EU Danube Region Strategy
PA 8 LIGHTHOUSE

GREEN TECH, CIRCULAR ECONOMY & CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY

ToBeReaL

Slovenia and Slovakia

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DANUBE REGION strategy Prosperity through Diversity
Interreg Programme Danube Region
Co-funded by the European Union
REPUBLIC of CROATIA Ministry of Economy
Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Tourism

Basics

Acronym: ToBeReaL

Name: Empowering bioeconomy projects by deploying Technical, Business, Regulatory and Social assistance services

Country: Slovakia Republic, Slovenia

Scoring: 44/50

Key Project Data:

2024 – 2029

2.999.846,08 €

Funded by Horizon Europe

Project Coordinator:

PNO INNOVATION SL

https://www.tobereal.eu/

Contact Person:

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Bioeconomy Cluster

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Consortium

Coordinator:

PNO INNOVATION SL, Spain

Partners from the Danube Region:

- Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Štajerska, Slovenia
- Bioeconomy Cluster, Slovakia

And other partners from outside the Danube Region

About the project

Currently, bioeconomy in the EU is still hampered by barriers such unsustainable resource use, supply-demand mismatches, fragmented regulation, fragmented funding landscape and lack of harmonised standards for assessing bio-based product sustainability.

ToBeReaL is a 5-year **European collaborative project** with the main goal of **catalysing public, private and public-private bioeconomy projects** at different stages of maturity leading to a higher number of flagship projects across EU. Its goal is to overcome obstacles and **create flagship projects that represent innovative and sustainable biological solutions**.

ToBeReaL is set to provide specialised assistance to bioeconomy projects in four key areas:

- Technical
- Business & Financial
- Regulatory & Legal
- Social innovation

ToBeReaL

DANUBE REGION strategy Competitiveness

INNOVATION

ToBeReaL is innovative by offering **tailored four-dimensional support**, which goes beyond technical solutions to address systemic issues in the bioeconomy.

SUSTAINABILITY

ToBeReaL is sustainable by focusing on **long-term assistance and transformation through regional empowerment and multi-actor engagement**.

SCALABILITY

ToBeReaL is scalable and replicable by designing **comparable models for other EU regions** via its open-access community platform, structured support services and robust assistance framework.

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Methodology

ToBeReaL follows **a five-phase holistic methodology**:

Identifying challenges in technological, regulatory, financial, and social domains

Needs and barriers assessment

Framework setup

Creating protocols and a service portfolio aligned with four portfolios

Continuous open call and a rigorous readiness level (RL) assessment

Project evaluation & assistance

Stakeholder engagement

Inclusive participation through workshops, webinars, and forums

Continuous mentoring, strategic roadmaps, and platform-based networking to achieve flagship outcomes

Long-term assistance

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Objectives and Activities

The project's core objective is to boost the **readiness and scalability of at least 30 bioeconomy projects** across Europe, with a strong focus on underdeveloped and transition regions. ToBeReaL is designed to empower those projects through a strategic support framework spanning **four key dimensions/portfolios.**

The main objectives and activities of the project are:

Objective	Activity
Facilitate the **transition from a fossil-based to a bio-based economy** and enhance competitiveness of novel bioeconomy projects	– Identification of future needs, barriers and enablers and formulate strategies
Address the factors hindering the projects **feasibility and scalability**	– Portfolio of services in the TBRS-verticals of assistance, applied along 5 years, including long-term support
Attract bioeconomy stakeholders and foster **networking with multi-actors** in the bioeconomy.	– Community platform, targeted webinars, feedstock workshops and BioPitch Forums
Fostering the **long-term growth of projects (flagship projects)**	– Ensuring projects progression towards flagship status, with a particular focus on regions where bioeconomy is currently underdeveloped

