

The President's Foreword

Dear all,

Last February was under the sign of the [Strategic Dialogue for the Future of the European Automotive Industry](#). This dialogue, launched by the European commission and realised with a core group of 22 industrial key stakeholders, resulted in an Industrial Action Plan for the Automotive Industry that has been presented on 5 March. Interested parties could contribute to the process by answering to a public consultation, a chance that we took as EACN to express our point of view! A great thanks to all of you who contributed with ideas and suggestions to our joint answer. The [Industrial Action Plan](#) builds on 5 pillars:

- ▲ **Innovation and Digitalisation** to regain leadership in the transition towards software-enabled, AI-powered connected and autonomous vehicles, and battery technologies.
- ▲ **Clean Mobility** with actions to allow averaging CO2 fleet emissions over three years, boost zero-emission vehicle demand and deployment of associated infrastructures.
- ▲ **Competitiveness and supply chain resilience** aiming at creating a cost-competitive domestic batterie cell production and supply chain with added value >50% (2030) and promote European production of components.
- ▲ **Skills and social dimension**: Creating of a European Fair Transition observatory and facilitating access to existing EGF and ESF+ funds.
- ▲ **Boosting market access** through cooperation agreements, creating similar level playing fields and simplification of administrative burdens.

This action plan is an important step and includes interesting measures to strengthen the European automotive and mobility ecosystem. Now it's time to quickly reinforce the paper with concrete regulations and decisions that help companies.

Yours

Bruno Grandjean, President

Inside EACN

Strategic dialogue answer

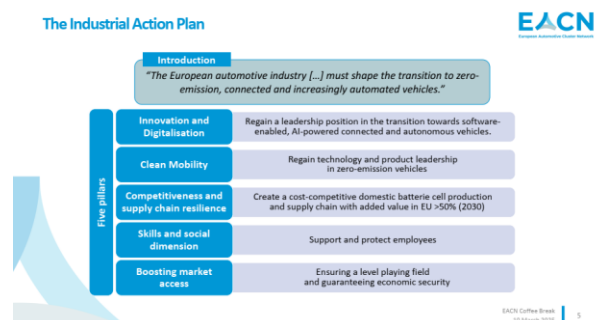
EACN answered to the public consultation to the Strategic Dialogue for the Future of the European Automotive Industry with a joint answer. This answer builds around the following topics:

- ▲ Interdependencies with other industries
- ▲ Stop the decline of the European supplier network as backbone of the automotive industry
- ▲ Create incentives to boost sales of vehicles with local European content

- ▲ Stimulation of next generation automotive technologies
- ▲ Strengthen re- and upskilling of the workforce
- ▲ Ensure effective protection against unfair commercial practices

The full EACN answer is available [here](#).

We welcome the fact that many EACN suggestions are at least partially considered in the Industrial Action Plan, but the support and protection of European SMEs could be stronger than it is.



Presentation of five pillars. Extract from the EACN Coffee Break presentation of March

The content of the Industrial Action Plan and the consideration of EACN suggestions have been presented and discussed during the [EACN Coffee Break of March 2025](#).

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Upcoming events with EACN (co-) organisation by EACN members

Cluster meets Regions, Heilbronn (Germany), 9-10 April 2025

The Clusters meet Regions conference in Heilbronn follows the slogan 'Transformation



of the manufacturing industry: The path towards Artificial Intelligence and Hydrogen' and will examine the transformative role of clusters in driving innovation, promoting sustainability, and strengthening resilience within regional and European ecosystems with a focus on . [It's still possible to register!](#)

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SEE Automotive Conference 2025, Belgrade (Serbia), 27-28 May 2025

On 27 and 28 May 2025, AC Serbia organises the 2025 edition of its SEE Automotive conference 'Connect & Supply' in Belgrade (Serbia). The conference's aim is to connect OEM manufacturers, TIER1&2 companies and relevant public institutions to strengthen the development of the automotive industry in the SEE region. [Further information and registration.](#)

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International Automotive Forum 2025, Sofia (Bulgaria), 11-12 June 2025

