

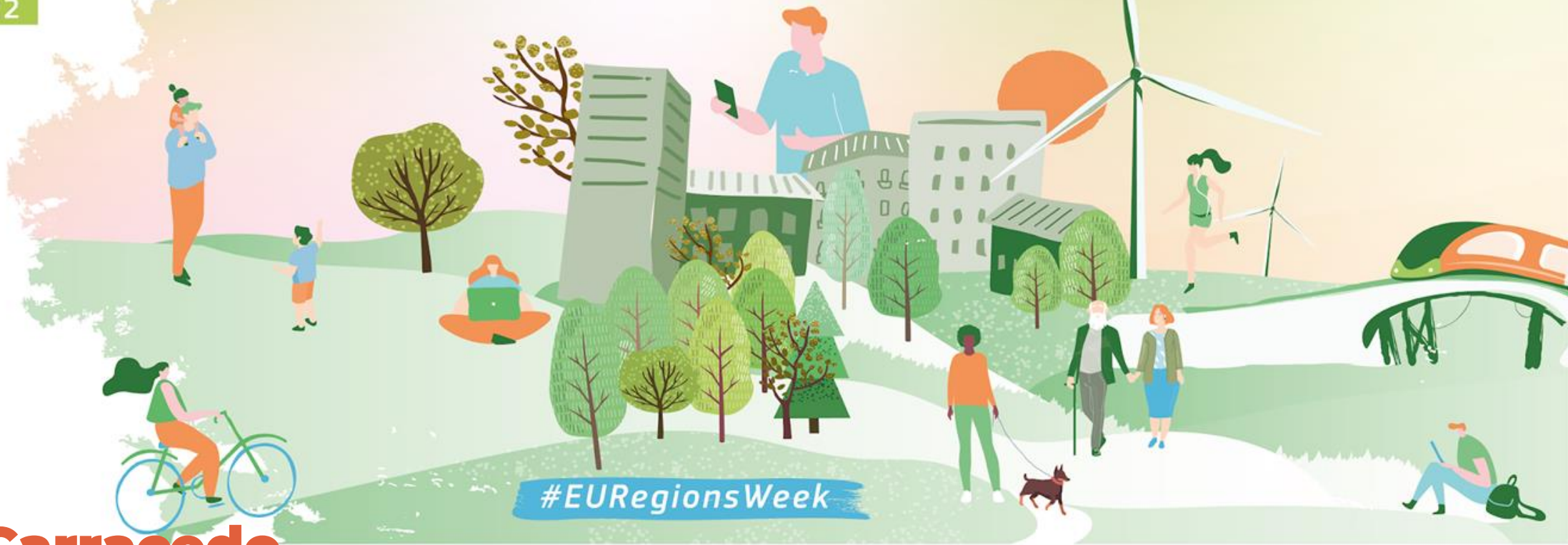


EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

# DIHs as a channel to the regions



**Mayte Carracedo**

Partner & Chief Development at FundingBox





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2023 - 2022

# Fundingbox & AI Ecosystem

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

- Open Calls
- Community
- **DIHs**

PRE PAI

**elise**

European Network of AI Excellence Centres



BONSAPPS

STARWAI



**i-energy**  
Artificial Intelligence  
for Energy

**AI4EU**



ROBOTUNION

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

#EURegionsWeek





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

**New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion**

# **DIHs as a middle man towards the regions**

**#EURegionsWeek**





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

## Regions and Innovation Agencies

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

They are a fundamental source of digital innovation and productivity for companies and as such **we want to accelerate the digital transformation** of the companies in their region and **bridge them towards EU Funding and Testing opportunities for Digital Solutions:**

- Bringing the latest **trending technologies to your region**
- Providing **networking opportunities with other European regions**

### CHALLENGES

- Lack understanding
- Lack of supporting mechanisms to make it happen
- Their companies are not mature enough for applying to these type of pilots





