COLiBRI
Collaborative Crop Breeding Research and Innovation for a Green Europe

The COLiBRI project

Executive Summary

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union under grant agreement number 101288631. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor REA can be held responsible for them.



COLiBRI is a Horizon Europe Coordination and Support Action that aims to strengthen the European crop breeding research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem. Against the backdrop of climate change, biodiversity loss, food and nutritional insecurity, and increasing pressure on agricultural competitiveness, Europe requires better coordinated and long-term approaches to plant breeding R&I.

COLiBRI brings together key actors from across the plant breeding value chain, including public research organizations, private breeders, farmer organizations, research infrastructures, policymakers and funders to jointly assess priorities, gaps and opportunities for plant breeding R&I in the EU, covering all farming systems and approaches. The project does not fund or carry out breeding research. Its role is to create a framework that coordinates, connects and structures existing and future research efforts at European level.

The central ambition of COLiBRI is to deliver a shared European roadmap and implementation strategy for crop breeding R&I funding, integrating fundamental and applied research, demonstration and innovation to breeding programmes, accompanied by a collaborative framework for a future EU-wide plant breeding network and funding mechanism. These outputs are intended to support developing crop varieties adapted to Europe's diverse agroecological conditions, farming systems and societal needs.

Why COLiBRI Matters

European plant breeding currently faces several structural challenges:

- Limited, fragmented and short-term funding, which rarely supports the full breeding cycle
- Limited alignment between research agendas, breeding needs, policy objectives and market realities
- Unequal access to research infrastructures, data and advanced technologies, particularly for SMEs and smaller breeding programmes
- Insufficient coordination across countries, crops, production systems and breeding approaches

COLiBRI responds to these challenges by creating a coherent European coordination framework, enabling stakeholders to jointly define priorities and align investments in line with EU policy objectives such as the European Research and Innovation Strategy 2024–2029, the European Strategy on Research and Technology Infrastructures, the Regulation on Plants Produced by New Genomic Techniques (NGT Regulation), the Proposal for a revised Regulation on the production and marketing of plant

reproductive material (PRM), the forthcoming EU Biotech Act II, the updated EU Bioeconomy Strategy, the EU Action Plan for Organic Production, the EU's Vision for Agriculture and Food, and the DG AGRI's Communication on a new Strategic Approach to Research and Innovation.

Core Objectives

COLiBRI pursues three closely linked objectives:

- Strengthen stakeholder coordination: Foster engagement of the European plant breeding R&I community connecting research, breeding, farming, industry, policy and end-user perspectives.
- Analyze priorities, gaps and bottlenecks: Map research needs, infrastructure availability and funding landscapes across crops, traits, technologies and production systems.
- Develop a European collaboration framework: Create a strategic roadmap, implementation plan and governance framework for a coordinated European plant breeding R&I network and funding mechanism.

Key Outputs

- A European Plant Breeding R&I Roadmap defining shared priorities
- An Implementation Plan outlining actions, roles and timelines for coordinated investment
- A Framework for a pan-European plant breeding network, including governance and collaboration principles
- Policy-relevant insights on funding models, infrastructure needs and pathways from research to market

All outputs will be developed through structured stakeholder engagement and made publicly available.

Follow the project:

www.colibri-plantbreeding.eu

@colibri-horizon-europe

@colibri_horizoneu

@colibrieuproject

Get involved: