Midterm report on the implementation of pilot activities and joint activities

ACTION
European Cluster Excellence Programme

PROJECT
Regrouping European Clusters in a Partnership of Excellence for Mobility

RECIPE4MOBILITY

ESCP4X
RECiPE4Mobility
Partnership

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MIDTERM REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PILOT ACTIVITIES AND JOINT ACTIVITIES

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Abstract (for dissemination)	This report will show the advancement of RECiPE4Mobility ClusterXchange pilot exchanges after one year of implementing the actions. The objective is to highlight how RECiPE4Mobility Partners have adapted their actions to cope with the Covid-19 situation, the issues that have been encountered and the support they need. This report could lay the foundations to discussions with the European Commission and ESCP-4x to find new solutions and reach our targets by the end of the project.
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Abstract

This report will show the **advancement of RECiPE4Mobility ClusterXchange pilot exchanges after one year** of implementing the actions. The objective is to highlight how RECiPE4Mobility Partners have **adapted their actions** to cope with the Covid-19 situation, the **issues** that have been encountered and the **support** they need. This report could **lay the foundations to discussions** with the European Commission and ESCP-4x to **find new solutions and reach our targets** by the end of the project.

Executive Summary

Work Package 5 is all about the ClusterXchange pilot programme. The ClusterXchange programme is a new pilot programme to support **short-term exchanges to better connect Europe's industrial ecosystems, specifically SME's**. The general objective of ClusterXchange is to encourage and facilitate transnational, cross-regional, sectoral and cross-sectoral cooperation between clusters and their members to boost their **learning and innovation-oriented activities** with the view to increase the **competitiveness of European SMEs**. 13 European Strategic Cluster Partnerships (ESCP) have access to the pilot of ClusterXchange. One of these projects is ours: **RECiPE4Mobility, focused on safe and sustainable urban mobility**. With this project we have access to the ClusterXchange pilot and we offer to all of our partners the opportunity to join and to broaden their horizon within Europe.

This report will show the **advancement of RECiPE4Mobility ClusterXchange pilot exchanges after one year** of implementing the actions. The objective is to highlight how RECiPE4Mobility Partners have **adapted their actions** to cope with the Covid-19 situation, the **issues** that have been encountered and the **support** they need. This report could **lay the foundations to discussions** with the European Commission and ESCP-4x to **find new solutions and reach our targets** by the end of the project.

This report is divided in multiple sections. In chapter one we discuss our **experiences concerning ClusterXchange** from the perspective of the five different clusters within RECiPE4Mobility. Subsequently, in chapter two we discuss which activities have been carried out for the **promotion of ClusterXchange** and the ClusterXchange IT tool. Then, we discuss the **next steps until the end of our project** (02/22) we will perform to communicate and work with ClusterXchange and its tool towards our SMEs, scale-up supporting organizations and other cluster organizations. Finally, our **measurable significant results** will be communicated.

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Issues and opportunities

One of the tasks within WP5, performed in M3, is Ensuring sufficient participating organisations in the pilot by **taking advantage of 3 already-aware privileged channels** (T5.2). This task is all about ensuring sufficient participating organisations in the pilot by taking advantage of three already-aware privileged channels :

1. **Valuable partnerships**: between our clusters and other relevant clusters

2. **Valuable platform**: The Smart Specialisation Platform for Industrial Modernisation "Safe and Sustainable Mobility (SSM)"

3. **Valuable Urban Mobility Network**: EIT Urban KIC Mobility

In order to actually contact these relevant clusters and networks about the ClusterXchange program, a **template** has been made which includes a general message. We have made a template for all cluster partners to inform them about the ClusterXchange program. The template consists information about the ClusterXchange pilot, who it is intended for, participating COSME countries and the ClusterXchange IT tool. Mainly the template communicates all organizations to spread out the word. All RECiPE4Mobility clusters were given the possibility to adapt the template into their own preference. Next to this template we also made an ECCP leaflet for/to all partners. This is the **official leaflet from ECCP** of the ClusterXchange initiative. It contains all the projects. The ECCP had consulted us beforehand regarding our name, key words and an icon for the leaflet. This template was **sent in early May** by all RECiPE4Mobility Partners to major players in their ecosystem and EU partners. The goal was mainly to **raise awareness about the pilot programme, as the Covid-19 crisis prevented physical exchanges** to take place.

