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## EXCELSIOR Project

H2020-WIDESPREAD-2018-2020   Grant Agreement No 857510	
Project full title:	<b>ERATOSTHENES: Excellence Research Centre for Earth Surveillance and Space-Based Monitoring of the Environment</b>
Project acronym:	<b>EXCELSIOR</b>
Work Package:	<b>WP9 Communication, Engagement and Networking</b>
Deliverable:	<b>D9.1 Communication Action Plan</b>

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report represents the Communication Strategy and Action Plan for the project EXCELSIOR, Deliverable D9.1. The Communication Action Plan aims to produce a strategic communication roadmap for the ECoE Communication and Dissemination activities to ensure maximum visibility and awareness has been developed and reached targeted audiences. It aims to highlight the different communication target audiences, the tools, methodologies and expected impacts utilised towards their effective involvement in the project's activities. Thus, the communication tools (e.g. website, brochure, events) and strategic communication priorities are tailored considering the diverse nature of the different stakeholder groups.

The present document constitutes the first issue of 'Communication Action Plan' in the framework of the EXCELSIOR project, dedicated to Task 9.1 'Communication strategy and action plan' under the work package WP9 'Communication, Engagement and Networking'. The Communication Action plan will be updated according to the needs of the communication strategy. D9.1 is delivered on Month 02 of the project and focuses on the first 15 months of the project, up to the first reporting period of the project. This document will be updated twice, one in Month 32 and one in Month 70 of the project, shared with partners in order to adopt a common policy related to any communication, branding and outreach activities implemented under the auspices of the ECoE.



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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>CAP</b>	Communication Action Plan
<b>CoE</b>	Centre of Excellence
<b>CUT</b>	Cyprus University of Technology
<b>DEC-MTCW</b>	Department of Electronic Communications- Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works
<b>DIH</b>	Digital Innovation Hub
<b>DLR</b>	German Aerospace Center
<b>ECoE</b>	ERATOSTHENES Centre of Excellence
<b>EMMENA</b>	Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East and North Africa
<b>EO</b>	Earth Observation
<b>ERC</b>	Eratosthenes Research Centre
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>KSA</b>	Knowledge, Skills and Abilities
<b>IPR</b>	Intellectual Property Rights
<b>NOA</b>	National Observatory of Athens
<b>RS</b>	Remote Sensing
<b>TROPOS</b>	Leibniz Institute for Tropospheric Research
<b>WP</b>	Working Package



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The **Communication Action Plan** falls under the scope and activities of WP9 "Communication, Engagement and Networking", whose main objective is to ensure that the impact of the upgrade of the ERATOSTHENES Centre of Excellence (ECoE) is maximized through an effective campaign of communication, dissemination and engagement activities based on a well-defined strategy, a toolbox of communication and outreach material. The Communication Plan has strong inter-dependencies with other WPs of the project – especially in relation to the different needs of different target audiences.

The EXCELSIOR project will receive €15M funding from the European Commission for the Teaming Phase-2 EXCELSIOR project. The funding, which will be available for a duration of 7 years, will provide substantial support for the start-up and implementation phase of the ECoE. **The funding will cover mainly personnel and communication/ dissemination costs of the ECoE.**

The main objective is to assess, develop and implement an internal and external communications plan for the ECoE **aiming to increase the visibility, performance and awareness in line with ECoE's mission, vision and activities.** This can be achieved by identifying and organising the activities to be performed in order to promote the commercial exploitation of the project's results and the widest dissemination of knowledge from the project. Specifically, the plan focuses on the various strategies that can be used to promote the ECoE through the EXCELSIOR project.

The present **Communication Action Plan** is a key mechanism to ensure the adequate progress of the project, to produce the envisaged results, and to successfully achieve the fundamental goals of the ECoE. The latter focusses on creating a sustainable ECoE and therewith a solid relation with international partners, customers and investors.

The Communication Action Plan basically seeks:

- to use the most adequate means for increasing visibility = **'PROMOTE'**
- to inform the community = **'EDUCATE'**
- to promote participation of the community = **'INVOLVE'**
- to develop impact-effective activities = **'RAISE AWARENESS'**

Taking all this into account, this report follows the structure presented below:

**Chapter 2** consists of an introduction to the Communication Action Plan of the EXCELSIOR project.

**Chapter 3** presents the communication and dissemination activities planned for the 1<sup>st</sup> reporting period of the EXCELSIOR project.

**Chapter 4** focuses on the impact expected to arise from the proposed communication action plan of the EXCELSIOR project.

**Chapter 5** concludes the report on the communication action plan.





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## 2. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTION PLAN

The overall strategic objective of the existing project is to upgrade the existing Eratosthenes Research Centre into a Centre of Excellence (CoE) by enhancing the scientific and R&I capabilities of the existing centre. This enhancement will enable the provision of new, highly innovative products and services to national, regional and international public and private sector, in the Space and Earth Observation sectors. Focus will be on supporting the continued competitiveness of the European Space industry, while contributing to its growth and to contribute to National and European Research and Innovation. This will be achieved through research and innovation excellence in the respective scientific and technological disciplines.

The Communication and Dissemination action plan will take into consideration the main expected impact of the projects as described in the project:

- Increase the scientific capabilities of the ECoE and enable it to engage in a strategic growth path pointing to long-term opportunities for economic development.
- Allow the low performing countries; through their improved scientific capabilities; to improve their chances to seek competitive funding in international fora
- Achieve, over the medium to long term, a measurable and significant improvement in terms of research and innovation culture of those countries
- Achieve more intensive research and innovation performers, in terms of access to new research avenues, increased creativity and development of new approaches, as well as a source for increased mobility (inwards and outwards) of qualified scientists

The achievement of these objectives relies heavily on the definition and implementation of an effective communication and dissemination campaign, whereby the different target audiences are well-defined, and the corresponding tools appropriately developed. Thus, the communication efforts that form part of the overall communication and dissemination plan proposed by EXCELSIOR will be carried out based on the following principles:

