



EUCLUSTERS TALKS ★

Sustainability requirements and reporting: Cluster support for SMEs

19 February 2025

08:30-09:45 CET

Online

Agenda

1. News from the European Cluster Collaboration Platform
Nina Hoppmann, *Team Member European Cluster Collaboration Platform*
2. Input from the European Commission
Georg Raab, *Policy Officer, DG GROW, European Commission*
3. Panel debate
Anaïs Le Corvec, *CEO, Cliclab Transformative Agency*
Cécile Fontaine, *Coordinator B-Resilient Eurocluster, Wagralim*
Roman Kravchenko, *CEO, 482.solutions, ESG Cluster HUB*
4. Funding opportunities
Nina Hoppmann, *Team Member European Cluster Collaboration Platform*

Housekeeping rules

Zivile Kropaite, presenter

- We will use **slido** to launch polls. Please scan the QR code to answer.
- Please use the **Zoom Q&A function to ask questions**, and the **chat function** to comment or share links.
- If you want to speak: Please **raise your hand** and we will give you the floor.
- Please note that the session is being **recorded** and that the recording will be **published** on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform.

NEWS FROM THE EUROPEAN CLUSTER COLLABORATION PLATFORM

Next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF): The Commission would like to hear your views!

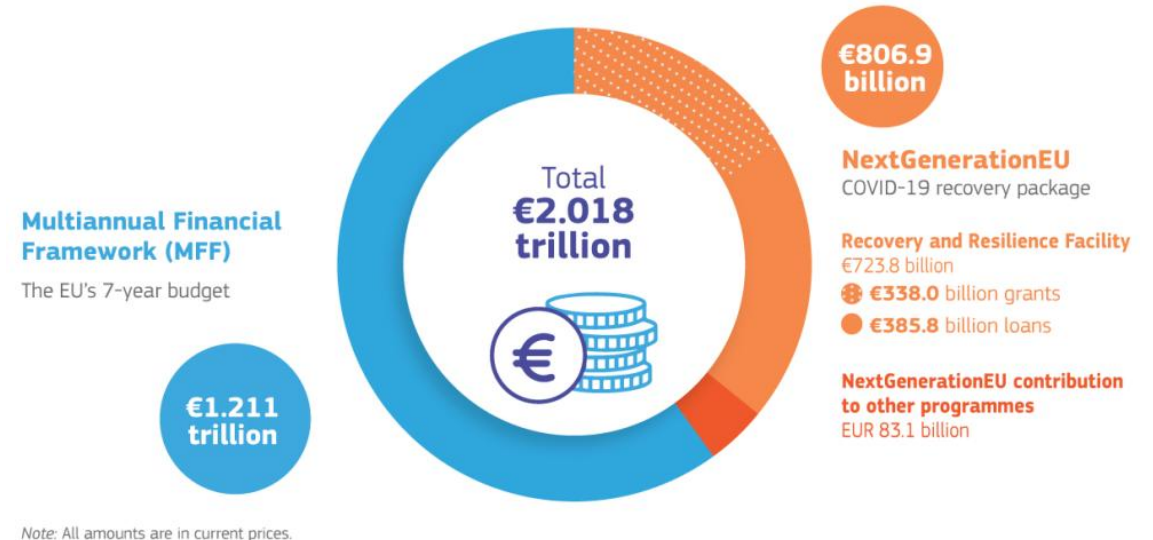
The European Commission is shaping the [next MFF](#), with a focus on simplification, impact, and strategic investment.

Key proposals include:

- **National reform & investment plans**
- A **European Competitiveness Fund** to boost strategic sectors
- Targeted **external financing** aligned with EU interests
- **Additional safeguards** for the rule of law

How can you participate?

- **Public consultations are now open** for the next 12 weeks – all Europeans can share their views on budget priorities.
- **Citizens' Panel:** 150 participants will debate and recommend changes.
- **Online platform:** Open for broader public engagement.



