

The EIT: A strong track record of delivery

Innovation has a prominent role in Europe’s efforts to tackle major societal and environmental challenges. The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is working towards this objective through its operational arm, the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), by accelerating innovation and supporting the creation of conditions where innovation is more likely to thrive and generate breakthroughs.

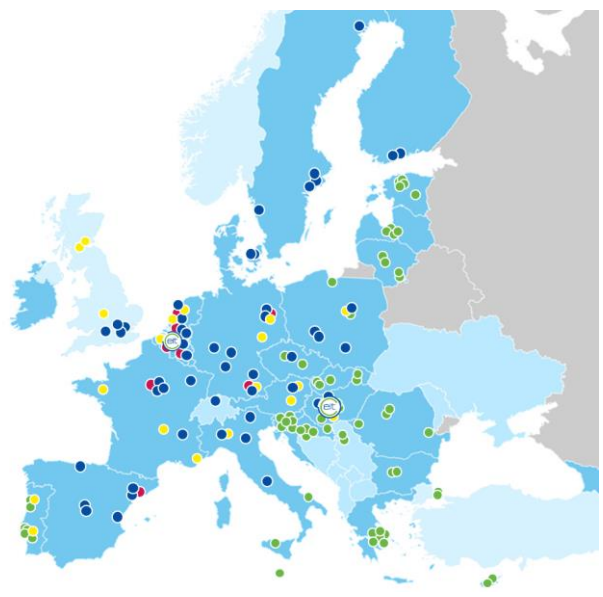
The EIT’s mission is to contribute to the sustainable European economic growth and global competitiveness by reinforcing the innovation capacity of the Member States and the Union and addressing major challenges faced by the European society. It does this by promoting synergies and cooperation through integrating higher education, research and business in order to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the knowledge triangle integration model. The EIT combines strategic orientation at EIT level, primarily through its Governing Board, with a bottom up approach within the thematic remits of its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). KICs are highly integrated legal entities, which function as pan-European partnerships and bring together excellent universities, research organisations, small-, medium and large enterprises and other innovation actors on a long-term commitment around specific grand societal challenges.

The KICs are designated by the EIT based on an open competitive call. In 2009, the EIT designated three initial KICs in the fields of sustainable energy (EIT InnoEnergy), climate change adaptation and mitigation (EIT Climate-KIC) and next generation information society (EIT Digital, until 2015 named EIT ICT Labs). In 2014, two new KICs were designated in the areas of healthy living and active ageing (EIT Health) and raw materials- sustainable exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution (EIT Raw Materials). In 2016, the EIT selected one additional KIC: EIT Food – sustainable supply chain from resources to consumers. In 2018, two more KICs were designated in the thematic areas of Urban Mobility and Adding Value Manufacturing.

Each KIC has regional **Co-location Centres (CLC)** with partners in close proximity, which is essential to facilitate interaction among members of the regional community. Co-location Centres are the focal point for the KICs’ activity within these areas of focus. Co-location Centres build on the existing labs, offices or campuses of some of the KICs’ core partners, which serve as clusters for a particular region, discipline or task. There they bring together people and teams from across the knowledge triangle for ideation, projects and other initiatives.

EIT COMMUNITY ACROSS EUROPE

- Headquarters
- Innovation Hubs (Co-Location Centres)
- Offices
- EIT Hubs under EIT Regional Innovation Scheme



KICs are delivering tangible solutions to pressing global challenges, as well as, substantial global and European socio-economic impact, including well over 3,000 start-ups supported and 13,000 jobs created. Some of Europe’s major scale-up success stories from the past ten year, including, Northvolt, Climeworks, Tado, Skeleton Technologies, Navya, Konux and Lilium Aviation were all powered by EIT accelerator programmes.



EIT Regional Innovation Scheme

The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) was introduced by the European Parliament and the Council as part of the EIT’s Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2014-2020. The EIT RIS is designed to share good practices and experience emerging from the EIT Community’s activities, as well as to widen participation in KICs’ activities. The aim of the EIT RIS is to help disseminate the knowledge and know-how of the EIT Community and widen participation in the KICs across Europe. The EIT RIS focuses on countries that are moderate and modest innovators according to the European Innovation Scoreboard¹ and have limited or no participation in the EIT Community’s activities.

Countries eligible to take part in the EIT RIS are:

- **EU Member States:** Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.
- **H2020 Associated Countries:** Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine.