- **Communication and dissemination activities** address the target groups, consider their requirements, and explain the benefits of EXCELSIOR technologies and their potential application
- **Communication messages** consider and adapt to the target groups
- **Synergies and Networking with other H2020 projects** maximize the impact of the EXCELSIOR project

Considering these main principles, the communication and dissemination plan of EXCELSIOR project will be based on a 4-step methodological approach:

- a) **Identification of Target groups:** This step consists in the identification of the different target audiences, their main interests and needs. It essentially responds to the question "who are we communicating to?".
- b) **Determination of the information to be provided:** The two most important ingredients for effective communication are simplicity and consistency and the best way to communicate simply is to develop key messages.
- c) **Identification of communication and dissemination channels:** The communication and dissemination channel is a medium through which a message is transmitted to its intended



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audience, such as print media or broadcast (electronic) media. For effective messaging, communication and dissemination channels must be chosen to capture the target audiences' attention frequently and precisely.

- d) **Evaluation:** Success or failure of communication / dissemination actions will be measured through quality indicators allowing their monitoring and evaluation.

The overall effort for the preparation of the Communication and Dissemination Action Plan (CAP) will be managed in WP9 and coordinated by the Communication/Dissemination Manager. The objective of WP9 is to develop and implement an effective multi-dimensional communication strategy for the ECoE, maximised through an effective campaign of communication and incorporating appropriate communication tools. This will inform, engage with stakeholders and raise awareness on ECoE research excellence and innovation potential. Target audiences include research bodies, EO industry, SMEs, policy makers and Governmental and regional authorities.

## 2.1 Networking

In order to establish the ECoE as a high-quality research and education Centre at national, regional and EU/global levels, a strategic and targeted plan will be followed promoting ECoE activities and objectives to a multitude of audiences. **This will entail efficient networking at a national, regional and international level**, as well as building and maintaining sustainable exploitation strategies. In this context, the exploitation measures are based on the following pillars:

1. A clearly defined roadmap towards the establishment of the ECoE for Earth Observation.
2. The solid and long-term participation of the ECoE in relevant networking initiatives, such as GEO, ACTRIS, EARLINET, ESA, NASA, NEREUS, IPSRS, GEO-CRADLE, EARSeL, Copernicus Academy & Relay, ETEK, etc.
3. The development of an e-based platform by the ECoE with high quality data for EO research for Cyprus, including free and open Copernicus data, which can also be used for further exploitation by stakeholders.
4. Long-term resource mobilisation strategy, based on experience in competitive proposals preparation and constructive inputs to the elaboration of the subsequent H2020/H2030/FP10 work programmes, as well as extending this capability to other areas of competitive proposals such as ESA programmes, Government Departments and direct collaboration with industry.
5. The establishment of strong links with European and international initiatives, such as Copernicus, GEO and GEOSS (e.g., in the context of EurosGEOSS), etc.
6. The development of a well-targeted and appropriately differentiated stakeholder engagement. The project will rely on the strong experience of several partners in GEO and Copernicus activities and the extensive network of the consortium partners, especially NOA through BEYOND & GEO-CRADLE initiatives. In addition, the project will seek to set up and/or leverage several channels of interaction and to perform targeted consultations that will provide stakeholder input in the establishment and implementation of ECoE.



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## 2.2 Target Audience

The EXCELSIOR project will promote the ECoE through branding, communication, dissemination, etc. in order for the ECoE to be sustainable at the end of the EXCELSIOR project. The ECoE will focus on the integrated collaboration of industry, Government, academia and society to strategically position the ECoE in Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East and North Africa (EMMENA) region. Therefore, the EXCELSIOR project will provide outreach activities to all four pillars of stakeholders (industry, Government, academia and society) to promote cutting edge research in Earth Observation (EO) and Space Technology and to promote the concrete benefits of space to the non-space sector. The EXCELSIOR project will promote its activities through a series of outreach campaigns targeted to the specific national stakeholders. A critical step for an effective and successful communication strategy is a solid understanding of the target audiences and the objectives of the communications aimed at them. To reinforce the uptake of the EXCELSIOR opportunities, the target audiences have been identified as the (a) **The wider scientific and academic community**, (b) **Stakeholders and decision makers**, (c) **The EO industry, including service, application and data providers** and (d) **Media and Public**. Table 1 outlines the communication objectives and key messages of EXCELSIOR to the targeted audiences.

Table 1: EXCELSIOR Communication objectives and key messages towards the different audiences

Audience	Objectives	Key Messages
<b>Scientific and academic community</b>	Promote <b>ERATOSTHENES CoE</b> facilities and services as an enabler for state-of-the-art research activities, communicate scientific results and create threads of discussion, to stimulate further knowledge exchange and collaboration with internationally recognized centres.	Interest for data exploitation has been shown from Research institutes and the Academia to be utilized in research related to the fields covered by the project consortium. Also interest for joined activities, exchange of staff, training workshops and seminars in the areas of EO and RS.
<b>Local authorities, Governmental organisations (Decision Makers and Stakeholders)</b>	Advocate the importance of the science results and services produced, deliver tools and updated information needed for decision making on economic, social and environmental critical sectors, communicate needs and requirements for further technological advancements. A representative member of each of these will participate to the Stakeholder Consultation	Interest has been shown in exploiting the services and products of ECoE to fit specific tailored needs of each department, such as Department of Lands and surveying showed interest in GIS data and Maps, the Department of Forestry in fire monitoring, the Department of Antiquities in Cultural Heritage Mapping, the Department of Water Development in Dam Mapping and evaporation modelling, the



