



Report on Matchmaking Event 4

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3				

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2 Introduction

The aim of this report is to briefly present how the fourth matchmaking event was planned and carried out by EXCITE partners in connection to the Business Mission to the Basque Country, organised by GAIA on the 13th-15th of November 2023 in San Sebastian and Bilbao, Spain as a part of the fourth EXCITE study visit.

As per one of the EXCITE goals - to improve the search for possible synergies - study visits and respective exchanges are combined with flagship and other local events, organized and hosted by the partners of EXCITE consortium.

The aim is to create a great opportunity for local SMEs to connect with international partners, engaged in accordance with the ClusterXchange scheme. Matchmaking events connect a variety of organizations - both public and private stakeholders, companies and scale-up support organizations, by facilitating various meeting formats – B2B, C2C, C2B or R2B with individualised programmes, to help SMEs to identify interregional collaboration opportunities and to follow-up on the identified potential cooperation and interests, as well provide unique opportunity to present their know-how and innovative technologies, find new technologies, meet potential business and collaboration partners, and etc.

3 Short report on the activities performed

From November 13th to 15th, 2023, the EXCITE consortium, including the cluster organizations MCICT, Pole SCS, Business Hive Vilnius, and Silicon Saxony, embarked on a mission to delve into the home of cluster partner GAIA – the Basque Country's industrial landscape. This expedition aimed to immerse participants in the region's innovation ecosystem, focusing on advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, and digitalization.

An impressive number of exhibitors looking for opportunity to connect - over 150:

- Cybersecurity zone – 17 exhibitors
- Digital transformation zone – 11 exhibitors
- Internationalisation zone – 19 exhibitors
- R&D&I zone – 18 exhibitors
- Startup & Scaleup zone – 82 exhibitors
- Sustainable digitalisation zone – 9 exhibitors

It brought together strategy, opinions, technology, experiences, speakers and workshops, and fostered relations around technological expertise based on production.

- Environmental-energy and digital-technological transitions
- Strategic vision for the manufacturing industry
- Sustainable digitalisation and cybersecurity solutions
- Artificial intelligence opportunities
- Talent and internationalisation

Day 1 & 2: Basque Open Industry - A Collaborative Platform



Picture 1. EXCITE group at Basque Open Industry

The first two days were filled with various activities within the framework of the "Basque Open Industry" event. This included an exhibition featuring more than 150 exhibitors, and visits to members and stakeholders of GAIA, including members of their CYBASQUE sub-cluster, and B2B meetings. A presentation on the Basque EDIH (BDIH), focusing on themes such as smart and connected machines, digital electricity networks, additive manufacturing, flexible robotics, medical devices and digital health, advanced materials, data-driven solutions, and cybersecurity, was also part of the program.



Picture 2. Basque Open Industry – preparations before the start



Pictures 3. Booths for startups and companies

Matchmaking

The Basque Open Industry has enabled nearly **800** business meetings, appointments and demonstrations between companies thanks to the APP 'Networking Land' enabled by SPRI (the regional trade & Investment agency). This interconnection between the Basque industrial ecosystem

in matters such as internationalization and application of R & D has been one of the centerpieces of this event held at the Bilbao Exhibition Centre (BEC). The matching tool used has helped attendees to get the most out of their participation in the event thanks to its functionalities aimed at providing quick and agile logistics of appointments and personalized demonstrations and the easy location of companies of interest. In this way, it has been possible to create meeting agendas with startups and companies specialising in:

- transformative projects of Industry 4.0
- latest technologies and solutions in AI
- Cybersecurity
- Software
- Connectivity and IoT
- Advanced Sensorics
- BigData
- Immersive Technologies
- Robotics and electronics
- Computing
- Additive Manufacturing
- Machine Vision
- Edge Computing

Companies have been able to contrast the possibilities of applying technologies from the centers to their respective business projects, as well as to know the possibilities and opportunities for international expansion of their business projects in the meetings held with the people responsible for the offices of the Basque Trade & Investment Foreign Network of the SPRI Group in 23 markets.

Business Hive Vilnius (BHV) provided insights and recommendations regarding the online tools and possible improvements for matchmaking during the event.

The matchmaking event was supported by EXCITE and Silicon Eurocluster projects.

