



EUCLUSTERS TALKS



The European Competitiveness Fund and the new MFF:

Future Roles and Opportunities for Clusters

24 September 2025 

08:30-09:45 CET

Online

Agenda

1. News from the European Cluster Collaboration Platform
Nina Hoppmann, Team Member European Cluster Collaboration Platform
2. Overview of the European Competitiveness Fund and the new MFF
Magdalena Brussel-Jacaszek, Policy Officer, DG GROW, European Commission
Jan Potuzak, Economic Analyst, DG GROW, European Commission
Agnieszka Wojdyr, Policy Officer, DG GROW, European Commission
3. Panel debate
Hervé Floch, President of the Europe Committee, AFPC
Monika Antonowicz, Expert in Strategy and Analysis Department, Polish Agency for Enterprise Development
Montse Daban, President, CEBR
Raffaella Bruzzzone, Chair “Access2Finance” Thematic Group, Enterprise Europe Network, Chamber of Commerce of Genoa
Sébastien Thomas-Chaffange, General Director, France Clusters
4. Funding opportunities
Nina Hoppmann, Team Member European Cluster Collaboration Platform

Housekeeping rules

Chris Burns, presenter

- We will use **slido** to launch polls. Please scan the QR code to answer.
- Please use the **Zoom Q&A function to ask questions**, and the **chat function** to comment or share links.
- If you want to speak: Please **raise your hand** and we will give you the floor.
- Please note that the session is being **recorded** and that the recording will be **published** on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform.

NEWS FROM THE EUROPEAN CLUSTER COLLABORATION PLATFORM



TCI GLOBAL CONFERENCE 2025

DUBLIN, ISLAND OF IRELAND
14 – 16 OCTOBER 2025

Why attend TCI 2025?

- See Real-World Impact
- Learn from Global Experts
- Experience Collaboration
- Connections that Matter
- Transform Your Strategy

Register now:



tciglobalconference.com

Net Zero Acceleration Valleys Survey

Cluster Survey – Study on Net-Zero Acceleration Valleys (NZAVs)

Fields marked with * are mandatory. ✕

Pages

Welcome!

Respondent Information

A. Cluster and Clean Tech – Net Zero Landscape

B. Regulatory and Policy Framework

C. Financial Measures and Investment Needs

D. Administrative Processes

E. Governance, Designation and Strategic Outlook


F. Optional Open Comments

G. Follow up

Submission Page / Consent Notice

The European Commission (DG GROW) has launched a study on “Net Zero Acceleration Valleys” under the Net Zero Industry Act, carried out by Prognos AG, G.A.C. Group and the London School of Economics (LSE). This survey has been launched in support of a study that focuses on regulatory, financial, administrative, and strategic enablers and barriers affecting industrial net-zero and decarbonisation clusters.

Access the survey [here](#)

 **Survey deadline: 30 September 2025**

Interested in more? Contact: NZAV_study@prognos.com.

Public Consultation on European Innovation Act

The European Commission has launched a [call for evidence](#) and a [public consultation](#), inviting all interested stakeholders to contribute to the **future European Innovation Act**.

A key deliverable of the [EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy](#), the European Innovation Act will facilitate bringing innovative ideas to market across all sectors.

The Act will:

- Facilitate bringing innovative ideas to market across all sectors
- Improve access to finance, markets, talent, and infrastructures
- Strengthen industry–academia collaboration
- Cut red tape and create a more innovation-friendly EU framework

 **Feedback period: until 3 October 2025**

ECCP Investment Survey, give us your feedback!

As part of the Summary Report 2025, the ECCP team is collecting **information on major investments** attracted by European clusters. The aim is to showcase the impact of cluster organisations in fostering investment activity and regional development.

For this, we need your input! Which investments has your cluster organisation helped to attract over the last years? The short survey should take no more than 5–10 minutes of your time. Thank you for your contributing to the ECCP Summary Report 2025!