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	Committee	Department of Labour Inspection in Air Quality monitoring, Civil Defence in Emergency Management Services, Department of Fisheries and Marine Research in Marine Environment Monitoring, oil spills, pollution and fish and Cetaceans monitoring, and finally the Geological Survey Department in Earthquake monitoring.
<b>Commercial users / SMEs and the EO Industry (end users)</b>	Advice on business and service opportunities in the region of interest. This target group would include partnering organisations and networks in Europe and internationally.	Interest for Big Data Management, EO Applications, ICT technologies and Receiving antenna Hosting. Also interest for joined activities, exchange of staff, training workshops and seminars in the areas of EO and RS.
<b>Media/Public</b>	Promote socio-economic and environmental benefits; the beneficial outputs of EU-funded initiatives; hands-on applications for the public. Address the broader community and thus contribute to the achievement of an important horizontal effort in H2020 by bridging the gap between science and all actors of society, to deliver timely and updated information in a popularized manner, to generate public interest in the benefits resulting from the ECoE activities.	Interested in the added-value the ECoE will bring to Cyprus but also the benefits from the environmental and societal impact of the services and products

### 2.3 Branding

The EXCELSIOR project needs to create a branding and communication strategy for the ECoE in order to promote the Centre locally and abroad. Branding refers to the distinctive identity of the project, which includes the activities of the project as well as what makes the ECoE unique. By definition, brand strategy is a long-term plan for the development of a successful brand in order to achieve specific goals. A well-defined and executed brand strategy affects all aspects of an organisation and is directly connected to consumer needs, emotions, and competitive environments. The brand identity is communicated frequently and consistently in multiple ways throughout every aspect of the organisation in order to ensure that the ECoE is known by the target markets. The branding of the EXCELSIOR project will result, essentially, in the promotion of the ECoE, as the ECoE is the



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ultimate goal of the EXCELSIOR project. Therefore, an effective brand consists of the following attributes.

**Purpose:** purpose can be viewed as (a) functional – the concept focuses on the evaluations of success or (b) intentional- the concept focuses on success as it relates to the ability to provide services or products.

**Consistency:** For the brand to have a platform to stand on, all messaging needs to be consistent since consistency contributes to brand recognition.

**Flexibility:** the organisation must remain flexible to stay relevant and adjust the brand as necessary.

**Objectives:** effective brand management requires the clear definition of the brand's target market and the objectives that the brand needs to achieve within those markets.

**Target Audience:** the power of your brand relies on the ability to focus. Defining the target market helps strengthen the brand's effectiveness.

Branding is the first step in dissemination activities as it provides the strategy and materials necessary for dissemination. For the EXCELSIOR project, branding considers the following:

- The vision and mission of ECoE.
- The product and services resulting from ECoE.
- Identification of the target markets.
- Explaining the benefit of the product and services to the end-user.
- The strategy for how the ECoE is developing state-of-the-art.
- The products and services in Earth observation and remote sensing that will be available through ECoE.

To develop branding for any organisation or business, the branding process takes place during the lifetime of the organisation (Figure 1); and it is revised according to the needs of the organisation over time.



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## THE “BRANDING” PROCESS



Figure 1: Branding Process (David Thompson)

Branding for the ECoE can begin by responding to the following four questions:

### What are the features and benefits of the ECoE?

The ECoE will serve as a gateway that links EO capacities and technological solutions with regional needs, priorities and challenges. The ECoE will enable the provision of tailored and/or new, highly innovative products and services for the benefit of National, regional and International public and private sectors, in the Space and Earth Monitoring sectors. This will be achieved through research and innovation excellence in the respective scientific and technological disciplines and collaborating with other EO industries, through which the ECoE will develop a pool of scientific expertise and engineering capability as well as technical facilities. The ECoE will be a fully functional Digital Innovation Hub (DIH) and a Research Excellence Centre for EO in the EMMENA region, creating an ecosystem where the state-of-the-art sensing equipment, cutting-edge research, targeted education services and entrepreneurship come together. The ECoE will establish the DIH to foster internal and external innovation uptake processes, thereby ensuring the Centre’s sustainability.



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### Who is the target market?

The target market is composed of four separate markets, outlined next.

- The scientific and academic community (EMMENA and globally).
- Local authorities, governmental organisations (decision makers and stakeholders) (Eastern Mediterranean and EMMENA).
- Commercial partners / SMEs and the EO Industry (Europa and EMMENA).
- End users and media/public (Eastern Mediterranean and EMMENA).

### How will they know the ECoE?

The ECoE will use different branding strategies for the local authorities as well as the EMMENA, European and International markets. This will be accomplished through networking, promotion through Excelsior Consortium Partners, project website, advertising, print media, social media, appearances on television, attending conferences, publication in scientific journals, contributing to events that focus on Earth Observation and Remote Sensing, etc. The EXCELSIOR logo, the logos of the Consortium partners and the information regarding the funding source and grant agreement information will be present on all promotional material, project templates, presentation templates, etc. In this way, the ECoE will be presented as a deliverable of the EXCELSIOR project.

### How will the ECoE develop products and services in Earth observation?:

The messages conveyed through the dissemination activities will explain what solutions and benefits (economic, environmental, social, technological) the ECoE offers. The core message of the dissemination strategy will highlight the main objectives of the EXCELSIOR project through the platform of the EcoE. This message will be properly adjusted to meet the specific needs and characteristics of each target group. Messages will be expressed in scientific, technical, non-technical, political, or explanatory language, depending on the type of audience to which it is addressed. All templates and marketing materials should have the same color scheme, font, logo placement and consistency so that the ECoE and EXCELSIOR logos are easily recognized. The EXCELSIOR project has developed a logo (Figure 2) that appropriately reflects and communicates its brand identity. It includes a satellite and the Earth within the word Excelsior to dictate the brand EXCELSIOR as synonymous with Earth observation. A logo will be created for the ECoE soon after its legal registration with the competent authority of the government of the Republic of Cyprus.