Besides, we also communicated towards the privileged channels that the ClusterXchange IT tool would be launched in June. Due to various circumstances, **the ClusterXchange IT tool was only launched on September 23rd. This did not enhance the credibility of our partnership towards the privileged channels**. However, the ClusterXchange Support Office gave us the opportunity to start with ClusterXchange without the tool. We have not responded to this, because in our experience the ClusterXchange IT tool is the heart of the ClusterXchange program. Therefore, performing activities without the tool would not benefit mutual communication and communication with external parties.

Regarding the ClusterXchange IT tool itself, we thought that it was not really that **user friendly** and it takes a lot of effort and time to fill it out, even for our own partnerships. We had discussions with the other partnerships that are experiencing the same issues. Therefore, asking external companies to create profiles and fill it out might be too demanding unless we provide something in exchange for their efforts. We are aware of other matchmaking **tools such as B2Match which are probably more user friendly**. Its user interface is probably clearer and therefore this tool is easier to communicate towards other clusters and companies for creating a profile.

Last but not least, it was simply not possible to run through an exchange due to **COVID-19.** Because of COVID-19 all partnerships were given the opportunity to manage several three days virtual exchanges. This is extremely difficult as we need to understand what motivates companies to attend digital events first. In addition, we must learn to understand how external companies should build an exchange program for three days. **The plan was to organize these programs during our three Cluster Missions**, but they have been cancelled for now, even if we held a online clusters-mission on 18th November to discover the Dutch Automotive & Mobility ecosystem. The set-up of an exchange is also difficult, because we have not done any physical events for doing so. In

addition, we instinctively have the idea that nobody conducts an **exchange online at home for three days**. COVID-19 is also the reason for the limited amount of registrations at the platform.

We realize that we are well behind schedule. Face-to-face meetings or physical missions could have provided sufficient motivation in our opinion, but unfortunately that was not possible due to COVID-19. **We would recommend bringing those back once it is safe and possible to travel**. Naturally we would like to resolve this undesirable situation. **We think we can do this by promoting ClusterXchange even more**, because we believe in the power of repetition. However, we ask for your flexibility. No one is interested in doing a three-day online exchange. Therefore we would like to propose to **shorten the duration towards one-day online exchanges**.
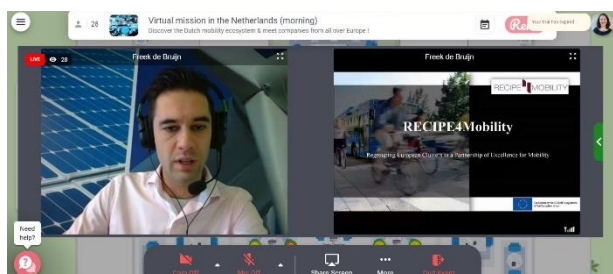
Promotion

Web promotion

ClusterXchange and the ClusterXchange IT tool have been promoted online by:

1. ClusterXchange is listed on the **RECiPE4Mobility website**
   (ClusterXchange - Recipe4Mobility);
2. ClusterXchange can be found on all **websites of the five partners**;
   NextMove- ClusterXchange, the new AirBnB, Meetic, Erasmus for SMEs and scaling-up organizations
   Project RECiPE4Mobility - E-Mobilitätscluster Regensburg - E-Fahrzeuge, Smart Grid/Ladeinfrastruktur und IKT (elektromobilitaet-regensburg.de)
   RECIPE4MOBILITY – ZONE Klaszter – Zalai Önvezető Jármű Klaszter (zonecluster.eu)
   RECiPE4Mobility | RAI Vereniging
   Projeto Recipe4mobility (mobinov.pt)
3. ClusterXchange is promoted through the **Twitter and LinkedIn pages** of RECiPE4Mobility;
   (17) RECiPE4Mobility (@R4M_Project) / Twitter
   (2) RECiPE4Mobility: overzicht | LinkedIn
4. These messages were shared on both platforms by all accounts of the five partners
5. Contacts have been made to other clusters and members, valuable networks and other ESCP-4x
   (Exxtra, Extratex, Smart Energy, Safe Smart Food)

Promotion via digital events

An exclusive presentation regarding ClusterXchange and the ClusterXchange IT tool was given during our Virtual Mission in the Netherlands on the 18th of November 2020 as part of WP4. On the next page you'll find a selection of slides from the presentation explaining the ClusterXchange program and the ClusterXchange IT tool.

