

# SCEWERO project: A challenging journey from proposal idea to implementation and impact

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# At the Beginning there was a message from a friend...

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 25, 2023 2:47 PM

**To:** ADINA-ELIZA CROITORU <[adina.croitoru@ubbcluj.ro](mailto:adina.croitoru@ubbcluj.ro)>;

[adina04@yahoo.com](mailto:adina04@yahoo.com) <[adina04@yahoo.com](mailto:adina04@yahoo.com)>

**Subject:** FW: RIVA CALL – Horizon Europe – Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence – 2023 Twinning call open

Hi Adina,  
Hope you are fine and doing well.

As a member of the scientific committee of your conference, I wanted to inform you that I have recently joined the University of Antwerp. Could you update my affiliation in the conference database accordingly?

Furthermore, I wanted to draw your attention to an email I received from our university's grant office regarding eligible countries for a grant opportunity. Upon reviewing the list, I noticed that Romania is categorized as a "Widening" country, which may be of interest to you or your colleagues.

Best regards,

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 25, 2023 9:30 AM

**Subject:** RIVA CALL – Horizon Europe – Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence – 2023 Twinning call open

**Message to:** ZAP, OP3, AAP, BAP and research and innovation support staff of UAntwerp

**Concerns:** RIVA CALL – Horizon Europe – Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence – 2023 Twinning call open

Dear researcher

Dear research/innovation manager

The Horizon Europe [Twinning call](#) has opened today (25 April 2023) with a deadline on **28 September 2023**.

**Twinning projects** provide funding to strengthen a defined field of research in an 'emerging institution' within a so-called 'Widening country' by linking it with at least two internationally-leading counterparts through at least the following activities: short-term staff exchanges, expert visits and short-term on-site or virtual training, workshops, conference attendance, organisation of joint summer school-type activities, and dissemination and outreach activities. See below for a full list of 'Widening countries'.

Applicants will have the choice to submit their proposals under either one of the two following options:

- **Topic A:** The (usual) [Twinning Bottom-Up](#): the applicant chooses the field of research or innovation;
- **Topic B:** The [Twinning Green Deal](#): the applicant chooses a defined area of research or innovation directly linked to at least one of the actions listed in the European Green Deal strategy: notably climate research, green technologies, renewable energy, sustainable mobility, biodiversity research or sustainable use of

**Tips**

- UAntwerp (and other Belgian organisations) cannot participate as a lead applicant within Twinning projects.
- UAntwerp may act though as a project partner, i.e., as one of the two (or more) internationally leading counterparts of the coordinating institution from the Widening country.
- UAntwerp researchers may engage for instance in short-term staff exchanges (e.g. hosting researchers from the coordinator in their lab or group) or in organising or participating in a joint summer school or workshop to train researchers from the coordinating institution.

- In case you and/or your research group have good contacts with a promising professor and/or research group in a Widening country, it may be a good idea to inform them about these funding schemes, to explore opportunities to work together more closely via these and other schemes and/or to see how you may help the research group or institution in the Widening country to become more excellent.
- If you are interested in this call and would like to receive more information, please send an e-mail as soon as possible to Rocio Canovas Martinez ([ocio.canovasmartinez@uantwerpen.be](mailto:ocio.canovasmartinez@uantwerpen.be)).

**Specific points of attention (please click to see more)**

- [Background info on the Widening Participation & Spreading Excellence program](#)
- [More info on the Twinning call](#)
- [Support from the Grants Office](#)

Met vriendelijke groeten / Kind regards

## Strengths

- Main previous activity research connected to EGD
- Interesting topic identified (!! ) perfectly fitted to the call
- Previous international engagement
- Numerous benefits, including training and “upper-level” research

## Opportunity

- Great (maybe unique) opportunity for international collaboration
- Topic B: Twinning Green Deal
- Competing with “widening countries” organization
- Lots of explanatory materials available from the EC
- Other friends experienced in HE projects!
- CESO office in UBB and NFC in Romania !!!