Organized by Automotive Cluster Bulgaria on June 11-12 in Sofia, Bulgaria, this event will provide a platform for in-depth discussions and collaboration on emerging topics, from electrification and automation, smart and sustainable manufacturing and integration of AI to supply chain disruptions and cutting-edge software solutions, the critical role of European Digital Innovation Hubs (EDIHs) in driving digital and sustainable transformation of the industry. This will also be the opportunity to kick off the EDIH- Northwest Automotive Cluster Bulgaria. [Further information.](#)

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Cluster meets Regions, Rzeszów (Poland), 3-4 June 2025

In complement to the EU Industry Days on 5-6 June, East Automotive Alliance co-organises a Clusters meet Regions event in Rzeszów on 3-4 June focussing on 'Exploring the Innovation Ecosystem: Clusters as Catalysts for Regional Competitiveness'. The event includes several round tables and pitching sessions. Registration will soon be possible. [Further information.](#)

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Members' lounge

CIAC Cluster Talks



On 20 February, Josep Nadal, Cluster Manager at CIAC, and Thomas Röhr, EACN Secretary General, had a [CIAC Cluster Talk](#) about the situation of the automotive industry in Europe and the role of clusters in supporting especially SMEs to overcome current challenges.

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SA & AM celebrates its 14th anniversary



On 17.02.2025, Silesia Automotive & Advanced Manufacturing cluster celebrated its 14th anniversary! It has been a time of remarkable collaboration, innovation, and growth, shaping the future of the automotive and advanced manufacturing industries in our region. Since the cluster was founded, it faced many challenges and achieved numerous successes. Thanks to the cooperation of members, partners, and supporting institutions, SA&AM became an integral part of the industrial landscape, promoting process innovation, operational excellence and sustainable development.

Today, SA&AM brings together over 260 members, including more than 150 manufacturers of vehicles, components and parts, more than 70 suppliers of advanced industrial & green technologies and dozens of research and scientific institutes, and business support organizations.



Lukasz Górecki, Director SA&AM, speaking at the anniversary event

Today Silesia Automotive & Advanced Manufacturing is among the top clusters in Poland and in Europe. SA&AM has the status of a Key National Cluster and a GOLD European Cluster Management Excellence Label.

On this special anniversary, we would like to express our gratitude to all our members, business partners, supporting institutions, and everyone involved for their continuous support and dedication. Together, we are shaping the future of the automotive and advanced manufacturing industries!

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30 candles for ACSstyria

Founded in 1995, ACStyria is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. The highlight of this special year will be the Contact30 – ACStyria Mobility Congress on May 8, 2025, at the Hangar, Graz Airport. Together with international top speakers, participants will explore the latest trends and developments in mobility and showcase numerous innovative products and solutions from Styria in a comprehensive exhibition



Interested in joining ACStyria for this special moment? Get in contact with

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Cluster Electric Mobility South West teaming up with OVIN (Canada)

In its function as the state agency for new mobility solutions and automotive in Baden-Württemberg, e-mobil BW coordinates the two technology clusters Electric Mobility South-West (CESW) and Fuel Cell BW.

A total of more than 400 companies and research institutions from Baden-Württemberg are working in projects and working groups on new technology solutions to drive forward the transformation. International networking and diverse cooperation with outstanding partners abroad – particularly in North America – are important, to effectively support and shape the transformation of mobility in Baden-Württemberg and Europe.

In 2023, CSEW and the cluster OVIN - Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which was renewed for another 3 years in early 2025 to promote transatlantic cooperation opportunities between the two regions Baden-Württemberg and Ontario. An online seminar on 25 February 2025 allowed about 50 participants to find out more about the status of the transformation in Canada and to familiarize themselves with the economic framework conditions, particularly in Ontario. Both partners will meet at the upcoming Hannover Messe from 31 March to 4 April.

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GIZ ACS – an active cluster

How to report effectively on sustainable development



ESG-Workshop participants

Companies in the automotive industry, and elsewhere, are committed to sustainability reporting, not only for the sake of legislation but also for the sake of their customers. As companies face many challenges in doing so, GIZ -ACS organised an expert consultation for members to work on how to report greenhouse gas emissions in the most effective way.

