



Initial Monitoring Scoreboard

Deliverable 1.3

Version: 1.1

Last Update: 2022-02-28

Dissemination Level: PU

Type: Other

"This report is part of the project EXCITE which has received funding from the European Union's COSME Programme."

Document Identity

Title:	Initial Monitoring Scoreboard
Main Editor:	Nadja Dehne
Version:	1.1
File name:	D1.3_InitialMonitoringScoreboard_V1.1.pdf
Last Update:	Monday, February 28, 2022

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Revision History

No.	Version	Edition	Author(s)	Date
1	1.0		Nadja Dehne	24.02.2022
		Reviewed	All partners	
	Comments:	GAIA suggested to add the frequency of the KPIs revision		
2	1.1		Nadja Dehne	28.02.2022
		Reviewed	Alesia Ramanishyna	
	Comments:			

Initial Monitoring Scoreboard

Purpose

During the EXCITE project, key performance indicators (KPIs) will be monthly monitored to measure the implementation of the actions. The consortium has introduced a Monitoring Scoreboard which will be the major tool serving both purposes of monitoring and communication of the project's KPIs. The Monitoring Scoreboard will mainly be used on European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) and at times on the dedicated cluster channels. The focus will be on cluster excellence, namely trainings of the cluster management, benchmarking as well as new services, and collaboration activities such as successful exchanges through the ClusterXchange mobility scheme or projects and newly formed partnerships.

Implementation

The used graphic design will show the status¹ of the KPIs and the figures that the project team wants to achieve as shown in **Figure 1**. For that matter, the graphic will be updated accordingly and exchanged on ECCP on a regular basis.

Although all eleven project Performance Indicators (PI) are planned to be regularly monitored by the consortium, it has been jointly agreed that the Monitoring Scoreboard will focus on the following five KPIs to be promoted publicly:

- **PI1:** Number of trainings (study visits) attended by cluster managers in view of enhancing their skills (Target: 5)
- **PI2:** Number of new support services developed by cluster organisations for their SME members (Target: 6)
- **PI3:** Number of cluster organisations engaged in benchmarking, accreditation, labelling (Target: 6)
- **PI5:** Number of cooperation projects/cooperation agreements/business agreements and/or inter-regional partnerships resulting from the supported activities (Target: 20)
- **PI6:** Number of successful exchanges through the "ClusterXchange" mobility scheme, including a breakdown by type of organisation (Target: 96² in total including cluster organisations; 48 SMEs; 24 scaling-up support organisations/large companies/public authorities, 24 participants from beyond Partnership community)

Next to those five KPIs, the graphic will include general information on the project, its logo, and the project partners' logos. As all project promotional material, it includes the acknowledgement of EU co-funding and the European Union logo. For now, the proposal's

¹ For demonstration purposes, the graphic shows a future status.

² For easier readability of the graph, 100 instead of 96 was included as the target (see **Figure 1**). As soon as 96 is approaching, the target number will be adapted.

project description is used. As soon as the new marketing material is developed for the project, the Monitoring Scoreboard will be adapted.

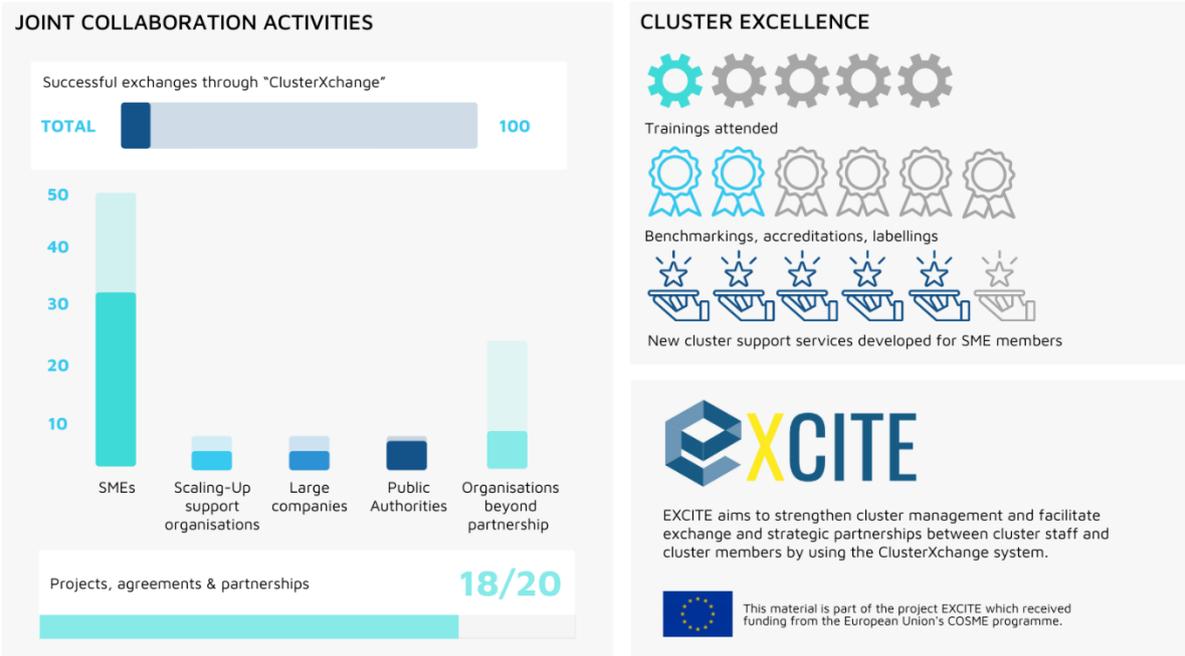


Figure 1: Monitoring Scoreboard for EXCITE project performance indicator communication



