



D4.3 Engagement & Community Report - c

Revision: Final

Work package	WP4	Task	Task 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4
Submission date	29/06/2026	Due date	30/06/2026
Deliverable lead	OpenNebula Systems	Version	Final
Authors	Francisco Picolini (OpenNebula Systems), Alberto P. Marti (OpenNebula Systems), Danijel Pavlica (F6S), Tajana Medakovic (F6S), Enrique Areizaga (TECNALIA), Amrita Prasad (Martel Innovate), Francesco Panella (Martel Innovate).		
Reviewers	Francesco Panella (Martel), Annika Strömdahl (RISE), Olatz Ibañez Otazua (TECNALIA)		
Abstract	This document provides detailed information about the community structure implemented by the Project and the definition and execution of the engagement actions involving the European research and industry ecosystem, as well as other relevant initiatives and user communities across different sectors. It is the final deliverable due M30 of the project, with an initial version in M6, and an updated version submitted in M18.		
Keywords	Community, engagement, ecosystem, research, industry, forum, strategic alignment.		

DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Description of change	List of contributor(s)
V0.1	19/05/2026	Agreed version of TOC, ready to start editing	Francisco Picolini (OpenNebula Systems)
V0.2	08/06/2026	Updated content in section 3	Amrita Prasad, Francesco Panella, Leonardo Tonetto (Martel Innovate)
V0.3	19/06/20	Edits and amendments for final draft for review	Francisco Picolini (OpenNebula Systems), Alberto P. Martí (OpenNebula Systems)
V0.4	25/06/20	Update of formatting and figures	Francisco Picolini (OpenNebula Systems)
V0.5	26/06/2026	Coordinator review of deliverable	Annika Strömdahl (RISE)
V0.6	29/06/2026	Amendment of comments from final internal review	Francisco Picolini (OpenNebula Systems)
Final	29/06/2026	Final draft for submission	Maria-Angeliki Evliati (RISE)

Disclaimer

Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the other granting authorities. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Copyright notice

© 2024 - 2026 NexusForum Consortium

Project co-funded by the European Commission in the Horizon Europe Programme		
Nature of the deliverable:	R	
Dissemination Level		
PU	Public, fully open, e.g. web	x

Executive summary

Deliverable D4.3 "Engagement & Community Report" provides an overview of the evolution and consolidation of the community structure established by NexusForum.EU, together with the engagement activities carried out across the European research, industry, policy, and innovation ecosystems up to the end of M30 (June 2026).

Building on the foundations established in D4.1 (submitted M6, June 2024) and further developed in D4.2 (submitted M18, June 2025), the project has successfully consolidated its stakeholder engagement framework and strengthened collaboration across the European cloud-edge-IoT and AI communities. Throughout the reporting period, NexusForum.EU has operated a structured network of thematic Working Groups, supported by the Research & Innovation Roadmap Advisory Board, providing a collaborative environment where industry leaders, researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders contribute to the project's strategic discussions and roadmap development.

The project has reinforced its role as a coordination and convergence platform within the European ecosystem through its close collaboration with key initiatives such as IPCEI-CIS, the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud, and EUCloudEdgeIoT. These activities have enabled the continuous collection of stakeholder feedback and the identification of strategic priorities related to digital sovereignty, open source, interoperability, cloud-edge infrastructures, and AI-enabled computing continuum technologies.

NexusForum.EU has actively engaged a diverse range of stakeholders, including SMEs, large enterprises, research organisations, public authorities, cooperatives, and industry associations. Through Working Group activities, webinars, consultations, workshops, participation in major European events, and targeted outreach actions, the project has facilitated knowledge exchange, strengthened cross-sector collaboration, and contributed to the discussion of key policy and research challenges facing the European digital ecosystem.

The project has also continued its efforts to establish and expand international dialogue with strategic partners beyond Europe, particularly in Japan and South Korea. While these cooperation activities remain under development, they have provided valuable opportunities for stakeholder exchange and contributed to the project's broader objective of fostering international collaboration around cloud-edge-IoT and AI technologies.

As a result, NexusForum.EU has strengthened its position as a trusted forum for stakeholder engagement, supporting the development of the project's Research & Innovation Roadmap and contributing to the alignment of European research, industrial, and policy priorities for the future of the computing continuum.

This is the final version of the deliverable, submitted at M30 (June 2026), following the initial version delivered at M6 (June 2024) and the intermediate version delivered at M18 (June 2025).

Table of content

1	Introduction	8
2	Community building and cross-cooperation structure	9
2.1	Structure of the Working Groups	9
2.1.1	The Research & Innovation Roadmap Advisory Board	11
2.1.2	NexusForum.EU community participation methodology	11
2.1.3	NexusForum.EU Working Group webinars	12
2.2	Engagement with the broader EU ecosystem	14
2.3	Channelling contributions to the Research & Innovation Roadmap	16
3	Engagement of European research and innovation ecosystem	18
3.1	Engagement with the RIA and IA ecosystem through the EUCloudEdgeIoT initiative 18	
3.2	Engagement with other relevant EU-funded initiatives	19
4	European market and industry engagement	21
4.1	Engagement with the IPCEI-CIS ecosystem	21
4.2	Engagement with the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud	24
4.3	Engagement with the Broader EU digital industry	28
4.4	Engagement with relevant non-EU industrial actors	36
5	Strategic alignment with relevant initiatives	38
5.1	Strategic alignment across the project	38
5.2	Contribution to the Research & Innovation Roadmap	38
5.3	Engagement beyond the Horizon Europe ecosystem	39
5.4	Legacy and future perspectives	39
6	Conclusions	40
7	References	42
	Appendix A. SovereignEdge.EU Blog Posts	43
	Appendix B. Feedback from Events organized by NexusForum Project	53

Table of figures

Figure 1: Recent Research Webinar, hosted at the YouTube Channel.....	13
Figure 2: Promotion of the Industry Webinars.....	14
Figure 3: Screenshot of Whaller Community Forum, promoting webinars and upcoming policies.....	15
Figure 4: The EUCloudEdgeIoT Wiki page.....	16
Figure 5: How the NexusForum.EU Working Groups contribute to the Research & Innovation Roadmap.....	17
Figure 6: IPCEI-CIS General Assembly in Gdańsk (Poland), in March 2025	21
Figure 7: Functional blocks of the IPCEI-CIS Reference Architecture.....	22
Figure 8: Presentation of the activities delivered over the last 2 years from the IPCEI-CIS Chairing, at 8ra General Assembly at Rotterdam.....	23
Figure 9: The European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud released already its Reference Architecture for Telco Cloud, under the coordination of OpenNebula Systems, in February 2025.....	24
Figure 10: Thematic Roadmap for Open Source.	25
Figure 11: Common Trust Principles Roadmap.	27
Figure 12: RISE, to the far right, presenting the NexusForum.EU Research and Innovation Roadmap	28
Figure 13: LinkedIn post, promoting the launch of ESTIA as strategic initiative	30
Figure 14: The board of CISPE together with Alberto P. Martí, from OpenNebula Systems, second from left.....	32
Figure 15: Engagement with the European DIGITAL SME Alliance via the NexusForum.EU LinkedIn channel	33
Figure 16: Slide presenting the Open Source Guidelines at 8ra General Assembly.....	35
Figure 17: Examples of the companies participating at NexusForum 2025.....	36

Index of Tables

Table 1: Alignment between Working Groups with IPCEI-CIS and the European Alliance of Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud..... 10

Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CRA	Cyber Resilience Act
CSA	Coordination and Support Action
DCA	Data Governance Act
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
HE	Horizon Europe
IDSA	International Data Spaces
IoT	Internet of Things
IPCEI	Important Project of Common European Interest
IPCEI-CIS	IPCEI Next Generation Cloud Infrastructure and Services
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
R&I	Research and Innovation
RIA	Research and Innovation Action
RTO	Research and Technology Organisation
TF	Task Force
WG	Working Group
WP	Work Package

1 Introduction

Deliverable D4.3 provides detailed information about the community structure implemented by the Project and the definition and execution of the engagement actions involving the European research and industry ecosystem, as well as other relevant initiatives and user communities across different sectors. It is the updated and final version of D4.2 (June 2025).

This document follows the structure of the activities carried out under WP4 "Stakeholders' Engagement and Community Building", while also highlighting the interactions with the other project work areas, namely Project Management (WP1), Consolidating Research and Technology Priorities (WP2), Reinforcing the Alignment with Digital Sovereignty Policy (WP3), and Impact Creation (WP5).

The document is composed of an Introduction (Chapter 1) and five main chapters:

- Chapter 2 describes the community-building and cross-cooperation structure established by the Project up to M30, including the Working Groups, the Research & Innovation Roadmap Advisory Board, and the mechanisms implemented to foster stakeholder participation and collaboration.
- Chapter 3 describes the Project's engagement with the European research and innovation ecosystem, highlighting how stakeholder contributions have supported the consolidation of research and technology priorities and the development of the Research & Innovation Roadmap.
- Chapter 4 describes the Project's engagement with European industry and market stakeholders, including collaboration with industrial initiatives, technology providers, SMEs, and relevant user communities, and how these activities contribute to strengthening the European computing continuum ecosystem.
- Chapter 5 describes the Project's strategic alignment activities with European and international initiatives, policy developments, and digital sovereignty objectives, as well as the contribution of stakeholders to the identification of future priorities for the European cloud-edge-IoT and AI ecosystem.
- Chapter 6 presents the main conclusions, summarises the impact achieved through the stakeholder engagement and community-building activities carried out during the project, and identifies key recommendations and next steps beyond M30.

Furthermore, the document contains two Appendixes:

- Appendix A, containing those public interviews conducted throughout the Project with European industry leaders, policymakers, and technology experts.
- Appendix B, summarises the feedback collected through the different summits, workshops, consultations, and stakeholder engagement activities organized during the Project execution.

2 Community building and cross-cooperation structure

The community-building and cross-collaboration framework was a central pillar of the NexusForum.EU ecosystem, supporting long-term cooperation across European research, industry, and policy communities throughout the project duration. The initiative strengthened connections between stakeholders working on the European Cognitive Computing Continuum, while promoting engagement with diverse user communities and application domains. A particular strength of the project was the Consortium's capacity to bring together, and coordinate actors involved in IPCEI-CIS, the *European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud* (see References on section 7), and complementary Horizon Europe initiatives, fostering synergies across the broader European digital landscape.

A key component of this framework was the network of Working Groups (WGs), established in alignment with the evolving Research & Innovation Roadmap and focused on strategic topics relevant to the IPCEI-CIS, the *European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud*, and the wider cloud-edge-IoT continuum. These WGs served as collaborative spaces where researchers, industry representatives, and technology experts jointly exchanged insights, identified priorities, and contributed to shaping future research and innovation directions. Each WG was coordinated by experts from the NexusForum.EU Consortium and supported by external specialists and industry stakeholders. Together, the WG leaders formed the Research & Innovation Roadmap Advisory Board, responsible for consolidating input from European and international communities and translating these contributions into the final Roadmap outcomes.

2.1 Structure of the Working Groups

The NexusForum.EU Working Groups were organized into two complementary categories:

- **Thematic Working Groups:** structured around the main topics of the Research & Innovation Roadmap and aligned with the strategic priorities of the IPCEI-CIS and the *European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud*. Their primary objective is to provide a collaborative framework for discussion, knowledge exchange, and the collection of contributions from researchers, technology providers, industry representatives, and other relevant stakeholders. Through these activities, the Working Groups support the continuous refinement of the Research & Innovation Roadmap and facilitate the identification of emerging priorities for the European computing continuum ecosystem.
- **Geographical Working Groups:** aimed at fostering dialogue and cooperation between the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem and strategic international partners. These groups support the development of exchanges with stakeholders from Japan and South Korea, creating opportunities for knowledge sharing, consultation, and future collaboration beyond the duration of the project.

The structure of the Working Groups was designed to align their thematic areas with the roadmap and strategic activities of the CSA. Initially intended as a forum for discussing and providing feedback on the roadmap and relevant policies, the approach evolved into a series of ad hoc conversations for practical reasons. The current structure and list of partners leading each Working Group can be found in table 1. This structure will continue after the end of the project.

Co-Leaders have organized workshops and webinars to gather valuable insights for the roadmap and to collect direct feedback and experiences from relevant industrial partners. Industry-focused webinars will continue beyond the end of the CSA, engaging with key

industrial players also during the preparation and execution phases of the upcoming IPCEI-AI. These sessions will provide a platform to explore how European open source works as an enabler for technological innovation in Europe and to debate the implementation of new digital policies.

Table 1: NexusForum.EU Working Groups aligned with the IPCEI-CIS priorities and the main thematic areas of the Research & Innovation Roadmap, together with the organisations acting as Research and Industry Co-Leaders.

NexusForum.EU Working Group	Industry Co-Leader	Research Co-Leader
Telco Cloud Edge	OpenNebula Systems	RISE
AI for Cloud-Edge	OpenNebula Systems	RISE
Cloud-Edge for AI	OpenNebula Systems	RISE
Cloud-Edge Use Cases	OpenNebula Systems	Universidad Politecnica de Valencia
Cybersecurity	OpenNebula Systems	RISE
Sustainability	OpenNebula Systems	RISE
Interoperability	OpenNebula Systems	Tecnalia
Sovereignty & Open Source	OpenNebula Systems	RISE

To support effective coordination and promote active collaboration among participants, the Working Groups, together with the NexusForum.EU Community Forum, are hosted on a Whaller instance¹ (see Deliverable D5.1 for further details), a secure collaboration platform developed and maintained in Europe. The platform provides a dedicated space for discussions, consultations, information sharing, and community-building activities across different thematic areas.

Each Working Group is coordinated by a designated pair of Co-Leaders who act as facilitators for discussions, stakeholder engagement, and contribution gathering, with support from selected Consortium members. Rather than representing the entirety of the ecosystem, these Co-Leaders provide thematic coordination and help channel expertise, feedback, and perspectives from participating stakeholders into the project's activities and roadmap editorial process. The Working Groups are intended to establish sustainable communities of interest that can continue fostering dialogue and collaboration beyond the formal conclusion of this CSA.

¹ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/cloud-alliance>

2.1.1 The Research & Innovation Roadmap Advisory Board

The NexusForum.EU Working Groups have constituted the project's primary mechanism for stakeholder engagement and thematic discussions. Coordinated mainly by the Research Co-Leaders from the consortium and supported by industry representatives and topic experts, the Working Groups have provided a structured environment for gathering feedback, exchanging perspectives, and discussing priorities for the Research & Innovation Roadmap.

The activities carried out within these Working Groups have facilitated both formal and informal exchanges among researchers, industry stakeholders, policymakers, and representatives from relevant initiatives, enabling the project to collect a broad range of viewpoints on technological, industrial, and policy challenges affecting the future evolution of the computing continuum.

The Research & Innovation Roadmap Advisory Board complemented this structure by providing coordination across thematic areas and helping ensure consistency throughout the roadmap editorial process. The geographical Working Groups further expanded the scope of the discussions by incorporating perspectives from stakeholders in Japan and South Korea, contributing additional insights on international developments and opportunities for future cooperation.

Participation in the Working Groups remained open throughout the project through a dedicated registration process. While most thematic Working Groups primarily targeted stakeholders active within the European ecosystem, the geographical Working Groups encouraged broader participation in support of international dialogue and knowledge exchange.

