



EUROPEAN  
CLUSTER COLLABORATION  
PLATFORM .eu

# EU-IRAN matchmaking event

## Tehran, Iran

17 – 18 October 2016



## Mission Proceedings Report

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## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Overview of the European Delegation.....	4
3. Feedback session & questionnaire: analysis summary.....	7
3.1 Overall quality of the event.....	7
Additional questions .....	8
3.2 Relevance of the event towards individual objectives .....	10
3.3 Impact of the event.....	11
3.4 Cooperation objectives and next steps.....	13
3.5 ECCP Platform: what are your recommendations to better develop the platform? 14	
4. Testimonials .....	15
5. Conclusions .....	16
Annex 1 – Agenda of the Event.....	18
Annex 2 Information note from the Commissioner ELŻBIETA BIEŃKOWSKA.....	22
Annex 3 - Overall Quality of the Event.....	24
Annex 4 - Relevance of the Event towards Individual Objectives.....	25
Annex 5 – Impact of the Event.....	25



## 1. Introduction

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On 17-18 October 2016 took place the EU-IRAN Cluster Cooperation Matchmaking Event, organised jointly by the European Commission, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, in close co-operation with the European External Action Service (EEAS) and facilitated by the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP).

The ECCP partner inno TSD supported by JN Durvy, external cluster advisor, was responsible for the preparation of the mission in close co-operation with the EEAS. The main elements of the visit agenda/ event included a seminar with high-level speakers, a matchmaking session and an all-day programme of industrial site visits.

**The event gathered participants representing a delegation of 14 EU clusters, 10 European industrial federations covering several key industrial sectors (incl. biotech, automotive, raw materials, tourism, textile, construction and greentech) and a sizeable Iranian delegation including a range of representatives of industrial federations and business intermediaries. It should however be noted that given the embryonic nature of Iranian clusters and industrial federations or their counterparts it was a difficult mission to organise and it was difficult for EU clusters to obtain much relevant information prior to their visits.**

**Nevertheless, a large number of bilateral exploratory meetings took place with an average of 5 meetings per EU cluster. The general opinion of the European clusters representatives was that there is a strong interest from the Iranian counterparts for European investments, joint ventures, both technological and commercial, and scope for cooperation with European clusters and companies.**

In order to assess the participants' satisfaction and to align future ECCP activity as far as possible to cluster organisations' needs and expectations, the project team organised a debriefing session open to all of the EU participants/delegation.

Overall the feedback received orally during the debriefing session was very positive, notably underlining the quality of the seminar speakers and the relevance of the industrial site visits. The feedback also highlighted the good professional organization of the 2 day events and the good balance, between both the policy and operational ingredients, of the mission.



In order to cross-check these oral comments with written feedback, a feedback questionnaire was distributed to the EU clusters delegation present.

This questionnaire comprised 3 major topics :

- Overall quality of the event
- Relevance of the event towards individual objectives
- Impact of the event

And one generic question regarding the ECCP platform itself: "What are your recommendations to better develop the platform ECCP".

Out of the 14 EU clusters delegation, all the participants completed the survey, and most of them participated in the debriefing session. The following sections provide more information about the responses received, combined with a summary of the oral feedback from the above-mentioned session with the EU delegation.

Finally, an online survey will be sent end of March 2017, as a follow-up of the matchmaking event. The aim is to investigate the nature of the established and maintained relationships with Iranian participants met during the matchmaking event in order to evaluate the event's relevance and ongoing impact. These additional results will be made available in April 2017. Already, however we can share some positive feedback from the cluster mission as **the cluster ARIA Normandie (automotive), in partnership with FIEV (French federation of automotive OEM), have already organised a new mission of French automotive SME in Teheran at the end of February 2017.**

## 2. Overview of the European Delegation

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The European cluster delegation was selected on the basis of a competitive call for expression of interest launched and published on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) in September 2016. The clusters were selected based on their relevance, merit and added value to the event. A focus was placed on clusters belonging to the construction, automotive and mobility, textile, chemicals, raw materials, environmental technologies and tourism fields.

A total of 21 expressions of interest from organisations across all of Europe were received. As a result of the selection process, which included the verification of the eligibility criteria and the



assessment of qualitative criteria, a total of 14 clusters from 6 different Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Poland, Romania and Spain) have been selected for the mission.

All the selected clusters were considered to have a high potential to maximise the opportunities from the matchmaking sessions and a strong willingness to engage in closer cooperation with Iranian organisations.



<b>CLUSTER</b>	<b>Field(s) of activity</b>	<b>Country</b>
<b>AgroTransilvania Cluster</b>	Agro food	Romania
<b>AMEC</b>	Industrial sectors Innovation Networking	Spain
<b>ARIA Normandy</b>	Automotive industries	France
<b>BIOENERGY FOR THE REGION</b>	Clean energy, environmental technologies, eco-innovation	Poland
<b>CASTRA</b>	Aerospace technology	Bulgaria
<b>Catalan Water Partnership</b>	Sustainable use of water. Water Treatment.	Spain
<b>CLUSTER MONTAGNE</b>	French know-how for sustainable mountain tourism development.	France
<b>CONSTRUCT CLUSTER OLTENIA ASSOCIATION</b>	Construction field	Romania
<b>Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry</b>	Education and Knowledge Creation, Textile Manufacturing	Belgium
<b>Images &amp; Reseaux</b>	Wireless networks, internet of things, multimedia	France
<b>INDESCAT</b>	Sport industry	Spain
<b>Silesian Aviation Cluster</b>	Aeronautical technology	Poland
<b>Ottenia Tourism Competitiveness Pole</b>	Tourism	Romania
<b>South-West Oltenia Automotive Competitiveness Pole</b>	Automotive Field	Romania

