Interreg Danube Region

Co-funded by the European Union

DanubIA Clusters

Recommendations of the working group

Deliverable D.4.1.2

Responsible Partner: MKK-Hungarian Cluster Alliance)

Contents

1 Executive Summary

An online consultation was held on April 28, 2025, bringing together 29 participants from Hungary, Czechia, Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine to provide expert input on the development of an AI-powered Cluster Cooperation Platform under the DanubIA Clusters Seed Money Project.

The platform aims to enhance cross-border collaboration among clusters and SMEs by supporting AI-driven B2B, C2C, and B2C matchmaking and data management.

The event included:

- **Project Overview:** Presented by Daniel COSNITA, highlighting goals to boost innovation and integration in the Danube Region through AI.
- **Expert Discussions:** Focused on AI use in solution design, cluster management, statistical harmonization with the EU, and tailored application development.
- **Feasibility Study:** Presented by Hyverr (Czech Republic), confirming the platform's technical and economic viability through successful testing of AI-based profiling and matchmaking tools.

2 Key Recommendations:

- Secure sustainable funding and define a clear rollout strategy.
- Encourage cluster members to provide company data for effective matchmaking.
- Benchmark against similar EU platforms for design and cost insights.
- Ensure EU alignment of Ukrainian statistical protocols.
- Embed strong data privacy and security measures.
- Partner with academia for development, research, and testing.
- Utilize low-cost AI/RPA tools to ensure scalability and affordability.
- Integrate automated event matchmaking features.

The consultation confirmed broad support and readiness to move into full-scale development and pilot deployment.

3 Introduction

On April 28th, 2025, the MKK–Hungarian Cluster Alliance, in collaboration with the DanubIA Clusters project partners, hosted an online consultation meeting with a panel of AI experts from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine. The objective of the meeting was to gather expert recommendations on the functionalities of the AI-based cluster cooperation platform developed within the DanubIA Clusters, Seed Money Project.

The event brought together 29 participants, including ICT-focused clusters, companies operating in the digital and AI sectors, and subject-matter experts in artificial intelligence.

4 Scope

The meeting aimed to foster cross-border collaboration among stakeholders from Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Ukraine, and Romania. Participants were invited to share their insights and recommendations on the AI-based cluster cooperation platform, designed to strengthen business-to-business (B2B), cluster-to-cluster (C2C), and business-to-cluster (B2C) interactions.

5 Content

The online consultation meeting held on April 28th, 2025, with AI experts and stakeholders was organized into three main sections:

5.1 Presentation of the DanubIA Clusters Project

Daniel COSNITA, President of the Romanian Cluster Association, presented the DanubIA Clusters project, which aims to enhance collaboration among cluster members, SMEs, and other actors of the quadruple helix in the Danube Region. The project's primary objective is to increase innovation capacity and improve positioning within international strategic value chains. This will be achieved through the development of an AI-powered cluster cooperation platform, whose core functionalities were outlined during the project.

5.2 Moderated Discussion Using Aha Slides

The interactive discussion, moderated by Daniel Cosnita, used **Aha Slides** to collect real-time input from participants. The discussions were cantered on four key thematic areas:

A. ChatGPT Usage in Solution Architecture

Participants discussed the application of AI, particularly ChatGPT, in solution design and architecture. Insights were shared on:

- Using LLMs for marketing content creation and web scraping
- Fine-tuning open-source LLMs for domain-specific tasks
- Developing chat-based front-end agents
- Utilizing tools like *Taskmaster* to generate multi-step AI tasks efficiently
- Project planning with AI support

B. AI and Data in Cluster Management

The group explored AI's role in managing and improving cluster activities:

- Creating buyer personas for e-commerce marketing
- Data harmonization and preprocessing supported by AI.
- Leveraging analytical papers for lobbying and advocacy
- Utilizing websites, reports, and social media as data sources
- Applying knowledge graphs to visualize relationships between clusters and competences

  Minimizing costs by using free-tier AI tools and distributing usage over time.