ClusterXchange presentation during the online clusters-mission (18/11/20)

What is ClusterXchange?

- ClusterXchange (CXC) fosters cooperation between industrial clusters across Europe by supporting **short-term exchanges** between their members, giving them the opportunity to develop and consolidate collaboration, learning, networking and innovation-oriented activities together.

- The European Strategic Cluster Partnerships for Excellence are tasked with the implementation of CXC.

- The European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) provides support to the scheme through the ClusterXchange Support Office (SO), at a general level, and the ClusterXchange IT Tool.
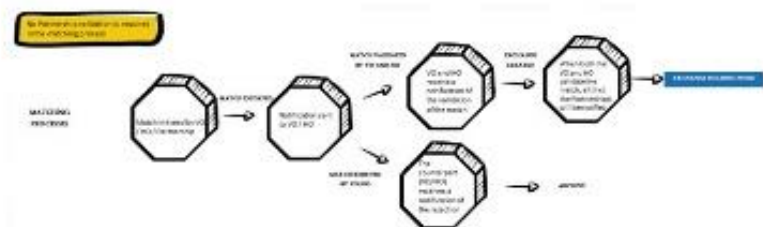
Why ClusterXchange?

- CXC supports cluster organizations, SMEs and scaling-up support organizations (that are members of a cluster) to **strengthen their strategic cross-regional collaboration activities** by spending periods of time in a partner in another COSME participating country. The nature of each exchange may follow different specific objectives within a broader approach aiming at the consolidation and/or the **creation of new value chains across Europe**, including related upskilling and reskilling of the workforce.

- **Enhance innovation-oriented collaboration and networking** between cluster organizations and their members

- **Foster cluster excellence capacity-building and promote cross-cluster learning** in order to help cluster organizations and their members acquire the necessary skills and take actions to explore and take up new solutions

Four step process

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1. Eligible and interested **hosting organizations (HO)** and **visiting organizations (VO)** candidates apply via the CXC IT Tool on the ECCP website. The eligibility check and validation process are performed by Partnerships. RECIPE4Mobility is one of 13 ESCP-4x partnerships.

2. HO and VO view each other's profiles and communicate via the CXC IT Tool to discuss the possibility of an exchange. Once both agree on the basic terms, **both parties validate the match and start building the exchange**.

3. HO and VO build the exchange by agreeing on the **dates, objectives, activities and outcomes of the exchange**. The Partnership in charge of the Host Organization (HOP) and the Partnership in charge of the Visitor Organization (VOP) **review the agreement and validate the exchange** to begin.

4. The HOP and VOP perform follow-up activities on the ongoing exchanges and take necessary actions if applicable. The HO and VO finalize the exchange by submitting **the final activity report form** which is validated by the Partnerships.

How to create a profile?

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- Create a profile (HO or VO);
- Indicate your preferences, what do you have to offer? What would you like to learn?
- HOP and VOP retrieve emails for validation;
- The IT Tool allows matching to take place after the **validation of a VO/HO profile by your partnership**;
- After validation participants have access to all the available profiles on the IT Tool which are in a 'published' status;

View possible matches

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Search Matches for Host Organisation AQUIMER

Below is the list of profiles that can be matched with for the profile above.

Name	Sector	Country	Languages	Organisation type	Length of stay
	Select	Select	Select	Select	Select