## Weakness

- **NO experience** in writing HE proposal
- **NO technical skills**/training for writing an international proposal
- **NO idea about the HE project implementation**
- No other international partners
- Bad experience with the national research project competition
- No team trained/experienced

## Threads

- High number of applications expected
- Short period (overlapping the summer holiday)
- Potential unavailability of partners

# Final response: Why NOT?

- **What first:** long discussion with the Belgian partner → **long to-do list:**
  - Topic of the project: **easy!**
  - Working with the EU platform: **medium!**
  - Potential top-level partners list: **medium!**
  - Understanding the logic/language of the call: **difficult!**
  - Contact top-level partners and convince them to be on board: **extremely difficult!**
  - Writing the proposal by myself: **almost impossible!**

But still .... **WHY NOT??**



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# Consortium and proposal writing process...

- Identified potential partners:
  - Mediterranean Center for Climate Change (CMCC) – IT
  - University of Antwerp (UANTWERPEN) – BE
  - Justus Liebig University (JLU) - DE
  - Indeco Software – RO
- Agreement on WPs and research area;
- Writing proposal with challenging sections: ethics, inclusivity, **BUDGET!!!!**
- Temptation to give up?... Every three days!
- 28 September 2023 – submission!
- 26 February 2024 – letter of acceptance

# Implementation

- 1 October 2024 – 30 September 2027
- 8 WPs +1 new WP: Ethics requirements

**First challenge!**  
No budget, difficulties in finding and an ethics advisor!

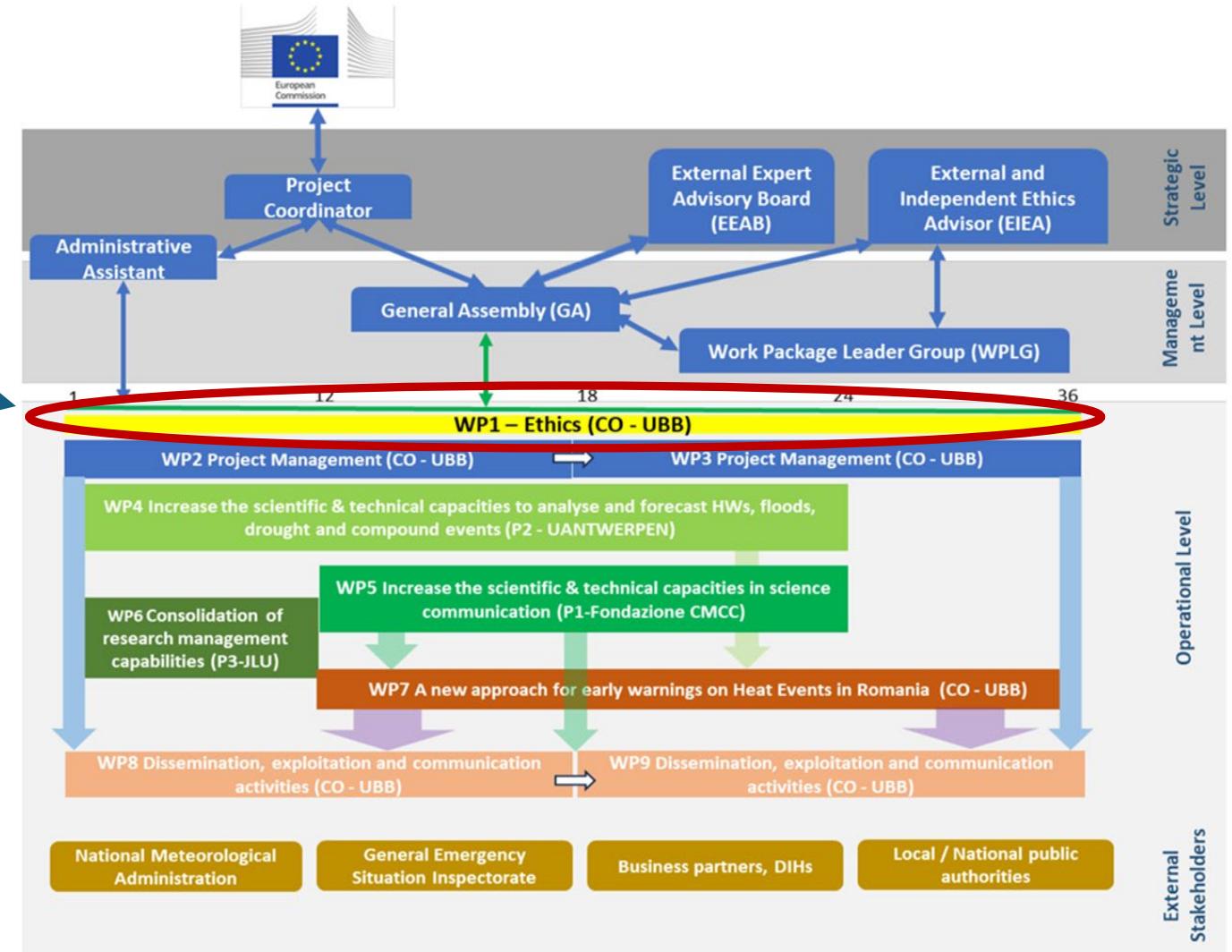
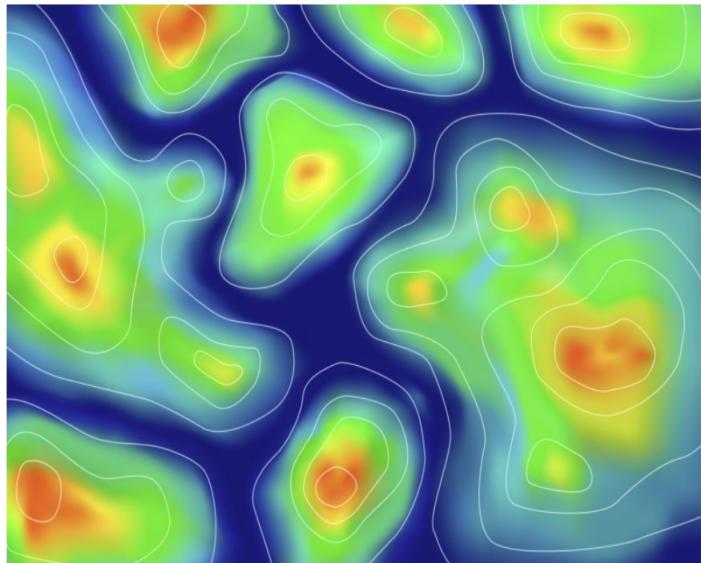


