



DELIVERABLE D.T2.3.1

DT2.3.1 Boost4BSO focus group on a well-established intermediaries' platform

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1. Introduction

This report summarizes the key steps of the Boost4BSO focus group on a well-established intermediaries' platform to ensure sustainable use and exploitation of the Boost4BSO capacity building programme and foster closer cooperation between BSOs, and further intermediaries, on a well-established platform, e.g. ECCP, TCI.

Based on the key findings and on the feedback of partners and BSOs participated in the waves, MESAP presented and discussed with partners the contents and the step of the focus group: those activities have been **realized online to respond to the pandemic situation**; the online focus group has been **provided in English language**.

2. Focus group: preparation phase



The preparation phase in the second part of the 2021, focused on the collection of the inputs and the needs, followed by a set up phase (selection and development) to maximize the impact of the focus group in term of sustainability and exploitation of the results. The preparation phase includes the discussion and the definition of:

- The Aims of the focus group, opting for a small group to facilitate the exchange of perspectives and experiences,
- The Topics selection and related consortium speakers,
- The Time of the event and the slots,
- The list of the participants coming from EU projects on ECCP and existing networks,
- The Identification and selection of the questions (dilemmas) to discuss with the participants,
- The interactive tool adopted to actively involve participants in the online meeting,
- The Participants commitment,
- The Communication strategy and the disseminate results,
- The Follow up strategy: material and final conference invite,
- The Mitigation actions to reduce potential perturbation against the success of the event,
- The Agenda



3. Implementation of the focus group

At the beginning of January 2022, the participants received an email by Mesap, including the invitation to the event and its purposes and themes and the consent form to use images (Annexe 1, Annexe 2) as well as the Microsoft Teams.

The event took place online on 26th January from 10.00 to 12.30: it was foreseen to end at 12.00 but due the introduction of the participants and the open discussion we extended slightly the duration.

Here the agenda:

Welcome & Roundtable	Eva Breuer - Biz Up, 10'
Boost4BSO in a nutshell	Eva Breuer - Biz Up, 10'
Dilemma 1: The digital transition and the COVID19 impact: SMEs and BSOs approach, Virtual post-it session	Marco Mangiantini - MESAP, 12'
T1: Boost4BSO perspective on Dilemma 1	Ewa Dudzic-Widera - SAAM, 15'
Results: a quick analysis	Marco Mangiantini - MESAP, 3'
Dilemma 2: The drivers and the services to support companies Virtual post-it session	Marco Mangiantini - MESAP, 12'
T2: Boost4BSO perspective on Dilemma 2	Boris Golob - STEP-RI, 10'
Results: a quick analysis	Marco Mangiantini - MESAP, 3'
Dilemma 3: Sustainability: how to extend project's impact? Virtual post-it session	Marco Mangiantini - MESAP, 5'
T3: Boost4BSO perspective on Dilemma 3	Wiesinger Sophie - FH, 10'
Results: a quick analysis	Marco Mangiantini - MESAP, 3'
Conclusions	Eva Breuer - Biz Up, 3'

Here the effective participants list, representing EU clusters and EU projects: after the welcome, Mrs Breuer gave the floor to the attendants to introduce themselves and the entities represented: the slide about the EU projects (see the impression below) was prepared in advance, based on the confirmation. Finally, Mrs Andrea Sanfeliu of ICT Cluster - representing reSTARTSMEs project- quoted in the slide did not take part to the meeting (deleted from the table below)

PARTICIPANT	EU PROJECT
Mr Edoardo Rota EIT Manufacturing South Integral part of Horizon Europe , the EU's Framework Programme for R&I www.eitmanufacturing.eu	The EIT Manufacturing established in 2019 brings together a growing network of top-tier industrial partners, leading academic and research institutions from across the region and innovative start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs that global manufacturing to make Europe and its manufacturing sector more competitive and sustainable.
Mrs Eda Cig, ICO Istanbul Chamber of Industry www.iso.org.tr representing Mind4Machines H2020 INNOSUP project (coordinator) www.mind4machines.eu/	MIND4MACHINES is a Horizon 2020 Project financed by the European Commission aiming to facilitate the cross-sectoral and cross-border support needed by manufacturing SMEs to test and adopt the latest digital technologies for transformation towards smarter, greener, and more resource-efficient manufacturing.
Mrs Yaneiza Mendez of AECIM Asociación de Empresas del Metal de Madrid www.aecim.org	Representing Mind4Machines INNOSUP project too and managing the communication, dissemination and exploitation activities
Mrs Paola Fontana, PO.IN.TEX. (Italian textile Cluster) www.pointex.eu representing EU ALLIANCE COSME & SMARTX Europe H2020 www.smartx-europe.eu	The ALLIANCE project gathers seven leading European partners from Advanced Materials and ICT industrial sectors oriented to the Defence and Security markets in particular the "dual use" opportunities in aerospace, soldier systems and robotics market segments. (The main objective of ALLIANCE is to build conditions for the sustainable internationalisation of European SMEs in three target countries: USA, JAPAN and SOUTH KOREA.



