



M E D I C N E S T

Deliverable 2.1 – Information Kit Template

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ABSTRACT

This report contains practical information for the project partners to support the exchange process.

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides practical information for the project partners to support the exchange process.

2. PROGRAM RULES

This chapter provides a summary of the most important program rules and serves as a quick reference for the partnership. It must however be emphasized that the documents available on the ECCP website are always leading.

2.1 Eligibility criteria

The first step before registering on the IT Tool, either as a candidate visiting organization or as a candidate host organisation is to check the eligibility criteria. The eligibility criteria have been categorised into three types: A. Legal; B. Age; and C. Geographical.

A. Legal Criteria

The types of eligible organisations are:

- All cluster organisations and business network organisations from COSME participating countries
- Scaling-up support organisations from COSME participating countries that are cluster members,
- SMEs from a COSME participating country that are cluster members,
- Training providers from a COSME participating country that are cluster members (as Host organisation only),
- Large companies from a COSME participating country that are cluster members (as Host organisation only),
- Public authorities at both regional and city/administration levels that are active in a cluster from a COSME participating country (as Host organisation only).

B. Age Criteria

The user that represents the host or visiting organisation must be minimum 18 years old in order to have the legal capacity to sign agreements and to participate.

C. Geographical Criteria

Visiting and host organisations must have their 'permanent residence' in an EU Member State or in any of the other COSME participating countries to participate in CXC. 'Permanent residence' is defined as:

- The place where the applicant organisation is registered;
- If an organisation has several registered establishments in different EU Member States or other participating countries, the user should choose the country where he/she is based as his/her permanent residence when registering on the IT Tool.

2.2 The application process

A candidate host or visiting organization that fulfils the eligibility criteria as described in 4.1 can register to the CXC program. The registration is done by creating a profile on the CXC IT Tool and submitting it for validation. The profile will be validated by the partnership which is assigned to the profile. A candidate can either choose a partnership or request an automatic assignment.

In case the profile does not fulfil the quality requirements, the partnership can ask for an update or even reject the application. If validated however, the next step in the process can start.

2.3 The matching process

Both visiting and host organisations with a validated profile can start searching for a matching organization. This process can be supported by the assigned partnership(s). But the final responsibility for validating the match lays with the visiting and host organization.

2.4 Exchange building

During this phase the Commitment to Quality has to be written and signed by all involved parties. The Commitment to Quality is an agreement between the parties (HO, VO, HOP & VOP) on the details and terms of the exchange.

In case of a group exchange, the host organization is taking the lead for writing the Commitment to Quality. The host organization has also to take care that an Exchange Group is created in the IT tool by clicking the “Add to Exchange Group” button.

The details of the signing procedure are explained in the IT Tool user manual.

After the visiting and host organisations have signed the Commitment to Quality, the assigned partnership(s) can validate and also sign the document.

The financial agreement has to be prepared by both visiting organization and assigned partnership and then uploaded to the IT tool.

The assigned partnerships have to set the actual exchange date in the IT tool and mark the exchange as ready to start.




2.5 Exchange finalisation

After the actual exchange has taken place, both the visiting and host organization have to complete the final activity report. This report will be reviewed by the assigned partnership(s) and if approved, validated. Only after validation of the final activity report, the lump sum can be paid to the visiting organization.

3. INFORMATION ON THE MEDIC NEST PARTNERSHIPS

3.1 IMAGO MOL CLUSTER – North East Romania

NORTH-EAST REGION OF ROMANIA

- 
The region of North-East Romania is the largest development region of Romania in terms of population (aprox. 4 mil people) and area (36.850 km²).
- 
 North-East Region creates, transfers and implements innovation in a systemic manner, mainly in the identified areas with potential for specialization.
- 
 One of the main identified areas with **potential for specialization in the North-East Region**, according to the **RIS3 Regional Strategy**, is **health**.

THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IN THE REGION



Health spending in Romania increased in the last decade but remains the second lowest in the EU as a whole – both as a share of GDP and per capita. Per capita spending on prevention is also the second lowest in the EU. Romania trains large numbers of health care practitioners, but emigration of medical staff has contributed to health workforce shortages in the country, and the numbers of physicians and nurses per capita are well below the EU averages.