Dr Janja Arbeiter from the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, stressed the importance of good reporting in the field of social responsibility and governance, not only in the field of ecology. According to numerous studies, the most social risks are expected to be taken globally in the future. Therefore, companies need to pay special attention to this area in order to be competitive and develop successfully.

FoMI 2025 also about AI

One focus of the international conference 'The Future of Manufacturing & Industry FoMI 2025' in Portorož/Slovenia on 19 March laid on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in production and business processes. Participants in the FoMI 2025 conference agreed that AI can significantly contribute to a more efficient transformation of business. However, for companies, the introduction of AI represents an organizational challenge rather than a technical one, since the technologies already exist and are developed, while the methods of introducing this extremely useful technology vary from company to company.

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GIZ-ACS and Mobinov at the Slovenian-Portuguese Business Forum in Ljubljana

The Director of SRIP ACS+, Tanja Mohorič, attended the Slovenia-Portugal Business Forum on 18 March in Ljubljana, which was organized by the SPIRIT agency to strengthen business ties between the two countries. One discussion topic was the automotive industry, its challenges and the opportunities that both countries have in this area.



Cluster Managers Tanja Mohorič, GIZ-ACS, and Miguel Araújo, Mobinov, discuss about the transformation for the European Automotive industry at the Slovenia-Portugal Business Forum

Slovenia and Portugal achieved just over 280 million euros in trade last year. Slovenia exported 173 million euros of goods and services to this Mediterranean country and imported 110 million euros from it. Not enough, believe the Director of SRIP ACS+, Tanja Mohorič, and the Director of the Portuguese automotive cluster MOBINOV, Miguel Araújo. Trade between the two countries should also increase because both Slovenia and Portugal have a highly developed automotive industry.

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Hannover Messe: Networking Event at the Finland Pavilion with Tampere Automotive Cluster

EACN member Tampere Automotive Cluster will be present at the Finland Pavilion at the Hannover Messe from 31 March – 4 April.

Business Finland, the Team Finland colleagues, and the Finnish companies organise their annual reception at the Finland Pavilion (Hall 11, Stand D44) on the first day of the Hannover Messe where you can team up with Ari Lylynoja and his colleagues.

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CIAC Cross Visit to FI GROUP on Investments and Financing in the Automotive Sector



Participants at the CIAC Cross Visit at FI Group

On 26 February 2025, CIAC organised a new Cross Visit in cooperation with FI Group. Experts and companies benefitted from the event to discuss financing opportunities and the challenges of the automotive sector's transformation. This event was also the moment to see Borja Dapena, former EU Project Manager at CEAGA, again, who is now Head of Automotive, Mobility & Transport at FI Group. [Further information.](#)

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East Automotive Alliance Study Tour & R&D working group meeting

On February 19-20, EAA organized a study tour to Balice and Wrocław for the EAA Think Tank groups "Digitalization & AI" and "Maintenance". Members learned about the latest solutions in automation, digitalization, and robotics during visits to MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC and BALLUFF.

The trip began with a visit to MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC, a global leader in the production of electrical systems. The presentation “Digitalization and Energy Efficiency” received a lot of attention, and the new product - the “Gemini” production line simulator - sparked a discussion on digitalization and optimization of production processes.

The second day began with a visit to BALLUFF, a company specializing in sensors and identification systems. During the “Digitalization & Lean/CI” presentation, the topic of data integration in production processes and digitalization in the context of Industry 4.0 was discussed. Participants also learned about modern solutions within the Digital Innovation Hub, such as automation and IoT.



Participants discover the BALLUFF smart production facilities

The trip was an opportunity to integrate EAA stakeholders, share experiences and build relationships among members of the EAA Think Tank groups. Participants appreciated the opportunity to discuss issues related to digitalization and automation, which is a key part of their work. They also submitted ideas for projects to support the development of digitization and AI in the automotive industry.

EAA Think Tank R&D working group meeting

On 30 January EAA held a meeting at the Tarnobrzeg Industrial and Technology Park with the attendance of EAA companies and cooperating universities. The day before, the guests toured the Tenneco and Pilkington plants. They had the opportunity to see production processes of pistons and glass. Both Warsaw and Rzeszow Universities of Technology and AGH University of Science and Technology in Krakow presented their R&D offer for the automotive industry. The presentations attracted the interest of EAA member companies, and they initiated a discussion on the challenges of the industry and opportunities for cooperation. The role of innovation and exchange of experience between science and business was emphasized, pointing out the differences in the pace of work of those two sectors, which in turn allows for the

development of a model for further cooperation between the sectors.

The next day, the Think Tank “Business and Development” meeting was held. During the opening, EAA President Ryszard Jania presented the current activities of the cluster and projects for the future.

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H2.R Wasserstoffrunde Regensburg: International Edition | 03.04.2025 | Online, 11:00 – 12:00 Uhr

A promotional poster for the H2.R Wasserstoffrunde Regensburg: International Edition. The poster features a blue and pink color scheme. It includes the logos for Cluster Mobility & Logistics and Green Tech Cluster. The text provides details about the event: Wann? 03.04.2025, 11:00 - 12:00 Uhr; Wo? online; and Mehr Infos: with a QR code. The main title 'H2.R unde Regensburg' is prominently displayed in the center.

The **Cluster Mobility & Logistics** and the **Green Tech Cluster** organise a webinar as part the **Regensburg Hydrogen Round Table H2.R!** Since the transformation cannot be managed alone, the focus on 3 April 2025 will be on international hydrogen projects, with interesting insights from Scotland and the Netherlands in partnership with Regensburg’s twin city Aberdeen RAI Automotive Industry NL who will provide insights into the [Dutch project “Green Transport Delta - Hydrogen”](#). [Further information and registration.](#)

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Project corner

Eurocluster OpenCalls

E-BOOST Mobility lump sum to Investors & Sponsors Day mission | Deadline: 12 May 2025

E-BOOST consortium is organizing a mission to the E-BOOST Investors & Sponsors Day (9th-10th April 2025), back-to-back to the Drive Forward conference in Helmond, Netherlands. [Further information.](#)

Mobinov: an active actor at European level

SCAIRA results and events

Territorial and Industrial Challenges in the Automotive and Aeronautic Sectors (D1.1.1): As part of the [SCAIRA project](#), an analysis of sustainability in the automotive and aeronautical sectors was developed, addressing challenges, opportunities, and strategic considerations, with a focus on the Iberian and SUDOE regions. It highlights the role of the Iberian Sustainable Mobility Ecosystem, the importance of automotive clusters, and sustainability in rural areas. Additionally, it presents emerging trends and innovations in both sectors, along with strategic recommendations to accelerate sustainability and innovation in mobility. [Download the document](#).

HACK4SCAIRA: On 14 and 15 March, the 24h-hackathon [HACK4SCAIRA](#) took place in six cities across France, Portugal, and Spain.



During these two days, 90 students and future entrepreneurs had the opportunity to develop and present innovative solutions for the challenges set by Airbus and Renault Group. Mobinov was present at the event in Portugal in Coimbra, and its General Director Miguel Araújo was members of the international jury evaluating the solutions presented for Renault Group's challenge.

SCAIRA start-up acceleration programme: The 2nd call will open in May! If you have an innovative idea to tackle strategic challenges from Airbus, Renault Iberia, and Horse Aveiro in the field of Green Manufacturing and sustainability, please contact [Tânia Estêvão](#) or [Bruno Amaro](#).

Skills Revolution by TRIREME Project

The TRIREME Project event will take place from April 8 to 10. On the first day, the [Skills \(R\)Evolution in the Automotive-Mobility Ecosystem conference](#) will be held in Ostrava, focusing on the transformation of the sector and skills development. This conference is supported by the FLAMENCO and GREEN projects and is free to attend upon registration.



On the following days, April 9 and 10, the TRIREME Partnership Meeting will take place, dedicated to project updates and strategy definition, followed by the final wrap-up of the event.

INFIMO Project Webinar: Sustainability in the Mobility Sector

Mobinov and its member **INFIMO** OPCO organized a webinar on sustainability in the mobility sector as part of the European [Infimo project](#). The webinar addressed EU ESG regulations, compliance requirements, and key obligations for the automotive industry. Experts presented innovative digital solutions for ESG data management and essential sustainability indicators across the value chain. The event fostered discussions on challenges and opportunities, reinforcing Mobinov's commitment to supporting the sector's sustainable transformation. Watch the replay [here](#).

