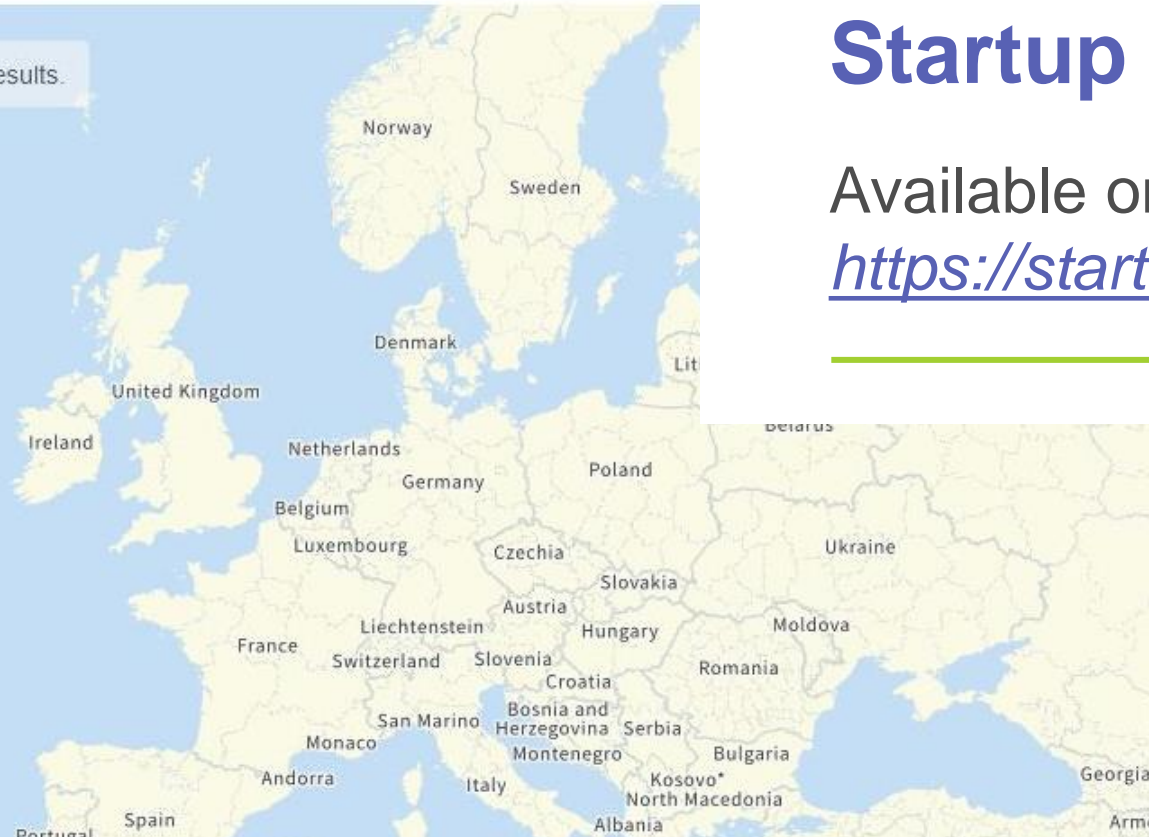
Understanding how innovation functions in rural areas is central for effective public and private sector's initiatives aimed at strengthening these territories. In February 2023, a rolling call for expression of interest was launched for all those European villages that intend to be Startup Villages. The map below will show the villages that have identified themselves as Startup Villages, and the information they provided. As the call remains open, the map will continue evolving.

If you represent a local authority and you think your village could qualify as a Startup Village, fill in the questionnaire!

[Go to survey ↗](#)



The map will show the existing results.



