

Study Visit

D3.1.4

30/06/2023

Project Acronym	CLASS4.0
Project ID Number	10415212
Project Title	CLuster for dAta-driven Solutions in the Sea economy 4.0
Priority Axis	1 – Blue innovation
Specific objective	1.1 - Enhance the framework conditions for innovation in the relevant sectors of the blue economy within the cooperation area
Work Package Number	3
Work Package Title	Clustering thematic activities
Activity Number	3.1
Activity Title	Exchange and exploitation of projects' results
Contribution by	All Partners
Partners involved	All Partners
Status	Final

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1 CLASS4.0

1.1 Background and Challenges

The blue economy, which encompasses all economic activities related to oceans, seas, and coasts, is a vital sector with immense potential. However, it faces several challenges. Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in this sector struggle with low competitiveness on international markets. Their innovation activities often don't yield the desired results, and there's a noticeable skill gap among the workforce. Additionally, there's a lack of cohesive collaboration between the business, research, and public sectors. These challenges are further compounded for Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) due to their size and the high costs associated with research and development.

1.2 Project Vision

CLASS4.0 seeks to address these challenges head-on. It doesn't start from scratch but aims to build upon and capitalize on the experiences and results of previous projects such as INVESTINFISH, BEAT, and BLUE KEP. The overarching goal is to bolster the competitiveness and innovative prowess of SMEs. The project recognizes the potential of Data-driven solutions (DDS) in revolutionizing the circular and sea economy.

1.3 Key Objectives and Strategies

1. **Raising Awareness:** One of the primary barriers to innovation is a lack of understanding of its potential benefits. CLASS4.0 aims to showcase relatable case studies, making it easier for SMEs to visualize the tangible returns from investing in innovation.
2. **Bridging the Skill Gap:** A significant impediment to the adoption of DDS by SMEs is the existing skill gap. By leveraging methodologies from the BLUE KEP project, CLASS4.0 hopes to create an environment conducive to DDS adoption.
3. **Promoting Technology Transfer:** The project emphasizes the importance of transferring technology and innovative processes, especially those related to DDS in the Blue Economy. Insights from the BEAT project will play a pivotal role in this.
4. **Future Thinking (FT) Methodology:** In an ever-evolving global landscape characterized by volatility and uncertainty, traditional decision-making models may fall short. CLASS4.0 will employ the FT methodology, a forward-looking approach that explores multiple future

scenarios. This method is particularly apt for navigating complex environments and ensuring that decisions are based on objective analysis rather than mere opinions.

5. **Capitalizing on Past Successes:** CLASS4.0 isn't about reinventing the wheel. It will draw from the successes of previous projects, adopting and adapting governance models, cooperation frameworks, and innovation capability analyses.
6. **Stakeholder Engagement:** A project of this magnitude and significance requires the active involvement of various stakeholders. CLASS4.0 has a comprehensive plan to engage industry representatives, policymakers, and other relevant entities right from the project's inception.
7. **Synergies and Collaboration:** The project recognizes the value of synergies. By fostering real connections between different projects and initiatives, CLASS4.0 aims to enhance the visibility and transferability of results.
8. **Four Pillars of Support:** The project's approach is built on four foundational pillars - skills and training, innovation ecosystem and networking, testing innovations before full-scale investment, and support in securing investments. Each pillar is crucial for ensuring the holistic development and competitiveness of SMEs.
9. **Regional Engagement:** While CLASS4.0 has a broad scope, it also understands the importance of regional nuances. Engaging regional managers will ensure that best practices are not just recognized but also integrated into regional strategies.
10. **European Integration:** The project's cluster model is inspired by the European Union's Digital Innovation Hubs (DIH) model. This ensures that the best practices and insights gleaned from CLASS4.0 can be seamlessly transferred and adopted across Europe.

2 Scope of the Deliverable

The purpose of this deliverable, titled "D.3.1.4 Study Visit," is to provide a comprehensive overview of the study visit conducted by the CLASS4.0 project to the Galileo Visionary District on May 23, 2023. This document serves as a record of the activities, interactions, and insights gained during the visit, emphasizing the significance of the venture in the broader context of the CLASS4.0 project and its alignment with the objectives of the Interreg IT-HR Programme.