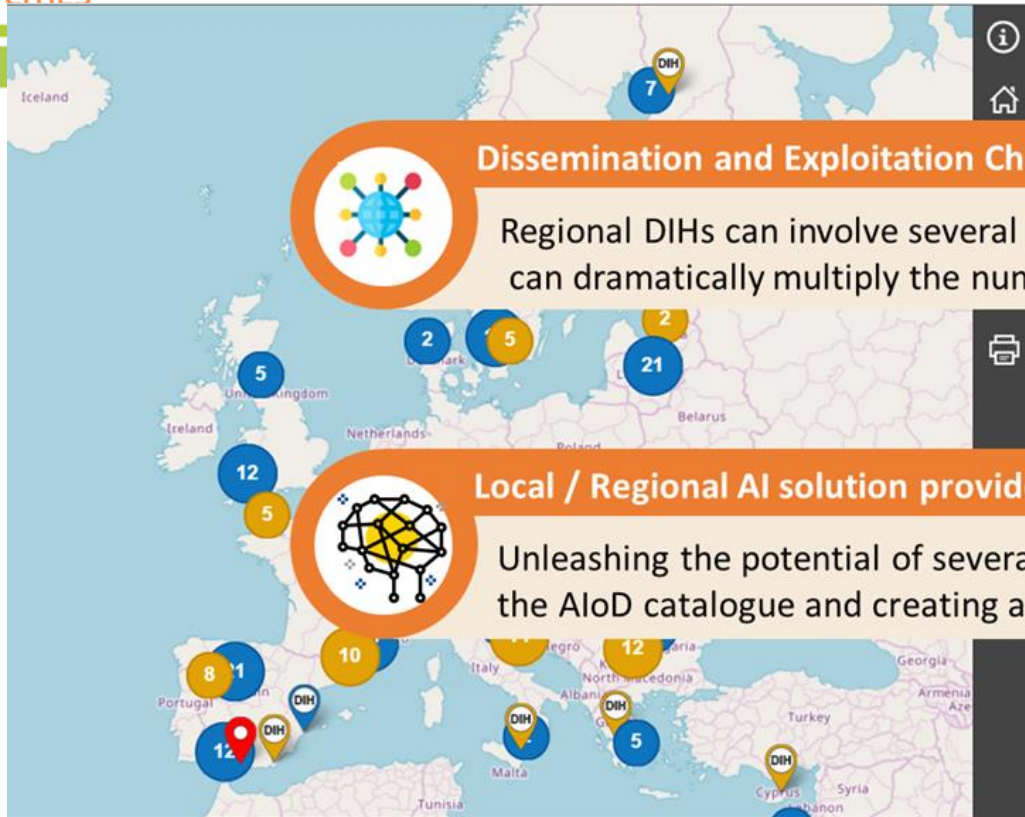


EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 -

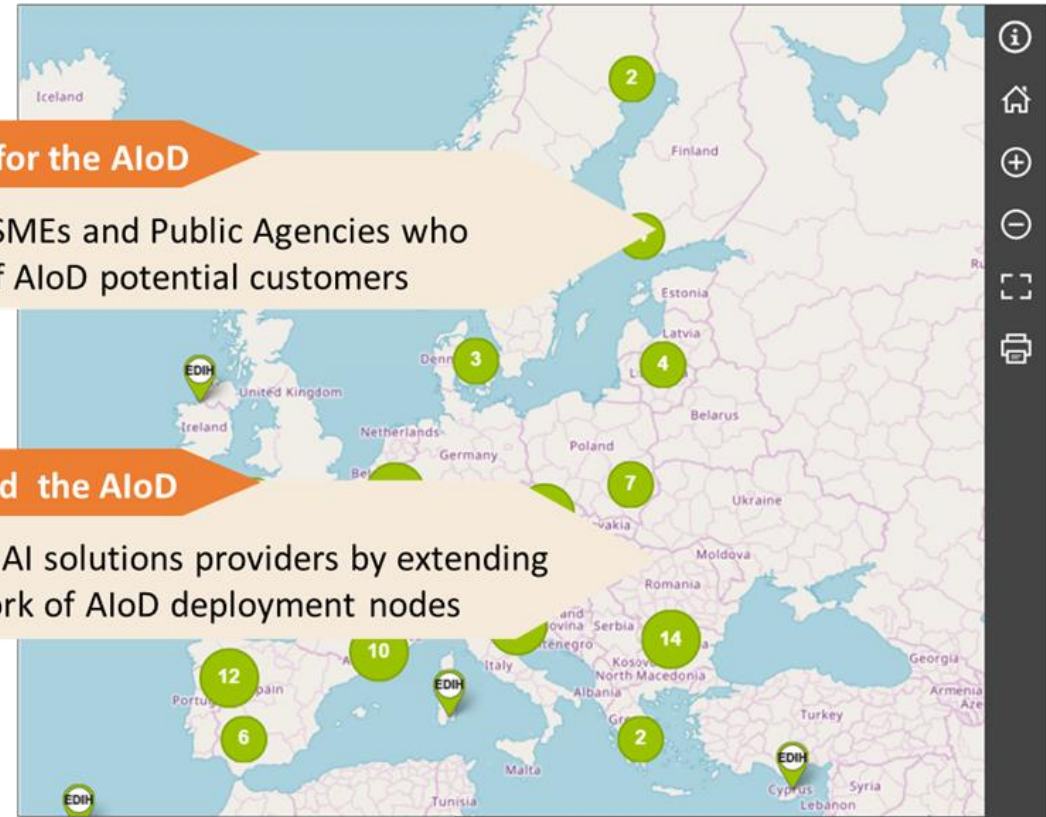
# Regionalizing the AIoD through DIHs: DIH Catalogue AI (E)DIH (434, 126)