Initial Report on Collection of Best Practices

Deliverable 1.4

Version:1.2

Last Update: 29.04.2022

Dissemination Level: PU

Type: R

“This report is part of the project EXCITE which has received funding from the European Union’s COSME Programme.”

Document Identity

Title:	Initial Report on Collection of Best Practices
Main Editor:	Clémence Castell
Version:	1.2
File name:	D1.4 Initial Report on Collection of Best Practices
Last Update:	29.04.2022

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Revision History

No.	Version	Edition	Author(s)	Date
1	1.0		Clémence Castell (SCS)	21.04.2022
	Comments:	Template structure		
2	1.1		Clémence Castell (SCS)	28.04.2022
	Comments:	Part 1		
3	1.2		Clémence Castell (SCS)	29.04.2022
	Comments:	Challenges assessment + good practices + conclusion		
4				
	Comments:			
5				
	Comments:			

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Introduction

EXCITE aims to strengthen cluster management and facilitate exchange and strategic partnership between cluster staff and cluster members by using the ClusterXchange mobility scheme. ClusterXchange is a new pilot project to promote short-term exchanges to better connect industrial ecosystems in Europe. The project will focus on skills, processes and services related to digital transformation - both in terms of the cluster organisation itself and its members, to be able to support them in successfully accessing global markets.

This report presents notable cluster management practices of the EXCITE consortium, and general needs for improvement, at the beginning of the project. The Consortium is composed of six European digital clusters:

- Silicon Saxony, microelectronic cluster in Germany,
- DTI Cluster, digital cluster in Bulgaria,
- Business Hive Vilnius, digital cluster in Lithuania,
- Mazovia Cluster ICT, digital cluster in Poland,
- GAIA, digital cluster in Spain,
- SCS Cluster, digital cluster in France.

In the frame of the project will take place training and best practice-sharing activities, with the aim to

- ➔ Improve the clusters' practices in terms of performance and level of services,
- ➔ Reinforce the clusters' relations and have a better understanding of each-other's ecosystems, to bring cross-border matchmaking opportunities to the cluster members, through the ClusterXchange missions,
- ➔ Build synergies through the elaboration of joint-services.

Thus, this report is meant to be a basis to focus the thematic that will be dealt with in the frame of the project activities, such as the study visits and the training/capacity building activities. A second iteration will be released in M12 (January 2023), with an update of the focus practices and activities for the undertaken and future best-practice-sharing actions.

This report is based on the survey conducted in the frame of the deliverable 2.1 *Skill development plan* (internal confidential report), which provides a more comprehensive overview of the practices and challenges of each cluster.

Methodology

The assessment of the EXCITE clusters' challenges and practices was structured in five distinct cluster management areas, chosen based on the dimensions structuring the **criteria of the Gold label of the European Cluster Excellence Initiative**¹.

1. **Cluster structure.** (*Structure of the cluster*) Refers to the cluster's "identity card": key thematic focus, members' typology, concentration, geographic focus, etc.
2. **Cluster strategy.** (*Strategy, objectives, services*) Refers to the purpose of the cluster, and its strategy making, implementation and monitoring.
3. **Cluster operational organisation.** (*Typology, governance, co-operation*) Refers to the operational structure: organisation, team management, internal management processes, governance.
4. **Cluster business model.** (*Financing cluster organisation management*) Refers to the income model of the cluster: services offer definition, membership fee management, etc.
5. **Communication and reputation.** (*Achievements, recognition*) Communication to the cluster members and prospects, and to the external stakeholders (financers, policy makers, etc.).

These dimensions structured the clusters' reflexion regarding the assessment of their own practices, conducted through a workshop, and a self-assessment survey², at the very beginning of the project (M1-M3).

