

Place-Based Missions for Circular Economy Transitions

How can European regions design and implement place-based circular economy missions that drive systemic change at regional and interregional level?

PROGRAMME LEARNING GUIDE

Background

The European Circular Innovation Valleys (ECIV) project aims to connect European regions and support them in addressing shared circular economy challenges through interregional collaboration and innovation.

To do so, ECIV applies a mission-oriented and place-based approach, focusing on:

- Systemic change in regional innovation ecosystems
- Cross-sectoral and cross-departmental collaboration
- Long-term transformation rather than isolated projects

However, regional governments and public agencies often lack:

- A clear understanding of how to operationalize mission-oriented innovation
- Practical tools to implement systemic and transformative approaches
- Concrete examples of how other regions have done it

This Capacity Building Program addresses this gap by translating the ECIV methodology and adapting the learning architecture developed within the Joint Research Centre's Preparatory Action *Territories in Action – Innovation for Place-Based Transformation* into practical and implementable training modules for regional government teams. The conceptual framing, mission-oriented logic and systemic tools presented here draw on that foundation and have been tailored to the specific objectives of the European Circular Innovation Valleys (ECIV) project.

Overall Program Objective

To strengthen the capacities of regional governments and public agencies to design, mobilize and implement place-based circular economy missions, using mission-oriented and transformative innovation approaches at regional and interregional level.

This program supports regions in moving from understanding to implementing, by combining:

- Clear conceptual foundations
- Practical tools and templates
- Real examples from European regions

Target Learners

- Regional government teams
- Public agencies and public authorities
- Policy officers, innovation managers, program coordinators

Overarching Learning Outcomes

By the end of the program, participants will have strengthened their capacity to:

OLO N.	Description	Where it will be achieved:
OLO 1	Develop a systemic understanding of circular economy challenges as place-based missions.	Module 1
OLO2	Engage and orchestrate stakeholders to mobilize circular economy missions across regional ecosystems.	Module 2
OLO3	Analyze regional systems and shape a shared mission direction for circular transitions.	Module 3
OLO4	Design coherent mission portfolios and governance arrangements aligned with systemic change.	Module 4
OLO5	Implement, experiment and adapt missions through structured learning and feedback processes.	Module 5

Program Structure & Time Allocation

The ECIV Capacity Building Program is composed of five self-paced e-learning modules, aligned with the ECIV methodology and inspired by the JRC *Territories in Action – Innovation for Place-Based Transformation* framework.

Each module focuses on a key step in the place-based mission journey for circular economy transitions. The modules combine structured conceptual inputs with guided reflection and practical, self-guided application that participants can adapt to their regional context.

The five modules are:

- **Module 1.** Introduction to Place-based Missions in Circular Transition
- **Module 2.** Engaging and Orchestrating for Mission Mobilization in Circular Economy
- **Module 3.** Shaping a Shared Mission Direction in the Circular Transition
- **Module 4.** Designing Mission Portfolios in Circularity
- **Module 5.** Implementing and Learning through Experimentation in Circular Economy

Each module includes approximately:

- **2 hours – Conceptual framing and guided reflection**
 - o Slides and structured conceptual inputs.
 - o Reading materials
 - o Short videos
 - o Case examples
- **4 hours – Practical application (self-guided)**
 - o Structured practical activities
 - o Tools and templates
 - o Guidance for adapting tools to local contexts.

Learning Blocks

The ECIV Capacity Building Program is structured around five self-paced, e-learning modules. Each module addresses a key step of the mission-oriented and place-based mission journey for circular economy transitions, moving progressively from systemic understanding to implementation and adaptive learning.

Block N.	Content	Program OLOs
M1	Introduction to Place-Based Missions in the Circular Transition This module reframes circular economy transitions as systemic, place-based missions. Participants explore complexity, systems thinking, territorial realities and mission-oriented approaches, supported by structured reflection and a systemic analysis exercise.	OLO1
M2	Engaging and Orchestrating for Mission Mobilization in Circular Economy This module focuses on how regional governments can mobilize and align actors across circular economy ecosystems. It addresses stakeholder engagement, co-ownership of missions, cross-sector and cross-departmental collaboration, and the role of narrative and political signals in sustaining mission processes.	OLO2
M3	Shaping a Shared Mission Direction in the Circular Transition This module supports regions in analyzing their current system and shaping direction for circular transitions. It introduces system mapping, future-oriented exploration, and approaches to building collective vision and alignment around mission goals.	OLO3
M4	Designing Mission Portfolios in Circularity This module explores how regions can structure and align portfolios of actions that reinforce systemic change. The module addresses governance arrangements, coordination mechanisms, role distribution and coherence across initiatives.	OLO4
M5	Implementing and Learning through Experimentation in Circular Economy This module focuses on translating missions into action through experimentation, adaptive implementation and structured learning. It addresses urgency, demand, pathway development, safe-to-fail experimentation and continuous feedback mechanisms to support scaling and adaptation.	OLO5