Table 1 - Overview European Cluster Delegation



### 3. Feedback session & questionnaire: analysis summary

#### 3.1 Overall quality of the event

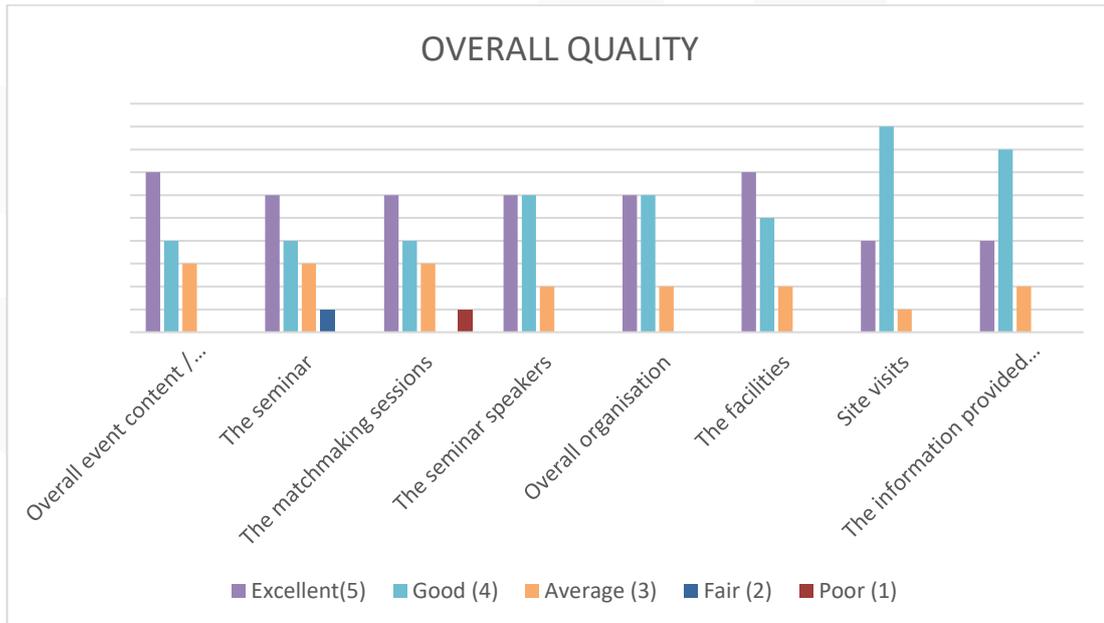


Figure 1 - Results on the overall quality of the event

On average, the EU clusters rated the overall event quality with a score of 4/5 which suggests that the ECCP team delivered a high quality event on all the indicators indicated in the figure. (overview table in annex 2) This corresponds to the feedback received orally also.

The overall event content and agenda was seen as very relevant. This can also apply to the information provided to participants, the organisation and the adequacy of the facilities. All these factors were deemed good or excellent. They also appreciated the the good professional organization of the 2 days' events.

The seminar was also rated as very positive. It provided a good introduction on Iranian culture, both on a political and operational level. The speakers were rated good.

The participants believe that they now have a better understanding of the situation and perspectives for the Iranian market and acknowledge that some sanctions are maintained, limiting the potentialities in some sectors.

The participation of Iranian organisations at the event and more specifically, the quality of the matchmaking session is considered good/average. As previously noted it was difficult for the ECCP to validate and select the Iranian delegation participants.



The detailed data and the average results are annexed to this report (Annex 2 – Overall Quality of the Event).

## Additional questions

The following open questions were asked so as to gather qualitative information.

### 1. Suggestions to improve future cluster matchmaking events

The cluster participants provided their impressions and comments about the event during the debriefing session and through the questionnaire. These observations are listed below and need to be seen not only as a way to contextualise and complement the quantitative inputs of the EU – IRAN matchmaking, but also as suggestions to improve future ECCP activities.

The comments can be divided into three main sections:

#### *On the overall organisation*

- To better anticipate on the visa issue.
- To do the selection of the participants more than one month in advance.

#### *On the Matchmaking Session*

- At the beginning of the mission consideration should be given the organization of a simple matchmaking session for the European clusters that participated in the mission.
- The duration of the bilateral meetings is too short.
- To better identify the right Iranian counterparts.
- To know in advance who are the Iranian counterparts.

#### *On the site visits*

- More information on site visits in advance notably about the participating organizations in the meetings.
- To increase the duration of the site visits.



**2. What international event (trade fair/conference) do you plan to attend in the next 12 months and would you propose us to organise a matchmaking mission at?**

YEARS 2017-18				
Dates	Event	Location	Link	Topic
February 14 -16th, 2017	MEE (Middle East Electricity)	Dubai, Emirats	<a href="http://www.middleeastelectricity.com/en/Home/">http://www.middleeastelectricity.com/en/Home/</a>	Power industry
February 20-24th, 2017	CEVISAMA (Feria Internacional de Ceramica y Equipamento de Bano)	Valencia, Spain	<a href="http://cevisama.feriavalencia.com/">http://cevisama.feriavalencia.com/</a>	Home equipment
March 09-19th, 2017	Mondial de l'Automobile	Geneve, Switzerland	<a href="http://www.mondial-automobile.com">http://www.mondial-automobile.com</a>	Automotive
May 31st - June 03rd 2017	KBC (Kitchen & Bath China)	Shangai, China	<a href="http://www.chinaexhibition.com/trade_events/8625-KBC_2017_-_The_22nd_Kitchen_and_Bath_China_2017.html">http://www.chinaexhibition.com/trade_events/8625-KBC_2017_-_The_22nd_Kitchen_and_Bath_China_2017.html</a>	Home equipment
August 28th - September 01st, 2017	ISH (International Symposium on High Voltage Engineering)	Frankfurt, Germany	<a href="http://www.ish2017.org/">http://www.ish2017.org/</a>	manufacture of equipment
2018	Iranair Show	Iran	<a href="http://iranairshow.com/?lang=en">http://iranairshow.com/?lang=en</a>	Aviation

**3. What countries are you interested in collaborating with (EU and worldwide)? Would the organisation of a matchmaking event related to these countries be helpful to you (in the EU or the specific country)?**

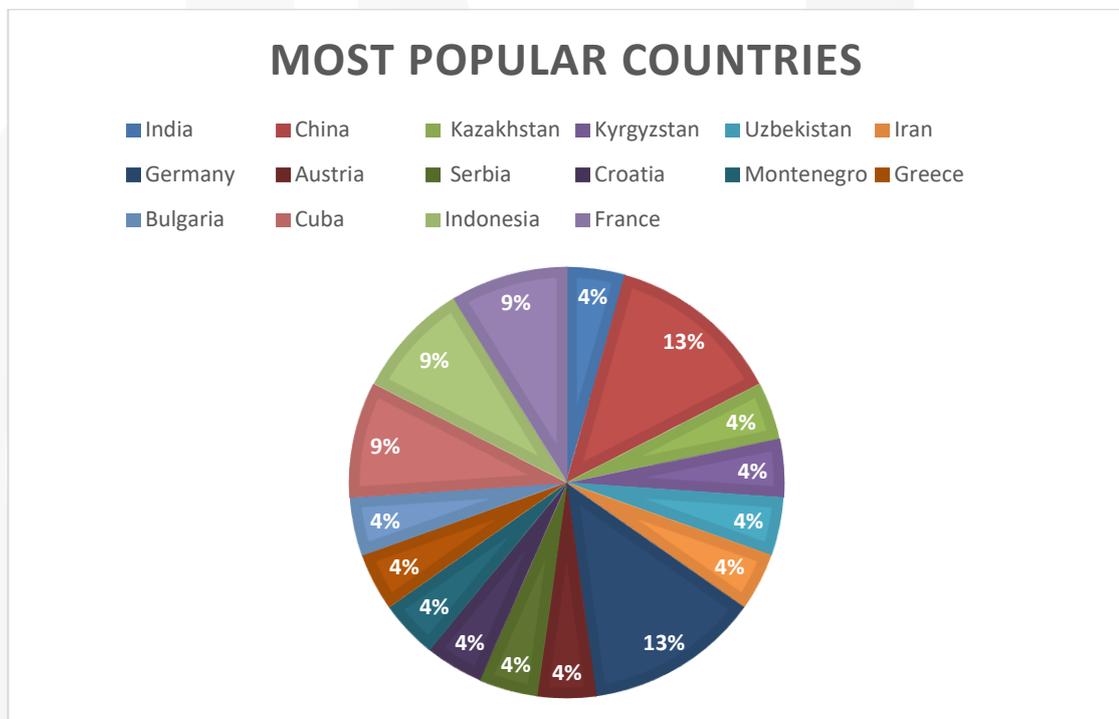


Figure 2 - Countries of interest to the clusters

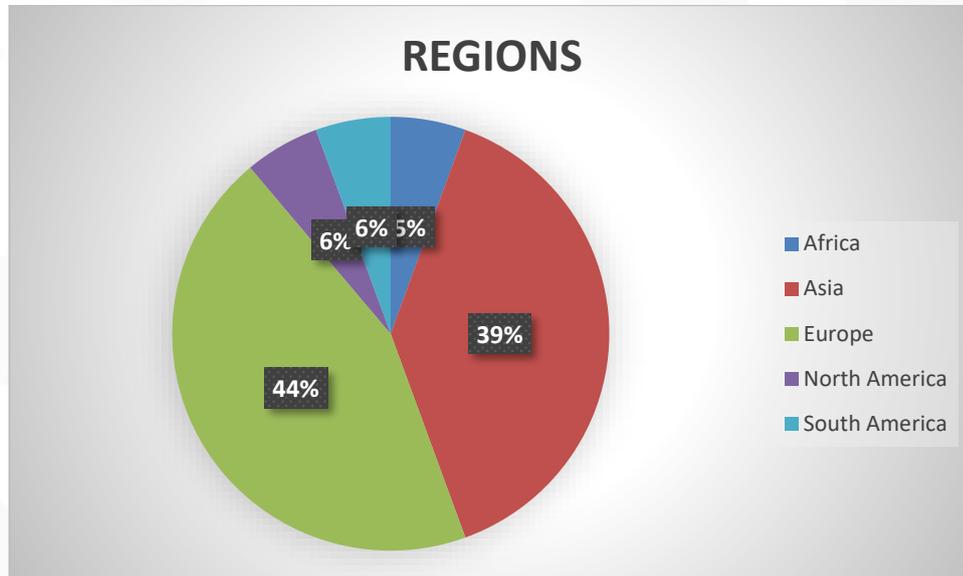


Figure 3 - Results on the countries of interest divided by regions

**Regions specifically mentioned:** Central Asia, and China.

### 3.2 Relevance of the event towards individual objectives

The figure below on the relevance of the event towards individual objectives shown above, indicates an average – good trend in all the relevant variables. The vision and knowledge of new markets, the knowledge of geographical market entry, the international visibility and market penetration and the development of new business activities, were the three factors valued most positively by the European delegates.

The scope for the signature of cooperation agreements was assessed as rather fair. But the answers seem to be more divided, indicating that not all clusters had the same experience. While for some participants the signature of agreements was viewed as very positive, others valued it poorly.

Finally, the development of new business and the access to new research and development competences was assessed very differently by the delegates. Please refer to the annexes to see the complete table of averages on the relevance of the event towards individual objectives (Annex 3 - Relevance of the Event towards Individual Objectives).

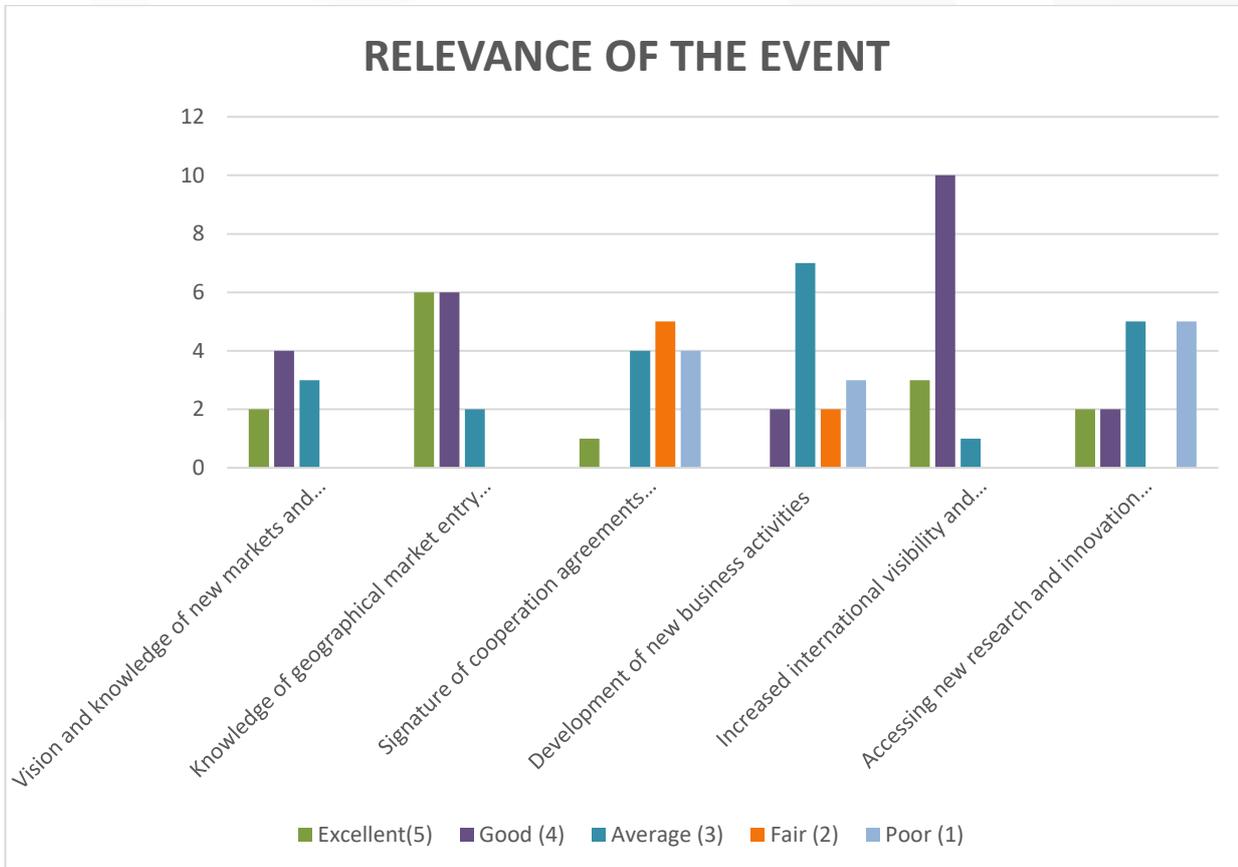


Figure 4 – Overview on the results of the event towards individual objectives

### 3.3 Impact of the event

The impact of the event was analysed through several factors namely: the number of agreements and/or letters of intent initiated or planned with organisations met at the event, the number of organisations with whom the clusters plan to maintain and pursue further contact and the number of collaborative project ideas emerged from the meetings.

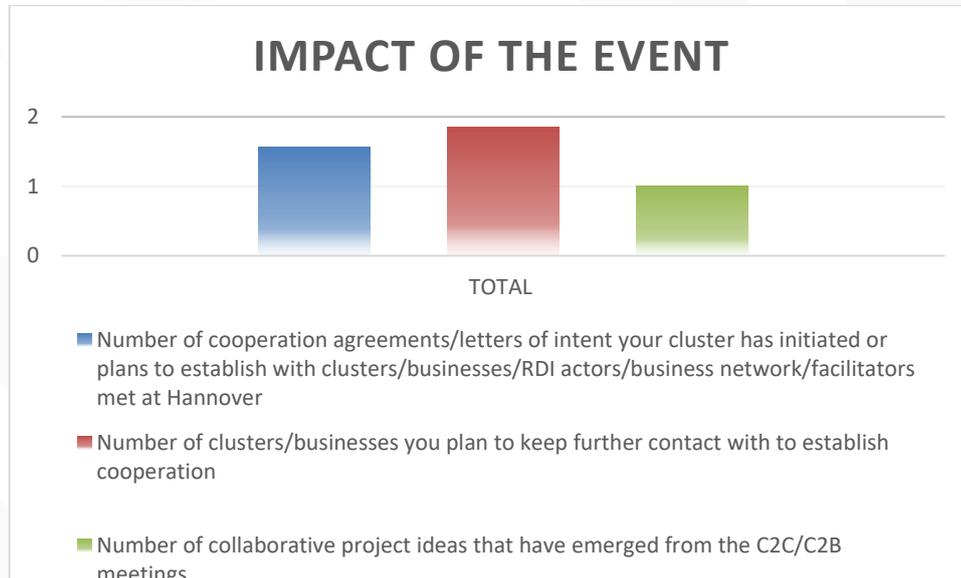


Figure 5- Impact of the event in terms of collaborative projects, agreements & cooperation with organisations

An average of 2 agreements and 1 collaborative project ideas per European cluster participant were initiated with organisations that participated in the matchmaking event. Each of the European cluster participants planned to continue contacts with an average of 2 organisations in order to establish future cooperation actions or agreements. Please refer to the annex for these results (Annex 4 – Impact of the Event).

Despite the low number of agreements and collaborative ideas originating from the bilateral meetings, the European clusters found that the visit provided them with interesting organisations with whom to continue talks to establish future cooperation.