¹ ECEI Gold label criteria, dimensions p.5: https://eucles.be/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/130226_Public-Document-for-GOLD-Assessment-preparation.pdf – EUCLES labelling: <https://eucles.be/labelling/> ;

²More information in D2.1 *Skill development plan (internal)*

1. The EXCITE clusters

Silicon Saxony



Full name of Organisation: Silicon Saxony
Location Geographic coverage: Saxony, office in Dresden, Germany
Membership: 400 members, 80% SMEs
Key Technology focus and specialisation: Microelectronics, Industry 4.0, Software, AI
Creation date: 2000

DTI Cluster



Full name of Organisation: Cluster for Digital Transformation and Innovations(DTI Cluster)
Location Geographic coverage: Bulgaria, office in Sofia
Membership: 100, 94% SMEs
Key Technology focus and specialisation: Microelectronics, Industry 4.0, Software, AI
Creation date: 2008

Business Hive Vilnius



Full name of Organisation: Business Hive Vilnius
Location Geographic coverage: Lithuania, Baltics, office in Vilnius
Membership: 25 members (100% SMEs)
Key Technology focus and specialisation: hardware, security, block-chain, AI and enterprise software startups
Creation date: 2010

Mazovia Cluster ICT



Full name of Organisation: Mazovia Cluster ICT coordinated by Stowarzyszenie Rozwoju Społeczno-Gospodarczego „Wiedza”
Location Geographic coverage: Warsaw, Mazovia district, Poland
Membership: 402 members, 88% SMEs
Key Technology focus and specialisation: ICT, AI, IoT, Robotics and specialisation: energy management, space technologies, cybersecurity
Creation date: 2007

GAIA



Full name of Organisation: Gaia -Association of Knowledge and Applied Technologies industries in the Basque Country

Location Geographic coverage: Basque Country, Spain, offices in Bilbao and San Sebastián.

Membership: 311 members, 65% SMEs

Key Technology focus and specialisation: Electronics, Informatics, Telecommunications, Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence, Experiential Intelligence, Cybersecurity

Creation date: 2008

SCS Cluster



Full name of Organisation: Pôle Solutions Communicantes Sécurisées (Secured Communicating Solutions Cluster)

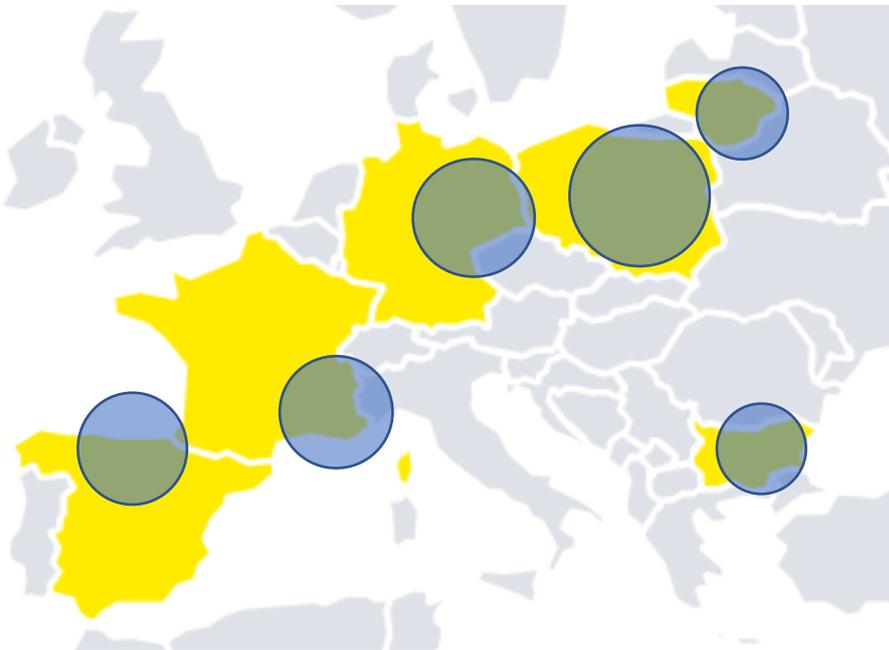
Location and geographic coverage: French Region Sud Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, with 2 main offices (Rousset & Sophia-Antipolis)

Membership: 310 members (72% SME)

Key Technology focus and specialisation: Microelectronics, AI, IoT, Cybersecurity

Creation date: 2006

Geographical coverage



2. Challenges assessment for best practices collection

2.1 Cluster structure

Common challenges

Regarding cluster structure, all six partners share challenges regarding their sectorial focus. As most of them are dealing with horizontal thematic – technologies that can be applied to various markets – the first difficulty is to be able to reach and be recognized in vertical sectors and **bring new markets to their members, at local and international level**. On the one hand, communication with players of other sectors can be difficult, because of unfamiliarity in terms of technology, specific challenges, and requirements. On the other hand, clusters also meet the difficulty to address consensus-messages and to tackle the needs of all members regarding the access to market, as they are targeting various markets – digital clusters focusing on several key enabling technologies, their members are diversified, and such technologies can target a wide range of markets.

Change of the economic context entails changes in the cluster strategic focus, and sometime can reconsider its purpose. Some clusters went through restructuration to adapt to new challenges, such as digital transformation, which requires to target new kinds of members, with new kinds of needs in terms of support and of market prospects. Resulting challenges are the **building of new competences and expertise**, the **recognition of the cluster in new fields**, and **attracting and retaining new members**.