Strategically, the Scheme is an additional offer to these countries to facilitate their engagement with the KICs. As such, the EIT RIS is not the sole method of participating in the activities of the EIT Innovation Communities. The Scheme’s aim is to facilitate the access to services and programmes offered by the KICs.

More information: <https://eit.europa.eu/our-activities/eit-regional-innovation-scheme-ris>

EIT Hubs

In order to promote KICs, activities in the EIT RIS countries, KICs engage local organisations to serve as EIT Hubs in the respective EIT RIS countries and regions. KICs have established EIT Hubs in the countries where they did not have a presence in terms of Co-location Centres or partners. Hence, an EIT Hub functions as a representative of the respective KIC and mobilises local organisations to take part in joint activities with the KICs.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/innovation/scoreboards_en



Local organisations are selected through an open competitive selection process and are designated to function as an EIT Hub for a specific KIC. The primary role of an EIT Hub is to ensure the visibility of the EIT Community and raise awareness of the EIT Community activities and cooperation opportunities for local players representing education, business and research areas.

The organisations serving as EIT Hubs have a strong footing in local ecosystems and help promote KICs' good practices and know-how of KTI. In addition, EIT Hubs also liaise with the relevant national, regional and local authorities and facilitate the sharing of EIT Innovation Community expertise with them.

EIT Hubs in Western Balkans

The Western Balkans host a number of EIT Hubs established under the framework of the EIT RIS:

- **EIT InnoEnergy** and **EIT Food Hubs** in Serbia, run by SEE ICT (Startit)
- **EIT Climate-KIC Hub** in Serbia, run by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Serbia, with the main partners StartIt, the Climate Innovation Hub (CIH) and CIREKON.
- **EIT RawMaterials Hub Adria**² in Croatia supporting the KIC's activities in WB.
- **EIT Urban Mobility** plans to designate a hub in Serbia in the course of 2020.

Facts & Figures

There are currently 10 partner organisations from three WB countries (BK, MK, RS) participating in three EIT KICs. The full list is presented below:

KIC Name	Full Official Name of the Partner	Country
EIT Climate-KIC	Privredna komora Srbije	Serbia
EIT Raw Materials	Rudarski Institut Za Projektno-Konsultantsko-Istraživačku Djelatnost Doo Banja Luka	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EIT Raw Materials	Univerzitet U Sarajevu	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EIT Health	Johnson & Johnson d.o.o. Ogranak u Beogradu	Serbia
EIT Health	Privredno drustvo za proizvodnju održavanje trgovinu na veliko i malo i inženjering PROXIMA eksport-import DOO, Cokot	Serbia
EIT Climate-KIC	Združenje na građani SMART AP – Laboratorija za socijalni inovacii Skopje	Northern Macedonia
EIT Climate-KIC	Hab za klimatske inovacije	Serbia
EIT Climate-KIC	Association SEE ICT	Serbia
EIT Climate-KIC	Sarajevska regionalna razvojna agencija d.o.o. Sarajevo	Bosnia and Herzegovina
EIT Climate-KIC	Centar Za Cirkularnu Ekonomiju Cirekon d.o.o	Serbia

² The Hub is consisted by the following organisations: Geological Survey of Slovenia, Slovenian National Building and Civil Engineering Institute, University of Zagreb – Faculty of Mining, Geology and Petroleum Engineering.



In total, the Western Balkan countries have received more than half a million EUR from of the EIT RIS funding. The biggest recipient is Serbia; the Serbian KIC partners received more than 400,000 EUR.

Country	EIT funding (EUR)	EIT funding per 100 000 population
Serbia	448,000	6,400
Northern Macedonia	28,000	1,300
Bosnia and Herzegovina	28,000	800
TOTAL:	504,000	

Start-up teams taking part in the EIT RIS business support activities

2018	EIT InnoEnergy	EIT InnoEnergy	EIT Climate-KIC	EIT Digital	EIT community	
Country	Primer	PowerUp pitching	EIT RIS Accelerator	Venture Program	EIT Jumpstarter	TOTAL
Bosnia and Herzegovina				1		1
Northern Macedonia				1		1
Montenegro				1	1	2
Serbia	30	6	9	1	4	50
2019	EIT InnoEnergy	EIT InnoEnergy	EIT Climate-KIC	EIT Digital		
Country	Primer	PowerUp pitching	EIT RIS Accelerator	Venture Program	Total	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	0	1	1	
Northern Macedonia	0	0	0	0	0	
Serbia	8	7	9	1	25	

EIT Community in the Western Balkans

EIT Climate-KIC in the Western Balkans

In Serbia

The EIT Climate-KIC has established a hub in Serbia in 2016 with the aim of nurturing and further developing the nascent clean-tech ecosystem in the country (these activities are relevant for the priorities “A European Green Deal” and “An economy that works for people”).