To support the launch of the Working Groups, kick-off sessions were organised by OpenNebula Systems to explain briefly the objectives, operational framework, and roadmap development methodology. Over the course of the project, Working Group activities evolved through a combination of online discussions, targeted consultations, webinars, interviews, fireside chats, workshops, and stakeholder engagement actions organised both independently and alongside external events.

Although the level of activity varied across thematic areas (e.g. active participation from industry has been a constant challenge), the Working Groups have successfully fulfilled their role as channels for collecting feedback, validating emerging priorities, and disseminating project results. Contributions gathered through these activities informed successive versions of the Research & Innovation Roadmap and helped ensure that its recommendations reflected the perspectives of a diverse set of stakeholders across research, industry, and policy communities.

While the formal activities of NexusForum.EU conclude at M30, the Working Groups have established communities and relationships that are expected to continue beyond the project's lifetime. In particular, the Industry Working Groups will continue fostering discussions around key topics identified during the project through webinars, fireside chats, interviews with industry representatives, and participation in community events. These activities aim to maintain an open dialogue with the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem, support the continued dissemination and refinement of the Research & Innovation Roadmap, and encourage ongoing exchanges between research, industry, and policy stakeholders as the European digital landscape continues to evolve.

2.1.2 NexusForum.EU community participation methodology

Throughout the project, NexusForum.EU implemented a structured stakeholder engagement approach to support interaction among participants from research, industry, policy, and related European initiatives. These activities provided opportunities to present project results, gather feedback on the Research & Innovation Roadmap, and promote participation in the Working Groups and Community Forum.

Stakeholder onboarding and community-building activities were carried out through a combination of project events, targeted outreach actions, and digital communication channels. The NexusForum.EU Summits, webinars, workshops, and other public events served as the primary entry points for introducing new stakeholders to the project and encouraging participation in Working Group discussions and consultation activities. New members joining the community were provided with access to the Community Forum and information on the different participation mechanisms available within the project.

To support these activities, NexusForum.EU developed and maintained a set of communication and dissemination materials, including newsletters, social media content, event visuals, brochures, onboarding resources, and promotional assets distributed through both project and partner channels. During the final year of the project, additional materials were introduced to facilitate access to project resources distributed at events and networking activities, including QR-code-enabled business cards and presentation materials linking directly to the Community Forum, the Research & Innovation Roadmap, and other project outputs. All these materials are listed and explained in the D5.5 report.

Working Group Co-Leaders and consortium partners contributed to stakeholder engagement by presenting NexusForum.EU activities within their respective communities, organizing targeted discussions when relevant, and encouraging participation in roadmap-related consultations. In addition to project-organized events, consortium members promoted NexusForum.EU through their participation in conferences, workshops, webinars, and meetings with related initiatives and stakeholder communities across Europe.

These engagement activities contributed to the dissemination of the project's results and provided several opportunities to collect feedback from external stakeholders. Discussions held during Working Group activities, project events, and bilateral exchanges helped validate roadmap priorities, identify emerging topics of interest, and gather perspectives from different segments of the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem.

The project established a community framework that enabled interaction among interested stakeholders and created channels through which feedback was collected and incorporated into the project's outputs. The Working Groups, Community Forum, and associated communication resources remain available as a basis for future exchanges and potential follow-up activities beyond the formal conclusion of the project.

2.1.3 NexusForum.EU Working Group webinars

The NexusForum.EU Working Group Webinar Series was established as a complementary engagement mechanism to support the dissemination of project activities, promote discussion around Working Group topics, and provide additional opportunities for stakeholder interaction. The webinars were aligned with the thematic areas addressed by the Working Groups and complemented the broader engagement activities carried out through the Community Forum, workshops, consultations, and project events.

Throughout the project, the webinar format evolved in response to the level of activity within the different Working Groups and the availability of contributors from the research, industry, and policy communities. Rather than focusing exclusively on formal presentations of Working Group outcomes, the Consortium progressively adopted a more concise and interactive format centred on discussion and exchange of perspectives.

As a result, several webinar sessions were organized as short fireside-chat-style conversations involving Working Group Co-Leaders, invited experts, and external stakeholders. These sessions provided a platform to discuss topics emerging from Working Group activities, including technological developments, interoperability challenges, open source strategies, digital sovereignty, standardization efforts, and international cooperation opportunities relevant to the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem.



Figure 1: Recent Research Webinar, hosted at the YouTube Channel

The webinar format also enabled direct interaction between speakers and participants through questions and open discussion. These exchanges provided additional opportunities to gather feedback, identify emerging areas of interest, and complement the contributions collected through other stakeholder engagement activities conducted by the project.

A similar approach was adopted for Industry Webinars, where discussions focused on practical aspects of technology development, innovation ecosystems, and the role of open source in strengthening Europe's digital sovereignty. These conversations are conducted as interview-style sessions with invited experts and representatives from relevant organisations, providing additional viewpoints on the challenges and opportunities associated with the development of European cloud-edge-IoT and AI technologies.

The recordings produced through these activities constitute a complementary project asset and contribute to documenting the perspectives collected throughout the project. Together with the Working Group discussions, consultations, workshops, and summit sessions, they provide additional context for the development and validation of the NexusForum.EU Research & Innovation Roadmap. All the videos can be found on the YouTube channel of the consortium. The publication of Industry Webinars, an activity led by OpenNebula Systems, will continue after June 2026 through the CISERO Project (IPCEI-CIS Exploitation Office)².

² https://www.youtube.com/@eucloudedgeiot_eu



2.2 Engagement with the broader EU ecosystem

It is in this context that the NexusForum.EU Project has acted as a collaborative umbrella, under which stakeholders have been able to openly exchange best practices, broaden their networks in the cloud-edge and data fields, and influence the European ecosystem. Members of the Working Groups have access to a unique network of experts and to a newsfeed tool to receive the latest news on cloud and edge computing in Europe, as well as with the latest developments on relevant EU regulation, relevant to the project. An example of dissemination within the Community is shown in Figure 3 below.

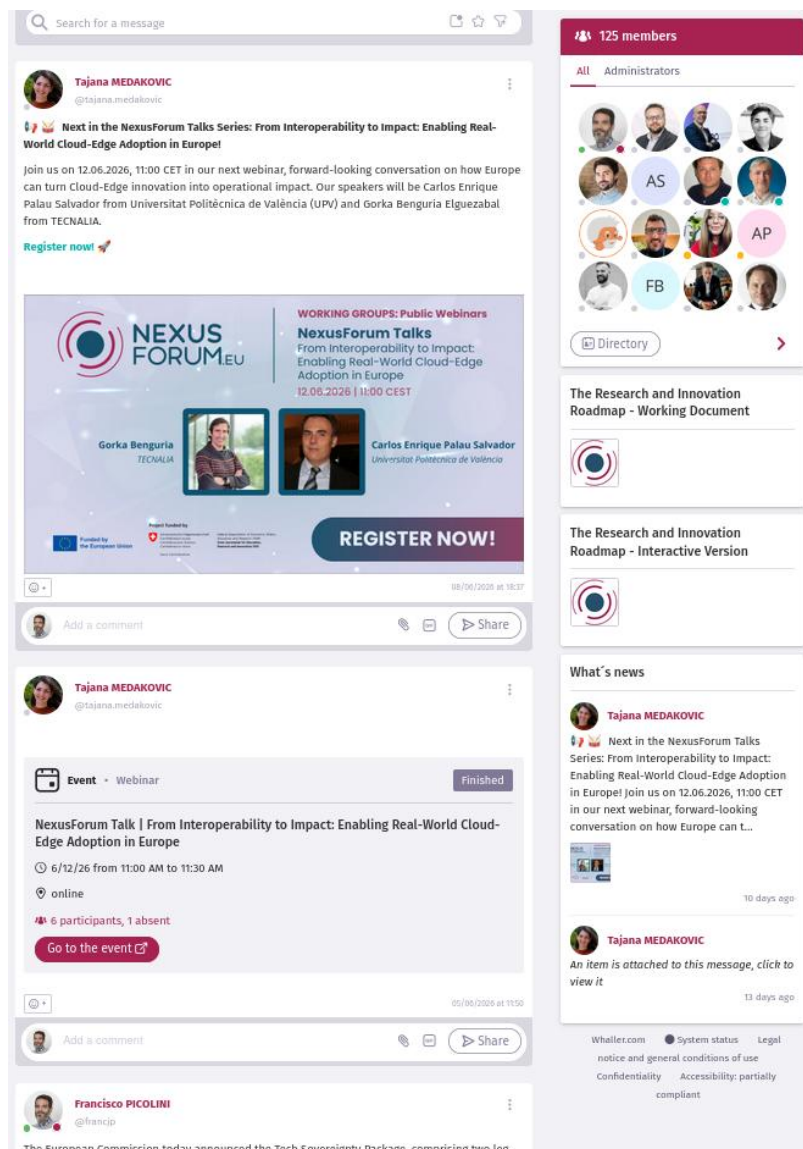


Figure 3: Screenshot of Whaller Community Forum, promoting webinars and upcoming policies.

The NexusForum.EU's ties with the IPCEI-CIS have also allowed stakeholders to meet the industry leaders behind this key digital policy EU initiative aimed at strengthening Europe's digital and technological sovereignty. The project also held an international Workshop in Tokyo, Japan in March 2025, and a meeting in Seoul, South Korea in April 2026, convening experts from industry, research institutions, and policy circles to engage in impactful discussions on the latest developments in the field of the Cognitive Computing Continuum, as well as serving as an in-person tool to recruit new members for the EU-Japan and EU-South Korea Cooperation Working Group. The Research & Innovation Roadmap has been made available for feedback and contributions on Whaller before its second, updated version, was published and before the global cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem was consulted on its contents. Co-Leaders of the Working Groups contributed to effectively channelling that feedback into the Roadmap.

Main Page

Welcome to the EUCloudEdgeIoT Wiki

This Wiki collects detailed information on the EUCloudEdgeIoT research and innovation projects, their research outputs and reusable assets as well as the NexusForum.EU Working Groups, including the members taking part, research papers and references to delve deeper.



What can I do on the EUCloudEdgeIoT Wiki?

The Wiki is a tool to explore the activities and outputs of the [EUCloudEdgeIoT](#) initiative.

You can explore:

- the [EUCloudEdgeIoT Scientific Publications Repository](#) listing outputs generated by the [Research and Innovation Actions](#) under the EUCloudEdgeIoT umbrella
- the [Research and Innovation Actions](#) funded by the European Commission's [Horizon 2020](#) and [Horizon Europe](#) programmes under the EUCloudEdgeIoT umbrella
- the [IPCEI-CIS Reference Architecture](#)
- the [NexusForum.EU Working Groups](#)
- a repository of [Researchers](#) active in the Cloud, Edge and IoT domains in Europe
- a [Research Organisations Map](#), listing organisations active in the Cloud, Edge and IoT research

Figure 4: The EUCloudEdgeIoT Wiki page.

Lastly, the NexusForum.EU project deployed the EUCloudEdgeIoT Wiki. The Wiki showcases key information on the NexusForum.EU Working Groups. Additionally, the platform collects information on Horizon 2020, and Horizon Europe funded research and innovation projects and provides an accessible knowledge base to increase dissemination and reuse of results. The outputs include a comprehensive, searchable, and filterable repository of research publications, a listing of researchers, as well as a map of EU research organisations engaged in the cloud, edge, and IoT domains. The European research ecosystem will be invited to keep joining this online, high-level catalogue of cutting-edge research, in line with the topics of the Research & Innovation Roadmap. This Wiki (see Figure 4) is meant to, at Community level, showcase the research work done in the areas of the Computing Continuum, and to, at stakeholder level, guarantee a level of visibility in those areas.

2.3 Channelling contributions to the Research & Innovation Roadmap

The Research & Innovation Roadmap Advisory Board collects feedback from the whole NexusForum.EU Community (see Figure 5). Co-Leaders have editorial rights.

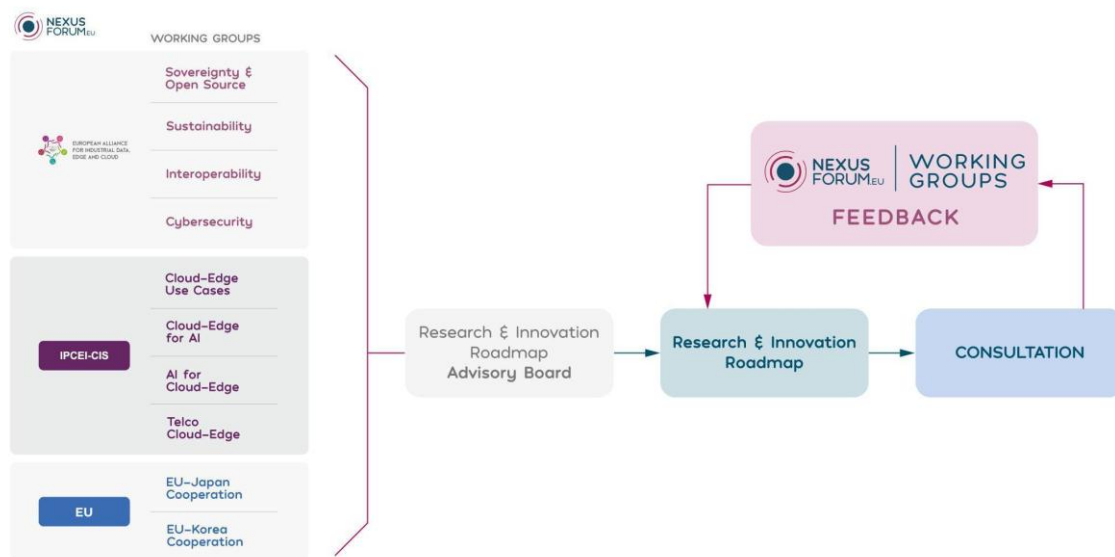


Figure 5: How the NexusForum.EU Working Groups contribute to the Research & Innovation Roadmap

The NexusForum.EU Summits in Brussels, together with international events arranged by NexusForum.EU, hence the EU Japan Digital Week in Tokyo (2025), and the EUOK Digital Convergence Week in Seoul (2026), provided important opportunities to engage industry representatives, researchers, policymakers, and technology users from both European and International ecosystems. These events were used to present the project's activities and Research & Innovation roadmap, facilitate discussions on emerging cloud-edge-IoT priorities, and explore potential areas for future collaboration between European and Asia-Pacific stakeholders.

The perspectives collected during these exchanges contributed to the validation of the priorities for the roadmap and provided international context for the project's strategic discussions. Further details on these activities and the feedback received are provided in the Annex B.

3 Engagement of European research and innovation ecosystem

Throughout its execution, NexusForum.EU actively engaged with the wider European research and innovation ecosystem supporting the development of cloud, edge, IoT, Artificial Intelligence, and data technologies. Rather than creating new research collaborations, the project contributed to strengthening coordination across existing initiatives by facilitating knowledge exchange, promoting dialogue among projects, and disseminating emerging research priorities through its Working Groups, events, and communication activities.

These interactions ensured that the NexusForum.EU Research & Innovation Roadmap remained aligned with ongoing developments across the European Computing Continuum ecosystem while providing opportunities to exchange experiences, identify common challenges, and promote collaboration between complementary initiatives.