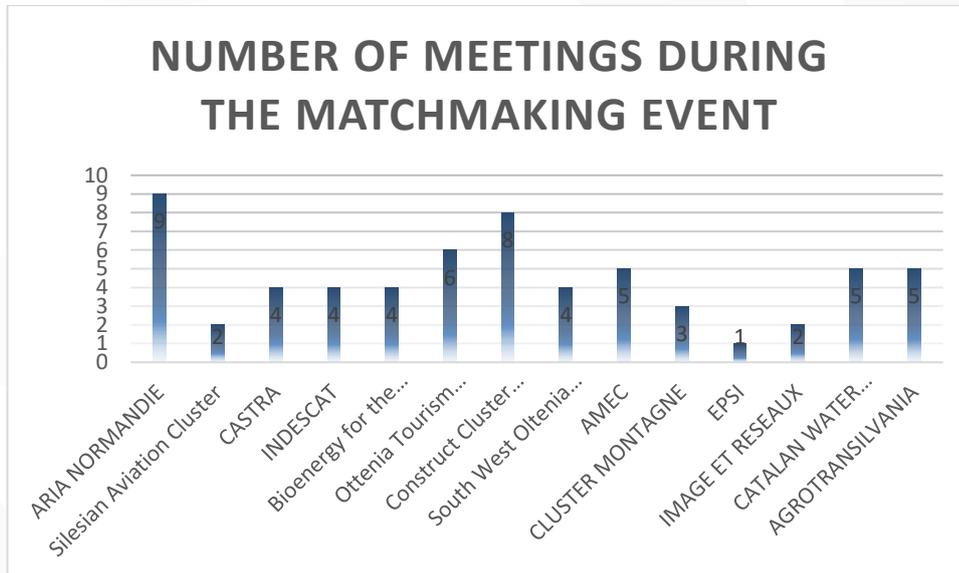


Figure 6 - Number of meetings held with Iranian & EU organisations

The average number of meetings reached 5 meetings per cluster participant in reference to interactions with Iranian counterparts, with highs of 9 (ARIA Normandie) and lows of one for Image et Réseaux.

### 3.4 Cooperation objectives and next steps

This section provides qualitative information on the specific results of the matchmaking actions. The clusters list those organisations they plan to maintain further contact in order to establish future cooperation.



EU CLUSTER	Name of the Iranian counterparts you plan to keep/ Next steps
<b>ARIA NORMANDIE</b>	H karami – sapco; Mansouri Birjandi – sapco; Nader Farrokh – Azin Khodro; Hamid Kianpour – Kian Khodro Novin; Mehdi Pourghazi – Nirumand Polymer; Farhad Abedini – saipa
<b>Silesian Aviation Cluster</b>	Presidency of Islamic Republic of Iran Vice Presidency for Science and Technology; Safiran Mehr Isan Trading Co.
<b>CASTRA</b>	Iran Aviation Technology Development Headquarters - Aysan Mousavi
<b>INDESCAT</b>	Tochal ski resort; Mountain and Outdoor federation. Plan to organise a webinar on how to do business in Iran for Indescat business delegation.
<b>Bioenergy for the Region Cluster</b>	Teheran Wastewater Treatment Plant; Commercial Attaché Pars Sky Investment Trading PJSC; Shabe Kahroba Corporation. An Iranian will join in the framework of the EU funded Marie Curie scheme; 1 meeting planned with a governmental organisation from
<b>Ottenia Tourism Competitiveness Pole</b>	Mohein Tourism Mellat; Pasargat tours
<b>Construct Cluster Oltenia Association</b>	industrial development & renovation of Iran, Istonex, syndicate of aluminium industries of Iran.
<b>CLUSTER MONTAGNE</b>	Tochal ski resort; Mountain and Outdoor federation. An Iranian delegation will come to Europe in the context of European strategic partnership cooperation : participation in tenders (POMA for ski lifts).
<b>EPSI</b>	Plan to organise an European seminar in a trade fair in Iran in 2017.
<b>CATALAN WATER PARTNERSHIP</b>	Plan some cooperations projects with technical center; 2 meetings scheduled for the following day in Teheran (1 with a big engineering company and 1 with an institute in petroleum).
<b>AGROTRANSILVANIA</b>	Plan a visit to Romania for an Iran business delegation; invitation to come to Iran from a new producer; Company on dairy products wants a joint-venture, 1 Iranian counterpart plan to buy their products.

### 3.5 ECCP Platform: what are your recommendations to better develop the platform?

Only 4 clusters replied to this question and their recommendations are:

- To be unified with Cordis and linked with EEN.
- To have more information about potential partners and economy and political situation in countries in international cooperation.



- As shared with other clusters, it is not initially easy to register a profile at the beginning, as it was not clear when the revision was automatically done or when changes remain just as draft.
- It is worth considering organising regular meetings of European clusters, for example, according to the criterion of the industry, which would be organized by the ECCP in different countries. Definitely, the close and permanent interactions between European clusters in the RES field are missing. During the meetings, clusters would work out the EU clusters position regarding e.g. the trends in the global market of renewable energy sources and develop joint actions on non-EU markets. Iran is a good example of a market in which individual companies have a little chance of success. Only the EU clusters consortium or coalition, founded on the platform of the ECCP, could be a good partner for Iran. (NB comment from ECCP a sound justification for the ESCP-4i concept).

