



PARI
PATHS FOR RURAL
INNOVATION

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MANDATORY TRANSNATIONAL WORKSHOP REPORT 4

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Introduction

Navarra is a region located in northern Spain, bordering France to the north and the Basque Country, La Rioja and Aragon to the west, south and east, respectively. It covers an area of 10,391 km² and has a population of 686,095 inhabitants as of July 1, 2025, according to provisional intercensal estimates published by the Statistics Institute of Navarra (NASTAT, 2025). This results in a population density of approximately 66 inhabitants per km². Pamplona, the regional capital, concentrates most administrative and innovation activities, while rural areas such as the Valley of Ollo and Sakana play a crucial role in maintaining territorial balance and driving the ecological transition of the region.



Source: Delegation of Navarra to the European Union

Navarra's territorial structure is characterised by a polycentric model that ensures strong functional and economic interconnections between urban and rural areas. This approach aims to foster territorial cohesion, sustainable mobility and balanced growth among municipalities of different scales (Government of Navarra, 2023). Its strategic position as a border region and corridor between the Iberian Peninsula and France has historically influenced its development and economic dynamics.

Economically, Navarra stands out for its high GDP per capita and diversified productive base, which combines industrial, technological and rural sectors. Its main areas of specialisation include renewable energy, the agri-food industry, automotive components and digital technologies. Alongside these, the social economy constitutes a structural pillar of the regional model, representing nearly 10 percent of total employment. The Third Comprehensive Plan for the Social Economy of Navarra 2025–2028, led by the Directorate-General for the Social Economy, reinforces cooperation among public institutions, enterprises and civil society to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth (Government of Navarra, 2025).

At the policy level, the **Navarra Sustainable Strategy 2030** provides the overarching framework for territorial, environmental and social development. It articulates five strategic pillars: (1) just and inclusive transition; (2) sustainable and innovative economy; (3) territorial balance and quality of life; (4) climate action and biodiversity; and (5) good governance and citizen participation (Government of Navarra, 2023). Together, these frameworks ensure alignment with the European Green Deal, the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, integrating environmental, economic and social dimensions into regional policy.



The Sakana Valley (Navarra), a territory combining natural heritage and community-based development. Source: Francos Irigoien, Sakana Development Agency.

Navarra's innovation and governance system also reflects strong institutional coordination. According to the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) case study on Navarra within the Higher Education for Smart Specialisation (HESS) initiative, the region has developed an advanced model linking research, higher education and territorial innovation through the Navarra Innovation System (SINAI), coordinated by ADItech and supported by universities and technology centres (European Commission, 2020).

Rural territories illustrate how these strategies are implemented in practice. The Sakana Development Agency leads a long-standing process of participatory planning and cluster management that promotes sustainable industrial and social innovation. Meanwhile, the Gure Sustriak cooperative, located in the Valley of Olo, integrates environmental education, social inclusion and entrepreneurship through initiatives such as the Ruralink Cluster. These examples embody how local actors contribute to building Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs), aligning community-based initiatives with regional and European objectives.

Within this context, the Navarra Mission allowed participants to observe how social economy, innovation and sustainability policies converge in practice, demonstrating how the region's governance architecture, institutional cooperation and territorial networks foster resilient ecosystems for social and ecological transformation.

The key data of the mission to Navarra

Places:	Navarra (Pamplona, Valley of Ollo and Sakana)
Dates:	October 14-15, 2025
Participants (project partners):	1. Elisa Mancinelli, REVES Aisbl (Belgium) 2. Camilla Carlsson, Coompanion Östergötland (Sweden) 3. Pia Tingvall, Coompanion Östergötland (Sweden) 4. Pablo Lansac, ANEL (Spain) 5. Iñaki Ugalde, ANEL (Spain) 6. María José Vivar, ANEL (Spain) 7. Antonio Martínez de Bujanda, ANEL (Spain) 8. Javier Zubicoa, Gobierno de Navarra (Spain) 9. Iñaki Mendioroz, Gobierno de Navarra (Spain) 10. Nicolle Santos, Câmara Municipal de Torres Vedras (Portugal) 11. Vítor Simões, Valor Partilhado (Portugal) 12. Francisco Martínez, DIESIS Network (Belgium)
Invited experts:	1. Raúl Pilar, Granja Escuela Gure Sustriaiak 2. Miriam Nepote, Aspace Navarra 3. María José Aliaga, Aspace Navarra 4. Iker Manterola, Sakana Development Agency 5. Josetxo Fresneda, ESEKI SAL 6. Beñat Araña, Eseki SAL 7. Sandra S. Redín, ESEKI SAL 8. Josu Reparaz, Federación de Ikastolas de Navarra 9. Ion Arrizabalaga, Polo Iris 10. Diego Garrido, Aditech 11. Paco Sánchez, Gobierno de Navarra 12. Consuelo Corella, EINA
Approach:	Study visits and learning missions are powerful instruments for collective learning, cross-sectoral dialogue, and capacity building. Within the PARI project, these missions act as living laboratories where partners and local actors explore how territories design and sustain Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs) through cooperation, shared governance, and the mobilisation of territorial assets. The Navarra Mission was conceived to explore how a mature ecosystem of social economy, innovation, and public policy can foster social and ecological transformation. The region offers a unique combination of institutional commitment, entrepreneurial vitality, and rural dynamism, a context where technological and social innovation coexist and reinforce one another. Following PARI's methodological framework, the mission combined field visits, peer learning and policy dialogue to analyse how innovation is anchored territorially and institutionally. The approach aimed to: • Observe different governance models of social and ecological clusters. • Facilitate exchange between policymakers, practitioners and enterprises.

