



EUROPEAN CLUSTER
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Country factsheet

Cyprus

An initiative of the European Union





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Introduction



This document presents an overview of the cluster policy in Cyprus. Given the importance to contextualise the cluster policies (and related) analysed in the factsheets, a comprehensive outlook of the country in socioeconomic terms can be consulted in the [European Semester Country Report for Cyprus](#). The European Semester was an instrument introduced to coordinate the EU Member States economic policies and address the economic challenges faced by the EU. Its goals are “to ensure sound public finances, to prevent excessive macroeconomic imbalances in the EU, to support structural reforms to create more jobs and growth, and to boost investment”. Thus, it focuses on the following areas: business environment; financial and fiscal stability; green economy; public administration; labour market and skills; and, social protection and cohesion.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused an unprecedented economic shock to the European and global economy. In response, policymakers at EU and national level have acted decisively and at short notice to make available very significant financial resources, notably through the Recovery and Resilience Facility, to tackle the threat of a prolonged downturn. [National recovery and resilience plans](#) have been drafted in each Member State to ensure a recovery that addresses the challenges identified in the European Semester. In Cyprus, clusters are directly mentioned in the National recovery and resilience plan in the priority area aiming to improve access to finance for SMEs. The enhancement of competitiveness will be achieved through the creation and development of clusters.¹ In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing Russian military aggression against Ukraine has also taken its toll on EU companies and industrial ecosystems, highlighting the significance of policy efforts in supporting SMEs and clusters.

[ERDF Partnership Agreement 2021-2027](#), Along with the Partnership Agreement, Cyprus was the first country to have its Cohesion Policy operational programme approved for the European Regional and Development Fund (ERDF) the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund (JTF) and the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+).

In the following, a succinct overview of the cluster policy in Cyprus will be provided. The structure of this factsheet generally encompasses:

- 1) an overview of the industrial ecosystems and cluster landscape in Cyprus,
- 2) an overview of a broad policy,
- 3) an assessment of the state of play of the national cluster policy.

¹ Cyprus National Resilience Plan [http://www.cyprus-tomorrow.gov.cy/cypresidency/kyprostoavrio.nsf/all/B37B4D3AC1DB73B6C22586DA00421E05/\\$file/Cyprus%20RRP%20For%20Upload%2020052021.pdf?openelement](http://www.cyprus-tomorrow.gov.cy/cypresidency/kyprostoavrio.nsf/all/B37B4D3AC1DB73B6C22586DA00421E05/$file/Cyprus%20RRP%20For%20Upload%2020052021.pdf?openelement)

01

Industrial ecosystems and cluster landscape



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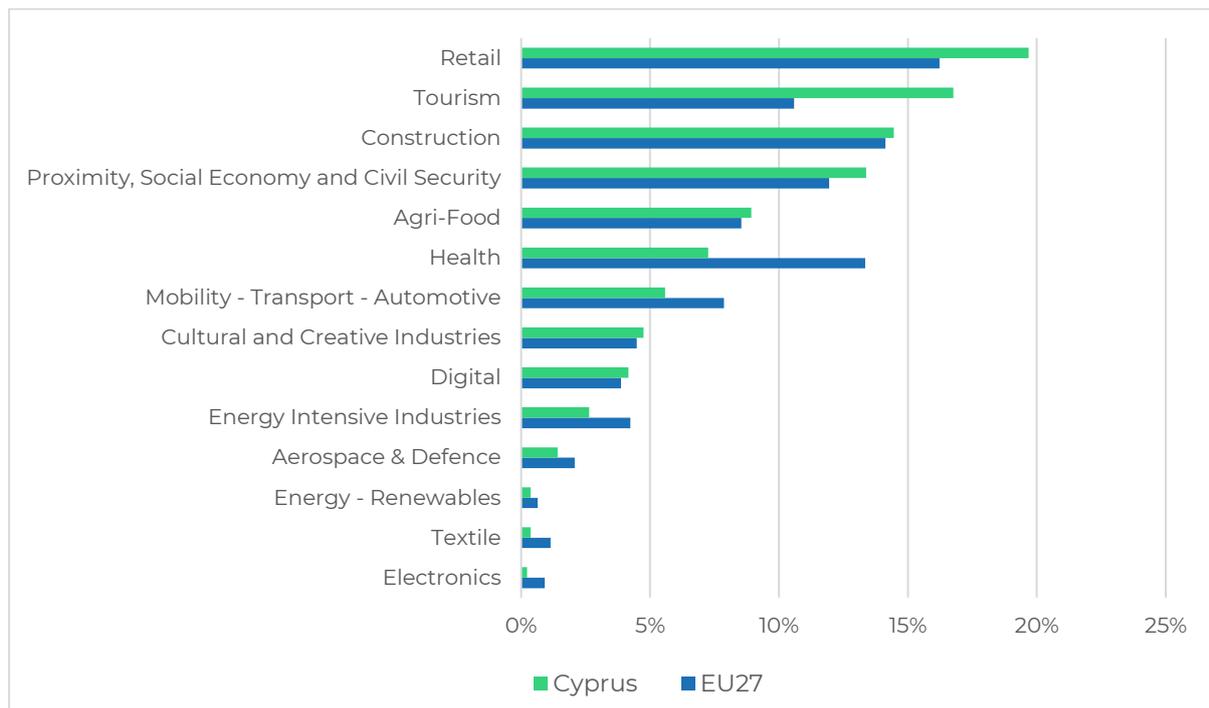
1. Industrial ecosystems and cluster landscape

Employment in the 14 ecosystems in the country

As part of its Industrial Strategy (March 2020), the European Commission has selected 14 industrial ecosystems that are particularly relevant in Europe and encompass all players operating in a value chain.² The classification of the 14 industrial ecosystems have been calculated by aggregating NACE 2 -digit activities, following the methodology established in the European Commission.³

In the following figure, the employment share of Cyprus and the EU27 in each industrial ecosystem is shown relative to the number of employed persons in the 14 industrial ecosystems. The ecosystems are ordered, from top to bottom, according to the amount of employment in the country. When the bar for the country is higher than that of the EU27, it indicates that the country is more specialised in that ecosystem. For Cyprus, the three main ecosystems by employment are “Retail”, “Tourism” and “Construction”. Moreover, Cyprus also has an above average employment share in these ecosystems which highlights the relative strength of the country in these ecosystems.

Figure 1: Employment in the ecosystems



Source: ECCP (2022), own elaboration from Eurostat.

² see here for more information <https://clustercollaboration.eu/in-focus/industrial-ecosystems> (last access 09.01.2023).

³ see European Commission (2021): Annual Single Market Report, SWD(2021)351.



Regionally relevant nodes (agglomerations)

Economic activity, and therefore employment, is not equally distributed in all regions. Specialisation can be measured through Location Quotients (LQ) that reflect the relative specialisation of an activity in a region compared to the EU average. If the LQ for a given activity-region combination is above 1.5, it is considered a specialisation node, and if the activity accounts for at least 1% of total employment in the region, it is considered regionally relevant.⁴ The following tables show the total number of regionally relevant specialisation nodes (agglomerations) in each region in the country and identifies the top five most specialised of these nodes. The first table focuses on the 88 NACE 2-digit activities or sectors, totalling 11 in the country, while the second table is based on the 14 ecosystems, which total 1 in the country.

Table 1: Number of regionally relevant sectoral nodes and Top 5 nodes by region (NACE)

Region	Number of nodes	Node 1	Node 2	Node 3	Node 4	Node 5
CY: Cyprus	11	I55 - Accommodation	K66 – Activities auxiliary to financial services and insurance activities	T97 – Activities of households as employers of domestic personnel	F41 – Construction of buildings	M69 – Legal and accounting activities

Source: ECCP (2022), own elaboration from Eurostat.