C. Harmonization of Ukraine's National Statistical Protocols

Participants addressed the need for better interoperability between **Ukraine's national statistical systems** and **EU data protocols**. Topics included:

- Ongoing efforts to align Ukraine's standards with those of the EU.

- The idea of a monitoring tool to track platform development progress.
- The role of clusters in improving data quality and privacy.
- The lack of a clear framework for interaction between clusters and their member entities

D. Tailor-Made Application Development and Data Management

Discussions covered the feasibility of creating a **customized application** for the platform, including:

- Integration of local databases with AI functionalities
- Challenges in estimating costs before defining project scope.
- Possible involvement of academic institutions in programming and proposal writing.
- Using collected data for research, analytics, and business development.

5.3 Presentation of a Feasibility Study

Lukas Reha, from the Hyverr Czech IT firm presented a feasibility study to assess the potential for developing an AI-powered cluster cooperation platform.

The study focused on automating data collection, enhancing matchmaking capabilities, and improving platform efficiency using artificial intelligence and automation technologies.

Objectives of the feasibility study:

- Assess the technical feasibility of creating a platform that supports smart matchmaking among companies and clusters.
- Evaluate how AI and RPA (Robotic Process Automation) can be used to process substantial amounts of publicly available business data.
- Explore the cost-effectiveness and scalability of implementing such a platform.

Key Functionalities Tested:

- Automated extraction of publicly available information from company websites.
- AI-generated recommendations (using large language models) to identify potential collaborations between companies.
- AI-driven event matchmaking, suggesting companies that may be interested in participating in conferences, seminars, and workshops.

Methodology:

- The team used a combination of RPA tools and a Large Language Model (LLM) to create company profiles.
- The profiling process was evaluated on 5,000 companies, each profile generated in approximately 20–25 seconds.
- The platform was also evaluated for its ability to generate event participation recommendations and assess company engagement.

Findings:

- The solution proved highly effective in terms of speed, accuracy, and scalability.
- The operational cost of using AI for data processing and matchmaking was found to be close to zero, making it suitable for wide adoption.
- The test implementation on a sample of 50 companies delivered positive results, confirming the viability of the approach.

Conclusion of the feasibility study

The feasibility study confirms that an AI-powered cluster cooperation platform is both technically and economically viable. With proper integration of AI and automation technologies, such a platform can streamline matchmaking, enhance data utilization, and reduce manual effort. The findings support the next step: moving from feasibility to full platform development and pilot deployment.

6 Experts' Recommendations

The experts provided the following recommendations for the future development and deployment of the AI-based Cluster Cooperation Platform:

- **Define financing strategies** to support development, rollout, and long-term maintenance of the platform.
- **Encourage clusters to upload member company profiles** to enable advanced AI-powered B2B matchmaking.
- **Benchmark against similar platforms in Europe** to guide feature development and cost planning.
- **Continue harmonization of Ukrainian national statistics** with EU standards for data compatibility.
- **Embed data privacy and protection features** into the platform from the beginning.
- **Collaborate with academic institutions** for AI integration, proposal development, and testing.
- **Engage research bodies** to analyse and derive value from platform-generated data.
- **Use low-cost or free AI and RPA tools** to develop and operate the platform efficiently.
- **Integrate automated matchmaking for events and conferences** to enhance C2C, B2B, and B2C collaboration opportunities.

7 Annexes

Aha slides questions.