The hub is part of the EIT RIS strategy of the KIC. Main partners are the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia, Start-It, the Climate Innovation Hub (CIH) and CIREKON.

The KIC runs a number of activities in Serbia, that encompasses education, support to innovation and support to business creation and development. In particular:



- “Pioneers into practice” program, which aims at connecting climate change organizations & professionals to learn practical skills in systems innovation: in 2018, 18 Serbian pioneers, 4 international pioneers, 5 host companies took part to the initiative.
- “RIS accelerator”, which supports the growth of clean-tech start-ups: in 2019 it provided support to 9 Serbian start-ups; 3 of them (i.e. FreonFrog, SmartCat, Food Group MSP) managed to secure investments (from other investors) to support the development of their business.
- “ClimateLaunchpad”, which aims at turning green ideas into a successful start-up: in 2018, 22 Serbian teams submitted their applications, 12 have been selected to participate to the training. The 3 national finalists participated in the Semi Finals in Edinburgh; 2 teams were invited to pitch in the Theme Awards.
- “Climathon”, aiming at finding solutions to the climate challenges identified by cities through the collaboration between citizens and local research and industrial partners: in 2018, in collaboration with UNDP, the KIC ran the Climathon in 5 cities (Novi Sad, Nis, Kragujevac, Zajecar and Sabac). The experience was so successful that it was repeated in 2019.
- “Academy for Circular Economy (ACE)”: it aims at fostering the implementation of Circular Economy principles and tools in SMEs that delivers goods or services. In 2018, 27 Serbian companies were trained on practical tools that help to develop innovative ideas in order to start a transition to a more circular business model. In 2019, the Academy was continued, developing a fully-fledged business model for the activity.
- Innovation projects: in 2020, EIT Climate-KIC is supporting 2 innovation projects in the field of circular economy, in particular: one project focused on a novel approach to transform the food waste value chain into a circular system; another one focused on the raising local capacities in Western Balkan countries to build an eco-system for circular, climate-related innovations.

Future Cities of South East Europe Initiative

Cities face an enormous challenge in becoming healthy places to live, while reaching net-zero emissions in just a few years. They are also places where multiple systems intersect, making fast change complex but possible. EIT Climate-KIC is forging relationships with the most ambitious city mayors and municipalities, who are ready to design portfolios of innovation options to unlock a wholesale transformation.

The **Future Cities of South East Europe Initiative (SEE)**, is a collaborative initiative led by EIT Climate-KIC and addressed to Križevci (Croatia), Maribor (Slovenia), Niš (Serbia), Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Skopje (North Macedonia), to deliver on the ambitious mission of: *“An inclusive, prosperous and zero-carbon transformation of 15 city neighborhoods in 5 cities in South East Europe, making these into some of the best possible places in Europe to live, work and visit by 2025”*.

Activities focus on: air pollution, energy efficiency (retrofit, heating and cooling), mobility, waste management, support in leveraging financial resources to implement the actions. The planning and implementation of KIC’s actions are co-created with the local communities, to ensure focus on local priorities and long-term collective ownership. The KIC provides the core coordination for co-creating and implementing ambitious actions across the community.

Work within the Future Cities of SEE started recently. At the moment, EIT Climate-KIC has run catalyser sessions in the region, aiming at exploring how to arrange the work with each city. In parallel, exchanges of experience, ideas and best practice approaches started between all five cities. Next steps are:

- the creation of the city-KIC team
- the identification of the cities priority action areas



- the development of a strategy and action plan for each city
- the implementation of the action plan activities.

EIT RawMaterials activities in the Western Balkans

EIT RawMaterials is active on several fronts in the Western Balkans. This region is naturally endowed with primary and secondary raw materials deposits and residues, therefore has been targeted as a focus region by the KIC since the inception of its activities. In Western Balkans the KIC runs knowledge triangle activities along the whole raw materials value chain (exploration, mining,

recycling, substitution of critical raw materials, design of products and services for the circular economy, resource efficiency).

EIT RawMaterials established also a RIS Hub for the Western Balkans in order to further support the development of KIC's activities in this area.