Figure 2: Logo of the EXCELSIOR project



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Therefore, all relevant templates for reports, presentations, promotional materials, etc. should include the branding of the ECoE, in order to reinforce the connection of the ECoE with Earth Observation. The design of the comprehensive branding for the ECoE to targeted activities and actions will ensure a wide visibility and identification of the project for marketing-driven dissemination. A style guide will be developed to provide partners with instructions to use the logo correctly. The logo, under development, could be used in the different layouts. All the files (logos, fonts, graphic templates for final deliverables, graphic templates for presentations, leaflet, brochure, etc.) would be made available on the cloud repository to all partners. A manual on how to use the EXCELSIOR, ECoE and the EC logos will be distributed to the consortium. Based on the visual image, a template was already created for slide presentations, headed notepaper, a promotional postcard flyer, a roll-up, a folder and a notebook. The brochure and other communication materials will be developed in the next months. All ECoE material will include the EXCELSIOR logo and relevant information regarding the research project funding source and grant agreement.

It is important to note that the ECoE will need to create a branding and communication strategy for each thematic area of the ECoE. The four aspects of the DIH, which consist of infrastructure, research, entrepreneurship and education, will need to develop their own specific communication strategy in order to promote and advertise the DIH to the various target markets of the ECoE (Figure 3). In addition, each thematic cluster of the ECoE, which consists of the Environment and Climate cluster, the Resilient Society cluster, and the Big Earth Data Analytics cluster will require three separate logos for each that also reflect the ECoE logo for the target markets to be able to identify each cluster by its unique logo, which will be developed.





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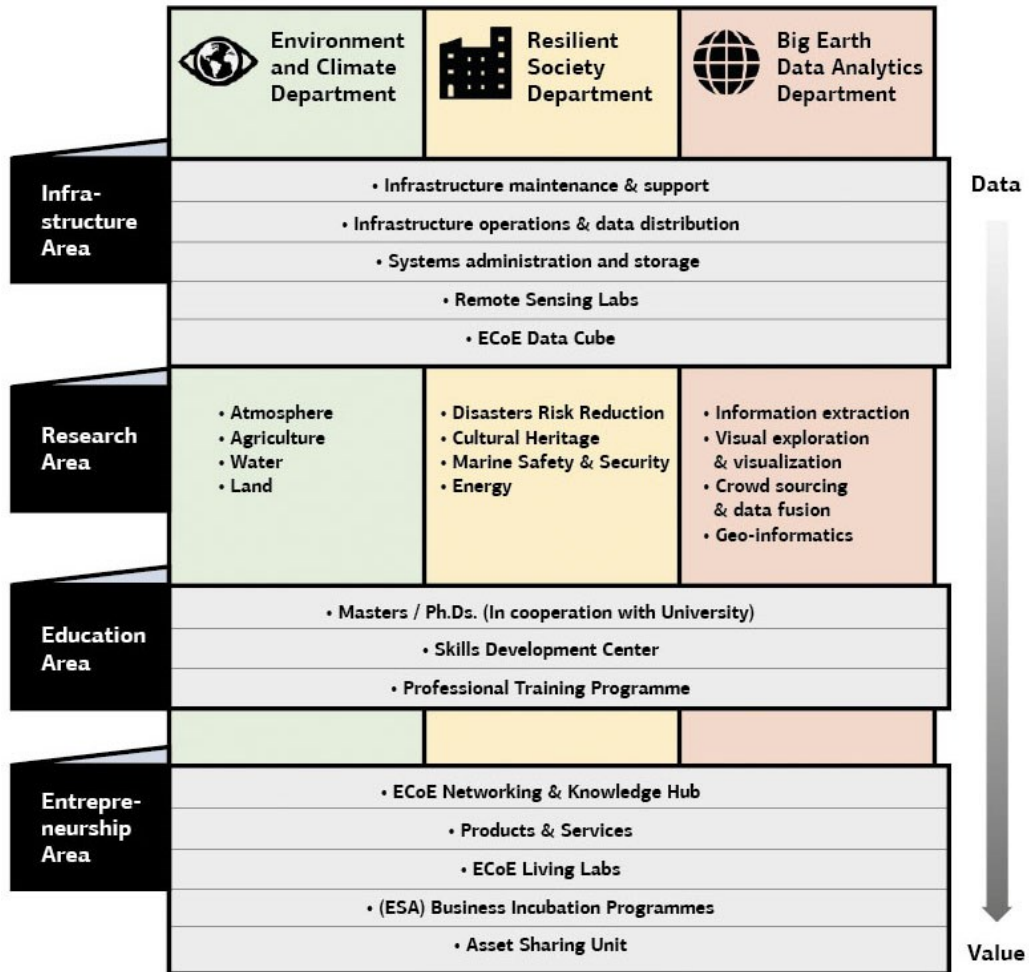


Figure 3: ECoE Digital Innovation Hub



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### 3. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

To ensure that the various outputs of the ECoE are appropriately communicated and disseminated amongst the interested stakeholders, a number of actions will be built on the following main pillars.

- Organisation of Dedicated Events/Conferences /Workshops / consultation & training events.
- Participation in dedicated conferences/workshops/network meetings/high-reputational earth observation events /meetings. Therefore, there should be a solid and long-term participation of the ECoE in relevant networking initiatives, such as GEO, ACTRIS, EARLINET, ESA, NASA, NEREUS, IPSRS, GEO-CRADLE, EARSeL, Copernicus Academy & Relay, ETEK, etc.
- Synergies with other H2020 projects.
- Use existing stakeholder hubs (e.g. Chamber and Industry Association, ETEK, GEOCRADLE, ERC, ATHENA, Cyprus Association for Research & Innovation Enterprises).
- Portals (e.g. GEO) Web magazines portals EO portal.

#### Organisation of Dedicated Conferences/Workshops & training events

Dissemination events in the format of targeted workshops will be organized to maximise awareness and engagement amongst the scientific community but also a wider audience. Six (6) scientific conferences will be organised in EXCELSIOR, two for each of the three thematic clusters. Seven (7) workshops are foreseen (one each year) named ECoE Annual International Workshop followed by organised workshops targeting EMMENA stakeholders.