Romania operates a compulsory social health insurance system with strong state stewardship: The Ministry of Health is responsible for overall governance of the social health insurance (SHI) system, while the National Health Insurance House administers and regulates the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF). Both the Ministry and the National Health Insurance House are locally represented through district public health authorities and district health insurance funds. In the SHI system, district health insurance funds buy services from health care providers (general practitioners (GPs), specialist practices, laboratories, hospitals and so on) at the local level. Health care providers are also paid by the Ministry of Health under national health programmes. These programmes cover priority areas such as maternal and child health, infectious disease control, mental health and screening.

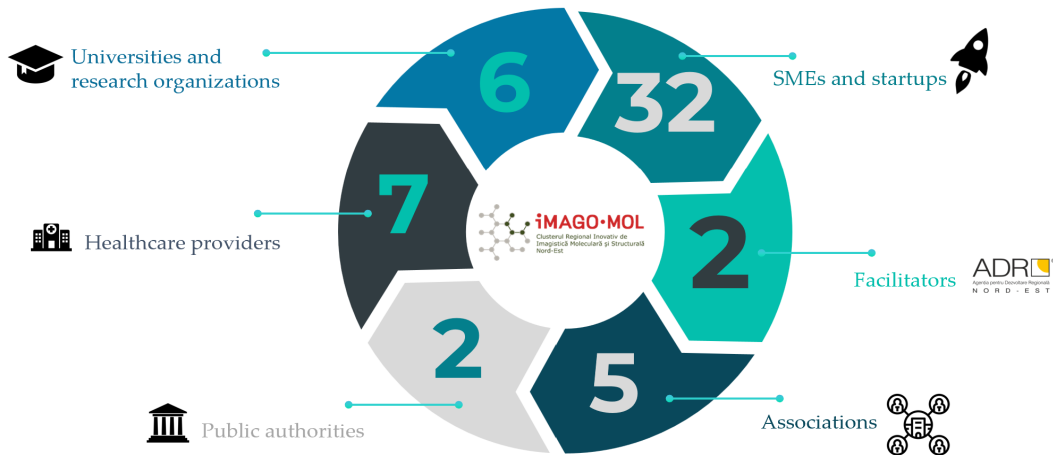
The informatic systems are insufficiently developed and integrated. Shortages faced during the pandemic stimulated the creation of several electronic information systems to manage the stretched health resources better. This situation creates an opportunity for the development of the private sector in this domain, as there is a high demand in the market. Consequently, the turnover of the SMEs operating in health & social care has constantly increase between 2016 and 2019.

IMAGO-MOL CLUSTER

The Innovative Regional Cluster of Molecular and Structural Imaging North-East (IMAGO-MOL) is the first cluster created in Romania in the field of health, particularly important for the development prospects of this sector in the North-East Region. The information and communication technology sector are also essential in supporting the development of advanced imaging.



54 cluster members representing the healthcare ecosystem from the **North-East region of Romania**



UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITIONS:

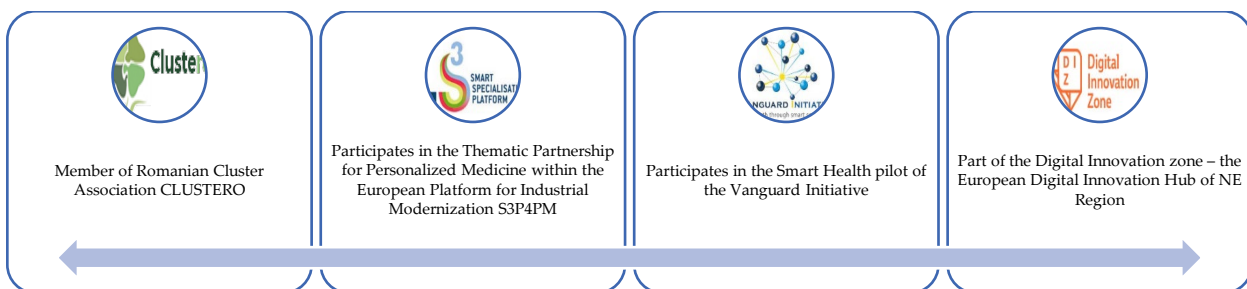
- The only cluster in RO focused on medical imaging
- Health-Tech companies & startups offering products/services such as tele-health solutions, tele-radiology, patients' platforms, AI medical software for medical imaging & radiotherapy
- Medical & Tech RDI & academic institutions with state-of –the art infrastructure for translational medicine, TTO's on medical & tech fields

MEMBERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS:

The collaborations that the IMAGO-MOL Cluster has established with international partners through consortia set up to carry out various projects or to exchange experiences, determine the geographical area of the market in which the cluster operates, in accordance with its specific innovation cluster, oriented towards health innovation research and development activities.