Startup Village Mapping Tool

Available on

<https://startup-forum.rural-vision.europa.eu>

EU VILLAGE

Close

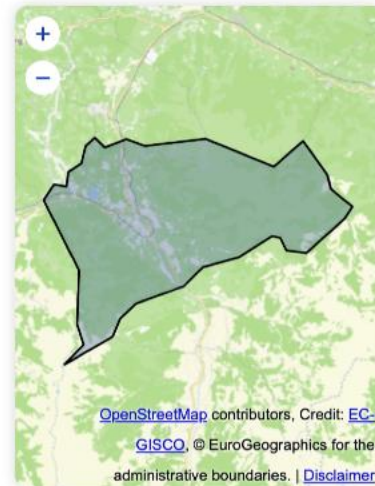
About this village

Country:
in the European Union

Size:
less than 15 000 inhabitants

Distance from the nearest main city:
less than 20 minutes' drive

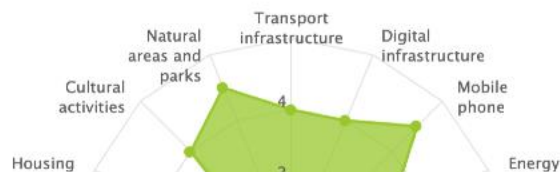
Institution providing information for this factsheet:
EU Village's Municipality



Why can EU Village be considered a Startup Village?

Our town has invested in developing mentoring schemes for startups, as well as functional co-working and networking spaces and regular events with established universities. These elements, in addition to available high-speed connection, have attracted a number founders and digital nomads.

Factors facilitating local innovation and entrepreneurship

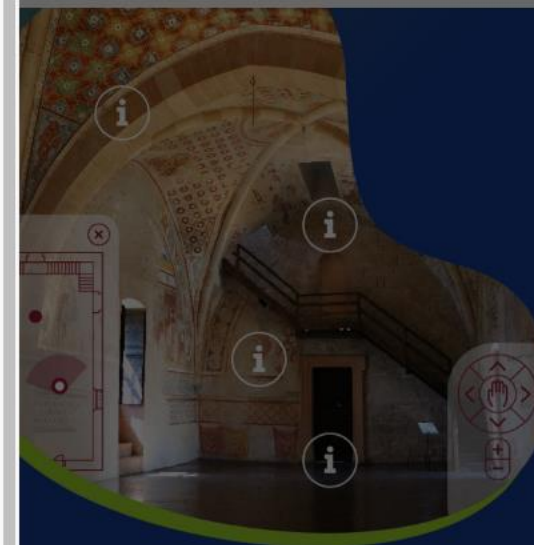


Research and innova
and growth in rural te

The European Startu
promote startup-dri

This initiative is part
includes a specific fl

What is a star



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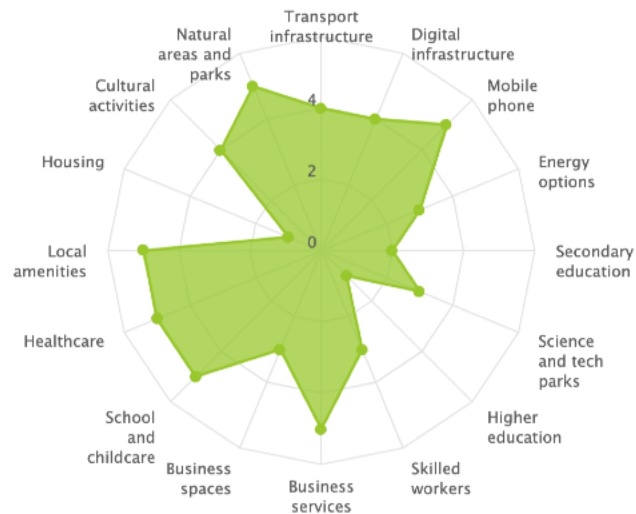


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Factors facilitating local innovation and entrepreneurship



Co-working facilities

Fablab facilities

Business incubation/acceleration



The three main economic sectors of EU Village

Research and innovation and growth in rural territories

The European Startup Village initiative aims to promote startup-driven growth in rural territories

This initiative is part of the European Rural Development Policy and includes a specific focus on rural entrepreneurship

What is a startup village?