BEST PRACTICES NEEDED

- ➔ Practices linked to **cross-industrial partnerships**, which would help make connexions with market-oriented clusters and relevant company prospects for the members, **at local and European level**.
- ➔ Practices linked to **members' attraction, loyalty and engagement in the cluster activities**.
- ➔ Practices linked to **competence and expertise building in strategic technology and market fields**.



GOOD PRACTICE

SCS Cluster agrees partnerships with market-focused clusters, on calls for interest based on value chain analysis and needs for digitalisation of the market sector. The aim is to bring the members to collaborative cross-sector projects giving them access to clients.

2.2 Cluster strategy

Common challenges

As regards cluster strategy issues, the major challenge shared by all the EXCITE clusters is the difficulty to **reach an active involvement of the cluster members in the strategy making**. Thus, the strategy can be mostly formulated by a few players and not by the majority, and it may be difficult to ask members to think collectively and not only for their own interests. This results in the fact that the strategic priorities followed by the cluster reflect only the interest of a few, and in a disinterest and mistrust of the others. The ambition of the clusters is to tackle the interests and challenges of the majority of their members and appear as a consolidated strong sector.

The majority of the clusters also need to **improve their strategy monitoring processes**. From the difficulty to define reliable KPIs, the lack of time-resources to achieve an efficient and constant reporting, the multiple reporting imposed by several authorities – when the cluster is partly public-financed, to the lack of skills to efficiently use reporting tools, there is a ground for collective improvement in this field.

BEST PRACTICES NEEDED

- ➔ Setting up of a **process of strategy co-creation format involving more members**, encompassing their needs and visions.
- ➔ **Motivation skills** to better engage the cluster members and keep them active.
- ➔ **Efficient collaborative reporting processes and tools** (such as CRM) engaging team members to achieve up to date reporting easily.



GOOD PRACTICE

Due to their small-size, Business Hive Vilnius has a demand-driven strategy, based on a good awareness of their members' needs thanks to members' involvement – even if it remains difficult to build the strategy on the long-term.

GOOD PRACTICE

Gaia performs an efficient KPIs monitoring thanks a tool allowing easy data reporting (Odo).



2.3 Cluster organisation

Common challenges

The clusters have diverse needs regarding their operational organisation, mainly depending on their maturity and size. However, the majority of them expressed **challenges in the workload and time management** which is most of the time high given the cluster's resources, and staff and management skills. Thus, most of them expressed a **lack of constant training** of their team, mainly due to a lack of time. Some of them expressed challenges in keeping the **operational team motivated**; some others also noticed the difficulty to efficiently **share among the team up-to-date members' information** regarding day-to-day activities and performed services. Finally, some clusters also think of **re-structuring their internal organisation** and become able to handle general activities on the longer-term.

BEST PRACTICES NEEDED

- **Efficient internal organisation** allowing optimised workload and time management, and alignment between the departments and the cluster structure.
- Practices **increasing human resources and expertise**, such as partnerships with members
- Leadership **trainings for the cluster staff**
- **Team cohesion** practices
- Efficient **knowledge management** among the team thanks to the **CRM/other processes**

GOOD PRACTICE

Mazovia ITC Cluster organised their working teams in technology & market competence areas. In addition, they build temporary working groups for the needs of projects with experts of specific fields.



2.4 Cluster business model

Common challenges

Business model good practices generated the most interests from the partners. First, most of them are interested in **exploring new services to enlarge or even re-design their services offer** and ensure continuous incomes from private sources.

The second challenge deals with **membership management**, and more precisely with ways to ensure the memberships renewal each year. This concerns issues of members' loyalty and satisfaction of the cluster activities, but also issues of inefficient membership monitoring in terms of subscription-fee payment, and of heavy administrative processes for subscription.

Finally, some clusters also expressed a difficulty regarding the **pricing of membership and services-fees**. For some clusters, especially the ones whose public subsidies are decreasing over the years, it may be a challenge to adapt fees to the market reality, and to justify it to the members who were used to low prices. For some others, the challenges is even to establish the strict payment of the membership to their members.

BEST PRACTICES NEEDED

- Services and joint-services allowing successful **matchmaking inside the cluster and cross-clusters** via physical and virtual formats
- Services and methodologies **bringing demand and supply together**
- Organisation of **major event with entry-fee**
- **Elaboration of services offer** and price list
- Light **subscription process**
- **Payment monitoring** process and system



GOOD PRACTICE

Silicon Saxony organise B2B events with entree-fee.

2.5 Communication, visibility & reputation

Regarding communication practices, and cluster visibility and reputation, most of the clusters have challenges in optimising their **members' reach**. First, some are implementing many actions and events and have troubles in **managing their information flow efficiently** – the members are overloaded with information, which may lead them to ignore e-mails from the cluster. Second, members are more likely to actively read **targeted communication** regarding their specific focus sectors, or individual communication targeting an individual need – which is also a challenge as the more members clusters have, the more difficult it is to have a good knowledge of each individual members' needs and interests. Likewise, reaching the right entry-point-contact in the organisation is also challenging. Besides, **getting feedback from the members on their success stories** is also needed by the clusters to better assess their added value to their ecosystem, but it remains difficult to track.

