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D5.5 Progress Report on the European Strategic Cluster Partnerships

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1 Introduction

The European Observatory for Clusters and Industrial Change (#EOCIC) is an initiative of the European Commission's Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Directorate-General. The Observatory provides a single access point for statistical information, analysis, and mapping of clusters and cluster policy in Europe, aimed at European, national, regional and local policy-makers, as well as cluster managers and representatives of SME intermediaries.

In the context of this project, the current document, "**Progress Report on the European Strategic Cluster Partnerships**", corresponds to deliverable D5.5 of *WP5 - Provision of advisory support service to European Strategic Cluster Partnerships and promotion of their networking*.

1.1 Purpose of the document

The objective of deliverable D5.5 *Progress Report on the European Strategic Cluster Partnerships* is to provide an overview of the second periodic assessment, good practices and lessons learnt achieved by the European Strategic Cluster Partnerships for Going International (ESCP-4i) funded under the call COS-CLUSINT-2016-03-01 and the first assessment for the European Strategic Cluster Partnerships for Smart Specialisation Investments (ESCP-S3) funded under the call COS-CLUSTPARTNS-2017-3-02. Both ESCP-4i and ESCP-S3 are part of the European Union's (EU) Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) (COSME Programme).

For the development of this deliverable, the EOCIC conducted two online surveys: one dedicated to the ESCP-4i and the other to the ESCP-S3. The survey aimed to involve the 23 ESCP-4i and the nine ESCP-S3. Both surveys were developed and implemented in collaboration with the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) to benefit from the synergies between both initiatives.

The present Progress report represent the second monitoring exercise implemented for the ESCP-4i and the first monitoring exercise implemented for the ESCP-S3.

The survey included quantitative and qualitative questions to allow for sufficient contextualisation of the analysis. It was structured into sections that explored the activities, barriers, difficulties and first achievements of the ESCP-4i and ESCP-S3, as well as the benefits obtained by the participating cluster organisations and their SME members for the ESCP-4i. As for the ESCP-S3, it is considered too early to analyse the benefits. The majority of questions combined a quantitative indicator with a text box where the respondents were invited to provide additional information. The structure of the survey for the ESCP-4i and ESCP-S3 is presented in Annex A and Annex B, respectively.

An online platform called *Limesurvey* was used to conduct the survey and to provide a more user-friendly interface. The survey was designed to take around 50 minutes to complete, considering the time to provide qualitative information. A first invitation to fill out the survey was sent by email on the 13th May 2019 to all 23 ESCP-4i partnerships. The responses were then closely monitored and follow-up emails were sent in the following weeks to those who did not answer. The survey was closed on the 5th June 2019. In total, 19 ESCP-4i partnerships provided complete surveys (over 80% of the total partnerships). Of these, 12 were ESCP-4i strand-1 (first generation) and seven were ESCP-4i strand-2 (second generation).

As for the ESCP-S3, a first invitation to fill the survey was sent by email on the 13th May 2019. The responses were then closely monitored and follow-up emails were sent in the following weeks to those who did not answer. The survey was closed on the 28th May 2019. In total, eight out of nine ESCP-S3 submitted their survey.

Overall, the number of respondents is regarded as sufficient to conduct a critical analysis of the data. As previously mentioned, this is the second monitoring exercise for the ESCP-4i and the first for ESCP-S3 conducted by the Observatory. The trends currently observed are likely to change over time.

It is important to note that ESCP-S3, ESCP-4i strand-1, and ESCP-4i strand-2 have different objectives, as reflected in the assessment made for the questions included in the survey. This variation in their objectives means that the comparison between strands can be misleading. It is necessary to take into consideration this difference when reading the report.

1.2 Structure of the document

After this Introduction, the document is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 - Activities, barriers and achievements of the ESCP-4i, which presents the activities implemented by the ESCP-4i and the results achieved so far, as well as the barriers and difficulties faced;
- Chapter 3 - Benefits for the ESCP-4i members, which presents the SMEs perceived advantages of belonging to an ESCP-4i;
- Chapter 4 - Activities of ESCP-S3, which presents the different activities implemented by the ESCP-S3 assessed from three different objectives;
- Chapter 5 – Barriers and benefits of ESCP-S3, which presents the SMEs perceived barriers and advantages of belonging to an ESCP-S3;
- Chapter 6 - Lessons learnt, which aims to provide orientation towards the future for both ESCP-4i and ESCP-S3;
- Annex A and Annex B presents the survey applied to ESCP-4i and ESCP-S3, respectively.

1.3 Context of the European Strategic Cluster Partnerships

In 2014, the European Commission (EC) launched the European Strategic Cluster Partnerships (ESCPs) under the COSME programme. The objective of this initiative is to boost economic growth and competitiveness in Europe by means of intensifying collaboration across regions and sectors.

Two ESCP categories have been established, with specific objectives:

- **European Strategic Cluster Partnerships for Smart Specialisation Investments (ESCP-S3):** to foster the collaboration of enterprises, especially SMEs, as well as their interaction with technology centres (both within clusters and across regional and sectoral silos) to generate joint actions and investment projects in common smart specialisation priority areas linked to industrial modernisation and to help improving their business environment.
- **European Strategic Cluster Partnerships for Going International (ESCP-4i):** to develop and implement joint cluster internationalisation strategies to support SME internationalisation towards third countries, thereby strengthening European SMEs access to specific third markets and initiating a long-term cooperation agenda with strategic partners in third countries.

To date, the EC has launched the following calls targeting ESCPs:

- COS-CLUSTER-2014-3-03: Cluster Go International;
- COS-CLUSINT-2016-03-01: Cluster Go International;
- COS-CLUSTPARTNS-2017-3-02: European Strategic Cluster Partnerships for Smart Specialisation Investments;
- COS-CLUSINT-2017-03-6: Clusters Go International in the defence and security sector.

The outcomes within the framework of these calls are briefly described below:

- **First generation of ESCP-4i** (COS-CLUSTER-2014-3-03)

A total of 25 partnerships (15 co-funded and 10 voluntary) were selected under the call and were operational in 2016-2017. These partnerships involved approximately 150 cluster organisations in 23 EU member states. The partnerships organised 370 cluster-to-cluster (C2C) events and more than 3,000 business-to-business (B2B) meetings that resulted in approximately 40 Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) and 45 collaboration projects. Moreover, about 2,000 European SMEs benefited to some extent from the activities, achieving 85 business cooperation opportunities with international partners.

- **Second generation of ESCP-4i** (COS-CLUSINT-2016-03-01 and COS-CLUSINT-2017-03-6)

The call COS-CLUSINT-2016-03-01 resulted in 23 partnerships involving 123 cluster organisations in 25 EU member states, which were implemented in 2018-2019. Two additional ESCP-4i for dual use (defence and security sector) were approved under the call COS-CLUSINT-2017-03-6 and started working in October 2018. The total number of SMEs that participate is not yet available, but it can be noted that the participating clusters account to over 17,000 EU

SMEs. With regard to the 123 participating cluster organisations, the five most represented countries are France, Spain, Belgium, Germany and Italy.

Figure 1 illustrates the industrial focus of the ESCP-4i second-generation partnerships. It can be noted that among the partnerships, four focus on agro-food and packaging; energy and environment; and smart city, mobility and transport, respectively.

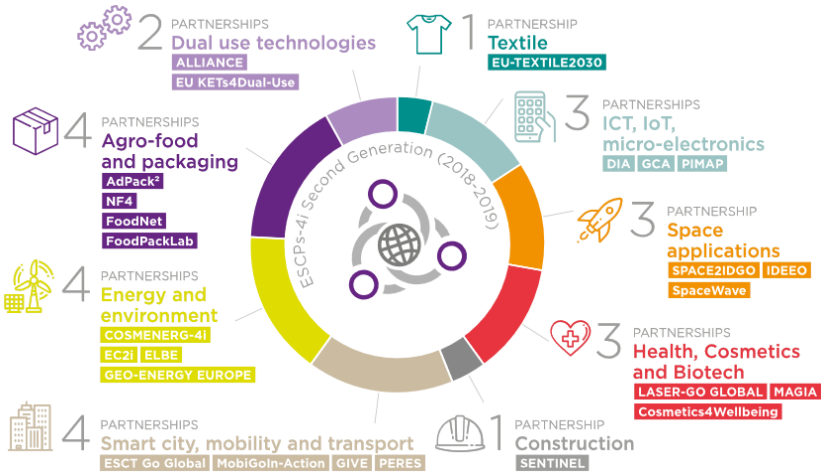

Figure 1 - Industrial focus of the ESCP-4i second generation partnerships
Source: European Cluster Collaboration Platform

- **First generation of ESCP-S3** (COS-CLUSTPARTNS-2017-3-02)

A total of nine ESCP-S3 were selected under this call. The nine partnerships, operational since autumn 2018, involve 57 partners from 19 COSME countries active in various industrial sectors. Figure 2 shows the industrial focus of the selected first generation of ESCP-S3.

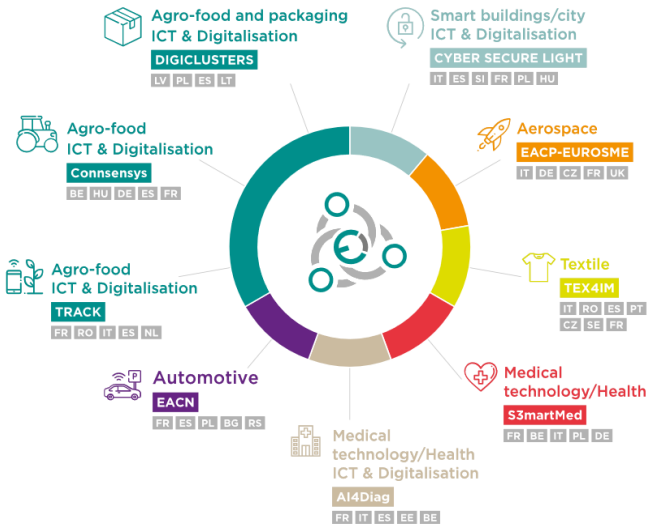

Figure 2 - Industrial focus of the ESCP-S3
Source: European Cluster Collaboration Platform

2 ESCP-4i activities, barriers and achievements

This chapter presents the activities implemented by the ESCP-4i and the achieved outcomes. It also describes the barriers and difficulties identified by the partnerships when implementing their activities.

2.1 Activities implemented by the ESCP-4i

This sub-chapter presents the responses provided by the ESCP-4i to the question "*Please indicate which kind of activities your ESCP-4i implemented so far*". As presented in Figure 3, each ESCP-4i had the opportunity to indicate all the applicable activities (multiple-answer question) among the pre-defined answers, as well as the opportunity to provide written feedback for each answer.

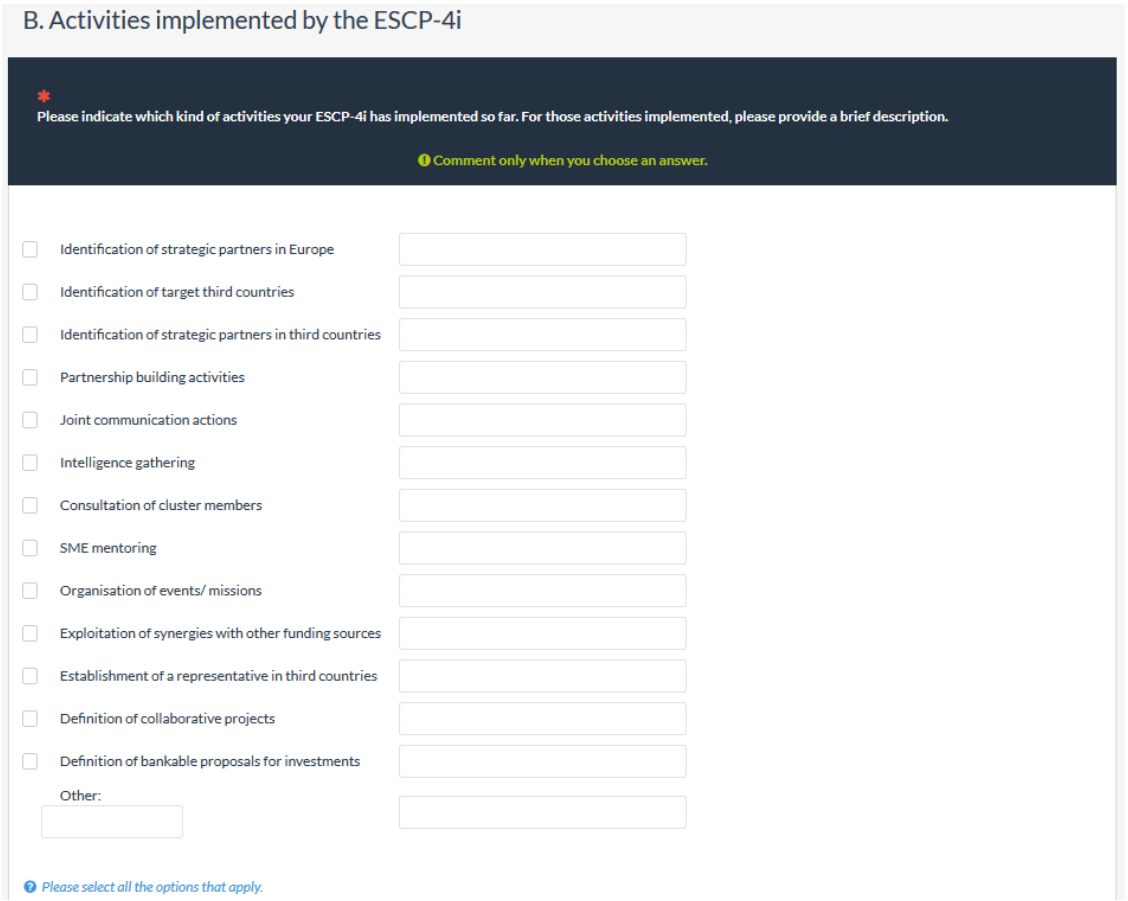

Figure 3 - Question on the activities implemented by ESCP-4i

Figure 4 shows the results derived from the question on the types of activities implemented by the ESCP-4i.