Available matches

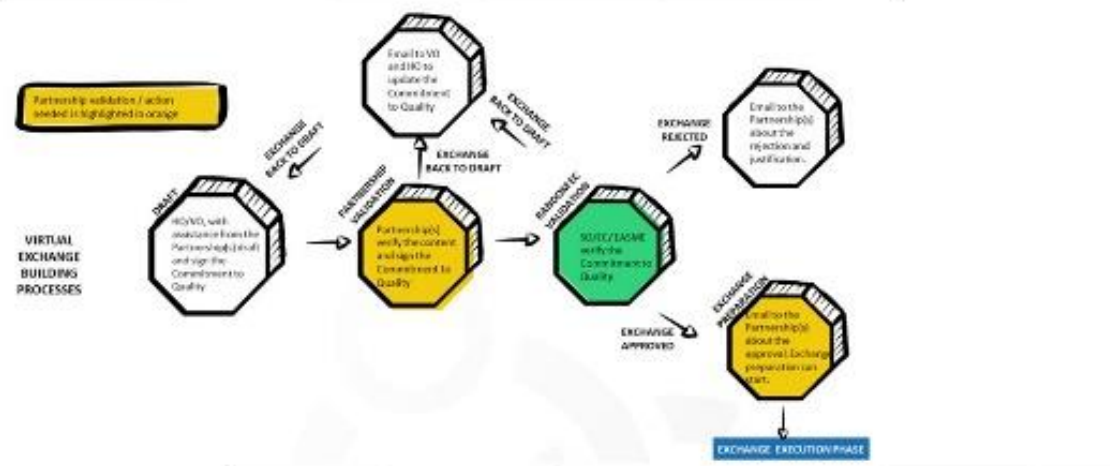| Organisation	Orgnisation Type	Country	Sector	ESCP-4c	Spoken Languages	Match Score	Actions
Fast Space Startups	Incubator	Romania	Electric Power General...	SMARTENERGY	Basque, Bulgarian	🟥	View
Creative Poland	Creative Hub	Poland	Automotive, Footwear	SMARTENERGY	Polish, Bulgarian	🟧	View
Bioenergy Center	Technology Center	Denmark	Apparel, Metal Mining	SMARTENERGY	Armenian, English	🟩	View

The 'Match Score' labels the profiles by colour – GREEN, ORANGE and RED. The profiles in RED have scores below 60. The ones in ORANGE have scores from 60 to 80 and those in GREEN from 80 to 100. The lower the score is, the least the profile is considered suited for a match.

Commitment of Quality

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- This is an official agreement between an HO and a VO to establish aspects such as the objective(s) of the exchange, the activity plan, the responsibilities, the expected outcomes, the duration of the stay and the planned start and end dates, etc.

- It is signed by the HO, VO, HOP and VOP.

Overview matchmaking

Final Activity Report

- This is a report in the form of a questionnaire which **must be completed by both, the VO and HO** after the exchange is completed. The report will be used to evaluate the exchange as well as the CXC scheme from the participants' perspective.

- The information and views set out in this document are **those of the author(s)** and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of EASME or of the Commission.

- The VOP and HOP need **to validate it to consider the exchange successful**.

How to start?

1. Register via: https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/user/register

2. Log in: https://clusterxchange.clustercollaboration.eu/

3. Start creating your profile

4. Happy matchmaking!

NextMove also organized its online local event in French on 11th December 2020, gathering 16 SME members that didn't participate to the first clusters-mission the month before. The recording is available on NextMove Youtube channel and will be used to engage French-speaking participants, while the slides used have been shared among RECiPE4Mobility partners for translation, as we have agreed common key messages on the programme.

Furthermore, in an attempt to add more registrations to ClusterXchange, **E-Mobility Cluster Regensburg has promoted the ClusterXchange IT tool at their German local event "Virtual Mobile Tuesday" on 26th January** by introducing the platform and the objectives. The presentation was given by E-Mobility Cluster Regensburg.

These local events were used to **present all the opportunities that RECiPE4Mobility will offer** throughout the project, as the pictures below illustrate. The communication strategy agreed among Partners was to send **strong messages to foster subscription to the IT Tool**, as you can see below:

- "ClusterXchange, a **unique opportunity for your internationalisation**": **tailored** and **co-funded matchmaking** with many exchange types offered
- "**Win-win exchanges**, as a visitor, or a host": to foster the subscription **not only as visitors**
- "Registration on the platform: **free, simple, and non-binding** !": motivate participants to subscribe and see by themselves if they find opportunities
- "Initiate contacts, and let's plan an exchange **together!**": highlight that **RECiPE4Mobility Partners will support the participants** throughout the process
- "Register now, **even despite travel restrictions**": we are aware that it's a virtuous circle if all ESCP-4x manage to motivate people to register in the platform ; because if not, those who will do won't find many opportunities and their motivation could decrease.