Overall, there are fewer numbers of ecosystem nodes compared to the regionally relevant sectoral nodes by NACE sectors. This more concentrated agglomeration can at least partially be linked to the methodology of measurement of the 14 industrial ecosystems. Cyprus' NACE nodes align with one official ecosystem that shows in table 2 and one unofficial one that does not show but is also integral to the Cyprian economy. The first is tourism which is linked to accommodation (I55) and construction (F41). The second, unofficial one is Cyprus status as a place for international financial services, in particular for high net-worth individuals. This ecosystem is responsible for the strong nodes in auxiliary activities to financial services and insurance activities (K66), legal and accounting activities (M69) and affects also the nodes of activities of households as employers of domestic personnel (T97) as well as construction (F41).

Table 2: Regionally relevant ecosystem nodes

Region	Number of nodes	Node 1
CY: Cyprus	1	Tourism

Source: ECCP (2022), own elaboration from Eurostat.

Cluster organisations in the country

There are three Cyprian cluster organisations registered on the ECCP. One of these cluster organisations is operating in the industrial ecosystem “Agri-food”. The other two cluster organisations have not provided this information. SMEs (92%, EU: 84%) followed by research organisations (6%, EU:7%) and large enterprises (2%, EU: 9%) constitute the majority of member organisations of Cypriot cluster organisations with profiles on the ECCP.

⁴ for more information on the methodology please see the methodology note: <https://clustercollaboration.eu/in-focus/policy-acceleration/country-factsheets-on-cluster-policies-and-programmes> (last access 09.01.2023).

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National cluster policy, programmes and initiatives



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2. National cluster policy, programmes and initiatives

In this section we provide an overview of the existing Cyprus cluster policies on a national level. The breakdown is presented in the form of a table, with the first column showcasing information on the aspects which constitute the policy (beginning with 'Policy Objectives', following with 'Policy Focus', etc.). The second column represents the case of a Cyprus national broad policy.

Within the table the text presented in bold (black) depicts standardised categories across country factsheets (56 in total for 2022), which are applied for comparative purposes. This is followed by a complementary descriptive text to provide more insights about the cluster policy in Cyprus.

Policy type:	Broad Policy
Policy name:	The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]
POLICY OBJECTIVES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening cooperation between companies or industry and RTDI actors Increasing competitiveness and boosting scale up of SMEs Supporting internationalisation activities Supporting the creation of new cluster organisations Fostering innovation and strengthening innovation ecosystems Fostering R&D activities, technology development and implementation Promoting entrepreneurship, start-ups and spin-offs Promoting resilience and sustainable economy and other solidarity-based initiatives Promoting employment and upgrading skills and competences Enhancing territorial cohesion (through RIS3)



Policy type:	Broad Policy
Policy name:	The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]
	<p>The broad cross- and multi-sectoral policy framework "The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" is the most recent framework developed by the Cypriot Government (Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry). The paper is aiming at finding common solutions to make digitization of industry a reality through shared solutions and learning in Cyprus. In that context, the creation and operation of clusters and reinforcement of automation, ICT and artificial intelligence are some of the main pillars of the New Industrial Policy. This policy framework will tackle the long term structural problems of Cyprus' economy such as the small size of production, the skills gap between the available human resources in relation to the needs of the industry and the reduced degree of cluster cooperation. The creation of clusters in production, distribution, export will increase the competitiveness of SMEs.</p>
<p>POLICY FOCUS</p> 	<p>Cross-sectoral</p> <p>The "New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" integrates a cross-sectoral priority areas playing a major role in the new economic development of Cyprus. The aim is to promote innovative industrial processes in different fields with a significant focus on energy, circular economy, research, telecommunications, transport and in general all possible sectors of production. One core field is the circular economy i.e. resource use and waste generation aiming at reducing water demand and to addressing the challenges posed by the gradually increasing costs of raw material, field that can be also supported by the LIFE programs, Horizon Europe (in the previous funding period Horizon 2020). The fields supported provide possibilities of promoting industrial coexistence through new invitations or new innovation projects.</p>
<p>RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES</p> 	<p>Both drafting and implementation</p> <p>Oversees the implementation</p> <p>The Industry and Technology Office of the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry will lead and coordinate the drafting process of the cluster policy framework. The broad policy instrument of "The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" was led by Ministry of Commerce, Energy, Industry and Tourism. For the implementation, the corresponding ministry will be responsible.</p>