Some cluster also expressed the difficulty to **be visible next to a wide range of other similar organisations**, sometimes overlapping the cluster's services. Thus, the clusters have challenges in standing out and demonstrating their added value to their members.

Member's engagement in the cluster's activities is thus a challenge depending on many factors, of which the COVID context, as many core activities like formal and informal meetings, that used to maintain and raise the members' motivation, were largely impacted – and the members' participation to such activities tends to remain lower than before, even during cooling down periods. Besides, events planning has become difficult due to the risky and changing context.

Finally, challenges were also recorded regarding the **use of communication channels**, and especially needs for skills in **using social media**.

BEST PRACTICES NEEDED

- ➔ **Targeted-communication** practices
- ➔ Communication actions **demonstrating the cluster's added value**
- ➔ Practices to **track success-feedback** from the members
- ➔ Optimised **use of communication channels and social media**
- ➔ Edition of **digital content**



CLUSTER FOR
**DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION &
INNOVATION**

GOOD PRACTICE

DTI Cluster offers numerous formal and informal meetings to their members to keep them involved in the cluster activities – even if the COVID context restrained these activities.

Conclusion

The major challenge shared by all EXCITE clusters through the five explored cluster management areas is the engagement of the cluster members, which is at the basis of the cluster's reason for being, from the definition of a consensus strategy tackling the interests of the majority of the players, to the profitability of the performed services, through the target's reach and impacts and performance monitoring.

To achieve the improvement of their practices in all the areas which we went through in this assessment, the EXCITE consortium will exchange each other's practices which appear to be diverse, through training activities, dedicated workshops during study visits, learning tandems, and the elaboration of joint-services.

This report will be upgraded with recorded best-practices throughout these project activities in M12 (January 2023).



Dissemination, outreach and communication plan

Deliverable 7.1

Version: 1.2

Last Update: 2022-04-29

Dissemination Level: PU

Type: R

“This report is part of the project EXCITE which has received funding from the European Union’s COSME Programme.”

Document Identity

Title:	Dissemination, outreach and communication plan
Main Editor:	Nadja Dehne
Version:	1.2
File name:	D7.1_dissemination_outreach_communication_plan_V1.2.pdf
Last Update:	Friday, April 29, 2022

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Revision History

No.	Version	Edition	Author(s)	Date
1	1.0		Nadja Dehne	13.04.2022
	Comments:			
2	1.1			28.04.2022
	Comments:	Contribution of links by partners where project was promoted		
3	1.2		Nadja Dehne, Alesia Ramanishyna	29.04.2022
	Comments:	Finalization		
4				
	Comments:			
5				
	Comments:			

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2 Publishable Summary

The aim of this document is to present the planned actions for communication, dissemination, and outreach of the results of the EXCITE project.

The overall objectives of all those activities are to:

- disseminating and promoting the progress and outputs of the project to ensure the widest possible dissemination towards key stakeholders at local, regional, national, and European level*
- guarantee the maximum visibility of the project at European level, notably through ECCP, dedicated events and existing EU networks and initiatives*
- encourage and engage companies to take part to the ClusterXchange scheme*
- support the activities of the partnership for cluster excellence capacity-building*
- raise interest and awareness around intra-clusters collaboration-related activities*

Main communication activities include

- introduction to the project and its partners on partner's websites, newsletters & social media channels*
- introduction to the ClusterXchange scheme towards member companies of the respective partners*
- introduction to European ecosystems that were chosen as exchange hosts by the project team*
- promotion of project related events or exchange possibilities to the partners' networks*
- regular updates on success stories through the ClusterXchange scheme on ECCP and through the partners' channels*
- regular updates on intra-clusters collaboration-related activities*

Restrictions

- EXCITE will not have its own project website or communication channels but use existing ones of the project partner's and will have a profile on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)*

The first plans for dissemination were initiated already in the proposal phase and will be continued throughout the project lifetime. This document will be a living (running) document and will be updated on a regular basis, discussed regularly in the WP7 meetings of the project. Next to this, in its role as Communication and Exploitation Manager, Silicon Saxony will track and trace the dissemination activities closely.

3 Introduction to the project

EXCITE aims to strengthen cluster management and facilitate exchange and strategic partnership between cluster staff and cluster members by using the ClusterXchange mobility scheme. ClusterXchange is a new pilot project to promote short-term exchanges to better connect industrial ecosystems in Europe. The project will focus on skills, processes and services related to digital transformation - both in terms of the cluster organisation itself and its members, to be able to support them in successfully accessing global markets.

This plan will serve three purposes – planning, monitoring, and reporting on all activities related to dissemination, outreach and communication activities related to progress and results of the project EXCITE. It was set up at the beginning of the project to support proper implementation of the project. All partners of EXCITE will be responsible for contributing, in particular with regard to activities on their cluster level. Actions, tools and supporting materials for communication will be discussed among partners according to the targeted audiences. As the project aims to facilitate exchanges within Europe, communication activities will be multilingual, with central messages provided by the project but translations into national languages in particular for communication activities towards SMEs and regional authorities.