3.1 Engagement within the EUCloudEdgeIoT initiative

NexusForum.EU maintained close collaboration with the EUCloudEdgeIoT (EUCEI) Initiative throughout the project. In particular, the consortium worked alongside the sister projects OpenContinuum and UNLOCK-CEI during the first phase of the project and continued this collaboration with CEI-Sphere, which remains active beyond the conclusion of NexusForum.EU (a reference of these projects can be found on Section 7 – References).

A major contribution of NexusForum.EU to the EUCEI community was its co-leadership of Task Force 6 (Communication). Initially coordinated together with UNLOCK-CEI and, following its completion, jointly with CEI-Sphere, Task Force 6 became the principal forum for coordinating communication and dissemination activities across the EUCloudEdgeIoT community³.

The Task Force brought together representatives from the active Research and Innovation Actions of the Cognitive Computing Cluster, Innovation Actions, and other ecosystem initiatives interested in strengthening collaboration across the European Computing Continuum. Monthly coordination meetings provided a platform to exchange information on project developments, upcoming events, communication campaigns, webinars, surveys, publications, and other collaborative activities.

Beyond routine coordination, Task Force 6 enabled the sharing of dissemination opportunities, promoted cross-project visibility, and facilitated exchanges between projects addressing complementary aspects of cloud, edge, IoT, AI, and data technologies. These interactions helped strengthen coherence across the EUCloudEdgeIoT community while avoiding duplication of communication efforts.

As part of these activities, NexusForum.EU also presented the MediaWiki-based knowledge platform developed within the project to members of Task Force 6 and the broader EUCEI community. The platform currently provides access to approximately 900 research outputs together with information on European projects, research organisations, and researchers active in cloud, edge, and IoT technologies. By improving the discoverability of research results and technical assets, the platform contributes to increasing opportunities for collaboration and reuse across the European research ecosystem.

³ <https://eucloudedgeiot.eu/task-forces/>

3.2 Joint dissemination and community engagement

Collaboration within the EUCloudEdgeIoT Initiative extended beyond regular coordination meetings through a series of joint dissemination and community-building activities organised throughout the project.

The annual NexusForum.EU Summits became one of the project's main forums for bringing together stakeholders from the European Computing Continuum ecosystem. Representatives from Horizon Europe projects, European initiatives, and IPCEI-CIS-related activities participated in panel discussions, technical sessions, and networking events addressing topics such as interoperability, digital sovereignty, Artificial Intelligence, cloud-edge infrastructures, and data ecosystems. These exchanges facilitated knowledge sharing across projects while providing a platform to discuss common challenges and emerging research priorities.

The 2025 edition of the Summit further strengthened this collaborative approach by expanding the traditional project pitch session to include Horizon Europe projects and initiatives beyond the immediate NexusForum.EU community. Participating projects showcased their main technological innovations, validation use cases, and research challenges, while identifying potential synergies with other initiatives active in the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem. This session contributed to increasing the visibility of ongoing Research and Innovation Actions and encouraged further collaboration across complementary projects.

The Summits also provided dedicated exhibition space for research projects during both the 2024 and 2025 editions. Located within the main networking area, the exhibition booths facilitated informal discussions between project representatives, industry participants, policymakers, and researchers, creating additional opportunities for networking, dissemination, and the exchange of technical expertise.

Together, these activities reinforced the role of NexusForum.EU as a forum for dialogue across the European research community, complementing the stakeholder engagement carried out through the project's Working Groups while strengthening collaboration and visibility across the wider EUCloudEdgeIoT ecosystem.

3.3 Engagement with other relevant EU-funded initiatives

Throughout its execution, NexusForum.EU has engaged with a broad range of European initiatives and stakeholder communities active in the cloud-edge-IoT, data, and digital sovereignty domains. These included the Big Data Value Association (BDVA), the Data Spaces Support Centre (DSSC), the International Data Spaces Association (IDSA), Gaia-X, HiPEAC, the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud, FIWARE, and CISERO, among others.

As part of these engagement activities, the project invited experts from these initiatives to participate in NexusForum.EU events and organized dedicated sessions to exchange views on the future of the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem, digital sovereignty, and research and innovation priorities. Key activities carried out during the project included:

- The organisation of the NexusForum.EU 2024 Summit, which brought together representatives from research, industry, policy, and related European initiatives to discuss priorities for the European Computing Continuum ecosystem.
- The organisation of the NexusForum.EU 2025 Summit continued the dialogue around roadmap development, digital sovereignty, and ecosystem coordination. Further details on both summits are provided in Deliverables D5.4 and D5.5 "Communication and Dissemination Plan and Report".

- The organisation of a dedicated session during the European Big Data Value Forum (EBDVF) 2024 provided an opportunity to engage with stakeholders from the European data and AI communities.
- On 6th of February 2025, Meiji University represented the NexusForum.EU project to the Information Technology Promotion Agency (Japan) and presented to the members of the Digital Infrastructure Centre and the Digital Transformation Department of Japan's Information Technology Promotion Agency.
- Participation in the Smart Connectivity and Computing Workshop held in Tokyo on 31 March 2025, organized in collaboration with INPACE, where discussions focused on "Consolidating Research and Policy along the Cognitive Computing Continuum."
- Participation in the OCP EMEA Summit from 29th – 30th April 2025, in Dublin, and gave a keynote at the Future Technology Symposium to open and an introduction to NexusForum.EU project and the Research and Innovation Roadmap.
- Participation in the Gaia-X Market-X Conference, held in Valencia on 13–14 May 2025, where NexusForum.EU engaged participants through a stakeholder survey supporting the SWOT analysis and the development of recommendations for future European digital policies.
- Participating in Gaia-X Summit in November 2025, Porto where it was discussed with other stakeholders the future of Cloud-Edge-IOT and the role of Gaia-X Labels with the EU Cloud Sovereignty framework.
- Participation in the Innovation Day: EU-Japan Projects in AI and Quantum Technology on 10th December 2025, by Meiji University, and contributed to the dialogue between Japan and the European Union that have teamed up on AI and quantum technology initiatives, focusing on communication, computing, and metrology.
- Participation in the Data Spaces Symposium 2026 in 10&11 February 2026, Madrid, contributing to discussions on the role of digital sovereignty on Data Spaces.
- Participation in the 8ra Annual Summit in March 2026, contributing to discussions on European cloud, edge, and digital sovereignty initiatives.
- On 12th May 2026, RISE, on behalf of NexusForum.EU, organised the European AI infrastructure ready for the future (Framtidens europeiska AI-infrastruktur: Behov, hinder och möjligheter) event in Stockholm in collaboration with the Swedish Innovation Agency Vinnova. The purpose was to invite AI mature SMEs to get their input on the existing European AI infrastructure and wishes for the future.

These interactions provided opportunities to present project results, gather feedback from external stakeholders, and exchange perspectives with related European initiatives. The insights collected through these activities contributed to the refinement of the NexusForum.EU Research & Innovation Roadmap and supported the identification of priorities for the future development of the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem. Further information on the collaboration with INPACE is provided in Deliverables D3.5 and D5.5.

4 European market and industry engagement

A key objective of NexusForum.EU has been to establish and maintain dialogue with industry stakeholders, technology providers, digital infrastructure initiatives, and market actors active across the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem. Throughout the project, these engagement activities helped validate research priorities, identify technological and market challenges, and collect feedback from organisations involved in the development and deployment of European digital infrastructures.

4.1 Engagement with the IPCEI-CIS ecosystem

The Important Project of Common European Interest on Next Generation Cloud Infrastructure and Services (IPCEI-CIS) is one of the most significant European initiatives supporting the development of sovereign cloud and edge infrastructures. Backed by 12 EU Member States, this initiative has mobilised approximately €1.2 billion in public funding and aimed to leverage an additional €1.4 billion in private investment to accelerate research, development, and first industrial deployments across Europe. Beyond its financial scale, IPCEI-CIS is playing an important role in promoting the development and adoption of European open source technologies, fostering interoperability, reducing technological dependencies, and strengthening Europe's digital sovereignty objectives.



Figure 6: IPCEI-CIS General Assembly in Gdańsk (Poland), in March 2025

Throughout its execution, NexusForum.EU maintained active exchanges with the IPCEI-CIS ecosystem. This relationship was facilitated in particular through the involvement of OpenNebula Systems, which chaired the IPCEI-CIS Industry Facilitation Group until March 2026. The participation of OpenNebula in both initiatives created opportunities for coordination and knowledge exchange on topics such as interoperability, cloud-edge architectures, open-source technologies, and digital sovereignty.

A significant milestone during the project was the second IPCEI-CIS General Assembly, held in Gdańsk, Poland, on 27–28 March 2025 (see Figure 6). During the event, the Industry Facilitation Group presented the first version of the IPCEI-CIS Reference Architecture,

providing a common framework to describe the technological building blocks required for the development of European cloud and edge infrastructures.

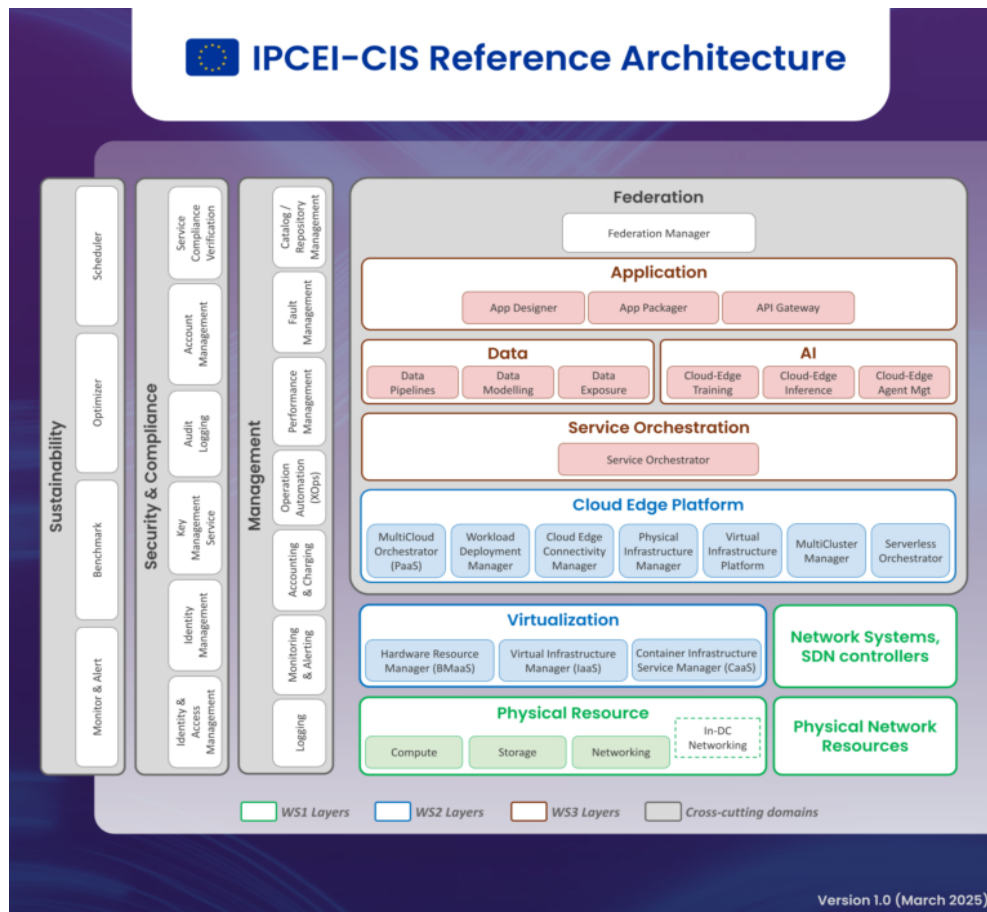


Figure 7: Functional blocks of the IPCEI-CIS Reference Architecture.

Given the strategic importance of this effort, NexusForum.EU disseminated this framework among the Working Group co-leaders, in alignment with the functional block structure depicted in Figure 7. The objective was to assess how this reference architecture could serve as a basis for mapping European cloud and edge computing technologies, and to identify areas requiring additional innovation efforts. Through these discussions, the project identified key technology gaps, interoperability requirements, and ecosystem-level priorities.



Figure 8: Presentation of the activities delivered over the last 2 years from the IPCEI-CIS Chairing, at 8ra General Assembly at Rotterdam

The second IPCEI-CIS General Assembly attended during the lifetime of NexusForum.EU took place in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, on 19–20 March 2026⁴. The event brought together representatives from Member States, industrial participants, research organisations, and European initiatives involved in the development of next-generation cloud and edge infrastructures.

NexusForum.EU contributed to several sessions during the event. On the second day, RISE participated in the session “Synergies with other EU Funding Programmes”, presenting the latest version of the NexusForum.EU Research & Innovation Roadmap and highlighting opportunities for stakeholders to contribute to the project's Working Groups and consultation activities. The session provided an opportunity to share project findings with a broader audience involved in European digital infrastructure initiatives.

OpenNebula Systems also participated in the session “Open Source in the IPCEI-CIS”, organised in collaboration with the CISERO project. The discussion focused on the role of open-source technologies in supporting interoperability, reducing technological dependencies, and fostering sustainable European cloud and edge ecosystems. The session additionally presented the open source Guidelines developed within the IPCEI-CIS context, addressing themes closely aligned with those explored through the NexusForum.EU Research & Innovation Roadmap.

Overall, engagement with the IPCEI-CIS ecosystem provided NexusForum.EU with valuable visibility into one of Europe's flagship digital infrastructure initiatives. The exchanges carried out throughout the project helped validate several of the priorities reflected in the Research &

⁴ <https://www.8ra-annual-summit2026.nl/programme/>

Innovation Roadmap, while ensuring continued awareness of developments related to interoperability, open-source technologies, cloud-edge infrastructures, and European digital sovereignty.

4.2 Engagement with the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud

Launched in 2021, the Cloud-Edge Working Group of the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud has produced outputs that have been highly relevant for NexusForum.EU.

As an example, in February 2025, the Working Group released the Telco Cloud Reference Architecture⁵ (see Figure 9), providing a reference framework for the development of interoperable and sovereign telecommunications cloud infrastructures in Europe. This deliverable represents an important milestone in structuring cloud-edge-telco convergence and in supporting the evolution of interoperable European digital infrastructures.