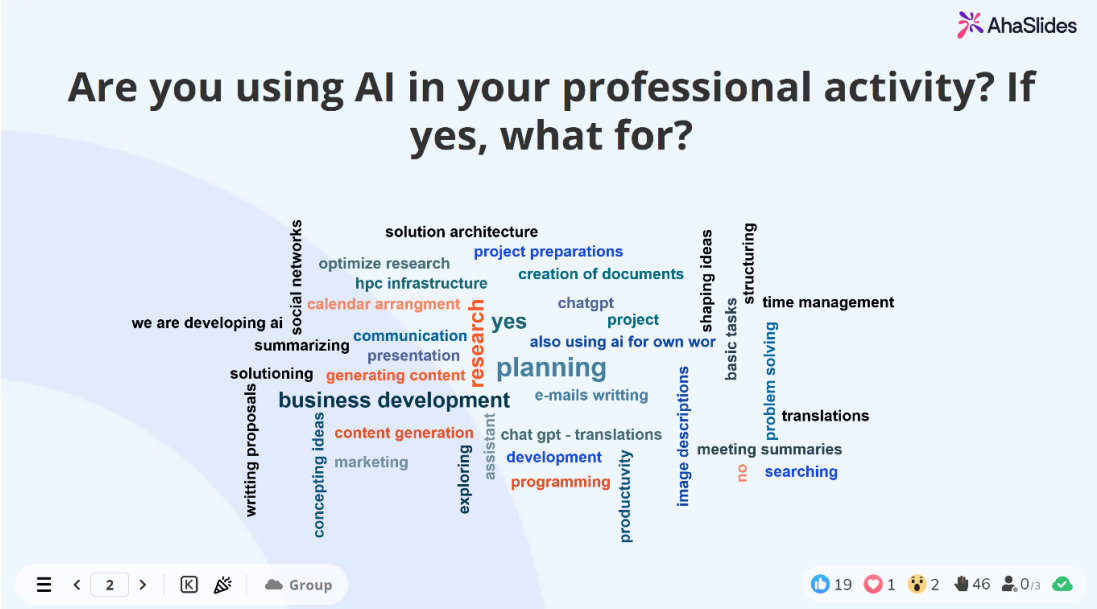
DanubIA Clusters project presentation

List of participants

"Aha slides" Questions.

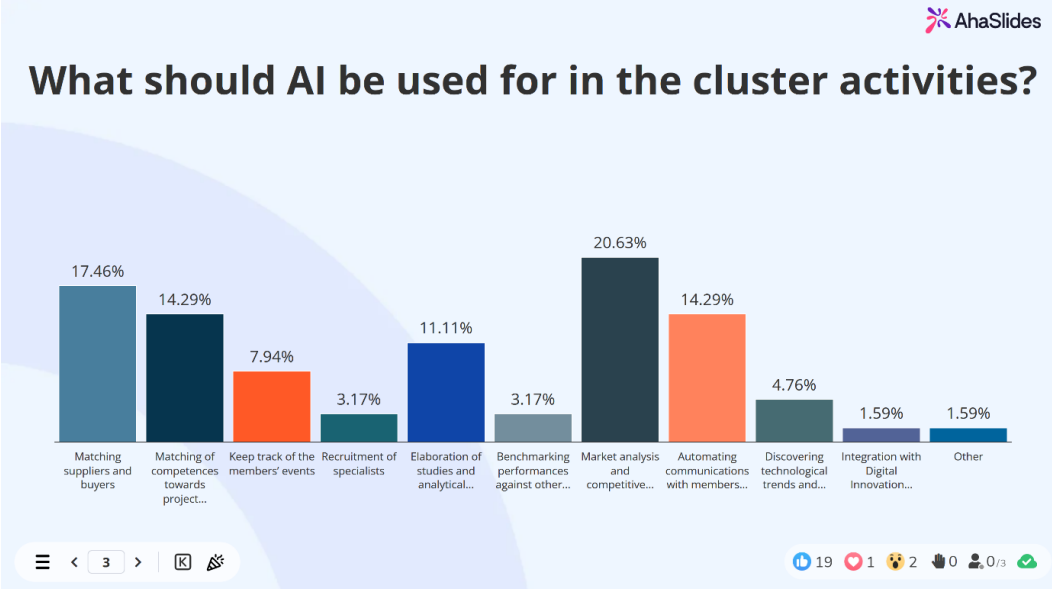
1. **Are you using AI in your professional activity? If yes, for what?**

The respondents use AI in their professional activities in the following areas: programming, solution architecture, project preparations, hpc infrastructure, productivity, time management, meeting summaries, optimize research, generating content, creating documents, chatgpt-translations, business development, social networks, image descriptions, basic tasks, problem solving, communication presentation, e-mails writing, shaping ideas.



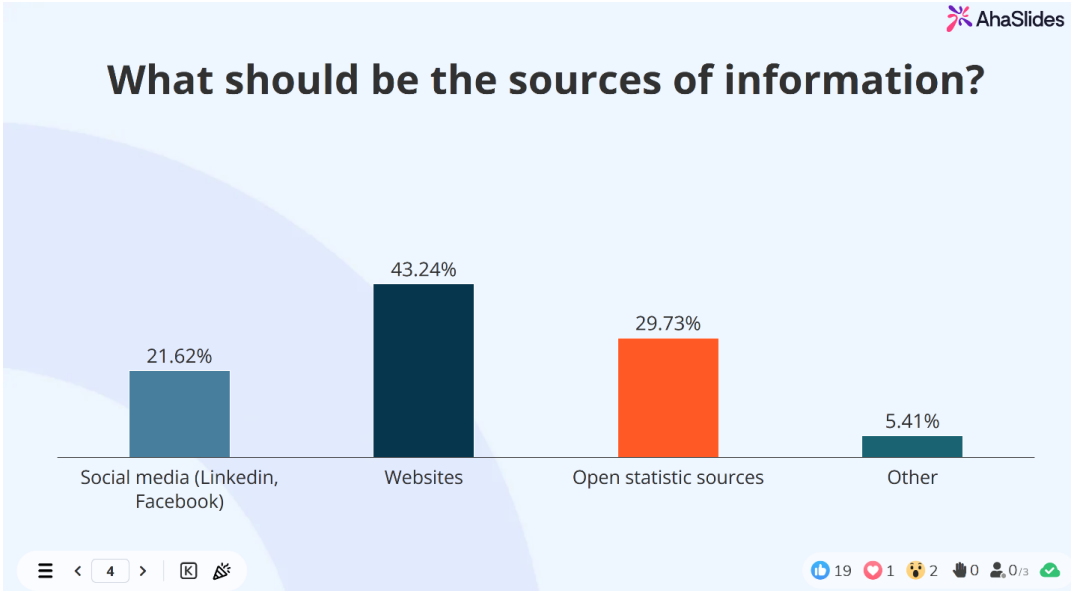
2. What should AI be used for in the cluster activities?

Most respondents use AI in cluster activities, including market analysis and competitiveness, matching suppliers with buyers, aligning competences with project needs, automating communication with members, preparing studies and analytical reports, and tracking members' events.



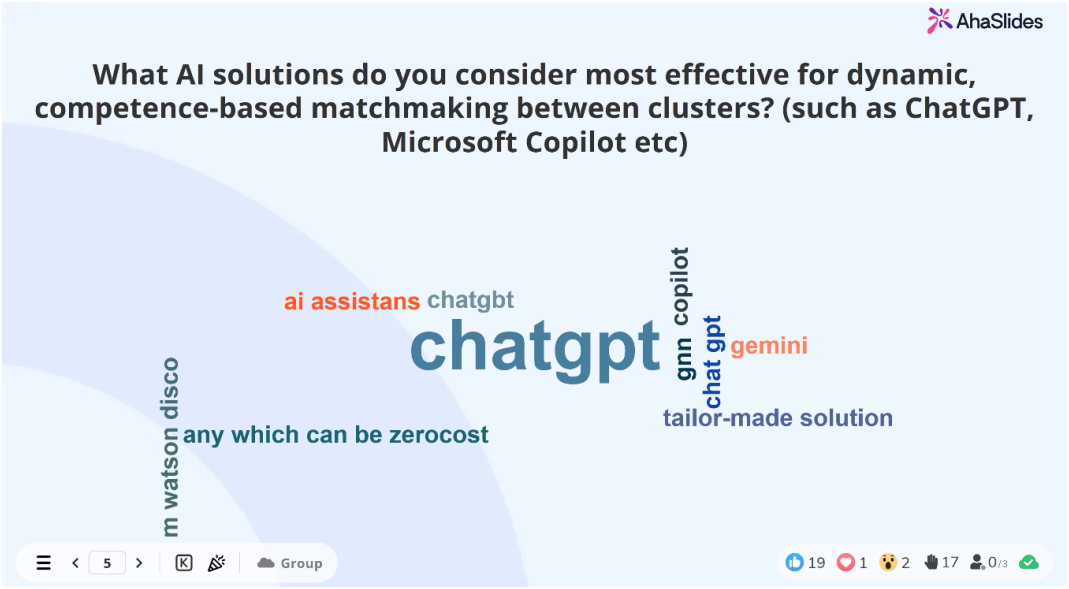
3. What should be the sources of information?

Respondents primarily use the following sources of information: websites, open statistical sources, and social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Facebook.



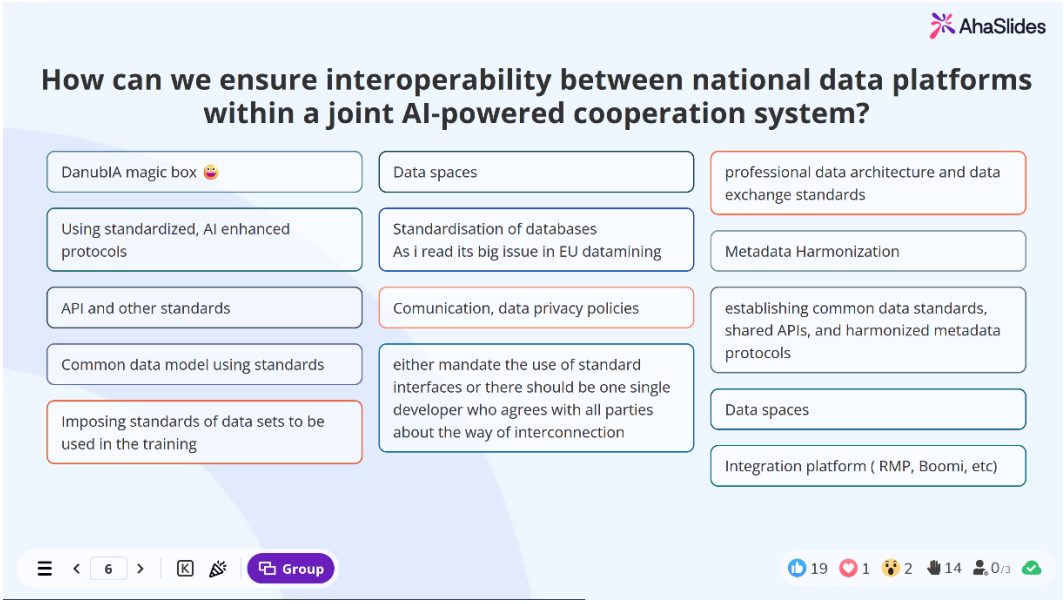
4. What AI solutions do you consider most effective for dynamic, competence-based matchmaking between clusters? (such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot etc).

The respondents consider the most effective AI solutions: gnn copilot, tailor made solution, m watson disco, ChatGPT, ai assistant ChatGPT, any solution, which can be zero cost.



5. How can we ensure interoperability between national data platforms within a joint AI-powered cooperation system?

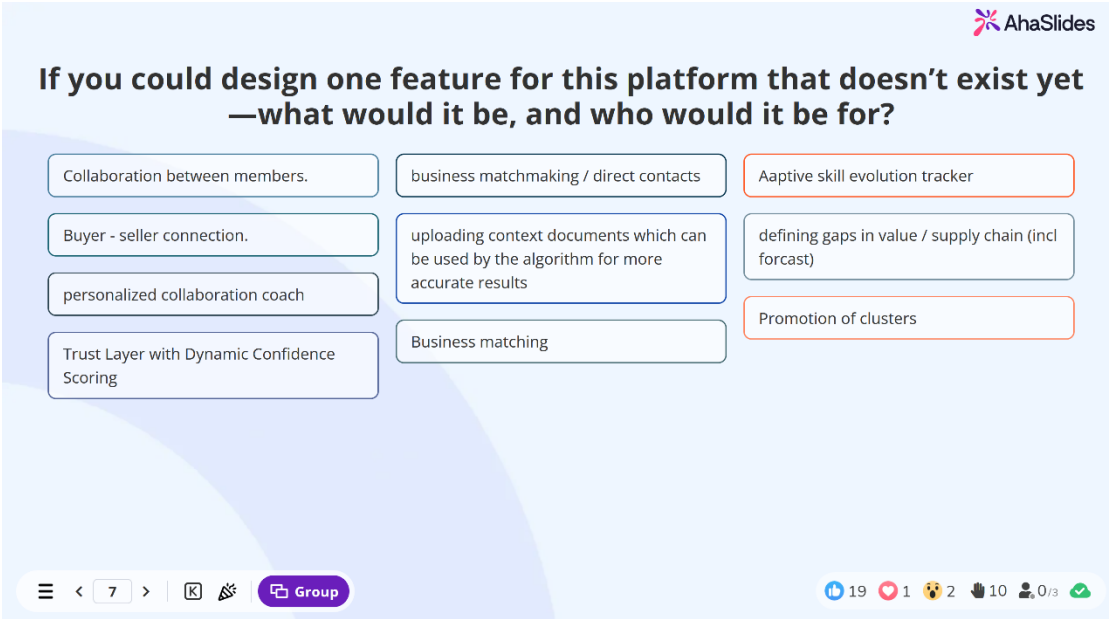
Most respondents state that interoperability between national data platforms within a joint AI-powered cooperation system can be ensured through database standardization, AI-enhanced protocols, metadata harmonization, the use of data spaces, effective communication, and robust data privacy policies.



6.If you could design one feature for this platform that does not exist yet—what would it be, and who would it be for?

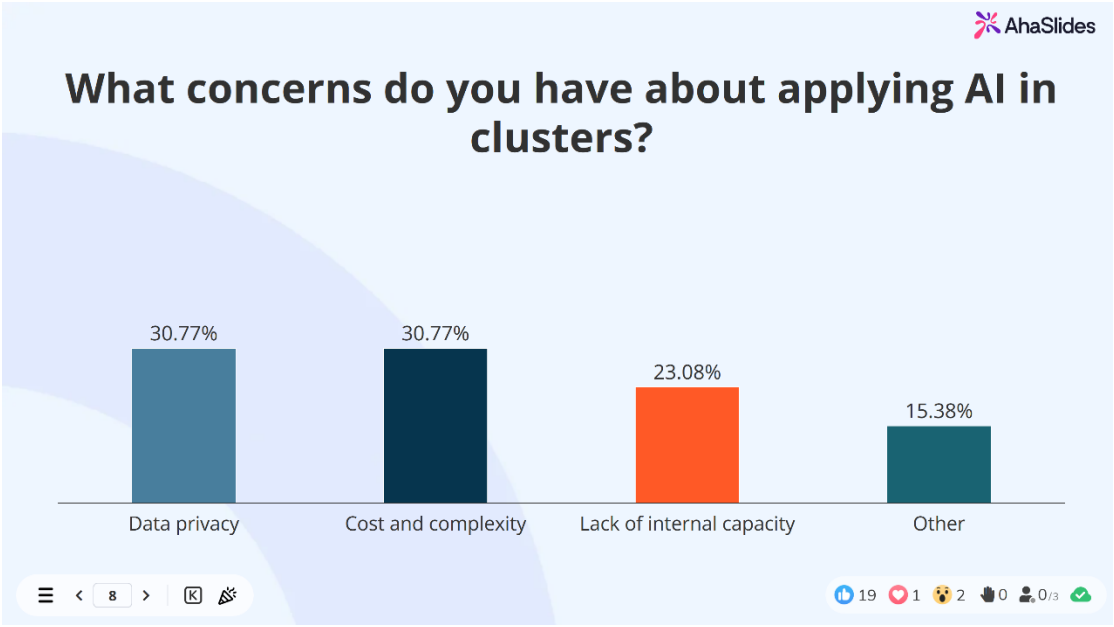
The respondents identified the following key features for the platform:

- Business matchmaking and direct contact opportunities
- Identification of gaps in the value and supply chain
- Ability to upload contextual documents for algorithm-enhanced accuracy.
- A personalized collaboration coach
- A trust layer with dynamic confidence scoring
- An adaptive skill evolution tracker
- Tools for promoting clusters.



7.What concerns do you have about applying AI in clusters?

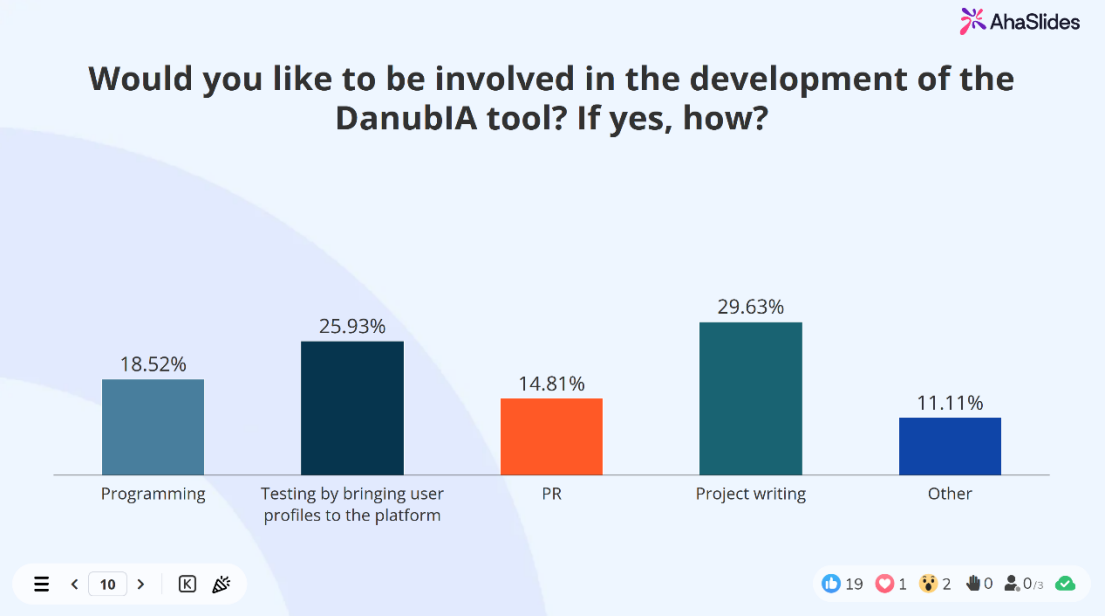
The respondents consider data privacy, cost and complexity, and lack of internal capacity to be the main concerns to apply AI in clusters.



8.How much should such a platform cost? What would be a fair cost? (in EUR)

The respondents estimate the cost of an AI-based cooperation platform to range from €20,000 to €600,000.

8. Would you like to be involved in the development of the DanubIA tool? If yes, how?
The respondents expressed the most interest in being involved in project writing, testing by contributing user profiles to the platform, and programming.


AhaSlides
Would you like to be involved in the development of the DanubIA tool? If yes, how?
18.52%
25.93%
14.81%
29.63%
11.11%
Programming
Testing by bringing user profiles to the platform
PR
Project writing
Other
10
19
1
2
0
0/3

Interreg Danube Region

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DanubIA Clusters

DanubIA Clusters

Expert Consultation Workshop
April 28th, 2025

Clustero

Hungarian Cluster Alliance

NCA CZ NATIONAL CLUSTER ASSOCIATION

ÚKS Únia Klastrov Slovenska

Ukrainian Cluster Alliance

Project: AI based Cluster Cooperation in the Danube Region
DanubIA Clusters

Project Partners: Romanian Cluster Association (RO) –LP;
Hungarian Cluster Alliance (HU);
National Cluster Association (CZ);
Union of Slovak Clusters (SK);
Ukrainian Cluster Alliance (UA)
Project Period: 1.09.2024-31.05.2025;
Project Budget:124.999 EUR

This project is supported by the Interreg Danube Region Programme co-funded by the European Union.