ClusterXchange presentation for the Local Events

The ClusterXchange, a unique opportunity for your internationalization!

- Networking platform between SMEs, clusters, and other "scaling-up support organizations" from all over Europe and all industrial sectors
- Tailor-made matching and adapted to your strategic objectives
- Physical or virtual exchanges from 3 days to 1 month as a host or visitor
- Visitor: travel and accommodation expenses co-financed by the EU
- Develop your network and meet new partners
- Discover other industrial ecosystems and market opportunities
- Exchange best practices and build skills
- Build the foundation for technological and commercial partnerships

* SME:
- EU definition: <250 employees, turnover <50M€ or Total annual balance sheet <43M€
- Member of a cluster

*scaling-up support organizations: tech centers, research institutes, digital innovation hubs, fab labs, creative hubs, resource-efficiency service providers, incubators, accelerators that are cluster members

Win-win exchanges, as host or visitor!

Visitors...
- Create new business opportunities and get involved in new innovative projects
- Find innovative solutions for your organization, your products and your services
- Expand your network and new cross-border partnerships
- Acquire knowledge on foreign markets and be guided in your development
- Familiarize yourself with the operation and techniques used by your host organization
- Strengthen your skills in your business sector, and in sectors previously unexplored by your organization
- Get financial assistance for your exchange
- Participate in the ClusterXchange alumni network

Hosts...
- Receive foreign organizations that will open up new commercial and technological opportunities
- Expand your network and increase the visibility of your organisation, services and products to relevant stakeholders across Europe
- Develop your skills and share your knowledge and experience in areas that meet your strategic objectives
- Acquire knowledge on foreign markets and be a leader in your development
- Participate in the Clusterxchange alumni network

Define together a rich agenda for your exchange

- Joint market research and development of new business opportunities;
- Project development, innovation and R&D;
- A fresh look at existing business activities;
- Understanding SME financing in the host country;
- Cluster or company branding, sales and marketing;
- Work on concrete projects in one or more of the areas mentioned above;
- Observation at the workplace;
- Individual or group training activities (e.g. a host organization could take advantage of ClusterXchange to simultaneously invite several visiting organizations for a group training session with a professional trainer or expert. This will allow cost sharing and to strengthen networking between participants)
- And so many other opportunities to define with your counterpart!

Registration to the platform: free, simple and non-binding!

Register for free on the ECCP portal, and gain access to the Clusterxchange platform. You will then create your exchange profile, with this information:

- Visitor or Host. (Only one physical exchange as a visitor per organization; no limit of exchanges as a host)
- Organization: name, legal form, sector, pole of affiliation, address and website, description of the activity
- Exchange participant (preferably a manager): name, position, languages spoken, e-mail and telephone, CV (free format/language)
- Preferences: range of availability, duration of the exchange, type of organization targeted (cluster, SME, gas pedal...), countries and sector targeted, languages spoken, type of exchange (exploring new markets, learning....)
- Motivations: Why do you want to participate? What can you bring to this exchange?
- Reference partnership: as a mobility company, please inform RECiPE4Mobility, the partnership coordinated by Mov'eo

⚠ Exchanges focused on business development and innovation, and skills development. Internships and HR prospecting are not exchanges.

⚠ A host can accommodate several visiting organizations at the same time. A visitor can go at the same time with other visiting organizations to the host. Contact Mov'eo to discuss this possibility.

A made-to-measure match... and free!

Initiate contacts, and let's plan an exchange together!

- Initiate contacts on the platform with organizations that meet your strategic objectives
- Define together the exchange program: dates, objectives, activities carried out during the exchange, and expected results
- A quality commitment will be signed by the parties on the respect of the defined agenda, and the submission of a short report within 10 days following the exchange
- Benefit from the permanent support of the RECiPE4Mobility team, your reference partnership. We are committed to:
  - Offer you matches that we think are relevant
  - Assist you in the construction of the exchange
  - Provide you with all the necessary information about the host country
  - Monitor the smooth running of the exchange and resolve possible conflicts
- Lump-sum aid received after transmission (and not evaluation) of the short report, presentation of invoices/flight tickets, and validation of the exchange by the reference partnerships

Register now... despite travel restrictions!