Fig. 1. Structure of the SCEWERO project

# Implementation

- WP4: Increase the scientific and technical capacities to analyse and forecast heatwaves, floods, drought and compound events:
  - 4 trainings for researchers
  - 2 international summer schools
- WP5: Increase the scientific and technical capacities in science communication on weather, climate, water and AI topics:
  - 1 onsite training in Cluj-Napoca
  - 1 training visit of UBB researchers in Bologna
  - 1 international summer school.

# Implementation



9-10 July 2025 – Training  
for heatwaves analysis



Provided by CMCC



# Implementation



11-12 September 2025 -  
Training for drought and  
floods



Provided by UANTWERPEN and JLU

# Implementation. Upcoming...



Provided by  
UANTWERPEN  
and CMCC

**24-25 February 2026 -  
Training for compound  
events analysis**

Provided by  
CMCC

**25-26 June 2026 - Training  
for AI tools for extreme  
events**

# Implementation



9-11 September 2025 -  
Summer school on extreme  
temperature and  
precipitation events.

Provided by CMCC, UANTWERPEN, and JLU



# Implementation: upcoming!



**22-24 June 2026 - Summer school on the use of AI for the analysis of extreme events.**



**September 2026 - Summer school on science communication**

Provided by CMCC

# Implementation

- WP6: Consolidation of the research management capacity and administrative skills
  - 1 online workshop;
  - 1 study visit of UBB researchers to JLU



11 February 2025 – Online  
training session

Provided by  
UANTWERPEN



24-28 March 2025 – Short  
visit to the JLU team

Provided by JLU

# Implementare



# Deliverables

- All training materials are freely available at:
  - Research trainings
  - Staff trainings

## Presentations repository

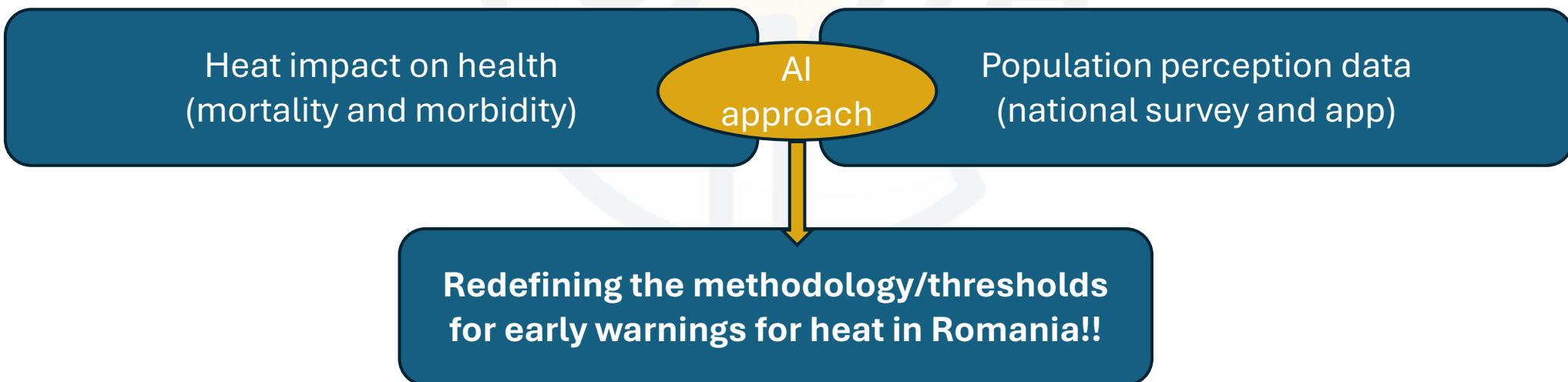
<a href="#">Download!</a>	<a href="#">Descarcă!</a>	<a href="#">Letöltés!</a>	Session 1. Heatwaves
<a href="#">Download!</a>	<a href="#">Descarcă!</a>	<a href="#">Letöltés!</a>	Session 2. Drought
<a href="#">Download!</a>	<a href="#">Descarcă!</a>	<a href="#">Letöltés!</a>	Session 3. Floods
<a href="#">Download!</a>	<a href="#">Descarcă!</a>	<a href="#">Letöltés!</a>	Session 4. Compound Events

## Training materials repository

 <a href="#">Download</a>	Training material workshop from UAntwerpen
 <a href="#">Download</a>	Funding and tending portal Proposal Structure
 <a href="#">Download</a>	Impact of proposal Dissemination KPI
 <a href="#">Download</a>	Open Science