Main KICs' activities in Western Balkans countries consist in:

Innovation support activities:

- Assessment and creation of an inventory for the Western Balkan Mineral Register for primary and secondary mineral resources (WB countries involved: Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Northern Macedonia, Serbia);
- development of a public mineral intelligence system to support authorities (on national, regional or local level) in their decision-making process and to facilitate industry to invest in Northern Macedonia;
- roadmap and innovative service for the zero waste extraction of metals (Cu, Ag, As, Au, and REE) from mining tailings (WB countries involved: Northern Macedonia);
- development of an innovative critical raw materials (CRMs) substitution technology for public authorities' vehicle catalysts (WB countries involved: Serbia);
- sorting and separation of non-radioactive materials from radioactive Phosphogypsum which can be further processed into radiopharmaceuticals (WB countries involved: Serbia);

Education & training activities:

- university based educational and experts' supported training program in Kosovo Republic and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the field of innovative exploration developments;
- Industry & University collaboration for creating an education program where students, academia and industry professionals from all over East and South East Europe learn from each other creating innovation in mining (WB countries involved: Serbia, Northern Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro);
- pupil engagement program in raw materials (WB countries involved: Bosnia and Herzegovina);
- DIM ESEE: education program on innovative mining: in 2019, 186 Master and PhD students, academia and industry employees participated to the courses.
- University Business Cooperation Capacity Building Program in the field of Raw Materials (WB countries involved: Serbia, Northern Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro);
- support to entrepreneurs and highly qualified mechanical engineers aiming to run their own businesses in maintenance engineering related to raw materials operations (WB countries involved: Bosnia and Herzegovina);
- Encouraging Girls to Study Geosciences and Geo-Engineering (WB countries involved: Serbia).



Business creation activities:

- Jumpstarter: Business idea competition, in order to provide support to the creation of new start-ups: proponents were mainly students; 30 teams from different WB countries have been supported in 2019 (around 100 teams supported from 2017 to 2019).
- ESEE Dialogue Conferences, aiming at promoting mineral sector and entrepreneurship in East & South-East Europe regions (WB countries involved: Serbia, Northern Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro).

EIT InnoEnergy in Western Balkans

EIT InnoEnergy has a RIS hub in Serbia through which it runs its programmes aiming at supporting students, innovators and start-ups and link them with the rest of the KIC ecosystem.

KIC's activities focus on its relevant thematic fields: energy storage, smart and efficient buildings and cities, renewable energies, smart electric grid, energy efficiency, energy for circular economy, energy for transport and mobility, nuclear energy.

In Serbia, the KIC runs activities in the field of business creation & growth and support to innovation. In particular:

- "Primer": it is a pre-acceleration programme for early-stage start-ups in the field of energy. In 2019, 8 Serbian teams have been selected and completed the programme.
- "Highway": it is the acceleration programme of the KIC, focused on providing support on 4 key dimensions: product, market, people, finance. During 2019 Hub Serbia has been actively scouting for startups that could be a part of Highway. 5 proposals from Serbia have been received and evaluated. One proposal ("Optimus Power" proposed by SmartCat: development of a software which improves efficiency of HVAC systems) was positively assessed and has accessed the Highway.
- "Boostway": it is the support programme for the growth of scale-ups, offering also financial resources of up to EUR 150 000. During 2019, 2 Serbian start-ups applied but the KIC decided not to invest on them for the time being. One proposal (FreonFrog, which developed a product that improve the performances of cooling systems) will be reassessed in 2020.
- "PowerUp! Competition": it is a challenge event for start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs from Central and Eastern Europe and which developed innovative products in the fields of energy, smart technologies, mobility. In 2019, 31 total applications were submitted for the Country final in Belgrade (29 from Serbia, 2 from Montenegro). A Serbian company (SmartCat) took part to the final in Krakow.

EIT Digital in Western Balkans

EIT Digital established its ARISE Venture Programme focused on the Eastern and Western Balkans, which in 2020 celebrates its 3rd edition. The programme, a two-stage competition, supports the establishment of deep-tech-based ventures by teams coming from those regions.

As a result, the Venture Programme 2018 and 2019 editions saw the creation of six start-ups by teams from Serbia (3: Gradoid, Saifer, Hotspoter), Bosnia-Herzegovina (2: Ordex and Portal) and Macedonia (1: Klimo), which benefited of the support in incubating the idea and a Final Cash Prize after successful evaluation of their applications.

In addition, all EIT Digital Innovation & Entrepreneurship and Education Activities are open to participants from Western Balkans. As an example, the EIT Digital Challenge 2019, the competition



for Digital DeepTech scale-ups, received applications from 33 different countries, including an application from an Albanian scale-up.

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