	SmartX unites 8 clusters, 2 two Research and Technology Organisations (for specific technological assistance) and 3 innovation support entities to build and support a dedicated community around Smart textile
Dieter Thierssen, DSP Valley (Belgian cluster on ICT) breedingdigitalbusiness.com/ Representing SMARTEES 2 https://smartees.eu/	SmartEEs2 - An original European acceleration program dedicated to helping innovative companies digitise their businesses thanks to flexible and wearable electronics (FWE) testing, experimentation and manufacturing support. DSP Valley was also part of IoT4Industry project
Giulia Razetti Clever Cluster, (Italian clear technologies cluster) representing IMPAWATT https://www.impawatt.com/ and SMART ENERGY	IMPAWATT: energy efficiency support and digital tool (platform) to enhance corporate policy towards energy efficiency, energy culture and sustainable supply-chain initiatives. SMARTENERGY aims at facilitating their ecosystems accessing the market boosting the digitalization of the energy sector. implementing real solutions for the digital challenges of the energy transition
Jaione Aguirre, TEKNIKER (tech center in Basque Region on advanced manufacturing) https://www.tekniker.es/en Coordinator of GreenSme	GreenSME, CSA (36 months) will start formally on May 2022 to support the capacity of manufacturing SMEs through the adoption of digital technologies, according to social and environmental sustainability. SYNERGIES: the project also involves MESAP and Silesia Automotive.

Impression from the Welcome & Roundtable session



WELCOME & ROUNDTABLE









Edoardo Rota - EIT Manufacturing South
 Paola Fontana, Po.In.Tex
 Tuğçe Sagdur Akdik, Istanbul Chamber of Industry
 Yanetza Mendez, AECIM
 Silvana Sanfelici, ICT Cluster
 Giulia Razetti, Clever Cluster
 Dieter Thierssen, DSP Valley
 Jaione Aguirre, TEKNIKER







 TAKING COOPERATION FORWARD

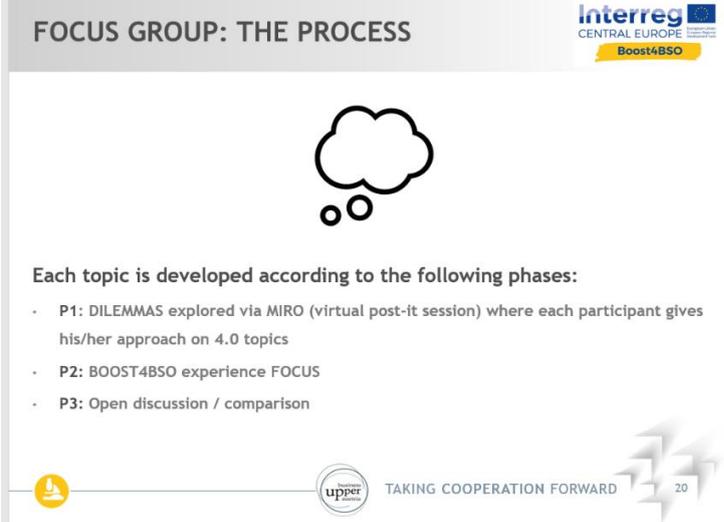


4. Methodology for engaging participants

The strategy to involve participants focused on emails and phone calls by MESAP, followed by participants collecting releases (use of image) and results dissemination (social media mainly), including and tagging participant. Participants received materials, participants slides (EU projects) including short the main results of the meeting and the final conference invite.

