EUROPEAN CLUSTERS ALLIANCE

ECA INTERREGIONAL CLUSTER CONFERENCE · GALAȚI & CHIȘINĂU

AGENDA 20–22 OCTOBER 2026

CLUSTERS AS COMPETITIVENESS INTEGRATORS

Connecting the Danube, Black Sea and European Value Chains

TUESDAY · 20 OCTOBER 2026 — GALAȚI

09:30–17:30 **Medical Workshop: Prevention of Epidemiological Risk in Conflict Zones and the Post-Conflict Period**

SIDE EVENT · Danubius International University · Open in Google Maps

In cooperation with **Clusters4Health** · 3 Galați Boulevard, Galați

14:30–18:00 **Travel to Galați from Bucharest Otopeni Airport**

Designated coach, boarding at the Departures terminal · Contacts: Christina Leucuța, +40 755 024 863 · Flaviu Iorgulescu, +40 723 531 741

WEDNESDAY · 21 OCTOBER 2026 — GALAȚI

Venue: **Unique Ballroom Events**, 1 Marea Unire Boulevard, Galați · Open in Google Maps

09:00–09:30 Welcoming coffee and registration — Unique 2 Conference Hall

09:30–09:45 **Opening speeches** — Unique 2 Conference Hall

MODERATOR · **Georgiana Vînău**, OpenHub Creative Cluster

SPEAKERS

Cezar Bichescu
City Manager, Galați

Camelia Epure
Galați County Council

Diana Gradea
RDA South-East

Adrian Pop
State Secretary, Ministry of Economy

Andy Pusca
Coordinator, Lower Danube Cluster Consortium

09:45–10:30 **Keynotes** — Unique 2 Conference Hall

MODERATOR · **Daniel Cosnita**, President, CLUSTERO

SPEAKERS

Antonio Novo
President, European Clusters Alliance

Bianca Muntean
Transilvania IT Cluster

Jan Philipp Kramer
Prognos

WEDNESDAY · 21 OCTOBER 2026

MORNING & LUNCH

10:30–11:15
SESSION I

New Instruments for Competitive Growth

Unique 2 Conference Hall

MODERATOR · **Daniel Cosnita**, President, CLUSTERO

INPUT · **Crispin Waymouth**, Deputy Head of Unit, DG GROW

PANELISTS

Hickmah Tagaully
President Council & European Bioregions

Diana Gradea
RDA South-East

Paola Ravenna
Department of European Policies, City of Venice, Italy

11:15–11:45 Coffee break — Unique 3 Conference Hall

11:45–12:30
SESSION II

Interregional Cooperation through Clusters

Unique 2 Conference Hall

MODERATOR · **Marius Geru**, OpenHub Creative Cluster

PANELISTS

Irina Calugareanu
MoldCluster

Jiri Herineck
President, National Cluster Association (NCA)

Aleksander Yurchak
President, Ukrainian Cluster Alliance

12:30–13:30 Lunch break — Unique 3 Conference Hall

WEDNESDAY · 21 OCTOBER 2026

EARLY AFTERNOON

13:30–14:45 Regional Smart Specialisations

SESSION III Three parallel side sessions · the energy session runs until 15:30.

ENERGY · 13:30–15:30

Industrial Decarbonisation and Green Energy for Energy-Intensive Value Chains

Unique 1 Conference Hall

MODERATOR

Daniel Cîrstea
Founder of RBL Sibiu; Managing Director & Co-Owner, RoofControl; Shareholder, Bridge Energy

PANELISTS

Codarcea Romulus Marius
Ludușan Law Office

Eugen Popa
SOCOT SA

Lucian Vrînceanu
Managing Partner, Energy Consultants

Adrian Ciurtin
Wiren Corporation

Ionuț Cristian Ciubotaru
Electrocentrale Borzești / OMV Petrom

LOGISTICS · 13:30–14:45

Logistics, Ports and Solidarity Lanes: Connecting Ukraine, Moldova and the EU

Unique 4 Conference Hall

MODERATOR

Natalia Budescu Sălceanu
Naval Cluster Galați; Director, Romanian River Transport Cluster Association

PANELISTS

Nicolae-Dan Tivilichi
General Manager, Maritime Danube Ports Administration (CN APDM) Galați

Olena Zhukova
Executive Director, Ukrainian Maritime Cluster; Director, Marine Design Engineering Mykolayiv

Costel Ungureanu
Dean, Faculty of Naval Architecture, "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galați; Vice-Chair TRIG Blue Economy

CREATIVE · 13:30–14:45

Creative Industries, Industrial Heritage and Regional Attractiveness

Unique 2 Conference Hall

MODERATOR

Georgiana Vînău
OpenHub Creative Cluster

PANELISTS

Kati Uusi-Rauva
Director, EIT Culture & Creativity North Oy

Ioannis Pappas
Green Evolution AE

Monica Crețu
Romanian Order of Architects (OAR), Bucharest branch

Teodor Frolu
Ivan Patzaichin Association – Mila 23

14:45–15:15 Coffee break

Unique 3 Conference Hall

WEDNESDAY · 21 OCTOBER 2026

AFTERNOON & EVENING

15:15–16:30 Two parallel sessions

SESSION IV

Role of SMEs in the Regional Industrial & Innovation Ecosystems and Clusters

Unique 2 Conference Hall

MODERATOR

Andy Pusca
Lower Danube Cluster Consortium

PANELISTS

Stefan Popa
Romanian Business Leaders

Sébastien Thomas-Chaffange
France Clusters

Veerle De Graef
Flanders Food

Clusters and Technology Transfer & Innovation

ROMANIAN ONLY

Unique 4 Conference Hall

MODERATOR

Prof. Adrian Micu, PhD

PRESENTATIONS · "DUNĂREA DE JOS" UNIVERSITY OF GALAȚI

Adelina Ștefania Milea · High-value valorisation of bioactive compounds from yellow and red onion skins through the development of biotics