The dissemination and communication activities of EXCITE build on the activities of the project's cluster partners. All of them created visibility, recognition, and trust through their existing communication channels. Therefore, the project will make use of these channels and will not create dedicated social media channels or a dedicated website.

The following report will give an overview on planned and implemented activities related to dissemination, communication, and outreach of the project.

4 Dissemination, outreach and communication strategy

1 Objectives

- Disseminating and promoting the progress and outputs of the project to ensure the widest possible dissemination towards key stakeholders at local, regional, national, and European level in order to gather input and feedback and to promote the awareness and experience.
- Guarantee the maximum visibility of the project at European level, notably through ECCP, dedicated events (such as European Cluster Days) and existing EU networks and initiatives such as Silicon Europe, e.g. to engage key stakeholders in project activities via networking in order to raise awareness about the EXCITE project development and implementation processes and to cooperate with other initiatives and/or projects/networks focused on Cluster excellence (e.g. partnerships from previous and actual call)
- Encourage and engage companies to take part to the ClusterXchange scheme
- Support the activities of the partnership for cluster excellence capacity-building
- Raise interest and awareness around intra-clusters collaboration-related activities e.g. among the relevant scale-up support organisations and all the relevant stakeholders;
- Identify expectations among target groups.

2 Monitoring

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are being monitored regularly. There is a monthly project meeting planned to keep the tables up to date. One major tool for combining monitoring and communication is a so-called monitoring scoreboard. It will serve to monitor the project's KPIs as well as an awareness-raising communication on the project. Refer to [Monitoring Scoreboard](#) for details on the monitoring scoreboard.

The following table shows the performance indicators (PI) regarding communication activities planned during the proposal phase.

Table 1: Performance Indicators regarding project's communication & dissemination

Title	Brief Description	Target (quantity)
PI8	Number of promotional events organised by the partnership (informative webinars and local events);	6 informative webinars, 12 local events (1 per partner and year)
PI9	Number of posts published on the ECCP site relating to specific awareness-raising actions undertaken by the partnership.	50 (5 per partner and year)
PI10	Number of SMEs reached>>interested>>engaged: (100-25-5 ratio)	1000 >> 250 >> 50 (appr. 1000 is the number of SMEs directly covered by the involved clusters, the total potential is therefore even higher)

3 Project presentation

Project description

A project description can be found on the project partner's websites as well as on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP). There will be two versions of the so-called boilerplate. One general explanation of the project and one dedicated to the main target group; the cluster members/SMEs.

General description of the project:

EXCITE - Exchange of Clusters using Digital Transformation for Excellence

EXCITE aims to strengthen cluster management and facilitate exchange and strategic partnership between cluster staff and cluster members by using the ClusterXchange system. ClusterXchange is a new pilot project to promote short-term exchanges to better connect industrial ecosystems in Europe. The project will focus on skills, processes and services related to digital transformation - both in terms of the cluster organisation itself and its members, to be able to support them in successfully accessing global markets.

The targeted description and promotion material for cluster members/SMEs will be created by Mazovia Cluster ICT. They will prepare a set of specific communication and outreach materials to promote the participation of clusters' members in the pilot program and to engage potential hosts in the program. See ClusterXchange mobility scheme for more information.

Monitoring Scoreboard

The monitoring scoreboard will serve the purpose of promoting the achieved project results. Therefore, it will mainly be used on ECCP and at times on the dedicated cluster channels. The focus will be on cluster excellence, namely trainings of the cluster management, new cluster support services and collaboration activities such as successful exchanges through the ClusterXchange mobility scheme (see also [ClusterXchange mobility scheme](#)) or projects and newly formed partnerships. The scoreboard will be updated regularly.

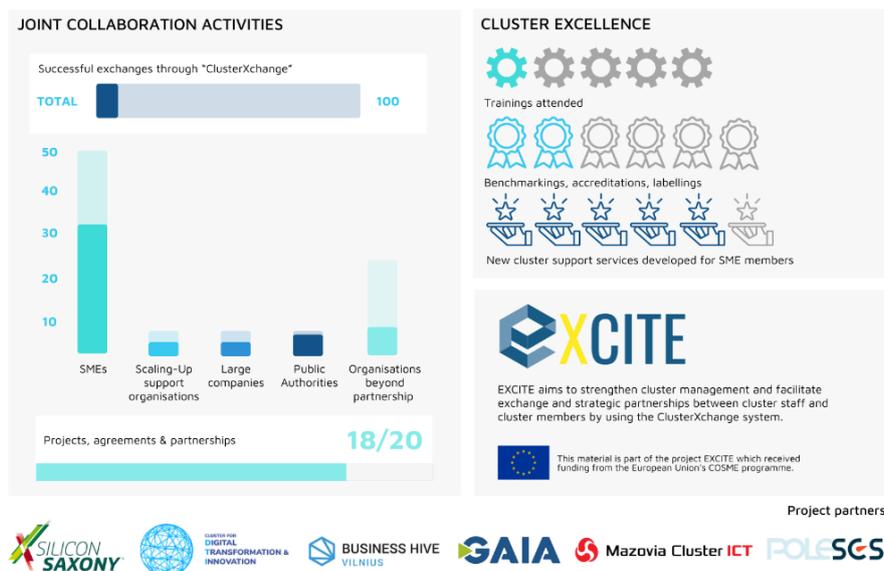


Figure 1: Monitoring Scoreboard (not the current status)