	• Identify transferable elements that strengthen resilience and sustainability in rural contexts. • Connect the practical experience of CSEIs with public policy and research frameworks. Through this approach, participants not only observed initiatives but engaged directly with the people and institutions driving them, generating a collective understanding of how to make innovation systemic, participatory, and impactful.
Narrative:	The mission in Navarra immersed participants in a territory where innovation, social economy, and public policy converge to promote sustainable development and inclusive governance. Over two days, the group explored how diverse actors — from cooperatives, labour societies (sociedades laborales), associations to public institutions — collaborate to build ecosystems for social and ecological innovation. The field visits on October 14th took participants to the Valley of Ollo and Sakana, two rural areas that exemplify community-driven innovation and public-private cooperation. At Gure Sustraiak, a social initiative cooperative leading both the Ruralink Cluster and the Arkhé Network, participants experienced how environmental education, inclusion, and sustainability can be combined to regenerate rural areas. The visit highlighted the cooperative's capacity to create participatory governance models that link education, social inclusion and ecological transition, turning a rural farm into a hub of territorial innovation. In the afternoon, the mission continued in Sakana, where Eseki S.A.L., a social economy enterprise specialised in industrial automation and energy innovation, presented how technological expertise can serve community objectives. Its approach, rooted in cooperative values, demonstrates how digitalisation and energy transition can be driven by social enterprises. The Sakana Development Agency complemented this view by showcasing its long-standing role as a facilitator of territorial cooperation. Through collaborative processes, strategic planning, and local cluster management, the Agency enables innovation networks to remain aligned with regional goals and community needs. The second day (October 15th) was devoted to understanding Navarra's institutional architecture supporting social and ecological innovation. Hosted at Polo IRIS, the region's Innovation, Research and Social Impact Hub, the session opened with an overview of the III Social Economy Comprehensive Plan and social impact measurement approaches by the Government of Navarra. ADltech, as coordinator of the Navarra Innovation System (SINAI), introduced how cooperation among research centres, enterprises, and social economy organisations strengthens innovation capacity. The Social Innovation Unit of the Government of Navarra, together with ADltech, presented its role as a driver of systemic change, connecting experimentation and policy learning.

The session concluded with CEPES Navarra, the regional confederation that brings together the different families of the Social Economy, which provided an overview of the regional ecosystem. EINA, the association of Social Integration Enterprises of Navarra, presented Kolaboratu, a pioneering initiative promoting collaboration between public administration and social economy organisations through participatory methodologies.

Throughout the mission, participants observed how Navarra integrates technological, ecological, and social dimensions into a coherent model of governance. The exchanges revealed an ecosystem that is both institutionally robust and community-oriented, where collaboration between public authorities, enterprises, and citizens turns innovation into a collective endeavour.

1. Gure Sustraiak – Ruralink and the Arkhé Network

The first field visit of the mission focused on **Gure Sustraiak**, a social initiative cooperative located in the Valley of Ollo. The organisation works to promote inclusion and access to employment for people with disabilities, young people and individuals at risk of exclusion, while contributing to the sustainable development of rural areas. Through environmental education, training and community engagement, Gure Sustraiak acts as a catalyst for rural vitality and resilience.



The PARI Project Partners at Gure Sustraiak (Owner: ANEL)

During the visit, participants were introduced to **Ruralink**, a network created by four social economy organisations operating in rural Navarra: Aspace Navarra, Josenea Bio, Gure Sustraiak and Eutsi. After a preliminary phase of collaboration, the network has been formally developing over the last two years. Its philosophy is grounded in cooperation and shared responsibility to address social and demographic challenges in rural territories, where public administration often lacks sufficient resources to respond to local needs.

Ruralink aims to generate quality employment in rural areas, particularly for people with disabilities, older adults and those at risk of exclusion. The network supports local authorities and rural enterprises to design and implement inclusive services and employment projects, based on local needs and co-designed with territorial stakeholders. Ruralink does not seek growth for its own organisations, but rather to scale solutions territorially by transferring successful interventions to other municipalities when necessary.

The network works through pilot projects that test and validate new services before replication or expansion. Its methodology — grounded in participatory social innovation — recognises that in rural areas, improving employability requires an integrated approach linking housing, mobility, digitalisation, circular economy and social care. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed urgent needs among older people, for example, which led Gure Sustraiak to mobilise quickly, although without a perfect match to their expertise.

These experiences reinforced the idea that the network should respond collectively, depending on which member has the adequate capability.

Ruralink is structured around a core group of the four founding entities, complemented by thematic innovation hubs in which each organisation contributes its specific expertise. This governance model prioritises trust-building and gradual incorporation of new partners, acknowledging that creating a cluster “on paper” does not generate real cooperation.

For the mission participants, Gure Sustraiak and Ruralink demonstrated how local social economy organisations can act as agents of social and ecological innovation in rural areas. Their approach emphasises empowerment, transversal collaboration with public authorities, and bottom-up responses to local needs, namely key components of Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs) in the PARI project.

Good practice information

- Website: <https://www.granjaescuelaguresustraiak.com/>
- Ruralink: <https://www.ruralink.org/>
- Arkhé: <https://redarkhe.org/>

2. Sakana Development Agency and Eseki S.A.L. – Territorial Cooperation and Industrial Innovation

The second part of the mission focused on the Sakana Valley, a territory located in central-western Navarra characterised by its strong industrial base, cooperative tradition and capacity for joint action. Sakana represents a model of how industrial and rural areas can generate sustainable and inclusive development through collaborative governance. The valley's approach is rooted in the idea that innovation must be both technological and social, combining economic competitiveness with ecological transition and community wellbeing.