DILEMMAS have been launched at the beginning of each section, to get as much as possible participants' perspective: they have been followed by the interpretation of Boost4BSO and enriched by a quick and preliminary analysis on the post it results. The methodology intended to avoid or at least mitigate the "replication" or confirmation of Boost4BSO analysis, inviting participants to express their point of view via digital post it on MURAL digital board (free version): www.mural.com

After Eva Breuer introduction, Mesap (Marco Mangiantini) briefly introduced the process (P1, P2, P3)



FOCUS GROUP: THE PROCESS

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Boost4BSO

Each topic is developed according to the following phases:

- P1: DILEMMAS explored via MIRO (virtual post-it session) where each participant gives his/her approach on 4.0 topics
- P2: BOOST4BSO experience FOCUS
- P3: Open discussion / comparison

TAKING COOPERATION FORWARD 20

and how to use the manage the online post it



VIRTUAL POST ON MIRO: TIPS

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Boost4BSO

To zoom in/out the virtual wall

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VIRTUAL POST ON MIRO: TIPS

Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Boost4BSO

For each «dilemma cluster» you will receive a LINK in the chat : you can pick -up 1 or more post-it and write your point of view

1) Move a post it and then write
OR
2) Write in the postit and then move it

TAKING COOPERATION FORWARD 22

Each DILEMMA grouped three questions (online in a Mural's ROOM) and the participants received the link on the chat to access on:



GROUP DILEMMAS 1: SMES AND BSOS BARRIERS, COVID19 IMPACT

<https://app.mural.co/t/alessiamendunimesap6403/m/alessiamendunimesap6403/1642866840835/5957e2342b6d55e05fdedf7b2343d97e9e286e8?sender=u975503f34793c3001b1f2207>

- What are the challenges BSOs are facing in supporting SMEs digital transformation? 3'
- What are the barriers hindering manufacturing companies to adopt digital transformation implementations? 3'
- Do you think COVID has an impact (positive/negative) on SMEs digital process? Please go through © 3'

TAKING COOPERATION FORWARD 24

The first Dilemma focused on the The digital transition and the COVID19 impact: SMEs and BSOs approach has been investigated by 3 questions (here below) and followed by T1: Boost4BSO perspective on Dilemma 1, Ewa Dudzic-Widera - SAAM 15' (See the Impression Below)

- ✓ What are the challenges BSOs are facing in supporting SMEs digital transformation?
- ✓ What are the barriers hindering manufacturing companies to adopt digital transformation implementations?
- ✓ Do you think COVID has an impact (positive/negative) on SMEs digital process? Please go through

Main Results:

Lack of awareness about ICT technologies

- Interactive with multiple stakeholders having different ICT levels, needs and targets
- Difficulty to show tangible benefits
- Low willingness to recognise the potential and pay for services to receive support
- Lack of ICT culture
- Lack of time and resource



Impression Focus Group on 1st Dilemma

Impression of Ewa Dudzic-Widera speech on the 1st Dilemma Session

The 2nd DILEMMA “Competence & Support” focused around 3 main questions and it was enriched by the perspective of Boris Golob of STEP RI offering an overview of Boost4BSO methodology and competence pack (e-learning, experts, showcase and collaboration opportunities)



- ✓ What are the drivers of manufacturing companies to adopt technology?
- ✓ What are the services that your project/association offers to companies to adopt technology?
- ✓ Do you think there are competences that you would like to acquire or increase? Please list them