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion



Webtools | Leaflet | © OpenStreetMap contributors | Disclaimer

Fully Operational In preparation Potential DIHs from H2020



Webtools | Leaflet | © OpenStreetMap contributors | Disclaimer

Candidate European DIH

#EURegionsWeek





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

**New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion**

# **Examples on how we collaborate with DIHs**

**#EURegionsWeek**





# Capacity building for DIHs

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion



- 1) Discover an alternative source of funding
- 2) How to win Cascade Funding Opportunities
- 3) Build your Alliances in the EU AI DIH Ecosystem

#EURegionsWeek





# Shaping the future of the AI policies and platforms

New Challenges for Europe's Cohesion

- Understand the main DIHs/EDIHs needs
- Recommendation OC challenges where AI Adoption is a key







EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

# DIH Survey results



New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

## What is a typical profile of the SME looking for support in AI Adoption in your ecosystem?

Beginners: They have identified use cases for AI solutions in our organization but have not assessed their value or taken steps to implement such solutions 22 resp. 51.2%



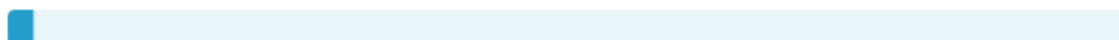
Early Adopters: They have not identified any use-cases for AI solutions in our organization 10 resp. 23.3%



Experimenters: They have identified use cases for AI solutions in their organization, have assessed their value and taken first steps to implement such solutions (e.g. consulting or accepting services from an AI expert or solution provider) 10 resp. 23.3%



Experts: Their organization is using AI solutions for services, products, in business processes or other areas of organization (pilots and fully functional solutions) 1 resp. 2.3%





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

# DIH Survey results



New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

## What are the main challenges for the implementation and use of AI?

Lack of data: companies do not have enough data to feed AI. Many are still collecting data manually or not collecting them at all. 35 resp. 81.4%



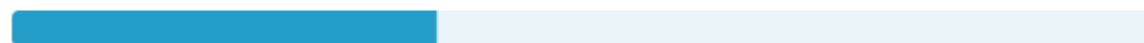
Under-skilled employees: employees are not ready for the AI transformation. They need more training for producing value for the company out of AI usage. 33 resp. 76.7%



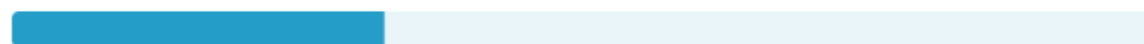
Lack of customised solutions: companies struggle in finding personalised AI solutions that can solve their problems at an affordable price. 17 resp. 39.5%



Complexity of solutions: AI tools are still too complicated. Companies need simple systems that can be deployed and used quickly by employees avoiding complex setups, commands or user interactions. 16 resp. 37.2%