What are the benefits of a startup village?

Startup Village

Understanding how the startup sector's initiatives are expressed in rural territories is essential for Startup Villages. The map below provides the information they need

If you represent a local authority, please complete the questionnaire!

[Go to survey](#)

The map will show the existing

Understanding how i
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the information they

If you represent a loc
the questionnaire!

[Go to survey](#)

The map will show the existing



Co-working facilities ✓

Fablab facilities ✓

Business incubation/acceleration ✓



The three main economic sectors of EU Village

Manufacture of furniture

Accommodation

Food and beverage service activities



Existing programmes for innovation and entrepreneurship

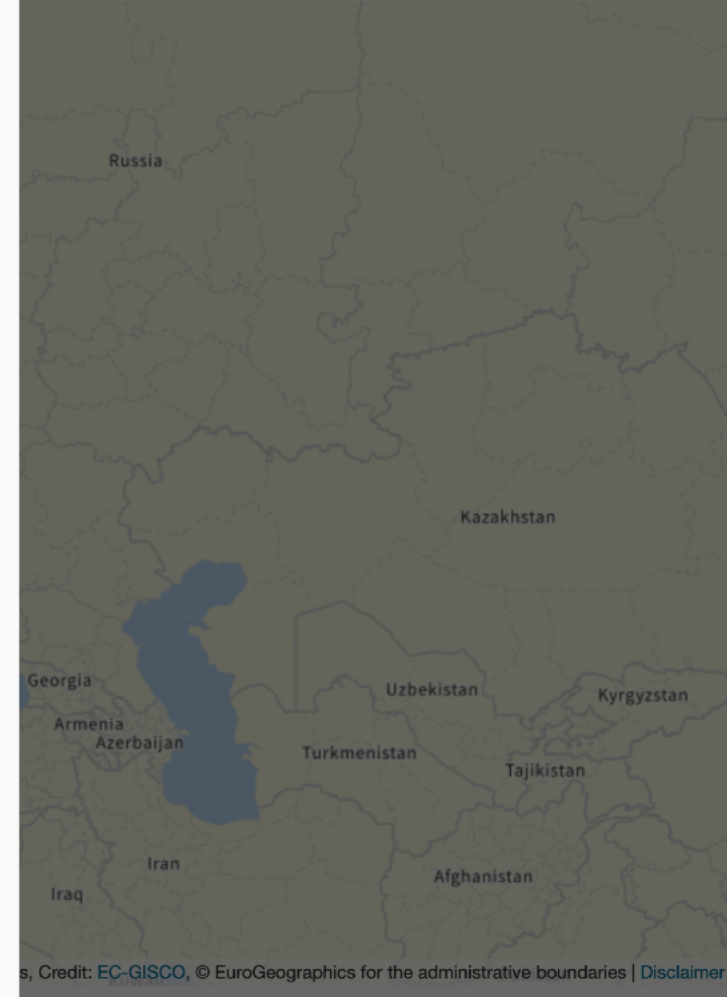
Implemented startup strategy/programme ✓

www.innovatingeuvillage.eu



How well do local innovation actors connect with each other?

Startups and SMEs	Very good	Good	Good	Rather weak	Good	Very weak
Public authorities	Good	Rather weak	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good
Investors	Rather weak	Good	Rather weak	Fair	Rather weak	Good
Industry and corporates	Rather weak	Very weak	Very good	Rather weak	Very good	Rather weak
Universities and research institutions	Fair	Good	Fair	Good	Good	Very good



Accommodation

Food and beverage service activities



Existing programmes for innovation and entrepreneurship

Implemented startup strategy/programme

www.innovatingeuvillage.eu



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Investors	Rather weak	Good	Rather weak	Fair	Rather weak	Good
Industry and corporates	Rather weak	Very weak	Very good	Rather weak	Very good	Rather weak
Universities and research institutions	Fair	Good	Fair	Good	Good	Very good
Civil society	Fair	Fair	Very good	Good	Very good	Rather weak



