

Eraikune and Odéys launch the first European innovation meta-cluster for the built environment

- *Eraikune, Odéys together with TECNALIA and NOBATEK/ INEF4 are launching the first transnational meta-cluster to accelerate the transformation towards a sustainable and people-centred built environment in Europe.*
- *Companies in this new cluster will benefit from incubating innovative solutions, reaching new markets through collaboration and knowledge transfer in accessibility, user-friendly design, sustainability or energy efficiency.*

Hendaye, September 18th. The Basque Construction Cluster Eraikune and Odéys, construction cluster from Nouvelle-Aquitaine, with the support of TECNALIA and NOBATEK/INEF4, have come together to launch the first European meta-cluster for the built environment.

The initiative has been presented in the EGTC Euroregion Nouvelle-Aquitaine Euskadi Navarra headquarters in Hendaye with representatives from each of the institutions: Jon Ansoleaga, General Manager at Eraikune; Frank Soccio, Director at Odéys; Julien Szabla, General Director at NOBATEK/INEF4 and Jesús Valero, General Director at TECNALIA; which took place at the Euroregion's office in Hendaye. In addition, the industrialization cluster of construction in Navarre, iCONS, has signed an Expression of Interest (EOI) declaring its interest in aligning its strategy with the Built4People Partnership and New European Bauhaus (NEB) and establishing collaborations with other European clusters, which will lead to future joint projects.

The new meta-cluster will address a holistic transformation of the built environment allowing a larger involvement of all players across the whole value chain as well as throughout the whole building life cycle. Currently benefiting more than 250 companies, promoters are working to engage other built environment ecosystems to increase the network. The aim is to enable companies to incubate innovative solutions, reach new markets through collaboration and knowledge transfer in accessibility, sustainability, health and energy efficiency.

Some of the key goals are to promote innovative approaches and developed scale-up solutions with high-market potential; Intensify cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary peer-learning from front runners; Strengthen cross-border cooperation and networking by enhancing regional, national and European links amongst others.

As per **Eraikune's General Manager, Jon Ansoleaga**, stated "Sustainability, seen from the social, environmental and economic aspects, represents one of the fundamental pillars on which we must build the transition in Europe in the coming years. The construction sector plays a key role in this shift towards green transformation, as it is considered by the European Union as a driver of the new model of well-being and health for European citizens.

Key players in the construction industry have a responsibility to mobilize the market, public administrations and businesses around these shared objectives, while fostering the competitiveness of our sector. To achieve this, it is imperative to promote flagship projects of transnational and cross-sectoral scope, all underpinned by innovation.

NEBULA (<http://built4people.eu/about/>) offers us a unique opportunity to lead the change. Together with our partners Odéys, Tecnalia and Nobatek/INEF4, we will strengthen cross-sector and interdisciplinary learning among leading peers, as well as facilitate networking and cross-border collaboration.”

As per as **Odéys Director, Frank Soccio**, stated "Above all, we are happy and proud to see Odéys take its place within this organization. This is recognition of the work carried out by our structure since 2019.

We see this project as an opportunity to strengthen our partnership relationships with Eraikune, Nobatek and Tecnalia. The missions carried out by our structures overlap on many subjects and the formalization of our common commitment should allow us to acquire more weight collectively and therefore, to acquire more operational impact in our daily missions. Together, we go further.

The benefits are multiple. The metacluster emerging on the border between our countries is a first in Europe. We are pioneers. This will obviously have a positive impact on our missions and the recognition of our structures at the European, national and regional level.

Concerning sustainable construction and development, sharing resources and experiences is at the heart of our activity. Being able to do this on a European scale is an opportunity for us to move forward more quickly and to advance the transition of all players in the sector in a more efficient manner. The challenges that await us are great and facing them as a united team seems to us to be the right path to follow."

