

# Policies to promote the competitiveness of forest-based SMEs in resource-efficient European regions



## NEWSLETTER #2

### Welcome to FBI4EU newsletter!

In this first issue of our newsletter, we are pleased to invite all readers to take part in our project and follow our efforts!



### What is the project about?

Forests are a vital part of Europe's landscape, covering 39% of the EU's territory and playing a significant role in the economy, environment, and rural development. The forest-based industry, dominated by SMEs, contributes substantially to the EU's GDP, employing around 3.6 million people across over 400,000 companies. However, the sector faces challenges, including diverse regional policies, modernization needs, and sustainability issues. Disparities across regions hinder the full potential of the sector, with some areas lacking the infrastructure or policies to support forest-based industries effectively.



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## FBI4EU



The FBI4EU project aims to address these challenges by uniting eight partners from seven European countries, including business support centers, regional development agencies, municipal authorities, and research institutions. This collaborative effort is focused on enhancing the competitiveness and sustainability of forest-based SMEs by developing targeted regional policies, promoting eco-innovation, and sharing best practices across regions. A key player, "Our Land" from Bosnia and Herzegovina, adds valuable regional insights to the project.

Through stakeholder engagement and tailored interventions, FBI4EU fosters sustainable growth, resource efficiency, and innovation in the forest-based industries. Its impact extends to economic growth in rural areas, job creation, and supporting the European Green Deal's goals for a greener, socially inclusive Europe.



## A few numbers about the project



1,649,909 €  
budget



01 Apr  
2024-30 Jun  
2028



8 partners

## Meeting in Poland #1

The Second International Partner Meeting of the FBI4EU project took place in Rzeszów, Poland, from November 26-27, 2024, hosted by the Rzeszow Regional Development Agency (RRDA). Partners from across Europe met to share knowledge, review progress, and discuss future activities. The first day covered the first semester's activities, communication strategies, and financial updates, followed by discussions on GP selection methodology, survey techniques, and a SWOT analysis of the wood sector. REDEA led a session on the forest-based industry's current state, and a key policy workshop focused on unlocking investment opportunities for SMEs in the sector.

[More information...](#)



## Meeting in Poland #2

On the second day, Onliwood CEO Zbigniew Karaszewski gave a presentation on the innovative timber sales portaul. The second presenter was Stefan Traczyk, President of the Association of Foresters and Forest Owners, presenting the concept of forest chambers, which aims to strengthen the representation of the industry. Following the presentations, participants took part in study tours: the Drek BIK company provided participants with insights into wood processing and innovative forest industry practices; REMET demonstrated advances in sustainable wood processing. The meeting successfully promoted collaboration and innovation among partners.

[More information...](#)