#### Seminars/Webinars

Dedicated Seminars to users and webinars will be to promote and make visible our results to a variety community of users. For example, Webinars will be set up to be interactive between the audience and with the presenter, e.g. including a Q&A session, using available software (e.g., GoToWebinar, Zoom, etc.). In addition, an array of public events with presentations adapted for the general audience will be planned. These events will target the general public and seek to inform them on the importance of space technology, EO and Remote Sensing (RS) in everyday life. The long-term results of these events are to familiarise the public regarding how EO and RS affects all aspects of our environment and educate the public regarding innovative solutions in policies regarding environmental monitoring, remote sensing science and education sector. The utilisation of the ERC network memberships in FabSpace and Copernicus Academy is considered fundamental in promoting activities such as Hackathons, Space Events, Educational summer schools, career days and other activities in collaboration with these networks.

#### Participation in dedicated conferences/workshops

Partner representatives will participate in external meetings and scientific conferences related to the EXCELSIOR objectives. Their presentations will focus on promoting project outcomes and activities. The results of the research derived from the ECoE will be presented at local and international conferences (e.g., SPIE45, ISPRS46, IGARSS47, GEOVIA etc). One of the main events that the ECoE will attend is the International Astronautical Congress in Dubai 12 – 16 Oct 2020. The ECoE and the



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Strategic partners will participate in several dissemination events in the format of targeted Workshops and scientific Conferences, as well as seminars and open-information days, in order to promote knowledge sharing, network building and exposure to the international EO and remote sensing field through participation in approximately 60 high calibre International Conferences. As well, dissemination will also occur through the publication of results from the ECoE in scientific journals with a high impact factor, such as Remote Sensing of Environment, Remote Sensing Access Journal, ACP & AMT Open Access Copernicus Journals, etc.

### **Synergies with other H2020 projects**

The ECoE will create impact not only through dissemination and communication activities, but also by linking with other H2020 initiatives such as GEO-CRADLE project, BEYOND CoE, ATHENA H2020 Twinning project, FabSpace 2 NETWORK (H2020).

### **Use existing stakeholder hubs**

In order to magnify the dissemination, the existing stakeholder hubs will be utilized. In particular, the Chamber and Industry Association, ETEK, GEOCRADLE, ERC, ATHENA, Cyprus Association for Research & Innovation Enterprises can be used for outreach and dissemination of ECoE.

## **3.1 Communication Strategy & Meetings**

The communication strategy aims to keep all the partners in the project and the Commission fully informed of the project status, planning and other issues necessary to ensure maximum transparency for all those involved parties. The EXCELSIOR project will develop its own website for storing and sharing technical reports, presentations, minutes (secure area) and dissemination material (public area), following templates already successfully used in other H2020 projects coordinated by the EXCELSIOR team. The contact information of each project partner will be produced at the launch of the project and will be updated regularly and kept in the secure area of the website (according to the EU's GDPR). Over the duration of the project, there will be 15 plenary meetings (1 inaugural + 14 plenary meetings at six-monthly intervals) to ensure the effective collaboration of the Consortium. These meetings will be hosted by the partners, except for dissemination events that will be specially organised to maximise external participation. E-mail and teleconferencing will be used to actively engage all partners in-between the meetings.

## **3.2 Communication toolkit**

The communication tools of EXCELSIOR will be developed and tailored based on the different needs of the specific audiences targeted by the project and of the specific areas of the ECoE. Table 2 provides an overview of the communication tools that will be utilised during the project to engage with different target groups. The Dissemination and Communication Manager together with the Stakeholder Manager and WP9 Leader will be responsible for communication tools and activities in close collaboration with the Leaders of the technical WPs.

The ECoE will develop an effective campaign of communication to inform, engage with stakeholders and raise awareness on ECoE research excellence and innovation potential. Target audiences include



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research bodies, EO industry, SMEs, policy makers and Governmental and regional authorities. The communication tools will be developed and tailored based on the different needs of the specific audiences targeted by the project and of the specific areas of the ECoE. The marketing department will be responsible for all dissemination activities and communication tools in close collaboration with the Managers of the respective areas/units. The activities can also be coordinated with the corresponding initiatives, including Copernicus FPA programme, Copernicus Relays and Copernicus Academy network, to maximise impact in the national and cross-border audiences.

The table below provides an overview of the communication tools that will be utilised in the course of the project towards the engagement of different target groups. An overview of the interactions between communication tools, target audiences and the purposes as described throughout this document is given in the Table 2.

Table 2 : EXCELSIOR Communication Toolkit and targeted audiences

	Communication Tool	Target						Purpose
		Decision Makers	Research	Industry	End-users	Media	Public	
Mass media (one-way communication)	Website	X	X	X	X	X	X	Raising awareness of project goals and activities, publishing news and enabling subscribers to the Newsletter
	Video	X	X	X	X	X	X	Two-minute video to promote the project on social media
	Newsletter	X	X	X	X	X	X	Communicating project highlights, maintaining the interest and awareness of subscribers, disseminating results
	Leaflet/ Brochure	X		X	X	X		Raising awareness of EXCELSIOR, especially in workshops/ conferences organized or attended by the consortium
	Promotional and marketing material	X		X	X	X	X	Advertise EXCELSIOR, especially in workshops/ conferences organized or attended by the consortium
	Social Media Channels		X		X	X	X	Create dialogue with target groups, announce events and utilize modern communication means
	Science and technical publications (peer reviewed)		X	X	X			Peer reviewed science and technical publications will increase the visibility and attention of the ECoE in the international science community.



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	TV/RADIO appearances	X		X	X	X	X	Open a new channel of communication with the general public with dedicated information on ECoE research areas.
Interpersonal (two-way communication)	Activities and Science Cafes			X	X	X	X	Promote the idea of ECoE through a more sociable way reaching students and interested members of the public
	Webinars	X	X	X	X			Webinars will be set up to be interactive between the audience and with the presenter, for example including a Q&A session. The goal of these webinars is to promote and make widely visible the main scientific results, primarily to the public sector, and end users.
	ECoE Help desk	X	X	X	X			Help Desk will be served as a direct link between different stakeholders of the ECoE, and to act as an interface between the ECoE and the external users (public sector, students, etc). The main goal of the platform's support service is to help the users to overcome any obstacles that may appear.
	Dedicated seminars	X	X	X	X	X	X	Organisation of dedicated seminars to users. The seminars will address specific potential users (from the public sector, companies and academia), covering their needs. The seminars will highlight the ECoE thematic areas which are more suitable and relevant for region's market. The seminars will focus in demonstrating the EO data transformation along the entire value chain, from raw Sentinel data to final products and services that provide actionable knowledge, transparency, increase in efficiency and in some cases commercial value. The seminars will be also a tool to map the interest of the different actors participating in ECoE.
	Career Days	X	X	X	X	X	X	Organisation of Annual Career Days. These days will give the opportunity to students to explore a variety of careers related to EO and learn how education is connected to a successful future.



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## 4. IMPACT

The EXCELSIOR project will have economic, social and innovation impact on Cyprus and the EMMENA region. To maximise the impact of the EXCELSIOR project, a combination of measures has been defined for implementing efficient dissemination, exploitation and communication plans. The projected impacts are measured by key performance indicators (KPIs), which will be examined on an annual basis and modified accordingly.

### 4.1 Economic Impact

The ECoE will act as a catalyst for investment and job creation. The creation of the ECoE, which will incorporate the use of integrated EO information, will increase competitiveness and attract funding with immediate benefit for the economy and employment of the country. It will provide employment to up to 60 highly qualified personnel, specialised in the fields of remote sensing and Earth Observation and to up to 50 junior researchers and PhD candidates, thereby providing a significant impact on the local employment. Indirect jobs will also be created to service the infrastructure and as a result of increase scientific and economic activity. Also, the Entrepreneurship aspect of the ECoE will encourage the development of SMEs through the Incubator Program and through the creation of spin-off and start-up companies.

Earth observation applications address critical global challenges such as climate change, water availability, food security, natural disaster mitigation, safe and secure transport, energy and resource security, agriculture forestry and ecosystems, coasts and oceans, health issues, infrastructure management national security. The vision of the ECoE within the first 7 years of operation is to be able to contribute to the above challenges sustained in the public and industrial entities in the performance of specific task, thus supporting economic development and sustainability.

Direct economic growth	By YR4 (1-4)	By YR7 (1-7)
Jobs directly generated by ECoE or start-ups/spin-offs associated with research activities of ECoE (in full-time equivalent (FTE) person-years for early stage researchers [ESR] and experienced researchers [EXP])	ESR=47FTE EXP=48FTE	ESR=145FTE EXP=112FTE
Positions for Senior Researchers	19	22
Number of start-ups and/or spin-offs created utilising products or expertise gained from the ECoE Research Areas	0	3
ECoE Partnership/relations with industry (Number of companies, SMEs)	10	50
Total volume of funding associated with R&D projects commissioned to the ECoE (based on the source of funding)	€5M	€13M
Number of ECoE proposals submitted for competitive research funding (coordinator or partner)	180	370



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## 4.2 Societal Impact

The ECoE will also have a societal impact, mainly be on public health and quality of life as a result of research conducted on atmosphere, agriculture and water. The ECoE will address societal challenges by providing services and applications for stakeholders to utilise Earth observation data to make informed decisions regarding the health and welfare of their citizens, such as data regarding air quality, dust levels, water management, and environmental protection. In addition, the ECoE will conduct research on disasters (natural and/or anthropogenic) and how to minimise the risk to the public as a result. In addition, research in smart cities will improve the quality of life for citizens. The ECoE will also monitor and document cultural heritage sites, thereby providing precise information to stakeholders, which can then be used for conservation efforts. The EXCELSIOR project will adhere to the ECoE’s social responsibility agenda, inspire Earth observation research culture to new generations and promote the EXCELSIOR vision to civil society.

Societal Impact	By YR4 (1-4)	By YR7 (1-7)
Thematic Networks and Technological platforms addressed by the ECoE	8	12
Local networks addressed for new membership	3	5
Activities targeting to non-academic audiences to increase of scientific culture of the country	10	15
Services developed for needs of Public Administration on the level of municipality,	5	12
Number of Educational and professional training programmes for Teachers/ Students/ professionals	4	8
Partnership with public authorities (Number of municipalities, community councils and Non-Governmental organisations)	10	30
Partnership with Government (Number of ministries, Departments, Governmental organisations)	5	10

## 4.3 Innovation impact

The EXCELSIOR project is expected to have significant impacts on: Environment, Agriculture and Food Security, Health, Tourism, Energy, Transport, Urban Growth and Built Environment. Earth observation techniques will be used to undertake high-calibre research aiming to develop Earth observation products, solutions and applications that can improve conditions in Cyprus and the EMMENA region. The establishment of a data acquisition receiving station in collaboration with DLR and International partners will provide coverage of environmental and security challenged areas at the cross-roads of three continents. In addition, the establishment of a ground based remote-sensing station in collaboration with TROPOS will enable real-time and long-term assessment of air quality issues as well as data on aerosols, clouds, and environmental state. The creation of the unique supersite with continuous observational data incorporated into existing scientific network data bases provides an added value for the National, regional and European stakeholders for atmospheric and environmental research.



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The ECoE will be able to provide detailed information regarding the EMMENA region, especially in terms of atmospheric, agricultural, marine, cultural heritage and disaster management data. The ECoE, the Strategic Partners and partnering organisations will benefit from the knowledge transfer that will take place as a result of collaboration on European and International research projects and services.

