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LIFE Programme Drives Innovation, Strategic Autonomy and Resilience for a More Competitive Europe

Key policies: *LIFE Programme, EU Competitiveness Compass, European Green Deal, Circular Economy Action Plan, Clean Industrial Deal, EU Climate Law, Strategic Autonomy*

The European Commission has highlighted the contribution of the **LIFE Programme** to Europe's competitiveness through a new publication showcasing how environmental and climate projects are driving innovation, strengthening strategic autonomy and increasing economic resilience across the European Union.

The publication, **LIFE and the EU's Competitiveness Agenda: Fostering Innovation, Strategic Autonomy, and Resilience for Sustainable Growth**, presents examples of LIFE-funded initiatives that transform innovative environmental solutions into commercially viable technologies and business models.

By supporting the deployment of clean technologies and accelerating their market uptake, the LIFE Programme demonstrates how climate action can simultaneously generate economic growth, industrial competitiveness and long-term resilience.

Bridging innovation and market deployment

One of the LIFE Programme's central objectives is to close the gap between research and commercial deployment.

Across Europe, LIFE supports projects that:

- Demonstrate innovative technologies
- Scale up market-ready solutions
- Mobilise private and public investment
- Strengthen European value chains
- Create new business opportunities

The programme enables promising environmental innovations to move beyond the pilot phase and achieve broader commercial application, helping European companies compete in rapidly expanding global markets for sustainable technologies.

Supporting the EU Competitiveness Compass

The LIFE Programme plays an important role in delivering the objectives of the **EU Competitiveness Compass**, which identifies innovation, strategic autonomy and resilience as key drivers of Europe's future economic prosperity.

With a budget of **€5.4 billion** for the **2021–2027** programming period and more than **€4 billion** mobilised since 2014, LIFE acts as a catalyst for additional public and private investment.

The programme contributes by:

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- Accelerating industrial decarbonisation
- Supporting clean technology deployment
- Reducing strategic dependencies
- Strengthening sustainable value chains
- Increasing Europe's technological leadership

These investments help position sustainability as a source of long-term competitive advantage rather than a regulatory obligation.

Driving innovation across key sectors

The publication showcases numerous LIFE projects that are helping European businesses develop and commercialise innovative environmental solutions.

Examples include:

DeliverEEM

The **DeliverEEM** project is expanding energy-efficient mortgage markets across Europe by encouraging private investment in building renovation and energy performance improvements.

PlastLIFE

PlastLIFE supports circular economy solutions that reduce dependence on fossil-based plastics while promoting more sustainable materials and production processes.

Together, these initiatives illustrate how LIFE accelerates the transition from research to commercial deployment and helps innovative businesses scale their solutions.

Strengthening Europe's strategic autonomy

Reducing dependence on imported energy and critical raw materials has become an increasingly important priority for the European Union.

Several LIFE projects contribute directly to this objective.

EXQUISHEAT

The **EXQUISHEAT** project promotes the deployment of industrial heat pump technologies that reduce fossil fuel consumption while improving industrial energy efficiency.

LIFE-SYNFLUOR

LIFE-SYNFLUOR demonstrates how industrial waste streams can be transformed into valuable critical raw materials, helping strengthen European supply chains and reduce reliance on imported resources.

These initiatives support both industrial competitiveness and Europe's broader objective of increasing economic and strategic autonomy.

Building long-term resilience

The LIFE Programme also contributes to climate resilience by supporting projects that improve ecosystem health, resource efficiency and adaptation to climate change.

Highlighted examples include:

LIFE TreeCheck

This project strengthens urban resilience by promoting green infrastructure that helps cities adapt to increasing temperatures and extreme weather events.

LIFE Olivares Vivos+

The **LIFE Olivares Vivos+** project demonstrates how biodiversity restoration in agricultural landscapes can simultaneously improve environmental outcomes, farm productivity and long-term competitiveness.

The publication emphasises that healthy ecosystems form a critical foundation for sustainable economic development and climate resilience.

Turning environmental ambition into economic opportunity

According to the Commission, the featured projects demonstrate that environmental protection and economic competitiveness can reinforce one another.

Through support for innovation, resource efficiency and circular economy solutions, the LIFE Programme helps:

- Create new markets for sustainable technologies
- Strengthen European industrial capacity
- Reduce dependence on external resources
- Improve resource productivity
- Increase resilience across key economic sectors

By supporting market-ready solutions, LIFE enables environmental objectives to generate tangible economic value while contributing to Europe's transition towards climate neutrality.

Background

The **LIFE Programme** is the European Union's dedicated funding instrument for environmental protection, climate action and the clean energy transition.

Since its establishment, LIFE has supported thousands of projects across Europe that address biodiversity conservation, climate mitigation and adaptation, pollution reduction, circular economy solutions and sustainable resource management.

With a **2021–2027 budget of €5.4 billion**, the programme plays a central role in implementing the **European Green Deal** while supporting the objectives of the **EU Competitiveness Compass**. By helping innovative environmental solutions reach the market, LIFE contributes to industrial competitiveness, strengthens Europe's strategic autonomy and enhances long-term economic resilience, demonstrating that sustainability and competitiveness can advance together.

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