Why? What for?

Interreg Danube Region

Co-funded by the European Union

DanubIA Clusters

Cluster A

EUROPEAN CLUSTER COLLABORATION PLATFORM

Cluster B

SME A

enterprise europe network

SME B

To strengthen the cooperation between the Danubian Cluster Associations

To better structure C2C/B2B/B2C cooperation

Clustero

Hungarian Cluster Alliance

NCA NATIONAL CLUSTER ASSOCIATION

ÚKS Únia Klastrov Slovenska

Ukrainian Cluster Alliance

Activity 1.1 Analysis of Needs and Challenges

The report will give an overview of past and current international cluster/SME cooperation activity,

with a focus on the Danube Region, including the use of digital/AI based platforms. It will describe

the identified shortcomings and challenges. The report will be the basis for the further development

of the functionalities of the AI empowered cluster cooperation platform. In depths analysis will be

performed in the frame of this output leading to the identification of the gaps and challenges to be

tackled by the future AI empowered cluster cooperation platform.

Activity 1.1 Analysis of Needs and Challenges

Stakeholder Questionnaire

To gather structured insights from stakeholders on the current state and future needs of digital/AI-based cooperation platforms to enhance cluster collaboration and support the development of an AI-empowered cluster cooperation platform.

78 respondents

National Partner Contributions to the Report on the State of Play on Digital/AI-Based B2B/C2C/B2C Cooperation Platforms."

Result:

Report on the state of play on digital/AI based B2B/C2C/B2C cooperation platforms;

Activity 2.1 Elaboration of the main project's workplan

Based on the results of the report on the state of play, the partners will develop the "project idea" into a fully fledged project concept describing activities, outputs, and results; potential partners will be identified and contacted; an indicative project budget and its breakdown on the category of costs will be elaborated.
As a result, the concept of the main project will be developed, and project partners will be selected.

NCA CZ
NATIONAL CLUSTER ASSOCIATION

Activity 3.1

The activities will consist of identification of most suitable financing sources for the main project as well as the elaboration of the roadmap defining the next steps towards the submission of the main project proposal

Funding possibilities:

Digital Europe Programme;

Horizon Europe:Cluster 4: Digital, Industry and Space;

Single Market Programme for Danubian Value Chains (some functionalities of AI platform)

Activity 4.1 Consultation of interested parties and set up of the expert group.

- Report on the activities of the working group
- Recommendations of the working group
- Report on the workshop (in Budapest)

Activity 4.2 Project Generation Seminar

Result: Main Project Executive Summary

Project generation seminar within Cluster Meet Regions Conference, in Chisinau, Republica Moldova, on October 9-11th, 2024

Agenda of the Cluster Meet Regions Conference

"CLUSTERS AS DRIVERS OF INTER-REGIONAL VALUE CHAINS"

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- DanubIA Clusters Project Steering Meeting in Budapest on February 3rd, 2025

DanubIA Clusters project presented at Plan –C project in Budapest on February 4th, 2025

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Ukrainian Cluster Alliance

Interreg Danube Region

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DanubIA Clusters

Cluster Meet Regions Conference, in Chisinau

Project Generation Seminar, October 11th, 2024

Interreg Danube Region

Co-funded by the European Union

DanubIA Clusters

DanubIA Clusters project
Piatra Neamt (RO) February 7th, 2025

Thank you!

Daniel Cosnita

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Romanian Cluster Association
daniel.cosnita@clustero.eu

https://clustero.eu/danubia-ai-based-cluster-cooperation-in-the-danube-region/

List of participants

Expert group consultation ; 28 April 2025

Name (orig	Email	Join time	Leave time	Duration (r	Guest	Recording	In waiting r
Daniel Cos	daniel.cosr	4/28/2025 10:33	4/28/2025 12:23	110	No	OK	No
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