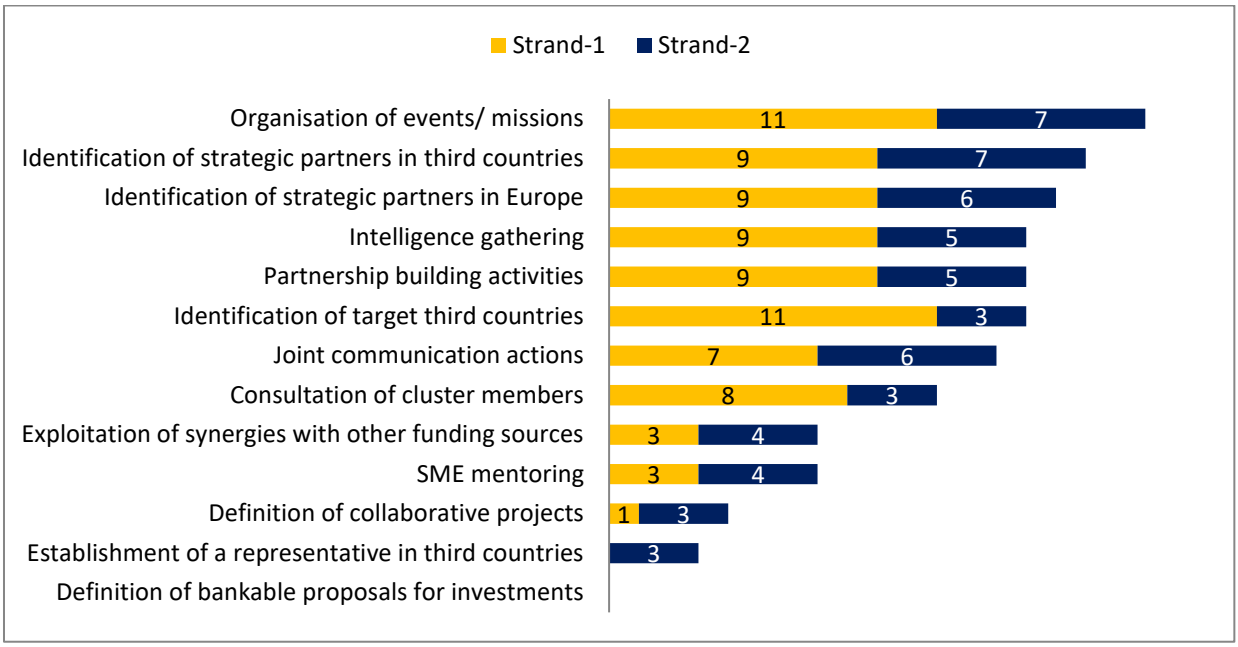

Figure 4 - Activities implemented by ESCP-4i

Overall, the most common activity implemented by the ESCP-4i is the organisation of events and missions, which was reported by 18 respondents. Specifically, 11 out of 12 strand-1 respondents and all strand-2 respondents reported having organised events and missions as one of their activities. The second most common activity reported was the identification of strategic partners in third countries, which received 16 responses. The following most mentioned activity is the identification of strategic partners in Europe with 15 responses.

Comparing the first survey (delivered during the first monitoring exercise) with this second survey, the main observed change is in the most common activities implemented, as the most common activity in the first survey was the identification of target markets in third countries and joint communication actions. As for the organisation of events and missions, this activity was reported by 17 respondents, representing the fourth most common activity in the first survey.

There are several less frequent activities identified from the survey responses, as these activities were implemented by just over 20% of the respondents, namely the definition of collaborative projects and the establishment of a representative in a third country.

Regarding the targeted third countries, the responses analysed depict a strong interest in the United States of America (USA) (with four responses) and China and Canada (with three responses each). Furthermore, other top ranked targeted countries identified by the ESCP-4i were Chile and Mexico (both with two responses), followed by Egypt, Brazil, India, Japan, Morocco, Kenya and Indonesia (each being mentioned once).

From the quantitative analysis, it is possible to observe the discrepancies of types of activities between strands. These differences are explained by the fact that the two strands have different goals and a different nature. Therefore, it is noteworthy that both strands went through different approaches in achieving their proposed objectives. To mention an example of such differences, the following information boxes present the cases of the MAGIA and DIA partnerships, from strand-1 and 2 ESCP-4i, respectively.

Diversified portfolio!

The **MAGIA** (ESCP-4i, strand-1) partnership has a diversified portfolio of activities, ranging from developing two fact-finding missions in third countries (i.e. China and the USA), then developing four study visits to help build bonds of trust. On top of that, a joint marketing strategy of the partnership was developed, mixed with a shared intelligence data strategy of the partner clusters regarding the targeted third countries. Four focus groups and a survey were organised with the cluster members of each of the four partners. Regarding events, MAGIA has jointly organised an event in partnership with other ESCP-4i.

Events as drivers!

The **DIA** (ESCP-4i, strand-2) partnership organised six events (i.e. workshops, matchmaking events, working group meetings). Three of them were regional events involving clusters, universities and SMEs. In particular, one of the regional events was aligned with an INNOSUP-01 project 'IoT4Industry' in order to learn from an international perspective the current market trends for ICT and Industry 4.0. Also, there were three international events, which targeted sectors involving digital industries. These events included aspects with potential in improving production techniques via digital advancements.

2.2 Barriers and difficulties faced by the ESCP-4i

This sub-chapter presents the responses provided by the ESCP-4i to the question "*Please select which kind of barriers/ difficulties your ESCP-4i faced during the implementation of activities*". As presented in Figure 5, this is a multiple-answer question with space to provide additional information for each selected answer.

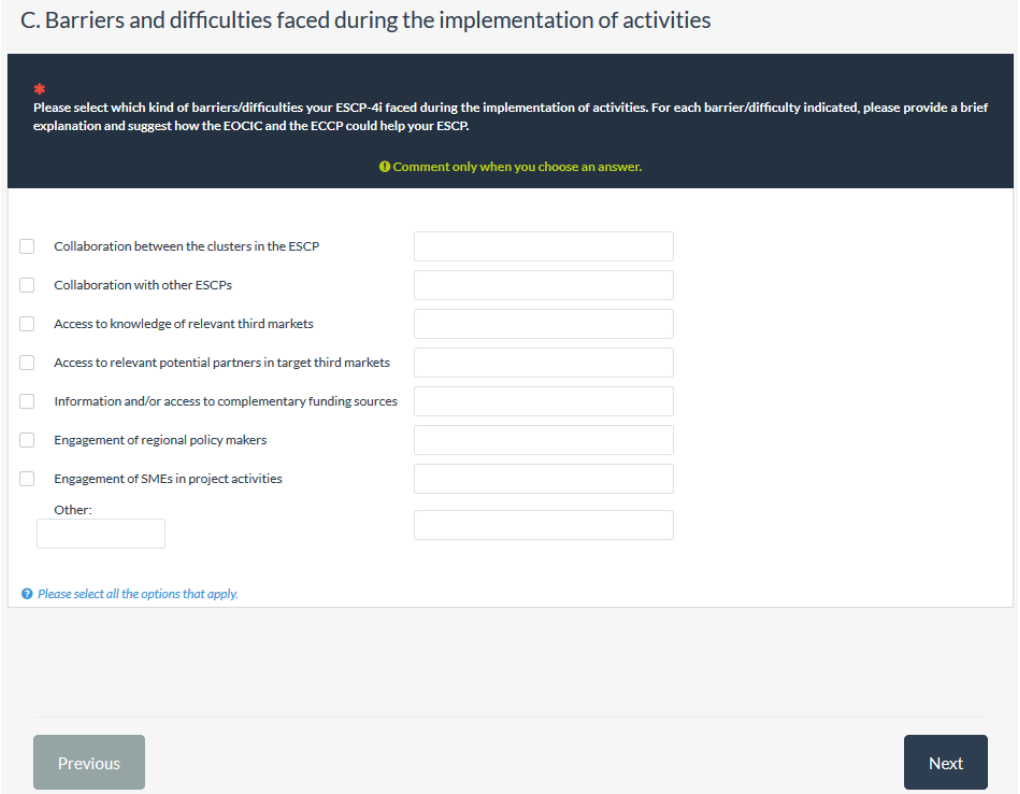

Figure 5 - Question on the barriers and difficulties faced by ESCP-4i during the implementation of activities

Figure 6 presents the quantitative results on the barriers and difficulties faced by the ESCP-4i.

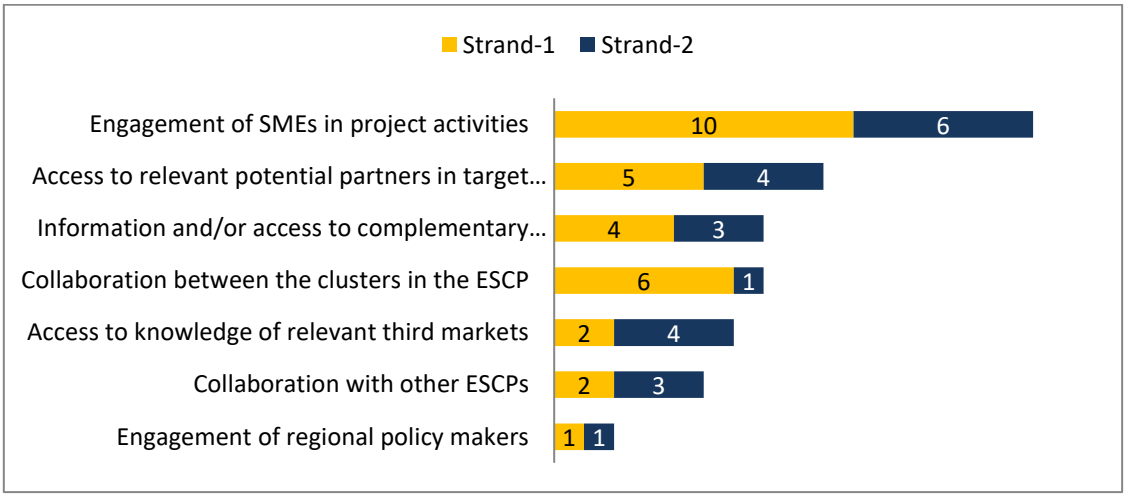

Figure 6 - Barriers and difficulties faced by ESCP-4i during the implementation of activities

In general, the majority of both ESCP-4i strands faced barriers and difficulties with the engagement of SMEs in project activities. This barrier was mentioned by 10 of the 12 strand-1 ESCP-4i partnerships, and six of the seven strand-2 partnerships. Other significant barriers are

the access to relevant potential partners in target third countries and the access to information on complementary funding sources.

Considering the information on qualitative responses, the lack of support and counselling endured by the SMEs were the main reported constraints for engaging the SMEs with the project activities of ESCP-4i. This cause was rooted from a variety of reasons including: cost-relevancy of international networking trips for SMEs, visa issues and readiness of the SMEs to internationalise.

As for the access to relevant potential targeted partners in third countries, the respondents highlighted the language barrier and lack of contacts with the third markets as the main constraints. Regarding the barriers for collaboration between the clusters in the ESCP, the main reason referred was related to different priorities and different levels of capabilities among partnerships.

It is also worth noting that different barriers between strand-1 and strand-2 were reported. Namely, half of strand-1 respondents reported barriers on collaboration between clusters in the ESCP, while only one partner of strand-2 reported this barrier. Likewise, four out of seven strand-2 respondents reported the barrier of access to knowledge of relevant third markets, while only two of 12 strand-1 respondents reported this barrier. Furthermore, all the respondents of the survey have faced at least one barrier or difficulty. Compared to the first survey, the results indicate similar barriers and difficulties.

2.3 Achievements accomplished by the ESCP-4i

The ESCP-4i have already reported several achievements, with a focus on cooperation agreements and collaborations, as described in the following sub-chapters.

2.3.1 Cooperation Agreements established by ESCP-4i

This sub-chapter presents the responses provided by the ESCP-4i regarding the cooperation agreements or MoU signed. As presented in Figure 7, ESCP-4i were asked to indicate the number of cooperation agreements or MoUs signed and, for each of them, to provide information regarding the counterpart: type of organisation, identification of the organisation and description of cooperation.

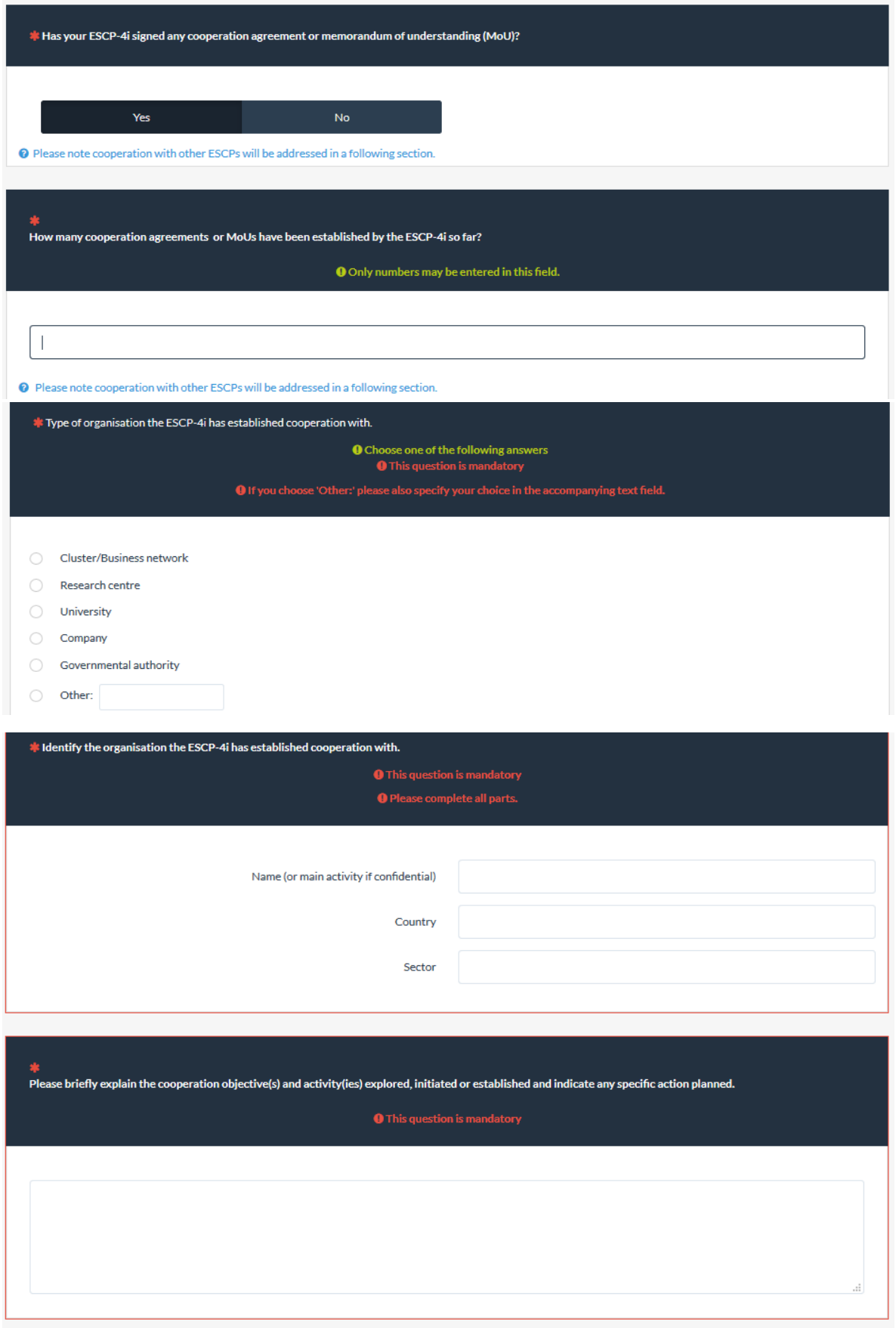

Figure 7 - Question on cooperation agreements or MoU signed by ESCP-4i

According to the survey, a total of 46 cooperation agreements have been established by 11 ESCP-4i partnerships, 24 of them being new agreements since the implementation of the first survey.

The qualitative assessment indicated that the majority of the cooperation agreements were signed with other clusters and business networks. In terms of the motivations for signing the cooperation agreements, the combination of different expertise for knowledge exchange was highlighted by one respondent.

Furthermore, four ESCP-4i reported on focusing the cooperation with countries in the EU. For example, AdPack² reported significant cooperation agreement progress with various clusters in five EU countries, including BalticNet-PlasmaTec from Germany, Nanoprogress from Czech Republic, InovCluster from Portugal, Packbridge from Sweden and Plastiwin from Belgium.

