EUKI – Climate action connecting Europe

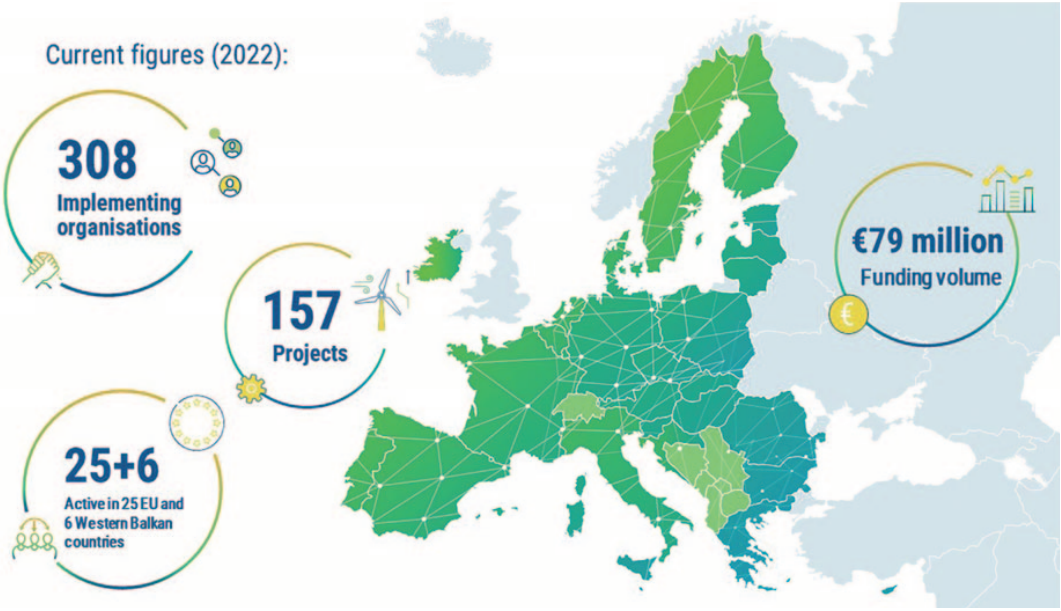
The **European Climate Initiative** (EUKI) supports and empowers climate action projects across Europe to accelerate the transition to climate neutrality. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK), the EUKI publishes an annual call for proposals. Together with the BMWK, 20 to 30 project ideas are then selected to receive support from the EUKI in the following years. This support ranges from funding to educational resources, to ensuring the projects can have a lasting and meaningful impact.

EUKI and GreenTecLab

In early 2020 the research institute FIAP (Forschungsinstitut für innovative Arbeitsgestaltung und Prävention) from Gelsenkirchen in Germany participated in the fourth call of proposals of the EUKI. Its project about "Green Business Ideas for Climate Protection and Agricultural Economy", later called GreenTecLab (GTL) has been selected and started its work in November 2020. Together with its four implementing partners German-Hellenic Chamber of Industry and Commerce (Greece), City Council of Cadiz (Spain), Asociación de Investigación y Cooperación Industrial de Andalucía (AICI) (Spain) and PEDAL Consulting (Slovakia) FIAP supports green startups and project ideas, addressing creative young people with technical competences who are interested in or motivated for green ideas. It particularly encourages young women to develop and implement green business ideas.

The development of new services and business ideas has the potential to create new, green jobs while at the same time supporting consumers in the use of climate-friendly technologies. To advance this process, it is essential to support young people in these regions in shaping structural change into new labour markets.

Another measure implemented by the project is to set up a transcultural "GreenTecLab" in form of an interactive, virtual coworking platform. The platform features virtual conferences, meetings, training courses and individual consultations in order to establish a network and knowledge exchange between and among the European partners and potential founders in the target regions.



Where do we support? Source: EUKI

How do EUKI support climate action?

Each year, promising projects, like GTL, that are striving to develop solutions to the global climate crisis are selected for EUKI funding via our call for project ideas. Since 2017, 157 projects have received EUKI funding. In total, the EUKI has a funding volume of 79 million Euro. Beyond financial support, we also personally assist projects in their professional development, offer knowledge and capacity building and welcome new members into our large EUKI climate community. There is an abundant diversity of EUKI climate projects when it comes to partnering countries or cities, scales and topics of action.

EUKI provides a space for transnational climate cooperation and networking for our active and engaged community of over 300 organizations in 31 European countries. EUKI connects climate actors, encourages inter-European dialogue and knowledge exchange, creating a network where both small and large NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) are welcome.

Where do we support?