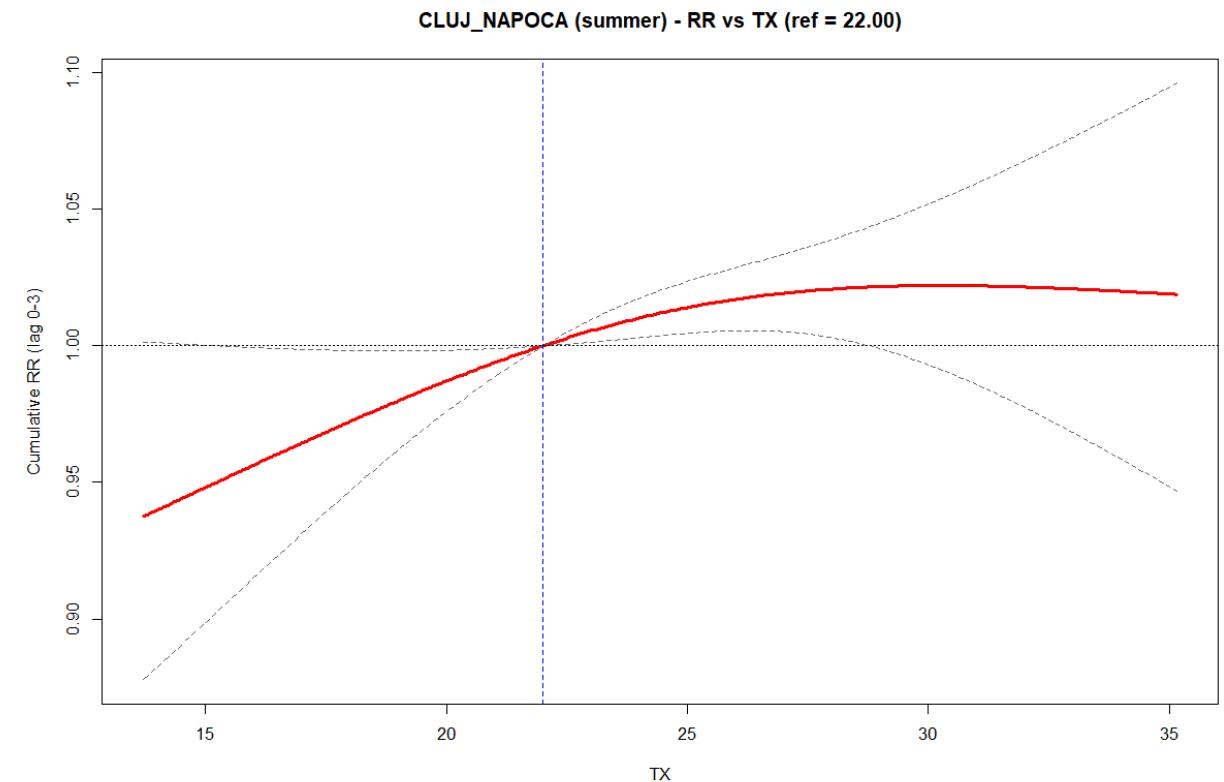
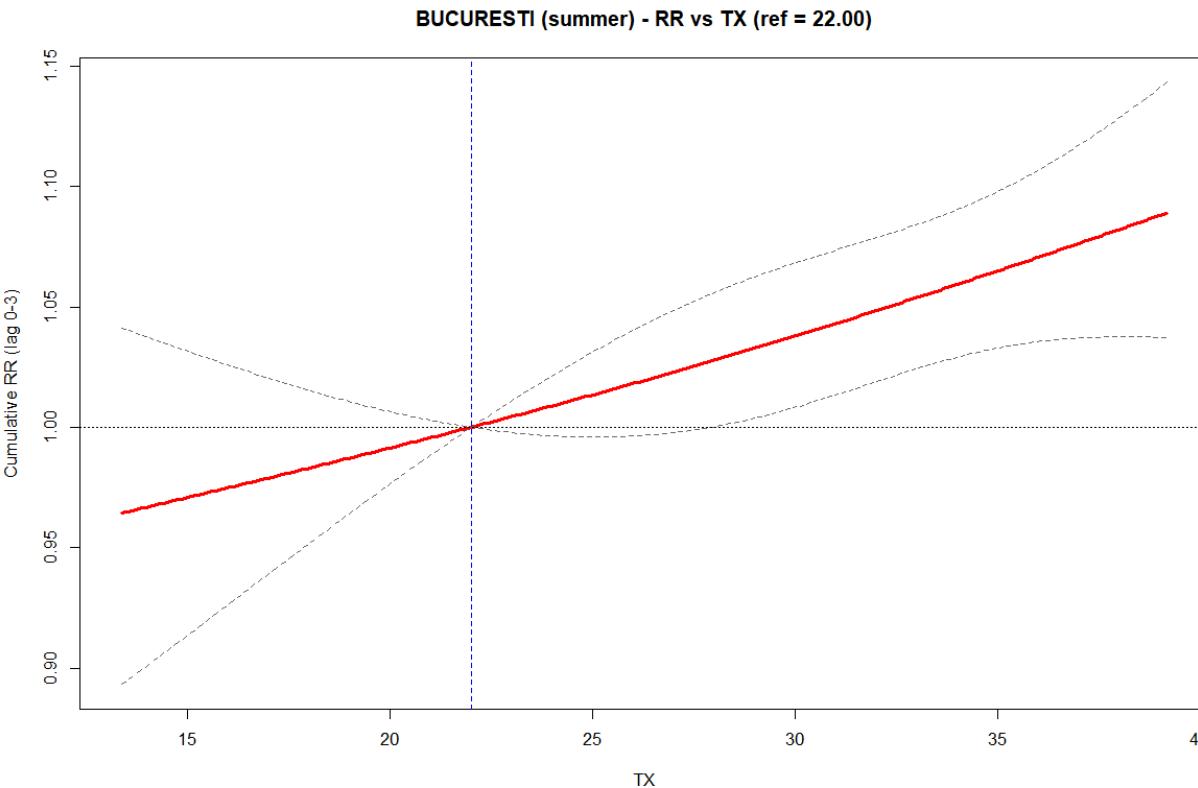
# Implementation