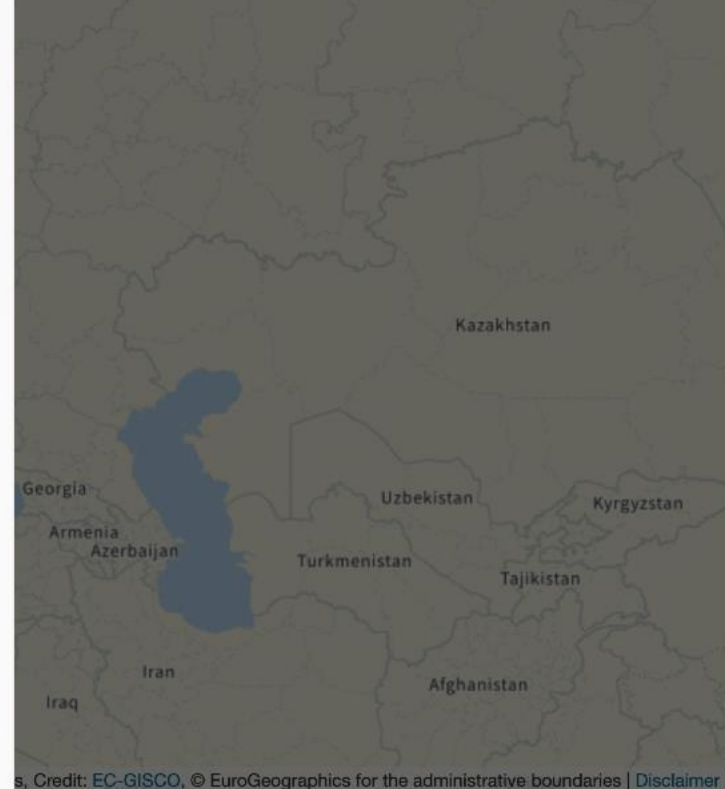
Access to funding

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

European Social Fund (ESF)

Cohesion Fund (CF)

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)



s, Credit: EC-GISCO, © EuroGeographics for the administrative boundaries | Disclaimer

Upcoming e

28

FEB

2023

Publications

Startup Village
conceptualisation

n 2021

define it as 'A

Thank you

simone.sasso@ec.europa.eu



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Speaker:



Marco Alves

Food Fab Lab
Tagus Valley, Portugal
Agri Renaissance





**TAGUS
VALLEY**
PARQUE DE CIÊNCIA
E TECNOLOGIA



**FOOD
FAB
LAB**
BY INOV'LINEA

A SHARED PRODUCTIVE UNIT FOR AGRIFOOD SECTOR

INTERREG POLICY LEARNING PLATFORM RURAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS

● INOVAÇÃO ● CONHECIMENTO ● EMPREENDEDORISMO

MARCO ALVES

INOV.LINEA
COORDINATOR

30.05.2024



Abrantes



INOV.POINT



INOV.LINEA



LINE.IPT



INOV.CODE





INOVLINIA

PRODUCTION AND TRANSFER OF AGRI-FOOD KNOWLEDGE

FOOD | CIRCULAR ECONOMY | BIOECONOMY



SERVICES



APPLIED RESEARCH

PILOT SCALE and INDUSTRIAL SCALE-UP (TRL's 5 - 9)

Innovative or emerging preservation and process technologies



FOOD FAB LAB

Has a diverse portfolio of clients ranging all territory (Data series: 2016 to 2020)