Innovation	By YR4 (1-4)	By YR7 (1-7)
Number of patents/ new methodologies/prototypes /designs developed	0	3
Number of start-ups and/or spin-offs created utilising products or expertise gained from the ECoE Research Areas	0	3
Turnover of companies; start-ups and/or spin-offs directly related to ECoE activities	0	€180K
Outreach to the European and EMMENA ecosystem of stakeholders regarding EO products, services and applications, thereby nurturing connectivity within the European and EMMENA industrial and stakeholder network.	*Participation to at least 20 business-oriented workshops. *Organisation of at least 6 communication and dissemination events in Cyprus, EU and EMMENA	

#### 4.4 Measures to maximise impact

To maximise the impact of the EXCELSIOR project, a combination of measures has been defined for implementing efficient dissemination, exploitation and communication plans. The stakeholders who seek to exploit for the mutual benefit the science and the innovation opened by the ECoE, include the following: (i) National, Eastern Mediterranean, regional European and International stakeholders link to the well identified, inventoried, mapped, and sustained community of the GEO-CRADLE Community Activity, which includes an ecosystem of 320 Government organisations, universities, research organisations, private companies/SMEs, public entities, decision makers, and business sectors from the region; (ii) International Science, Academia/Researchers; (iii) Infrastructure/technological assets: European Research Infrastructures (e.g., ACTRIS, EPOS), national/regional Infrastructures (data hubs, portals, stations, networks, in-situ); (iv) Multipliers: Copernicus Entrusted Entities, International Funding Organisations, Industry Associations ; (v) European and global initiatives: H2020, GEO & GEO initiatives and flagships, Copernicus, GEOSS, EuroGEOSS, Partnership Instruments, Partnership on Research and Innovation e.g., PRIMA, European Regional Development Fund, Development Cooperation Instrument, Policy frameworks; (vi) Value adders: European, National, MENA industry, SMEs, entrepreneurs, start-ups; (vii) Industrial Sectors: indicatively Telecom/Facilities, Energy, Climate, Minerals, Agriculture, Insurance, Tourism, Transport, Health; (viii) Data consumers: Companies, public administration, decision makers, value adders.





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Other national scale channels include the various departments of the Government of Cyprus, the local municipalities and R&D SMEs, and the national structures supporting research and innovation, such as the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation providing funding originating from national and EU sources. Significant channelling of the ECoE’s activity is expected to take place in the context of needs and priorities of the private sector and educational channels (via lifelong seminars, capacity building, trainings-workshops, and educational programs, etc). These channels are expected to provide a twofold support in the form of in-kind, financial and/or technical assistance to the ECoE and will be used as carriers for disseminating the developed innovation and the activities of the ECoE at national level and abroad in the neighbouring countries/regions.

The ECoE will interface with its partners through several channels, including participation in research funding proposals, training opportunities, open data access and notifications regarding future opportunities. Direct channels for contacting stakeholders will include the ECoE website, newsletter, ECoE participation in industry events, direct contact with stakeholders and open workshops. Indirect channels for advertising the ECoE will include partner websites and activities, as well as presentations at conferences and seminars. Dissemination cornerstones in EXCELSIOR are the ECoE Knowledge and Networking Hub. Table 3 provides a brief description of EXCELSIOR activities and objectives, as well as their matrices.

Table 3: EXCELSIOR activities & objectives with measures

Type of Activity & Specific Objective	Measures
Outreach to the European and EMMENA ecosystem of stakeholders regarding EO products, services and applications, thereby nurturing connectivity within the European and EMMENA industrial and stakeholder network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation to at least <b>20 business-oriented Workshops</b>.</li> <li>• Organisation of at least <b>6 communication and dissemination events</b> in Cyprus, EU and EMMENA</li> <li>• <b>Six (6) scientific conferences will be organised</b> in EXCELSIOR, two for each of the three thematic clusters.</li> <li>• <b>Seven (7) workshops are foreseen</b> (one each year) named <b>ECoE Annual International Workshop</b> followed by organised workshops targeting EMMENA stakeholders.</li> </ul>
Exploit untapped market opportunities in the National and EMMENA region in relation to SDG-related priorities through the DIH for EO and networking activities	<b>At least 30 participations to regional events (EMMENA)</b> , including Conferences, in support to sustaining and enriching the networking activities of the organisation of 6 events.
Provide access to the ECoE Asset Sharing Unit, including infrastructure, education, ECoE Networking and Knowledge Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>6 events</b> to satellite reception facilities and GBS.</li> </ul>



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applications and services and entrepreneurship service area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>At least 6 events</b> (e.g., professional training, Workshops, Seminars).</li> <li>• <b>Minimum 3 events</b> to use the models, algorithms, forecasting, now casting from EMMENA stakeholders.</li> <li>• <b>Minimum 25 events to ECoE Living Labs, ESA Business Incubator Programmes</b></li> </ul>
Expand visibility to the National, regional and European stakeholders in basic and applied research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>15 Webinars</b> addressed to stakeholders</li> <li>• <b>organisation of 15 workshop events</b> in various environmental fields</li> </ul>
Ensure a sustainable agenda in safeguarding the environment, while influencing and shaping national and European policies regarding public health and citizen welfare to benefit the community and improve the quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>12 collaborative activities</b> with national stakeholders</li> <li>• <b>Participation in at least 3 EU Workshops for EO policies</b> per year</li> </ul>
Raise awareness on e.g., Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction and Water Resources Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>6 hosting</b> of training events</li> <li>• <b>6 Workshop organisation</b></li> <li>• <b>6 Seminars</b></li> <li>• <b>6 Open Information Days</b></li> </ul>
Develop and promote in EO science culture within primary and secondary education levels in collaboration with Copernicus Academy, NASA Training Centre and Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>15 school visits</b></li> <li>• <b>7 Open days</b> at ECoE</li> <li>• <b>7 participations</b> to annual Researcher’s night</li> </ul>

#### 4.5 Assessment

The impact of the communication activities is strongly tied to the success of the stakeholder engagement and dissemination activities. Thus, the tools which were developed as part of the communication strategy were leveraged in a holistic approach. Appropriate indicators to assess the impact of dissemination and communication include: (A) *Communication material distributed in conference and events*, (B) *Email campaigns – including Newsletters abiding to the GDPR Directive*, (C) *Social Media*, (D) *Journal Articles*, (E) *Press Releases*, (F) *Excelsior website/portal*

The detailed analysis of the impact of the individual activities of the project will be carried out in the course of the project. Table 4 summarises the possible impact of the Communication activities.