The visit highlighted two key actors – the Sakana Development Agency and Eseki S.A.L. – which play complementary roles as catalysts of social and ecological innovation within the local ecosystem.

2.1 Sakana Development Agency – A Territorial Governance Model for Sustainable Development

The Sakana Development Agency acts as the coordinating body for the valley's municipalities, enterprises, and organisations. Its mission, “Sakanan bizi eta lan egin” (“Live and work in Sakana”), reflects a shared commitment to ensuring that people can both live and work in the valley, balancing economic growth with social cohesion.



The Agency implements the Sakana Strategic Plan 2021–2027, which defines four transversal priorities: sustainability, gender equality, digitalisation, and social economy. These cross-cutting axes are integrated across all initiatives, from industrial modernisation to circular economy, renewable energy and social innovation. The plan promotes participatory governance through regular dialogue with local councils, business associations, cooperatives and citizens, consolidating a long-term ecosystem of trust and cooperation.



Source: Sakana Strategic Plan 2021-2027

As a territorial innovation intermediary, the Agency supports municipalities and local enterprises in designing and implementing development projects. It provides technical assistance, facilitates access to European funding, and connects local actors with regional and national innovation policies. Through this work, it has positioned Sakana as a pioneer of rural innovation governance, demonstrating how coordinated multi-level action can produce tangible results in employment, sustainability and digital transition.

For the mission participants, the Agency illustrated how territorial cooperation can serve as the foundation for the creation of Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs). Its integrative approach shows that innovation is not limited to technological solutions but also requires social dialogue, capacity building, and shared strategic vision.

Good practice information

- Website: <https://www.sakanagaratzen.com/es>

2.2 Eseki S.A.L. – Industrial Transformation through the Social Economy

The visit to Eseki S.A.L., a labour-owned company based in Sakana, offered a concrete example of how industrial innovation and social economy principles can coexist. Founded in 1995, Eseki specialises in automation, robotics, and energy management systems, providing engineering services for manufacturing industries, renewable energy installations, and smart energy solutions.



The group of participants and the ESEKI team during the visit (Owner: ANEL)

Over the years, the company has evolved into a key driver of energy transition and digital transformation in the valley, developing projects such as local energy communities, industrial maintenance systems, and renewable energy integration. Eseki's governance structure, based on worker ownership and participatory decision-making, ensures that innovation remains aligned with social and territorial objectives.



Through its collaboration with the Sakana Development Agency and ANEL, Eseki contributes to building an interconnected ecosystem of enterprises and institutions committed to sustainable industrial growth. Its experience shows that the social economy can serve as a bridge between technological progress and community development, embedding advanced industrial capabilities in a framework of democratic governance and long-term local engagement.

For the mission, Eseki exemplified how social economy enterprises can act as agents of ecological and digital transition, translating cooperative values into practical industrial outcomes. The company's trajectory reinforces one of the key lessons of the PARI project: that innovation becomes transformative when it is anchored in place, co-created with local actors, and oriented towards shared social and environmental goals.

Good practice information

- Website: <https://www.eseki.es/>
- Video: [Esekiren 30. urteurrena//30 años de Eseki: eskerrik asko gure historiaren parte izateagatik](#)

3. Public-private collaboration in Navarra

The second day of the mission focused on the institutional architecture that enables social and ecological innovation in Navarra. The session, held at Polo IRIS, presented how public administration, the social economy and innovation actors cooperate structurally to address regional challenges and sustain long-term territorial development.

Navarra's governance model is based on trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility, reflecting more than forty years of cooperation between public authorities and social economy organisations. The PARI partners were able to observe how this institutional ecosystem creates favourable conditions for the emergence of Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs), providing strategic vision, coordination mechanisms and technical support for local initiatives.

3.1 Polo IRIS – A Public-Private Hub for Social Impact

Polo IRIS is Navarra's Hub for Innovation, Research and Social Impact, recognised as a European Digital Innovation Hub (EDIH) by the European Commission. Conceived as a cluster organisation, IRIS mobilises the region's innovation ecosystem — including administration, research institutions, enterprises and the social economy — to jointly address local and global challenges with shared governance and collective capabilities.



The hub integrates 40 key organisations — such as the Government of Navarra, ADItech, ANEL, universities and sectoral clusters — building a multi-actor cluster structured around three strategic functions:

1. One-stop shop for digital transition
2. Catalyst between innovation demand and supply
3. Collaboration spaces that foster co-creation and territorial learning

IRIS operates through cluster dynamics: shared infrastructures, coordinated support services, joint experimentation and strategic prioritisation. Its services — including AI and data analytics, cybersecurity, prototyping, and testing of new technologies — ensure that technological progress translates into social and territorial value

The hub also plays a crucial inter-clustering role, acting as a connector between:

- The Navarra Innovation System (SINAI) coordinated by ADItech
- The Social Innovation Unit of the Government of Navarra
- Local innovation ecosystems emerging in territories such as Sakana

ANEL's presence on the Social Innovation Unit governing board and as member of the Polo Iris reinforces the leading position of the social economy within the cluster.

Through IRIS, innovation becomes place-based, participatory, and scalable, helping local actors validate solutions and transfer them to regional policies and value chains.

For the PARI delegation, IRIS demonstrated how cluster governance can serve as a foundational mechanism for the development of Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs), enabling cooperation, shared experimentation and sustainable scaling of innovation across territories.