Important deadlines

- 📅 Consultations open now – 12 February 2025 - 07 May 2025
- 📅 Commission proposal in July 2025
- 📅 New MFF takes effect in January 2028

Save the date: EU-Ukraine Business Summit



The EU-Ukraine Business Summit will take place in **Brussels on 10-11 April 2025.**

The summit will feature engaging panel discussions, interactive workshops, and hands-on sessions designed for businesses looking to **explore opportunities** in Ukraine. Discussions will also focus on **Ukraine's reconstruction** within the broader framework **of European reindustrialization**, highlighting key reforms aimed at unlocking investment and improving the business climate.

European Business Summits website:

<https://ebsummits.eu/our-summits/future-of-ukraine/>

Plan your next European project!

The European Cluster Collaboration Platform, in collaboration with the Government of Aragón, organises the next edition of the [Cluster Collaboration Labs in Zaragoza, Spain, on 19-20 March 2025](#).

This C2Lab has a special focus on **Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions**.

The Cluster Collaboration Labs (C2Labs) are **interactive workshops** for cluster organisations, companies, research organisations, actors from civil society, and other interested entities.

The **purpose** of these events is to bring and find collaboration partners, mature your project idea, and build the business case for your idea.



Proposed project topics

- AI for Net Zero Technologies
- AI for Industrial Transformation and Competitiveness
- AI for Healthcare Innovation
- AI for Dual Use Technologies
- AI for Smart Cities
- Collaborative AI Infrastructure
- AI for Crisis Management
- Your own project idea

Save the date and register for the next ECCP events!



EUROPEAN CLUSTER COLLABORATION PLATFORM

An initiative of the European Union

ECCP Events to Kickstart 2025

-  **Biweekly Online EU Clusters Talks**
19 February - 26 February at 8:30 CET
-  **Zaragoza, Spain**
Cluster Collaboration Labs | 19-20 March
-  **Eindhoven, The Netherlands**
Clusters meet Regions | 26-27 March & EU Matchmaking
-  **Heilbronn, Germany**
Clusters meet Regions | 9-10 April & EU Matchmaking
-  **Alentejo, Portugal**
Clusters meet Regions | 29 April
-  **Esbjerg, Denmark**
Cluster Collaboration Labs | 6-7 May
-  **Palma de Mallorca, Spain**
Clusters meet Regions | 14-15 May & EU Matchmaking
-  **Rzeszów, Poland**
Clusters meet Regions | 3-4 June

■ Clusters Meet Regions ■ C2Lab

Registration is open for Clusters Meet Regions in [Eindhoven, The Netherlands](#), and [Heilbronn, Germany](#).

Input from the European Commission

Georg Raab

Policy Officer, DG GROW, European Commission



Sustainable Reporting for SMEs in the EU

Key Requirements & Recent Developments
19 February 2025, Brussels

European Green Deal Ambition

CLIMATE-NEUTRAL EU BY 2050 &
-55% emissions by 2030



Need to mobilise
EUR 500 billion of investments per year

EU Taxonomy – defining sustainable



A classification system



A measuring tool



A transition tool

What the EU Taxonomy ~~is~~ **is not**



- It's not a mandatory list to invest in
- It's not a rating of the “greenness” of companies
- What's not green is not necessarily brown.

No Green Transition without SMEs



99.8%

64.4%

51.8%

enterprises

jobs

of value added

Increased regulatory & market pressure to disclose ESG data

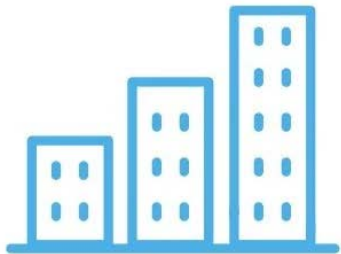
SMEs & Sustainable Finance

- **Proliferation of disclosure requests** No direct reporting obligations under the EU sustainable finance framework*, but SMEs experience the „trickle down effect“ (from banks & value chain partners).
- **Supply of affordable sustainable finance** Very limited offer
- **Reporting Standards** standards for listed SMEs and separate standards for voluntary use by non-listed SMEs in preparation by EFRAG