Regarding the reported agreements with third countries, EC2i reported to have signed three cooperation agreements, namely: the Marine Renewables from Canada, the Business Network for Offshore Wind from the USA and the Umore from China. Overall, the information collected from the survey has shown a positive rate of building new and solid cooperation agreements with other important innovation actors inside and outside the EU. Table 1 lists the number of cooperation agreements registered for the ESCP-4i as reported in the first and second surveys.

Table 1 - Number of cooperation agreements registered

ESCP-4i	Strand	Number of agreements reported	
		First Survey	Second Survey
GCA	*Strand-1*	0	3
MAGIA	*Strand-1*	0	1
ELBE	*Strand-1*	0	2
FoodNet	*Strand-1*	4	5
IDEEO	*Strand-1*	2	2
EC2i	*Strand-2*	4	5
MobiGoIn-Action	*Strand-2*	0	1
LASER-GO GLOBAL	*Strand-2*	2	10
MobiGoIn- Action	*Strand-2*	2	1
NF4	*Strand-2*	2	3
EU-TEXTILE2030	*Strand-2*	0	1
AdPack²	*Strand-2*	0	5
COSMENERG-4i	*Strand-2*	5	7
TOTAL		**21**	**46**

2.3.2 Collaborations initiated between ESCP-4i

This sub-chapter presents the responses provided by the ESCP-4i partnerships to the questions "*Has your ESCP initiated any dialogue/ collaboration with other ESCPs?*" and "*With which other ESCP has your ESCP-4i initiated any dialogue/ collaboration? Which is the purpose of the dialogue/ collaboration?*", as shown in Figure 8.

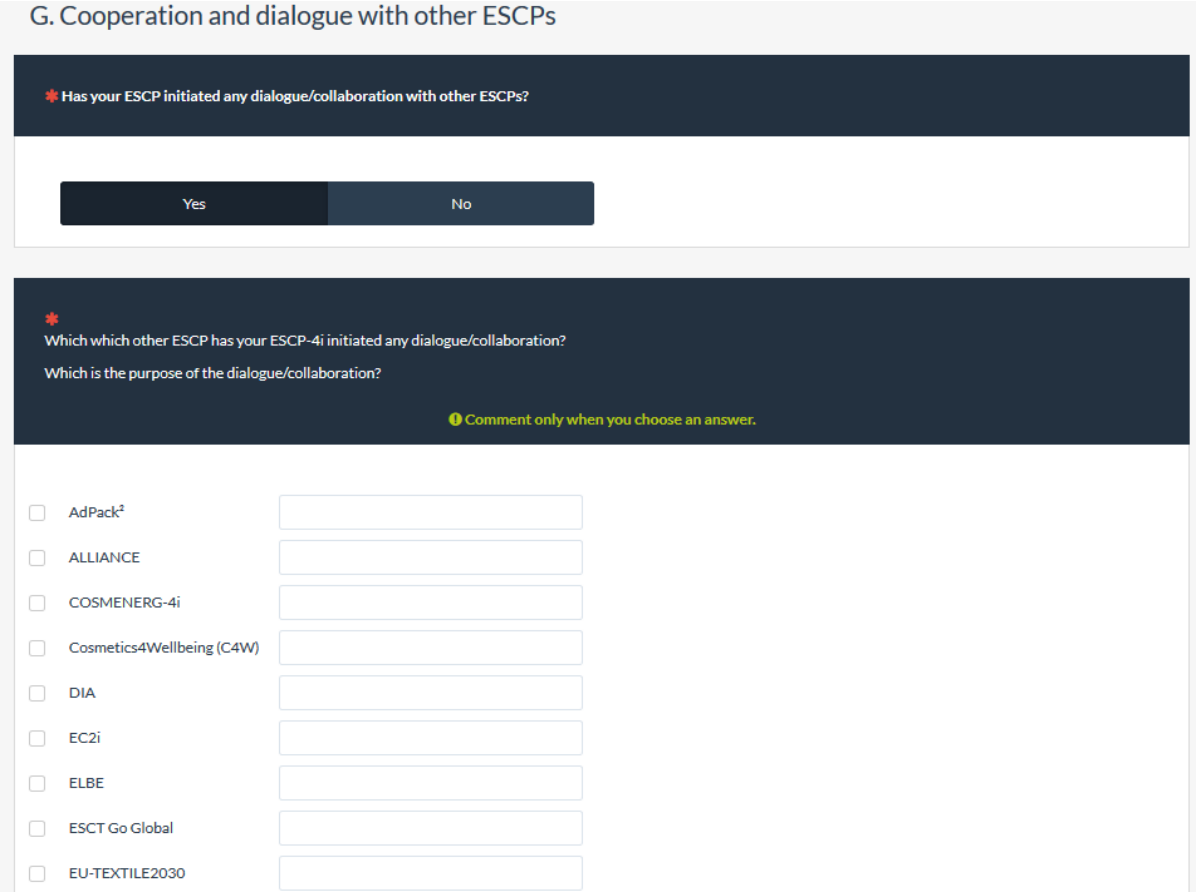

Figure 8 - Question on cooperation and dialogue with other ESCPs

In total, there were 36 different dialogue/collaboration activities identified among the ESCP-4i partnerships. Furthermore, all the 12 ESCP-4i reported to have initiated collaboration activities with other partnerships.

Based on the responses provided, most of the collaboration activities among the ESCP-4i partnerships are internationalisation collaboration missions with a third-country (i.e. China, the USA, among others). The other common activities identified are related to knowledge exchange. The knowledge exchange activities identified from the qualitative assessment mostly involve dialogue and exchange of useful information for internationalisation strategies. The other collaboration activities included more specific activities, such as the development of a joint panel session and the collaboration on dissemination activities.

The **MobiGoIn** partnership (ESCP-4i, strand-2) reported the highest number of initiated dialogue/collaboration activities among the ESCP-4i partnerships. The collaboration activities include knowledge exchange activities on international strategy and collaboration to third country.

Table 2 presents all the inter-partnership collaborations achieved. It should be noted that there are several collaborations reported unilaterally, which means that the perception of collaboration also varies among the partnerships.

Table 2 - Collaboration registered between ESCP-4i partnerships

ESCP-4i	Collaborate with	Description of Identified Collaboration among ESCP-4
EC2i	AdPack²	Collaboration in China mission in 2019
	NF4	Collaboration in China mission in 2019
	SmartCity Tech*	Collaboration in US mission in 2019
	SPACE2IDGO	Collaboration in China mission in 2019
EU-TEXTILE 2030	MobiGoIn-Action	Innosup proposals based on common interests for new value chains
	ALLIANCE	Collaboration with partners in common
	AdPack²	Participated in an Innosup proposal and be in contact for Bucharest Conference
FoodPackLab	FoodNet	Details N/A
	AdPack²	Details N/A
GCA	MobiGoIn-Action	Details N/A
GEO-ENERGY EUROPE	EC2i	Details N/A
	COSMENERG-4i	Details N/A
IDEEO	SPACE2IDGO	Details N/A
	SpaceWave	Details N/A
LASER-GO GLOBAL	SmartCity Tech*	Exchanged info and plan to jointly write proposals
	MAGIA	Co-organisation of a cluster panel at EU Industry Days 2019 Development of a joint workshop, info and experience exchange
	C4W	Exchange of best practices on dissemination activities
	WBioXclusters*	Organisation of a joint panel session at the EU Industry Days
		Involved a partner (Biocat) in a consortium
MAGIA	BioXclusters*	Information and experience exchange
	LASER-GO GLOBAL	Joint activities on a sharing event
MobiGoIn-Action	AdPack²	Explore potential collaboration in China
	COSMENERG-4i	Details N/A
	Cosmetics4Wellbeing (C4W)	Knowledge exchange activities on international strategy

ESCP-4i	Collaborate with	Description of Identified Collaboration among ESCP-4
	EC2i	Explore potential collaboration in China
	ESCT Go Global	Explore collaboration in Singapore and USA
	FoodNet	Details N/A
	GIVE	Knowledge transfer activities on international strategy
	MAGIA	Knowledge exchange activities on international strategy
	NF4	Explore potential collaboration in China
	SENTINEL	Knowledge exchange activities on international strategy
	SPACE2IDGO	Explore collaboration in China and planning the organisation of a mission
NF4	AdPack²	MoU under discussion
PERES	AdPack²	Knowledge exchange activities on the formal establishment of ESCP-4i and its long-term sustainability
	LASER-GO GLOBAL	Knowledge exchange activities on the formal establishment of ESCP-4i and its long-term sustainability
	MobiGoIn-Action	Knowledge exchange activities on the formal establishment of ESCP-4i and its long-term sustainability and discussion of potential collaboration on specific "niches" on the mobility sector in the USA
	ECCA	Knowledge exchange on the activities on formal establishment of ESCP-4i as long-term continuity
SpaceWave	IDEEO	Discussed joint presentation at ESA event. Experiences shared between coordinators

3 Benefits for ESCP-4i members

One of the core objectives of the ESCP-4i is to bring benefits for their members, not only the cluster organisations that form the partnership but also their affiliates, especially SMEs. This chapter provides the perceived advantages of belonging to an ESCP-4i, both for the cluster's participating organisations in the ESCP-4i and for their SME members.

3.1 Results achieved by cluster organisations in ESCP-4i

This sub-chapter presents the responses provided by the ESCP-4i to the question "*Please indicate which results the cluster organisations in the ESCP-4i have accomplished due to their participation*". As presented in Figure 9, this is a multiple-answer question with space to provide additional information for each answer.

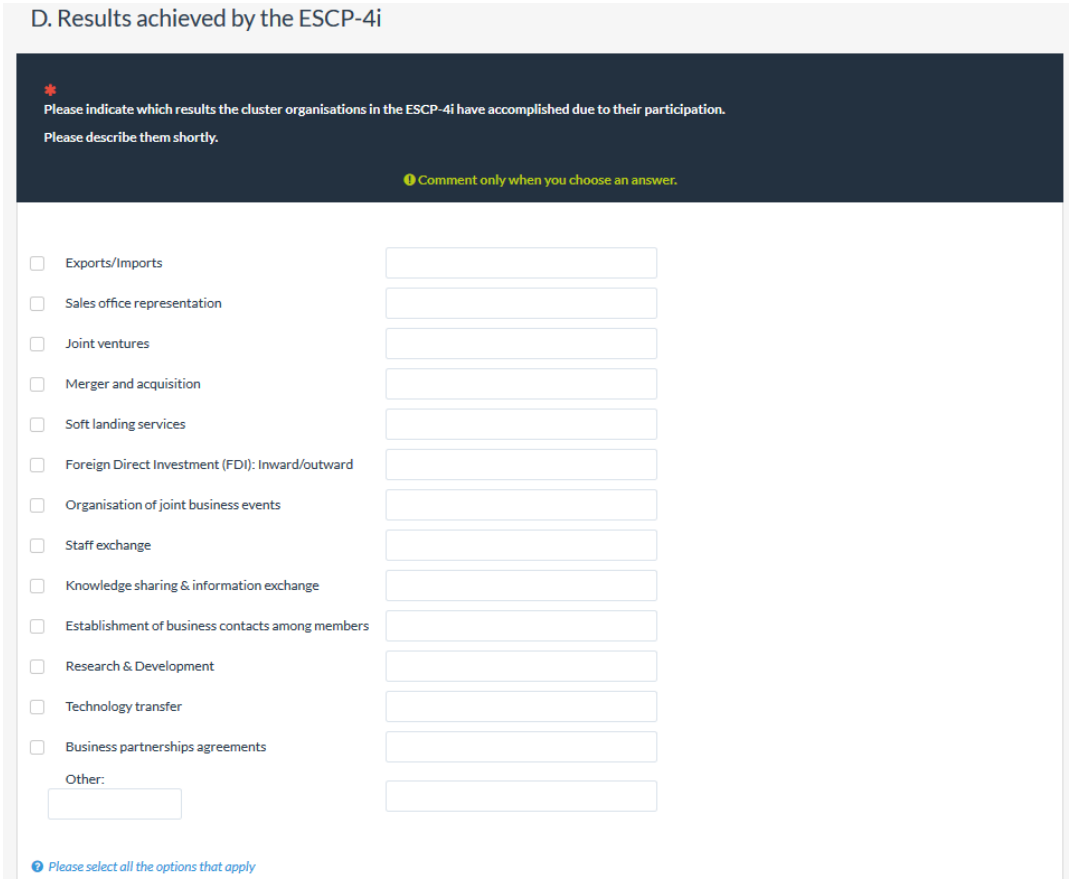

Figure 9 - Question on results accomplished by the cluster organisations in the ESCP-4i

Figure 10 presents the responses from a quantitative perspective for the results accomplished by the cluster organisations in the ESCP-4i.

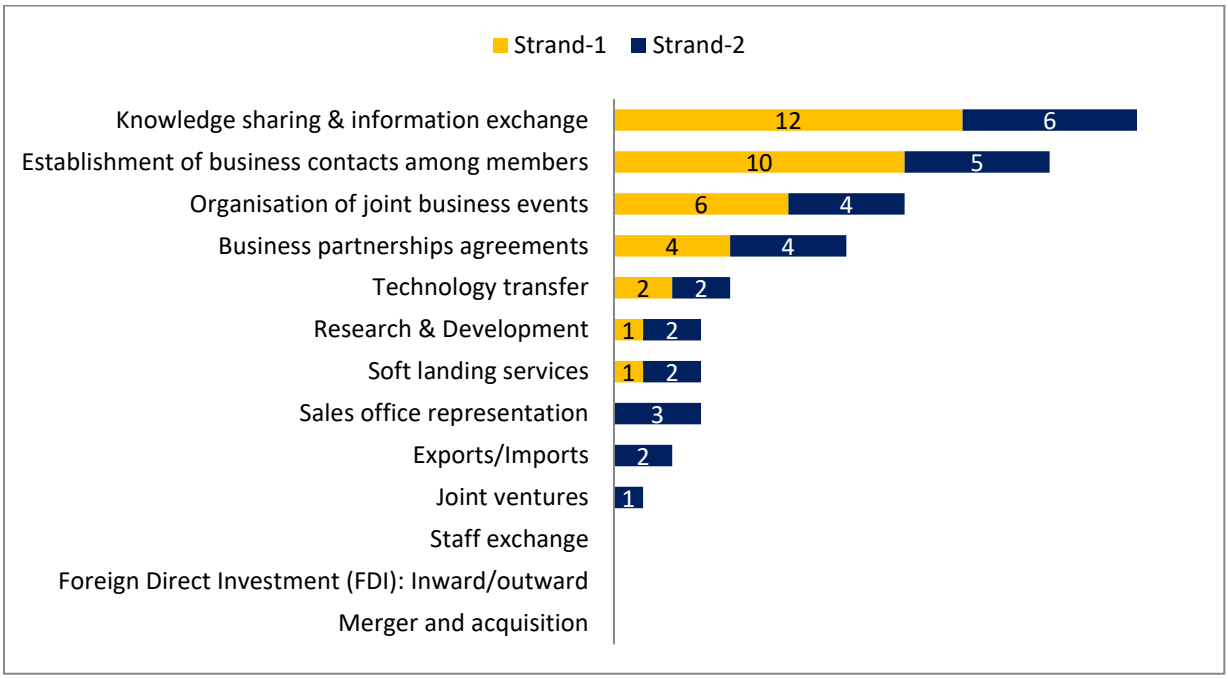

Figure 10 - Results accomplished by the cluster organisations in the ESCP-4i

Different benefits were identified by the cluster organisations in regard to their involvement in the partnerships: knowledge sharing and information exchange was the most significant and representative benefit mentioned among the respondents. These benefits were reported by all strand-1 and by six out of seven strand-2 ECSP-4i. Another advantage reported was the establishment of business contacts among members, being registered by 83% strand-1 partnerships and over 70% strand-2 ECSP-4i partnerships. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that other significant benefits reported are the organisation of joint business events, with over 50% respondents. However, no benefit was reported on staff exchange, Foreign Direct Investment (FDIs), and Merger and Acquisition.

