Partnerships for Regional Innovation: First lighthouse event explores tools to locally address resilience and sustainability challenges

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Europe is rich in diversity. All territories face the same societal challenges, such as climate change, energy crisis, or the interruption of supply chains, but these impact on regions in different ways. Every region has different priorities, different conditions and different assets in face of such challenges. The uniqueness of each territory requires bespoke actions that are tailored to both the specific territorial needs and the availability of tools at the disposal of each region. For example, some places may have a greater need to support the creation of new industries, while others to help existing industries become more sustainable.

To overcome these challenges and transform cities, regions and countries, innovation is key. The Partnerships for Regional Innovation, in which the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the European Committee of Regions (CoR) are working side by side, held today the first of several Lighthouse meetings. These so-called lighthouses aim to help the 74 territories who participate in the pilot project enumerate the needs and possible solutions towards a greener and more sustainable future for European citizens.

This territorial dimension of innovation was addressed by the new President of the European Committee of the Regions, Vasco Alves Cordeiro, who joined for the first time the workings of this Pilot Action. To deepen on its links with the new European Innovation Agenda, Isidro Laso Ballesteros, Commissioner Gabriel Cabinet Expert, elaborated on the flagship action on fostering connected regional Deep Tech Innovation Valleys across the EU, and how PRI can contribute to this initiative.

The second part of the event focused on specific PRI tools and methods to assess and respond to resilience and sustainability challenges in the territories. Introduced by a keynote from European Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovič on monitoring Resilience in the new geopolitical context, participants learnt about indicator frameworks to assess progress towards Sustainable Development Goals at local level, to analyse territories' strengths and weaknesses such as the Resilience Dashboards, and policy tools such as the Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These tools and methods can guide them to adapt, transform and undergo transitions in a sustainable and fair manner.

The next Partnerships for Regional Innovation meeting (October 11th) will be open to everyone interested in innovation policies for territorial transformation. It will be held as an online workshop during the European Week of Regions and Cities and will be dedicated to present this concept and strategic framework developed by the JRC.

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