Main Results

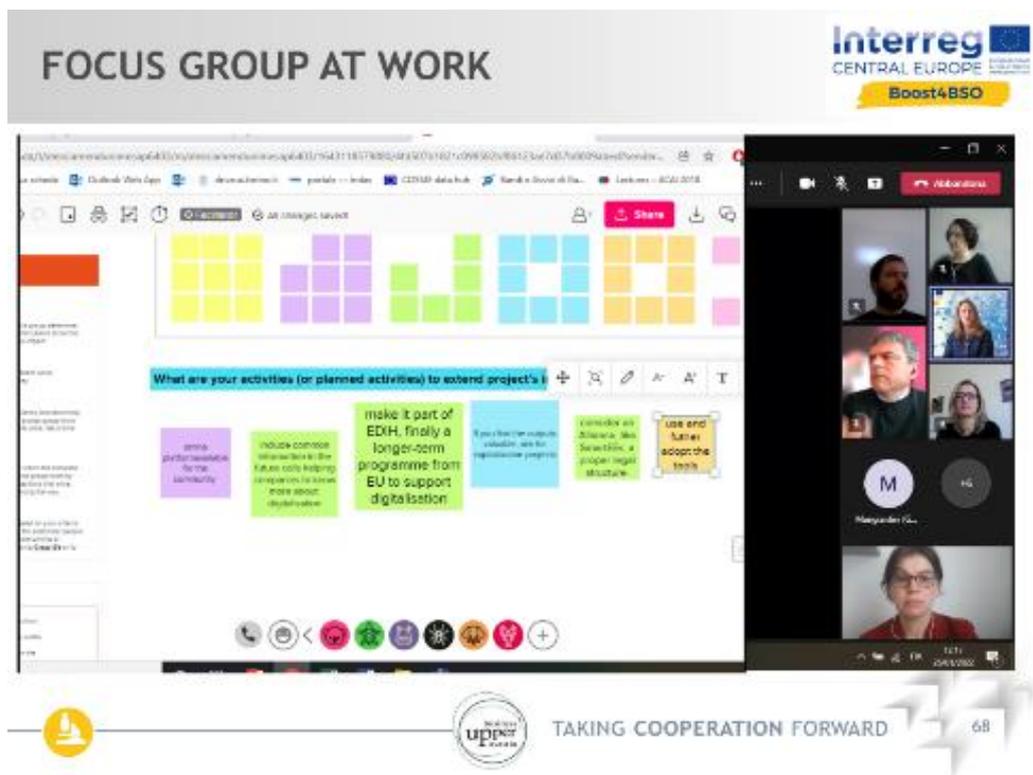
- Lack of time and resource
- Lack of culture (of change) and mindset (management vision)
- Lack of awareness about ICT technologies
- Poor ICT infrastructures
- Business daily activities «distract» from those opportunities

The 3rd Dilemma only invested one question (see the *impression below*) What are your activities (or planned activities) to extend project’s impact? 3’ and was followed by Sophie Wiesinger speech of FH on the Boost4BSO perspectives.

Main Results:

Covid19 effected the financial sustainability of traditional SMEs negatively. At the same time, it is increasing the interest on ICT technologies and in several case, it is accelerating their implementation.

Impression Focus Group on 3rd Dilemma





5. Sustainability seeds

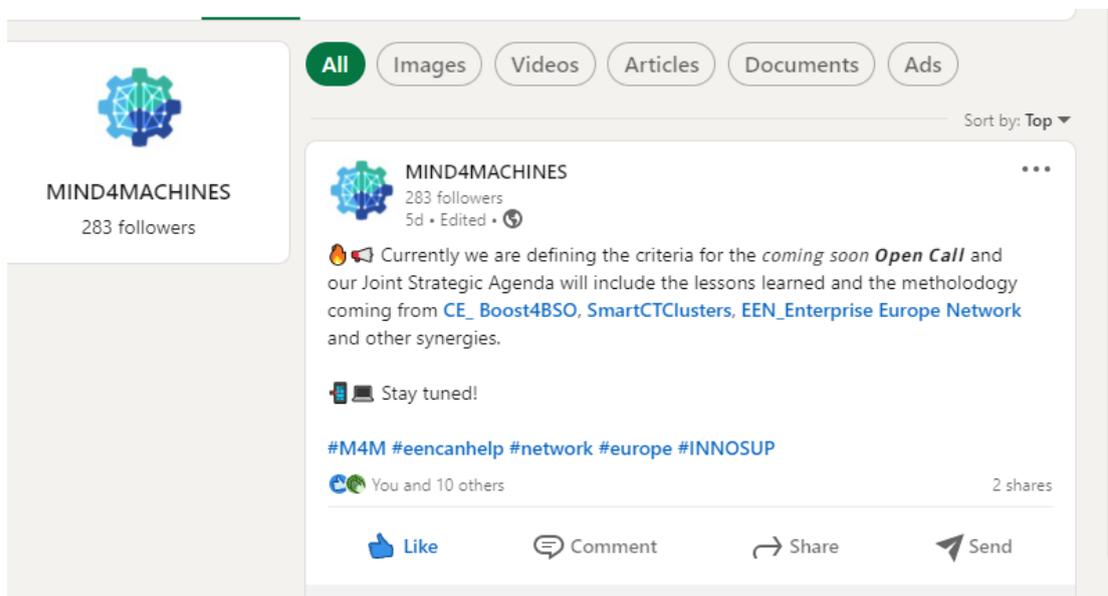
The FOCUS GROUP represents a great occasion to:

PRESENT THE METHODOLOGY AND ITS AVAILABILITY: how we worked with BSOs (Waves and Championship), the pilot actions with companies (Wave 3) and the **Boost4BSO platform** at their disposal, even after the formal end of the project as:

- ✓ a place for BSOs to share knowledge,
- ✓ a meeting spot for entrepreneurs to find or present solutions,
- ✓ a channel to get in contact with experts.



One of the results of the meeting is that **Mind4Machines** project decided to adopt **Boost4BSO methodology** into its **Joint Strategic Agenda** and as part of the coming soon open call. To stress these exploitable results, M4M realised a post in coincidence with the Boost4BSO Final Conference time ([here](#)).



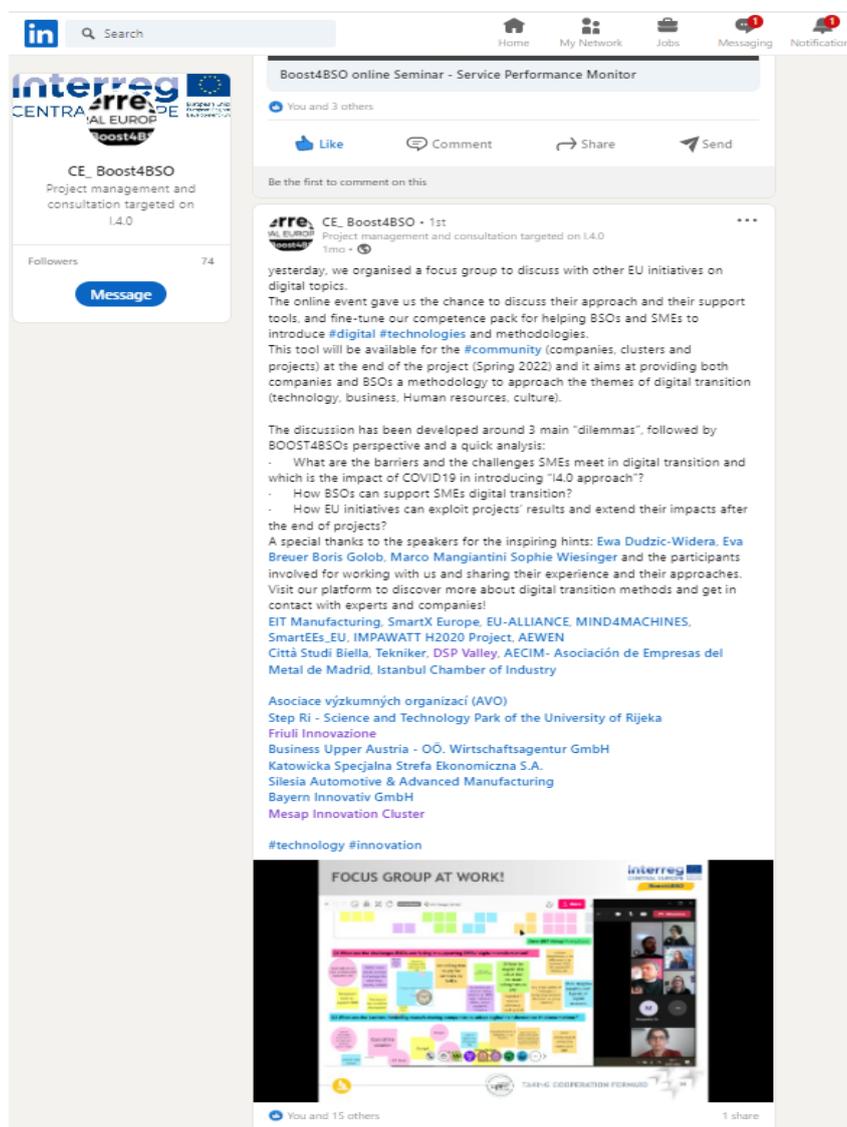
SHARE IDEAS AND PROMOTE COLLABORATION to facilitate the collaboration and the knowledge among European projects we requested a short presentation of the EU projects they represented to have a panorama of their methodologies and opportunities.