- WP7: A new approach for early warnings on heat events in Romania (research)
  - Heat impact on health (mortality and morbidity)
  - Population perception data
  - Redefining the methodology/thresholds for early warnings for heat events in Romania



# Implementation

**First results: the existing early warning thresholds are overestimated!**



# SCEWERO in numbers

 WP4  
 Ongoing

No	Event	Participants	Target	Achieved
1	Training on heatwaves	15 researchers	Minimum 15 researchers	17 researchers in total
2	Training on drought and floods	8 researchers		
3	Summer school on extreme temperature and precipitation events	17 participants 8 countries/6 widening countries (70 registrations)	45 participants	21 confirmed

 WP6  
 Finalised!

No	Event	Participants	Target	Achieved
1	One online training (UA)	14 researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 5-7 researchers</li> <li>• One technical group created at FAG-UBB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 researchers in total</li> <li>• Technical group created!</li> </ul>
2	One training visit (JLU)	10 researchers		
3	One additional training organised in UBB	12 participants (UBB) 8 participants (FAG)		

**WP8  
Ongoing**

No	Social media account	Followers	Target	Achieved
1	LinkedIn	342	>500	652
2	Facebook	236		
3	Instagram	74		

**Invited to Climate festival  
Climateeurope2**
**Visibility and  
reputation!**


**Climateeurope2**  
1,778 followers  
3mo • Edited •

Continuing into the [#Climateeurope2BelgradeFestival](#) session are climate dialogues in Southeast Europe: Innovation, Impact, Inclusion. Moderated by Vladimir Djurdjevic, the panel gathers regional researchers and practitioners to showcase active projects and, above all, to chart how climate services can move from pilots to reliable, operational tools.

Panelists include [Gorjan Jovanovski](#), [Vassiliki Kotroni](#), [Ibolya TOROK](#), [Biljana Basarin](#)

Discussion will focus on practical cross-border collaboration to enhance services and strengthen resilience; concrete strategies for integrating research outputs into national and local early-warning systems; and the real—rather than assumed—use of data and technology in public and private climate strategies, including the opportunities and limits of AI.

#ClimateServices #ScienceCommunication #ArtScience #Climateeurope2 #BelgradeFestival

