

# BIOLOC

Biobased and social innovation  
to revitalise European  
local communities



Funded by  
the European Union

# NEWSLETTER #1

# #1



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**BIOLOC** project is funded by **European Commission**, and it promotes **social innovation** and **inclusion** as enabling factors to accelerate the transition to **circular bioeconomy** and thus contributes to revitalizing local communities in **12 European regions** in Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain. Through extensive **interdisciplinary research** and cross-sectoral analyses, BIOLOC will elaborate on **concepts and solutions** that will trigger positive cascading effects on communities by **fostering a participatory and inclusive approach to develop resilient innovative biobased activities open to the contribution of socially disadvantaged or marginalised groups**. In this way it will deliver innovative and inclusive business models and drive the establishment of permanent **public-private multistakeholder hubs** to pioneer a social dialogue on innovative and inclusive circular bioeconomy as a leveraging factor for **sustainable and resilient local communities**.

# Meet the team

## **CENTRAL EUROPEAN INITIATIVE Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES)**

is a regional intergovernmental forum of 17 Member States in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. It fosters European integration and sustainable development through regional cooperation. Among its objectives, the CEI-ES promotes flourishing Green Growth by ensuring that economic development is pursued in a sustainable and resource-efficient manner.



It is the coordinator of the BIOLOC project and it will ensure the visibility and dissemination of all project achievements to further promote the transition to circular bioeconomy in all involved regions and beyond.

**WAGENINGEN RESEARCH**, part of Wageningen University and Research (WUR), aims at exploring the potential of nature to improve the quality of life' domain. Its strength lies in its ability to join the forces of specialized research institutes and the university as well as in the combined efforts of the various fields of natural and social sciences.



Thanks to its important expertise on biobased solutions and biorefinery concepts from a technical, economic, and social point of view the Wageningen Research will build a catalogue of biobased solutions and relevant biobased value chains that contributes to the revitalization of the 12 selected European regions.

**CIRCE** is a Spanish technology centre that works to transfer technological solutions to the business fabric in the field of energy and sustainability with the aim of improving its competitiveness in the market. Its business lines are focused on renewable energies, electricity grids, sustainable mobility, industry 4.0, energy efficiency and circular economy.



CIRCE is committed to promote bioeconomy and biobased value chains, therefore project BILOC topics are a key to increase their contribution to this ambitious goal in their regions and at national or even at international level.

**ZSI** is a private non-profit institute for applied social sciences and a Centre of Excellence for social innovation based in Vienna (Austria). ZSI implements research and application projects on the social embedding and impact of all types of innovations.

ZENTRUM FÜR SOZIALE INNOVATION  
CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION



In BIOLOC ZSI will support the deployment biobased solutions for the revitalisation local communities. The goal is to stimulate interaction and peer learning between 13 regional BIOLOC hubs on the one hand and co-creation of tailored bio-based solutions with local communities and stakeholders on the other hand. This multi-faceted engagement process will eventually trigger positive trade-offs and positive impact on the biobased sector.

**RINA** inherited the legacy from one of the world's first ship classification registers and turned it into a "business-to-society" company that helps its clients stay ahead of changes and grow further with a focus on energy transition, ESG and digitalization.



In BIOLOC, RINA will develop new updated network-oriented business models to build local capacity enabling impacts, benefits, positive trade-offs, and performances of specific biobased value chains. In this way, RINA will increase its own knowledge from the mapping of the current state-of-the-art and prospects of most relevant bio-based value chains and will revise the current

business models and practices to embed the approaches of open innovation, social innovation, and social entrepreneurship.

**UNIVERSITY OF HOHENHEIM (UHOH)**, founded in 1818, is not only engaged in basic research but also in developing innovative solutions for urgent social matters. Today, UHOH has a unique profile, a wide international network, and works with distinguished specialists from all fields.



In BIOLOC UHOH will perform comparative analysis that focuses on structural similarities and differences to identify opportunities for knowledge transfer from and between the selected regions. Knowledge is also the key factor to provide information and training on Circular Bioeconomy (CBE) opportunities for their stakeholders in Baden-Württemberg, Germany.

**Region of Aragon** has been promoting sustainability and bioeconomy initiatives for some time and is aware of the importance to allocate efforts to this aim.



In BIOLOC IT will join forces with CIRCE to contribute to launch new biobased initiatives in the region and enhance bioeconomy development in the region while addressing marginal groups integration.

### **Center for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH)**

is one of the top research centres in Europe, with its branch located in the heart of Western Macedonia, a region in just transition, as one of the 12 BIOLOC Regions. CERTH/CPERI will be employed in a bottom-up process organizing an innovation network to generate, special and regional applicable knowledge to locally exploit the potentials from a knowledge based circular bioeconomy.