Complete the survey [here](#)

Name of your cluster organisation:

Your EU Member State:

Your region:

Sector(s) covered by your cluster organisation:

Since January 2022, has your cluster attracted any significant private investment in your ecosystem (e.g., in member companies, infrastructure, R&D projects, production facilities, etc.)?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Register for C2Lab in Kuopio, Finland

In partnership with **Kuopio Water Cluster, Comprehensive Security Cluster North Savo, SuperEcosystem, BoostECO, Savonia University of Applied Sciences, and the North Savo Regional Council**, we are hosting the Cluster Summit Finland 2025 and the Cluster Collaboration Lab (C2Lab) in Kuopio, Finland.

C2Lab is a **workshop-style event** where you will have the opportunity to meet new partners, discuss your project ideas, and initiate collaboration. Participants could **either join with a concrete project proposal or offer their expertise and knowledge by joining others.**



REGISTRATION OPEN

ECCP Events 2025

An initiative of the European Union



Vaasa, Finland

Clusters meet Regions | **24-25 September**



Kuopio, Finland

Cluster Summit Finland & C2 Lab | **28-30 October 2025**



Pamplona, Spain

Clusters meet Regions & ECCP Matchmaking | **12-13 November**



Alentejo, Portugal

Clusters meet Regions | **18-19 November**



Regensburg, Germany

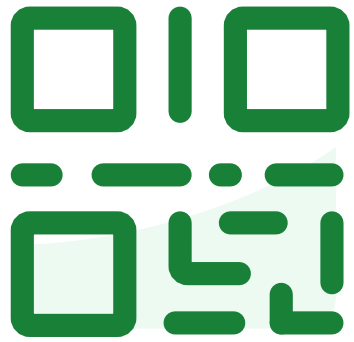
Clusters meet Regions & ECCP Matchmaking | **26-27 November**



Copenhagen, Denmark

Clusters meet Regions | **2-3 December**





**Join at slido.com
#ECF**



From which EU funds have you received funding as a beneficiary?

European Competitiveness Fund proposal

In a nutshell

EU Cluster Talks

24 September 2025

DG GROW, C2 Public Investment

*Magdalena Brussel-Jacaszek, Jan Potuzak,
Agnieszka Wojdyr, Viorika Dishnica*

Why ECF?

“The current offer of EU funds does not provide **large-scale, seamless funding support** on the entire investment journey to address market failures...

...with insufficient **flexibility** to respond to unforeseen needs...

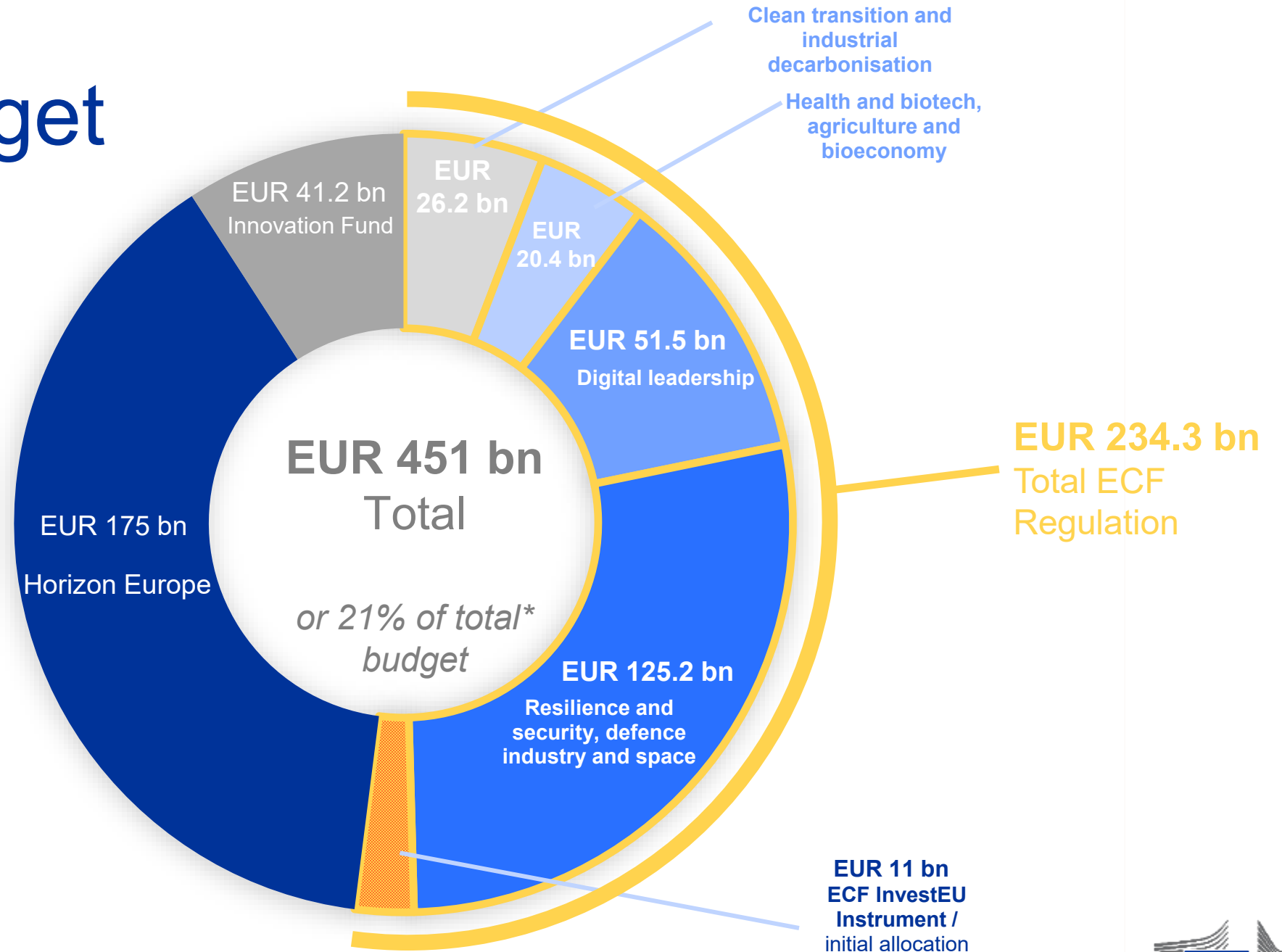
.. it is also **insufficiently linked** with other sources of public (national, regional, local) and private funding, which themselves are very fragmented...