#### 4. Testimonials

Immediately after the event, a number of written testimonials were collected (free text) as below:



Ewa KOCHANska, Cluster manager at Bioenergy for the Region Cluster, Poland:

*“The overall organization of the mission was excellent: I received comprehensive information before travelling to Iran. Tips on how to get a visa in Iran were much appreciated, the Iranian Embassy in Warsaw had been informed about the mission, and I could receive the Iranian visa within 40 minutes. Information on travel and accommodation were on time and complete. During our stay in Tehran, all organizational issues are transparent. Special thanks to Ms. Camille Vidaud for creating a friendship atmosphere during the mission. As I represent Bioenergy for the Region Cluster and our activities are related to renewable energy and waste management, so from this point of view, the mission was very useful. We highly appreciate all seminar presentations, because they gave us opportunities to better understand the socio-economic situation in Iran and conditions for the perspectives of eventual cooperation with partners from Iran.”*



Alberto Bichi, Executive director at EPSI:

*“Good professional organization of the 2 days events and good balance, both political and operational, of the mission. In general, Iranian business people are welcoming but maybe missing depth in the way we can do business with them. In general, they are reluctant to initiate / follow up on different actions unless it concerns direct investments and concrete proposal from our side on how we can help them. (maybe this is because of the history...)”*



Angelamaria Lalatta, cluster manager at AMEC, Spain:

*“The participants were grouped upon the umbrella of construction even if they represent different sectors and interest. The visits have been interesting in order to know how Iran is running.”*

## 5. Conclusions

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The questionnaires analysed represented 100% of the total European cluster delegation. According to the overall assessment of the feedback received, it can be concluded that the objective of the EU – Iran Matchmaking Event was achieved. Participants gained knowledge on the opportunities, potential and challenges of the Iranian market and established the first contacts with their counterparts from the host country. In many cases, the European cluster participants established the foundations to develop further cooperation agreements and in some cases to sign cooperation agreements in different topics.

Nonetheless, there are several issues that should be addressed to improve future events. The European delegations mainly commented on the perhaps unrealistic expectations of the Iranian counterparts whom in many cases were principally looking for investors and less so cooperation partners. This could be explained by the recent reintegration into world markets and the relaxation of the international sanctions. Equally, it proved difficult (for the ECCP) to obtain much information on the Iranian delegation prior to the visit, nor organise a pre event webinar which is the norm.

But the outcome of the event was generally seen as very positive. The follow – up will offer more insights on how fruitful the event was for the European cluster participants over the long-term. **However, the Iranian’s requests for competences and sector y expertise, and the very good**



contacts made during the mission, have laid the ground for enable a next step for pursuing commercial contracts and in some cases the possibility for (eg French) companies' setting up in Iran. ARIA Normandie, in partnership with FIEV (French federation of automotive OEM), planned to organize a new mission of French automotive SME in Teheran at the end of February 2017.

On the Iranian counterpart side, the Iranians are keen to establish collaboration with European businesses, for example because of the quality image they have compared to other continents.

Finally, it is worth noting some of the direct feedback and comments received from the Iranian participants. The material is presented as quotations but not attributed to respect the confidentiality of those concerned.

"The Iranians have a very great spirit of openness and appreciate the Europeans and especially some countries that have a quality image. The opinion on the Americans is generally very negative and the Chinese are not appreciated for their lack of quality."

On several occasions, Iranian entrepreneurs have stated: "If you do not want to come and do business with us, we will do business with the Chinese since they are always knocking on our doorstep."

It would seem that the Iranian appetite for doing business with Europeans is present with a new and powerful industrial tool but in search of partnerships with Europeans seeking access to skills, industrial capacity and quality..

"Iran imports little by setting high tariffs and rather seeks foreign companies to ally with and establish a local company presence and possibly a (JV)."



## Annex 1 – Agenda of the Event

**Monday AM, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

*venue: Hotel Espinas, Le Chateau meeting room*

### **EU economic mission and Conference on economic, industrial and investment opportunities in Tehran, Iran**

#### **SEMINAR**

##### KICK OFF MEETING WITH EU BUSINESS ORGANISATIONS AND CLUSTER PARTICIPANTS

- 09.15 Welcome by Commissioner Bienkowska
- 09.30 Organisational and administrative issues, badges (EU liaison team)
- 09.45 Group picture on staircase lobby hotel
- 10.15 Coffee break

##### EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH EU MEMBER STATES ECONOMIC COUNSELLORS

- 10.30 Opening by Ms Yvette Daoud, deputy Head of Mission, Netherlands Embassy
- 10.35 Introduction of the objectives of the visit and European business organisations and clusters participants by Director DG GROW, Eric Mamer
- 10.40 Presentation by Daniel Gottschald view on the potential for EU-Iran cooperation
- 10.50 Presentation by Eric Lighthart, financial expert, on the financial and banking situation in Iran following the lifting of nuclear related sanctions
- 11.10 Exchange of views on investment and business opportunities in Iran and experiences of EU MS (per sector per table with a group of MS)
- 11.55 Closure by Ms Yvette Daoud, deputy Head of Mission, Netherlands Embassy
- 12.00 Lunch time

**Monday PM, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

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**Venue: International Fair Complex of the Iranian Trade Promotion Organisation (Persian Gulf Hall).**

**Conference on Economic, Industrial and Investment Opportunities in Iran and launch of industrial dialogues, Trade and Promotion Organisation of Iran, Persian Gulf Hall**

- 14.00 Opening and welcome speech, by *H.E. Mr. Mohammad Reza Ne'Matzadeh, Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade*
- 14.15 Key note speech by *Ms Bienkowska, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Commission*
- 14.30 Business climate, industrial and investment opportunities in Iran, *Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade*
- 15.15 Discussion with the audience
- 15:30 Launch of the **EU-Iran regulatory and industrial policy dialogues** with interventions from *Mr Eric Mamer, Director, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (GROW), European Commission, and representatives of the Iranian Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade and the Ministry of Economic affairs and Finance*
- 15.55 Closure remarks by *H.E. Susanna Terstal, Netherlands Ambassador to Iran, Local EU Representative*
- Break
- 16.05 Introduction by *Mr Eric Mamer* of the **"Know your counterpart" networking event**
- Example of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform
  - Example of the EU4 sports clusters cooperation with Iranian stakeholders
- 16.20 Face to face meetings
- 18.15 Closure remarks by *Ms Yvette Daoud, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Netherlands, Local EU Representation*
- 18.30 Departure to hotel



**Tuesday, 18 October 2016 – All day**

Industrial site visits

**Industrial horizontal sector:** Pardis technology park.

**Automotive, mobility sector:** Renault HQ, Renault/Saipa-Pars Khodro.

**Textile sector:** Iranian Textile association, Chamber of Commerce, private sports clothing production site.

**Pharma Life science:** Pharmaceutical production site and green technology site.

**Tourism:** Tourism and Cultural Heritage Organisation and Tochal ski resort.

**Raw materials:** Iranian Minerals Association and field trip to mines or processing site.

**Construction:** Iranian Engineers and Construction Association, Construction Company Iran and the Producers and Importers of Construction Machinery association.