Comparing the benefits reported from each strand, several discrepancies were observed. While three strand-2 partnerships reported benefits from sales office representation, two partnerships reported export/imports and one reported joint-ventures. None of the 12 strand-1 respondents reported any benefit on those specific categories.

Based on the qualitative analysis, B2B (business-to-business) networking events were the main driver for mutual exchange among the clusters. This mutual exchange helps justify the results presented in Figure 10 related to the main benefits, namely knowledge sharing and information exchange and the establishment of business contacts among members. In addition, webinars and trade missions were also reported as drivers for knowledge sharing and information exchange. More concrete accomplishments reported by the clusters are: signatures of MoU with third countries for soft-landing agreements, confidential joint-venture business

collaborations, and sales derived from export/import activities through the partnerships. The box below presents a successful case with outstanding results from a ESCP-4i.

Pacing the progress!

The **EC2I** (ESCP-4i, strand-2) is the only ESCP-4i to be in the process of a joint-venture business collaboration between a Swedish SME and a Chinese partner. This is a successful case in fostering collaboration and internationalisation.

3.2 Results achieved by SMEs involved in ESCP-4i activities

This sub-section presents the responses provided by the ESCP-4i to the question "*Please indicate which results have been achieved by the ESCP-4i SME members due to their involvement in ESCP-4i activities*". As presented in Figure 11, this is a multiple-answer question with space to provide additional information for each answer.

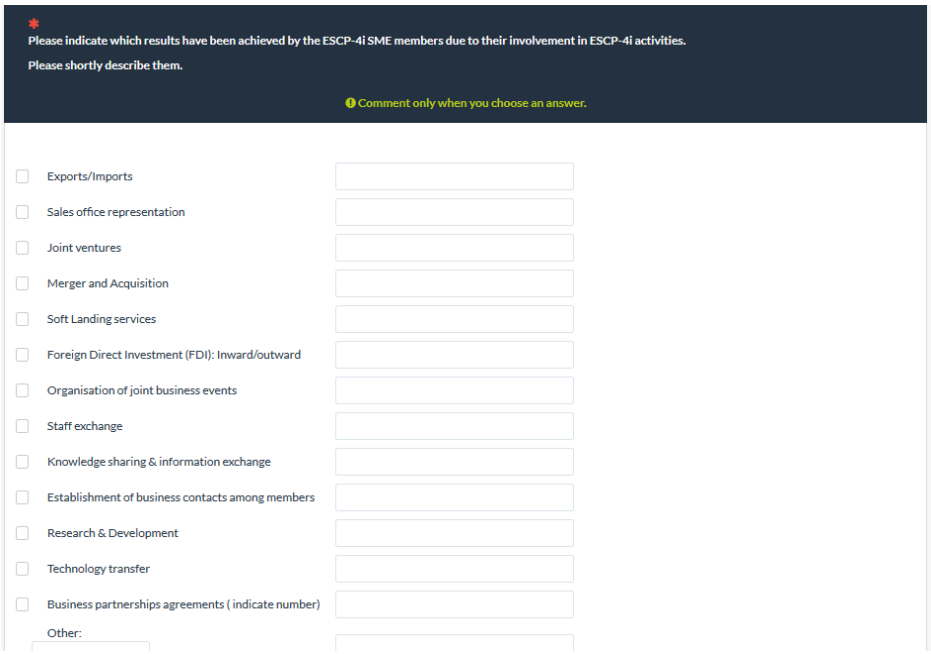

Figure 11 - Question on results achieved by ESCP-4i SME members due to their involvement in ESCP-4i activities

Figure 12 shows the quantitative responses on the results achieved by ESCP-4i SME members due to their involvement in the ESCP-4i activities.

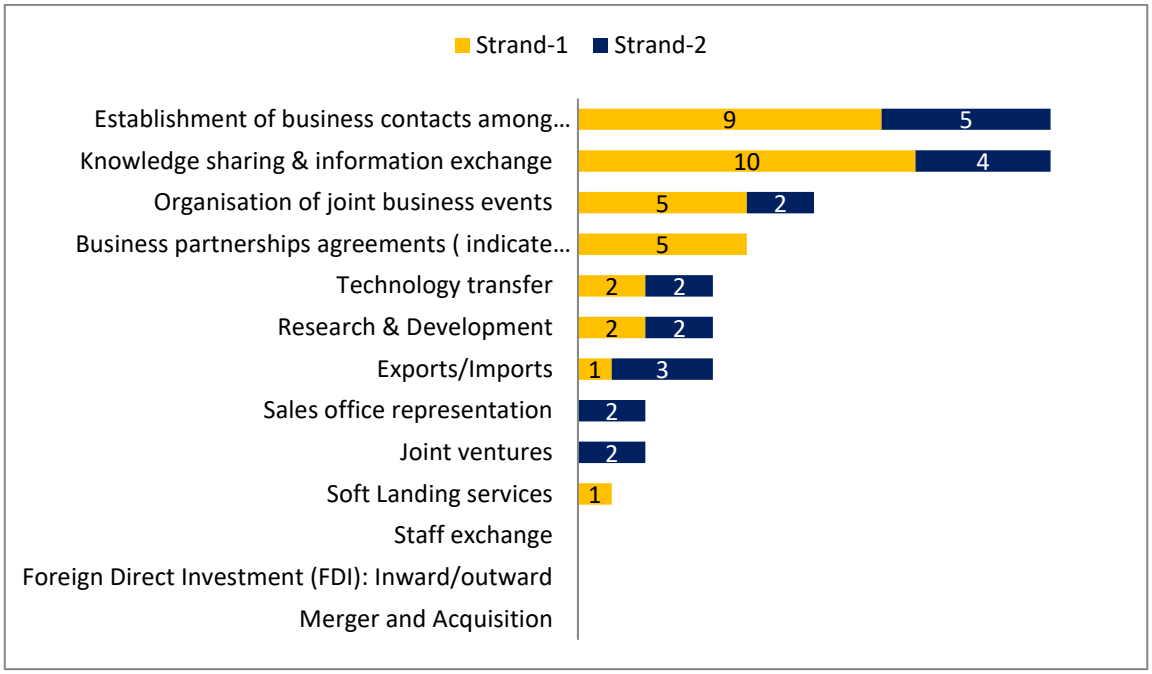

Figure 12 - Results achieved by ESCP-4i SME members due to their involvement in ESCP-4i activities

Overall, the most common results achieved by the ESCP-4i SME members is the establishment of business contacts among members, which was reported by 75% of strand-1 respondents and by over 70% strand-2 respondents. The second most commonly mentioned result achieved are knowledge sharing and information exchange, with 10 of 12 respondents of strand-1 partnerships, and around four of seven strand-2 respondents. These results resemble the responses of the cluster organisations (presented in Figure 10). In both cases, knowledge sharing and information exchange were the most common result mentioned.

Figure 12 shows a total of four ESCP-4i partnerships having reported benefits to its SME members from export/import activities, four from research and development activities and another four from technology transfer activities. One strand-1 partnership reported benefits to its SME members from soft-landing services. It is worth mentioning that there was an overall improvement on the results achieved by ESCP-4i SME members in both strands from the first to the second survey. The following text box presents the details of results achieved by the SMEs involved in two ESCP-4i reported in the survey.

Accruing achievements!

The **ELBE** (ESCP-4i, strand-1) partnership managed to deliver great results from two networking events. In total, 85 collaboration opportunities were identified, namely: six invitations to tenders, 32 accesses to new potential clients, 34 potential new contracts, one partnership agreement, nine R&D collaborations and three collaboration agreements. The **GIVE** (ESCP-4i, strand-1) partnership participated in B2Bs organised by companies and managed to establish business contacts with other companies and partners. Around 60 B2B and B2C meetings were held so far. In both cases, ESCP-4i SME members are direct beneficiaries of such types of activities.

4 ESCP-S3 activities

This chapter presents the activities implemented by the ESCP-S3 for three different aspects reflecting the partnership's objectives. As presented in Annex B, the Progress Survey for the ESCP-S3 was designed in accordance with the specific conditions and aims of the S3 partnerships. Therefore, the structure and questions are different from the ESCP-4i survey presented in Annex A. The three types of activities analysed are the following:

- Cluster partnership strategy;
- Interregional business collaboration;
- Strengthening cluster cooperation.

The analysis of the survey on each type of activity undertaken by the ESCP-S3 is described in detail in the following sections.

4.1 Activities implemented by the ESCP-S3 in the development of a joint cluster partnership strategy

This sub-chapter analyses the results from the eight ESCP-S3 that completed the survey. The proposed question *"Please indicate the activities which your ESCP-S3 has implemented so far in the development of a joint cluster partnership strategy."* As presented in Figure 13, each ESCP-S3 had the opportunity to indicate all the relevant activities (multiple-answer question) they had implemented to date. They were also provided space to give additional written feedback.

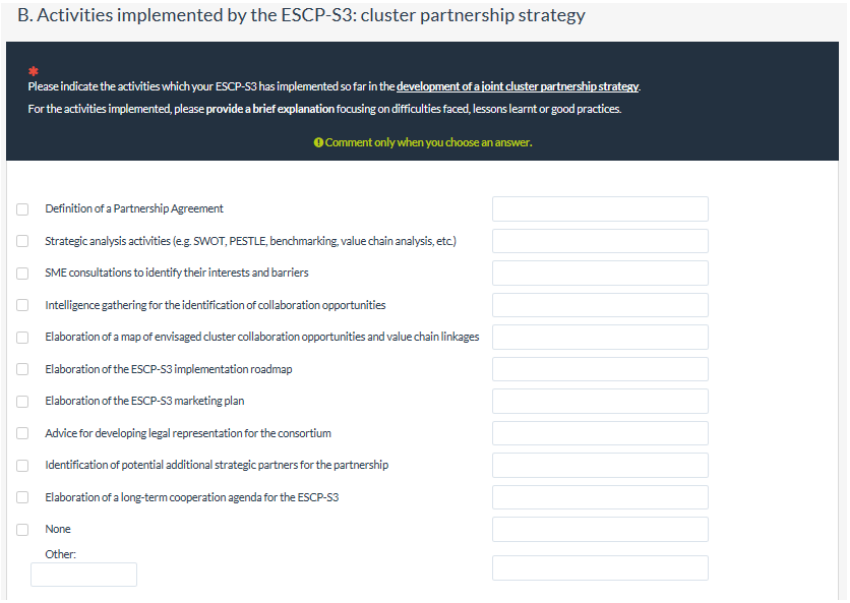

Figure 13 - Question on the activities implemented by ESCP-S3 in the development of a joint cluster partnership strategy

Figure 14 shows the quantitative responses from different activities implemented by the ESCP-S3 in the development of a joint cluster partnership strategy.

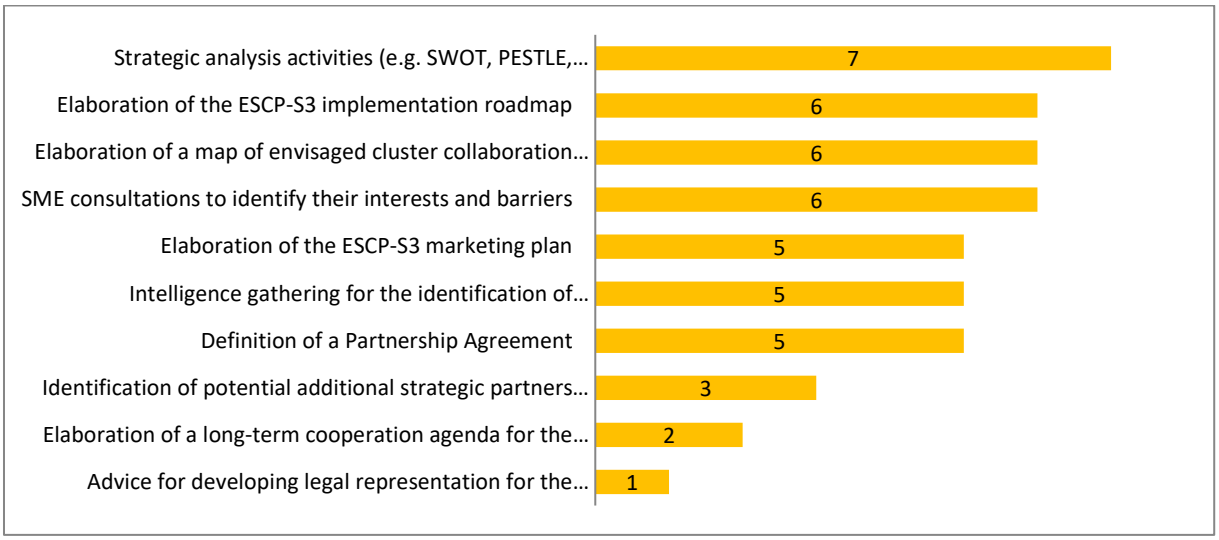

Figure 14 - Activities implemented by ESCP-S3 in the development of a joint cluster partnership strategy

Overall, strategic analysis was identified as the most common activity, followed by the elaboration of the ESCP-S3 implementation roadmap. Advice for developing legal representation for the consortium was the least mentioned activity, reported by only one partnership. In addition, the elaboration of a long-term cooperation agenda for the ESCP-S3 and the identification of potential additional strategic partners are two other activities with a reduced number of responses, with less than 50% of the respondents having implemented each of these types of activities.

4.2 Activities implemented by the ESCP-S3 to mobilise interregional business collaboration projects for innovation and investments

This sub-chapter presents the responses provided by the ESCP-S3 to the question "*Please indicate which joint activities your ESCP-S3 has implemented so far to mobilise interregional business collaboration projects for innovation and investments*". As presented in Figure 15, this is a multiple-answer question with space to provide additional information for each answer selected.