ToBeReaL

DANUBE REGION strategy Competitiveness

T Technical

B Business & Financial

R Regulatory & Legal

S Social Innovation

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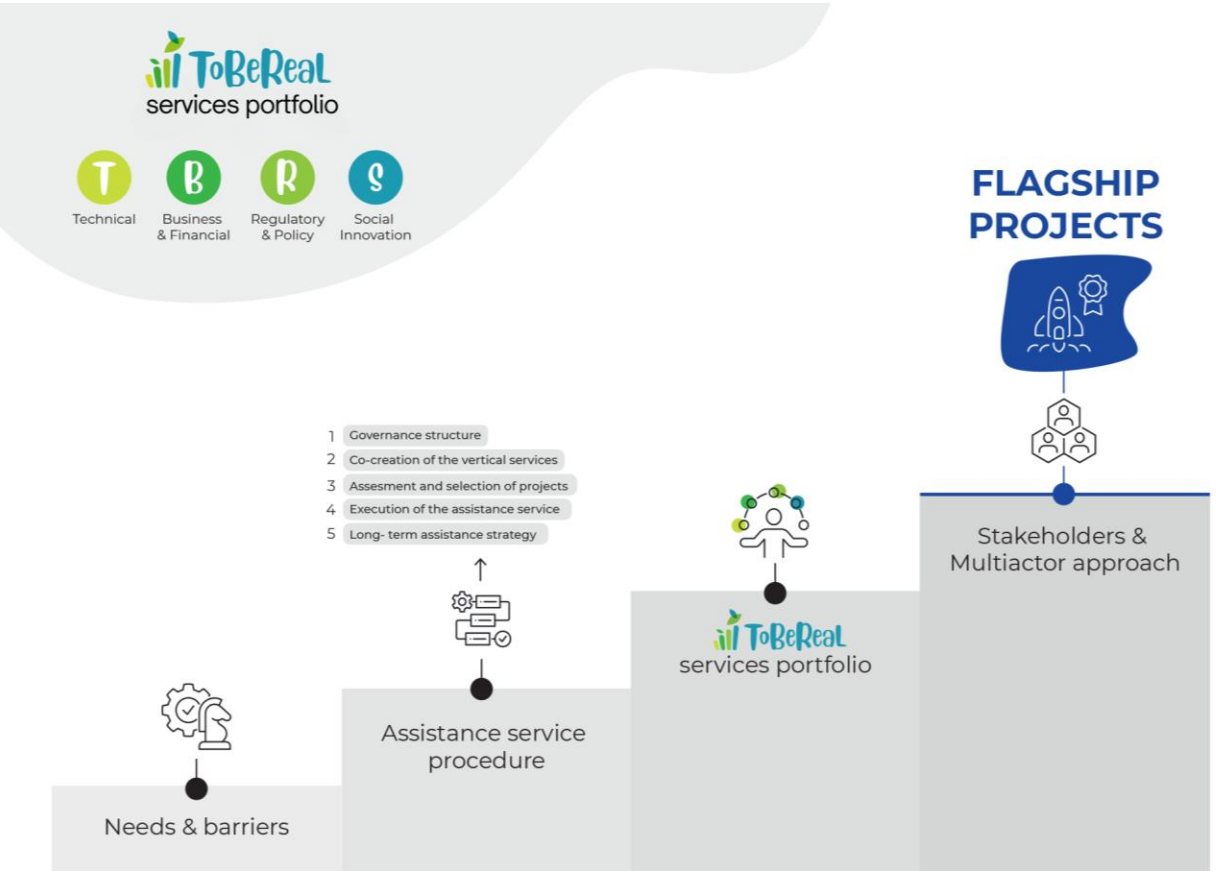