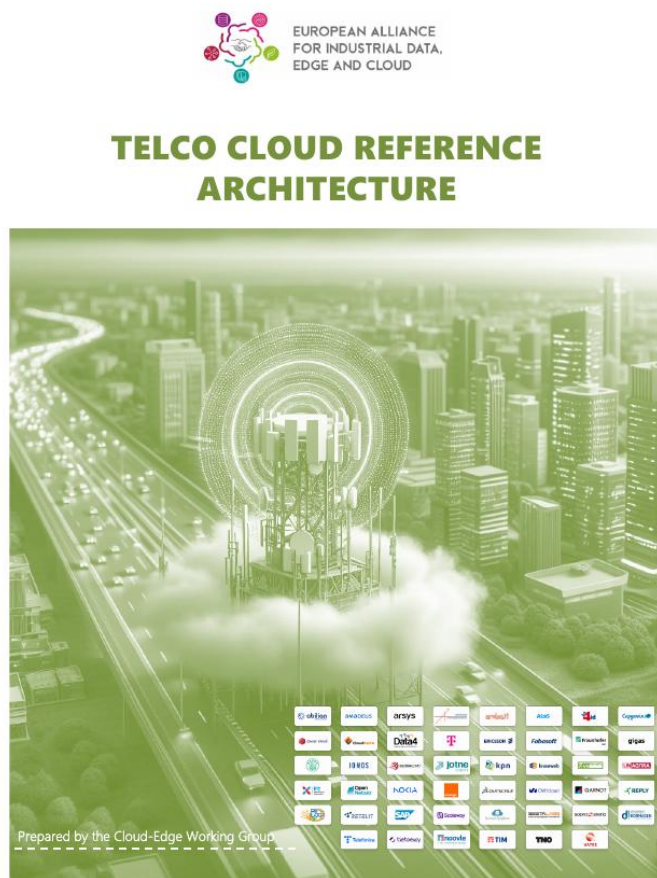


Figure 9: The European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud released already its Reference Architecture for Telco Cloud, under the coordination of OpenNebula Systems, in February 2025

5 <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/new-telco-cloud-thematic-roadmap-european-alliance-industrial-data-edge-and-cloud>

Subsequently, in July 2025, the Working Group published two complementary thematic roadmaps⁶:

- The **Thematic Roadmap for Open Source**
- The **Thematic Roadmap for Trust Principles**

These roadmaps were developed to raise awareness of the role of open source, trust, and interoperability in the future development of European digital infrastructures. Their objectives are closely aligned with those of NexusForum.EU, particularly regarding the promotion of interoperable, trustworthy, sustainable, and European-governed cloud, edge, AI, and data ecosystems.

The Thematic Roadmap for Open Source addresses several strategic areas also explored through NexusForum.EU activities and reflected in the Research & Innovation Roadmap. These include the adoption of open-source technologies, interoperability across cloud-edge environments, the development of resilient digital infrastructures, and the strengthening of European digital ecosystems. The roadmap also highlights the importance of open standards, collaborative governance models, sustainable funding approaches for critical open-source projects, and enhanced cooperation among industry, research organisations, SMEs, and policymakers.



EUROPEAN ALLIANCE
FOR INDUSTRIAL DATA,
EDGE AND CLOUD

THEMATIC ROADMAP



Figure 10: Thematic Roadmap for Open Source.

⁶ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/thematic-roadmap-open-source-and-inputs-common-trust-principles>

In addition, the roadmap identifies several persistent challenges affecting the European digital ecosystem, including fragmented governance structures, interoperability barriers, limited participation of smaller organisations in certain initiatives, and the need for sustainable long-term investment models. These observations are consistent with feedback collected through NexusForum.EU stakeholder engagement activities and Working Group discussions.

Another area of convergence concerns sustainability and energy-efficient digital infrastructures. The roadmap identifies open-source cloud and edge technologies as key enablers of more sustainable digital ecosystems and highlights their potential contribution to European environmental and digital policy objectives.

The roadmap further emphasises the importance of skills development, collaborative governance, open innovation ecosystems, and procurement approaches that foster the adoption of interoperable solutions. These themes are also reflected in discussions within NexusForum.EU and have informed the development of the project's Research & Innovation Roadmap.

Overall, the recommendations and findings presented in the open source Roadmap provide a valuable reference point for NexusForum.EU activities. The alignment between both initiatives reinforces key messages related to interoperability, open source, digital sovereignty, stakeholder collaboration, and the long-term development of a competitive European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem.

The Thematic Roadmap for Trust Principles⁷ strongly complements and reinforces the strategic findings previously identified in the open source Roadmap for EU Digital Sovereignty & Competitiveness⁸. Both documents converge on a shared vision for Europe's digital future based on openness, interoperability, transparency, trustworthiness, and technological sovereignty.

⁷ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/thematic-roadmap-open-source-and-inputs-common-trust-principles>

⁸ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/thematic-roadmap-open-source-and-inputs-common-trust-principles>



INPUTS TO THE EUROPEAN DATA INNOVATION BOARD

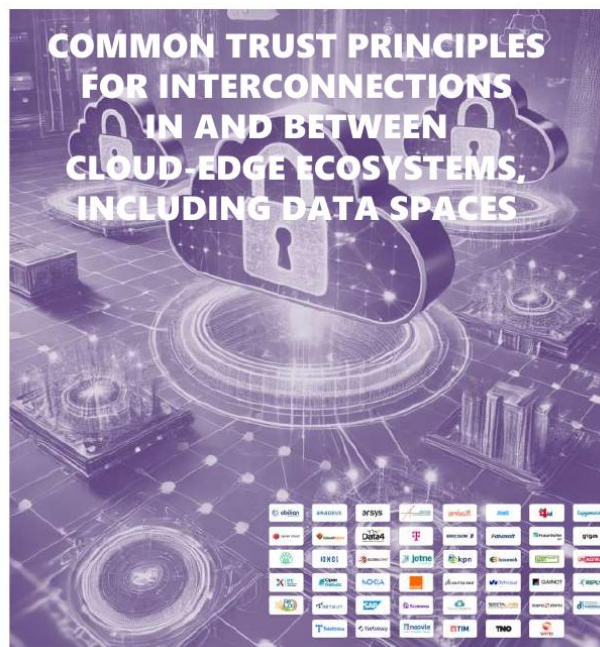


Figure 11: Common Trust Principles Roadmap.

A particularly important contribution to the Trust Principles Roadmap is the identification of “trust” as a foundational enabler for Europe’s future digital ecosystems. The document recognises that insufficient levels of trust remain one of the principal barriers to secure and efficient data sharing across Europe, and that trustworthiness must be embedded by design in cloud-edge infrastructures, federated data spaces, and digital services. The proposed trust principles—including digital sovereignty, interoperability, transparency, security, resilience, accountability, privacy, sustainability, and freedom of choice—are fully aligned with the strategic priorities promoted by NexusForum.EU and broader European cloud-edge initiatives linked to IPCEI-CIS and sovereign cloud infrastructures.

The report also provides valuable lessons regarding the current fragmentation of Europe’s cloud and data ecosystem landscape. While initiatives such as Gaia-X, IDSA, FIWARE, Catena-X, and other European data space frameworks already contribute to interoperability and trusted data sharing, the document highlights that significant gaps remain in standardisation, governance harmonisation, regulatory interoperability, and operational trust frameworks.

Furthermore, the Trust Principles Roadmap strongly supports the role of open-source technologies and federated multi-provider architectures as critical enablers of European sovereignty and resilience. It explicitly identifies open-source solutions as mechanisms to reduce dependency on non-European providers, avoid vendor lock-in, increase transparency, and strengthen interoperable cloud ecosystems.

Finally, the report introduces a forward-looking perspective on the emergence of new business models based on trustworthy data-sharing environments. By positioning data as a strategic economic asset and promoting trusted data spaces, federated infrastructures, and

interoperable governance frameworks, the document demonstrates how secure European cloud-edge ecosystems can simultaneously support innovation, competitiveness, sustainability, and economic growth.

As a final highlight, the NexusForum.EU Research and Innovation Roadmap was presented during the 5th General Assembly of the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud (see Figure 12), where participants were also invited to join the NexusForum.EU Working Groups.



Figure 12: RISE, to the far right, presenting the NexusForum.EU Research and Innovation Roadmap

4.3 Engagement with the Broader EU digital industry

One of the main objectives of the NexusForum.EU Project was to ensure a permanent and solid engagement with the broader EU digital industry with interests in the research and innovation actions that were taking place around cloud and edge computing. The project sought to encourage participation of these stakeholders in the consultation processes launched by EU institutions as well as their active involvement with the CSA through its Working Groups for EU experts and researchers. The project focused its efforts on consolidating the effective engagement with the following EU-based industrial entities:

ESTIA

<https://estia-europe.org>

The European Sovereign Tech Industry Alliance (ESTIA) is a coalition of Europe's leading cloud, digital services, and technology companies committed to building a trustworthy, resilient, and independent European digital ecosystem.

At a time when the vast majority of European data and critical digital infrastructure remain dependent on non-European providers, ESTIA advocates for a stronger European technological foundation based on sovereignty, transparency, interoperability, and strategic autonomy. The alliance promotes European cloud and digital services, harmonised standards, supportive public procurement frameworks, and predictable regulation that enable European solutions to scale globally while safeguarding Europe's economic interests and the data of governments, businesses, and citizens.

ESTIA members deliver sovereign cloud infrastructure, digital services, and advanced technologies that meet the highest standards for data protection, cybersecurity, resilience, and operational trustworthiness. Their work is essential for ensuring that Europe retains control over strategic digital capabilities across critical sectors including industry, public administration, healthcare, mobility, energy, and artificial intelligence.

This vision is closely aligned with the objectives of the NexusForum.EU project, which brings together research, industry, policymakers, and innovation stakeholders to strengthen Europe's technological leadership across the AI–Cloud–Edge continuum. By fostering collaboration between Horizon Europe projects, industrial initiatives, open source communities, and policy actors, NexusForum.EU contributes to translating the principles of digital sovereignty into concrete technological ecosystems, research roadmaps, and deployable European solutions.

The convergence between ESTIA and NexusForum has been particularly relevant in the current European context, where AI, cloud, edge computing, sustainability, and cybersecurity are increasingly interconnected strategic priorities. Europe's ability to innovate competitively while preserving its values, regulatory autonomy, and industrial resilience depends on the creation of a strong sovereign digital infrastructure ecosystem capable of supporting next-generation services and applications.

Through initiatives such as NexusForum, Europe is not only discussing digital sovereignty as a policy ambition, but actively building the collaborations, standards, open technologies, and industrial partnerships needed to make it operational at scale. In this sense, ESTIA's industrial advocacy and NexusForum's research and ecosystem-building activities are complementary contributions toward a common objective: ensuring that Europe can shape its own digital future on its own terms.

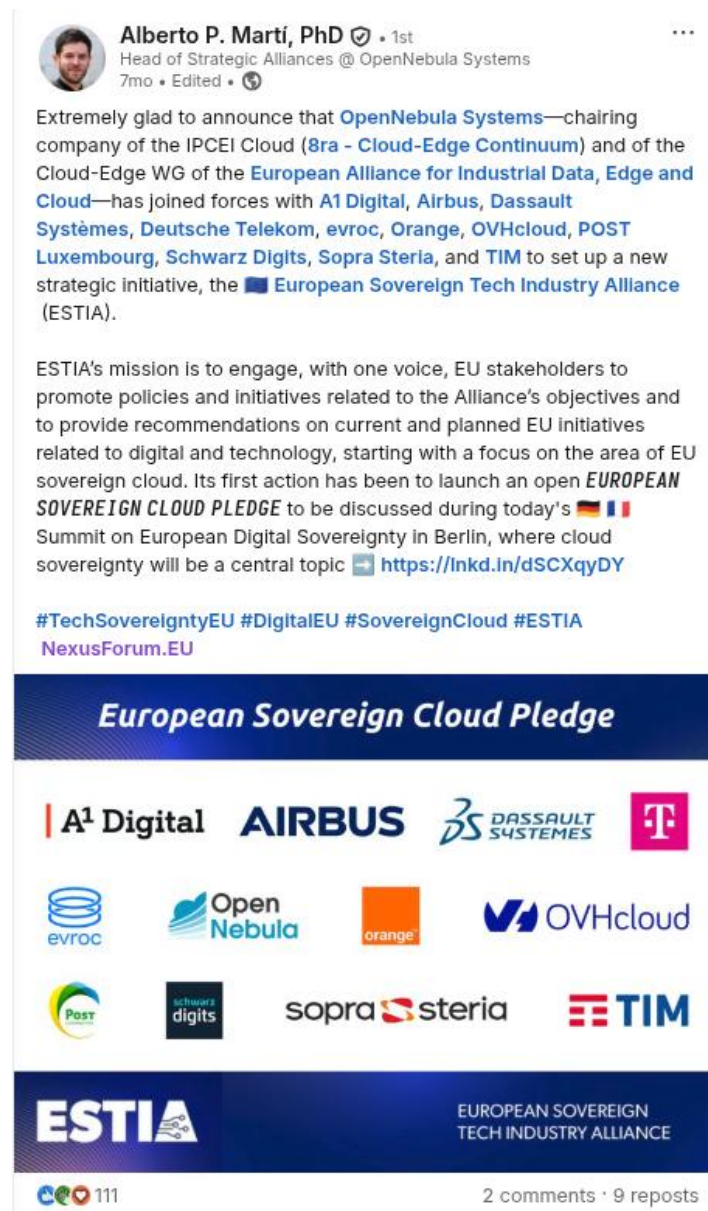


Figure 13: LinkedIn post, promoting the launch of ESTIA as strategic initiative

Cloud Infrastructure Services Providers in Europe (CISPE)

<https://cispe.cloud>

CISPE is a non-profit association dedicated to promoting the adoption, understanding, and development of cloud infrastructure services in Europe. The association has played a leading role in shaping Europe's cloud policy landscape, notably through the development of the first dedicated Cloud Infrastructure Services Code of Conduct for Data Protection under the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This pioneering framework aligns cloud infrastructure services with the strict requirements of the GDPR, helping providers strengthen compliance while enabling customers and public administrations to identify trusted and transparent European cloud solutions.

At European level, CISPE actively advocates for cloud-first public procurement policies, sustainable and energy-efficient digital infrastructures, cybersecurity and privacy-by-design principles, open and competitive digital markets, and balanced regulatory approaches that

distinguish between infrastructure providers that process customer data and those that do not. CISPE also supports a coherent European trade and industrial policy framework that reinforces Europe's strategic autonomy while promoting European digital values internationally.

Over the last year, CISPE has intensified its efforts around the definition and operationalization of sovereign cloud services in Europe. A major milestone has been the development of the CISPE Sovereign and Resilient Cloud Services framework, an industry-driven initiative designed to provide clear, verifiable criteria for identifying cloud services that meet European sovereignty, resilience, transparency, and operational independence requirements. This initiative directly addresses growing concerns around “sovereignty washing” in the European cloud market by establishing measurable standards that distinguish genuinely sovereign European cloud services from marketing-driven claims lacking enforceable guarantees.

Complementing these efforts, Cloud Data Engine (CDE) unveiled at VivaTech 2025 the first software suite specifically designed to monitor and automate compliance verification of cloud services against Gaia-X trust frameworks⁹. This represents a significant step toward the operationalization of sovereign and interoperable European data ecosystems. The solution enables real-time automated verification of Gaia-X labels for cloud services integrated into marketplaces and federated data spaces, ensuring that governance, transparency, and trust requirements can be enforced continuously from design to deployment.

The software suite will also support the orchestration of the new release of the CISPE Catalogue, launched in 2025 and already featuring more than 1,000 cloud services operated by CISPE members across Europe. Together, these initiatives demonstrate the growing maturity of Europe's sovereign cloud ecosystem and the increasing convergence between industrial alliances, open-source technologies, regulatory frameworks, and federated data infrastructure initiatives.

These developments are also highly relevant for the objectives of NexusForum.EU, particularly regarding the creation of trustworthy AI–Cloud–Edge infrastructures, interoperability frameworks, and sovereign digital ecosystems capable of supporting Europe's next generation of data-driven innovation. The alignment between CISPE's industrial and policy activities and NexusForum's ecosystem-building and coordination role highlights the importance of collaborative European approaches to ensuring strategic autonomy, resilience, and technological leadership in the digital domain.