Policy type:		Broad Policy
Policy name:		The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]
BENEFICIARIES 		<p>SMEs</p> <p>Cluster organisations</p> <p>Start-ups</p> <p>Research organisations</p> <p>Academic institutions</p> <p>Large firms</p> <p>Technology centres</p> <p>The broad cross- and multi-sectoral policy framework "The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" is the most recent instrument to support entrepreneurial ecosystem and provide a wide range of government assistance. The support of clusters is mentioned mainly in the field of innovation and R&D (action 1.6, nr. 7). The partnership of high technology companies, academic and research Institutions and other Institutions in specific technological fields, in the form of clusters is promoted. Innovation and academic stakeholders need to be interlinked with industrial actors (with a focus on SMEs and start-ups). The interconnection and opportunities that will derive of the synergies from a diversified portfolio of actors such as businesses with universities and research centers is generally acknowledged.</p>
INSTRUMENTS 	Financial	Funding collaboration initiatives
	Technical assistance	No non-financial instruments
	Explanation	The "New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" will support the cluster implementation. The funding will be achieved through the implementation of various schemes co-financed by the European, Structural and Investment Funds and the whole amount of funding is estimated to overpass 100million.



Policy type:		Broad Policy
Policy name:		The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]
		However, no evidence for concrete financial support for the actions described in the roadmap for 2019-2022 is provided. Technical assistance is also not addressed in the form of general advisory services. The initiative is only referring to the boosting of partnerships between research institutions, SMEs, start-ups and academy in a broad level without the necessary implementation steps.
HISTORY 	Period	Limited period
	Ending year <i>(for policies with limited period)</i>	2030
	Starting year	2019
	Explanation	"The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" was approved in 2019 for the agenda between 2019 and 2030. In parallel, it provides a roadmap with solid actions to be implemented until 2022.
BUDGET 	Overall	No data available
	Annual	No data available
	Source of funding	"The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" does not outline specifically the government's commitment of resources for clusters. The ambition for the whole program is to overpass 100 million euros.
POLICY EVALUATION 	Availability	No policy evaluation
	Results	There is no evaluation plan of "The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" yet concerning cluster policy design or implementation.



Policy type:	Broad Policy
Policy name:	The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]
POLICY ALIGNMENT WITH THE EU PRIORITIES 	Green economy Digitalisation Resilience

03

State of play of cluster policy



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3. State of play of cluster policy

This section presents an overview on the **state of play of Cyprus cluster policy** in the form of a quantitative and qualitative assessment. The data below illustrates how the country ranks in terms of maturity of cluster policy at the national level. The maturity assessment is based on a combination of factors presented in Chapter 2, which receive a score based on the existence or absence of a given element in the cluster policy.

Note: the maturity assessment does not reflect the performance of a country, but only the degree of development of their national cluster policy at the moment of data collection (Q3 2022). The assessment illustrates how the country scores for each of the four criteria (policy scope, continuity of cluster policies, evidence of performance, cluster support instruments) compared to the maximum score that they can reach. Please refer to the Annex for the detailed overview of the categories and the scoring system.

The table below presents an overview of the **maturity assessment for Cyprus for 2022**. The total score of Cyprus is 1.5 points out of 8.

