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Corporate content on communication for outreach networks

European Commission, Directorate General for
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EU News & Policy Highlights

EU Agenda for cities

The European Commission has launched the EU Agenda for Cities, a new framework to support cities in addressing local challenges while contributing to wider EU goals. It strengthens the urban dimension of EU policies and calls for closer dialogue with local authorities. Cities are crucial hubs for Europe's prosperity and competitiveness, playing a key role in job creation, social inclusiveness, decarbonisation and sustainability. They are therefore at the forefront of addressing vital challenges for the continent's future. The Agenda outlines upcoming opportunities for cities, including the call for European Urban Initiative Innovative Actions opening in early 2026 and the production of a regular State of European Cities report. Implementation of the EU Agenda for Cities begins under the current financial framework and will continue through the next programming period. Staying informed will help you plan better and engage citizens where it matters most. More [here](#).

40 years of Spain and Portugal in the EU

The [40th anniversary of Spain and Portugal](#) joining the EU on 1 January 2026 is a powerful storytelling moment for every centre across Europe. Their accession helped shape the Union citizens know today: a larger single market, stronger democracy, and a more cohesive, outward-looking Europe that benefits all regions. This anniversary also serves as a prime hook to show how EU membership transforms local communities: modern infrastructure, new jobs linked to cohesion and regional funds, Erasmus+ mobility, cross-border projects and tourism flows that now link villages, towns and cities across the continent. It is an ideal occasion to organise citizen dialogues, school visits and cross-border exchanges, using Spain and Portugal's experience to spark conversations about what 40 years of [EU membership](#) has meant, and could mean, in every territory.

EU impact close to home

A new [EU Geographical Indications \(GI\) scheme](#) has just opened for Europe's craftspeople. From now on, glassblowers, potters, cutlers, jewellers and other makers can register the names of their craft and industrial products for EU-wide protection, similar to the system long used for food and drink. This protection highlights products whose quality and reputation are tied to their place of origin, helping preserve traditional skills, support local jobs and guide consumers toward

authentic, high-quality European goods. It's a very concrete example of what the EU delivers for people and local economies. It supports local artisans and SMEs across regions. It shows the EU's commitment to cultural heritage, craftsmanship, and quality standards. A great opportunity to showcase the EU's impact close to home! Find two short explanatory videos in your language – [one showing](#) what makes certain products unmistakably local and [another explaining](#) how to register a geographical indication with the EU.

Europe's energy communities are taking off

Across the EU, more than 8,000 local energy communities are now active, bringing together citizens, municipalities and small businesses to jointly invest in renewable energy and energy-efficiency solutions. These initiatives help lower energy bills, cut emissions and keep economic value local. By enabling collective, citizen-driven energy action they also boost public acceptance of renewable projects and make it easier to attract private investment in the clean energy transition. Energy communities are becoming a powerful tool to reshape local energy systems — helping reduce energy poverty, create green jobs, and empower people to take part in the transition. The REPowerEU Plan set the goal of achieving one energy community per municipality with more than 10,000 inhabitants by 2025. With over 8,000 already in place, Europe is well on its way. A [timely and inspiring story](#) to share with your community!

Spotlight on resources

New funding opportunity for schools to teach about the EU

Through the [Learning EU initiatives](#) + [Networks for schools](#), schools can apply to secure funding, to integrate EU topics into their classroom learning. The call is open to primary, secondary, vocational education and training schools, located in Erasmus+ programme countries. The [Learning EU at school booklet](#) has testimonials from teachers and pupils. On the [Funding & tenders portal](#) you can find past summaries. [How to begin an application for Jean Monnet Learning EU Initiatives on Vimeo](#). Europe needs citizens who feel empowered to shape their future. The Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Actions "Learning EU Initiatives" and Networks for Schools support this goal by offering funding for schools in Erasmus+ Programme Countries to teach more about the EU. Schools can apply for grants of up to EUR 35,000 to develop EU-focused learning activities. While the application form on the Funding & Tenders Portal is in English, it can be completed in any EU language. Deadline: 3 February at 17:00 CET. More [here](#).

Better understand the Common Agricultural Policy

We need your support to promote the [2026 call for applications](#) - deadline: 14 January 2026. The European Commission co-funds (60%) projects that inform the public especially young people and rural stakeholders about the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Eligible activities include AV content, farm visits and sector-related events, information campaigns, media activities, apps, games and training tools. Applications are welcome from media organisations, farmer groups, content creators and actors working against disinformation. The call focuses on projects that highlight fair income and a stronger position for farmers in the food chain, competitiveness and resilience of EU agriculture, climate- and nature-friendly food systems and generational renewal

and gender balance. Why promote it: The call supports wide-reaching communication activities that help citizens better understand how the CAP supports farmers, rural areas, food quality, climate action and Europe's food future. It is a concrete opportunity to bring Europe's agricultural story closer to people.