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Drive2Transform: Call for experts

The Interreg Central Europe project



[Drive2Transform](#)

Drive2Transform

aims at supporting automotive SMEs to take up trends like electrification, connectivity, automation, and the platform economy. The Drive2Transform project helps them to master this shift by developing a cross-regional strategy and deploying an open transformation platform for the automotive sector.

The project is looking for experts to join one (or more) of the following expert groups:

- ⚡ Electrification: Scaling and Promoting Innovation in Battery Technologies & Charging Infrastructure
- ⚡ Automation: Scaling Level 4+ Autonomous Driving Without Safety Drivers
- ⚡ Platform Economy: Building an Ecosystem for Data-Driven Mobility Services
- ⚡ Connectivity: Secure and High-Performance Digital Infrastructures for Connected Mobility

Further information on the call for experts can be found on the [website](#) and in this [document](#).

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Mixed Fleet Project

The [Mixed Fleet](#) research project studies how autonomous machines and human workers or manually operated machines are working together in the same workflow. Another research target is optimizing work site operations by combination of machines of different types and models and machines from various manufacturers. The Mixed Fleet project is related to lifting equipment manufacturer [Konecranes' Zero4](#) programme which focuses on digitizing material flow management.



The three-year joint project is funded by Business Finland, as well as companies and research institutions. The [pilot implementation](#) of the project will take place at Konecranes' factory in Hyvinkää, Logisnext's demo center in Järvenpää, and with the assistance of Kalmar in demanding outdoor conditions at the Kouvola rail terminal. Project website: [Mixed Fleet | Project | FIMA ry](#)

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Other information

Horizon Europe Info Day and Brokerage event: Cluster 5 | Climate Energy Mobility Transport

The European commission organises on **6 May** an InfoDay on Cluster 5 topics in the upcoming Work programme 2025. There are **limited onsite spots available** (registration by 31 March 2025 necessary), but an online participation is also possible (registration at any time). [Further information and registration](#)

The Info Day will be followed by a networking and brokerage event organised by [GREENET](#) in the same premises (16:00 – 19:00 CET). [Further information and registration](#)

I3Instrument Work Programme for 2025-2027 adopted!

The European Commission has adopted the new Work Programme for the **Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument** for 2025-2027, allocating €176 million. It will focus on scaling innovation, strengthening regional innovation ecosystems, and supporting interregional collaboration. Key intervention areas:

- 🚀 Financial and advisory support for investments in interregional innovation projects in shared smart specialisation areas (Strand 1);
- 🚀 Financial and advisory support for investments in interregional innovation projects (Strand 2a), and

capacity building (Strand 2b), for the development of value chains in less developed regions.

Planned call for proposals 2025:

- 🚀 Investment Calls Strand 1 & 2a: planned Deadline 13.11.2025
- 🚀 Final Capacity Building Call Cap2b: Planned launch Q3.2025

The I3I work programme 2025 can be found [here](#), and information about the upcoming calls [here](#).

Public consultation on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2034

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_486

The European Commission published a Communication on 'The Road to the next Multiannual Financial Framework'. It outlines **the key policy and budgetary challenges that will shape the design of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)**. The elaboration of the next MFF is accompanied by a Europe-wide campaign with a range of stakeholders, including Member States governments, regional entities, and citizens, as well as a public consultation inviting stakeholders and citizens to express their point of view on different topics:

- 🚀 [Implementing EU Funds with Member States and regions](#)
- 🚀 [EU funding for competitiveness](#)
- 🚀 [EU funding for external action](#)
- 🚀 [EU funding for cross-border education, training and solidarity, youth, media, culture, and creative sectors, values, and civil society](#)
- 🚀 [EU funding for civil protection, preparedness and response to crises](#)
- 🚀 [EU funding for the single market, and cooperation between national authorities](#)
- 🚀 [Performance of the EU budget](#)

The public consultation is open until 6 May 2025.