Good practice information

Website: <https://www.irisnavarra.com/en/inicio>

Services: <https://www.irisnavarra.com/index.php/en/services>

Video: [Social Economy and Polo IRIS: joining forces for an innovative and cooperative Navarra](#)  

3.2 The Social Economy Ecosystem of Navarra: A Strategic and Collaborative Model under the III Comprehensive Plan

Navarra has built one of the most consolidated and cohesive Social Economy ecosystems in Europe, based on a long tradition of cooperation between public authorities, representative organisations and enterprises. Over the past four decades, this collaboration has given rise to a governance model characterised by trust, participation and shared responsibility for territorial development.

At the core of this ecosystem lies the III Comprehensive Plan for the Social Economy of Navarra 2025–2028, designed and implemented jointly by the Directorate-General for the Social Economy and the regional families of the Social Economy. Rather than relying on formal regulation, the Plan is anchored in political commitment, structured dialogue and a co-governance framework, which ensures continued alignment between public policy and the sector's evolving needs.



Source: Approval event of the III Social Economy Plan of Navarra. Source: Noticias de Navarra (2025).

The Plan reinforces the Social Economy as a strategic pillar of regional development, with objectives focused on:

- Business creation and transformation, particularly in rural areas
- Quality and inclusive employment, supporting the ecological and digital transitions
- Innovation and knowledge transfer, in collaboration with SINAI and IRIS
- Social impact measurement as a mechanism for continuous improvement and accountability

A key factor in the strength of the Navarrase model is the role of intermediary organisations, such as CEPES Navarra, which brings together the six representative branches of the Social Economy and acts as the sector's collective voice. CEPES Navarra participates actively in all stages of policy design, implementation and evaluation, ensuring co-responsibility and coherence across the ecosystem.



Presentation of the III Comprehensive Plan for the Social Economy of Navarra (2025–2028), during the X Social Economy Day in Navarra. Source: ANEL (2024).

The mission participants observed how this strategic, cross-sectoral governance enables the Social Economy not only to contribute to economic competitiveness and employment, but also to drive community-based solutions to territorial challenges such as ageing, depopulation and ecological transition. The co-governance structures embedded in the Comprehensive Plan thus form a crucial enabler for the emergence of Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs) — providing stability, direction, investment and institutional recognition to local transformation processes.

Good practice information

News: <https://anel.es/ya-esta-aqui-el-iii-plan-integral-de-economia-social-2025-2028-una-hoja-de-ruta-para-el-progreso-inclusivo-de-navarra/>

3.3 ADItech – Connecting Research, Innovation and Territorial Needs

ADItech is the coordinator of the Navarra Innovation System (SINAI), in accordance with the Navarra Science and Technology Law (Ley Foral 15/2018), and is responsible for promoting collaboration among R&D&I organisations, talent development, and the relationship between science and industry in the region. Its coordination role ensures that research capabilities are aligned with Navarra's Smart Specialisation Strategy (S4) and geared toward solving real social, ecological and competitiveness challenges.



Navarra is recognised as a Strong Innovator in the European Regional Innovation Scoreboard (2023). The region has one of the highest R&D investment levels in Spain, representing 1.91% of regional GDP, and €591.90 per inhabitant, far above the national average of €363.70 (Data from Aditech presentation, presented at the PARI's mission in Navarra). ADItech plays a key role in sustaining this performance by fostering excellence, projection, and knowledge transfer across SINAI organisations. Its activities include:

- Coordinating collaboration networks across SINAI agents and with companies
- Managing shared scientific infrastructures and common research resources
- Promoting technology transfer and industry adoption of R&D results
- Improving research excellence through evaluation and capacity-building
- Raising awareness and social understanding of R&D in Navarra
- Ensuring gender equality and “science without bias” principles in research

During the mission, ADItech highlighted its involvement in social innovation, particularly through collaboration with Polo IRIS and the Social Innovation Unit of the Government of Navarra. This strengthens connections between technological innovation and community-driven needs — supporting rural development, industrial transformation and circular economy initiatives.

For the PARI project, ADItech demonstrates how research systems act as scientific anchors in CSEIs, ensuring that innovation is territorially rooted, scalable, and closely linked to public policy and local challenges. Its work helps bridge the gap between laboratories, enterprises and communities, ensuring that innovation contributes to inclusion, sustainability and quality employment.



Good practice information

Website: <https://www.aditech.com/en/>

3.4 CEPES Navarra – Strengthening Collaboration Across the Social Economy

CEPES Navarra is the regional confederation that represents the six families of the Social Economy in Navarra: cooperatives, labour-owned companies, social integration enterprises, special employment centres, foundations and alternative/solidarity economy organisations. Its creation responded to a need to build trust and a common identity across a diverse sector, enabling coordinated dialogue with public authorities and shared strategic positioning.



CEPES Navarra at the 10th Social Economy Day in Navarra. Source: Navarra Capital (2025)

CEPES Navarra plays a dual role:

1. Representation and policy advocacy, ensuring that the Social Economy has a unified voice in the design of regional strategies
2. Intermediation and innovation support, promoting collaboration and joint initiatives among enterprises and organisations

A key principle guiding its action is subsidiarity: decisions are taken collectively only when they clearly benefit the sector as a whole, while differentiated needs are addressed within each family. This governance approach has strengthened coherence and reduced fragmentation, consolidating a model of co-governance with the Government of Navarra. CEPES Navarra actively co-designs, implements and evaluates the III Comprehensive Plan for the Social Economy 2025–2028, ensuring co-responsibility and adaptation to emerging challenges.

The results of this collaborative model are notable: more than 1,200 new Social Economy enterprises registered and over 25,000 direct jobs in recent years, contributing significantly to inclusive employment, territorial cohesion and the ecological and digital transitions in the region.

For the PARI partners, CEPES Navarra demonstrated how intermediary organisations are essential in building and scaling Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs). Its coordinating role helps channel resources, activate networks and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and good practices that can be transferred across territories.