In October 2025, to ensure a closer alignment with the activities under the NexusForum.EU project, OpenNebula Systems joined CISPE's Working Group on sovereign cloud and digital resilience initiatives, contributing to ongoing efforts to define and operationalise European sovereign cloud solutions. As part of this engagement, OpenNebula Systems is participating in technical and policy discussions aimed at strengthening the CISPE Sovereign and Resilient Cloud Services framework, including the refinement of criteria for sovereignty, transparency, and operational independence, as well as the practical implementation of verifiable compliance mechanisms for cloud infrastructure services in Europe.

This participation builds on CISPE's broader industrial initiative to address sovereignty requirements through measurable and auditable approaches, including the development of frameworks designed to mitigate “sovereignty washing” and ensure that cloud service offerings can be assessed against clear, objective and enforceable indicators. In this context, OpenNebula Systems' contribution supports the advancement of interoperable and standards-based cloud architectures aligned with European regulatory and industrial priorities, including GDPR compliance, data protection by design, and trusted multi-provider cloud environments.

9 <https://gaia-x.eu/cloud-data-engine-joins-gaia-x-and-unveils-first-compliance-suite-for-gaia-x-labeled-cloud-services-at-vivatech/>

On the 30th of March 2026, OpenNebula Systems organized and hosted at its premises in Brussels a private workshop between representatives from CISPE, the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud, and ESTIA. The main objective was to share and discuss their respective approaches towards the proposed Cloud and AI Development Act (CADA). This multi-party closed-door meeting led to significant alignment between these entities around their feedback and towards a closer relationship when it comes to future participation in European Commission's public consultations from the EU tech industry.



Figure 14: The board of CISPE together with Alberto P. Martí, from OpenNebula Systems, second from left.

European DIGITAL SME Alliance

<https://www.digitalsme.eu>

The European DIGITAL SME Alliance is the largest network of ICT small and medium-sized enterprises in Europe, representing more than 45,000 digital SMEs across the continent. The Alliance promotes a strong European digital ecosystem built on innovation, technological sovereignty, fair competition, and the development of independent European digital capacities. It plays an increasingly important role in European policy discussions related to artificial intelligence, cloud and edge computing, cybersecurity, data governance, digital infrastructure, and Europe's industrial competitiveness.

Engagement with the European DIGITAL SME Alliance within the NexusForum.EU project is based on the recognition that European digital SMEs represent one of the most dynamic and strategically important segments for the adoption and deployment of next-generation cloud, edge, and AI technologies emerging from major European initiatives, including IPCEI-CIS and related European data infrastructure programs. SMEs are expected to become key adopters, integrators, and innovators within Europe's future sovereign digital ecosystem due to their flexibility, sector-specific expertise, and capacity to accelerate innovation across industrial value chains.

Over the last year, NexusForum.EU has progressively strengthened its engagement with the European DIGITAL SME Alliance through participation in policy discussions, webinars,

ecosystem events, and dissemination activities focused on digital sovereignty, sovereign cloud infrastructures, open technologies, and Europe's strategic digital autonomy. These interactions have contributed to increasing the visibility of NexusForum.EU among European SME communities while fostering exchanges between research projects, industry stakeholders, and policy-oriented digital SME networks.

As shown in Figure 15, the NexusForum.EU project has already participated in events organized by the European DIGITAL SME Alliance addressing topics such as digital sovereignty, trustworthy AI, cloud-edge infrastructures, and Europe's technological resilience. NexusForum.EU also actively engaged with the Alliance through LinkedIn communication campaigns and dissemination activities designed to amplify the reach of these discussions and encourage broader stakeholder participation.

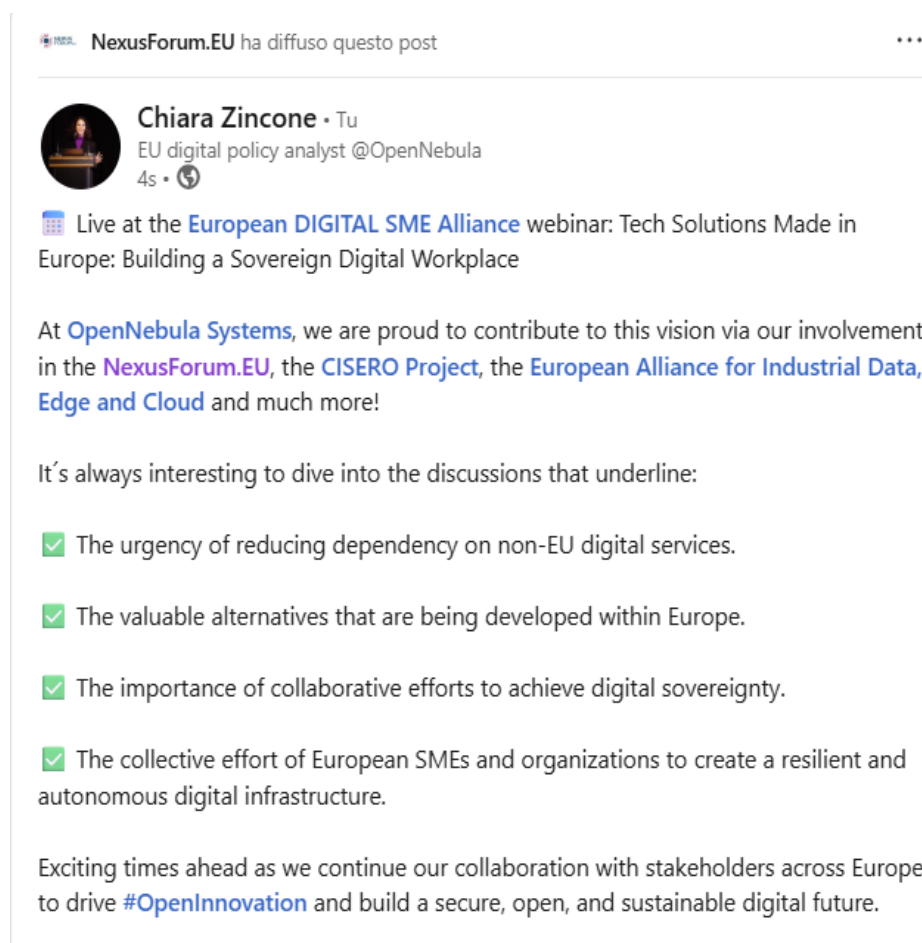


Figure 15: Engagement with the European DIGITAL SME Alliance via the NexusForum.EU LinkedIn channel

In parallel, NexusForum.EU promoted these initiatives through its Community Forum and communication channels, enabling project community members and external stakeholders to participate directly in webinars and policy exchanges organised by the Alliance. This contributed to enriching discussions with perspectives from research, open-source communities, cloud and edge infrastructure providers, and industrial actors involved in the development of sovereign European digital ecosystems.

The ongoing dialogue with the European DIGITAL SME Alliance is particularly relevant for NexusForum.EU because it creates direct connections with Europe's innovation-driven SME

ecosystem, helping bridge the gap between research and market adoption. Strengthening this collaboration supports the broader objective of accelerating the uptake of European cloud-edge and AI technologies while ensuring that SMEs are fully integrated into the future European digital infrastructure landscape.

CISERO

<https://cisero-project.eu>

The CISERO project, launched in support of the IPCEI-CIS, plays a pivotal role in accelerating the adoption, coordination, and long-term exploitation of the technologies and industrial capabilities emerging from the IPCEI-CIS ecosystem. CISERO was established to provide strategic coordination services and facilitate collaboration between Member States, industrial actors, research organisations, open-source communities, and public authorities involved in Europe's sovereign cloud and edge computing initiatives.

Its mission is to ensure that the large-scale investments made under IPCEI-CIS translate into tangible technological, industrial, and societal benefits for Europe's digital future. CISERO supports the development and deployment of secure, interoperable, energy-efficient, and innovative cloud-edge infrastructures capable of strengthening Europe's strategic autonomy and competitiveness in critical digital technologies. In particular, the project contributes to building a coordinated European ecosystem around cloud-edge services, fostering synergies between national initiatives, industrial deployments, and research and innovation activities across Europe.

This aligns strongly through a shared commitment to supporting the objectives of IPCEI-CIS and fostering EU-wide collaboration among stakeholders operating across the AI, cloud, edge, and data continuum. Specifically, both initiatives recognize the importance of creating interoperable and sovereign European digital infrastructures supported by coordinated governance models, open innovation ecosystems, and strategic industrial cooperation.

The NexusForum.EU project benefits from CISERO's coordination activities, stakeholder engagement mechanisms, and sustainable cloud-edge vision, which complement and reinforce the NexusForum Research & Innovation Roadmap. CISERO's work on ecosystem governance, strategic coordination, and operational collaboration provides valuable input for NexusForum activities related to roadmap alignment, policy discussions, dissemination, and ecosystem building. Furthermore, CISERO's ambassador network and multi-stakeholder engagement model contributes to strengthening NexusForum's outreach capabilities and its role in supporting the broader adoption and visibility of IPCEI-CIS-related technologies and initiatives.

Over the last year, NexusForum.EU (and specifically OpenNebula Systems as a consortium partner) has actively contributed to CISERO-related dissemination and collaboration activities. This includes participation in the 8ra initiative event held in Rotterdam in March 2026, which brought together key European stakeholders involved in sovereign cloud, edge, and digital infrastructure initiatives. The event provided an important opportunity to exchange perspectives on Europe's cloud-edge strategy, open-source collaboration models, and the implementation of sovereign digital infrastructure frameworks across Europe.

In parallel, OpenNebula Systems collaborated in the development of the open source Guidelines produced within the IPCEI-CIS context. These guidelines aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the European and international open-source ecosystem, including the main organisations, foundations, governance structures, licensing models, and commonly used terminology relevant to cloud, edge, and digital infrastructure projects. The document also contributes to clarifying best practices and improving understanding of open-source

governance and sustainability models among industrial, research, and public-sector stakeholders involved in IPCEI-CIS and related European initiatives.

CISERO Deliverables and Contributions

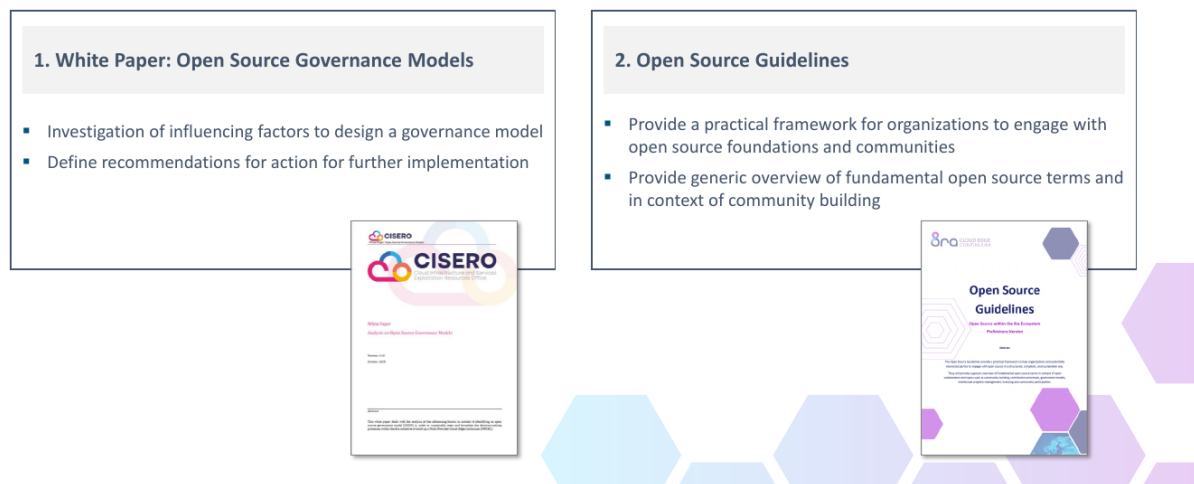


Figure 16: Slide presenting the Open Source Guidelines at 8ra General Assembly.

This contribution is particularly relevant given the strategic role that open-source technologies play in enabling interoperability, transparency, vendor independence, and technological sovereignty within Europe's future cloud-edge ecosystem. By contributing to these activities, NexusForum.EU reinforces its role as a collaborative platform connecting research, industry, policy, and open-source communities working toward the development of trustworthy and sovereign European digital infrastructures.

Key Industrial Players

Over the course of the NexusForum.EU project, and particularly through the three major Summits organized in Brussels between 2023 and 2025, the project successfully engaged with a wide range of key European industry stakeholders that play a strategic role in the development of Europe's digital and cloud-edge ecosystem. These events provided an important platform for dialogue, collaboration, and exchange between industry leaders, research organisations, policymakers, open-source communities, and European digital infrastructure initiatives.

The participation of major European companies and technology providers such as IONOS, Arsys, CloudFerro, SAP, Telefónica, Deutsche Telekom, Siemens, Tiscali, TIM, and others significantly enriched the discussions through presentations, keynote interventions, technical sessions, and panel debates. Their contributions brought valuable industrial perspectives and real-world operational experience to the NexusForum.EU discussions, helping validate many of the project's strategic priorities and roadmap recommendations.

Some of the Participants



Figure 17: Examples of the companies participating at NexusForum 2025

The engagement with these industry actors also provided a unique opportunity to discuss concrete challenges related to Europe's digital sovereignty ambitions, including interoperability, trusted cloud infrastructures, AI-cloud-edge integration, cybersecurity, data governance, sustainability, and the adoption of open and federated digital ecosystems. Insights gathered during these exchanges contributed to strengthening the NexusForum Research & Innovation Roadmap by incorporating practical industrial viewpoints, market realities, and deployment-related considerations emerging from operational environments across Europe.

A particularly important outcome of these interactions was the strong convergence around the need for Europe to reinforce its technological sovereignty through the support of open-source technologies, interoperable standards, federated cloud-edge architectures, and European-led digital infrastructures. Many of the participating organisations highlighted the importance of reducing technological dependencies, avoiding vendor lock-in, and enabling a more competitive and resilient European digital ecosystem capable of supporting strategic sectors and public administrations.

The Summits also served as an important ecosystem-building mechanism, facilitating networking and collaboration opportunities between industrial actors, Horizon Europe projects, policymakers, SMEs, and open-source initiatives. These exchanges contributed to increasing the visibility of NexusForum.EU within the broader European cloud-edge landscape while strengthening relationships with organisations actively shaping the future of Europe's digital infrastructure strategy.

4.4 Engagement with relevant non-EU industrial actors

As part of its international outreach activities, NexusForum.EU engaged with stakeholders from Japan and South Korea to exchange perspectives on the future of cloud-edge-IoT infrastructures, Artificial Intelligence, digital sovereignty, and emerging computing

technologies. These activities complemented the project's European stakeholder engagement efforts and provided additional viewpoints on global technology trends, industrial priorities, and innovation ecosystems.

The engagement was primarily conducted through dedicated workshops, conference sessions, bilateral meetings, and participation in international events organized during the project. Activities carried out in Japan (2025) and South Korea (2026) provided opportunities to present the objectives and results of NexusForum.EU, discuss the development of the Research & Innovation Roadmap, and collect feedback from non-European stakeholders.