*for unlisted SMEs who constitute the majority of all SMEs

Corporate sustainability reporting

Large undertakings



Fulfilment of two out of three characteristics:

- 250+ Employees
- 50+ Mio.€ Annual turnover
- 25+ Mio.€ Balance sheet

Listed small and medium-sized undertakings (SME)



Fulfilment of two out of three characteristics:

- 10+ Employees
- 10+ Mio.€ Annual turnover
- 5+ Mio.€ Balance sheet

Small and non-complex credit institutions and captive insurers



- Listed SMEs: FY 2026 (publication in 2027)
- Indirect impact – Large companies require SME disclosures
- Supply chain reporting – Scope 3 emissions transparency
- Voluntary SME Standard coming mid-2025

European Sustainability Reporting Standards

Feature	ESRS (Full Standard)	VSME (Simplified for SMEs)
Applies to	Large companies & listed SMEs	Non-listed SMEs (voluntary)
Mandatory?	Yes, under CSRD	No, voluntary
Level of Detail	Comprehensive ESG disclosures	Simplified reporting
Purpose	Standardized, detailed sustainability reporting	Helps SMEs report in a proportionate way
Release Date	Already in force	Expected mid-2025

Challenges for SMEs in Sustainability Reporting

- Limited resources & expertise
 - Databases/tools/guidance may not be available in the SME owners' local **language**.
 - These resources may require a **fee** to access
 - SMEs may have a hard **time** discerning what methods or tools to use if there are too many options offered (see below on challenges for use of emissions calculators)
 - Navigating these external reference guides and tools requires additional time and resources
- Complex data collection & frameworks
- Multiple reporting requests from stakeholders
- Lack of standardized tools

Support Mechanisms & Digital Tools



- Standardizing digital data formats (e.g., VSME and GHG emissions) to streamline compliance

- RSE Portal A one-stop digital platform for businesses to manage their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and ESG obligations

- Personalized dashboard



- A free digital tool helping businesses identify ESG materiality, develop sustainability strategies, and align with CSRD

- The Hellenic Development Bank launched an ESG Tracker
- Freely accessible with a real-time self-assessment and a tool to report on their sustainability progress



Recent Developments & Policy Discussions

- The Omnibus Simplification Package, expected on February 26, will review:
 - EU Taxonomy & Sustainability Reporting obligations
 - Discussion on a new definition of small mid-caps under the Competitive Compass, cutting SME reporting obligations by 35%

How to apply for EU finance

Region

MAGYARORSZÁG - Any -

Type of finance

- Any -

Investment focus

1 Cleantech & Sustainability

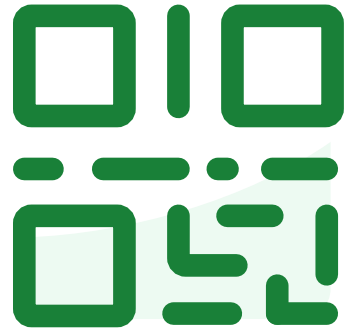
13 result(s) found at this level for **MAGYARORSZÁG**

Financial intermediaries	Type of finance	Investment focus	Additional information	Sources of finance
K&H Bank Zrt. (Hungary) - IEU - CDG	Loan/ Guarantee	All sectors/ general, Cleantech & Sustainability, Digitalisation, Research, development, innovation		InvestEU
UniCredit - Umbrella - UniCredit Bank Hungary - IEU - UDG	Loan/ Guarantee	Cleantech & Sustainability, Cultural and creative sectors, Digitalisation, Research, development, innovation, Social enterprises, proximity and civil security	Financing infrastructure	InvestEU



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Are you dealing with ESG reporting in your organisation?

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How prepared do you think companies are for ESG reporting?

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Do you see ESG reporting as a burden or a chance?

① Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Panel debate

Anais Le Corvec, CEO, Cliclab Transformative Agency

Cécile Fontaine, Coordinator B-Resilient Eurocluster, Wagralim

Roman Kravchenko, CEO, 482.solutions, ESG Cluster HUB

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

STAGE Sustainability Transition Programme

- The STAGE Sustainability Transition Programme **supports European industrial SMEs** in transitioning towards sustainable and competitive business models. The programme offers **sustainability assessments, training, advisory services, and financial grants** to help SMEs develop sustainability transition plans and attract private investment.
- The admission to the STAGE Sustainability Transition Programme will be done on a **first-come first-served basis**.
- The programme consists of three phases:
 - PHASE 1 – Sustainability Assessment**
 - 500 SMEs to develop Sustainability Transition Plans
 - PHASE 2 – Training & Capacity Building**
 - SMEs receive tailored training in four key sustainability areas
 - PHASE 3 – Advisory & Investment Support**
 - 100 SMEs: Grants of up to €50,000 for investment projects (via separate calls)
 - 20 SMEs: Dedicated financial advisory support
- Topic ID: HORIZON-CL4-2021-RESILIENCE-01-29
- Deadline: 31 May 2025
- Published on [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)

Call For Social Economy Enterprises: Financial Support For Purchasing Capacity Building Services To Support Green Transition

- This call provides **financial support of up to €6,700** to Social Economy Enterprises (SEEs) to help them purchase capacity-building services aimed at finalising and implementing new business models.
- **Any European industrial SME** can apply for this call.
- To apply, organisations must:
 - Be a **Social Economy Enterprise (SEE)** as defined by the EU
 - Be a **Micro or Small Enterprise (as per EU definition)**
 - Be legally registered in an eligible country (EU, EEA, and COSME-associated countries)
 - Have participated in Phase 1 (advisory & coaching activities on green transition)
 - **Apply individually** (consortia are not eligible)
- Topic ID: SMP-COSME-2022-SEE-01
- Deadline: 29 June 2025
- Published on [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)

EIC Accelerator 2025 - Short application

- The EIC Accelerator supports SMEs and **start-ups in scaling up high-impact innovations** that have the potential to create new markets or disrupt existing ones. It offers:
 - Funding between €0.5 million and €12.5 million.
 - Business Acceleration Services to facilitate growth and investment.
- The programme particularly targets deep tech innovations that require **long-term funding** ('patient capital') and struggle to secure private investment due to high risks and long return periods.
- Applicants to EIC Accelerator can submit proposals through the following topics:
 - **EIC Accelerator Open** – Open to all fields of technology and application.
 - **EIC Accelerator Challenges** – Focused on strategic and emerging technologies in predefined priority areas.
- Topic ID: HORIZON-EIC-2025-ACCELERATOR-01
- Deadline: 18 December 2025
- Published on [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)

Opportunities for SMEs: Calls from Euroclusters

- BLUEDOTS – Open Call for Proposals: Financial support for **Social Economy SMEs** and enabling organisations in the blue sector across Europe; deadline 21 March.
- FRIEND CCI – Call for Providers: Seeking **experts** in digitalisation, green transition, and internationalisation services to support SMEs.; deadline 1 August 2025.
- POLREC – 2nd Networking Open Call: Call for **Polymer Recycling Industries** to collaborate and innovate in recycling processes; deadline 14 March.
- POLREC – 2nd Training Open Call: Support for up to **31 SMEs to receive training** in one or two of three key sub-topics; deadline 25 February.
- RESIST – 2nd Open Call: Support for **internationalisation** activities focused on resilience and sustainability in the Automotive – Mobility – Transport ecosystem; deadline 19 February 2025.
- RESIST – Networking & Marketing Support: Assistance for SMEs to develop sustainable production tools that enhance economic success & resilience in the Automotive – Mobility – Transport ecosystem; deadline 19 February 2025.

All calls here:

https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/funding?f%5B0%5D=status%3A1_open&f%5B1%5D=type%3A101189

Register for the next Talks

26 February

Europe's Technological Future: Driving Innovation for Economic Security

12 March

Clean Industrial Deal

26 March

EU Transition Pathways Stakeholder Support Platform

Continue the discussion



<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9503062/>

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THANK YOU