Lack of AI lifecycle assessment methods: companies have the perception that the cost of AI solutions is still too high. 14 resp. 32.6%



#EURegionsWeek





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

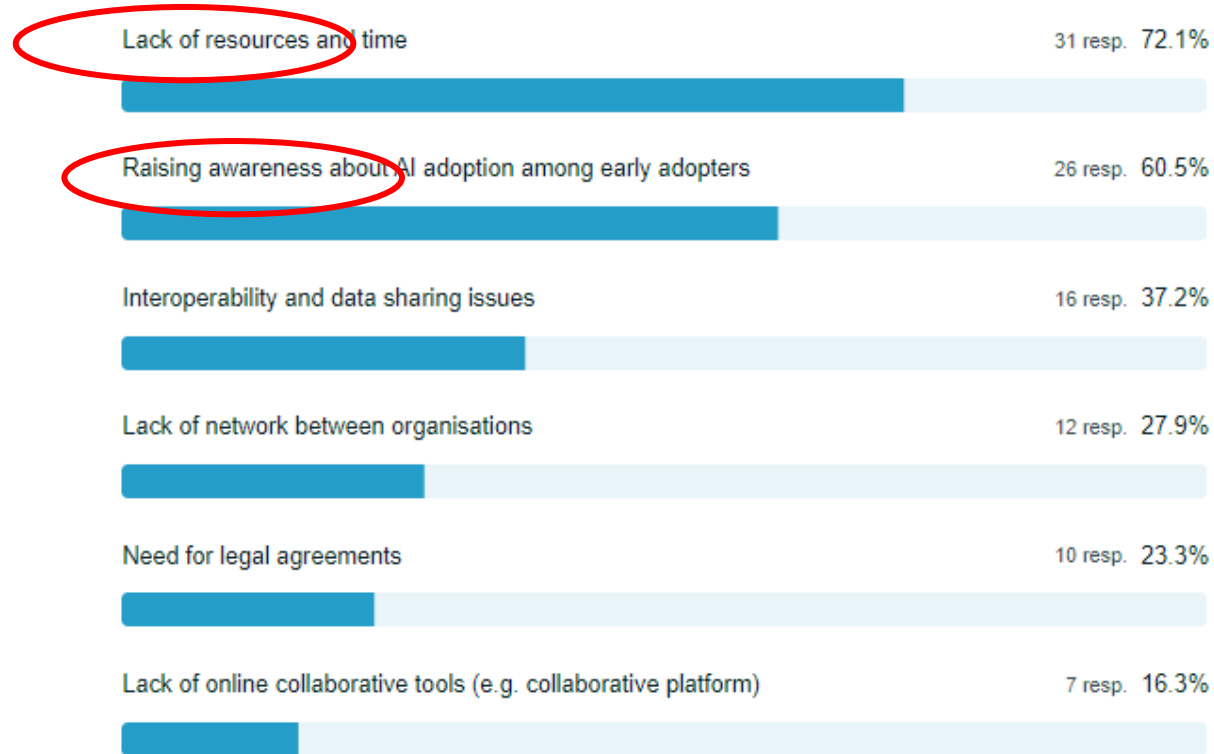
2003 - 2022

# DIH Survey results



New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

According to your experience, what are the biggest challenges for your organization in providing your ecosystem with AI-related support?



#EURegionsWeek





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

# DIH Survey results

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

What expectations does your DIH have concerning the European projects like AI4EU, BonsAPPs or StairwAI?

Business Support: networking space to find funding and sponsors. News on European AI funding opportunities, such as Open Calls, HE, DIGITAL and other programmes

26 resp. 60.5%



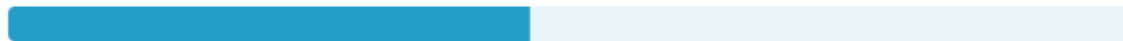
Ecosystem Support: access to an ecosystem of researchers, industry, AI experts etc., and a forum for sharing results, tools, and solutions from the broader European AI community.