**Start Up Fumeiro do Mar
52%**



**SME Quinta da Mó
39%**



**University
Leiria Polytechnic Institute
9%**

CONTACTS (total): 75
SERVICES (total): 31
CLIENTS (total): 23

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. INVOLVE ALL STAKEHOLDERS ON FOOD FAB LAB PLANNING



AGRI-FOOD
COMPANIES



LEGAL & FISCAL ENTITIES



TECHNICAL TEAM



OTHERS



MUNICIPAL
GOVERNMENT



B. EXPLORE NATIVE SPECIES



FIG



QUINCE



WINE



OTHERS



ARBUTUS



TAKE AWAY MESSAGE



FOOD FAB LAB a **Shared Productive Unit** that can contribute for the **Economic Development** through **Knowledge Transfer** and **New Products Development** towards a **Circular Economy Society**



**TAGUS
VALLEY**
PARQUE DE CIÊNCIA
E TECNOLOGIA

◆ INOVAÇÃO ◆ CONHECIMENTO ◆ EMPREENDEDORISMO

WWW.TAGUSVALLEY.PT



marco_alves@tagusvalley.pt

Speaker:



Ingjerd Skogseid

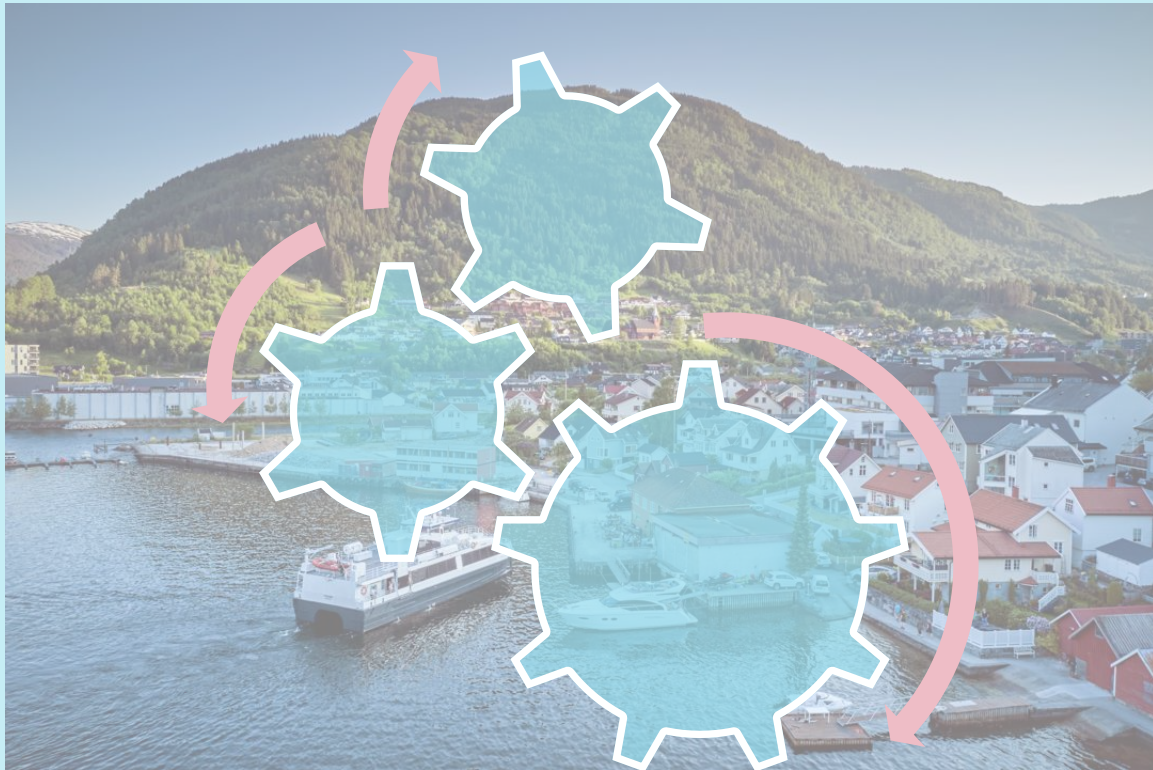
Tech Hub Fosshaugane
Campus
Region Vestland, Norway,
P-IRIS