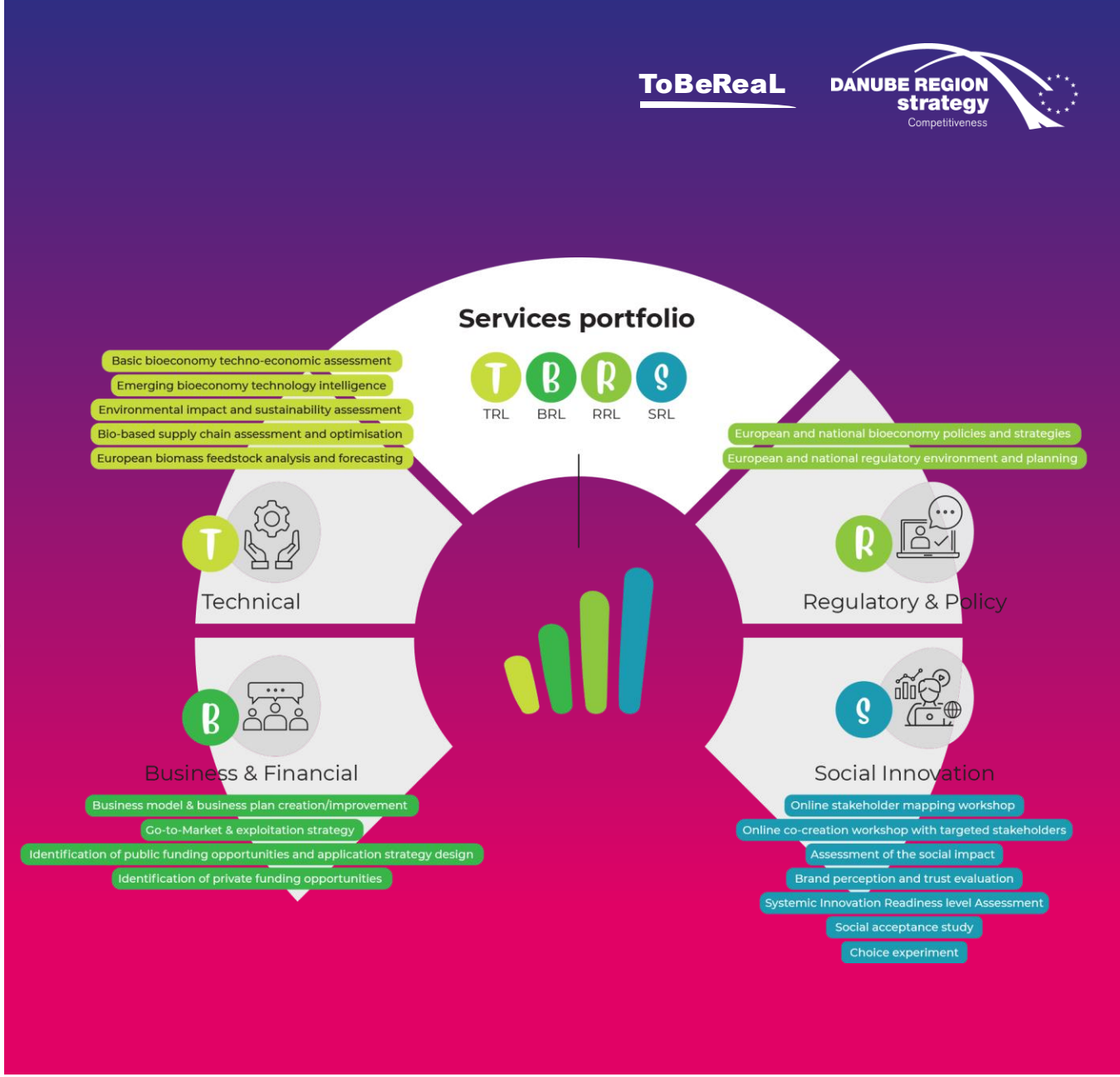

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Outcome

ToBeReaL project has an impact on various sectors:

European bio-based economy, especially in widening countries:

- Creating new knowledge in strategies and methodologies
- Enhancing the readiness and innovation capacity of bioeconomy projects
- Creating new jobs and markets

Local communities and stakeholders

- Support and Engagement through multi-actor approach
- Diffusion of knowledge and Open Science

Research and innovation ecosystem

- Leveraging investment by strategic assistance and multi-actor partnerships
- Enhanced visibility of bioeconomy assisted projects and associated stakeholders
- Promoting circular transitions

Results

The project was launched in November 2024 and the main outcomes achieved so far include:

- Design of **service portfolio** in four verticals (TBRS)
- Launch of **application mechanism** offering tailored **support services to bioeconomy projects**
- Bioeconomy nurturing webinar
- Populating ToBeReaL project by **feedstock workshop**
- → one strategic thematic workshop delivered so far, five more coming up

Barriers and Tips

The main concerns of the ToBeReal project:

- **Low stakeholder participation** in some regions
- Risk of **insufficient number of project applications** in early stages of the call
- **Technical complexity** in tailoring assistance services to diverse needs

The ideas for future replications:

- Leveraging **regional networks and clusters**
- Prioritizing underrepresented regions and **tailoring actions to their specific economic and policy landscapes**
- **Modular and flexible assistance model** that adapts to the maturity level and local context of individual projects

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