At the level of Cluster2Cluster cooperation, IMAGO-MOL collaborates with Canceropole Lyon Auvergne Rhône-Alpes, CLARA (France), Pharmapolis Cluster of Hungary, BioLAGO e.V. the health network (Germany), Hellenic BioCluster (HBio) (Greece), MEDVIA (Belgium), OuluHealth (Finland), Secpho (Spain), RTD Cluster (Bosnia and Herzegovina), bioPmed / Bioindustry Park (Italy), Health City Medellin (Columbia).

The member companies of the IMAGO-MOL Cluster that export services / products are present on the following international markets: Western Europe, especially Austria, Germany and France, respectively North America.



3.2 MEDVIA – Flanders

MEDVIA

The innovation cluster for better health

MEDVIA, which started last year under the name of flanders.healthTech is the Flemish health tech cluster. It is an industry driven network set up as a public private partnership with the Flemish government, stimulating innovations in healthcare. MEDVIA facilitates and support collaborations between companies, knowledge centres, universities, hospitals and other healthcare institutions. All our 100+ members are committed to jointly support innovation for better health at the crossroads of medical biotechnology, medical technology and digital technology.

The cluster is active in a region with a strong life sciences industry including pharma, biotech, medical and digital technologies.

Defining Flanders' life sciences industry as diverse is an understatement. From young start-ups to established local firms and multinationals: the entire value chain – from research and discovery to development and commercialization – is represented in Belgium's northern region.

Thanks to fertile cross-pollination between biotech, medtech, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, Flanders offers a unique life sciences ecosystem that is underpinned by a robust financing landscape as well as a supportive government.

Looking for a chart-topping R&D environment to take your life sciences innovations to new heights? Look no further! Within the European Union, Belgium and its northern region of Flanders rank:

- #1 for clinical trial procedure speed (source: pharma.be, 2019 facts and figures);
- #1 for biotech market capitalization (source: flanders.bio, 2016);
- #2 for clinical trial applications per capita (source: pharma.be, 2019 facts and figures);
- #2 for pharma and biotech patent applications per capita (source: pharma.be, 2020 facts and figures);
- #3 for number (bio)pharma researchers per capita (source: pharma.be, 2019 facts and figures).

Innovating in life science is practically a tradition in Flanders. Alongside the local community of biopharma companies, biotechnological firms and agribusinesses – both large enterprises and SMEs –, Flanders' universities are the main driver of R&D.

In fact, each of the region's five universities has strong and innovative life sciences departments, particularly the universities of Leuven (KU Leuven) and Ghent (UGent). What's more, these higher education institutions excel in promoting tech transfer and adopt an innovative approach to contract research collaboration with local and international companies.

To top it all off, Flanders' universities – which rank among the world's best and most innovative – ensure your life sciences business of a steady influx of talented people to work and cocreate with. As such, every year, Flanders' higher education system accounts for:

Three of Flanders' four strategic research centers are the perfect match to support your life sciences R&D and innovation efforts:

- VIB focuses on biotech in all its facets. Its team of scientists from numerous countries has been responsible for major scientific breakthroughs in cancer research, immunology, neuro- and microbiology, medical biotech, etc. In addition, VIB provides advanced life sciences training and coaching.
- imec concentrates on nanotech and digital technology. It plays a crucial role in designing electronics for pharma and healthcare, for example, all while providing access to leading expertise in e-health and e-care innovations.
- VITO dedicates its research to cleantech and sustainable development, including the field of sustainable health. The research center works, among other developments, on new applications, measurement methods and biomarkers for preventive healthcare and health management.

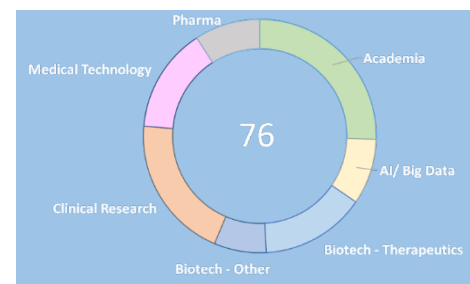
These strategic research centers are proven sources of innovations, business-driven developments and spin-offs. They have the financial means and experts needed to turn science into viable products.

3.3 HBIO



The Hellenic Biocluster (HBio) is the first and largest Health & Life Sciences cluster in Greece. HBio is a strong innovation moderator, connecting and supporting industry and academia partners to develop innovative and impact science.