23 resp. 53.5%



Technical Support: access to tools and resources that could aid DIH customers with AI solution development, technical challenges and testing and validation

20 resp. 46.5%



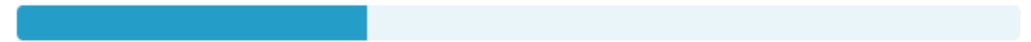
Skills Support: access catalogue of courses, best practices for teaching AI skills, recruitment services including job offerings and demands

17 resp. 39.5%



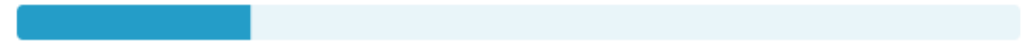
Technical Support: matchmaking tools to identify needs and technological responses to fill technological gaps and find suitable AI experts to provide solutions

15 resp. 34.9%



Technical Support : data services, support in assisting with data acquisition, data processing, and data analysis.

10 resp. 23.3%



Ethics/Legal: advice on ethical guidelines and legal compliance

6 resp. 14%





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

# DIHs at AI on demand Platform

## Strengthening Digital Innovation Hubs with the European AI-on-demand platform: Recommendations White Paper

Brunner, Melissa; Kühner, Susanne; Gonzalez-Castañé, Gabriel

### Other(s)

Alonso Román, Daniel; Galasso, Giovanna; Butter, Maurits; Carracedo, Mayte; Reimann, Meike; Varandas, Nuno; Gusmeroli, Sergio

To support scientific excellence, and address challenges presented by uneven development, the European Commission has implemented several key R&D&I policies and innovations. Among these actions are the two initiatives, namely the AI on-demand Platform and Digital Innovation Hubs. These bodies and their proposed interaction are the subject of this White Paper.

What precisely will be the nature of the relationship and interactions between the pan-European on-demand platform and the regional (E)DIHs? What value can they offer one another? And how will they work together to serve the interests of the respective and sometimes overlapping stakeholders?

To add further complexity to these questions, it is necessary to consider the role and functions of other high-profile existing projects (e.g., EUHubs4Data, DIH4AI etc.), initiatives (AI, Data and Robotics Public to Private Partnership) and programmes (Digital Transformation Accelerator (DTA)) that are closely connected to the AI and DIH ecosystem.

It is precisely the objective of this document to consider the above questions and present a set of recommendations of how both initiatives can best support and complement one another. To develop a robust and considered set of recommendations, under the auspices of the AI4EU project, a group of DIH experts were consulted on how they viewed the current and future landscape and how the interests of stakeholders and the community at large could be best served through the interaction and collaboration between the on-demand platform and current and future (E)DIHs.

#EURegionsWeek

<https://zenodo.org/record/6483645#.YzxIhXZBxRZ>



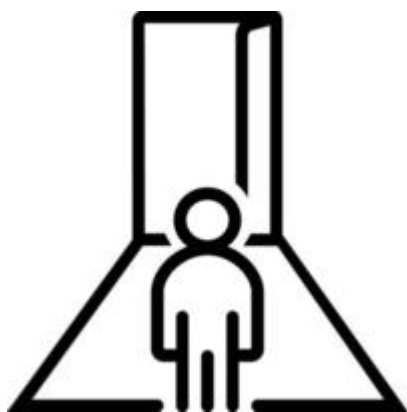




New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

## DIH 2023 opportunities

for AI Hub Supportive Partners



- **DIHs Roadshow vol.2:**  
Discover Cascade Funding opportunities for AI (4M EUR)
- **AI on Demand platform customized for DIHs:**  
Help us to shape the future of AI
- **AI Adoption toolkit**  
Bonsapps Essential guide about AI Adoption that will help you to support SMEs

#EURegionsWeek

<https://ai-hub.fundingbox.com/>





New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion



## **DIH4AI project and the joint approach towards an AI Regional DIH Network**

#EURegionsWeek





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS

200

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

# The DIH4AI Innovation Action

- DURATION:** 36 months (January 2021 – *ongoing*)
- COORDINATOR:** Politecnico di Milano
- FUNDING:** € 4,999,863 (2M Open Calls)
- CONSORTIUM:** 12 Partners from 6 countries
- OPEN CALLS:** 10+10 new DIH-driven SME-oriented
- DIHs:** 5 AI DIHs selected from AI DIH Network
- EXPERIMENTS:** 20+ AI Best Services implementations