The below graphs present more accurate data on the number of factual meetings per each EXCITE group member per country:

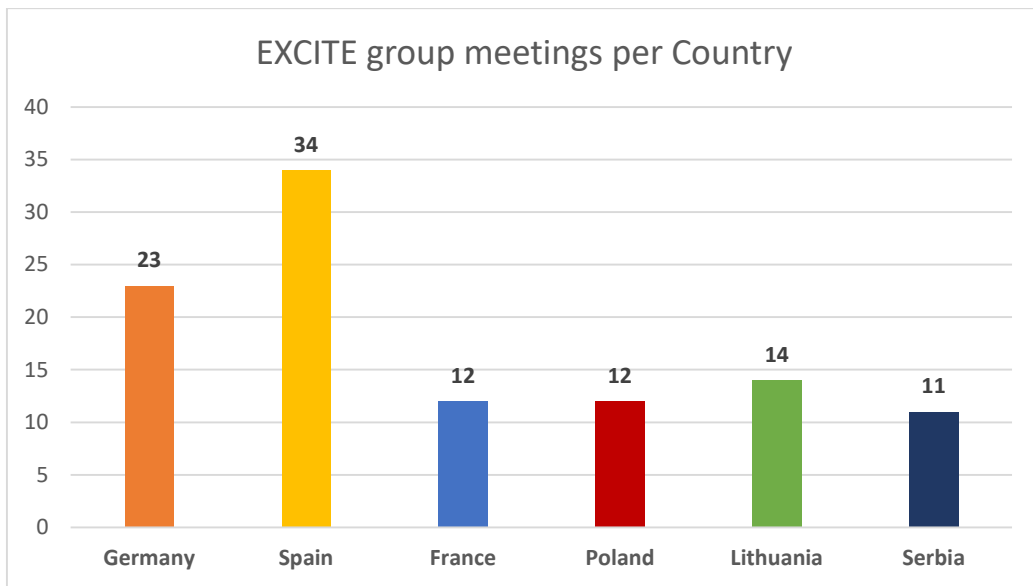


Figure 3. Number of meetings per EXCITE group members per country

The below statistics displays that the number of transnational meetings held significantly prevailed over the meetings conducted by the participants originating from the same country.

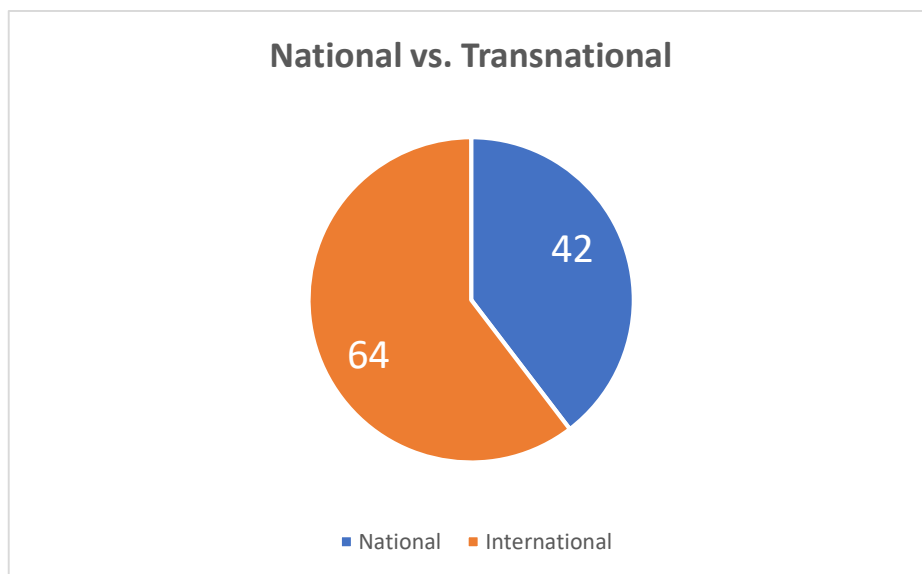


Figure 4. Ratio of transnational vs. national meetings

Day 3: Exploring Innovations and Excellence

The final day of the mission encompassed the SME Assembly and the Europe Enterprise Network (EEN) Conference. This event provided a unique opportunity for small and medium-sized enterprises to network with potential partners and investors, gaining insights into the latest industry trends and technologies. Furthermore, a visit to Bilbao AS Fabrik (Advanced Services Fabrik) – an innovative and

reference ecosystem in the field of advanced services for Industry 4.0 and the digital economy – was organized for interested participants.

4 Conclusions

Business Mission to the Basque Country was very highly appraised by consortium members and foreign guests.

Basque Open Industry showcases the maturity of an advanced manufacturing ecosystem, yet it effectively maintains a format of multidisciplinary event for all professional profiles and sectors, and the general public alike, interested in attracting and developing talent around cutting-edge technologies.

A high-tech conference and networking event – has been a great platform for many companies to extend their connections internationally and build ties with potential business partners across the border. B2match sessions facilitated one-on-one meetings between participants and Basque companies, enabling exploration of potential partnerships and collaborations.

EXCITE partners have been able to experience the diversity of the local ecosystem in terms of technologies, high organisational level and competences and various actors present in the region. Some of the practices are considered as best practices and are seen as a great learning opportunity by the EXCITE partners.