



## PRESS RELEASE

### THE EUROPEAN CLUSTER CONFERENCE 2022 IN PRAGUE IS COMING UP

**The 8th edition of the European Cluster Conference will take place on 26 - 27 September 2022 in Prague, Czech Republic. The conference will bring together cluster managers, policymakers and experts from all over the European Union to discuss the latest trends in cluster policies. The event aims to stimulate a high-level policy discussion on the challenges that need to be addressed to reinforce the role and added value of clusters in the implementation of the updated EU Industrial Strategy as well as in other core European initiatives impacting industry.**

Prague will host the [European Cluster Conference 2022](#) as part of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union. This major EU conference for industry stakeholders will focus on topics stemming from the updated EU Industrial Strategy and its implementation on the ground. It will also cover issues to be addressed by the Czech Presidency such as energy security and strategic resilience of EU industry. The Czech Presidency is working on accelerating the processes of decarbonisation, digitalisation and automation of European industry, enabling the expansion of competitive production in the EU. Targeted support for technological competitiveness based on own production capacities is essential for strengthening strategic resilience, which is well in line with the currently developing cluster policies.

The 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the European Cluster Conference is a unique opportunity to discuss current and future priorities for cluster policies and developments to make the green and digital transitions happen whilst strengthening the EU's economic resilience. It will foster networking and it is an opportunity to build connections between Europe's value chains, clusters and ecosystems in view of future interregional and cross-sectoral cooperation.

The conference is organised by the European Commission with the support of the [European Cluster Collaboration Platform](#) (ECCP) and in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic under the [Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU](#).

The conference will take place on **26 – 27 September 2022**, at O2 Universum, Českomoravská 2345/17, Prague 9.

Registration to the conference and additional information can be found at

[europeanclusterconference.eu](http://europeanclusterconference.eu).

### **Winners of cluster awards will be announced at a ceremony**

Participants to the conference will have the chance to vote for the “**European Cluster Manager of the Year**” and the “**European Cluster Partnership of the Year.**” Voting will first take place online from 14 September until 22 September, when the shortlisted nominees’ videos highlighting their achievements will be available for voting on the digital hub of the European Cluster Conference. Subsequently, the participants to the conference will also have the opportunity to cast their vote onsite. The event's highlight will include a ceremony with the announcement of the winners of these two awards.

List of nominees:

#### European Cluster Manager of the Year

- Kristina Sermuksnyte-Alesiuniene, Cluster Agrifood Lithuania
- Veronica Elena Bocci, Cluster DITECFER
- Xavier Amores Bravo, Catalan Water Partnership Cluster

#### European Cluster Partnership of the Year

- [S3FOOD](#) – Digital Innovation in the Agrifood Industry
- [REMOBILISE](#) - Regrouping Mobility clusters to develop Skills and Exchange
- [PIMAP+](#) - Photonics for Advanced Manufacturing Plus

### **Site visits will show cluster partnerships in practice**

Participants to the conference will also have an opportunity to take part in site visits. The options are the following and only the ones with the higher interest will be organised:

- **Mechatronics Cluster:** A platform for cooperation specialising in areas such as additive manufacturing R&D. The site trip will include visits to the **Welding School** – a training and certification institution with a long tradition and well-equipped workplaces unique in the entire Pilsen region, and **COMTES FHT** – a private research organisation, which, thanks to its top laboratories and researchers, significantly contributes to the development of R&D topics in manufacturing processes.
- **Nanoprogess (Nanotechnology) and Clutex (Technical textiles) clusters.** The site visit to the two clusters in the Liberec region will include guided tours through the Institute **for Nanomaterials, Advanced Technology and Innovation (Cxl)** and **Centre for the Development of Engineering Research (VÚTS)**. The participants will get acquainted with top class R&D and industrial infrastructures and the unique equipment of the Nanoprogess nanotech lab.

- **Czech Optical Cluster:** A visit including the presentation and visit to the premises of the **HiLASE Centre** (Hi-tech laser research centre focused on industrial applications) and **ELI Beamlines** (leading laser research centre and part of the Extreme Light infrastructure). In addition, guests will be able to see the laser laboratories through the visitor gallery and visit the experimental halls.
- **Czech Implant Cluster:** A visit to a medical cluster focusing on implantology. The visit includes a visit to the Czech SME **Beznoska** with a tour of the company production facilities specialising in R&D, design and manufacture of implants, tools and surgical utensils for orthopaedic surgery and traumatology.
- **Czech Institute of Informatics, Robotics and Cybernetics:** the visit will include a **guided tour of the Testbed for Industry 4.0. The Institute at the Czech Technical University is the applicant for the European Digital Innovation Hub in Prague**, specialising in AI.

Participants can select their preferred site visits on the [registration platform](#).

### **ECCP Matchmaking event**

On 26 September 2022 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., prior to the European Cluster Conference, a **Matchmaking event** will be held in a physical format in a dedicated room of the conference venue. This event will gather cluster organisations and SMEs to explore trade, investment and partnering opportunities and to develop connections between Europe's value chains and ecosystems. The matchmaking event offers a dedicated framework to find potential business partners at all stages of the supply chain. It is the right place for anyone looking for future project partners or specific products or services. [Registrations](#) are open until 25 September.

### **Exhibition**

Before the start of the conference, an **exhibition** will be opened, which can be visited during the entire event. The exhibition will be ceremonially opened by Jozef Síkela, Minister of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic, and Maive Rute, Deputy Director General DG GROW, European Commission. Among the exhibitors will be the European Commission, European and national cluster associations, clusters from many countries, and other related initiatives. The opening of the exhibition will be accompanied by a **guided tour for press** and VIPs.

### **About the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)**

The [European Cluster Collaboration Platform](#) is a vibrant online community helping cluster organisations across Europe and beyond to connect, communicate and collaborate. It provides a unique one-stop-shop for news, opportunities and collaboration for industrial clusters across Europe, boosting the visibility and showcasing the impact of European clusters in cutting-edge industries and expanding markets throughout the world.

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