



Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems

Launch event
13 October 2023, Plovdiv, Bulgaria

Background

The Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems will **contribute to the New European Innovation Agenda and its flagship action in building 100 regional deep-tech innovation valleys**. Regional Innovation Valleys for bioeconomy and Food Systems have significant potential to support and accelerate the deployment of the bioeconomy in regions where people live and work, and to address the innovation divide within the EU. They also address the innovation divide within the EU, with a particular attention to **countries from Central and Eastern Europe**.

The **concept of the Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems** was developed by European Commission (EC) with input from Member States provided in a workshop at the European Bioeconomy Policy Forum.

This high-level event to launch the resulting concept on ‘Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems’ is organised jointly by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation and the Agricultural University of Plovdiv, in close cooperation with the BIOEAST Initiative.

Objectives

Specific objectives are:

- Introduce EU instruments which are relevant for building-up a network of Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems, particularly the [New European Innovation Agenda](#) and the flagship initiative on the [Regional Innovation Valleys](#)
- Explain the specific characteristics of Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems and showcase good practice examples
- Discuss and explore challenges and opportunities to set-up Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems, in particular for BIOEAST countries and regions, and discuss the role of bioeconomy innovations
- Highlight and strengthen the role of bioeconomy education and skills development, and discuss the needs and gaps in current curricula to support Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems

The target audience of the event are existing and potential emerging bioeconomy and food system valleys, regions, with a strong emphasis on involving less developed regions, relevant bioeconomy stakeholders, university staff and students, and media.

08:30 – 09:00 Registration and welcome coffee

Session 1. High-level opening

Moderation: Karina ANGELIEVA

09.00 - 09.10	Hristina YANCHEVA , the rector of the Agricultural University Plovdiv <i>Welcome and opening</i>
09.10 - 09.15	Nikolai DENKOV , Prime Minister of Bulgaria
09.15 - 09.25	John BELL , Director of Healthy Planet, Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission <i>Keynote</i>
09.25 - 09.30	Milena STOYCHEVA , Bulgarian Minister of Innovation and Growth

**Session 2. Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems (RIV4BFS):
what are RIV4BFS & good practice examples**

Moderation: Karina ANGELIEVA

09.30 - 09.45	John BELL , Director of Healthy Planet, Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission <i>Concept on Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems</i>
09.45 - 10.45	<i>Discussion panel on good practice examples and impacts of existing bioeconomy and food system valleys/regions</i> Marja-Lisa MEURICE , Director EIT Food North and East Region Ulrich SCHURR , BioökonomieRevier, Forschungszentrum Juelich, Coordinator of BIO2REG project Laila GERCANE , Head of Development and Project Department of Vidzeme Planning Region Maria ALEXANDROVA , Head of Innovation Projects and Sustainability, Nasekomo

10:45 – 11:15 Coffee break

**Session 3. Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems (RIV4BFS):
Enabling the transition through education, skills and financing**

Moderation: Barna KOVACS

11.15 - 12.30	<i>Panel discussion on education and finance, research and innovation for RIV4BFS</i> Jekaterina NOVIKOVA , Deputy Head of Innovation Policy and Access to Finance unit, Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission Nicolo GIACOMUZZI-MOORE , Acting Executive Director, Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking Sebastien COLLOT , Bioeconomy Senior Engineer, European Investment Bank Martin GREIMEL , Head of the Centre for Bioeconomy, University of Natural Resources and Life Science Vienna Marta MENDEL , Vice-rector for international cooperation, Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Vice-chair of the Board of Directors, Green European University – UNIGreen <i>Q&A</i>
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Session 4. Closing

12.30 - 12.45	Katrin JOGI , Bioeconomy Youth Ambassador John BELL , Director of Healthy Planet, Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission Vladislav POPOV , Vice-rector, Agricultural University of Plovdiv
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12:45– 13:45 Lunch

13:45– 15:00 Networking continues...