The construction ecosystem employs 24.9 million people and provides a value added of EUR 1 158 billion (9.6% of the EU total), being one of the key enablers for achieving climate neutrality by 2050. Considering that 99% of construction companies in the EU are SMEs and given that these companies are most often affiliated to regional clusters, this new initiative will be crucial to engage the innovation value chain.

The initiative is part of NEBULA, a Horizon Europe Innovation project, which has selected Eraikune and Odéys as the first two clusters in the construction sector to be the European reference for the deployment of the New European Bauhaus. TECNALIA, as a standard bearer of the European Green Pact, will contribute its expertise in cultural heritage, circular economy, along with friendly and accessible environments to adapt the principles of sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion in developments for the Basque construction sector. Within the project, NOBATEK/INEF4 is coordinating the Research & Innovation support to BPI4C, including specialisation and advanced expertise with multi-disciplinary knowledge.

About Eraikune

Eraikune, the Basque Construction Cluster, represents the public-private construction ecosystem of the Basque Country. The aim of the cluster is to boost the competitiveness of companies throughout the value chain of the construction industry through sectoral collaboration, innovation and internationalization.

Among the 145 affiliated entities are public administrations, financial institutions, insurance companies, business and professional associations, knowledge agents, companies in the subsectors of promotion, design, manufacturing, construction, infrastructure operation and building, valorization, and smart consultancy. Eraikune's main areas of activity include Sustainable construction, industrialization and digitalization.

About Odéys

Odéys, is the french regional cluster for sustainable construction and development in Nouvelle-Aquitaine. Present with 5 branches throughout the territory (Anglet, Bordeaux, La Rochelle, Limoges, Poitiers).

The cluster ambition is to be a catalyst, a facilitator and an accelerator of Environmental, Energy, Digital, Social transitions and changes in behaviour in the construction sector. Odéys's mission is to develop competitiveness, facilitate business innovation, and improve the consideration of sustainable development in businesses and projects. Concretely, it's support, encourage, raise awareness, train and communicate on our 3 pillars: network, innovation and sustainable construction and development.

The Odéys network is made up of nearly 400 members bringing together all the players in the sustainable construction and development sector in Nouvelle-Aquitaine.

About iCONS

The industrialization cluster of construction in Navarre, iCONS, is part of Navarre's commitment to lead the industrialization processes in the construction sector. Recently established and currently comprising more than 50 member companies, its main aim is bringing together private sector companies and public entities, mainly within the territorial scope of Navarre. Within this framework of public-private collaboration, the association is working to position Navarre as a benchmark in industrialised construction at both national and European level, as well as to facilitate the dialogue between companies and those responsible for the different policies involved. A comprehensive strategic plan has been developed covering areas such as Sustainability or Industrialization and it has already started to be implemented

About TECNALIA

TECNALIA is the largest applied research and technological development centre in Spain, a European benchmark and member of the Basque Research and Technology Alliance. TECNALIA works with companies and institutions to improve their competitiveness, people's quality of life and achieve sustainable growth, thanks to a team of more than 1,500 people committed to building a better world through technological research and innovation. This is why TECNALIA's research has a real impact on society and generates benefits in the form of quality of life and progress.

Its main areas of action are: smart manufacturing, digital transformation, energy transition, sustainable mobility, health and food, urban ecosystem and circular economy.

In the latest brand awareness and positioning study carried out by the European Research Survey (ERS) in 2022, TECNALIA tops the list regarding R&D&I brand awareness.

About NOBATEK

NOBATEK/INEF4 is a private RTO, French Institute for Energy and Environmental Transition in Construction. NOBATEK/INEF4 Co-develops innovative solutions to assist the construction sector in its entirety (architects, corporations, public and private contractors, developers, engineers and communities) in achieving greater energy efficiency and sustainable design, moving towards the greater Energy and Environmental Transition. The RTO Drives innovation from ideas to market-ready solutions. Teams of researchers and engineers conceptualise innovative products and solutions that improve the energy efficiency and environmental quality of buildings and neighbourhoods and make them a reality.



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