Here below the list of participants for the site visits:

Industrial sector	Organiser	Site description	Interested organisations
PARDIS TECHNOLOGY PARK (HORIZONTAL)	Trade and Promotion Organisation (TPO – Iran)	<a href="http://en.techpark.ir/">http://en.techpark.ir/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eurochambres</li><li>• London Chamber of Commerce and Industry</li><li>• European Cluster Cooperation Platform (ECCP)</li></ul>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cluster Aero-Space Technologies Research and Applications (CASTRA), ES</li> <li>Image et Reseaux, FR</li> <li>Agro Transilvania, RO</li> </ul>
<b>AUTOMOTIVE/ MOBILITY</b>	Embassy of France	Visits to Renault HQ, Renault/Saipa-Pars Khodro production site, two car spare parts production sites (car seats and car plastics).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Association régionale de l'industrie automobile de Normandie (ARIA Automotive), FR</li> <li>South-West Oltenia Automotive competitiveness pole, RO</li> <li>European Cluster Cooperation Platform (ECCP)</li> </ul>
<b>TEXTILE</b>	Embassy of Italy	Meetings with the Iranian Textile association and the relevant section of the Chamber of Commerce, visit to a private sports clothing production site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European Federation of Sporting Goods (FESI)</li> <li>Fur Europe</li> </ul>
<b>PHARMA / LIFE SCIENCES</b>	Embassy of Austria	Visit to a pharmaceutical production site and green technology site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medecines for Europe</li> <li>Bioenergy for the Region, PL</li> </ul>
<b>TOURISM</b>	Embassy of Spain	Meeting with the Tourism and Cultural Heritage Organisation (introduction of the Iranian tourism plan for the coming years). Visit to Tochal ski resort.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indecat, ES</li> <li>Cluster Montagne, FR</li> <li>Oltenia Tourism, RO</li> </ul>
<b>RAW MATERIALS</b>	Embassy of Bulgaria	Meeting with the Iranian Minerals Association and field trip to mines or processing site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Industrial Minerals Association (IMA Europe)</li> <li>Catalan Water Partnership, ES</li> </ul>
<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>	Embassy of Poland	Meetings with the Iranian Engineers and Construction Association, Construction Company Iran and the Producers and Importers of Construction Machinery association.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>European International Contractors</li> <li>European Dredging Association (EuDA)</li> <li>Construct cluster Oltenia association, RO</li> <li>Silesian Aviation Cluster, PL</li> <li>Association of the Internationalized industrial companies (AMEC), ES</li> </ul>



## Annex 2 Information note from the Commissioner ELŻBIETA BIEŃKOWSKA

### VISIT TO IRAN 16-19 OCTOBER 2016

The economic mission to Iran that I led on 16-19 October was a first follow-up to the EU high-level visit in April led by HRVP Mogherini, in which I participated together with several Commissioners.

The visit was prepared in close co-operation with EEAS and several DGs (ECFIN, FISMA, JUST, TRADE, DEVCO and the EIB). The main goal was promotion of the EU's economic interest with a cross-sectoral and cross-service approach.

I had the opportunity to meet the Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Vice-President of Iran responsible for Cultural Heritage and Tourism, and the President of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

I also participated and co-chaired a conference on the opportunities for investment in Iran organised by the Iranian side with the participation of both Iranian and EU associations of industries, clusters and individual companies.

During this economic mission, I was accompanied by 33 representatives of European industrial federations and industrial & innovation clusters covering a number of key sectors of common interest (pharmaceuticals/biotech, automotive, raw materials, tourism, construction and textile). They had opportunities to meet their counterparts in Iran, and benefit from knowledge on the ground via a number of sectoral site visits organised by six EU Member States' embassies in Tehran. This reinforced the partnership between the Commission, Member States and EU business organisations.

In all meetings, I stressed that the EU is committed to build a long term and mutually beneficial economic partnership with Iran. For doing so, we need to build trust and find pragmatic solutions to enable our businesses to benefit from new opportunities in Iran. The potential of this country is high in terms of an educated workforce, natural resources, the need for upgrading of infrastructures in various sectors and potentially high economic growth.

EU-Iran economic co-operation is confronted with two main challenges: (i) the external difficulties for European large banks to operate in Iran and (ii) the deficiencies in the level of development of the business and legal environments.

(i) In part, large European banks' reluctance or hesitation to engage in Iran comes from the effects of the US sanctions. These banks fear possible US sanctions when/if operating in Iran, as they have interests and activities in the US. It is also partly due to Iran's backlog in adapting to current international banking standards as well as deficient anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing controls.



In order to promote the EU economic interest (banks and enterprises willing to operate in Iran), we should continue to engage with the US in order to get clarity and ensure that the US framework is well understood and does not create any unjustified obstacles or uncertainties for the resumption of the EU economic, industrial and trade relations with Iran.

(ii) It appears that Iran underestimates the need to modernise the business environment, be it the banking and financial sector, property rights' protection (both intellectual and physical assets), public procurement, the standardisation and the regulatory framework in various sectors, etc.