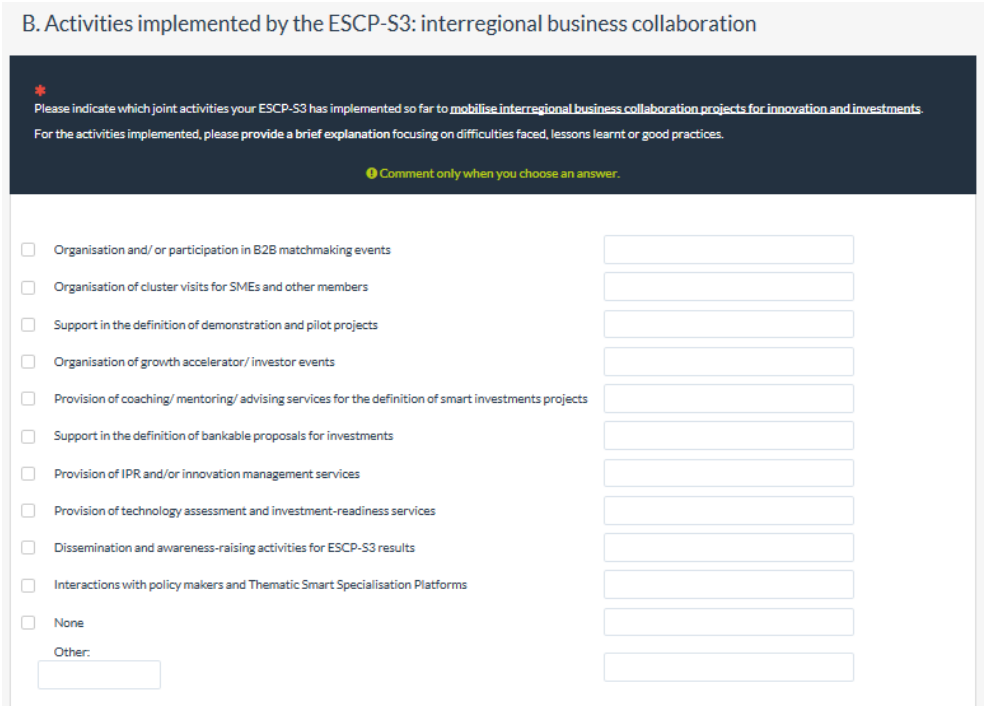

Figure 15 - Question on the activities implemented by ESCP-S3 to mobilise interregional business collaboration projects for innovation and investments

Figure 16 shows the quantitative results on the activities implemented by ESCP-S3 to mobilise interregional business collaboration projects for innovation and investments.

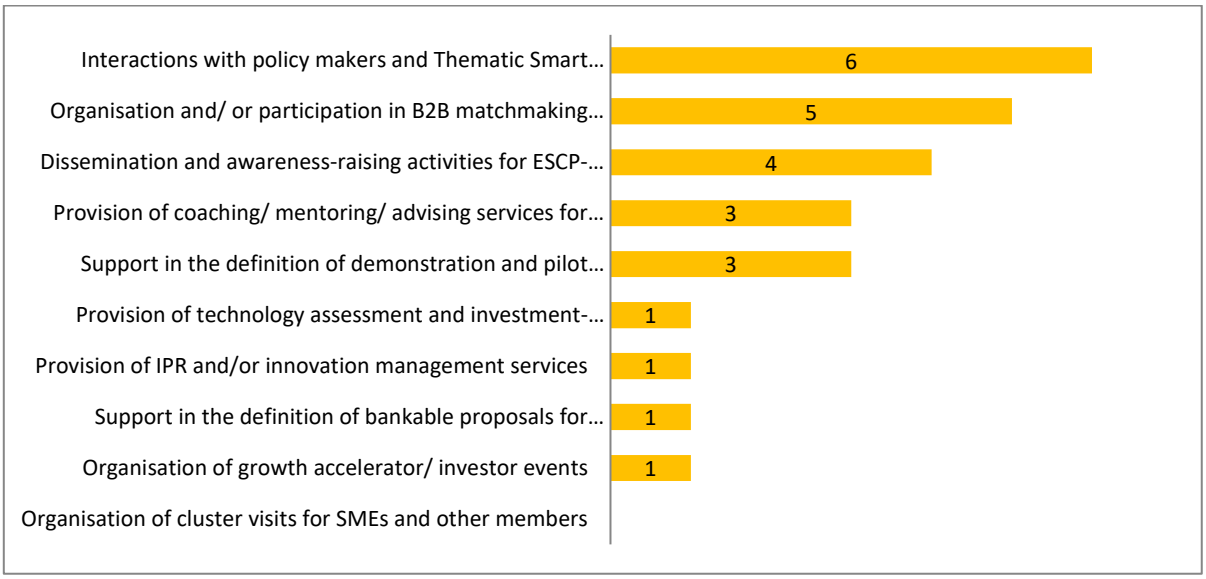

Figure 16 - Activities implemented by ESCP-S3 to mobilise interregional business collaboration projects for innovation and investments

Based on the survey results, interactions with policy makers and thematic smart specialisation platforms was the most common activity implemented by the ESCP-S3 to mobilise interregional business collaboration projects for innovation and investments, with six out of eight responses. This result is perceived to be a strategic move, as in the initial phase, the partnerships must form solid networks through the active interaction with policymakers and relevant thematic platforms. The second most common activity was the organisation and participation in B2B matchmaking events, which was reported by five of the eight respondents, followed by the dissemination and awareness raising activities for ESCP-S3 results (four responses).

Four activities were the least mentioned by the respondents, with one answer each: provision of IPR and/or innovation management services; provision of technology assessment and investment-readiness services; support in the definition of demonstration and pilot projects; and organisation of growth accelerator/ investor event.

The qualitative analysis demonstrates that the partnerships managed to identify specific strategies to effectively achieve the aim of mobilising interregional business collaborations. In the following information box, it is possible to observe in detail an example of an ESCP-S3 strategy already under development.

Focus on the progress!

The **S3martMed** ESCP-S3 dedicated to medical technologies innovation has elaborated the mapping of SMEs and research centres in the field of medical technologies and classified them by field of technologies and applications. They first defined together a common excel template with the different categories, and each cluster filled in the template with its list of local players. The objective was to highlight some specialisation by regions and potential bottlenecks. This exercise will also be complemented by in-depth analysis from each of the partner clusters. Noteworthy, this strategy strongly supports the mobilisation of interregional business collaboration projects for innovation and investment.

4.3 Activities implemented by the ESCP-S3 to strengthen cluster cooperation amongst the partners in the ESCP-S3 (C2C)

This sub-chapter presents the responses provided by the ESCP-S3 to the question "*Please indicate which joint activities your ESCP-S3 has implemented so far to strengthen cluster cooperation amongst the partners in the ESCP-S3 (C2C).*" As presented in Figure 17, this is a multiple-answer question with space to provide additional information.

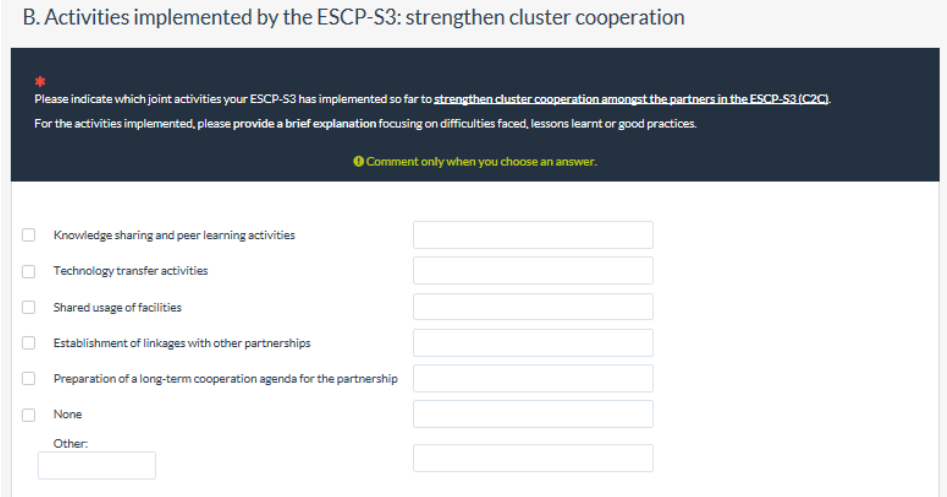

Figure 17 - Question on the activities implemented by ESCP-S3 to strengthen cluster cooperation amongst the partners in the ESCP-S3 (C2C)

Figure 18 presents the quantitative results on the activities implemented by the ESCP-S3 to strengthen cluster cooperation amongst the partners in the ESCP-S3 (C2C).

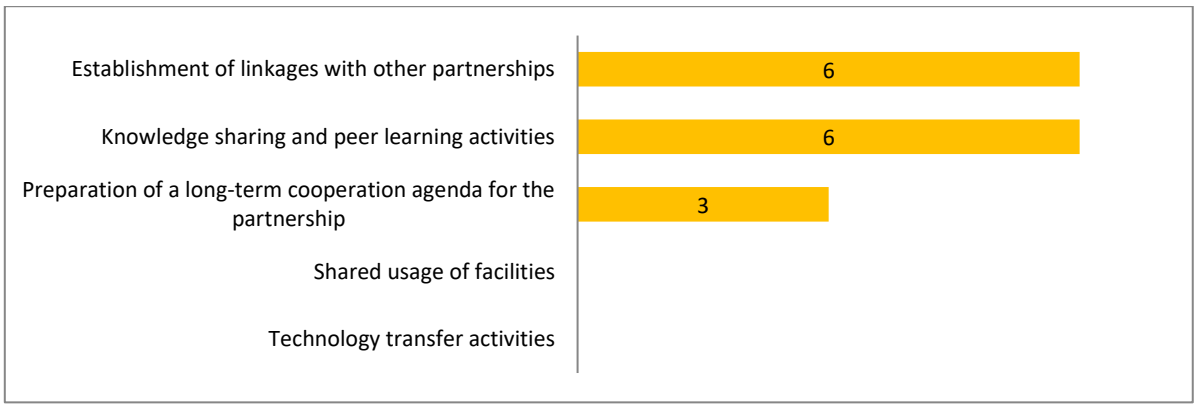

Figure 18 - Activities implemented by ESCP-S3 to strengthen cluster cooperation amongst the partners in the ESCP-S3 (C2C)

The two most common activities reported as being implemented by the ESCP-S3 to strengthen cluster cooperation amongst the partners in the ESCP-S3 (C2C) are the establishment of linkages with other partnerships and knowledge sharing and peer learning activities, each with six responses. Three respondents reported activities on the preparation of a long-term cooperation agenda for the partnership. Further, activities related to the shared use of facilities and technology transfer activities were not referred.

Considering that the ESCP-S3 has just started, proper resources planning and also well-established linkages are required prior to initiating more complex cooperation activities, such as sharing facilities or transfer technology. These activities might be implemented in a later phase of ESCP-S3.

5 SCP-S3 barriers and achievements

Chapter 5 presents the main barriers and difficulties identified by ESCP-S3 to date and also the reported achievements and good practices to be highlighted of the experience in the first months of implementation of the smart specialisation partnerships.

5.1 Barriers and difficulties faced by the ESCP-S3

This sub-chapter presents the responses provided by the ESCP-S3 to the question "*Please select which kind of barriers/difficulties your ESCP-S3 has faced during the implementation of activities*". As presented in Figure 19, this is a multiple-answer question with space to provide additional information.

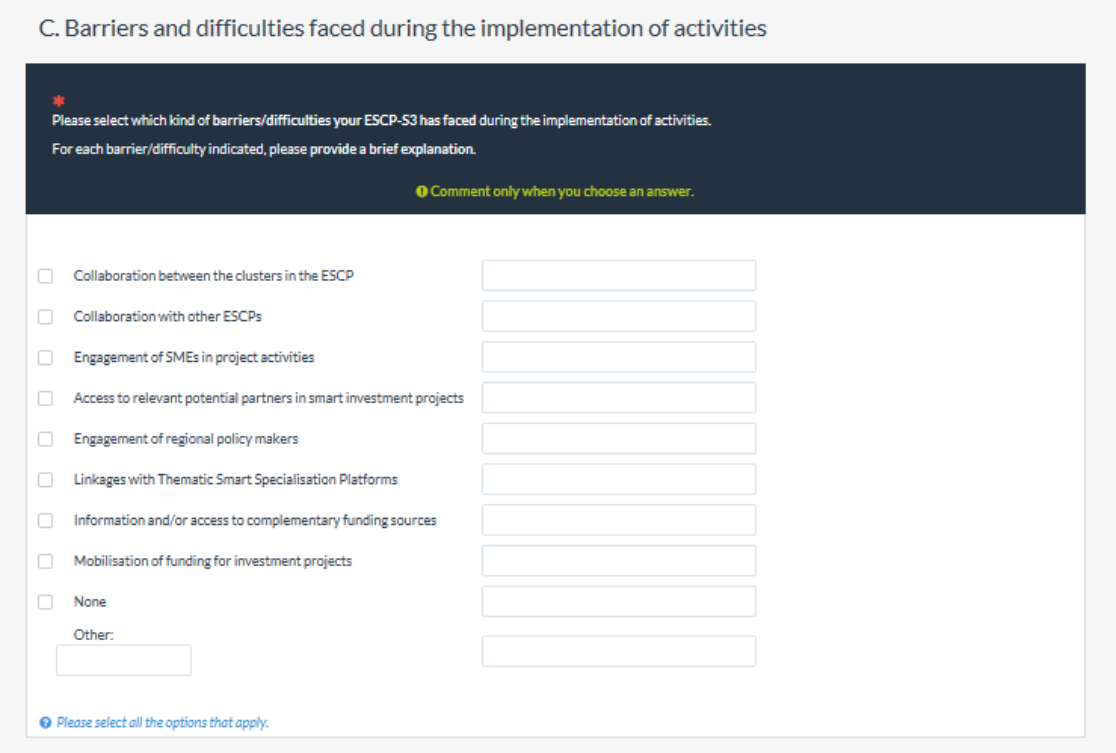

Figure 19 - Question on the barriers and difficulties faced by ESCP-S3 during the implementation of activities

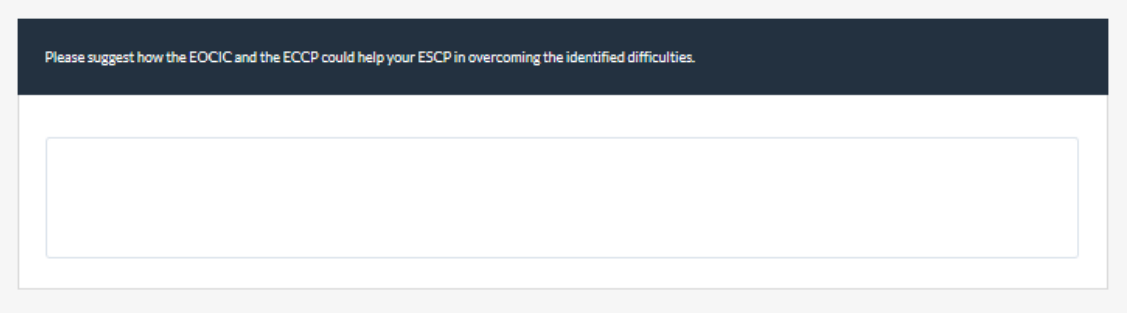

Figure 20 - Question on suggestion to overcome the identified difficulties faced by ESCP-S3

Figure 21 presents the quantitative results for the barriers and difficulties faced by the ESCP-S3.

