



EUROPEAN CLUSTER
COLLABORATION PLATFORM

Delivering Impact for Europe's Clusters: ECCP Activities and Results

Summary



EU Clusters Talks
25 February 2026, 8:30 – 9:45 CET

An initiative of the European Union





Delivering Impact for Europe's Clusters: ECCP Activities and Results

The European Cluster Collaboration Platform, on behalf of the European Commission, hosted the EU Clusters Talk “**Delivering Impact for Europe's Clusters: ECCP Activities and Results**” on 25 February, from 8:30 – 9:45 CET. The session highlighted key outcomes and results of ECCP activities for the cluster community and discussed upcoming opportunities to engage with the ECCP moving forward.

Agenda of the meeting

Moderation: Chris Burns

1. News from the European Cluster Collaboration Platform
Nina Hoppmann, team member of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform
2. Overview of ECCP activities and results
Manuel Seuffert, Coordination Lead, ECCP team
3. Panel debate
Anders Thomson, CEO, NordicFlexHouse
Ardita Hoxha-Jahja, Internationalisation Manager, Agri-Food Cluster North Savo
Irena Łobočka, Manager, Sustainable Infrastructure Cluster, Poland
Paolo Vercesi, Executive Director, AFIL
4. Outlook on upcoming ECCP activities
Valentino Izzo, Programme Coordination Manager, EISMEA
5. Funding opportunities
Nina Hoppmann, team member of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform

Key messages

- The ECCP has established itself as Europe's coordination backbone for clusters, bringing together around 1,500 organisations and supporting the implementation of EU industrial policy.
- The ECCP has evolved from a networking platform into a driver of measurable cooperation.
- The platform strengthens policy intelligence and foresight through updated profiles, guides, country fact sheets and annual reports that support clusters in navigating EU priorities and funding.
- Participation in ECCP matchmaking and international missions has led to tangible partnerships and projects, advancing internationalisation and investment opportunities.
- Cross-border and cross-sector collaboration through the ECCP accelerates innovation, digitalisation and sustainability, enabling clusters to respond more effectively to market needs and enhance European competitiveness.



1. News from the European Cluster Collaboration Platform

Nina Hoppmann, team member, European Cluster Collaboration Platform

The following news items were presented:

1. Clusters meet Regions: [Call for Expressions of Interest 2026](#)
2. European Commission adopted the [2026 Annual Single Market and Competitiveness Report](#)
3. Invitation to [EU-Ukraine Business Summit](#) in Brussels on 22-23 April 2026
4. [Survey](#) on Intellectual Property Rights in public procurement
5. Meet the Euroclusters: slides and recordings are available on the presentation of the Euroclusters in [Strand 1](#) and [Strand 2](#)

2. Overview of ECCP activities and results

Manuel Seuffert, Coordination Lead, ECCP team

Manuel Seuffert outlined the European Cluster Collaboration Platform's main achievements in facts and figures from 2024–2025, emphasising its role as a strategic innovation infrastructure supporting the implementation of EU industrial policy. The ECCP now gathers around 1,500 cluster organisations, representing more than 155,000 SMEs, large enterprises and research organisations across Europe and beyond. Over 60% of these clusters were established within the past 15 years, demonstrating a dynamic and expanding ecosystem, with the digital sector being the most represented. The platform is increasingly recognised as the coordination backbone of the European cluster community.

In the past two years, the ECCP has strengthened its shift from event organisation to structured cooperation. Matchmaking events engaged more than 1,300 participants, generated over 6,700 bilateral meetings and resulted in more than 1,380 identified cooperation cases. 95 EU Clusters Talks attracted more than 6,700 participants, confirming strong and sustained interest. The Cluster Booster Academy supported over 100 cluster professionals in upskilling on business models and use cases, while Clusters meet Regions events gathered more than 4,200 participants and included close to 300 pitching sessions. Eight C2Labs involved over 350 participants and led to concrete project ideas and collaborations. In addition, 25 case studies were developed to showcase successful cluster practices and provide inspiration.

On the analytical side, the ECCP reinforced its role as a European cluster observatory and foresight instrument. More than 250 new profiles were published in 2024-2025, and the share of regularly updated profiles increased from around 20% to over 40%. Three green transition guides were produced to help clusters navigate EU policies and funding instruments. The platform also updated 56 country fact sheets and published annual panorama reports addressing Europe's competitiveness agenda, clean and resilient industrial transformation, cross-border collaboration and the EU cluster policy framework.

Behind the scenes, significant upgrades to the IT backbone, user experience and digital tools improved the platform's robustness and digital maturity, while exceeding key performance



indicators. Overall, the ECCP combines measurable cooperation outcomes with strategic policy intelligence to strengthen Europe's cluster ecosystem and competitiveness.