.. there is a financing and investment gap in the latter stages of innovation, development and scaling up of companies, in strategic sectors essential for supporting the competitiveness of the EU economy, including the “**valley of death**” **scaling-up problem**..”

Impact assessment on the ECF



ECF Budget

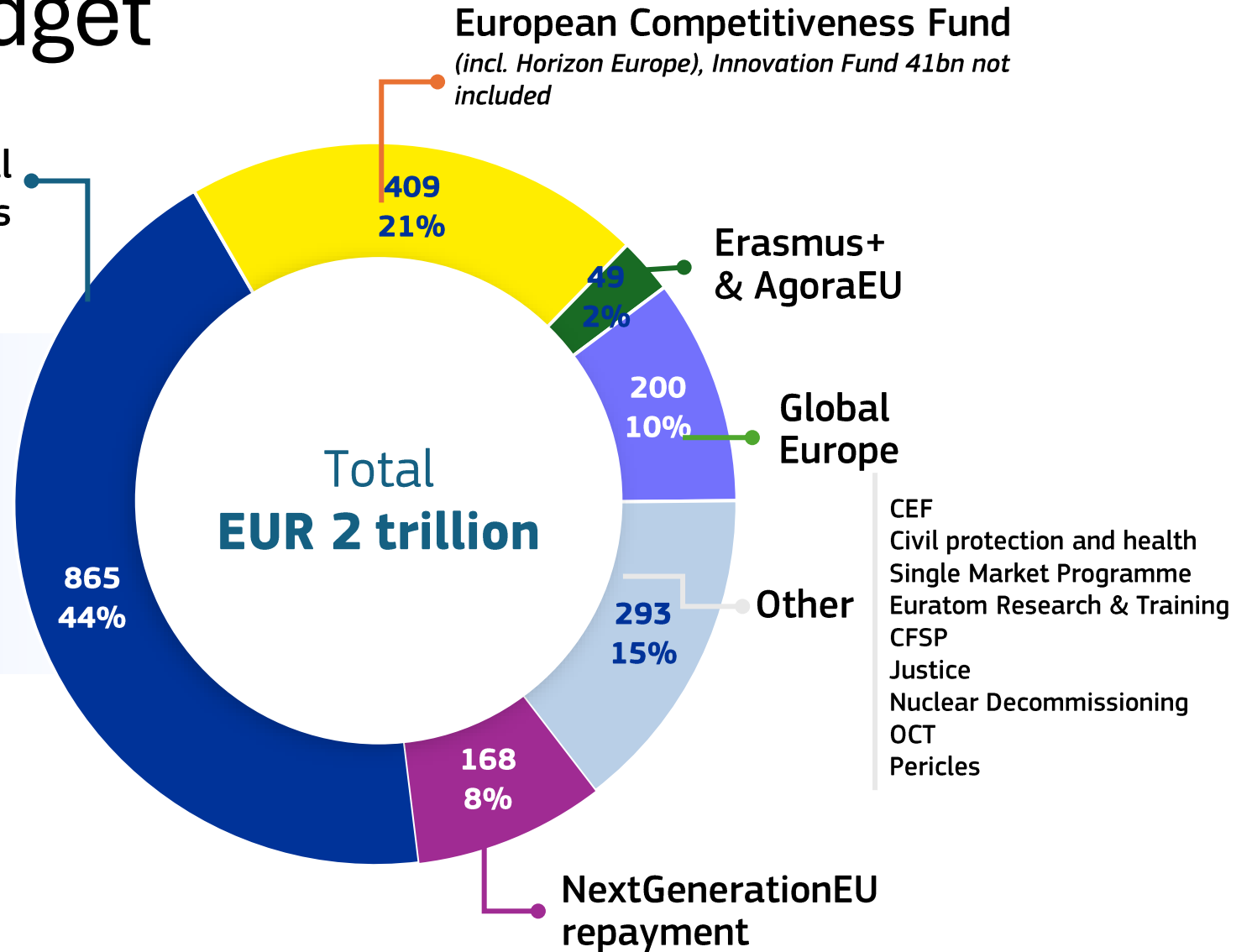


* excluding Innovation Fund

An ambitious budget

- From 52 to **16 programmes**
- **Simpler** for beneficiaries
- **Results** oriented
- More **agile**

National and Regional
Partnership Plans



All amounts in EUR, **current prices**, adjusted with 2% deflator

Key features



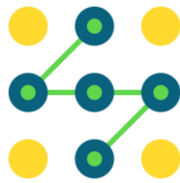
SCALE

Pulling together **investment power of € 451 billion** at EU level for our industrial leadership in strategic sectors.



IMPACT

To deliver one powerful financial toolbox to leverage and mobilise private investment.



SEAMLESS INVESTMENT JOURNEY

To fund entire investment journey from research to scale up, and global manufacturing.



SINGLE RULEBOOK

To simplify rules and make funds get faster to applicants.



POLICY COHERENCE

To ensure coherence between industrial and research policies.



AGILITY

To react quickly to new priorities.