The discussions involved representatives from research organisations, industry, academia, and public institutions. Depending on the event and thematic area addressed, participating organisations included NTT, RIKEN, Toyota, Samsung, SK hynix, the National Information Society Agency (NIA), Seoul National University, Yonsei University, ETRI, and several European stakeholders active in cloud-edge-IoT, AI, and digital infrastructure initiatives.

Several topics emerged consistently throughout these exchanges, including:

- Artificial Intelligence and trustworthy AI frameworks;
- Cloud-edge computing architectures and interoperability;
- Data spaces and data governance approaches;
- Semiconductor technologies and advanced computing infrastructures;
- Future communication networks and 6G-related developments;
- Digital sovereignty and resilient digital ecosystems;
- Industrial applications of AI in manufacturing, mobility, healthcare, and smart cities;
- Sustainability and energy efficiency of digital infrastructures.

The international events also provided opportunities to discuss similarities and differences between European, Japanese, and South Korean approaches to digital transformation, innovation policy, and industrial competitiveness. These exchanges highlighted several shared priorities, particularly regarding trustworthy AI, interoperable digital infrastructures, open innovation ecosystems, and the need for stronger collaboration between research and industry.

The feedback collected during these activities complemented the inputs gathered through the NexusForum.EU Working Groups, consultations, and stakeholder engagement actions. While the primary focus of the project remained the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem, the international exchanges contributed additional perspectives that informed discussions around technology trends, research priorities, and future challenges reflected in the Research & Innovation Roadmap.

Beyond the immediate project outcomes, these activities also established contacts and communication channels with organisations in Japan and South Korea that may facilitate future exchanges and cooperation opportunities after the conclusion of NexusForum.EU.

5 Strategic alignment with relevant initiatives

In parallel with its stakeholder engagement activities, NexusForum.EU maintained awareness of relevant developments taking place across the wider cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem. This chapter summarises how these interactions and observations contributed to the validation of the project's Research & Innovation Roadmap and helped position its outcomes within the broader European digital landscape.

5.1 Strategic alignment across the project

Throughout its execution, NexusForum.EU sought to ensure that its activities remained aligned with the wider European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem. Rather than establishing new governance structures or creating dedicated coordination mechanisms, the project focused on maintaining active exchanges with relevant initiatives, communities, and stakeholders operating across research, industry, policy, and standardisation domains.

This alignment was achieved through the activities described in previous chapters, including Working Groups, stakeholder consultations, webinars, interviews, conferences, workshops, and participation in external events. These interactions enabled the project to continuously compare its findings with ongoing developments in the European digital ecosystem and to validate the priorities emerging from its Research & Innovation Roadmap.

Particular attention was given to initiatives contributing to Europe's objectives on digital sovereignty, interoperability, trusted digital infrastructures, open-source innovation, and the development of cloud-edge-AI ecosystems. The engagement carried out throughout the project helped ensure that NexusForum.EU remained connected to broader technological, industrial, and policy developments taking place at European and international level.

5.2 Contribution to the Research & Innovation Roadmap

One of the main outcomes of the strategic alignment activities was the validation and refinement of the NexusForum.EU Research & Innovation Roadmap.

Throughout the project, discussions with stakeholders from research organisations, industry, public administrations, and ecosystem initiatives consistently highlighted several common priorities. These included the need for interoperable cloud-edge infrastructures, stronger adoption of open-source technologies, trusted data-sharing mechanisms, federated digital ecosystems, and increased European technological autonomy.

As the project evolved, additional topics gained prominence across stakeholder discussions, including trustworthy Artificial Intelligence, sustainability of digital infrastructures, cybersecurity, resilience, and the operational implementation of digital sovereignty principles.

The convergence of these themes across multiple stakeholder groups reinforced the relevance of the priorities reflected in the final version of the NexusForum.EU Research & Innovation Roadmap. While the project did not seek to define new policy positions, the strategic alignment activities provided valuable external validation of the challenges, opportunities, and research directions identified by the Working Groups.

5.3 Engagement beyond the Horizon Europe ecosystem

In addition to interactions with European research and innovation projects, NexusForum.EU sought to maintain awareness of developments taking place across the broader digital ecosystem.

This included exchanges with representatives from industry associations, technology alliances, open-source communities, research institutions, and standardisation-related activities relevant to the future evolution of cloud, edge, AI, and data infrastructures. Discussions also covered initiatives contributing to interoperability frameworks, trusted data ecosystems, digital sovereignty, and federated infrastructure models.

Although the level of engagement varied across organisations and communities, these exchanges provided valuable perspectives on challenges extending beyond individual projects. They also highlighted the importance of maintaining dialogue between research activities, industrial deployment initiatives, open-source ecosystems, and standardisation efforts to support the development of a competitive European digital landscape.

The project further observed increasing convergence between technological developments and regulatory initiatives, particularly regarding interoperability, trustworthy AI, cybersecurity, and data governance. These topics are expected to remain highly relevant for future European research and innovation activities.

5.4 Legacy and future perspectives

The activities carried out under this task confirmed that many of the challenges addressed by NexusForum.EU are shared across a broad range of initiatives and stakeholder communities. Issues such as interoperability, open-source sustainability, trusted data sharing, digital sovereignty, and the deployment of trustworthy AI continue to be the subject of active discussion across Europe and internationally.

While NexusForum.EU concludes its activities at M30, the relationships established throughout the project and the exchanges facilitated through its Working Groups, events, and stakeholder consultations have contributed to strengthening connections between different parts of the European cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem.

The project also highlighted the value of maintaining forums where researchers, industry representatives, policymakers, and technology communities can exchange perspectives and identify common priorities. Future initiatives building on the outcomes of NexusForum.EU may benefit from continuing these discussions and further exploring collaboration opportunities with industrial alliances, open-source communities, research organisations, standardisation bodies, and international partners.

Overall, the strategic alignment activities supported the development of a more comprehensive understanding of the evolving European digital landscape and contributed to ensuring that the NexusForum.EU Research & Innovation Roadmap remained connected to the broader ecosystem in which future research, innovation, and industrial deployment activities will take place.

6 Conclusions

This deliverable (D4.3) reports on the progress achieved in stakeholder engagement and community-building activities since the previous reporting period (M18) up to June 2026. Through a range of targeted actions, the project has further strengthened its role as a strategic coordination and engagement hub at the intersection of EU research, industry, and policy in the emerging Cognitive Computing Continuum. These activities have remained closely aligned with the IPCEI-CIS initiative and the Cloud-Edge Working Group of the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud, ensuring continued policy relevance and contribution to European strategic priorities.

Looking ahead, the engagement strategy will continue to be anchored on two core operational pillars, which constitute the main instruments of the project's community-building and stakeholder engagement activities: (i) the regular publication and dissemination of Industry Webinars, which will continue to be coordinated by OpenNebula Systems, and (ii) the organisation and further exploitation of the NexusForum Summits, with a strengthened focus on amplifying results and maximising their impact within the broader European cloud-edge ecosystem. These two activities represent the primary mechanisms through which NexusForum.EU will ensure sustained stakeholder involvement, structured dialogue, and the ongoing translation of technical and policy discussions into actionable ecosystem outcomes.

The key conclusions from engagement activities up to M30 are summarised below:

The establishment of thematic and geographic Working Groups (WGs) has been a cornerstone of the engagement strategy. The WGs have enabled structured dialogue and knowledge exchange among research organisations, industry representatives, and policy stakeholders across different domains and regions. While engagement levels have varied across topics, the Working Groups have successfully facilitated the creation of targeted connections and collaborations with key stakeholders relevant to the project objectives. In particular, they have played a central role in identifying priorities, collecting stakeholder feedback, and supporting the development of the Research & Innovation Roadmap. Their alignment with the IPCEI-CIS Workstreams and the Cloud-Edge WG Task Forces of the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud has ensured coherence with Europe's strategic industrial and digital policy priorities.

A growing stakeholder consensus has emerged around the need to define "European Open Source." Engagement activities have highlighted increasing interest in establishing a shared understanding of European Open Source that balances openness, interoperability, and collaborative development with European requirements for sovereignty, resilience, and strategic autonomy. Contributions from both academic and industrial stakeholders have confirmed the relevance of this topic for future roadmap activities and policy recommendations.

Cross-border cooperation has proven to be an important driver for ecosystem expansion and international collaboration. International engagement activities, particularly through the EU-Japan and South Korea Working Groups, have created opportunities for collaboration in areas such as cloud security, AI governance, interoperability, and joint research and innovation initiatives. Activities conducted during the EU-Japan Digital Week, together with exchanges involving organisations such as KOIIA, JBCE, and the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation, have demonstrated the value of structured international outreach in strengthening Europe's digital partnerships.

The project has achieved strong alignment with the broader EU digital policy and innovation landscape. NexusForum.EU has continued to act as a convergence point for a broad range of European initiatives, including Gaia-X, IDSA, 6G-IA, and BDVA. This positioning has enabled the project to channel stakeholder feedback into ongoing policy discussions, support

coordination among initiatives, and contribute to broader efforts toward interoperability and ecosystem convergence within Europe's cloud-edge continuum.

7 References

- European Alliance for Industrial, Data, Edge and Cloud. Retrieved from: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/cloud-alliance>
- BDVA. Big Data Value Association. Retrieved from <https://www.bdva.eu>
- CEI-Sphere. Retrieved from: <https://ceisphere.eu/about-cei-sphere>
- Data Spaces Support Centre. Retrieved from <https://archive.dssc.eu/space/Partners/175472674/About+DSSC>
- EUCloudEdgeIoT.eu. Retrieved from <https://eucloudedgeiot.eu>
- European Commission. Open Source Software Strategy 2020–2023. Retrieved from <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/open-source-observatory-osor/document/open-source-software-strategy-2020-2023>, 2023.
- European Commission. Reference Architecture for Telco Cloud. Retrieved from <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu>, 2025.
- European Commission. Reference Architecture for IPCEI-CIS. Retrieved from <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/reference-architecture-ipcei-cis>, 2024.
- European DIGITAL SME Alliance. Retrieved from <https://www.digitalsme.eu>
- FIWARE Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.fiware.org>
- Gaia-X European Association for Data and Cloud AISBL. Retrieved from <https://gaia-x.eu>
- HiPEAC. High Performance, Edge and Cloud Computing. Retrieved from <https://inpacehub.eu>
- IDSA. International Data Spaces Association. Retrieved from <https://internationaldataspaces.org>
- INPACE. Indo-Pacific European Hub for Digital Partnerships. Retrieved from <https://inpacehub.eu>
- Thematic Roadmap for Open Source, and Common Trust Principles Roadmap, from *European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud*. Retrieved from: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/thematic-roadmap-open-source-and-inputs-common-trust-principles>
- Unlock CEI. Retrieved from <https://eucloudedgeiot.eu/unlock-cei/>

Appendix A. SovereignEdge.EU Blog Posts

As part of its commitment to actively engage with the European market, and by leveraging the resources of SovereignEdge.EU—a community initiative coordinated by OpenNebula Systems and focused on bringing together the main EU industrial and research organisations collaborating in the sustainable development of European open source cloud/edge technologies—the NexusForum.EU Project has launched a series of public interviews with EU industry leaders and technology experts. These interviews offer valuable information for understanding to what extent the Roadmaps produced by the CSA are aligned with the main technological and digital policy priorities of the EU industry.

Interview with Catherine Jestin (Airbus)

Source: *A Sovereign Edge Cloud for the European aerospace industry – An exclusive interview with Catherine Jestin (Airbus)*

What is the role that Airbus has been playing as part of the main EU research & innovation programmes?

- We at [Airbus](#) are very active in the main EU research and innovation programmes. Our involvement is strong in Horizon Europe, Digital Europe and, of course, in the Clean Aviation Joint Undertaking—the European Union’s leading research and innovation programme for transforming aviation towards a sustainable future—and in the Single European Sky Joint Undertaking—focused on accelerating through research and innovation the delivery of an inclusive, resilient and sustainable digital European sky. **These strategic JUs are fundamental to our sector’s safety and environmental roadmap.**

How do you understand the concept of Technological Sovereignty from a European perspective, and what role do you expect open source to play in that?

- Our aerospace and defence ecosystem is actively tackling two objectives: deliver an ambitious aviation sustainability roadmap and bring a key contribution to the EU’s peace and security priorities—notably through defence and space activities. This relies deeply upon the increased use of dual digital technologies and solutions, including at the Cloud level. **This also requires a resilient and competitive industrial system and supply chain, facing non-European competitors and the support they benefit from.**

While being open, we must remain in control of the digital solutions that we adopt. Concretely, this means that we must ensure sufficient protection of our sensitive data and avoid risks of operational disruptions in the operation of the solutions we chose. This is indispensable in order to preserve our unique European know-how through the full life-cycle of Airbus aircrafts, from their initial design to post-sale maintenance.

How is the participation of Airbus in the *European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud* contributing to strengthening your connections with the rest of the EU industrial ecosystem?

- EU Alliances are, generally speaking, an excellent instrument to foster cooperation and develop concrete projects within and throughout industrial ecosystems. The [European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud](#), officially launched by the European Commission in 2021, provides a strong means to strengthen our collaboration for multi-

country aerospace and defence programmes and consolidate **links with the EU industry that can eventually lead to concrete R&D projects**. As part of the EU Cloud Alliance, Airbus is involved in the development and deployment of data, computing and industrial ecosystems that support the digital transformation of European industry. We are also participating actively in the EU Alliances for Renewable Low Carbon Fuels (RLCF) and Zero Emission Aviation (AZEA).

How do you expect the new European highly-distributed, multi-provider cloud infrastructure that projects like the IPCEI-CIS are building to help Airbus speed up the adoption of the emerging Edge Computing paradigm?

- It is important for Airbus, as a leading global manufacturer, to have **access to low-latency cloud resources near our manufacturing facilities**, but making sure that this new edge cloud reduces vendor lock-in and contributes to the competitiveness of the EU industry by facilitating the adoption of next-generation technologies that are actively developed in Europe, thus **reducing dependencies on non-EU providers**.

Furthermore, having a **pan-European cloud service supported by a consistent multi-provider cloud infrastructure** is essential for organisations like Airbus, which operates in several countries. This would avoid complexity and cost for local adaption or contractualisation to cope with specific national requirements. Furthermore, such an infrastructure, targeting state-of-art level of security, reliability and availability, can help to **ensure business continuity in a context of geopolitical tensions around the world**.

Airbus' involvement in the new €3B [IPCEI-CIS](#) also relates to use cases such as linking an aircraft (understood as a large IoT/Edge device) with on-the-ground cloud infrastructures. This will contribute to the European Digital Sky by enabling future services for Airbus, and other partners such as Diehl, based on advanced data-driven capabilities. This will improve the passenger experience too.

Technological challenges aside, what do you think is the main policy aspect related to cloud/edge computing that the EU should address in the short term?