Communication Channels

As mentioned earlier, EXCITE will not have its own social media channels or a dedicated website. Instead, the focus will be on its own ECCP profile (see also [European Cluster Collaboration Platform](#)) and existing channels of the project partners including websites, newsletters, social media profiles etc. Furthermore, promotional events such as informative webinars, local flagship events, international conferences and fairs where partners are represented will be used to communicate about the project and its services with a dedicated focus on the benefits of the ClusterXchange programme. See [Types of communication & channels](#) for more detailed information.

Additional to leveraging own existing channels (see [Table 2](#)), EXCITE partners will also make use of Silicon Europe's¹ channels (website + social media).

Table 2: Existing communication channels of project partners

	English website	Website local language	LinkedIn	Twitter	Facebook	Email contacts
SiSax	yes	DE	>7,500	>1,850	Yes	4000
DTI	yes	BG	Group	n.a.	Yes	1500
BHV	yes	LT	>75	>40	Yes	300
GAIA	yes	ES	>1,600	>3,700	Yes	2800
Mazovia ICT cluster	yes	PL	>290	n.a.	Yes	2500
SCS	yes	FR	>2,000	>3,200	Yes	4000

European Cluster Collaboration Platform

All six EXCITE partners are recognized clusters and have their cluster profile validated in the European Cluster Collaboration platform (ECCP). Most partners are proactive using the services of ECCP, some also have participated in several cluster matchmaking and networking events in the recent years. BHV and DTI are transforming into cluster organisations supporting actively digital transformation, expressed e.g., in the change of their names.

A dedicated profile for the EXCITE project was created stating all project partners and objectives: <https://clustercollaboration.eu/content/excite>

Over time, news, events, project results and other achievements will be published there. Additionally, each cluster partner will regularly publish information on the project. In total, 50 posts ought to be published on the ECCP site relating to specific awareness-raising actions undertaken by the partnership which equals five per partner and year.

¹ The Silicon Europe Alliance is an Electronic Based System meta cluster, representing eleven European clusters a.o. Silicon Saxony, Pôle SCS and GAIA.

Dissemination activities to promote beginning of the project

As described further above, dissemination activities by partners are being tracked and discussed in monthly meetings. The following table shows the project partner's activities to introduce EXCITE to their networks. Next to that, the project was introduced on ECCP².

Table 3: Introduction of EXCITE in project partner networks

Partner	Partner No	Link	Type: Newsletters, Website, Posts
Silicon Saxony	1	<p>Newsletter (German): https://archive.newsletter2go.com/?n2g=pjm70frb-magb32na-18ba</p> <p>Website: https://www.silicon-saxony.de/en/projects/</p> <p>LinkedIn: Intro to project & kick-off ClusterXchange</p>	Introduction to members in newsletter, presentation on website, and EXCITE promotion on the LinkedIn by the Coordinator
Cluster for Digital Transformation and Innovation Bulgaria	2	<p>Website: https://dticluster.org/</p> <p>Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/DTiCluster</p> <p>LinkedIn https://www.linkedin.com/company/cluster-for-digital-transformation-and-innovations-dti-cluster-bulgaria/</p>	Introduction to project on website
Business Hive Vilnius	3	<p>Website: http://www.bhv.lt/en/news-and-media/detail.php?ID=672</p>	Introduction to project in news area on website
Gaia - Association of Knowledge and Applied Technologies industries in the Basque Country	4	<p>Website: https://www.gaia.es/blog/noticias-gaia-1/post/excite-exchange-of-clusters-using-digital-transformation-for-excellence-498</p> <p>LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6920080180971474944</p>	Introduction to the project on website and LinkedIn
Mazovia Cluster ICT	5	<p>Website (Polish): https://klasterict.pl/excite-exchange-of-clusters-using-digital-transformation-for-</p>	Introduction to the project on website, LinkedIn and Facebook

² <https://clustercollaboration.eu/community-news/eu-funding-project-excite-aims-support-international-networking-small-and-medium>

		excellence/?fbclid=IwAR2jZLE1j3qw1r3bpDKmlKa2mbGkOGI0nZ5ehpCCDBnUhdWUoroBPUbYD3k LinkedIn (Polish): https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6922950406218133504 Facebook (Polish): https://www.facebook.com/MazowieckiKlasterIct/posts/4899143433540775	
Secure Communication Cluster – Pôle SCS	6	Website: https://www.pole-scs.org/en/en-excite/	Website project sheet (English and French)

4 Planned dissemination activities

Target groups

The main target group addressed within EXCITE are the participating clusters as organizations on both levels 1) their staff and management and 2) their members with particular emphasis on the SMEs.