**Climate Capsule visit to  
Cluj-Napoca  
Joint organized  
workshop on Climate  
Services  
24-25 March 2026**


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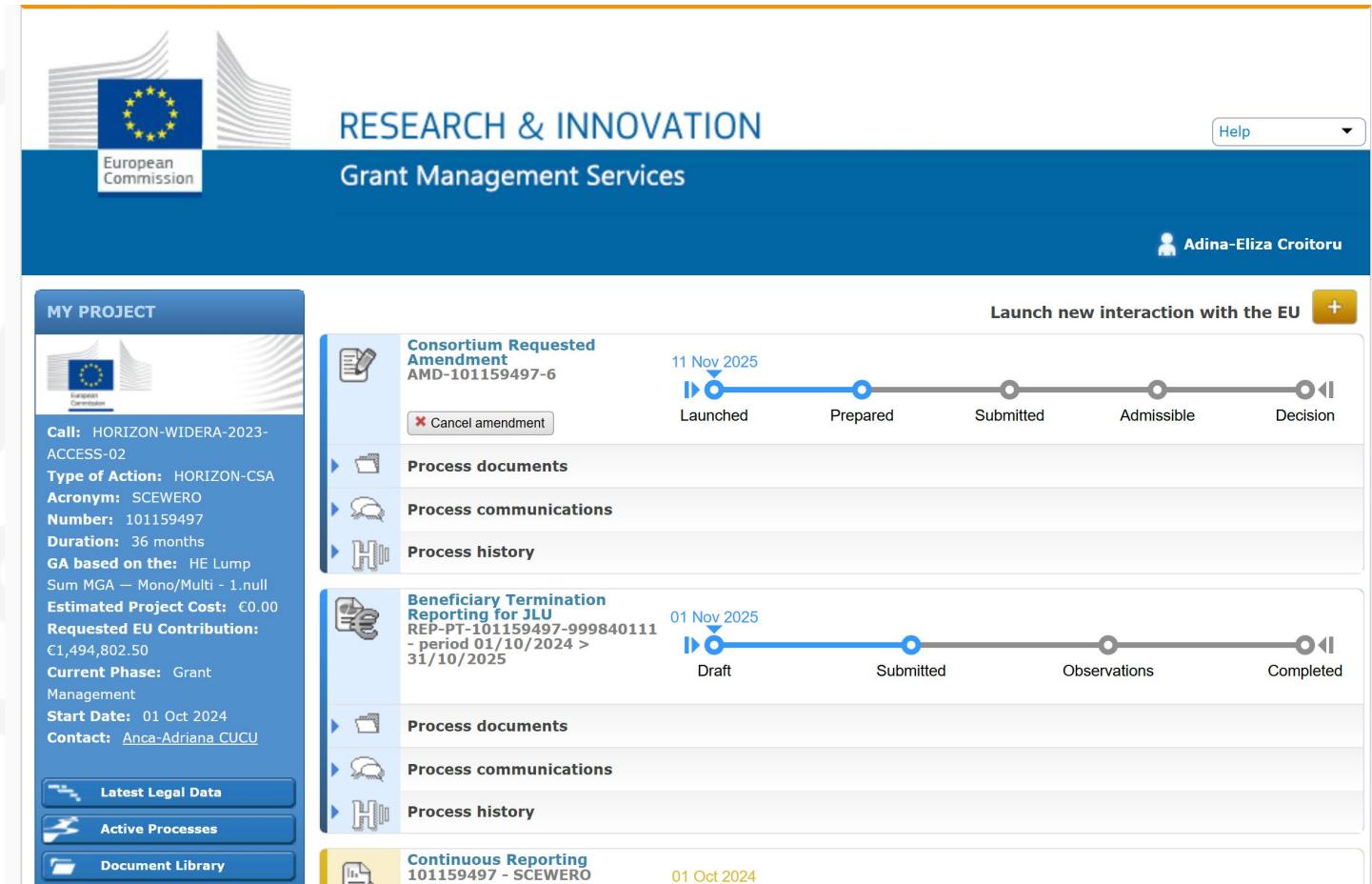
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# Biggest challenge

- **P4 termination:**

- First information: March 2025
- Difficult communication with the partner;
- Conflicting information from the partner;
- Negotiation with the remaining partners to undertake the remaining activities/tasks of the terminated task;
- Preparation of AMDs, TERA, and the terminated partner report.
- Today status: still work in progress...



# Instead of conclusions....

➤ It is not easy, but it is challenging!

➤ Is it worth it?

- Definitely YES!

➤ Would I try again?

- Yes, WHY NOT?...





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# Thank you very much!

Contact:

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[www.scewero.eu](http://www.scewero.eu)



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