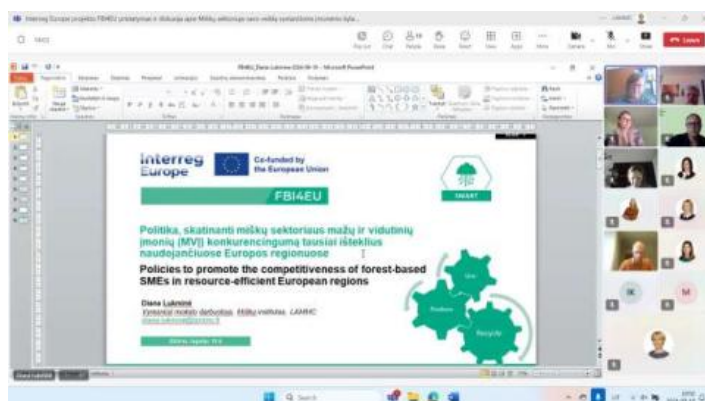
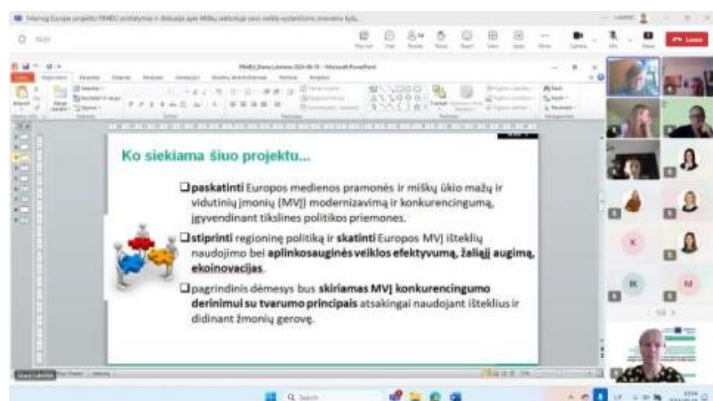
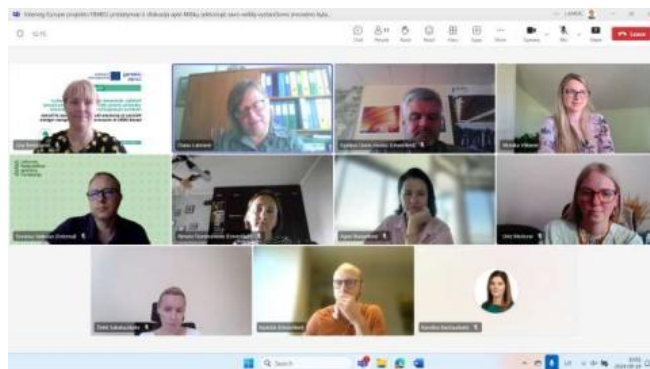




# 1st Regional Stakeholder Meeting in Lithuania

The First Regional Meeting of the Stakeholders was held on September 19, 2024 in Lithuania. The meeting was organized by the Lithuanian Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry, which presented a comprehensive overview of the project and its objectives. The meeting was held through the TEAMS platform and brought together stakeholders drawn from government bodies, forest owners, private companies and academic institutions. The focus was on the challenges facing timber SMEs in light of the European Green Deal and the long-term benefits for companies promoting innovation and sustainability.

[More information...](#)



# Stakeholder Meeting in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The First Regional Stakeholder Meeting in Bosnia and Herzegovina was held on September 27 via Google Meet. The highlight of the meeting was the presentation of the FBI4EU project to the participants, among whom were representatives of institutions from the forestry industry. Participants discussed strategies and policies for innovation and digital transformation, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the sector. The meeting concluded with a discussion on future cooperation to address climate change challenges.

[More information...](#)

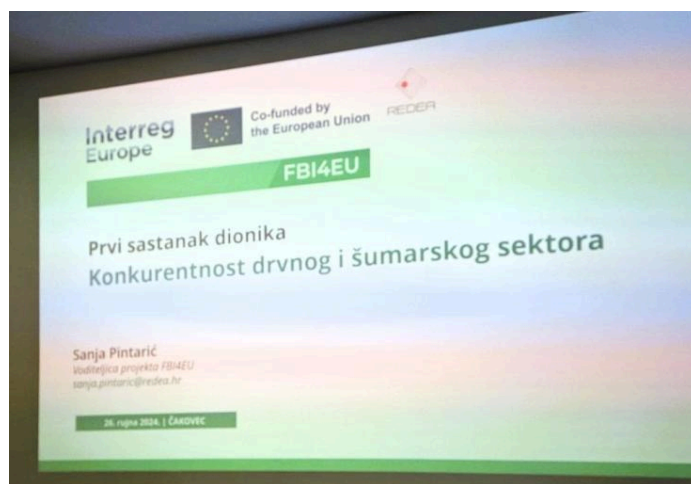




# 1st Regional Stakeholder Meeting in Croatia

The First Meeting of the Regional Stakeholder Group was held in Međimurje, Croatia, bringing together key stakeholders in the region and providing a forum to identify industry opportunities and challenges. Participants were introduced to the FBI4EU project and took an active part in a SWOT analysis of the industry. The meeting focused on sustainability and environmental responsibility, technologies and advances in forestry, and increasing the region's competitiveness. The discussion resulted in the identification of strengths and opportunities, but also highlighted several weaknesses and challenges facing the timber sector.

