



GRASS CEILING



Final Showcase Event

Brussels, 4 December 2025



Introduction and Agenda

The GRASS CEILING Final Showcase Event marks the culmination of three years of collaboration, research, and innovation under the Horizon Europe GRASS CEILING project. This high-level gathering will take place at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in Brussels on 4 December 2025, bringing together rural innovators, policymakers, researchers, and representatives from EU institutions and civil society.

The event will highlight key findings from the project's Living Labs, showcase pioneering examples of female-led innovation in rural areas, and provide a space for dialogue on the future of gender equality in the agricultural and rural innovation ecosystem.

Participants will also attend the award ceremonies of the Rural Women Innovators (RUWI) and Parental Leave Champions (PARCA) initiatives, celebrating leadership, inclusion, and transformative change in rural Europe.

Register here: [LINK](#)

Venue: EESC – Room JDE51		
Time	Item	Host(s) - Facilitator
8h30 – 9h00	Registration	
9h00 – 9h15	Welcome to the Final Conference by Oana Neagu (Copa-Cogeca) and Stoyan Tchoukanov (EESC)	
9h15 – 9h35	Introduction by GRASS CEILING Coordinator Professor Sally Shortall (SETU)	
9h35 – 9h50	The European Policy Forum for women-led innovation in agriculture and rural areas Welcome Dialogue with MEPs: Georgiana Teodorescu (<i>ECR</i>) Maria Walsh (<i>EPP</i>)	Blanca Casares Guillén (AEIDL)
09h:50 – 10h:10	GRASS CEILING policy recommendations by Blanca Casares Guillén (AEIDL)	
10h10 – 11h10	Round Table Inclusive pathways for farming and rural futures: EU policy solutions for the transition <u>Panellists:</u> Elena Schubert European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) - Social Sustainability Unit Maria Nikolopoulou European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)	Serafin Pazos Vidal (AEIDL)

	Faustine Bas-Defossez European Environmental Bureau (EEB) Maria Walsh Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Sally Shortall Newcastle University – GRASS CEILING coordinator Blanca Casares European Association for Innovation in Local Development (AEIDL)	
11h10 – 11h30	Coffee Break	
11h30 – 11h45	GRASS CEILING policy tools presentation by Blanca Casares Guillén (AEIDL) and Professor Sally Shortall (Newcastle University)	
11h45 – 12h45	Round Table Inclusive policy tools: integrating gender responsiveness into EU innovation and monitoring frameworks. <u>Panellists:</u> Lewis Dijkstra European Commission, Joint Research Centre (JRC) – Territorial development Unit Giulia Bizzo European Commission Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) – Bioeconomy & Food Systems Maura Farrell University of Galway - FLIARA Project coordinator Sari Rautio Committee of the Regions (CoR) Blanca Casares European Association for Innovation in Local Development (AEIDL)	Professor Sally Shortall (SETU)
12h45 – 14h00	Networking Lunch	
14h00 – 16h15	Living Lab Dialogue: Outcomes and impacts Innovator Journey (<i>pecha kucha presentations</i>) <u>Innovators:</u> Vesna Jakić (Croatia) Emer Lawrence (Ireland) Letizia Cuonzo (Italy) Daiva Šinkevičienė (Lithuania) Albertine Ekkels (The Netherlands) Torunn Hernes Bjerke (Norway) Haley Shepherd (Scotland) Marta Llorente (Spain) Ulrica Björnhag (Sweden)	Felicity Kelliher (SETU)
16h15 – 16h45	Awards ceremonies The GRASS CEILING Rural Women's Social Innovation (RUWI) Award The GRASS CEILING Parental Leave Champions Award (PARCA)	Professor Sally Shortall (SETU)



16h:45 – 17h:00	Wrap up and final remarks by GRASS CEILING Coordinator	Professor Sally Shortall (SETU)
17h:00 – 18h:30	Networking Reception	



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