<https://www.dih4ai.eu/>









EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

# The L BEST SERVICE PORTFOLIO

Developed an L-BEST 3-levels taxonomy of Services

**L** Legal

- LEGAL AND IPR ASSISTANCE
- ETHICAL AI ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT
- ETHICAL AI LIFE CYCLE ASSISTANCE & ASSESSMENT

**B** Business

- INCUBATION ACCELERATION SUPPORT
- ACCESS TO FINANCE
- OFFERING HOUSING
- BUSINESS TRAINING AND EDUCATION
- PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

**E** Ecosystem

- COMMUNITY BUILDING
- DIH INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT
- ECOSYSTEM GOVERNANCE

**S** Skills

- PROCESS & ORGANIZATIONAL MATURITY
- HUMAN CAPABILITY MATURITY
- SKILLS IMPROVEMENT

**T** Technology

- IDEAS MANAGEMENT AND MATERIALIZATION
- CONTRACT RESEARCH
- PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE
- TECHNICAL SUPPORT ON SCALE UP
- VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION
- DATA MANAGEMENT

#EURegionsWeek







EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

# Servitise the AloD Platform: L BEST

Developed an L-BEST 3-levels taxonomy of Services

**L** Legal

**Ethics**  
Promoting European ethical, legal, cultural and socio-economic values for AI.

**B** Business

**Open Calls**  
Explore Open Calls to find funding and supports SMEs and more

[Explore Open Calls](#)

**E** Ecosystem

**AI4EU Webcafés**  
The AI4EU Web Café provides the users with possibilities to participate virtually in live sessions with experts on specific AI domain or areas of interests.

**S** Skills

**Education**  
Access to AI courses and materials for up-skilling, learning about AI and career development.

**T** Technology

**Experiments and Sandbox**  
Open space for AI developers that offers visual and intuitive design methods. Facilitates the creation of human-centered AI-solutions, building modular structures and using hybrid AI technologies.  
Discover our resources, develop your own solutions, collaborate and share your ideas and solutions with the AI community.

[Access the service now!](#)