[More information...](#)



# Regional Stakeholder Meeting in Denmark

On November 4, 2024, Norddjurs Municipality held the First Regional Stakeholder Group Meeting of the FBI4EU project in Denmark. Through the meeting, which brought together decision makers and industry leaders, the shaping of the direction of sustainable forestry was examined. The discussion undertaken focused on the direction of forest use in the coming years, the formation of forest policy, and innovation and modernization of the industry. The event highlighted the importance of cooperation in the project and outlined a framework for further action.

[More information...](#)





## Stakeholder Meeting in Podkarpackie Region

On 25 November 2024, the first Regional Stakeholder Meeting of the FBI4EU project took place, hosted by the Rzeszow Regional Development Agency. The meeting was attended by representatives of SMEs from the forestry sector, experts and academic researchers. During the meeting, the main objectives of the project and an analysis of the current situation of the forestry and wood processing industry in the region were presented. Participants actively took part in a workshop, which identified the needs of SME entrepreneurs and the challenges of climate and sustainable development.

[More information...](#)



## Stakeholder Meetings in Sweden

In Sweden, a series of stakeholder meetings were held in 2024 as part of the Regional Forest Programme in Östergötland. The meetings, which aimed to strengthen cooperation, exchange knowledge and plan future activities, included the topic of the FBI4EU project. The speakers discussed how to integrate the programme into the project and further analyse the value chain of the forestry sector in Östergötland.

[More information...](#)



## Demoforest 2024

Demoforest is one of the most important industry events in Europe that brings together institutions, entrepreneurs and experts related to the forestry sector. Thanks to project partners Filière Bois Wallonie, the FBI4EU project was presented to the event's participants as an example of international cooperation for innovation in the forestry sector. The project's objectives and activities were presented, as well as its innovative practices supported by the project. Demoforest is a trade fair where it is possible to present technologies and make many contacts and exchange knowledge.

[More information...](#)

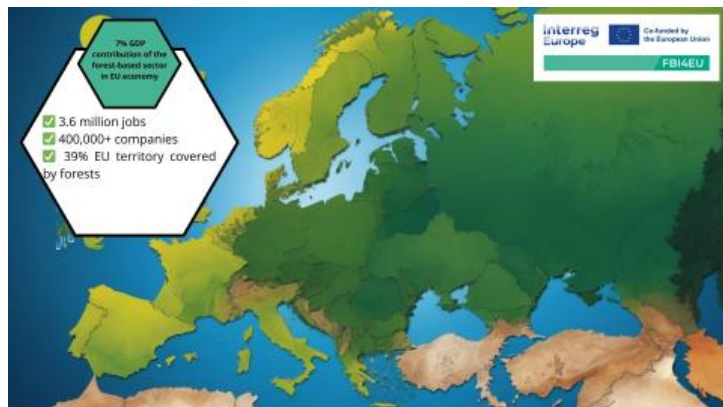




# Shaping the Future of Forest-Based SMEs

Forests provide essential resources for the economy, industry and local communities and are the lungs of our planet. In the EU itself, forests cover 39% of the territory and are the mainstay of the timber industry, which accounts for 7% of the EU's GDP and millions of jobs. Despite its significance, the forest industry faces many challenges, which FBI4EU aims to tackle. Under the Interreg Europe programme, the project helps regions improve policies and promote sustainable development.

[More information...](#)



# Shaping the Future of Forest-Based SMEs

Onliwood is an innovative platform that was presented during a project meeting hosted by the Rzeszow Regional Development Agency. It offers a centralised platform for networking, knowledge sharing and access to state-of-the-art technologies. Its main objective is to strengthen collaboration between businesses, researchers and policy makers to stimulate innovation in the forestry and wood processing sectors.