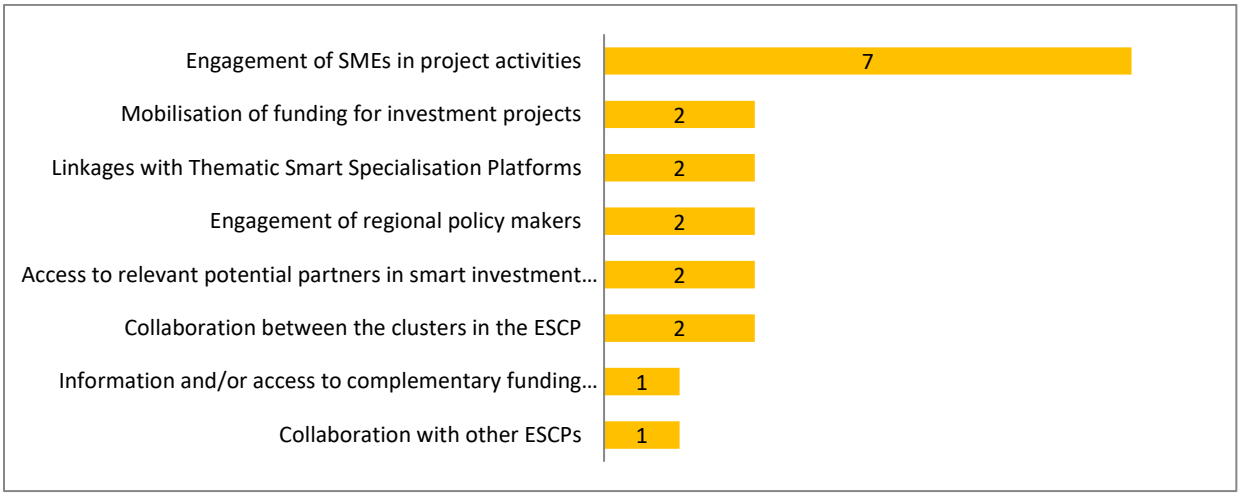

Figure 21 - Barriers and difficulties faced by the ESCP-S3

Figure 21 shows that seven of eight respondents reported difficulties in engaging SMEs in the project activities. The main reasons reported for these difficulties were the lack of incentive from the partnerships and clusters, the gap between SMEs' requirements and needs, and the effective support provided by the clusters and partnerships.

Additionally, only one respondent reported to have experienced difficulties on both information and/or access to complementary funding sources and collaboration between the clusters in the ESCP. It is worth noting that all potential barriers presented were reported by at least one of the respondents, while five types of the barriers were mentioned by two respondents each.

A new barrier was suggested by a respondent concerning financial struggles to implement the activities, engage SMEs and run the partnerships. The respondent suggested travel vouchers for the SMEs as a potential solution for engaging more SMEs with the project activities.

Concerning the linkages with Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms (TSSP), some respondents mentioned missing linkages with the TSSP; while others reported an industrial modernisation gap with the thematic platforms.

From the qualitative analysis, the responses concerning how to overcome the identified barriers are the following:

1) Providing counselling or inter-cluster mediation;
2) Facilitating contact with other relevant European projects;
3) Making available financial and other resources to support SMEs in joining the ESCP-S3 activities;
4) Developing potential future business opportunities for SMEs;
5) Promoting initiatives in favour of SMEs, advertising the opportunities identified and upcoming events that are organised by the partnerships.

5.2 Results achieved by cluster organisations in ESCP-S3

This sub-chapter presents the responses provided by the ESCP-S3 to the question "*Please indicate which results associated to your participation in the ESCP-S3 you or your members have accomplished*". As presented in Figure 22, this is a multiple-answer question with space to provide additional information.

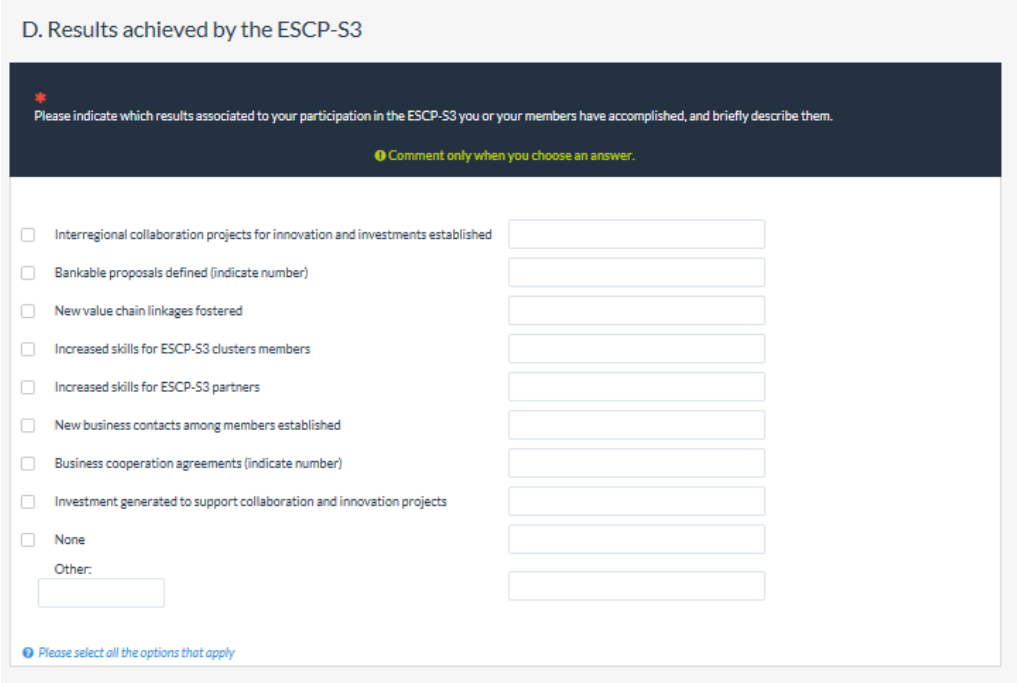

Figure 22 - Question on results accomplished by the cluster organisations in the ESCP-S3

Figure 23 presents the responses from a quantitative perspective.

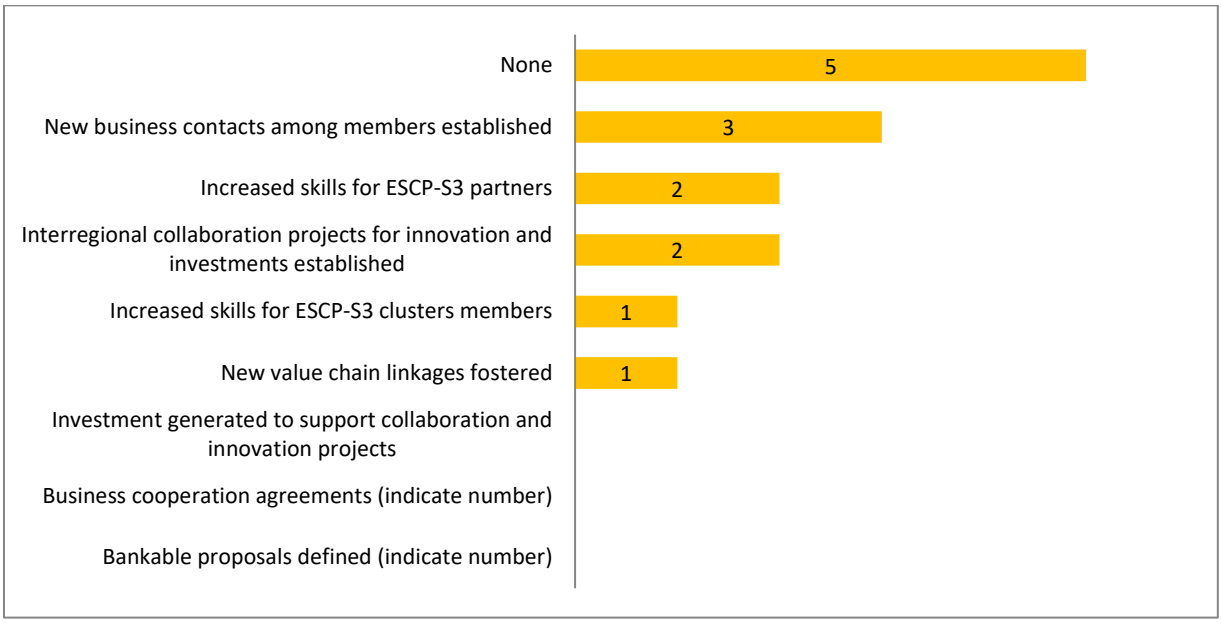

Figure 23 - Results accomplished by the cluster organisations in the ESCP-S3

Over 70% of the ESCP-S3 reported that they had not achieved the intended results by the time the survey was conducted. It is worth mentioning that the ESCP-S3 are still in an initial phase and, therefore, more time will be required to acknowledge the desired outcomes.

As for the other analysed topics, three respondents reported to have acquired new business contacts among the established members and two reported to have benefited from close collaboration and skills exchange with other ESCP-S3 members. The collaboration and exchange were mainly due to study visits and boot camps organised by the partnerships and attended by its members. Another output of such collaborations is a submission of a H2020 proposal including two members of an ESCP-S3 partnership.

6 Preliminary lessons learnt

This chapter includes the main lessons learnt on the progress of the ESCP-4i and ESCP-S3 as the result of the second survey assessment. In the case of the ESCP-4i partnerships, as this is the second survey the partnerships have participated in, the lessons learnt confirm and expand the previous identified results. Regarding the ESCP-S3, this is the first survey they have participated in and, therefore, the lessons learnt are considered to be preliminary.

6.1 ESCP-4i lessons learnt

Considering the objective of the ESCP-4i that is to develop and implement joint cluster internationalisation strategies to support SMEs, some conclusions and lessons learnt are provided in this sub-chapter, in order to guide the future work of the partnerships towards a long-term and sustainable operation.

When comparing the first and second survey results, the main changes can be observed in the most prominent activities undertaken by the ESCP-4i. While the most common activities reported in the first survey focused on the identification of target markets in third countries and in intelligence gathering, the main activities in this second survey included the organisation of events or missions, identification of strategic partners and intelligence gathering. A growth in the participation and organisation of events and missions suggests an improvement in the maturity level of the partnerships.

Further lessons to be learnt from the current survey are the following:

SME engagement and long-term sustainability

According to the information collected in both the first and second surveys, the engagement of SMEs in project activities is still perceived as the biggest barrier. Therefore, the partnerships must take into account potential misalignments between ESCP-4i strategies and the real interests of their SME members.

Moreover, the involvement of SMEs might also affect the long-term sustainability of the partnerships, as the perception of the benefits from the SMEs and other organisations involved in the partnerships is directly related to their participation in the project and the assurance of its long-term sustainability.

Thus, it is of high importance that the ESCP-4i have the capacity to effectively translate the benefits of participating in the partnerships to the SMEs and actively work to bring them onboard all activities to create a higher level of engagement.

Strong cooperation agreements to create long-term partnerships

An increased number of cooperation agreements was registered in the second survey. Despite the increase in the number of international cooperation agreements that were signed in the period between the first and the second survey, there is a need to concentrate efforts in the strengthening of such cooperation agreements. In the future, the next logical step is related to the establishment of a strong management component to support the agreements and partnerships already implemented. Furthermore, the number of partnerships between ESCPs have also increased from the first to the second survey. This is considered as a positive outcome and a signal of maturity and evolution of the partnerships as a whole.

Management and cohesion of the partnerships

Validating the previous results, there are still some difficulties in developing the necessary internal cohesion to carry out the planned activities, culminating in individualised actions carried out by the members. It is thus recommended that the detailed strategy of each ESCP-4i should define the role of each cluster organisation in the partnership and what it is expected to be accomplished.

Moreover, some struggles were reported in regard to the lack of competences in certain key areas for the management of the partnerships. Noteworthy, a strong leadership is also of great importance to ensure the cohesion of the group. As previously mentioned, the extent of the ESCP-4i projects requires project management teams to be able to effectively manage and implement the activities. Therefore, having a solid leadership in each ESCP-4i partnership is the key to the long-term sustainability of the partnerships.

6.2 ESCP-S3 lessons learnt

The objective of the ESCP-S3 partnerships is to foster the collaboration of enterprises, especially SMEs, as well as their interaction with technology centres (within clusters and across regional and sectoral silos) towards generating joint actions and investment projects in common smart specialisation priority areas linked to industrial modernisation and to help improving their business environment. In order to monitor the status of the activities undertaken by the ESCP-S3 partnerships towards the achievement of the mentioned objective, the survey provided some insights and lessons learnt to be implemented throughout the process. The lessons are divided by the types of activities and barriers that have been identified.

Cluster partnership strategy: Different phases of development

The ESCP-S3 strategic partnerships reported to be in different phases, each now progressing at its unique pace. It was found that some of the ESCP-S3 partnerships are still in the drafting phase, while some already manage to do in-depth analysis for SME specialisation in finding solutions for the identified barriers. Nonetheless, more than a half of the ESCP-S3 partnerships have already defined partnership agreements, elaborated the marketing plan, undertaken SMEs consultations, elaborated a map of the cluster, implemented a roadmap and developed an initial strategic analysis.

Therefore, it is recommended that the partnerships take advantage of a mutual learning process, thus being able to provide great support for the partnerships that are still in the drafting phase, and allowing them to rely on other ESCP-S3's experience through the process.

Interregional business collaboration: Setting up the basis by building the network

Based on the collected data, interactions with policymakers and thematic smart specialisation platforms were the most common activities in the ESCP-S3 partnerships to mobilise interregional business collaboration projects for innovation and investments. This is considered to be a significant strategic move, as in the initial phase, the partnerships must form solid networks through interaction with policymakers and relevant thematic platforms. However, as the partnerships develop their activities and implement their strategies, it is important to mobilise their networks in order to provide several categories of high-relevance services and advice in interregional business collaboration.

Still, a long-term strategy would involve the provision of coaching, mentoring and advising, technology assessment and investment-readiness, IPR and innovation management, demonstration of pilot projects, organisation of growth accelerator and investment events, among others.

Strengthening cluster cooperation: Towards the preparation of long-term cooperation strategies

The two most common activities reported as being implemented by the ESCP-S3 to strengthen cluster collaboration are the establishment of linkages with other partnerships and knowledge sharing and peer learning activities.

Furthermore, the next step is the effective joint preparation of long-term cooperation agendas for the partnerships. This should be of high relevance in order to strengthen the different partnerships and to contribute to the sustainability of the nine existing ESCP-S3. When creating long-term cooperation ties, it becomes easier to not only exchange knowledge and implement peer learning activities, but also to develop the cooperation to a much deeper level, such as benefitting from the sharing of usage facilities or undertaking technology transfer activities.

Barriers: Overcoming initial obstacles

As already identified for the ESCP-4i, the ESCP-S3 also presented the same obstacle related to the lack of engagement of SMEs. The responses from the survey have demonstrated difficulties in engaging the SMEs in the project activities (as per the partnerships point of view) and a gap between the needs of the SMEs and the support provided by the partnerships (as per the SMEs point of view).

Furthermore, other barriers reported by ESCP-S3 ranged from providing counselling or inter-cluster mediation, facilitation of contacts with other relevant European projects, financial and other resources to support SMEs in joining ESCP-S3 activities, development of potential future business opportunities for SMEs, promotion of actions in favour of SMEs, and advertising the opportunities identified.

Having understood the initial barriers to be overcome, it is has been noted that the majority of the respondents have not perceived benefits in being part of the partnership. Nonetheless, ESCP-S3 reported other benefits, including the development of new business contacts among members, increased skills for the partners, and the development of interregional collaboration projects from innovation.

The survey has demonstrated that ESCP-S3 partnerships are still in the drafting phase and therefore, the activities are focused on creating networks, setting up the basis to create strong and long-term partnerships, engaging all stakeholders and SMEs, consolidating their strategic position and overcoming initial barriers.

European Observatory for Clusters and Industrial Change

The European Observatory for Clusters and Industrial Change (#EOCIC) is an initiative of the European Commission's Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Directorate-General. The Observatory provides a single access point for statistical information, analysis and mapping of clusters and cluster policy in Europe, aimed at European, national, regional and local policy-makers, as well as cluster managers and representatives of SME intermediaries.