#EURegion

AI4EU





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

# PIPELINE - TECHNOLOGY USER, DIGIHALL

New Challenges for Europe's Cohesion  
**DIGIHALL**



OBSERVATION



AWARENESS



EXPERIMENT

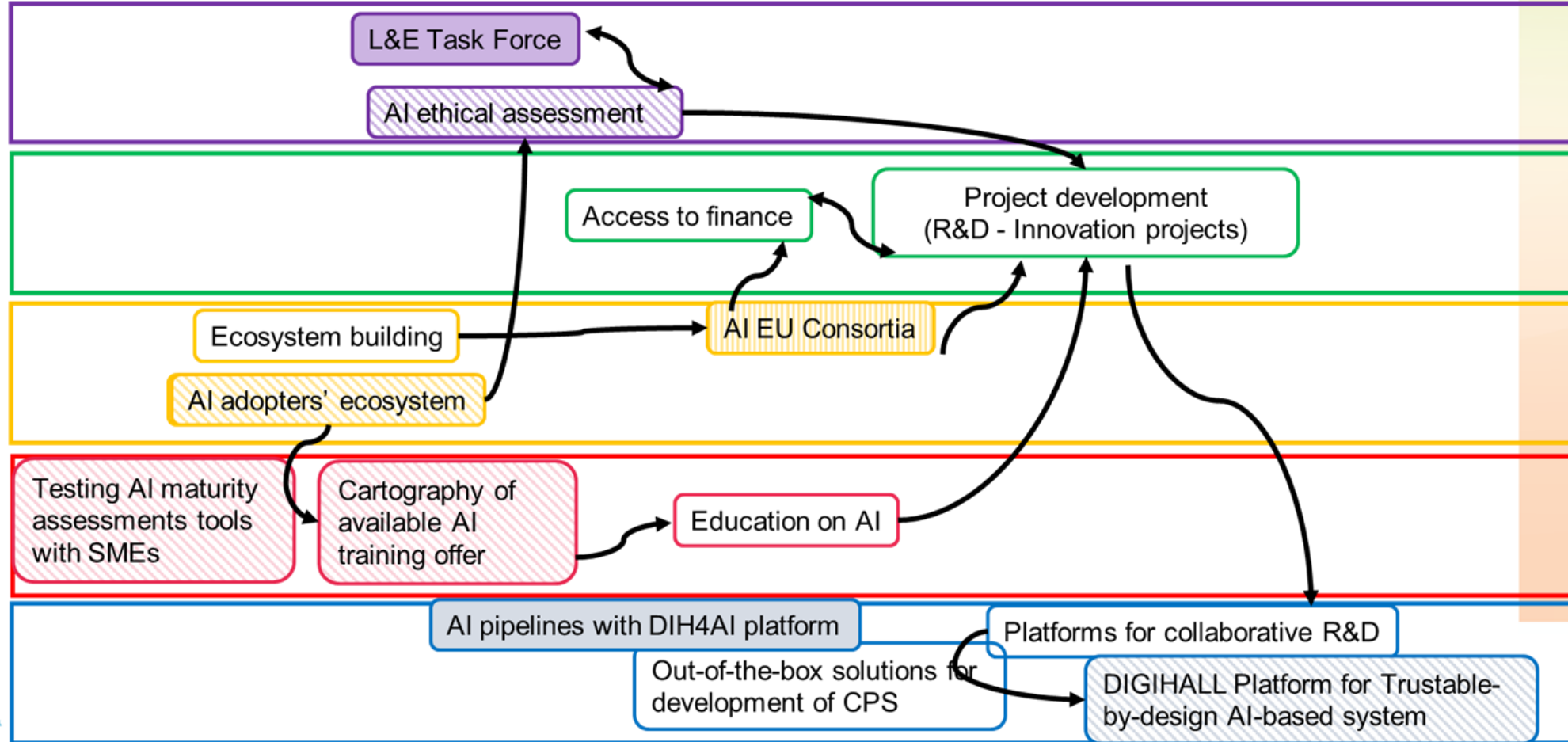


EXPERIENCE



ADOPTION

L  
B  
E  
S  
T



#EURegionsWeek



EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2023 - 2024

# DIH4AI Outcomes Integration with the AIoD Platform



## The AIoD Portal and the AI DIH pages

A concrete operational proposal was discussed in July 2021 TGB. Key point: integrating DIHIWARE into AIoD platform (esp. AI Assets, Cases)



## The AIoD Experimental Facility and DIH AI Pipelines

As part of their service pipelines, DIHs accompany their customers (AI users and/or providers) in the Design Studio and Assets Marketplace



## The AIoD Platform and DIHIWARE innovation

Regional DIH platforms to be interoperable with the pan-EU AIoD platform through service collaboration. Involving the DT Accelerator for AI EDIHs

## New Challenges for Europe's Cohesion

### Regional Engagement - DIHs

Digital Innovation Hubs support businesses and companies in their digital transformation and promote cooperation among them. To this end, a special focus is placed on AI to provide support for the preparation of upcoming policies and projects.



### Discover AI4EU Experiments



#EUReg

AI4EU





New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

**Thank you for your attention**

[mayte.carracedo@fundingbox.com](mailto:mayte.carracedo@fundingbox.com)

**AI cluster at FundingBox**

[izabella.zrazinska@fundingbox.com](mailto:izabella.zrazinska@fundingbox.com)

**DIH4AI project** [sergio.gusmeroli@polimi.it](mailto:sergio.gusmeroli@polimi.it)





# Join the AI Community







EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

**New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion**

## **Key takeaways:**

- 1. Artificial Intelligence is rapidly growing and will soon become ubiquitous and pervade our daily life**
- 2. There are multiple opportunities that small companies can get support with in AI Adoption through Open Calls such as BonsAPPs, I-ENERGY, StairwAI, AIPlan4EU, DIH4AI**
- 3. First steps towards a joint strategy from the ICT49 is to populate and enrich the «Regional Engagement – DIH» section of the AIoD portal**





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

# Join AI Community

## Session summary + Q&A



<https://spaces.fundingbox.com/c/AI-community>

#EURegionsWeek





EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

# THANK YOU!



#EURegionsWeek