P-IRIS
Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund





Rural Innovation ecosystem in Vestland

Case: Tech Hub Fosshaugane Campus

Ingjerd Skogseid

Senior advisor innovation infrastructure, Dr.Scient
Department of Business, Planning and Innovation
Vestland County Council

P-IRIS

Policies to improve rural areas' innovation systems
by professionalising networking activities
and use of innovation tools

A P-IRIS position
presented and adopted
P-IRIS final



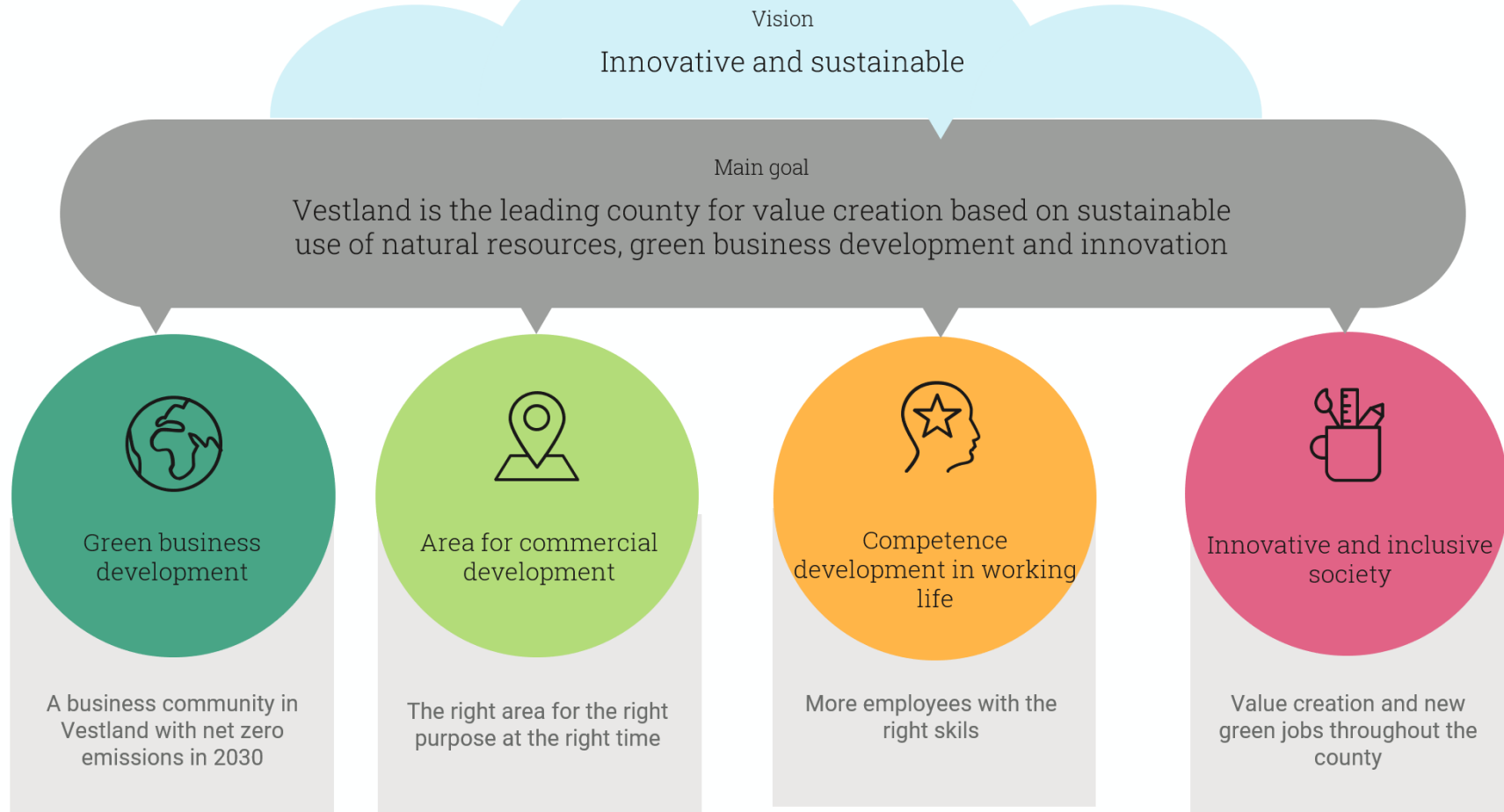
P-IRIS project (2017-2022)