3 Introduction to the Study Visit

On **May 23, 2023**, the CLASS4.0 project orchestrated a pivotal Study Visit to the esteemed Galileo Visionary District. This venture was a golden chance for all partners involved to delve into groundbreaking methodologies, facilitate knowledge transfer, and cultivate potential collaborations. The primary intent of this visit was to fortify the ties between various projects, broaden our collaborative networks, and further the objectives of the Interreg IT-HR Programme in the forthcoming years.

The CLASS4.0 initiative is dedicated to refining the conditions for cross-border innovation. It does so by capitalizing on the insights and outcomes garnered from projects like INVESTINFISH, BEAT, and BLUE KEP. The overarching ambition is to propagate sustainable innovative strategies and disseminate these achievements beyond the confines of the IT-HR Programme Area, leveraging the diverse networks and partnerships of each participant.

Our journey to the Galileo Visionary District was of paramount importance. Recognized for its prowess in championing innovation and technological progression, the district offered us a unique chance to tour its state-of-the-art facilities, interact with industry experts, and glean knowledge from their triumphant endeavors.

The visit had multifaceted objectives. We aimed to unearth avant-garde strategies to ensure the longevity of our project outcomes. By integrating design and future-oriented methodologies, we crafted plans to amplify the influence of our initiatives. Furthermore, we endeavored to disseminate our project findings beyond the IT-HR Programme Area, forging robust alliances and synchronizing with other Interreg and EU ventures. This expanded our reach, facilitating a ripple effect in knowledge sharing.

Additionally, our engagement with other IT-HR projects in analogous thematic areas, like INNOVAMARE, magnified our collective impact, driving the region's innovation landscape forward. The visit also paved the way for brainstorming projects in line with the Interreg IT-HR Programme 2021-2027. By pinpointing cross-border challenges and employing Future Thinking methodologies, we addressed pertinent issues, influencing policy decisions that champion innovation and cross-border collaboration.

4 Galileo Visionary District: A Brief Overview

Emerging in the late 1980s, the vision of a "science park" in Padua aimed to grant SMEs access to cutting-edge research-driven knowledge. Spearheaded by the Chamber of Commerce and the University of Padua, the initial phase of the Science Park project saw the establishment of the Padova Ricerche Consortium and the Tecnopadova Special Company.

Over the years, the Galileo Park has been at the forefront of propelling innovation, emphasizing economic, environmental, and social sustainability. The park thrives on collaboration, fostering relationships with both national and international entities to promote mutual growth. Their holistic approach encompasses design, communication, marketing, startup acceleration, and education, making them a beacon of innovation in the region.

5 Key Takeaways from the Study Visit

During our visit, we were introduced to several projects spearheaded by the Galileo Park:

- **iNest** (Interconnected Nord-Est Innovation Ecosystem), financially supported in the frame of PNRR Program, is aimed at extending the beneficial effects of digitalization to the key specialization areas of "Nord-Est" (Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Veneto and Province Autonome di Trento e Bolzano): industrial and manufacturing, agriculture, marine and mountain environment, architecture and construction, tourism, culture, wellness and food are the fields addressed.
- **SID – Scuola Italiana di Design**: Scuola Italiana di Design is the educational department of Parco Scientifico e Tecnologico Galileo SCpA in Padua, Italy. It offers a three-year training program focused on design. The relevance of Scuola Italiana di Design's activities for the "data economy" lies in its systemic approach to design. The school recognizes that design is

not limited to the creation of physical objects but extends to the analysis of needs, cultural changes, lifestyles, and the impact of new technologies. In the context of the data economy, this approach becomes crucial

- **Matech:** MaTech is the research and development activity of Galileo Visionary District focused on new materials and advanced technologies. MaTech serves as a center of expertise that provides research and development services on technical issues related to new materials and innovative technologies. The collaboration between engineers, business managers, and entrepreneurs at MaTech is an important success story on how to integrate technical expertise with market demands. This synergy creates opportunities for economic growth and competitive advantage in the data economy.

For a detailed account of the visit, refer to D.3.1.5. This report encompasses the attendance list, agenda, visuals, and other pertinent materials.