Moreover, on 31st January 2022 MESAP, after the coordinator check and approval, MESAP sent the event materials to participants: the files included:

- ✓ Boost4BSO slides
- ✓ The results of DILEMMAS
- ✓ The presentations of the EU projects
- ✓ Participants emails
- ✓ General Invitation to the final event (streaming)

ENSURE COMMITMENT & VISIBILITY We asked Participants to give evidence through their channels of the results of Boost4BSOs. In particular, we asked them their LinkedIn, inviting to post and share (see the LinkedIn post): this increased the visibility on the project's opportunities towards a wider audience.





6. Conclusions

The focus group has been an occasion for disseminating the project goals and the methodology adopted for supporting BSOs, and consequently SMEs, in facing the new challenges given by the transformation towards I4.0.

At the same time, it represented the chance for sharing ideas and experiences among very skilled BSOs, representing EU clusters and EU projects.

The final remarks of the focus group have been in line with the Boost4BSO main observations: the path towards the implementation of digital technologies in the manufacturing sector is challenging. Technology is only one part of the overall framework: other factors, such as the internal resources upskill, the need of a re-tuning of the business models, the lack of time, the lack of culture and mind-set are extremely important too.

BSOs with relatively poor experience in this specific field should acquire new competences and Boost4BSO can give those tools and methodology. SMEs willing to progress should be open to the change and make a thorough examination of the needs and gaps to be filled. BSOs should be at their side for facilitating their journey.



7. Annex

Annexe Invitation to join the FOCUS GROUP (standard personalized for each participant)



EMAIL TEXT

Dear **XX**

We are happy to invite you to the **BOOST4BSO Focus group** that will take place **virtually on 26th January 2022 from 10.30 to 12.00 CEST**.

[BOOST4BSO project](#) is an Interreg Central Europe aims at improving knowledge build-up and sustainable knowledge transfer linkages among business support organizations (BSOs).

The project offers services to support companies and BSOs in their digital path by

- Offering **tailor made services**
- Increasing their **knowledge** on I4.0 Topics
- **promoting innovative solutions** or find collaboration (an [agile showcase for your companies](#))
- expanding their **network** and **presenting their expertise**

The meeting will analyse the **needs and challenges of the manufacturing industry** in the use of digital technologies and it will briefly present some hints to provide effective and efficient support services for local companies (*competence pack*).

The focus group will help us **to compare and integrate your point of view (as EU project XXXXXX representative) with our approach** to make it sustainable and able to cover all the key aspects of transformation towards I4.0. For that reason, we will be more than honoured to count on your support.

The event will have a theoretical session followed by an interactive session (with [SLI-DO](#) or [MIRO](#)) : the session will be **recorded only for internal use (archive)** and we will take a couple of pictures that will be published on our channels for dissemination purposes.

You can confirm your **participation within 20th January 2022** by replying and filling the section here below:

I will join the meeting: I consent to BOOST4BSO publishing photos on its channels for disseminating information about the project's activities.

I will join the meeting: I am aware that the organizers will take pictures during the event and I have the opportunity to switch off the camera to avoid the pictures.

To increase your visibility we would tag you on LinkedIn

- Your Account _____
- Your Cluster _____
- Project or Association _____

You can also include brief description/slides of the project you represent that we will send after the event, to disseminate your project too!

After you confirmation you will receive the link. We hope to have you "on board" and we invite you to contact us for any additional information.



Annexe 2 Dissemination Consent Form



INFORMATION ON BOOST4BSO PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA IN THE FORM OF PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEO AND AUDIO

You will be photographed/filmed/recorded on behalf of BOOST4BSO project.

YES: I Consent to BOOST4BSO publishing photos on its channels for disseminating information about the project's activities.

To increase your visibility we would tag you, the cluster and the project on LinkedIn

Your LinkedIn _____

Cluster LinkedIn _____

Project or Association _____

NO: I am aware that the organizers will take pictures during the event and I have the opportunity to switch off the camera to avoid the pictures.