Policies to improve rural areas innovation systems by professionalising networking activities and use of innovation tools

1. Youth – a key target group
2. Living labs and the smart village future
3. Remote working and coworking space
4. Connect rural innovation networks to the outside world
5. A holistic support system
6. Develop skills in innovation-network management
7. A proactive public sector

Sustainable value creation - Regional plan for innovation and

Goals and efforts in the Regional plan



From football stadium to a rural innovation ecosystem

- started back in 1960
- escalated from 1996 onward
- To be able to play in the top league they needed to develop their arena
- Were able to identify and fill both public and private needs and there through raise both public and private funding
- Key elements
 1. *Strategic choice of tenants*
 2. *Shared use of physical infrastructure between football, education and businesses*
 3. *Cross-sectorial use of competence between actors*



Photo: Tor Yttri Sogn Avis 8.5.1999



Photo: Sogndal Fotball

Tech hub Fosshaugane

- Network between tech startups – Part of Fosshaugane campus
- Informal
- High degree of knowledge co-creation and sharing
- Difficult to engage R&D
- Common recruiting strategy
 - Rocketfarm Camp



Sogn Næring



Sognefjorden næringshage



Høgskulen på Vestlandet

VESTLANDSFORSKING

Sogndal vgs. Vestland fylkeskommune



Tech hub Fosshaugane

Infrastructure

- Business facilities for (tech) startups
- Campus Fosshaugane
 - FuS – office and work spaces
 - Incubator offices
- RocketHouse
- Sufficient Internet connection
- Housing for in movers
- Nature – for «play» winter and summer

Innovation infrastructure

- First line of service: Municipal/ Sogn Næring
- Business garden: Sognefjorden næringshage
- Incubator: Kunnskapsparken Vestland

Research and education

- Sogndal Highschool
- Higher vocational college
- Western Norway University of Applied Sciences
- Western Norway Research Institute/ Vestlandsforskning