Thinking European and acting locally, EUKI projects are contributing to climate action across the continent, from capital cities to small rural towns, from countries to regions. Our geographical focus is primarily in CEE (Central and Eastern Europe) countries as well as the Baltic states and EU accession countries. We want to leverage the unique potential that each region offers for climate action and support the commitment of local communities. Currently, the EUKI is active in 25 EU and six Western Balkan countries. We strive to connect climate actors at the national, municipal, civil society, economic and education policy level.

Who do we support climate action?

The size of EUKI projects ranges too, from medium to small-scale projects (120,000 € – 1 Mio €), we want to encourage all climate action potential equally. We actively strengthen smaller organisations so that their climate action ideas can become big. We understand the importance of supporting grassroots initiatives and it is our ambition to help small-scale projects stand on their own feet to find further funding and continue to grow and thrive. Presently, over 300 organisations are implementing EUKI projects, among them non-governmental organisations, national, regional or local authorities, nonprofit enterprises and educational institutions.

What do we support?

EUKI projects work in 8 main clusters: Climate Policy, Energy, Buildings and Municipalities, Mobility, Agriculture, Soils & Forestry, Awareness, Climate-Aligned Finance and Sustainable Economy.

EUKI project Boschi per la Biosfera by Giacche Verdi Bronte and Manfred-Hermsen-Stiftung

With their results and impacts, EUKI projects contribute to the goals of the European Green Deal. Some examples: Within the framework of the EU Commission's climate policy guidelines, some projects are working to successfully implement the "Fit for 55" package and the associated legislative processes. Energy production and consumption account for more than 75% of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions. In order to achieve Europe's climate targets for 2030 and climate neutrality by 2050, it is imperative that we decarbonise the EU's energy system. The EUKI therefore also supports projects for dialogue formats and strategy development on the coal phase-out and structural change, promotes energy efficiency measures in various industries and advises end consumers on investing in renewable energy plants. The EU's "Farm to Fork" strategy is part of the European Green Deal and aims to make food systems fair, healthy and environmentally friendly.

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) also plays a crucial role in shaping the EU's climate policy. This is why some EUKI projects bring together key stakeholders in this field to facilitate knowledge sharing and support the implementation of promising approaches to mitigating climate change. The EU Commission also presented building guidelines according to which the climate neutrality of all buildings in the EU is to be created by 2050, another area where EUKI projects are active.

From rolling museums engaging youth in Lithuania and Latvia about climate change to carbon sequestration on organic farms in Slovenia and Serbia – EUKI projects cover a range of European climate activities. Behind each project there is a story, and most importantly, behind each project there are people, who have a vision for a sustainable Europe. We enable the realisation of their ideas with which they serve their local communities and contribute to the mosaic of Europe's climate-neutral future.

EUKI Academy

The EUKI Academy was founded with the aim to facilitate a deeper cooperation and learning experience within the EUKI community. By offering this additional support we wish to strengthen the funded projects and the transformative change in the target countries. The programme of the EUKI Academy is designed to encourage public discussion and information-sharing about key climate topics such as Energy efficiency, energy security, digitalisation for a greener future, funding opportunities and more. At the same time, our offer aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of EUKI project organisations through targeted trainings in areas such as finance management or public relations.

The EUKI Academy organizes, often in cooperation with EUKI project implementers, web seminars, community events and networking conferences in specific countries. Once a year, the Academy hosts the EUKI Annual Conference, which took place only virtually last year and is planned as a hybrid event for September this year. EUKI organisations will be invited to Berlin and parts of the conference will be streamed live online. Current and past webinars and tutorials produced by the EUKI Academy are available at the EUKI website.

Climate Action is an opportunity

Creating a sustainable and climate-neutral Europe is our collective project. The European Climate Initiative plays a small but significant role in the endeavor. It is our aim to unite European integration with climate action. Building strong networks from one project to another and from one country to the next creates a powerful community. We believe it is with this community that we can reach even our most ambitious climate goals.

Explore the EUKI

Organisations interested in applying for the next call for proposals this year in autumn, will find more information about the funding procedure on our website. The call will also be announced via newsletter and we regularly share updates on our social media channels: Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Organisations looking for collaborators to bring a climate action idea to life can also check out our community list filled with potential partners. Useful and informative reports, guidelines, analyses, and policy recommendations from EUKI projects can be found in our publications section.

Now is the time to jointly take climate action. From politicians, NGOs, educators, scientists, industry workforce to consumers: It will take our collective contribution to achieve a sustainable transformation. Climate action has the potential to foster European technological leadership, boost innovation, open new markets, and create jobs. The ecological, social, and economic opportunities of climate action are limitless – it is up to us to unlock them.

Annual Conference 2021; left: Verena Ringler, host; right: Erian Veliaj, mayor of Tirana, Albania