Alexandra Teodora Mărtin · Carrot beyond colour: technologies for innovative products based on circular economy principles

Oana Nistor, Doina Andronoiu · Dessert-type dairy product based on whey protein concentrate and sea buckthorn, and its production technology

Nicoleta Stanciuc · Success stories in the patenting activity of PhD students in Food Products Engineering

Frasina Sorin · Sensor network for micro-mapping heat stress in the urban environment

16:30–17:00 Pitching sessions

Unique 2 Conference Hall

17:00–17:10 Wrap-up of the first day

Unique 2 Conference Hall

MODERATOR · **Georgiana Vînău**, OpenHub Creative Cluster

17:10–19:10 Matchmaking event in cooperation with EEN

Unique 3 Conference Hall

One-to-one meetings. Book them on **b2match**.

19:30 Networking dinner

Unique 3 Conference Hall

CHIȘINĂU · REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

2ND NATIONAL CLUSTERS FORUM

Clusters as Competitiveness Integrators

THURSDAY · 22 OCTOBER 2026 — CHIȘINĂU

Transfer from Galați: **08:00, Hotel Faleza by Vega** · book your seat on **b2match**

08:30–09:00 Registration and networking coffee

09:00–09:30 **Opening remarks**

SPEAKERS

Natalia Selevestru
State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalisation of the Republic of Moldova (TBC)

Simone Di Stefano
Deputy Director of Cooperation, Swiss Cooperation Office in Moldova

H.E. Petra Lärke
Ambassador of Sweden to the Republic of Moldova (TBC)

H.E. Fern Horine
Ambassador of the United Kingdom to the Republic of Moldova (TBC)

Seher Ariner
UNDP Deputy Resident Representative to the Republic of Moldova

PART I Strengthening Cluster Excellence in Moldova

09:30–10:00 **Ceremonial Awarding of the ESCA Bronze Label Certificates**

Official presentation of the European Secretariat for Cluster Analysis (ESCA) Bronze Label Certificates to the clusters supported under the UNDP AdTrade Project, recognising their achievement of European standards in cluster management excellence.

Group photo: awarded clusters, then all participants.

10:00–10:30 **ESCA Certification Benefits and Hints for a Smooth Certification Journey**

SPEAKER

Gerd Meier zu Koecker
Representative, ESCA

THURSDAY · 22 OCTOBER 2026 — PART I

10:30–11:30 — PANEL

Artificial Intelligence and Digitalisation: How Clusters Can Increase SME Competitiveness

MODERATOR · **Dumitru Udrea**

PANELISTS

Anisia Culea
OpenHub Creative Cluster Galați
Digital transformation services offered by clusters

Vlad Vedrașco
Frudova
AI and innovations adoption by SMEs

Ana Pancrat
Millstream Trade
From Microchipping to Smart Farming

11:30–11:50 — Coffee break

11:50–12:50 — PANEL

Research and Innovation Partnerships as Competitiveness Integrators

MODERATOR · **Radu Tucan**

PANELISTS

Oleg Masner
OviClust
Strengthening collaboration between clusters, universities and research organisations – the OviClust case

Nicu Vrabie
Horizon Europe: European Industrial Competitiveness

Andrei Mirza
SORINTEX
Cluster-driven innovation for regional competitiveness

Lucia Ușurelu
Cluster cooperation with research and education institutions

13:00–14:00 — Lunch

THURSDAY · 22 OCTOBER 2026

PART II

PART II International Forum Romania – Moldova – Ukraine – EU Cluster Cooperation

14:00–14:30

Opening of the International Forum

MODERATOR · **Cristina Tiscul**

SPEAKERS

Claudiu-Iulius-Gavril Năsui
Minister of Economic Development and Digitalisation of the Republic of Moldova (TBC)

H.E. Iwona Piórko
Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova, Head of the EU Delegation (TBC)

Seher Ariner
Deputy Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme

Daniel Coșniță
President, Romanian Cluster Association – CLUSTERO

14:30–15:30

PANEL

Clusters as Drivers of European Integration

MODERATOR · **Diana Prisăcaru**

PANELISTS

Crispin Waymouth
Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission
Clusters in the EU Competitiveness Agenda: Opportunities for Moldova and Ukraine

Jan Philipp Kramer
Manager, Prognos
Clusters as Bridges to European Innovation and Value Chains – evidence and lessons from European cluster ecosystems

Antonio Novo
President, European Clusters Alliance
Connecting Moldova and Ukraine to European Industrial Ecosystems – networks, partnerships and joint projects

THURSDAY · 22 OCTOBER 2026

PART II

15:30–16:30

PANEL

The Power of Cluster Networks

MODERATOR · **Daniel Coșniță**

PANELISTS

Genoveva Christova
Manager, Cluster Ligna BG
From Cluster Cooperation to Business Opportunities – practical SME internationalisation and cross-border cooperation

Jiri Herinek
President, National Cluster Association Czechia
Czech cluster association – experience, practice, success

Alexandre Yurchak
President, Ukrainian Clusters Alliance
Ukraine cluster association – experience, practice, success

Ciprian Morcan
Manager, Transilvanian Furniture Cluster
International cooperation Romania–Moldova–Ukraine

16:30–17:30

Clusters Pitching Session: Connecting Cross-border Clusters

MODERATOR · **Cristina Tiscul**

Clusters briefly present their expertise, products, services, cooperation interests and project ideas. The session facilitates direct connections between pan-European clusters and identifies opportunities for partnerships, joint projects, business cooperation and participation in European initiatives.

17:30–19:00 **B2B and dinner networking**