By creating and fostering dynamic synergies, HBio actively contributes to partner and sector growth and ensures a coherent and positive innovation climate for the bio industry in Greece. HBio delivers connectivity to the global science and technology frontiers, with the vision to continue being a catalyst, adding value to the innovation performance of our partners and Greece as a whole. HBio members are active across all industry sectors including biotech, pharma, diagnostics and medtech and have complementary skills and services.



Established in 2006, HBio brings together innovation-intensive companies with an international outlook and is a frequent interlocutor of the Hellenic government on matters of policy design in the areas of innovation support and life sciences strategy.

HBio Activities and Services:

- **Capacity building:** HBio provides advisory services to partners for the development of commercialization pathways, digital awareness building and mindset shift. HBio has established career development mentoring and training programmes in order to add new skillsets to the bioscience workforce.
- **Business development:** HBio seeks and supports business development opportunities between partners and national and international stakeholders.
- **Policy making:** HBio is an active member of EU bodies advocating for bioscience and innovation ensuring global best practice governance and contributing to the creation of a coherent and positive innovation climate for the bioindustry in Europe.

The Life Sciences & Biotech industry in Greece constitutes a strategic national industry with significant potential for new investments.

Growing local market and sector participants: Pharmaceutical and medical devices sales in Greece are expected to steadily rise until 2023, according to the latest estimations. In pharmaceutical sales there was an increase of 35% from 2015 to 2019, whereas in medical devices sales there was an 4.1% increase from 2015 to 2019. Approximately 150 pharmaceutical companies and more than 50 manufacturers of medical devices operate in the country (source: europa.eu, Eurostat).

Innovation: During the last years, there is a constant growing trend in the total number of submitted patent applications & patent grants (in 2011 there were 78 patent applications and 29 patent grants, whereas in 2021 there were 198 patent applications and 68 patent grants, according to the European Patent Office), especially in those related to Medical, Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals fields. The investment interest is focused mainly on R&D and clinical trials; and big pharmaceutical companies have already announced some ambitious investment plans in these areas. Greece, recognizing the importance of the sector both for the economy and for the society, has introduced significant tax incentives to support such investments.

Outstanding Talent: The excellent quality of the Greek innovation ecosystem, as well as the highly knowledgeable and skilled Greek scientific workforce are two factors that should also be highlighted. In 2019/2020 academic year, 9.1% of the total of the undergraduate students at Greek universities were studying in Life Sciences and Biotech Schools / Departments, whereas 13.7% of the registered startups within “Elevate Greece”, the country’s start-up platform, operate in the Life Sciences sector.

Clinical trials: The introduction of a new EU regulation, which considerably simplifies and enhances transparency in the process for conducting clinical trials, has led to an increase in the number of clinical trials in Greece (from 134 in 2017 to 191 in 2021 according to the Hellenic Association of Pharmaceutical Companies - SFEE). The total number of clinical trials (of all phases / stages), conducted in Greece from 2002 to 2021 was ~3,500, among which 2,000 were completed.

3.4 BIOTECYL - Castilla y León



Biotecyl was founded in 2013 to become the benchmark forum and to represent the range of Healthcare activities in Castilla y León.

Our mission is to contribute the improvement of healthcare in Castilla y León through innovation, developing joint collaboration projects, sharing good practices and coordinating action in order to form a highly competitive sector both nationally and internationally. Our aim is to make the Community of Castilla y León a magnet for businesses in the field of healthcare, creating a nexus between our members and the different actors in the area.

The lines of **activity** of Biotecyl are:

🚦 Innovation and entrepreneurship

Helping to create spin-offs and to develop solutions

🚦 Visibility and internationalization

Promoting regional companies to position them in benchmark markets

🚦 Business development and competitiveness

Giving technical, commercial and economic support to Biotecyl members

🚦 Networking and collaboration

Promoting cooperation between innovative companies in the field of healthcare

In view of the profile of the members of BIOTECYL, which, from a business point of view, has been shown to be mainly active in the production of pharmaceutical products, as well as R&D in biotechnology, we can characterise its market as follows:

- ❖ **Health Care System**, with public and private hospitals as the main customers of the drug development companies.
- ❖ From the point of view of **biotechnology**, other sectors interrelated with the health sector, in addition to the health sector, such as the agri-food and cosmetics sectors, and specifically focused on the applications of red biotechnology and green biotechnology.