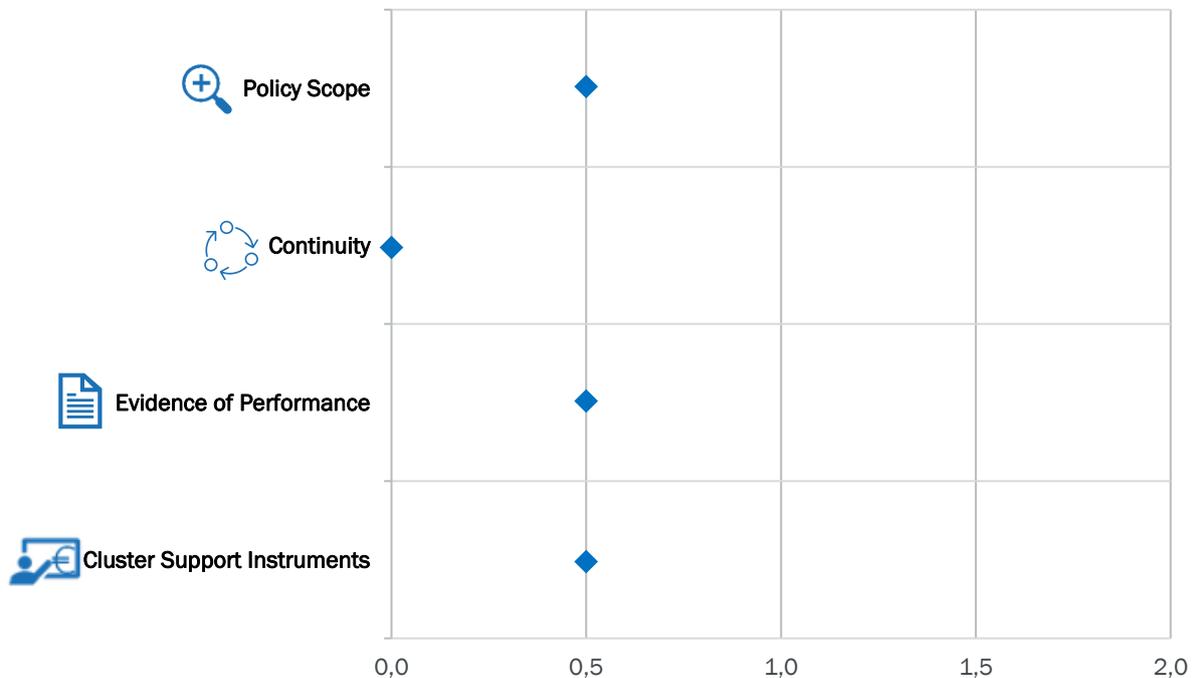
Cyprus	MATURITY ASSESSMENT	Max score	Actual score
POLICY SCOPE	Absence of cluster policy	0	
	Broad policy	0,5	0,5
	Sectoral policy	1	
CONTINUITY	National and/or regional cluster policy	2	
	No cluster-specific policy available	0	0
	Cluster policy established recently	0,5	
	Cluster policy established between over 2 and 10 years	1	
EVIDENCE OF PERFORMANCE	Cluster policy established over 10 years ago	2	
	No evaluation and / or monitoring available	0	
	Existence of evaluations of past policies	0,5	0,5
	Existence of monitoring or an ongoing / interim evaluation	1	
	Existence of monitoring and ex-ante or ongoing / interim evaluation	2	
CLUSTER SUPPORT INSTRUMENTS	No instruments for cluster development	0	
	Financial support for cluster development in the broader and / or sectoral policy	0,5	0,5
	Financial or technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy	1	
	Financial and technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy	2	
TOTAL (8)			1,5

Source: ECCP (2022)



Drawing from the table above that showcases the scored points in Cyprus's cluster policy, the Figure below portrays the **degree of maturity** across four categories related to the national level cluster policy.

Figure 2: Maturity of cluster policy - Cyprus



Source: ECCP (2022)

The text below provides a **qualitative description** of the state of play of the cluster policy in Cyprus, which is complementary to the maturity assessment presented above.

Policy scope

Until today, there is no national cluster policy in Cyprus. Broader policies are the framework for the design and implementation of a future cluster policy framework. Most of the clusters up-to-date have been created as outputs of research programs. For example, the Green Cluster, that aimed at the identification of opportunities and market needs in the green sector in Cyprus. Another example is linked to large scale international initiatives such as in the case of the Cypriot cluster as part of Smart Cities Mediterranean Cluster. The national scale cluster ambition for a particular sector to be noted is the creation of the Cypriot Maritime Cluster. Last, in parallel with the national policy instruments, European funding through projects also build to the cluster policy agenda. For example, through the implementation of the Interreg-med project 'Social and Creative', the Ministry of Commerce, Energy, Industry and Tourism has organized meetings with key stakeholders of the creative business community aiming to the creation of a national cluster under the proposal "The creative industry as a multiplier of innovation and competitiveness". Creative companies in cooperation with industrial actors and the public sector will be liaised. Other European programmes that are currently open also support cluster formation and operation such as relevant calls of interest for the creation and operation of European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) Initiative of the EU Digital Europe Program (DEP).