STAGE Sustainability Transition Programme

STAGE is a unique sustainability transition ecosystem that provides companies with dedicated support to transform into competitive and sustainable leaders of the European industrial community.

The aim of this call is to identify and work with 2.000 SMEs to help them develop their sustainability transition plans, become investment ready and attract private finance. The Programme is divided in three phases:

- 🚀 PHASE 1: Sustainability Assessment: Initial & Performance assessment, Carbon Footprint

assessment, EU Taxonomy assessment (target: 500 SMEs).


- PHASE 2: Training and capacity building. Training modules in 4 Pillars have been created by the STAGE partners to help with SMEs' sustainability transition.
- PHASE 3: Advisory services to develop investment project plans and attract private funding (50.000 € grants for 100 SMEs).


[Further information and application](#)


Voluntary reporting standard for SMEs (VSME)


EFRAG has been tasked by the European Commission to develop a voluntary sustainability reporting standard for non-listed micro, small and medium enterprises (VSME). It aims to be a simple reporting tool for SMEs to face growing sustainability data requests from business counterparties (i.e. banks, investors or larger companies for which non-listed SMEs are suppliers) in an efficient and proportionate manner as well as to facilitate their participation in the transition to a sustainable economy. The VSME standard, delivered on 17.12.2024, is expected to standardise the current multiple ESG data requests (which represent a significant cost of preparation for non-listed SMEs), by reducing the number of uncoordinated requests they receive. [Further information](#)


Agenda

 31 March – 4 April 2025 | Hannover (Germany)
Hannover Messe 2025: Shaping the Future with Technology | [Further information](#)

 03 April 2025 | 09:30 – 13:00 CET | Online
Horizon Implementation Day: Grant Management in Horizon Europe | [Event website](#)


 08 April 2025 | Ostrava (Czech Republic)
Skills (R)Evolution in the Automotive-Mobility Ecosystem conference | organised by the TRIEME consortium | [Further information and registration](#)


 8 – 10 April 2025 | Barcelona (Spain)
Advanced Factories | [Further information](#)


 9 – 10 April 2025 | Heilbronn (Germany)
Cluster Meet Regions Heilbronn: Transformation of the manufacturing industry: The path towards Artificial Intelligence and Hydrogen | co-organised by Transformative Dialogue/WFG Heilbronn | [Further information and registration \(<24 March 2025\)](#)


 6 May 2025 | Brussels & online
Infoday 2025 on calls for proposals Cluster 5: Climate,


Energy & Mobility | organised by the European Commission | [Further information](#)


 6 May 2025 | Brussels
Greenet physical Brokerage event Cluster 5: Climate, Energy & Mobility | organised by Greenet after the Infoday | [Further information](#)

 13 – 15 May 2025 | Ispra (Italy)
5th European Conference on Connected and Automated Driving (EUCAD) | organized by the EC, CCAM, and FAME project | [Further information](#)


 27 – 28 May 2025 | Belgrade (Serbia)
SEE Automotive Conference | organised by AC Serbia | Save the date

 3 – 4 June 2025 | Rzeszów (Poland)
Cluster Meet Regions Rzeszów: Exploring the Innovation Ecosystem: Clusters as Catalysts for Regional Competitiveness | organised by the European Commission and ECCP | [Further information](#)


 5 – 6 June 2025 | Rzeszów (Poland)
EU Industry Days 2025 | organised by the European Commission and ECCP | [Further information](#)

 11 – 12 June 2025 | Sofia (Bulgaria)
International Automotive Forum 2025 | organised by Automotive Cluster Bulgaria | [Further information and registration](#)

 16–17 September 2025 | Brussels (Belgium)
European Research & Innovation (R&I) Days 2025: Together, towards a Research and Innovation Union | organised by the European Commission | [Further information](#)


 4 December 2025 | Belfort (France)
Forum Hydrogen Business For Climate: Safe & Scale - Secure and accelerate | co-organised by Pôle Véhicule du Futur | [Further information and registration](#)



Legal notice

Links preceded by the  are also available on the EACN website with a limited access to employees from EACN clusters and their members.

This is the internal newsletter of EACN. Input comes from the Executive Board members, the Secretary General as well as from EACN cluster members.

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