The aim of the Observatory is to help Europe's regions and countries design better and more evidence-based cluster policies and initiatives that help countries participating in the COSME programme to:

- develop world-class clusters with competitive industrial value chains that cut across sectors;
- support Industrial modernisation;
- foster Entrepreneurship in emerging industries with growth potential;
- improve SMEs' access to clusters and internationalisation activities; and
- enable more strategic inter-regional collaboration and investments in the implementation of smart specialisation strategies.

In order to address these goals, the Observatory provides an Europe-wide comparative cluster mapping with sectoral and cross-sectoral statistical analysis of the geographical concentration of economic activities and performance, made available on the website of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)[1]. The Observatory provides the following services:

- **Bi-annual "European Panorama of Clusters and Industrial Change"** that analyses cluster strengths and development trends across 51 cluster sectors and 10 emerging industries, and investigates the linkages between clusters and industrial change, entrepreneurship, growth, innovation, internationalisation and economic development;
- "**Cluster and Industrial Transformation Trends Report"** which investigates the transformation of clusters, new specialisation patterns and emerging industries;
- **Cluster policy mapping** in European countries and regions as well as in selected non-European countries;

[1] https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/

- "**Regional Eco-system Scoreboard for Clusters and Industrial Change"** that identifies and captures favourable framework conditions for industrial change, innovation, entrepreneurship and cluster development;
- **Updated European Service Innovation Scoreboard**[2], that provides scorecards on service innovation for European regions;
- **"European Stress Test for Cluster Policy",** including a self-assessment tool targeted at cross-sectoral collaboration, innovation and entrepreneurships with a view to boosting industrial change;
- **Customised advisory support services** to twelve selected model demonstrator regions, including expert analysis, regional survey and benchmarking report, peer-review meeting, and policy briefings in support of industrial modernisation;
- **Advisory support service to European Strategic Cluster Partnerships**, in order to support networking between the partnerships and to support exchanges of successful practices for cross-regional collaborations and joint innovation investments;
- **Smart Guides** for cluster policy monitoring and evaluation, and for entrepreneurship support through clusters that provide guidance for policy-makers; and
- **Brings together Europe's cluster policy-makers and stakeholders** at four European Cluster Policy Forum events, European Cluster Days, and at the European Cluster Conference In order to facilitate high-level cluster policy dialogues, exchanges with experts and mutual cluster policy learning. Two European Cluster Policy Forums took place in February and April 2018, the third one will take place on 15 November in Brussels. The European Cluster Conference is scheduled for 14 to 16 May 2019 in Bucharest (Romania).
- Online presentations and publications, discussion papers, newsletters, videos and further promotional material accompany and support information exchanges and policy learning on cluster development, cluster policies and industrial change.

More information about the European Observatory for Clusters and Industrial Change is available at: www.clustercollaboration.eu/eu-initiatives/european-cluster-observatory

[2] Previous versions for 2014 and 2015 were developed by the European Service Innovation Centre (ESIC), see http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/esic/index_en.htm

Annex A - ESCP-4i Progress Survey

ESCP-4i progress survey

Dear participant,

The **European Observatory for Clusters and Industrial Change** (#EOCIC) and the **European Cluster Collaboration Platform** (ECCP) welcome your participation in the **ESCP-4i progress survey**.

This survey takes place in the scope of the EOCIC and ECCP services for ESCP-4i. It aims to gather information on the current progress and results of ESCPs-4i, in order to gain understanding on their development and performance, as well as to identify those aspects that are being more challenging. We appreciate that you provide as much details as possible.

This information will be highly useful for the EOCIC and the ECCP to ensure their services are aligned with the needs of ESCPs.

For any additional information or clarifications please send an email to eocic@spi.pt.

Thank you in advance for your response!

EOCIC & ECCP Team

The **European Observatory for Clusters and Industrial Change (#EOCIC)** is an initiative of the European Commission's Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Directorate-General (DG GROW). The Observatory provides a single access point for statistical information, analysis and mapping of clusters and cluster policy in Europe, aimed at European, national, regional and local policy-makers, as well as cluster managers and representatives of SME intermediaries. The EOCIC services include advisory support services to European Strategic Cluster Partnerships, in order to support networking between the partnerships and to support exchanges of successful practices for cross-regional collaborations and joint innovation investments.

The **European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)** is an action of the Cluster Internationalisation Programme for SMEs funded under COSME launched by DG GROW. The ECCP provides networking and information support for clusters and their members aiming to improve their performance and increase their competitiveness through trans-national and international cooperation.

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A. Identification of the ESCP-4i

* Name of the ESCP-4i:

Choose one of the following answers

Please choose...

* Strand of the ESCP-4i:

Choose one of the following answers

- Strand-1
- Strand-2

* Cluster organisation:

* Contact person:

* Email:

*

I accept that my personal data are added to the EOCIC contact database.

The EOCIC project will only use your personal data for project activities linked to services for ESCPs. Your personal data will not be used for other purposes or shared with others.

If you want to be eliminated from the EOCIC database, please send an email to eocic@spi.pt.

Yes | No

B. Activities implemented by the ESCP-4i

*
Please indicate which kind of activities your ESCP-4i has implemented so far. For those activities implemented, please provide a brief description.

Comment only when you choose an answer.

☐ Identification of strategic partners in Europe	
☐ Identification of target third countries	
☐ Identification of strategic partners in third countries	
☐ Partnership building activities	
☐ Joint communication actions	
☐ Intelligence gathering	
☐ Consultation of cluster members	
☐ SME mentoring	
☐ Organisation of events/ missions	
☐ Exploitation of synergies with other funding sources	
☐ Establishment of a representative in third countries	
☐ Definition of collaborative projects	
☐ Definition of bankable proposals for investments	
Other:	

Please select all the options that apply.

C. Barriers and difficulties faced during the implementation of activities

Please select which kind of barriers/difficulties your ESCP-4i faced during the implementation of activities. For each barrier/difficulty indicated, please provide a brief explanation and suggest how the EOCIC and the ECCP could help your ESCP.

Comment only when you choose an answer.

☐ Collaboration between the clusters in the ESCP	
☐ Collaboration with other ESCPs	
☐ Access to knowledge of relevant third markets	
☐ Access to relevant potential partners in target third markets	
☐ Information and/or access to complementary funding sources	
☐ Engagement of regional policy makers	
☐ Engagement of SMEs in project activities	
☐ Other:	

Please select all the options that apply.

Previous Next

D. Results achieved by the ESCP-4i

Please indicate which results the cluster organisations in the ESCP-4i have accomplished due to their participation.

Please describe them shortly.

Comment only when you choose an answer.

☐ Exports/Imports	
☐ Sales office representation	
☐ Joint ventures	
☐ Merger and acquisition	
☐ Soft landing services	
☐ Foreign Direct Investment (FDI): Inward/outward	
☐ Organisation of joint business events	
☐ Staff exchange	
☐ Knowledge sharing & information exchange	
☐ Establishment of business contacts among members	
☐ Research & Development	
☐ Technology transfer	
☐ Business partnerships agreements	
☐ Other:	

Please select all the options that apply

Has your ESCP-4i signed any cooperation agreement or memorandum of understanding (MoU)?

Yes | No

Please note cooperation with other ESCPs will be addressed in a following section.

How many cooperation agreements or MoUs have been established by the ESCP-4i so far?

Only numbers may be entered in this field.

Please note cooperation with other ESCPs will be addressed in a following section.

Previous | Next

Cooperation Case 1

Please provide the following information for the cooperation case 1 (cooperation agreement or MoU).

*** Type of organisation the ESCP-4i has established cooperation with.**

Choose one of the following answers
This question is mandatory
If you choose 'Other:' please also specify your choice in the accompanying text field.

- ○ Cluster/Business network
- ○ Research centre
- ○ University
- ○ Company
- ○ Governmental authority
- ○ Other:

*** Identify the organisation the ESCP-4i has established cooperation with.**

This question is mandatory
Please complete all parts.

Name (or main activity if confidential)	
Country	
Sector	

*****
Please briefly explain the cooperation objective(s) and activity(ies) explored, initiated or established and indicate any specific action planned.

This question is mandatory

Previous Next

E. Results achieved by ESCP-4i SME members

Please provide information regarding the results achieved by SME members that participated in the ESCP-4i activities.

Please indicate which results have been achieved by the ESCP-4i SME members due to their involvement in ESCP-4i activities.
Please shortly describe them.

Comment only when you choose an answer.

Exports/Imports	
Sales office representation	
Joint ventures	
Merger and Acquisition	
Soft Landing services	
Foreign Direct Investment (FDI): Inward/outward	
Organisation of joint business events	
Staff exchange	
Knowledge sharing & information exchange	
Establishment of business contacts among members	
Research & Development	
Technology transfer	
Business partnerships agreements (indicate number)	
Other:	

Has any SME member signed a cooperation agreement/memorandum of understanding?

Yes | No

How many cooperation agreements/MoUs have been signed by SME members so far?

Only numbers may be entered in this field.

Previous Next

F. Examples of SMEs benefited

Please provide the following information for the cooperation case of SME members that benefited from their involvement in the ESCP-4i activities.

Example 1 - SME Name

Example 1 - Please select the SME benefits

Check all that apply

- [ ] Access to new clients or distributors
- [ ] Increased exports
- [ ] Participation in exploratory visits
- [ ] Participation in collaborative RDI projects
- [ ] Staff exchanges
- [ ] Technology transfer
- [ ] Facilitation of soft landing
- [ ] Participation in B2B events
- [ ] Other:

Example 1 - Please briefly describe how the SME benefited and specify any further action planned.

Previous Next

G. Cooperation and dialogue with other ESCPs

*** Has your ESCP initiated any dialogue/collaboration with other ESCPs?**

Yes | No

*****

Which which other ESCP has your ESCP-4i initiated any dialogue/collaboration?

Which is the purpose of the dialogue/collaboration?

Comment only when you choose an answer.

☐ AdPack²	
☐ ALLIANCE	
☐ COSMENERG-4i	
☐ Cosmetics4Wellbeing (C4W)	
☐ DIA	
☐ EC2i	
☐ ELBE	
☐ ESCT Go Global	
☐ EU-TEXTILE2030	

*** Do you use the ESCP-4i forum on the ECCP?**

Yes | No

Please explain briefly what are the advantages of using the tool.

Previous | Next

H. Planned activities

Please provide the following information regarding the events that your ESCP-4i plans to attend in the next 12 months.

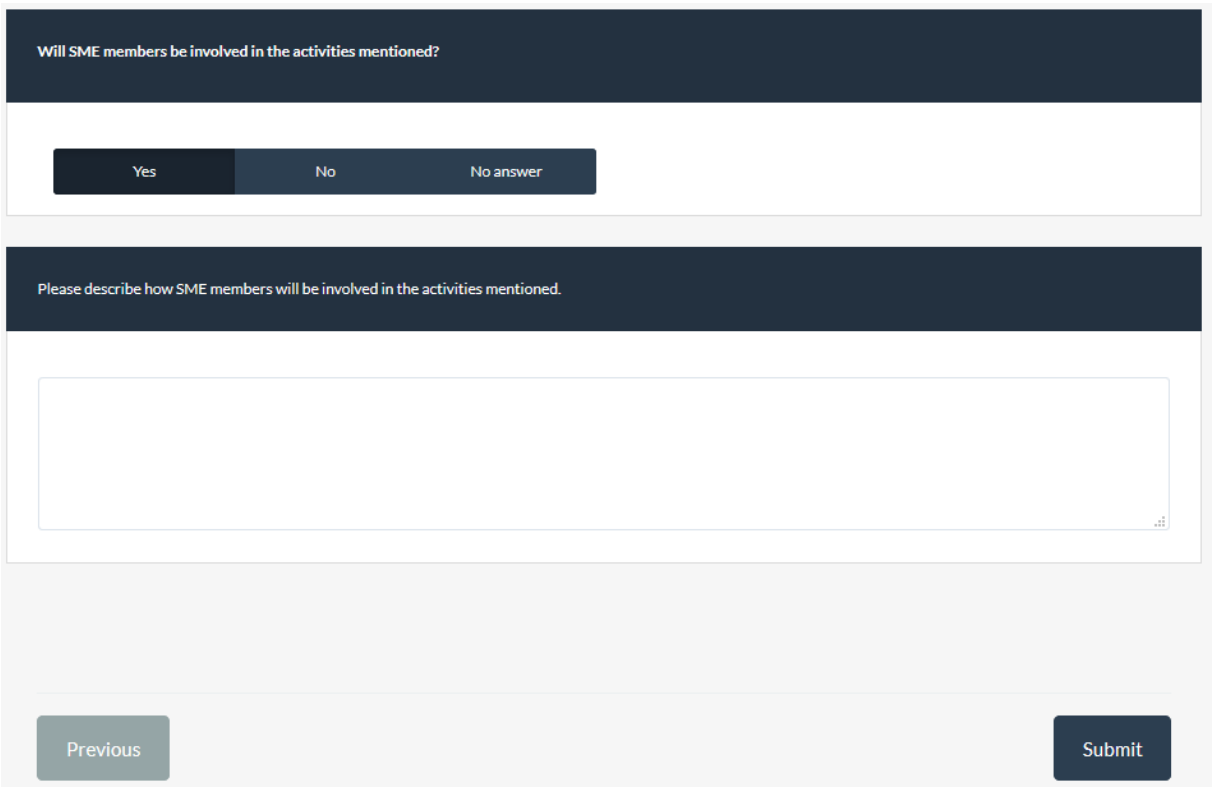
Which EUROPEAN trade fairs, cluster conferences, events, visits and missions is your ESCP-4i planning to attend or organise in the next 12 months?

	Event name	Event location (city/ country)	Event date	Event topic(s)
Event 1				
Event 2				
Event 3				
Event 4				
Event 5				

Please indicate only events and activities taking place in Europe.

Which trade fairs, cluster conferences, events, visits and missions BEYOND EUROPE are you planning to attend or organise in the next 12 months?

	Event name	Event location (city/country)	Event dates	Event topic(s)
Event 1				
Event 2				
Event 3				
Event 4				
Event 5				


Will SME members be involved in the activities mentioned?
Yes
No
No answer
Please describe how SME members will be involved in the activities mentioned.
Previous
Submit

Annex B - ESCP-S3 Progress Survey

ESCP-S3 progress survey 1

Dear participant,

The European Observatory for Clusters and Industrial Change (#EOCIC) and the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) welcome your participation in the **ESCP-S3 progress survey**.

This survey takes place in the scope of the EOCIC and ECCP services for ESCP-S3. It aims to gather information on the current progress and results of ESCPs-S3, in order to gain understanding on their development and performance, as well as to identify those aspects that are being more challenging. We appreciate that you provide as much details as possible.

This information will be highly useful for the EOCIC and the ECCP to ensure their services are aligned with the needs of ESCPs.

For any additional information or clarifications please send an email to eocic@spi.pt.

Thank you in advance for your response!