Continuity

There is still a lack of a supporting framework for clustering policy in Cyprus. However, there is one core instrument through the "The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]". Before the aforementioned initiative, there have been published two significant policy documents that present the official approach on the importance of clustering in Cyprus ("National Policy Statement for the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem" (NPSEE) and the "Smart Specialization Strategy for Cyprus" (S3CY), both of which were adopted in 2015). In that context, strengthening industry clusters is a constant key priority along with innovation- friendly business environments for SMEs, research infrastructures, centres of competence, university–enterprise collaboration and financial instruments.

Evidence of performance

In Cyprus, there is no specific policy framework on the operation of clusters or on the concept of cluster-based economic development yet . However, there are important policy documents of the Cypriot government concerning industrial renewal, entrepreneurial ecosystem and business innovation focusing on the SMEs collaboration with different stakeholders in various sectors. Concerning the broad industrial policy of "The New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" which is supporting cluster agenda, it is mentioned that audit processes will be constant and the evaluation will take place on an annual basis through a monitoring mechanism that will be set up.

Cluster support instruments

The "New Industrial Policy of Cyprus 2019 – 2030 [Action Plan for period 2019 - 2022]" will support the cluster implementation. The funding will be achieved through the implementation of various schemes co-financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds and the whole amount of funding is estimated to overpass 100million. However, no evidence for concrete financial support for the actions described in the roadmap for 2019-2022 is provided. Technical assistance is also not addressed in the form of general advisory services. The initiative is only referring to the boosting of partnerships between research institutions, SMEs, start-ups and academy in a broad level without the necessary implementation steps.

Cross-regional / international cooperation

The European Cluster Partnerships and the INNOSUP-1 initiative have been launched by the European Commission to encourage clusters from Europe to intensify collaboration across regions and sectors. Cyprus cluster organisations have not been involved in the European Strategic Cluster Partnerships or the INNOSUP-1 initiative as well as the newly launched Eurocluster initiative.

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Annex

Criterion of maturity assessment	Description	Scoring (points between 0 and 2)
Policy scope	assessment whether the country has a dedicated cluster policy, or cluster creation and/or development is targeted through broader policies, e.g. foreign trade policies, labour and social policies or specific sectoral policies, e.g. industrial policy tourism policies, agriculture policies	<p>absence of cluster policy = 0</p> <p>existence of broader policies = 0,5</p> <p>existence of specific sectoral policies = 1</p> <p>existence of targeted cluster policies = 2</p>
Continuity of cluster policies	assessment of the duration and experience of the country in carrying out cluster policies. This criterion assesses only existence of targeted cluster policies and not broader policies or sectoral policies	<p>absence of policies supporting cluster development = 0</p> <p>cluster policy established recently (within the last 2 years) = 0,5</p> <p>cluster policy established between over 2 and 10 years = 1</p> <p>cluster policy established over 10 years ago = 2</p>
Evidence of performance	assessment whether there are evaluations of past and ongoing policies and a monitoring system in place. The existence of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms determines the degree of policy development in the country	<p>no evaluation and / or monitoring available = 0</p> <p>existence of evaluations of past policies, e.g. ex-ante = 0,5</p> <p>existence of monitoring or an ongoing / interim evaluation =1</p> <p>existence of monitoring and ex-ante or ongoing / interim evaluation =2</p>
Cluster Support Instruments	assessment whether the policies provide any instruments to support the policy implementation, being these financial and/or technical support	<p>no instruments for cluster development =0</p> <p>financial support for cluster development in the broader and / or sectoral policy = 0,5</p> <p>financial or technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy = 1</p> <p>financial and technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy = 2</p>

Source: ECCP (2022)