

# EU TESTING INNOVATION IN 24 REGIONS TO ACCELERATE CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Climate adaptation has become one of the main targets for Europe by 2030. As climate change escalates, the EU is facilitating the research and implementation of new societal innovations at the local level to accelerate our resilience.

Within the EU Mission Adaptation to Climate Change, helping to deliver the European Green Deal, 118 regions and communities in Europe participate in the work towards climate resilience. In this context, over 100 organisations have received €50 million from the Horizon Europe programme framework - *Research and Innovation actions in support of the implementation of the Adaptation to Climate Change Mission* - to address current and forecasted climate change-related challenges and to build more resilient European communities. Two projects are starting in January 2023 – Regions4Climate and RESIST – to plan and implement real climate-resilient innovations created by and for people, in response to the EU Mission Adaptation to Climate Change.

Regions4Climate will deliver significant sociocultural, economic and environmental impacts during the 5-year duration of the project. At least 13.8 million people, inhabitants of the 12 Regions4Climate partner regions, are expected to directly benefit from the outcomes of the project, with potential upscaling to the ca. 746 million people living in Europe in the longer term.

Regions4Climate will implement innovative actions to enhance climate resilience in close collaboration with stakeholders within the real-life environments of partner regions. By employing a cross-sectoral approach, the project will develop and validate resilience solutions including novel technologies, their integration, and their application in combination with new business models and innovative policies. This will facilitate and empower decision-making and enhance regional resilience to climate change by providing a suite of proven, scalable and easily replicable climate change adaptation solutions.

“Climate change necessitates a paradigm shift in terms of how we interact with the world around us. As we seek to both adapt to and mitigate climate change, we must become increasingly resource- and water-efficient, working in harmony with nature and generating new knowledge and information that will enable society to thrive in the face of this major global challenge”, explains Laura Wendling, a senior scientist from VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland and Coordinator of Regions4Climate.

Regions4Climate engages 12 European regions in developing and testing their own resilience plans and transformative adaptation pathways, enhanced by cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange. Partner regions include the Basque country (Spain), South Aquitaine (France), the Azores (Portugal), Toscana (Italy), Køge Bay (Denmark), Burgas (Bulgaria), Helsinki-Uusimaa (Finland), Pärnumaa (Estonia), Eastern Crete (Greece), Castilla y León (Spain), the Nordic Archipelago (Finland, Åland and Sweden), and Troodos (Cyprus Republic).

Markku Markkula, President of the Helsinki-Uusimaa Region and Vice President of the European Committee of the Regions emphasises the importance of cross-border collaboration to address climate challenges, commenting “The European Missions offer enormous pioneering opportunities in solving together the most wicked challenges we face. On climate change, mitigation and adaptation go hand-in-hand. Europe needs more public and private RDI investments in all phases of societal value chains to co-create societal innovations and to scale them up to active implementation in all parts of Europe and globally. Our region has the two largest cities in Finland, Helsinki and



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Espoo. They are pioneers in 100 Cities Mission, collaborating with other municipalities, industry, universities and research centres, and citizens to become active forerunners in breakthrough innovations. Helsinki-Uusimaa Region is thrilled about the launch of the Regions4Climate -project and its ambition to make Europe substantially better prepared for the various adapting measures by extending our European regional partnerships.

The solutions developed in the Regions4Climate project will create new opportunities for European regions. Anastina Sarlin of Nordiska Skärgårdssamarbetet describes the project's relevance to the Nordic Archipelago Region, noting "Climate smart and efficient sea transport is crucial for archipelago areas and sea transport as a whole. The archipelago areas of the Baltic sea region are almost totally dependent on sea transport. The project enables us to map and draft new solutions for sea transport in the archipelagos. An added value will be sought by exploring opportunity for a cooperation model in between nations, a joint company for the future sea transport in these sensitive archipelago areas."

The results and the social innovations developed within the project will be shared on the [JUST TRANSITION Platform](#) to be replicated in other regions.



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- Climate change
- Climate resilience
- Regional resilience
- Social innovation
- Replicability
- Environmental sciences

## About Regions4Climate

The Regions4Climate project, which is coordinated by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland, brings together 44 partners from 13 different European countries to demonstrate innovations that enhance societal resilience to the impacts of climate change, in line with the Paris Agreement and the EU Green Deal. Based on cross-sectoral strategies created by and for people, the project partners will collaboratively develop and implement novel social, technological, digital, business, governance, and environmental solutions to reinforce adaptive capacity and minimise vulnerability to climate impacts.

The five-year project, starting in January 2023, has received a total grant of 24,522,103.00€ from the European Commission under the Horizon Europe research and innovation programme addressing the topic of “Large scale demonstrators of climate resilience creating cross-border value” under agreement n° 101093873 HORIZON-MISS-2021-CLIMA-02-04.

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