- A unique opportunity to **start international discussions despite the current situation**
  - Free, simple and non-binding platform
  - Take the time to identify the organizations that correspond to your needs and plan the exchange
- **Virtual exchanges** possible until April 2021
  - Identical opportunities and registration process
  - Minimum duration of 3 days, which can be divided into 6 online half-days spread over 3 weeks
  - A virtual exchange does not prevent you from making a physical exchange afterwards, and from receiving financial assistance
  - No financial support for the virtual exchange

Let's go!

- Register on the ECCP platform:
  https://www.clustercollaboration.eu/user/register
- Access the Clusterxchange platform, and create a profile:
  https://clusterxchange.clustercollaboration.eu/
- We will inform you of its validation, and you will be able to search for organizations via "My profiles" then "Find Matches"!
- Exchange, and plan one or more exchanges!

Next steps

If business meetings and events are not possible due to the COVID-19 situation, we could focus on using the ClusterXchange IT Tool to :

- Enable meetings **between clusters**
- Enable meetings **between SMEs/research centres that are drafting a joint proposal** for example an EU call for proposal
- Register **participants for the remaining two Cluster Missions in France (Paris) and Germany (Regensburg).**

Furthermore we will still remain to promote ClusterXchange and the ClusterXchange IT tool via our **newsletters,** mailings to cluster-member and introducing it **at other events**. Hopefully this will increase the numbers of registrations.

In order to motivate interested parties to exchange ideas, we would like to promote digital events and we truly believe that this is possible if there's more flexibility and help from the EC and the ClusterXchange Support Office, to adapt the format to the online experience.

Significant results

- **Three valuable networks** informed about the RECiPE4Mobility ClusterXchange pilot launch;
- **One completed questionnaire** on the test version of the ClusterXchange IT Tool;
- **Two registrations** linked to partnership RECiPE4Mobility have been created;
- **No exchanges**;
- At the time of writing, we are working towards the first match between two clusters from different COSME countries.

WP5 objectives/indicators to be achieved	Due achievement date	Achieved Yes/No	Actual / Forecast achievement date	Comments
5.5.1 Exchanges : at least 50 (25 for SMEs, 5 for clusters managers, 10 for technology centres, 10 for scaling-up support organizations)	M24	No	M24	No significant results have yet been achieved within WP5. This is mainly because of COVID-19 and of the launch of the ClusterXchange IT tool was delayed until mid-September. Also more support could be provided by the Support Office, for instance in organization of joint ESCP-4x events where we

				could benefit from the powerful matchmaking tools available to the EC. Furthermore the user interface of the ClusterXchange IT tool could be more user friendly.

About the RECiPE4Mobility Partners

NextMove (France): Gold Label automotive and mobility cluster that strengthens innovation and competitiveness of companies from Ile-de-France (Paris region) and Normandy regions. Created in 2006, NextMove has 620 members, from which 360 are cutting-edge SMEs operating in the urban mobility sector.

E-Mobility Cluster Regensburg (Germany): Created in 2011, E-Mobility Cluster Regensburg has the ambitious goal to place Bavaria region among the best locations for technological innovation. Particularly, in the field of electric-mobility which is part and parcel of the regional business development program. 30 out of the 40 members are SMEs.

Zone Cluster (Hungary): Created in 2018, Zone Cluster is a recent cluster which aims to become a significant European professional base for the future mobility solutions and infrastructures development. It has recently already encountered a major success being part of the EIT Urban Mobility.

RAI Automotive Industry NL (Netherlands): Created in 2011, since 2020 part of the RAI Association. RAI Automotive Industry NL is a strong and experienced cluster dedicated to working together with all automotive- and mobility related organizations to address the ongoing challenges facing the Dutch automotive industry. It regroups almost 200 members, 90% of them are SMEs.

Mobinov (Portugal): Created in 2016, Mobinov is an automotive cluster aiming to foster the growth of the national automotive sector through mobilizing initiatives and projects that enhance international competitiveness, innovation and increased added value for its members. It has 55 members, including 24 SMEs.

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https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/recipe4mobility/