**University for Agriculture (AUP)**, Plovdiv is the only specialized state-funded university and the leader in the agricultural education in Bulgaria in the field of agricultural and life sciences, agricultural innovations, bioeconomy agri-business and many other sectors. AUP is working on capacity building for formulation and implementation of a bioeconomy strategy in the municipality of Plovdiv and the Plovdiv region. Additionally, it runs projects that involve integration of primary organic producers and processors and SMEs to co-develop regional circular bioeconomy with young and experienced researchers and entrepreneurs. Through BIOLOC the AUP will acquire additional knowledge and provide training to local communities, with the objective of increasing regionally-specific biobased & social innovations such as regional cooperatives and branding.



## Business and Innovation Centre Bratislava (BIC)

supports innovation, technology transfer and business development since 1991. Their services include business and innovation advice, support of international cooperation, assistance in access to finance, as well as supporting participation in the EU framework programmes for research and innovation.



In BIOLOC BIC will explore the potential for bioeconomy and prepare structures in western Slovakia – Nitra and further disseminate good practices from other regions among local stakeholders.

## Association of Chemical Industry of Slovenia (ACIS)

operates autonomously under the umbrella of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (CCIS).

Bio-based economy is one of the priorities of ACIS, in connection with the circular economy and industrial symbiosis.

The Association has already worked in the field of bioeconomy and has built a network of stakeholders (companies, national authorities, faculties, and research institutions). However, to ensure a permanent bioeconomy stakeholder network to take off, a national hub should be established. BIOLOC will help in building such a hub and acquire the necessary knowledge to develop new innovative biobased business models for local companies.



## DOOR (Society for Sustainable Development Design)

is a civil society organization founded in 2003.

Whose mission is the promotion of sustainable development principles in all segments of society, at the local, regional and national levels, primarily in the field of energy. DOOR's aim is to contribute to achieving a just and carbon-neutral society,

adapted to unavoidable climate change, in which the public takes part in delivering,

monitoring, and evaluating public policies, and sustainable energy plays an important





role in social, economic, and ecological development and decreasing poverty. In BIOLOC DOOR will involve relevant stakeholders based on the analysis of the current state of innovation and social inclusion in local bioeconomies. They will also map the main obstacles that hinder the development and create new business opportunities and value chains. DOOR will also facilitate the widespread adoption of project results , thus, maximising project impacts.

**RCISD** is a woman-led innovative SME, founded by scientists and R&I managers to carry out scientific research and manage R&I projects, a fast-moving flexible actor, an exchange place between scientific knowledge and managerial skills, a well-established platform for regional and international cooperation. RCISD is working on biomass assessment in North-Hungary.



The key elements of this strategy are energy plants in local energy systems and the role of such initiatives in tackling energy poverty in the socially backward region. Through BIOLOC they will connect the local actors dwellers, farmers, decisionmakers,



entrepreneurs and engineering personnel in the region to be able to circulate knowledge on biomass opportunities.

**University of Life Science "King Mihai I" from Timisoara (ULST)** trains specialists in bioresource management, carries out research in bioeconomy, offers consultancy, collaborates with economic entities, and has a social mission to provide education and services for communities.



In BIOLOC, the ULST team will address challenges in developing knowledge-based bioeconomy, developing and integrating models within the circular economy to create new supply chains using bioresources to produce not only food, but also energy and a wide variety of bio-based materials. Moreover, ongoing local initiatives will be supported and integrated into the circular bioeconomy, opening up opportunities and creating new business models that will increase the well-being of the local population.

The **Association of Research Organisations (AVO)** is one of the first members of the BIOEAST HUB CZ, the first national bioeconomy BIOEAST HUB in the BIOEAST region established in line with the Governance and Roadmap of the BIOEAST Initiative with the support of the Czech Ministry of Agriculture.



Having already established national bioeconomy HUB as a network to gather stakeholders and support their engagement in bioeconomy AVO will share their experience with BIOLOC partners but also increase further their capacity by learning from the best practices provided by other project partners. Through this experience AVO will further advance on the stakeholder engagement, support applied research, technology transfer and good practice of bioeconomy innovations to the BIOEAST region.

**Apeldoorn** is the 'capital of Veluwe' natural park the Netherlands finest area of natural scenic beauty. The municipality of Apeldoorn is very active in the area of circular economy.



In BIOLOC, Apeldoorn local communities will be used to test the solutions identified by the project and monitor the improvements made within the area. The acquired knowledge will be shared with relevant stakeholder.

The **Cluster SPRING** is a non-profit association acting as the Italian Circular Bioeconomy Cluster. It encourages sustainable innovation and acts as a springboard for development and systemic growth based on the bioeconomy. SPRING fosters the creation of a strong, cohesive and representative community, which represents its interests before regional, national, European and international institutions and promotes visibility and awareness among the general and specialist public.



In BIOLOC SPRING will create a regional hub in Campania region, support local communities and disadvantaged groups. In particular, it will focus on mapping and engaging with stakeholders, by understanding needs, drivers and barriers in order to revitalise local bioeconomy ecosystem.

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