Good practice information

Website: <https://www.cepessnavarra.org/>

3.5 Kolaboratu: Public–Social Collaboration for Inclusion and Service Innovation

Kolaboratu is a pioneering collaboration space uniting all families of the Social and Solidarity Economy in Navarra, aimed at strengthening territorial wellbeing through community-driven service innovation and inclusive employment. It enables organisations from different Social Economy models to identify shared challenges and co-create solutions, ensuring that innovation contributes directly to improving quality of life in rural areas.



Kolaboratu project results presentations with the whole social economy ecosystem of Navarra. Source: EINA

The initiative uses participatory methodologies tailored to each organisation and territorial reality, fostering mutual understanding, shared learning and joint action. Through this approach, Kolaboratu reinforces trust, reveals complementarities between actors, and creates the conditions for collaborative projects to emerge.

A notable example presented during the mission was a pilot focused on reserved public procurement, developed jointly by REAS Navarra, CEISNA and EINA. The initiative supports local authorities in integrating socially responsible contracting to generate employment for people who face greater difficulties accessing the labour market, while improving territorial services. This pilot included workshops, training sessions and operational meetings with Local Action Groups and contracting authorities across different parts of Navarra.

For PARI partners, Kolaboratu provided a practical demonstration of how public–social collaboration can be structured within Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs). It shows that when Social Economy actors work together — and in coordination with public administrations — new services can be created that combine proximity, inclusion and sustainability, strengthening rural resilience and local innovation capacity.

Good practice information

EINA's website: <https://www.einavarra.org/>

Kolaboratu website: <https://www.einavarra.org/proyecto-kolaboratu-estrategia-para-fomentar-la-colaboracion-entre-las-empresas-de-insercion-y-las-diferentes-familias-de-la-economia-social-de-navarra/>

4. Concluding Remarks and Next Steps

4.1 Key takeaways from the field visit and workshop discussions: Insights from the PARI mission on Navarra

The field visit in Navarra provided the PARI partners with a comprehensive understanding of how territorial innovation can be fostered through long-standing cooperation between public authorities, the Social Economy, and research actors. The experience highlighted several key elements that are highly relevant for the development of Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs) in the PARI territories:

- **Governance grounded in shared responsibility:** Navarra's collaborative model – based on stable dialogue, subsidiarity and co-governance structures – showed that resilient ecosystems emerge when public policies are co-designed and co-implemented with Social Economy actors. Local development is not only encouraged but strategically coordinated.
- **The Social Economy as a driver of inclusive innovation:** Examples from Gure Sustaiak S. Coop, Eseki S.A.L. and the broader Social Economy ecosystem demonstrated that innovation can generate employment for those facing greater barriers, especially in rural areas. In Navarra, inclusion is embedded in the innovation process, rather than treated as a secondary outcome.
- **Territorial cooperation enables systemic impact:** Sakana and its Development Agency illustrated how rural and industrial communities can jointly lead digital, energy and ecological transitions. These initiatives align territorial needs with regional strategies, ensuring that innovation remains anchored in places and communities.
- **Strong innovation support structures and scientific coordination:** Polo IRIS and ADItech showcased how cluster-type governance and research coordination make it possible to translate technological breakthroughs into solutions with social value. Innovation is intentionally linked to real-world challenges, particularly those arising in rural areas.
- **Scaling through collaboration, not growth for its own sake:** Approaches like Ruralink and Kolaboratu emphasised inter-entity cooperation and replication of proven solutions rather than competition or expansion of individual organisations. This strengthens territorial equity and fosters context-appropriate innovation.

In summary, the Navarra Mission demonstrated that territorial transformation becomes more robust and sustainable when built upon long-term cooperation, shared leadership and a strong social purpose. By integrating social economy enterprises, research institutions and public administrations into aligned governance structures, the region has succeeded in turning innovation into a collective endeavour that benefits both people and the environment. These insights provide a clear direction for the next phases of PARI: to foster similar enabling conditions in partner territories, strengthening their capacity to co-design and scale Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs) rooted in local needs and collective responsibility.

4.2 Enabling Conditions for Social and Ecological Innovation in Navarra

The mission provided an opportunity to reflect on Navarra's specific development challenges and on the strengths underpinning the region's transition toward a more sustainable, equitable and innovative model. As shown throughout the field visits, the region combines a strong strategic vision with solid governance structures, yet faces territorial disparities and demographic pressures that require continued collaborative action. The table below summarises the main needs and challenges identified, alongside the existing resources and key actors that enable the region to advance inclusive territorial transformation.

CATEGORY	ASPECT	DETAILS
Needs & Challenges	Challenges Territorial cohesion & rural depopulation	- Demographic decline and ageing in smaller valleys such as Ollo - Risk of territorial inequality driven by centralisation in Pamplona - Insufficient access to employment and essential services in rural areas
	Industrial & agri-food transformation	- Vulnerability of SMEs to technological change - Need to strengthen sustainability and competitiveness of agri-food exploitations
	Labour inclusion & migrant participation	- Migrants represent ~35% of cooperative entrepreneurship (2024) but remain at higher risk of labour segmentation - Need to harness multicultural talent strategically
	Gender equality in industrial employment	Persistent underrepresentation of women in technical and industrial job profiles, especially in Sakana
	Housing & access to services	- Housing cost and availability constraints in rural environments limit the settlement of young people - Transport and digitalisation gaps reduce territorial attractiveness- Balancing rural character and urban development pressures in a municipality where agriculture and forestry account for 87.6% of land use.