- The **European Union Cybersecurity Scheme for Cloud Services (EUCS)** is certainly the most pressing piece of legislation related to the EU's cloud policy. Ongoing discussions in this context are mainly concerned with the inclusion of various security criteria. Together with numerous Cloud users—within and beyond the EU aerospace and defence ecosystem—we are **strong advocates for the so-called High+ criteria to be included in EUCS**. These criteria are the only way to set a voluntary EU-wide reference point, allowing users to know whether the Cloud solution they would adopt is really safe from an extraterritoriality standpoint, especially when it comes to managing their most sensitive data. This concerns both potential leaks of data and risks of operational disruption. This standard would remain voluntary, so it would not be a barrier to entry—this is a “pro-choice” position. We want to be able to work with everyone, but **we must be sure that the Cloud platforms we pick for hosting our most sensitive data are indeed robust enough from a legal standpoint**. This needs to be done at EU level, for obvious harmonisation reasons and for single market and competitiveness purposes.

PS – We at Airbus (along with many other EU companies) are inviting cloud users in agreement with this position to adhere to an **open letter supporting the High+ criteria as part of the EUCS**. Everyone willing to join us, or get in touch with us, they can do so through the new [EUCSHighPlus.EU](#) portal

Interview with Michel Iñigo (Mondragon)

Source: [*A Sovereign Cloud for boosting Europe's industrial competitiveness – An exclusive interview with Michel Iñigo \(MONDRAGON\)*](#)

How has MONDRAGON been contributing so far to the main EU research & innovation programmes?

- At [MONDRAGON Corporation](#)—a world leader in the cooperative movement with almost 69,000 workers and 81 cooperatives across four business areas (industry, retail, knowledge, and finance)—we are highly active in R&D projects under EU research and innovation programmes. With more than 50 ongoing projects, we submit around 100 proposals per year, leading 15% of them. Our R&D projects involve the manufacturing value chain (e.g. the automotive or machine tool builder divisions) and **leverage technological expertise from our eight R&D centres plus the Mondragon University**. Among other challenges, these projects address digital and sustainability topics such as AI, edge cloud, IoT, data spaces, Digital Product Passport, recycling, lightweight materials, etc.

How do you understand the concept of “European digital sovereignty”, and what role do you expect open source should play in that?

- At MONDRAGON Corporation we work with the triangle of knowledge involving the industrial value chain, the Mondragon University, and our eight R&D centres. It is through this unique combination of in-house capabilities that we address advanced technological challenges around Artificial Intelligence, standardisation and hybrid edge-cloud architectures by carrying out the open source developments and integrations that we need. At this point, the inclusion of advanced skills and talent is crucial for us to maintain our digital autonomy as a leading European industrial group, and **incorporating open source solutions is essential for our technical teams to produce agile, resilient, and interoperable solutions for a changing market**.

How important is it to foster a model of joint technological innovation for strengthening the global competitiveness of the EU industry?

- Global competitiveness in the industry depends on the **implementation of standard procedures, technological advancements, interoperability, and collaboration across the industrial value chain and with technology providers** to enable agile responses and flexible manufacturing lines. At MONDRAGON Corporation, for example, we are developing standard solutions including the Reference Architectural Model for Industry 4.0 (RAMI 4.0) and its Reference Asset Administration Shell (AAS) standard. The flexibility of the AAS information model supports a wide variety of Industry 4.0 assets such as robots, drilling, boring or milling machines, sensors, 3D printers, CNCs, PLCs, SCADAs, and ERP/MES systems, to name a few. AAS applications can also encompass maintenance, information/data modelling, human-machine interfaces, production, simulation platforms, condition monitoring, troubleshooting, energy management, and safety and security.

Furthermore, collaborative business models are essential. In that sense, pan-European data space initiatives led by industrial actors like CATENA-X—an automotive open data ecosystem mirroring GAIA-X, where MONDRAGON is actively involved—enhance the automotive value chain and contribute to making the European industry more resilient. On the other hand, In EU-funded projects like [Flex4Res](#) we are developing an open platform for secure and sovereign data exchange along the supply chain that supports the reconfiguration of production networks. All these efforts are ultimately focused on

consolidating our manufacturing capacities in a resilient way, which is crucial for maintaining high-quality production at efficient rates while reducing non-value-added activities.

How do you expect the new European highly-distributed, multi-provider cloud infrastructure that projects like the IPCEI-CIS are building to help your company speed up the adoption of the emerging Edge Computing paradigm?

- **It is crucial to implement sovereign and standardised cloud-edge-IoT solutions for the European manufacturing ecosystem**, which is right now highly dependent on non-EU technologies and vendors. MONDRAGON Corporation, representing over 30 industry cooperatives within sectors such as automotive, industry components, and machine tool building, led the Advanced Application Workstream of the **IPCEI-CIS** during the proposal phase. As part of this strategic project, MONDRAGON is planning to deploy innovative Federated Learning services based on Asset Administration Shells (RAMI 4.0) and Artificial Intelligence to advance the European Manufacturing Data Space strategy through a seamless edge-cloud infrastructure.

These solutions will enable our manufacturing cooperatives to enhance and expedite the adoption of Digital Twins interoperability between heterogeneous cyber-physical systems and IoT platforms. Simultaneously, they will facilitate and **streamline AI developments in a federated environment across multiple manufacturing locations and lines**. This can be achieved by combining standardised data models from industrial devices as Digital Twins and secure data exchange within the industrial value chain; all that being deployed across the sort of hybrid edge-cloud environments that the IPCEI-CIS is expected to offer.

Technological challenges aside, what do you think is the main digital policy aspect related to cloud/edge computing that the EU should address in the short-mid term?

- The primary goals for society include economic growth and sustainability, bolstered by technology and innovation, while upholding human rights and democracy. MONDRAGON fosters a cooperative identity, forming a business group with strong local roots that is profitable, competitive, and entrepreneurial. **We are Europe's best example of how an industrial cooperative can successfully operate in global markets through democratic methods, inter-cooperation, and social responsibility**, merging the advantages of consensus with the unique human dimension of cooperatives to create a resilient and supportive industrial project.

The MONDRAGON Corporation aims to provide employment, facilitate the personal and professional growth of its workers, and contribute to community development, supported by innovation, advanced technical and business education, and social transformation. European digital policies should also be grounded in these principles to enhance productivity and the social commitment of businesses across different sectors. We look forward to **further EU investments in AI and cloud-edge infrastructures for supporting the role that industrial cooperatives can play in boosting a socially committed, more resilient, and competitive Digital Europe.**

Interview with Octavia de Weerd (NBIP)

Source: *For a critical digital infrastructure in our own hands – An exclusive interview with Octavia de Weerd (NBIP)*

What is NBIP and how have you been contributing so far to the IPCEI-CIS?

- **NBIP** is a Dutch foundation that provides professional cyber security services to providers and organisations in the digital infrastructure sector, based on the idea that an open and resilient Internet is a shared responsibility. We therefore operate on a non-for-profit basis to achieve this goal.

NBIP operates and develops facilities from a shared service center concept. This enables providers and organisations using the internet, to comply with legal and availability requirements. These facilities are costly to acquire, operate and maintain as a single party. Therefore, it makes sense to jointly operate such services. An example of such a facility is our not-for-profit DDoS scrubbing center NaWas, which currently services some 200 organisations in 10 European countries.

Our role in the **IPCEI-CIS** lies primarily in **developing a secure by design open security platform that will be integrated in the stack of a new modular data center design for a distributed European cloud infrastructure**. One of the avenues we are currently exploring in this regard is a distributed edge DDoS mitigation platform. We also have a very active role in the cross-cutting security workstream which involves many IPCEI-CIS projects.

How important is it to foster a model of joint technological innovation for strengthening the global competitiveness of the EU cloud industry?

- I think it would be, at this moment in time, hard to overstate the significance of cooperation for technological innovation in the EU, especially in the digital domain. We are now rapidly becoming more aware of what risks are associated with outsourcing much of our needs for digital technology and services to non-EU corporations. I believe the EU has taken and is taking important steps to reduce these risks, for example by investing in programs to realize its own cloud infrastructure. But this will take time, perseverance, and a shift in mentality. What I mean by that is that I think it should be self-evident to everyone that **Europe will only be able to prosper if we cooperate more and more often and put our collective interests as Europeans above other concerns**.

How do you understand the concept of “European digital sovereignty”, and what role should cybersecurity play in that?

- In the past decades we have created dependencies on foreign technology and services that in hindsight seem undesirable. There are many circumstances that have led to these dependencies, and I don't think it is useful to dwell too much on the past. We do need to carefully consider now, nevertheless, how we are going to disentangle ourselves from non-EU tech. When we talk about digital sovereignty, we should understand it as a certain level of control over the digital technology we use, whether it's hardware, software, or the infrastructure we use to deliver digital services. **Open source solutions are an important way to achieve this.**

This is also true for cybersecurity. **Many cybersecurity services and applications that are used across Europe have not been developed within the EU.** Given the current geopolitical context, we cannot rule out that this will one day be turned against us. Does that mean we need to become a digital autarky? Of course not. This would harm us more than it would do good. But we do need to think carefully about what it means to be digitally sovereign in a world that is thoroughly digitally interconnected.

I think a sensible first step would be to **ensure that critical digital infrastructure is firmly in our own hands**. In addition, we need to move away from using non-EU cloud services for anything and everything, without much regard for the (national) security

risks associated with it. When it comes to cybersecurity, we need to be able to develop and provide core services ourselves, whether it is DDoS-mitigation, AV-software, or firewalls.

How do you perceive recent EU regulatory initiatives such as the Cyber Resilience Act?

- I think that, **as Europeans, we should be proud that the EU is taking the lead and setting an example when it comes to regulating the digital domain, including cyber resilience.** In my view, many issues around cybersecurity are the result of two things: non-intentional incompetence and a classic collective action problem. What I mean is that many organisations that need to be more cyber resilient, fail to achieve this because they do not know they are falling short in this respect.

Secondly, issues such as the abuse of security vulnerabilities are enabled by the fact that it's not always in the interest of organisations to commit resources to solving these types of problems, even though if everyone would take it seriously, the problem would be less persistent and less costly. So **it helps to have clear rules about what is expected from manufacturers and developers** in this respect, which will hopefully ultimately result in less abuse.

Technological challenges aside, what do you think is the main digital policy aspect that the EU should address in the short-mid term?

- I think we are on the right track, but I think the EU should be wary of over-regulating the digital sector. **It is difficult for many SMEs to keep up with the regulations that have been enacted in the past years.** These regulations are necessary, there is no doubt about that. But we also run the risk that SMEs, who play an important role in ensuring Europe's digital sovereignty by participating in European funded projects, will refrain from participating and boosting innovation. For them, a steep regulatory burden is stifling their capacity for innovation. I would therefore say the EU should be mindful of this if it wants its ambitious projects to come to fruition sooner rather than later.

Interview with Björn Håkansson (TNO)

Source: [Building Europe's Computing Continuum based on interoperability – An exclusive interview with Björn Håkansson \(TNO\) | SovereignEdge.EU](#)

You were recently elected as Co-Chair of the Cloud-Edge Working Group of the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud. In which way is this initiative crucial in the current technological and geopolitical context?

- I think the [European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud](#) plays a crucial role in creating a **stable meeting point for the industry and the European Commission**, where we can share our views on the developing technologies and developing markets around Cloud-Edge in Europe. As industry partners in the Alliance we have the opportunity to advise the European Commission on both the larger picture as well as on details that may be important to all of us. There is a lot going on both in the technological domain as well as in the geopolitical arena so **this is an important moment for Europe, especially in the digital field of Cloud and Edge.**

How do you understand the concept of “European digital sovereignty” and how does it inspire the activities that the Cloud-Edge WG undertakes?

- European digital sovereignty is one of the triggers on many interesting discussions in the market. Basically it means that **users in Europe want to have better control over their digital environments**. This can however be achieved in multiple ways; more transparency is a key instrument in this, more choice of providers and avoiding lock-in effects are other ways. Also non-EU providers are taking steps to offer more digital sovereignty in their services, and then it often comes down to taking a risk-based approach. Are the potential risks around digital sovereignty manageable in relation to the benefits of opting for a very capable non-European provider? The Cloud-Edge WG can undertake activities to **promote more transparency, more interoperability and more awareness** around the factors that are important for European digital sovereignty. For individual companies there will also be other considerations than for EU Member States and the European Union as a whole, where for the latter **digital autonomy, fair markets, technological competitiveness and longer-term dependencies will be key factors**. This complex landscape inspires us to guide our stakeholders towards the different enablers needed so that European players can compete and become capable providers in a thriving European digital landscape otherwise dominated by the larger non-European players.

How important is it to foster a model of joint technological innovation for strengthening the global competitiveness of the EU industry?

- I think there is no other way than joint technological innovation. In certain domains, like cloud services or AI, the European developments are lagging behind the larger non-EU developments and this can partly be blamed on the fragmented European market and some other deficiencies that were highlighted well in the recent [Draghi Report](#). **To stay competitive in the EU we need to target the obstacles that are holding us back, one of which is interoperability on a European scale**. Interoperability is nothing you can develop without joint technological innovation. The **development of a common reference architecture, of common open standards, and of the technological solutions often based on open source software** are all made possible only through joint technological innovation. How to achieve that? That often requires strong incentives, like facilitated collaboration and access to shared funding for research and innovation. In the Netherlands, for example, TNO operates a government-funded [Centre of Excellence for Data Sharing and Cloud](#) that provides a whole range of activities aimed at fostering collaboration.

How do you expect the new European highly-distributed, multi-provider cloud infrastructure that projects like the IPCEI-CIS are building will speed up the consolidation of the Edge Computing paradigm?

- I think the [IPCEI-CIS](#) is a **very good example of how much the EU can facilitate collaboration and provide access to shared funding**. The Edge Computing paradigm will also be an integral part of the next generation of cloud infrastructure and services where a multi-provider based computing continuum will be working seamlessly across Europe. There is still however the need to do more in order to speed up and consolidate this tendency further; the IPCEI-CIS will contribute of course, but maybe **additional IPCEIs might be needed to target areas not covered in the IPCEI-CIS**. An important part to discover is also how European telcos can play a role in the digital Edge Computing landscape, and how this role integrates with—and complements—the overarching multi-provider cloud-edge continuum.

Technological challenges aside, what do you think is the main digital policy aspect related to cloud/edge computing that the EU should address in the short-mid term?

- We have seen that legislation can be important too; the Data Act serves as a good example where digital policy can contribute to developments in the short/mid-term. However, we also notice that **many users and many providers are frustrated and struggling to understand what is going on and what to expect, and when things are happening**. They often hear about European projects like IPCEI-CIS, initiatives like Gaia-X, enablers like SIMPL and DOME, and compliance requirements such as EUCS and NIS2. However, they don't always see the forest through the trees. For those working on digital policies I think a short-term aspect would be to increase awareness of all that is happening and what users and providers can expect. The different roadmaps from our WG could play a role here. A mid-term aspect that might also help is to enable some leading examples, e.g. by having the EU co-funding a pilot project to showcase and demonstrate some of the new developments. **There are already a lot of interesting things happening, but we need to make sure that companies in Europe (including SMEs) know about them too.**

Interview with Arthur van der Wees (Arthur's Legal)

Source: [Europe must team up and get out of its digital comfort zone – An exclusive interview with Arthur van der Wees \(Arthur's Legal\)](#)

You were recently elected as Co-Chair of the Cloud-Edge Working Group of the European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud. In which way is this initiative crucial in the current technological and geopolitical context?