3. Panel debate

During the panel debate, the speakers reflected on outcomes and benefits from participating in ECCP activities.

Anders Thomson highlighted the strategic value of the ECCP for international collaboration, particularly with India. His cluster NordicFlexHouse develops green system solutions in partnership with universities, governments and companies. Its projects include vertical urban farming systems combining food, fish and insect production in circular models; mobile healthcare units designed to bring hospital services to rural areas, including in India; and the transformation of micro-oil into liquid biofertiliser. Through the ECCP matchmaking events, he has participated in two missions to India, which led to concrete partnerships and collaborative projects. For example, a new agreement is set to be signed to establish a living lab for mobile healthcare solutions, supporting localisation and future production in India. Anders welcomed the recent EU–India trade agreement as a major opportunity, significantly reducing customs duties and facilitating market entry. He emphasised the importance of integrating sustainable construction with food systems to achieve carbon neutrality, promoting mass customisation with standardised, factory-based production methods.

Ardita Hoxha-Jahja reflected on how their agri-food cluster has significantly strengthened its capacity and international profile through engagement with the ECCP. Participation in the Cluster Booster Academy helped professionalise cluster management and improve internationalisation readiness, enabling the cluster to move from mainly local cooperation to greater visibility within the European agri-food ecosystem. Innovation and R&D collaboration also became more demand-driven and cross-sectoral, linking food technology, animal welfare and the bioeconomy. Academic research, particularly from the University of Applied Sciences managing the cluster, was translated into practical tools for farmers, such as solutions to convert agricultural side streams and food waste into soil improvers. Furthermore, she highlighted that member engagement increased, with companies better understanding the value of cluster participation. Through ECCP networking and mapping activities, the cluster connected with partners in other regions, including Italy and Germany, addressing shared agricultural challenges such as biogas, dairy production and biodiversity. This cooperation has supported knowledge exchange, market understanding and the promotion of Finnish food exports, helping the cluster shift from local focus to global engagement. Importantly, the cluster is currently implementing three Horizon projects on farm health and safety, soil improvement from waste, and soil pollution.

Irena Łobocka outlined how the ECCP has supported the cluster's internationalisation and strategic development over the past three years, whereby internationalisation has been a core priority. In total, three Clusters meet Regions events were organised in Poland, enhancing both international visibility and regional credibility. This strengthened cooperation with regional authorities, particularly in managing smart specialisation platforms operated by clusters in collaboration with the regional government. Participation in the Cluster Booster Academy further reinforced management capacity and strategic insight. Furthermore, her involvement in four ECCP international missions has led to very tangible outcomes, including two ongoing projects: one on hydrogen technologies in



cooperation with Moroccan and Latvian clusters, and another on sustainable construction with partners in Egypt. Hydrogen is a strategic priority for the region, and ECCP missions helped connect regional strengths with international opportunities. The missions also opened doors to wider collaboration and investment opportunities, including partnerships in North Africa and India. She emphasised that while online tools and databases are useful, in-person missions are irreplaceable for building trust, community and long-term cooperation.

Paolo Vercesi spoke about the strategic importance of European cooperation through the ECCP. As there is no national cluster association in Italy, the ECCP plays a crucial role for his cluster as a European connection backbone, enabling access to networks, partnerships and market intelligence. The cluster hosted the first Italian Clusters meet Regions event in Milan, gathering 250 participants, 67 speakers and multiple panels and pitching sessions. The event strengthened inter-cluster cooperation within the region and enhanced visibility at European level. It also fostered collaboration among Lombardy's otherwise vertical clusters (e.g. energy, aerospace, agriculture), creating a more coordinated regional approach towards Europe. At European level, the cluster is active in the Vanguard Initiative, leading the pilot on efficient and sustainable manufacturing. It currently runs 13 European projects and is preparing 10 further proposals for 2026–2027. As manufacturing is transversal and spans multiple sectors, close cooperation with sector-specific clusters across Europe is essential to understand market needs. He emphasised that digitalisation is fundamental to achieving sustainability and enabling new business models. Stronger links with clusters working on digital and material innovation—such as bio-based polymers and sustainable plastics—have been particularly valuable.

4. Funding opportunities

Nina Hoppmann, team member, European Cluster Collaboration Platform

Closing the EU Clusters Talk, Nina Hoppmann shared the following examples of funding opportunities:

1. [EU launches new call for Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs local partners](#); deadline 21 April 2026
2. [Boosting sustainable competitiveness in rural areas through innovation](#); deadline 14 April 2026
3. [Innovation Fund: Net Zero Technologies - General decarbonisation](#); deadline 23 April 2026