	Governance coordination for innovation	• High collaboration culture, but uneven municipal capacities • Need for stronger cross-departmental alignment on ecological transition
Existing Resources & Assets	Strategic policy framework	• Navarra Industrialisation Plan supporting green industrialisation • Strategic vision for rural development integrated in regional planning
	Climate & ecological transition instruments	• Foral Law 4/2022 on Climate Change and Energy Transition provides mandatory targets and investment tools
	Digital and innovation infrastructure	• Dinabide technological coworking network boosting SMEs digitalisation • Polo IRIS enabling coordinated innovation and social impact • Clusters from Navarra's Smart Specialisation Strategy S4
	Circular economy innovation	• "Navarra Zirkular" connecting industrial transformation and sustainability
	Co-governance for inclusive development	• III Comprehensive Plan for the Social Economy 2025–2028 strengthening collaboration among public institutions and the Social Economy • Navarra's Social Inclusion Plan 2025–2028
Key Stakeholders	Public authorities	• Government of Navarre (different departments) • Local councils
	Territorial intermediaries	• Sakana Development Agency • Cederna-Garalur • Rest of Local Action Groups
	Social Economy actors	• ANEL • CEPES Navarra • Social Economy Enterprises

		• Ruralink organisations
	Innovation & research	• ADItech (SINAI coordination) • Polo IRIS • Universities and technology centres
	Communities & civil society	• Residents in rural and industrial areas • Local associations and socio-cultural initiatives

These findings confirm that Navarra combines a strong enabling environment for innovation with concrete territorial challenges requiring further coordinated action. The coexistence of dynamic industrial clusters, a mature Social Economy and advanced R&D infrastructure represent a solid foundation for developing Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs). At the same time, demographic imbalance, inclusion needs and uneven territorial capacities call for continued investment in proximity-based services, workforce development and governance innovation.

For the PARI project, this regional analysis highlights the relevance of approaches that connect innovation to social inclusion and ecological goals. Navarra illustrates that sustainable territorial transformation emerges where collaborative governance aligns strategies, capabilities and community-driven initiatives. The insights gained from the mission therefore provide a valuable reference to support the enhancement of CSEIs in the partner territories of Portugal and Sweden.

4.3 Concluding Remarks and Steps Ahead: Strengthening CSEI Development in Navarra

The mission to Navarra provided valuable insights into how social and ecological innovation can be embedded into territorial development through long-term cooperation, shared governance and strong institutional commitment. The region illustrates that sustainable transformation emerges when innovation is connected to local needs, particularly in rural and industrial territories experiencing demographic and socioeconomic pressure.

A key strength observed throughout the visit was the maturity of Navarra's Social Economy ecosystem and its strategic governance model. The III Comprehensive Plan for the Social Economy 2025–2028 enables co-design and co-responsibility among institutions and representative bodies, ensuring that the Social Economy remains a driving force for employment, inclusiveness and ecological transition. This stable collaboration offers a solid foundation for the emergence and scaling of Clusters for Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEIs).

Territorial intermediaries such as the Sakana Development Agency and Gure Sustraiak demonstrate that innovation can be both technological and social, generating new services, dignified employment and participatory governance methods rooted in place. These actors enable the region to respond proactively to challenges such as population ageing, labour inclusion, and the sustainability of industrial and agri-food systems. Their work shows that inclusive territorial development depends on mobilising proximity-based knowledge and partnerships.

At regional level, Polo IRIS and ADItech strengthen the connection between research, innovation and social impact. By coordinating digital transformation, scientific excellence and multi-actor collaboration, they help ensure that advanced technological capabilities reach rural SMEs, local authorities and community organisations. This alignment across scales — from grassroots initiatives to regional institutions — is one of Navarra's most distinctive assets.

Going forward, several priorities will reinforce CSEI development in Navarra and support knowledge transfer to the other PARI territories:

- **Deepening multi-level cooperation** to reduce territorial inequality and enhance municipal capacity to engage in ecological transition processes.
- **Strengthening local innovation infrastructures** — particularly around digitalisation, circular economy and care services — to support rural resilience.
- **Expanding cross-sectoral collaboration** between industrial actors, social economy enterprises and research centres to accelerate green transformation.
- **Scaling successful rural innovation models** such as Ruralink through structured replication pathways and shared learning spaces.
- **Enhancing inclusive labour pathways**, enabling migrants, women and young people to shape the future of rural and industrial territories.

Overall, the mission confirmed that Navarra offers a strong enabling environment for building and consolidating CSEIs. The insights gained will contribute to the continued development of methodologies, tools and strategic recommendations within the PARI project, strengthening cooperation and resilience across all partner regions.

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Annexes

The programme



Programme – PARI Navarra Mission (Pamplona, 13–15 October 2025)

Navarra – 13, 14 & 15 October 2025

Main topic: Governance of CSEIs (Clusters of Social and Ecological Innovation)

Monday, 13 October – Internal session and welcome (Pamplona)

16:30 – 18:30 Internal session for members. [DG Social Economy Government of Navarra](#).

20:00 Joint dinner in Pamplona. [La Mandarina de la Rens](#).

Tuesday, 14 October – Field visits and local experiences (Oñe and Sakana)

09:00 Meeting at [ANEL](#). Transfer to Oñe ([Gure Sustraiak Educational Farm headquarters](#)).

09:30 – 11:00 Ruralink Cluster and Arkbe: presentation of the network and its role in rural social and ecological innovation. (Governance of the cluster).

11:00 – 11:30 Joint reflection

11:30 – 12:00 Coffee break

12:00 – 13:00 Tour at Gure Sustraiak Educational Farm

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch at Gure Sustraiak

14:30 – 15:00 Transfer to Sakana ([Loeki](#))

15:00 – 15:45 [Loeki](#): Ecological innovation in Sakana.