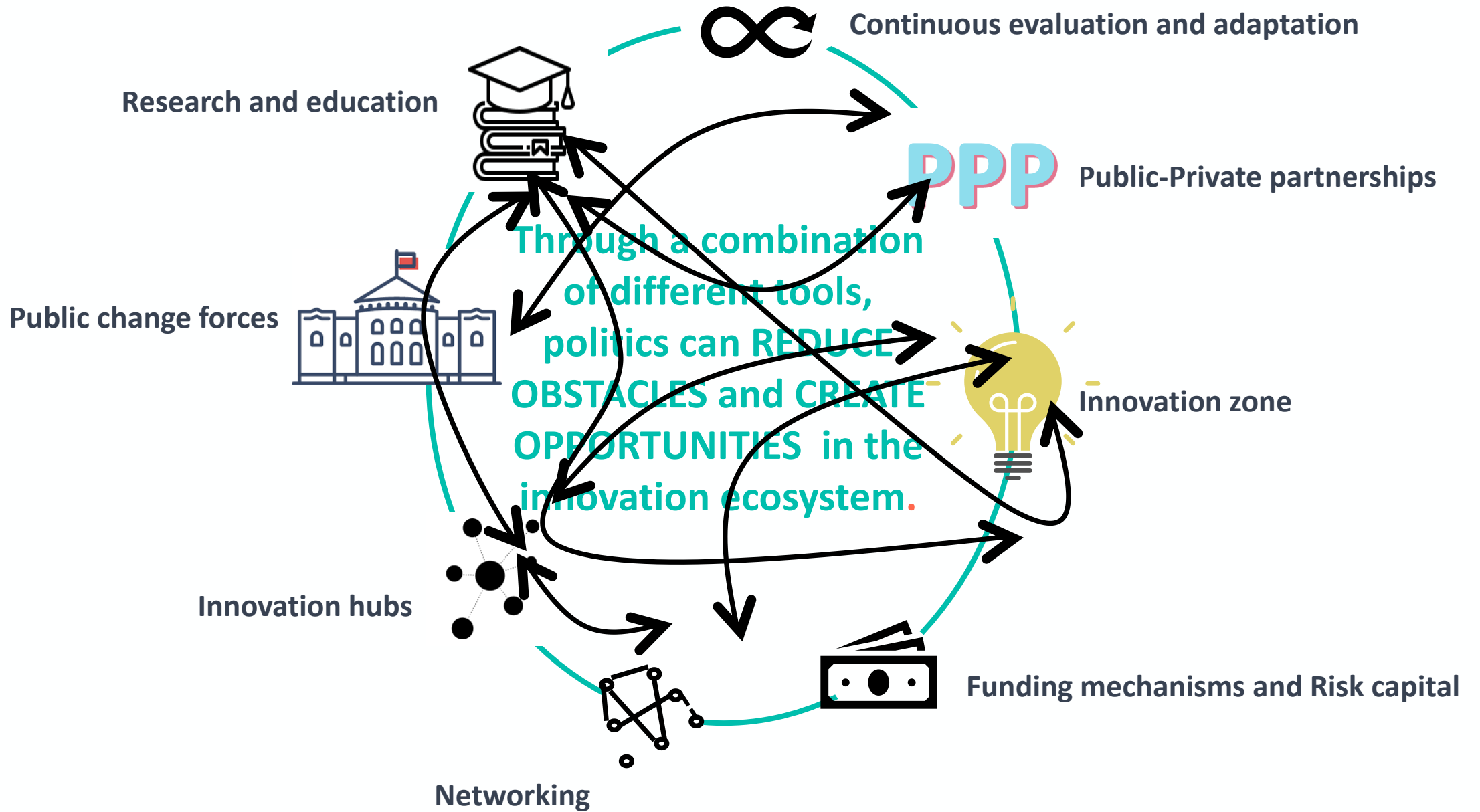
Funding / Risk funding

Public actors

- SIVA – Company for industrial growth
- Innovation Norway – Helps startups and companies grow sustainably
- Vestland County council



Innovation ecosystem – As we see it...



Vestland County Council supports the development of the innovation ecosystem in Vestland

■ Thank you!

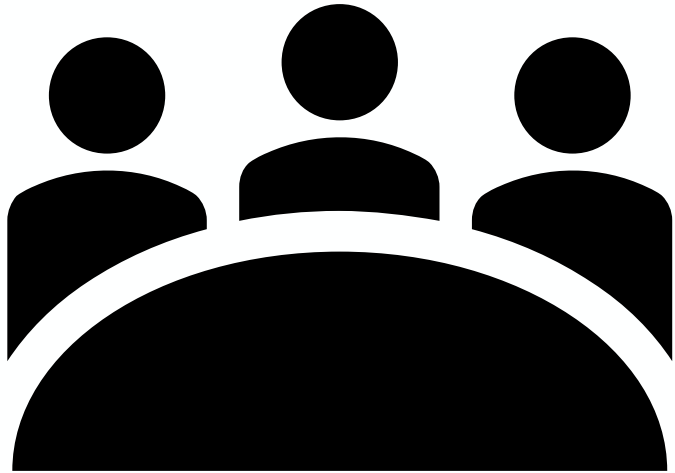


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County Council

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Open Roundtable discussion

**Interreg
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