Nevertheless, the scope of the project opens a wide range of organizations that can be, directly or indirectly, beneficiaries of the project implementation and results. The consortium has consequently identified six target groups (TG) that would particularly benefit from the activities implemented by EXCITE, due to their assets, needs and constraints. They have also been selected to ensure large multiplier effect and therefore a contribution to maximising the impact of the project.

- Clusters' organizations in EXCITE partnership
- EXCITE Clusters' staff and managers
- SMEs members of EXCITE partners
- Regional authorities responsible for RIS3 implementation and digital transformation
- Other EU SMEs
- EU Innovation actors

The communication & dissemination activities will mainly be directed to European SMEs and the promotion of the ClusterXchange scheme as well as our respective offers & services.

Types of communication & channels

Three types of communication activities will be implemented using various communication channels:

- communication regarding the overall project, using the ECCP platform and other existing communication channels by the clusters,
- communication regarding actions organized by the partners within the project framework
- communication regarding the ClusterXchange scheme

The following channels of communication will be used for that matter:

Website

As pointed out above there will be no dedicated stand-alone website. Instead, the partners will present the project on their websites. These will link to the EXCITE partnership profile on ECCP where all relevant information, events, news and achievements will be accessible. Also, public deliverables will be stored and published there. Furthermore, partners will translate relevant content into local languages and publish it on their own established channels including social media.

Social networks

The partnership will actively use the existing LinkedIn and Twitter channels of the project partners to highlight the main activities, events, and success stories of the project, as well as major milestones. Hashtags such as #ClusterXchange and #EXCITE will be used.

Communication through associated networks

All participating partners have strong international networks that will be used to promote the project activities as well as different actions like the ClusterXchange scheme. For that, we anticipate the use of ongoing networks like Silicon Europe or others.

Apart from that, other communication channels will be studied: posters, roll-ups, flyers publications, participation in conferences and workshops (oral presentation), booth in selected exhibitions, newsletters (of partners, associated partners), promotional video clips etc.

Promotional events

Promotional events – either informative webinars or local events for interested target groups – will be used to promote the ClusterXchange scheme among our networks. For that, the project and its objectives will be briefly introduced. The focus will be on the benefits of using the ClusterXchange scheme. Therefore, the scheme will be presented as transparent as possible also by giving answers to frequently arising questions. Afterwards, the participants receive informative material and a contact or link how to register for the scheme.

(Printed) promotion material

To promote the ClusterXchange scheme, promotional material will be created which will be translated in the local language of the project partners if necessary. This material will mainly be used virtually but can also be printed to give it to member companies at events for instance. For more details, see [ClusterXchange mobility scheme](#).

5 ClusterXchange mobility scheme

Through the ClusterXchange mobility scheme, the project facilitates transnational, sectoral and cross-sectoral exchanges between clusters and their members. Communications play a vital role in achieving these exchanges. As stated earlier (Objectives), the project aims to encourage and engage companies to take part to the ClusterXchange scheme. Hence, promotion material must be prepared to promote the participation of clusters' members in the pilot program and to engage potential hosts in the program.

For that, two sets of promotional materials will be prepared, one direct to potential hosts and the other focusing on potential participants as visitors. Each partner will translate (if necessary), print (if necessary) and distribute the materials to actively engage cluster members or companies from the host's network with strong focus on SMEs participation.

To engage companies to take part, the focus of promotion materials will be on the benefits and a clear understanding of the offer. Therefore, activities will include:

- a) the recompilation and highlighting of success stories (i.e. featuring participating SMEs or interviews as traction for engaging others, highlights of hosts at each cluster)
- b) featuring the ClusterXchange and relevant information in each cluster newsletter – if possible, as an additional offer to existing events of the cluster partners
- c) promoting the ClusterXchange helpdesk & publishing main information and FAQ about the scheme

All promotional material will include the link to the European Cluster Collaboration Platform's dedicated web section, the acknowledgement of EU co-funding and the European Union logo.

5 Exploitation

All project results (learning tandems, study visits and exchange of best practices, new services creation on individual cluster level and jointly) will be integrated into the operational models of the project partner's clusters and communicated to the respective target groups. The exploitation will be implemented by transferring of the project results to the cluster community but also the opening a new wider perspective in terms of reaching near but also less near market areas. The consortium will make an effort by spreading the results of the implemented activities in order to maximize the impact at local and international level.

6 Conclusion

Dissemination, outreach and communication activities of the EXCITE project will mainly target European SMEs, clusters and their staff as well as other innovation actor and regional authorities. By promoting the benefits and success stories of the ClusterXchange scheme and the project's activities, the target groups shall be encouraged to take part in the offers to reach the project's KPIs. EXCITE will not have its own social media channels or a dedicated website. Instead, EXCITE partners will leverage their existing channels. The dissemination, outreach and communication plan will be a living document which will be updated on a regular basis and discussed regularly in the WP7 meetings of the project.