15:45 – 16:15 [Sakana Development Agency](#): Territorial cooperation, network facilitator, etc.

16:30 – 17:00 Joint Reflection

17:00 – 18:00 Visit to Kalaka S. Coop

18:00 Return to Pamplona

20:30 Joint dinner in Pamplona. [Casa Maroto](#).



Wednesday, 15 October – Application of the public-private collaboration system in Navarre

Location: [Polo DRS](#)

09:00 – 9:30 Institutional Welcome.

9:30 – 10:00 III Social Economy Comprehensive Plan (DG Social Economy + CEPES Navarra). Itaki Mendiaroz & Antonio Martínez de Bujanda

10:00 – 10:30 Social Impact Measurement. Paeo Sánchez, Analysis and Research Office.

10:30 – 11:00 Polo Ira (Iris Hub) + Call for grants for clusters. Ion Arriolaizaga, Diego Garrido (Aditech)

11:00 – 11:30 Social Innovation Unit. Diego Garrido (ADITECH) & Itaki Mendiaroz (DGRST)

11:30–11:30 Coffee Break

Location: [Public University of Navarra](#)

12:00 – 12:20 Chair of Social Economy and Cooperativism of the Public University of Navarra. Sandra Cervero, Javier Zubicoa, Ignacio Ugarte

12:20 – 12:40 CEPES Navarra. Ignacio Ugarte

12:40 – 13:00 Kalaboratu project. EINA.

13:15 – 13:30 Joint reflection

13:30 – 15:00 Farewell lunch

Gure Sustraiak – Educational farm in Oñe

Gure Sustraiak is a social initiative cooperative that combines environmental education, social inclusion, and solidarity economy. Based in Oñe, it leads and coordinates both the Ruralink Cluster and the Arkbe Network, two initiatives fostering social and ecological innovation in rural areas.



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Its contribution to the PARI project is central, as it provides a practical example of rural cluster governance, bringing together educational, social, economic, and institutional actors around shared objectives. Moreover, it demonstrates how a territorial hub can generate added value by integrating training, sustainability, and cross-border cooperation, three strategic pillars for the development of CSEs.

Eseki S.A.L.

Eseki S.A.L. is a social economy enterprise based in Sakana (Navarre), specialized in electrical installations, industrial maintenance, robotics, programming, and energy innovation.

Its role in the PARI project highlights how a technological and industrial actor within the social economy can strengthen the governance of CSEs. Eseki brings:

- Technical expertise in energy, robotics, and automation to translate ecological and social needs into feasible solutions.
- A socially oriented business model, closer to cooperative values, that connects technological innovation with community impact.
- Experience in collaborative networks through its membership in ANEI (Navarre Association of Social Economy Enterprises), which positions it as a reliable partner in cluster governance.

Eseki illustrates how local enterprises rooted in the social economy can become driving forces of ecological transition when integrated into territorial clusters.

Sakana Development Agency

The Sakana Development Agency is a territorial facilitator that promotes economic, social, and environmental development in the Sakana valley. Its work focuses on fostering cooperation among local enterprises, public institutions, and community actors.

Within the PARI project, its contribution is particularly relevant for the governance dimension of CSEs:

- Acting as a network enabler, it connects diverse stakeholders to co-create shared strategies.
- Providing territorial coordination, ensuring that innovation clusters are embedded in local priorities and policies.
- Bringing long-standing experience in cluster management and facilitation, with a proven track record of supporting cooperative projects and ecological transitions.

The Agency exemplifies how intermediary bodies can anchor innovation clusters in the territory, ensuring continuity, inclusiveness, and alignment with sustainable development goals.



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IRIS Hub – Innovation, Research and Social Impact

The IRIS Hub (Polo IRIS) is a cluster in Navarre that brings together technological innovation and social innovation, creating a collaborative space where companies, research centres, public institutions, and social economy organizations interact.

Its relevance for the PARI project lies in demonstrating how cross-sectoral clusters can foster Social and Ecological Innovation by:

- Building bridges between digital/technological capacities and social impact goals.
- Providing a laboratory for governance models, where diverse stakeholders co-design projects and share resources.
- Illustrating the potential of hybrid clusters that go beyond single-sector dynamics, embedding social economy values into high-tech ecosystems.

The IRIS Hub represents a concrete example of how CSEs can integrate innovation, impact, and inclusiveness, positioning Navarre as a pioneer in linking technology with the social and ecological transition.

Social Innovation Unit of Navarre

The Social Innovation Unit of the Government of Navarre is a public initiative that promotes systemic innovation to address social and ecological challenges. It works by connecting public policies, civil society, and the social economy with research and innovation practices.

Within the PARI project, its contribution is especially important for the governance of CSEs because it:

- Provides an institutional framework that supports experimentation and the scaling-up of innovative solutions.
- Acts as a policy driver, aligning cluster initiatives with regional strategies and European agendas such as the SDGs and the green transition.
- Offers methodologies for participatory governance, ensuring that CSEs are inclusive and anchored in public-private cooperation.

The Unit shows how public institutions can play a catalytic role in cluster governance, bridging grassroots innovation with regional development strategies.

CEPES Navarra

CEPES Navarra is the regional business confederation representing the Social Economy in Navarre, bringing together cooperatives, worker-owned companies, social enterprises, and other solidarity-based organizations.



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In the framework of the PARI project, its contribution to Social and Ecological Innovation Clusters (SEIs) is strategic:

- Acting as the voice of the Social Economy ecosystem, it ensures that cluster governance integrates the diversity of social economy actors.
- Providing policy dialogue and advocacy, it connects cluster initiatives with regional and national strategies for sustainable development.
- Facilitating collaboration and inter-cooperation, it strengthens the networks that allow SEIs to scale their social and ecological impact.