- The [European Alliance for Industrial Data, Edge and Cloud](#) has a unique role. Established in 2021 with the consensus of all 27 Member States, it unites efforts to design, procure, deploy, and sustain future-proof, resilient, interoperable, climate-neutral, trustworthy, agile, and competitive data processing, edge and cloud infrastructures, ecosystems, and services. With the European Commission as facilitator, Member States as members, and leading industry experts in the Cloud-Edge WG, it is a truly joint undertaking. I am honoured to serve as Co-Chair.

Unlike earlier initiatives since 2012, this Alliance has a solid structure that enables designing detailed value and business models, including investment and implementation roadmaps, to actually deploy these capacities across public administrations, businesses, and society at large.

Its strong footing makes it well-positioned to address technological and geopolitical dynamics, while advancing EU competitiveness, societal challenges, and major objectives such as the [Digital Decade 2030](#), the [European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles](#), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the [Paris 2050](#) goals. Crucially, all this is co-created, procured, deployed, and sustained at Union level, in line with EU values and the Rule of Law by design and by default.

*For the Alliance's [Edge-Cloud Strategic Roadmap](#) delivered in July 2023, I led the chapter on Digital Sovereignty. Building on over a decade of work in areas such as cybersecurity, supply chain resilience, critical infrastructure risks, interoperability, cloud switching and exit strategies, algorithmic transparency, and accountability, **we defined digital sovereignty as a multidimensional, dynamic, and omnipresent concept. Narrow definitions only create loopholes; it must be addressed holistically.***

In the subsequent Thematic Roadmaps and Inputs I have contributed to, including the recent ones on [Open Source in EU's digital sovereignty and competitiveness](#), and [Common Trust Principles in and between digital ecosystems](#), as well as a previous one

on Edge/Telco Cloud, we have further built on these notions.

Digital sovereignty cuts across the full lifecycle of digital products, systems, and services: from strategic planning, investment, procurement, development, and deployment to operations, maintenance, incident response, recovery, re-use, and decommissioning. It shapes principles, requirements, and policies needed to reach Europe's sovereign levels of data processing and infrastructures, aligned with the [Competitiveness Compass](#), [Digital Decade 2030](#), and EU's [Fit for the Digital Age](#).

It must not be treated passively or defensively. **It is about avoiding digital colonialism or feudalism, safeguarding dignity, values, competitiveness, and control over data.** Running infrastructure on EU soil is not enough: true sovereignty means continuous control, independence, freedom from external influence, and the ability to pivot and improve across all layers; individual, organisational, societal, Member State, and Union.

The Alliance's role is to help Europe move from observer to protagonist. We cannot remain victims or limit ourselves to talk; we must act together. On the positive side, digital sovereignty means building strong capabilities, investing in Research & Development, co-creating, focusing on quality, learning, and sustaining progress. It is a complex challenge with no single solution-success depends on joint effort. Digital sovereignty is, above all, a team sport.

How important is it to foster a model of joint technological innovation for strengthening the global competitiveness of the EU industry?

- As mentioned above, it is not only important to foster collaborative EU co-creation and address societal challenges, create opportunities and further improve the quality of life. It is an essential success factor.

The public sector increasingly relies on the private sector to support their needs to create and sustain societal-centric, people- and public services-oriented ecosystems of digital ecosystems. It is sometimes even made mandatory; the Data Governance Act calls that GovTech. Hence, **robust technologies based on European societal and economic values are essential for successful digitalisation of the public sector and society.**

People and institutions deserve trustworthy systems built on values, trust and accountability. Although some say differently, these are already available in today's Digital Age. However, designers, developers and providers who ensure consistent trustworthiness need equally reliable partners on the demand-side to co-create long-term and otherwise sustainable products, systems and services. Trust is consistency over time. It is a two-way street that requires teamwork, co-investment, and shared accountability, on both sides of any market.

By placing people at the centre of such digital ecosystems, trust and trustworthiness empowers and defends key values, including human, economical, ecological and related societal values, in a future-proof and dignified fashion.

How do you expect the new European highly distributed, multi-provider cloud infrastructure that projects like the IPCEI-CIS are building to speed up the consolidation of the Edge Computing paradigm?

- Considering my previous points, you can be sure I am a fan of such multi-country, Union-level (and EU/EEA and other EU partner) programs and related projects.

*Nevertheless, markets and ecosystems include demand, supply, and user sides, as well as other stakeholders like society, policymakers, authorities, taxpayers, and investors. **For IPCEI-CIS, upcoming IPCEIs, and other multi-country programs, I advocate engaging and empowering all stakeholders at the right time, fostering collaborative trust, and building sustainable EU markets.***

For instance:

1. **Customers** should be able to understand, appreciate and ascertain the appropriate levels of trust and related trustworthiness of public-private collaborative digital (eco)systems, data flows and services such as the EU highly distributed, multi-provider cloud edge infrastructure of IPCEI-CIS.
2. **Public and private procurement bodies**, including CIO/CFO/CxO departments, need guidance to prioritize quality over price, so they can procure, co-create, and help implement, sustain, and improve trustworthy and collaborative digital ecosystems, data flows, and services.
3. **Collaborative EU providers**, such as designers, engineers, integrators, and other partners, including investors, also need clear guidance so they can understand, value, and invest in these initiatives. This enables them to co-create, implement, deliver, sustain, and improve digital ecosystems, data flows, and services in a trustworthy and collaborative way.
4. **Policy makers and authorities** should be able to understand, give guidance and monitor which appropriate contextual (existing, upcoming or envisioned) policy initiatives and instruments make sense, are feasible and should be implemented and optimised.

Technological challenges aside, what do you think is the main digital policy aspect related to cloud/edge computing that the EU should address in the short-mid term?

- *Thinking that we can address these major EU, global and other intertwined economical, ecological and other societal challenges by doing more of the same and with that we will get a different outcome, is a low probability success strategy. We have to get out of our comfort zones. **We have to be willing to try new, alternative approaches to provide these essential digital products, systems, services and data sharing to the public, while improving and sustaining the quality of life and the planet.***

However, people and the ecosystems we live in, in this Digital Age, have great capabilities to improve and sustain the quality of life for all. If we interact and team up. As we face and urgently need to deal with many challenges, we need a climate for change.

*So, accruing these and all my other points above, I would urge every Alliance member and other colleagues involved, whether from the Cloud-Edge Industry Working Group as well as the Member States Working Group, to fully focus on walking the walk (while continuing to talk). **It is high time for joining forces, action and execution. We should be more aware, less risk-averse, more proud and visible of what we can achieve together.***

From Acts, to actionables, to action. Starting today.

With this mindset, Europe has great capabilities to lead, and the Alliance and all members have an important role – and in my view also a moral obligation – to play here. The upside and other benefits are enormous, also as trustworthy exports and offerings outside of the EU.

Appendix B. Feedback from Events organized by NexusForum Project

NexusForum Summit 2024

The 2024 NexusForum underscored Europe's urgent need to redefine its digital sovereignty strategy amid growing competitiveness gaps with the US and China. Louise Grabo (Observatory of Digital Transition) highlighted that while regulation is a European strength, innovation in regulatory frameworks –not just technology– is critical to avoid stifling market growth. The Draghi Report revealed alarming trends, including Europe's declining competitiveness and the 45% of AI service costs tied to energy, emphasizing the need for green, affordable energy solutions. Participants stressed leveraging Europe's single market strength while addressing fragmentation, with calls for a Capital Market Union and flexible regulation to attract investment. The decline in the EU's cloud market share (from 25% in 2017 to 10%) served as a stark reminder of the need for coordinated, demand-driven action.

Feedback revealed critical gaps in infrastructure and technical deployment. The Edge Observatory identified security, skills, and sustainable supply chains as priorities for achieving the 2030 target of 10,000 climate-neutral edge nodes. Projects like DOME (a federated cloud marketplace) and SIMPL (data space interoperability) demonstrated progress, but challenges remain in standardization, scaling adoption, and integrating AI factories with data spaces. Participants noted that AI can enhance consent management, traceability, and data quality, though regulatory alignment (e.g., DGA, EUCS) remains a hurdle. The computing continuum was described as still in its "beta" phase, with open source recognized as essential but not a silver bullet for sovereignty.

Policy discussions centered on aligning regulatory frameworks with the Cognitive Computing Continuum's development, prioritizing digital sovereignty, cybersecurity, sustainability, and interoperability. Stakeholders called for clearer, more agile regulations that enable innovation without creating uncertainty, as well as a shift from subsidizing supply to stimulating demand. The Digital Markets Act (DMA) and Digital Services Act (DSA) were cited as starting points, but participants urged faster adaptation to technological change. Open source was highlighted as a strategic tool for sovereignty – only if European-maintained alternatives to US foundations are developed. Public procurement emerged as a powerful lever to drive adoption of European solutions.

Key recommendations included prioritizing education and skills, stimulating demand for European cloud/edge solutions, and ensuring European ownership of infrastructure. Stakeholders also called for better R&D-industry alignment, with mentorship programs, knowledge transfer, and market-ready solutions. Finally, participants warned against replicating US or Chinese models, urging Europe to leverage its strengths in ethics, sustainability, and digital democracy to carve out a unique, competitive path.

NexusForum Summit 2025

The NexusForum 2025 Summit (held on November 5th and 6th 2025) served as a critical platform for stakeholder collaboration, gathering over 200 participants from industry, research, and policymaking to co-shape the future of Europe's cloud-edge-IoT ecosystem. Engagement activities included interactive consultations on the next Research & Innovation (R&I) Roadmap, live feedback sessions via Google Forms, and 10+ panels addressing topics such as digital sovereignty, AI factories, federated cloud infrastructure, and open-source adoption. The event also featured pitch sessions for Horizon Europe projects (e.g., Phoenix-RTOS, COGNIFOG, DECICE), fostering cross-project synergies, and networking opportunities (e.g., LEGO Lottery,

poster demos) to encourage informal knowledge exchange. Notably, the CISERO project panel highlighted the IPCEI-CIS Reference Architecture, underscoring the role of NexusForum.EU in aligning with and amplifying such initiatives through its community-driven approach.

Feedback on Strategic Priorities

Participants emphasized the urgency of digital sovereignty, with repeated calls to harmonize fragmented EU markets and reduce dependency on non-EU providers. Key feedback included the need for interoperable, federated cloud-edge solutions (e.g., DYNAMO, FULCRUM projects) to enable SMEs and public sector actors to adopt European alternatives. Energy efficiency emerged as a cross-cutting concern, with debates on balancing performance with sustainability—e.g., optimizing software to extend hardware lifecycles and incentivizing carbon-aware computing. The AI Continent initiative sparked discussions on demand-side challenges, such as the lack of EU-specific datasets and the dominance of U.S. technological stacks in gigafactories. Stakeholders also stressed the critical role of open source (e.g., OpenNebula in Fact8ra, AI-on-Demand Platform) but noted gaps in financial viability, visibility, and governance for EU-led projects.

Conclusions on Collaboration and Governance

The Summit revealed three critical success factors for NexusForum.EU's mission:

- Strengthening EU-wide collaboration: IPCEI-CIS was praised for fostering cross-border partnerships (e.g., 12 member states, 120+ companies), but participants urged greater SME inclusion and simplified matchmaking in future initiatives. The Advisory Board model (e.g., Research Co-Leaders engaging ad-hoc industry experts) was validated as effective for roadmap development.
- Bridging policy and practice: While regulations like the AI Act and Data Act were seen as positive, stakeholders highlighted implementation gaps—e.g., public procurement rules lagging behind technological needs. Public-sector leadership (e.g., mandating "Public Money, Public Code") was identified as a catalyst for adoption.
- Addressing cultural and technical barriers: Federation was widely endorsed as Europe's path to sovereignty (e.g., "cloud roaming" concepts), but cultural resistance (e.g., nationalistic market approaches) and technical fragmentation (e.g., divergent standards) remain obstacles. The AI-on-Demand Platform and Fact8ra Federated AI Factory were cited as examples of open, interoperable ecosystems.

NexusForum EU-Japan Event 2025

The NexusForum.EU Roadmap received targeted feedback during the Japan event, with stakeholders prioritizing data spaces, edge computing, and quantum computing as key focus areas. Participants emphasized the need for a convergent computing continuum –tightly integrating connectivity and compute, accelerating AI deployment, and embedding energy efficiency and sustainability as core principles. Cross-border data flows were deemed critical, with 86% rating free data flow as "very important" and 100% prioritizing technological sovereignty. To combat vendor lock-in, most favoured developing alternative models over collaborating with hyperscalers, while alternative semiconductor technologies and carbon-aware computing were highlighted as solutions to sustainability challenges.

Community engagement was robust, with 100+ votes gathered via Slido during the interactive Roadmap session, revealing strong interest in AI deployment in industry (manufacturing, healthcare, mobility) and Japan's potential association with Horizon Europe. The summit featured all the Working Groups co-led by industry and academic leaders, fostering collaboration between EU and Japanese stakeholders. Discussions underscored shared

values (open systems, interoperability, and trust) with calls to align funding mechanisms, student exchanges, and joint initiatives like HANAMI and GAIA-X.

Key insights included the critical role of open-source and federated architectures in preventing vendor lock-in, though cultural adaptation remains a barrier. Energy efficiency emerged as a major concern, while practical, industry-driven AI use cases (e.g., healthcare, manufacturing) and cross-border data governance were identified as priorities. Stakeholders agreed that EU-Japan collaboration should leverage shared values (sovereignty, ethics, sustainability) rather than replicating US or Chinese models, with concrete steps like joint funding calls and sandbox approaches proposed to deepen cooperation.

NexusForum EU-South Korea Digital Convergence Week 2026

The NexusForum EU-South Korea Digital Convergence Week 2026 took place between 13th to 16th of April 2026, marking a significant milestone in the maturing digital partnership between the two regions. Held at the Yonsei University International Campus, the event drew a strong turnout with 143 total registrations across the two-day intensive program.

The forum shifted the conversation from high-level political statements to concrete operational collaboration. Experts and policymakers from both the EU and South Korea explored deep technical alignment in critical sectors, including 6G, AI, and decentralized data spaces. A recurring theme throughout the sessions was the "research-to-market" imperative, with speakers emphasizing that the next phase of the partnership must focus on real-world deployment and industrial commercialization rather than academic output alone.

Key highlights from the event included:

- **Regulatory Synergy:** A line-by-line comparison between the EU AI Act and South Korea's AI Basic Act revealed high levels of convergence, paving the way for shared standards in high-risk AI.
- **Data Interoperability:** Discussions focused on South Korea's adoption of the Gaia-X framework and its \$2 billion investment in data ecosystems, positioning the country as a vital partner for EU data space integration.
- **Industrial Complementarity:** Panels identified 6G, quantum computing (specifically hybrid quantum-HPC systems), and assisted automation in manufacturing as the strongest areas for mutual growth.
- **Bridging the Gap:** Participants addressed practical barriers to joint research, highlighting the role of exchange programs like Horizon Europe and Euraxess in facilitating international cooperation.

The event closed with a call for early industrial commitment and the development of "human-centric" digital independence. By combining Europe's leadership in governance and basic research with South Korea's rapid industrialization and technology adoption, the partnership is set to become a global model for sustainable digital innovation.

The final leg of the Digital Week consisted of NexusForum.EU's exhibition at the 36th Joint Conference on Communication and Information on the 16th of April 2026. We showcased project's outputs, the research and innovation roadmap, the policy recommendations and the cohesive work the project is doing in the European cognitive computing continuum ecosystem.