The health sector in Castilla y León, as well as the members of the Cluster, are small and medium-sized companies that generate products for pharmaceutical companies and/or directly for the healthcare system. In the coming years, the potential market of the Cluster's business base is expected to increase, combined with the wide possibilities and financing frameworks (public and private) to carry out research and innovation projects.

In the design and manufacture of pharmaceuticals, the market share of companies in Castilla y León is relatively high and the goal is to further increase the national and international market share of the large pharma's, most of which are present in the Spanish market.

Castilla y León accounts for 7.8% of the national biotechnology sector. If we look at companies dedicated exclusively to biotech, the percentage drops to 3.5%, which supports the transversality and the necessary collaboration between the sector in the region with other sectors of economic activity.

In the health sector, research platforms stand out, followed by diagnostics and personalized medicine. In the agri-food sector, veterinary medicine; and in the industrial field, products and processes related to bioprocesses or bioproducts.

On the other hand, and in order to endorse the relevance of the actions to be carried out by BIOTECYL Cluster and the potential of the market in which its members operate, it is necessary to take into account the main trends of the Health sector, both at national and international level and that, together with the profile of the Cluster members, show the development potential of the sector, that aligns with:

- Increasing development of precision medicine
- This personalized medicine requires technologies (ICT, Big Data) and digital tools
- Development of new biological treatments of a new generation.
- New trial designs supported by digital tools
- Development of new targeted therapies against pathologies without therapeutic alternative
- Increasing collaboration of public-private biomedicine

4. INFORMATION FOR VISITING AND HOST ORGANIZATIONS

In order to attract potential candidates for CXC we have created a template with concise information to be used by the partners and which is also displayed on the Medic-Nest website:

What is ClusterXchange?

ClusterXchange is a new pilot scheme to support short-term exchanges to better connect Europe's industrial ecosystems.

It facilitates transnational cooperation, peer learning, networking and innovation uptake between actors of different industrial clusters. It is implemented with support from cluster organisations that have teamed up in the European [Cluster Partnerships | Excellence](#), which are transnational cluster partnerships selected under the European Cluster Excellence Programme as part of the European Commission's COSME programme →

Medic Nest is a transnational cluster partnership / a consortium of 4 clusters (Imago-Mol Cluster, Medvia, Hellenic BioCluster, Biotecyl), which has been selected under the ECEP in 2022.

What is an exchange?

An exchange in ClusterXchange (CXC) is a trip abroad by a visiting organization to a host organization to explore collaboration and opportunities.

Exchanges can be used to:

1. Learn from actors in another cluster
2. Explore growth opportunities in new markets
3. Adopt new technologies, digitalisation and green low-carbon solutions
4. Invest in strategic interregional collaboration

Activities during an exchange

The nature of each exchange exercise may follow different specific objectives within a broader approach aiming at the consolidation and/or the creation of new value chains across Europe.

The types of activities visiting and host organisations may carry out during an exchange are:

1. Individual or grouped capacity building
2. Sharing of knowledge, experience and information in specific areas
3. Project development, innovation and research and development
4. Market research
5. Networking, identifying new partners and creating business opportunities

Who can be a visitor?

- SMEs
- Research institutes
- Technology centers

Who can be the host?

- SMEs
- Research institutes
- Technology parks
- Public authorities and Universities
- Large companies
- Training providers

Main conditions:

- Registration in the CXC tool (with our assistance @clusters within the Medic Nest consortium)
- Travel time is a minimum of 3 days (excluding the day of arrival and departure) and a maximum of 1 month
- Travel expenses are reimbursed in the form of a lump sum (which differs depending on the country of destination and in full only if the duration of the visit is 5 days, otherwise the amount is reduced by half)
- An organization can be a one-time visitor (one person)
- Travel must take place within the EU or COSME associated countries
- The host organization must be a member of a cluster

What does it include for me, as an organization?

A CXC may include: training / learning activities, market prospecting, exchange of knowledge and experience, activities for the development of joint projects, business mission, participation in fairs and exhibitions.

If you are interested in benefiting from CXC as a VISITOR organization, please complete the following questionnaire that will help us build a successful CXC together:

1. What is the event (training, conference, congress, workshop, exhibition, B2B, etc.) that you would be interested in participating in between July 2022 - January 2024?
2. What is the estimated date and period of deployment?

If you are interested in benefiting from CXC as a HOST organization, please complete the following questionnaire that will help us build a successful CXC together:

1. What is the event (training, conference, congress, workshop, exhibition, B2B, etc.) that you organize between May 2022 - January 2024 and at which you would like to attend?
2. What is the estimated date and period of deployment?