[More information...](#)



Onliwood - Wood Trading Portal

Zbigniew Karaszewski  
CEO

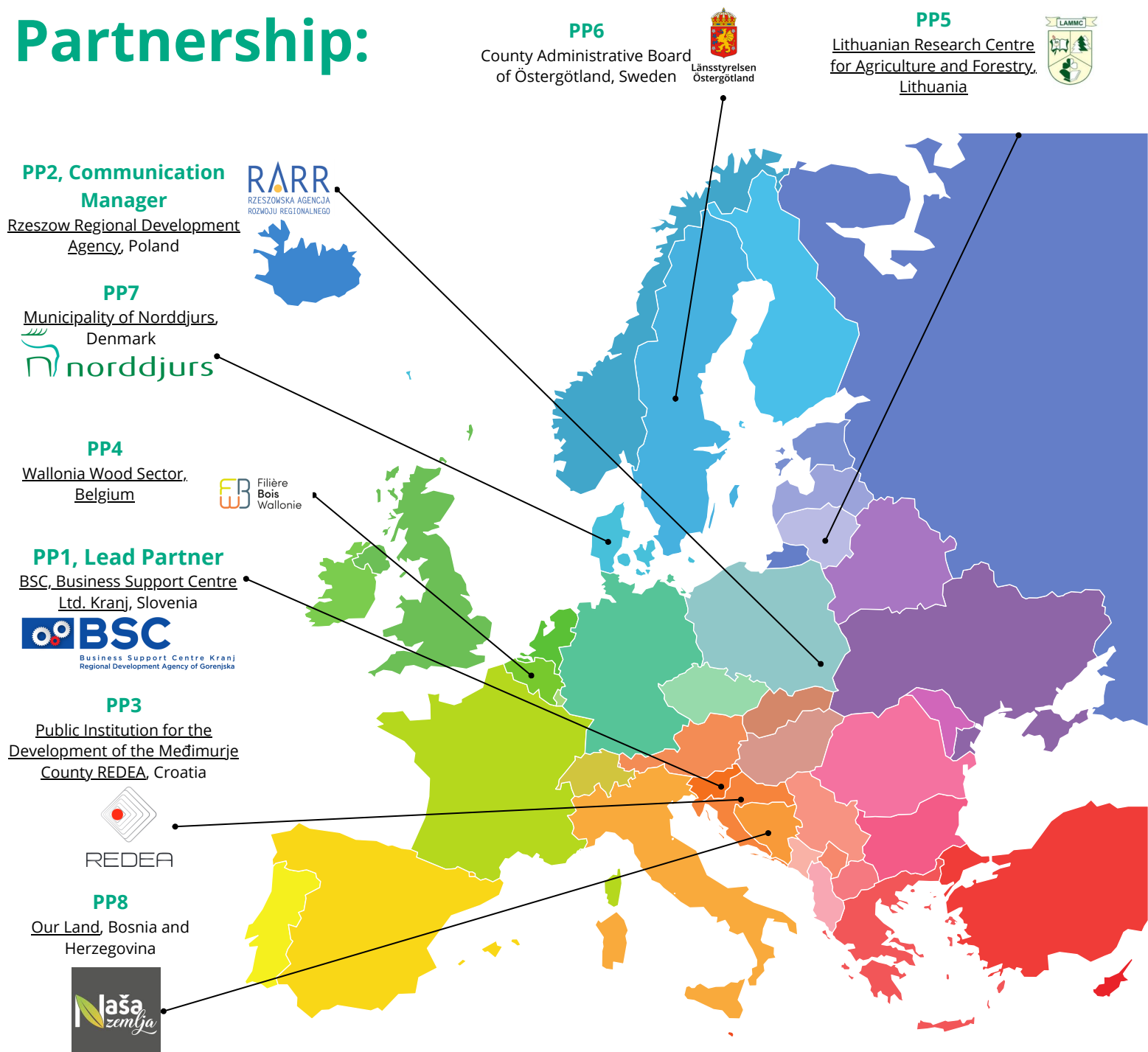
"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

– Helen Keller





# Partnership:



The project is co-financed by the European Union from European Regional Development Fund Under the Interreg Europe 2021-2027 program.

Interreg  
Europe



Co-funded by  
the European Union

FBI4EU





Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. We truly appreciate your interest and support in our efforts. We look forward to staying connected and welcome your continued engagement as we work together towards a sustainable and innovative future for Europe's forest-based industries. Stay tuned for further updates and opportunities to get involved!

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