General objective of the ECF

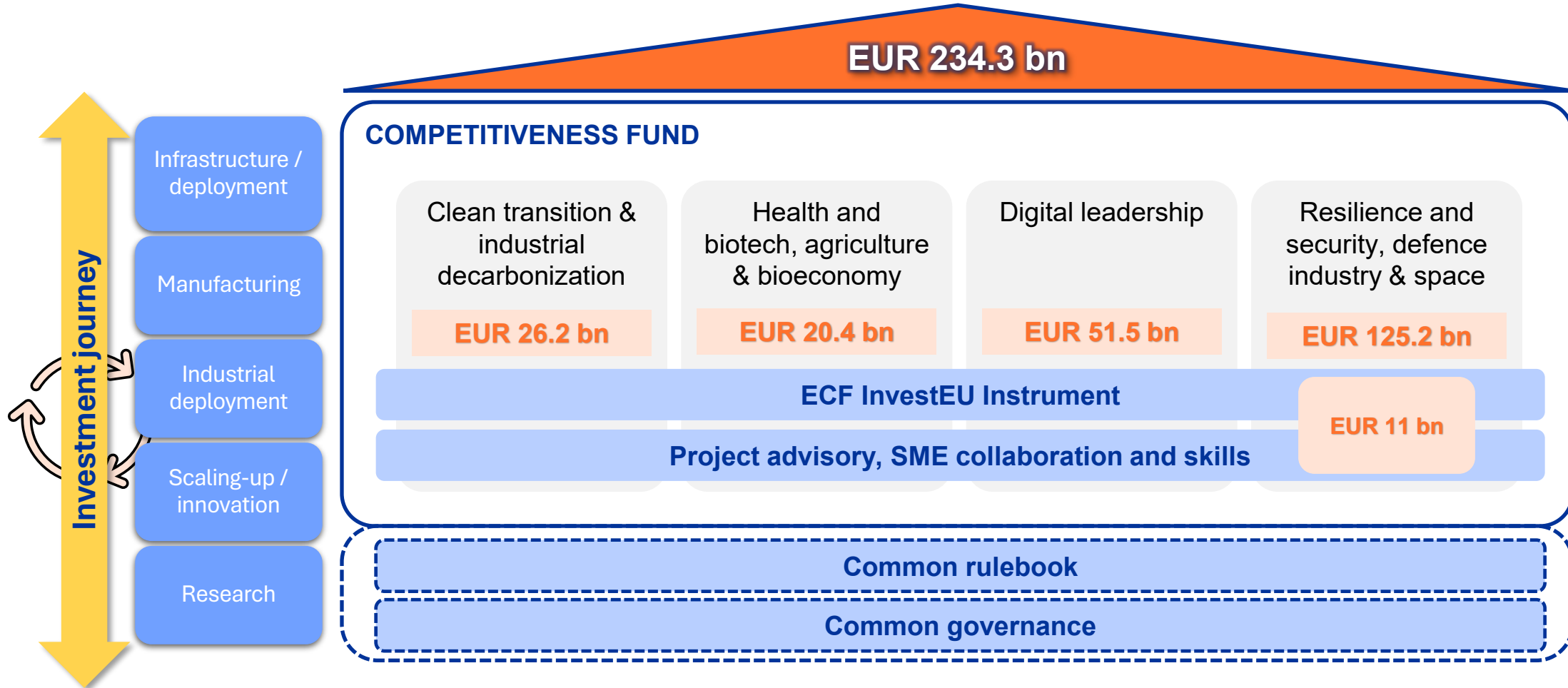


Establish an **investment capacity** to support **European competitiveness** in **strategic technologies and sectors**, including disruptive innovation, decarbonisation and resilience, through a more **seamless investment journey** from fundamental research, applied research to deployment and manufacturing.

Leverage the **funding tools of the EU Budget** to unlock **private, institutional and national investment in support of strategic technologies and sectors**, including for research and innovation, in the EU.



ECF architecture



Single rulebook



Chapter I (ECF)



ECF Toolbox

Grants, procurement and industrial policy coordination tools

- Work Programmes
- Accelerated and Targeted Actions for Competitiveness
- Single Market value chains builder
- EU Tech frontrunners
- Production Ramp up actions
- Top Ups for IPCEIs

ECF InvestEU Instrument

- Budgetary guarantee
- Financial instruments
- Blending operations
- Support to start-ups and scale-ups
- EU and Member States Compartments

Horizontal and cross-cutting activities

Project advisory

- Advisory for the identification, development, structuring, procuring and implementation of investment projects.
- Capacity building.
- Market development activities.

Business acceleration services

- Facilitating access to ECF funding.
- Matchmaking with private investors.
- Promoting financial literacy of entrepreneurs.

EU4Business Network

- European Cluster Collaboration Platform
- Building on the Enterprise Europe Network.
- Offering advisory and partnership services free of charge to SMEs.

SME actions

- Dedicated, sector-specific actions targeting start-ups, SMEs and small midcaps under each policy window.

Beneficiary service desk

- Single electronic data interchange area for participants comprising all ECF activities.

Thank you

© European Union 2025



What's a key aspect of the Competitiveness Fund that your company or cluster could benefit from?



What else would you like to see in the Competitiveness Fund?