CEPES Navarra embodies how representative organizations can anchor clusters in broader ecosystems, ensuring that innovation is both socially inclusive and institutionally supported.

Chair of Social Economy and Cooperativism – Public University of Navarre (UPNA)

The Chair of Social Economy and Cooperativism of the Public University of Navarre (UPNA) is a reference in research, education, and dissemination of cooperative and social economy values in the region. It brings together academics, students, practitioners, and institutions to promote knowledge transfer and training in the field. The entity partners are ANEL, the Government of Navarra, Laboral Kutxa, Tafalla Iron Foundry S. Coop, Navarra Capital, Sakana S. Coop and Liceo Morjardin.

Within the PARI project, its contribution lies in:

- Providing an academic and research-based perspective that enriches the governance of SEIs.
- Offering training and educational programs that connect young people and professionals with social and ecological innovation.
- Acting as a knowledge hub that bridges theory and practice, ensuring that cluster initiatives are grounded in evidence-based approaches.

The Chair illustrates how universities can play a crucial role in anchoring social and ecological innovation clusters through research, teaching, and dissemination.

Kolaboratu Project – EINA

Kolaboratu is an initiative developed by EINA (Escuela de Innovación en la Administración Pública), aimed at promoting collaboration, participation, and innovation within public institutions and between the public sector and civil society. It is based on co-design and participatory methodologies that foster new ways of governance.

In the framework of the PARI project, Kolaboratu contributes by:

- Demonstrating participatory tools and methodologies for public-private collaboration in cluster governance.



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- Strengthening the role of citizens and organizations in shaping innovative and sustainable solutions.
- Providing practical examples of how co-creation can generate institutional innovation and legitimacy in decision-making.

Kolaboratu shows how participatory innovation projects can nurture governance models for SEIs, reinforcing inclusiveness and shared ownership.

Kalaska S. Coop

Kalaska S. Coop is a cooperative enterprise in Navarre specializing in creative industries, communication, and digital innovation. It combines cooperative values with technological expertise, offering services in design, audiovisual production, and digital content with a strong social orientation.

Its role in the PARI project is to highlight the potential of creative and cultural cooperatives as actors of ecological and social innovation:

- Linking digital creativity and communication with the goals of sustainable development.
- Providing tools and narratives that make cluster initiatives visible and accessible to wider audiences.
- Embodying cooperative governance and values within the cultural and creative sector, demonstrating its relevance for SEIs.

Kalaska represents how cooperatives in the creative industries can act as catalysts for social innovation and cross-sectoral collaboration within clusters.

First publicacion in ANEL's website: <https://anel.es/gure-sustraiak-y-eseki-protagonizan-la-mision-en-navarra-del-proyecto-europeo-pari-impulsada-por-anel-y-el-gobierno-de-navarra/>



Second publication in ANEL's website: <https://anel.es/anel-impulsa-el-papel-de-navarra-en-la-innovacion-social-y-ecologica-a-traves-del-proyecto-europeo-pari/>

31/11/25, 16:30 ANEL impulsa el papel de Navarra en la innovación social y ecológica a través del proyecto europeo PARI (PARI-ANEL)

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ANEL impulsa el papel de Navarra en la innovación social y ecológica a través del proyecto europeo PARI

31/11/25



El consorcio europeo PARI (Paths for Rural Innovation), cofinanciado por el programa CRE-COSPE de la Comisión Europea, impulsa en Pamplona un encuentro de trabajo que reunió a los socios internacionales y agentes locales para analizar el desarrollo de Clústeres de Innovación Social y Ecológica (CISEE) en territorios rurales.

La reunión puso en valor el papel de ANEL como entidad de referencia en la promoción de la Economía Social y en la aplicación de políticas de desarrollo sostenible e inclusivo en el territorio. ANEL, junto con Gobierno de Navarra, forma parte del consorcio europeo que lidera el proyecto, impulsando la colaboración entre administraciones públicas, empresas, entidades sociales y comunidades locales.

El proyecto PARI tiene como objetivo fortalecer las capacidades locales para un desarrollo social sostenible y resiliente, fomentando la cooperación entre actores económicos, sociales y ambientales en tres regiones europeas: Tercer Volcan (Portugal), Ötztal/Hanau (Suiza) y Navarra (España).

Noticias Relacionadas



Los principios de la economía social presentados en la II.ª Jornada de Economía Social

- Noticias institucionales
- Creación de empresas

02/12/25, 16:30

ANEL impulsa el papel de Navarra en la innovación social y ecológica a través del proyecto europeo PARI (PARI-ANEL)



En Navarra, ANEL, coordinadora europea del proyecto PARI, impulsó, promoviendo la innovación social y ecológica y reforzando los ecosistemas locales de Economía Social en el marco del proyecto PARI, generando sinergias entre los agentes del territorio, contribuyendo a su desarrollo social, económico, participativo y sostenible.

Además de su dimensión social, PARI tiene un objetivo de impacto, al contribuir a la formación de políticas y estrategias transfronterizas a través de los territorios de innovación social y ecológica que se impulsan en el territorio rural y digital, la economía social y el fortalecimiento de la Economía Social, impulsando el desarrollo de los territorios rurales, la Economía Social, el PARI Rural Navarra y la Política de Cohesión.

El encuentro en Pamplona se centró en el análisis de los territorios de innovación social y ecológica, así como en la presentación de los resultados del proyecto PARI, impulsando la colaboración entre administraciones públicas, empresas, entidades sociales y comunidades locales.



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