EOCIC & ECCP Team

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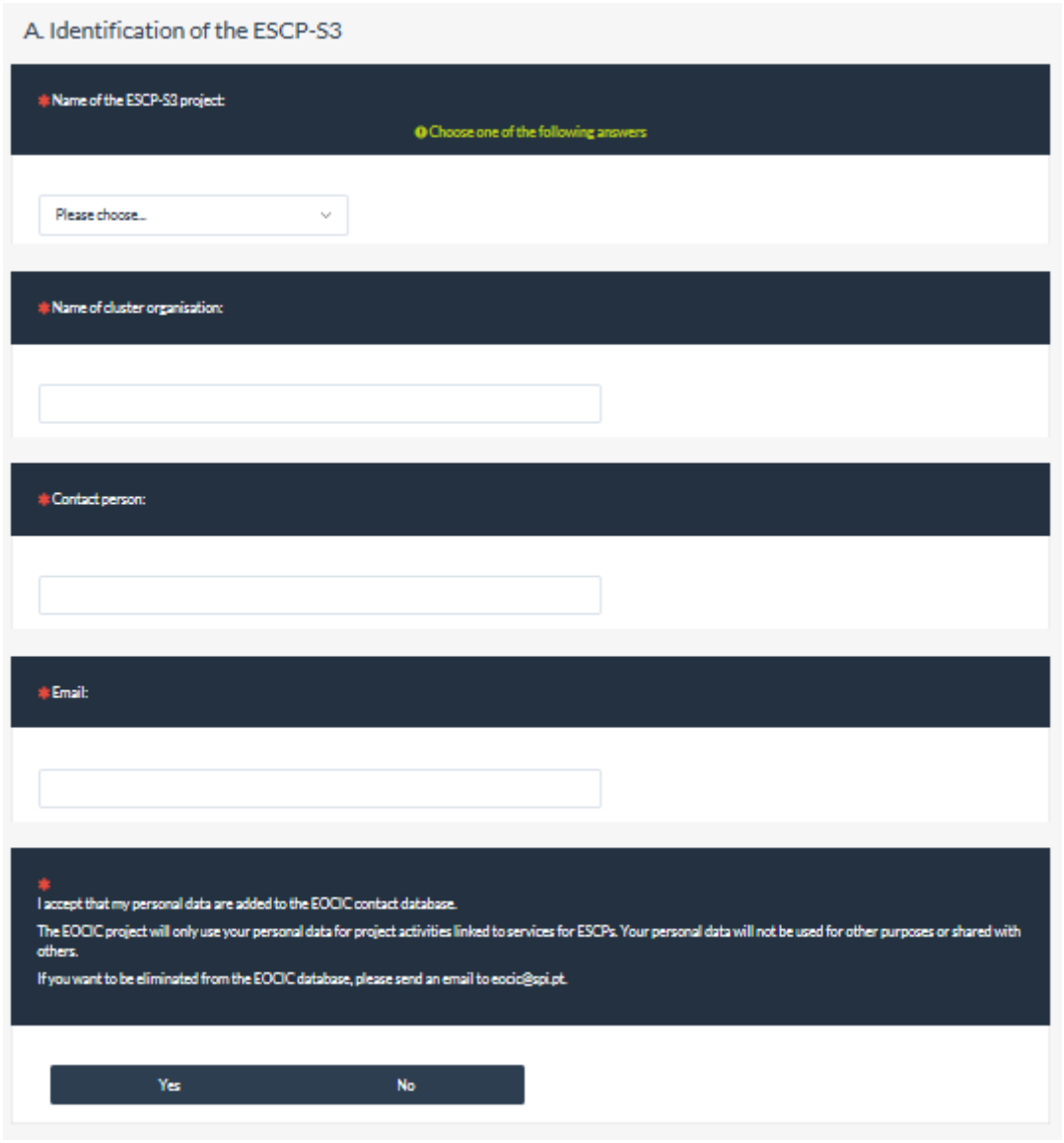

A. Identification of the ESCP-S3
Name of the ESCP-S3 project:
Choose one of the following answers
Please choose...
Name of cluster organisation:
Contact person:
Email:
I accept that my personal data are added to the EOCIC contact database.
The EOCIC project will only use your personal data for project activities linked to services for ESCPs. Your personal data will not be used for other purposes or shared with others.
If you want to be eliminated from the EOCIC database, please send an email to eocic@spi.pt.
Yes
No

B. Activities implemented by the ESCP-S3: cluster partnership strategy

*

Please indicate the activities which your ESCP-S3 has implemented so far in the development of a joint cluster partnership strategy.
For the activities implemented, please provide a brief explanation focusing on difficulties faced, lessons learnt or good practices.

Comment only when you choose an answer.

- [ ] Definition of a Partnership Agreement
- [ ] Strategic analysis activities (e.g. SWOT, PESTLE, benchmarking, value chain analysis, etc.)
- [ ] SME consultations to identify their interests and barriers
- [ ] Intelligence gathering for the identification of collaboration opportunities
- [ ] Elaboration of a map of envisaged cluster collaboration opportunities and value chain linkages
- [ ] Elaboration of the ESCP-S3 implementation roadmap
- [ ] Elaboration of the ESCP-S3 marketing plan
- [ ] Advice for developing legal representation for the consortium
- [ ] Identification of potential additional strategic partners for the partnership
- [ ] Elaboration of a long-term cooperation agenda for the ESCP-S3
- [ ] None
- [ ] Other:

Please select all the options that apply.

B. Activities implemented by the ESCP-S3: interregional business collaboration

*

Please indicate which joint activities your ESCP-S3 has implemented so far to mobilise interregional business collaboration projects for innovation and investments.
For the activities implemented, please provide a brief explanation focusing on difficulties faced, lessons learnt or good practices.

Comment only when you choose an answer.

- [ ] Organisation and/ or participation in B2B matchmaking events
- [ ] Organisation of cluster visits for SMEs and other members
- [ ] Support in the definition of demonstration and pilot projects
- [ ] Organisation of growth accelerator/ investor events
- [ ] Provision of coaching/ mentoring/ advising services for the definition of smart investments projects
- [ ] Support in the definition of bankable proposals for investments
- [ ] Provision of IPR and/or innovation management services
- [ ] Provision of technology assessment and investment-readiness services
- [ ] Dissemination and awareness-raising activities for ESCP-S3 results
- [ ] Interactions with policy makers and Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms
- [ ] None
- [ ] Other:

Please select all the options that apply.

B. Activities implemented by the ESCP-S3: strengthen cluster cooperation

*

Please indicate which joint activities your ESCP-S3 has implemented so far to strengthen cluster cooperation amongst the partners in the ESCP-S3 (C2C).
For the activities implemented, please provide a brief explanation focusing on difficulties faced, lessons learnt or good practices.

Comment only when you choose an answer.

- [ ] Knowledge sharing and peer learning activities
- [ ] Technology transfer activities
- [ ] Shared usage of facilities
- [ ] Establishment of linkages with other partnerships
- [ ] Preparation of a long-term cooperation agenda for the partnership
- [ ] None
- [ ] Other:

Please select all the options that apply.

C. Barriers and difficulties faced during the implementation of activities

*

Please select which kind of barriers/difficulties your ESCP-S3 has faced during the implementation of activities.
For each barrier/difficulty indicated, please provide a brief explanation.

Comment only when you choose an answer.

- [ ] Collaboration between the clusters in the ESCP
- [ ] Collaboration with other ESCPs
- [ ] Engagement of SMEs in project activities
- [ ] Access to relevant potential partners in smart investment projects
- [ ] Engagement of regional policy makers
- [ ] Linkages with Thematic Smart Specialisation Platforms
- [ ] Information and/or access to complementary funding sources
- [ ] Mobilisation of funding for investment projects
- [ ] None
- [ ] Other:

Please select all the options that apply.

Please suggest how the EOCIC and the ECCP could help your ESCP in overcoming the identified difficulties.

D. Results achieved by the ESCP-S3

* Please indicate which results associated to your participation in the ESCP-S3 you or your members have accomplished, and briefly describe them.

Comment only when you choose an answer.

- [ ] Interregional collaboration projects for innovation and investments established
- [ ] Bankable proposals defined (indicate number)
- [ ] New value chain linkages fostered
- [ ] Increased skills for ESCP-S3 clusters members
- [ ] Increased skills for ESCP-S3 partners
- [ ] New business contacts among members established
- [ ] Business cooperation agreements (indicate number)
- [ ] Investment generated to support collaboration and innovation projects
- [ ] None
- [ ] Other:

Please select all the options that apply

* Has the ESCP-S3 signed any cooperation agreements/MoUs?

Yes | No

Please note cooperation with other ESCPs will be addressed in a following section.

* How many cooperation agreements/MoUs have been signed by the ESCP-S3 so far?

Only numbers may be entered in this field.

Please note cooperation with other ESCPs will be addressed in a following section.

Please describe any good practices and/or success stories related to the activities implemented by the ESCP-S3 that you consider have been key and differential for the results achieved:

E. Cooperation and dialog with other ESCPs

* Has your ESCP-S3 initiated any dialog/collaboration with other ESCPs?

Yes | No

*

Please select the name of the ESCP:

Check all that apply

- [ ] SPACE2IDGO
- [ ] COSMENERG-4i
- [ ] NF4
- [ ] MobiGoIn-Action
- [ ] EC2i
- [ ] ESCT Go Global
- [ ] EU-TEXTILE2030
- [ ] AdPack2
- [ ] LASER-GO GLOBAL
- [ ] SENTINEL
- [ ] GEO-ENERGY EUROPE
- [ ] ELBE
- [ ] DIA
- [ ] FoodNet
- [ ] MAGIA
- [ ] GIVE
- [ ] Cosmetics4Wellbeing
- [ ] GCA
- [ ] PIMAP Partnership
- [ ] PERES
- [ ] FoodPackLab
- [ ] IDEEO
- [ ] SpaceWave
- [ ] EU KETs4Dual-Use
- [ ] ALLIANCE
- [ ] EACP- EUROSME
- [ ] AI4DIAG
- [ ] TEX4IM
- [ ] DIGICLUSTERS
- [ ] Connsensys
- [ ] EACN
- [ ] S3martMed
- [ ] TRACK
- [ ] CYBER SECURE LIGHT

What is the purpose of this (these) collaboration activities? Please indicate the name of the ESCP(s) with which you collaborate and the specific objectives.

	Main purpose and specific activities
ESCP 1	
ESCP 2	
ESCP 3	
ESCP 4	
ESCP 5	

F. Synergies with the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platform on Industrial Modernisation

* What are the smart specialisation areas targeted by your ESCP-S3?

* Is your ESCP-S3 involved in any partnership under the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platform on Industrial Modernisation?

Yes | No

You can check in this link the list of partnerships/ thematic areas under the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platform on Industrial Modernisation.

* Please indicate the name of the partnership:

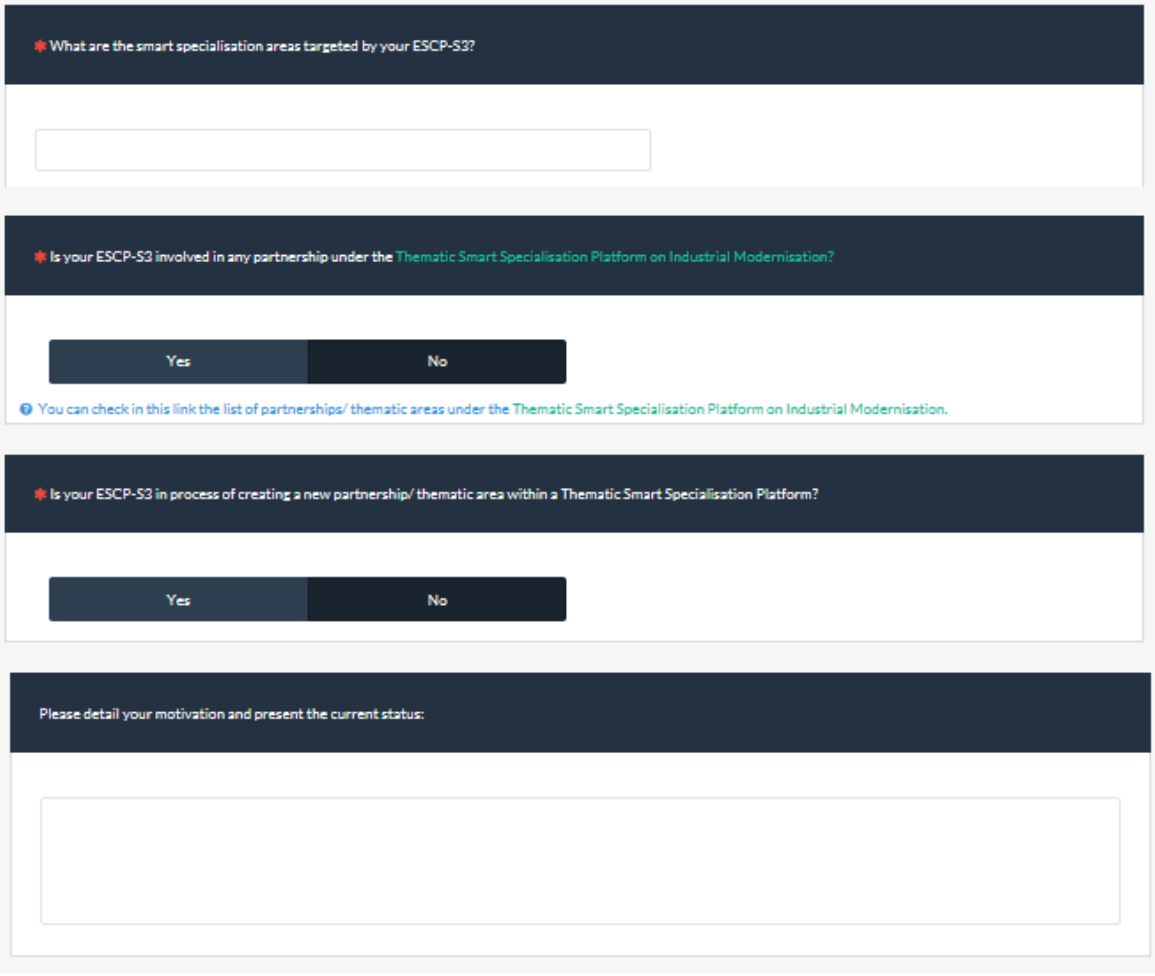
Check all that apply

- [ ] ADMA Energy
- [ ] Advanced materials for batteries
- [ ] Artificial Intelligence and Human Machine Interface
- [ ] Bio-economy
- [ ] Chemicals
- [ ] Cybersecurity
- [ ] Digitalisation and Safety for Tourism
- [ ] Efficient and Sustainable Manufacturing
- [ ] High Performance Production through 3D-Printing
- [ ] Hydrogen valleys
- [ ] Medical technology
- [ ] Mining industry
- [ ] New nano-enabled Products
- [ ] Personalised medicine
- [ ] Photonics
- [ ] Smart Regional Investments in Textile Innovation
- [ ] Safe and sustainable mobility
- [ ] SME integration to Industry 4.0
- [ ] Social Economy
- [ ] Sport
- [ ] Water Smart Territories
- [ ] Other:

* What are the synergies and activities with that partnership under the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platform?

* What are the benefits for your ESCP-S3?

F. Synergies with the Thematic Smart Specialisation Platform on Industrial Modernisation



G. Upcoming activities

Please briefly describe the activities your ESCP-S3 will organise in the next 12 months:

Which EUROPEAN trade fairs, cluster conferences, events, visits and missions is your ESCP-S3 planning to attend or organise in the next 12 months?

	Event name	Event location (city/ country)	Event date
Event 1			
Event 2			
Event 3			
Event 4			
Event 5			

European Commission

European Observatory for Clusters and Industrial Change

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