In order to improve the overall framework conditions for European enterprises to invest and operate in Iran, I discussed with the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade the launching of a Regulatory and Industrial Policy Dialogue which will include business environment as a horizontal dimension. It will also have a sectoral dimension in six fields: pharmaceuticals/biotech, automotive, raw materials, tourism, construction and textile to build convergence on technical regulations and standards. The Vice-President responsible for Cultural Heritage and Tourism suggested to explore the prospects for a Memorandum of Understanding with the EU in this area.

The recent developments of our economic relations with Iran are promising. These include e.g. increase of trade, clear willingness of the European businesses to engage, Commission' support to Iran's accession to WTO, proposal to include Iran as potentially eligible country for EIB operations, our shared interest in establishing three complementary dialogues (macroeconomic + trade and investment + regulatory and industrial policy). On this basis, trust and a long-term partnership with Iran can be developed.

The timing of the visit was opportune. In the last few months, Iran has been receiving a growing number of visits of delegations from individual EU Member States. More than 3500 delegates from EU Member States' Governments and economic operators have visited Iran following the lifting of the sanctions. Further and deeper coordination among the Member States under the Commission's and EEAS's umbrellas is therefore needed. I passed this message to EU Ambassadors accredited to Tehran at two meetings that we held in the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands during my visit.

Another very important subject that was tackled during all my bilateral meetings with the Iranian officials was the opening of the fully operational EU Delegation in Tehran. Currently the two EU officials accredited in Tehran work in the so-called EU Liaison Office attached to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands that represents the interests of the EU in the contacts with Iranian authorities. The discussions about the opening of the EU Delegation in Iran last for more than a year now. All my interlocutors shared the importance of the opening of the EU Delegation in Iran. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Zarif, informed me during our meeting on 19 October that on the same day, he had sent a letter to President Rouhani regarding the importance of opening an EU Delegation to Iran. He stressed however that even though the political obstacles



to opening the delegation seem to have been removed, a number of legal questions concerning the status of the accredited personnel remain. He therefore asked to send him additional information concerning the status of the EU personnel accredited in other EU delegations across the world.

### Annex 3 - Overall Quality of the Event

OVERALL QUALITY OF THE EVENT								
EU CLUSTER	Overall event content / agenda	The seminar	The matchmaking sessions	The seminar speakers	Overall organisation	The facilities	Site visits	The information provided to the participants
ARIA NORMANDIE	5	3	5	4	5	5	5	5
Silesian Aviation Cluster	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
CASTRA	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
INDESCAT	3	3	1	3	3	5	4	3
Bioenergy for the Region Cluster	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5
Oltenia Tourism Competitiveness Pole	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4
Construct Cluster Oltenia Association	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4
South West Oltenia Automotive Competitiveness Pole	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	4
AMEC	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3
CLUSTER MONTAGNE	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3
EPSI	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4
IMAGE ET RESEAUX	3	2	3	3	4	3	4	4
CATALAN WATER PARTNERSHIP	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4
AGROTRANSILVANIA	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4
<b>TOTAL AVERAGE (score 0-5)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Excellent(5)</i>	7	6	6	6	6	7	4	4
<i>Good (4)</i>	4	4	4	6	6	5	9	8
<i>Average (3)</i>	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	2
<i>Fair (2)</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Poor (1)</i>	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0



## Annex 4 - Relevance of the Event towards Individual Objectives

RELEVANCE OF THE EVENT TOWARDS INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIVES						
EU CLUSTER	Vision and knowledge of new markets and technology trends	Knowledge of geographical market entry barriers for cluster organisations / members	Signature of cooperation agreements between companies and/or laboratories within participating clusters/regions/countries	Development of new business activities	Increased international visibility and market penetration: facilitate search for strategic alliances/partners	Accessing new research and innovation competences and developing concrete projects
ARIA NORMANDIE	3	5	3	4	5	4
Silesian Aviation Cluster	3	4	3	3	4	5
CASTRA	5	5	1	1	5	1
INDESCAT	4	3	0	3	4	3
Bioenergy for the Region Cluster	5	4	5	3	5	5
Ottenia Tourism Competitiveness Pole	4	5	2	2	4	1
Construct Cluster Oltenia Association	4	4	3	3	4	1
South West Oltenia Automotive Competitiveness Pole	3	5	0	1	4	1
AMEC	4	5	2	4	4	4
CLUSTER MONTAGNE	4	4	2	3	4	3
EPSI	3	3	3	2	4	3
IMAGE ET RESEAUX	3	5	1	1	3	1
CATALAN WATER PARTNERSHIP	4	4	2	3	4	3
AGROTRANSILVANIA	4	4	2	3	4	3
<i>Excellent(5)</i>	2	6	1	0	3	2
<i>Good (4)</i>	4	6	0	2	10	2
<i>Average (3)</i>	3	2	4	7	1	5
<i>Fair (2)</i>	0	0	5	2	0	0
<i>Poor (1)</i>	0	0	4	3	0	5

## Annex 5 – Impact of the Event

EU CLUSTER	Number of cooperation agreements/letters of intent your cluster has initiated or plans to establish with clusters/businesses/RDI actors/business network/facilitators met at Hannover	Number of clusters/businesses you plan to keep further contact with to establish cooperation	Number of collaborative project ideas that have emerged from the C2C/C2B meetings
ARIA NORMANDIE	0	5	2
Silesian Aviation Cluster	2	2	1
CASTRA	3	1	1
INDESCAT	2	3	2
Bioenergy for the Region Cluster	3	3	1
Ottenia Tourism Competitiveness Pole	4	2	1
Construct Cluster Oltenia Association	0	2	3
South West Oltenia Automotive Compet	0	0	0
AMEC	3	3	0
CLUSTER MONTAGNE	1	2	1
EPSI	0	1	0
IMAGE ET RESEAUX	0	0	0
CATALAN WATER PARTNERSHIP	2	1	1
AGROTRANSILVANIA	2	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>