Panel debate

Hervé Floch, President of the Europe Committee, AFPC

Monika Antonowicz, Expert in Strategy and Analysis Department,
Polish Agency for Enterprise Development

Montse Daban, President, CEBR

Raffaella Bruzzone, Chair “Access2Finance” Thematic Group,
Enterprise Europe Network, Chamber of Commerce of Genoa

Sébastien Thomas-Chaffange, General Director, France Clusters

The European Competitiveness Fund and the MFF: Opportunities for Cluster Organisations

- ➔ Engage/lobby to participate in the preparation of the National and Regional Plans – Influence and shape investment, sector and cohesion priorities ... Mobilise your national cluster organization(s).
- ➔ Engage with four sector priority actions plans of MFF and associated programmes, including Industry Transition Pathways:
 - Clean transition and decarbonization;
 - Digital transition;
 - Health, biotech, agriculture and bioeconomy;
 - Defence, and space.
- ➔ Maintain clusters position as a facilitator of engagement with SMEs and regional innovation ecosystems – For example in France, pôles/clusters are drivers of EDIH.
- ➔ Territorial dimension and network actions will continue (S3/I3/Interreg) - Important for clusters to engage in thematic partnerships, cross border programmes, macro regions etc. Clusters in I3 Value chains, Vanguard Pilot Actions etc.



Which support services would help you navigate the ECF?

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

European network of national competence centers for innovation procurement

- The call aims to establish and expand a **European-wide network of national competence centres for innovation procurement**, supporting public buyers to adopt Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP) and Public Procurement of Innovative Solutions (PPI) more systematically.
- Project results are expected to, among other outcomes, contribute to:
 - Greater awareness among **startups and SMEs of innovation procurement** opportunities across Europe.
 - More EU-wide preliminary **market consultations and published tenders**.
 - Increased recognition of the strategic **role of innovation procurement** in policies.
- By **scaling up cooperation and capacity** across Member States, the network will:
 - Help public buyers access and deploy innovative solutions.
 - Support EU industrial competitiveness and economic security.
 - Create business opportunities for SMEs and startups across borders
- Topic ID: HORIZON-EIE-2026-01-CONNECT-01
- Deadline: 20 January 2026
- Published on [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)

Scaling up deep tech ecosystems

- The call seeks to **strengthen inclusive, interconnected, and efficient innovation ecosystems** across the EU by linking diverse actors, regions, and resources. It **promotes collaboration** between innovation leaders and less advanced territories to boost competitiveness, sustainability, and cohesion, while supporting the green, digital, and social transitions.
- The call underpins a **sustainable and inclusive European innovation model**, enabling companies to thrive with access to new markets, talent, and resources, while addressing **Europe's "burning challenges"**:
 - Reducing reliance on fossil fuels
 - Increasing global food security
 - Mastering digital transformation (incl. cybersecurity)
 - Improving healthcare
 - Achieving circularity
- Topic ID: HORIZON-EIE-2026-01-CONNECT-03
- Deadline: 20 January 2026
- Published on [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)

Expanding Investment Ecosystems

- The call aims to **increase cross-border venture capital flows** into emerging and moderate innovator regions, helping local startups expand into stronger EU markets and bridging gaps in later-stage financing. Projects should run **at least two years**, co-designed by business acceleration providers, investor networks, or innovation hubs from both strong and emerging ecosystems. Eligible activities include:
 - Market orientation programmes for investors and startups (information on legislation, incentives, taxation).
 - Assistance for investors throughout the investment process (legal, cultural, linguistic).
 - Roadshows and international forums showcasing local ecosystems and startups.
 - Peer-matching and networking between investors, business angels, and buyers of innovation.
 - Repositories of best practices and recommendations for regulators to ease cross-border investment.
- Activities must align with one or more of the **five “burning challenges”** of the New European Innovation Agenda: reducing reliance on fossil fuels, increasing food security, mastering digital transformation (incl. cybersecurity), improving healthcare, and achieving circularity.
- Topic ID: HORIZON-EIE-2026-01-CONNECT-02
- Deadline: 20 January 2026
- Published on [EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)

Register for the next Talk

8 October

Comprehensive Security:
Building Resilience and Industrial Innovation Across Sectors

Continue the discussion



<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9503062/>

Visit our website and follow us social media



www.clustercollaboration.eu



@Clusters_EU



European Cluster Collaboration Platform



European Cluster Collaboration Platform - ECCP

#EUClustersTalks

#ECCP

EUCLUSTERS

THANK YOU