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Table 4: List of communication outputs and type of measurements

Communication Output	Type of Measurement
<b>Communication material distributed in conference and events</b>	Number of communication material in relation with the number of the attendees
	# Printed Portfolio # Banners # Photobanner # EXCELSIOR brochures double side # Folders
<b>Email campaigns – including Newsletters</b>	Number of emailing campaigns, new subscribers for the newsletter
	#
<b>Social Media</b>	Members per month, Followers, number of threads and discussions
	# 5 Social Media Profiles Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn
<b>Journal Articles /Blogs</b>	( <b>Twitter</b> ) Tweets Followers Likes
	( <b>Facebook</b> ) Likes Followers
	Number of articles in journals /Blogs
	Article at GEO’s Blog
	Article at EO portal
<b>Press Releases / Media</b>	Article at Copernicus4regions
	Article at EARSeL portal
	Number of press releases/ number of media appearances
	# articles for coverage of events (press releases)
	# replications of opinion articles # interviews # articles for coverage of events (press releases) # YouTube videos # TV appearance <b>Total = # Media appearances</b>
<b>Excelsior website/portal</b>	# TV appearances # Opinion articles from Members of the Research Centre # Videos at the YouTube Chanel of EXCELSIOR <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0hHy-5jxOMS-SP9Z6pPMwg">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0hHy-5jxOMS-SP9Z6pPMwg</a> # media publications regarding events #Interviews by ERC
	Number of hits, number of unique users, number of visitors per month, average duration of visit
	# new visitors # subscriptions # page visits



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The communication and dissemination activities of the ECoE will be available within the EXCELSIOR website on dedicated pages, as shown on Table 5.

Table 5: Communication activities on EXCELSIOR website

Organisation of Dedicated Workshops & training events	<a href="http://www.excelsior2020.eu/events/">http://www.excelsior2020.eu/events/</a>
Participation in dedicated conferences/workshops	<a href="http://www.excelsior2020.eu/events/">http://www.excelsior2020.eu/events/</a>
Press Releases	<a href="http://www.excelsior2020.eu/press-release/">http://www.excelsior2020.eu/press-release/</a>
Excelsior in Media	<a href="http://www.excelsior2020.eu/excelsior-in-media/">http://www.excelsior2020.eu/excelsior-in-media/</a>
Excelsior for Schools	<a href="http://www.excelsior2020.eu/excelsior-for-schools/">http://www.excelsior2020.eu/excelsior-for-schools/</a>
Excelsior for Stakeholders	<a href="https://www.excelsior2020.eu/how-to-get-involved/">https://www.excelsior2020.eu/how-to-get-involved/</a>



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## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Considering the communication targets presented previously and the key messages aimed at them, EXCELSIOR will implement a Communication Action Plan to promote the ECoE covering the following actions:

- identify all target groups
- develop a brand for the ECoE through the EXCELSIOR project
- develop a set of communication methods and tools for promoting the ECoE
- ensure adherence of all external communication and publicity with programme requirements
- identify the actions and costs required for external communication and publicity
- gauge the impact of the different communication activities and adjust appropriately

The elements of the Communication Action Plan presented in this document will be updated and enhanced as the activities of the project progress. Reports on communication and dissemination activities, as well as more detailed presentation of the proceedings of conferences and workshops will be available in the Periodic Report as well as the Deliverables for WP9. During the period of the project all project partners will support the communication and dissemination activities. During the duration of the project, Excelsior will promote ECoE through an effective campaign of communication, dissemination and engagement activities based on a well-defined strategy, a toolbox of communication and outreach material. The activities for communication and dissemination of the ECoE are indicative and subject to change.




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## APPENDIX I – EXCELSIOR EVENTS TO DATE

<p><b>22 November, 2019</b> EXCELSIOR Public Inauguration Event under the presence and auspices of The President of Cyprus, H.E. Mr. Nicos Anastasiades.</p>	
<p><b>20-22 November, 2019</b> EXCELSIOR Kick-off meeting</p>	
<p><b>16 November 2019</b>, Meeting Director of the Dep. of Electronic Communications team &amp; Director of Antiquities with the Minister of Transport, Communications &amp; Works regarding EXCELSIOR. These meetings were followed by Press Conference to the MEDIA.</p>	
<p><b>16 November 2019</b>, EuroSDR meeting, where the EXCELSIOR project was presented</p>	







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<p><b>8 November 2019</b>, Meeting with the Deputy Minister of Education in Greece Prof. Vassilios Digalakis to discuss the EXCELSIOR project</p>	
<p><b>6 November 2019</b>, Meeting at the School of Rural and Surveying Engineering of the National Technical University of Athens to discuss collaboration regarding the EXCELSIOR project</p>	
<p><b>6 November 2019</b>, Participation in annual meeting of H2020 project "Research" Remote Sensing Techniques for Archaeology (Grant Agreement No. 823987)</p>	
<p><b>5 November 2019</b>, Meeting with the Hellenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency to discuss the EXCELSIOR project</p>	



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<p><b>5 November 2019</b>, Meeting with Strategic Partner, NOA, to discuss the EXCELSIOR project and the Beyond Centre</p>	
<p><b>31 October 2019</b>, Presentation regarding the EXCELSIOR project through the 'Cyprus in Germany', which was attended by the German ambassador</p>	
<p><b>22 October 2019</b>, 11 PhD Positions announced at the Department of Civil Engineering &amp; Geomatics at the Cyprus University of Technology for the EXCELSIOR project</p>	
<p><b>30 October 2019</b>, Presentation of EXCELSIOR to the University of Brighton</p>	





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<p><b>25 October 2019</b>, Participation in the third general meeting of the International Network to Encourage the Use of Monitoring and Forecasting Dust Products (inDust)</p>	
<p><b>25 October 2019</b>, Meeting with George Palas, the General Director of Alexander College, to discuss further collaboration through the EXCELSIOR project</p>	
<p><b>17 October 2019</b>, Meeting with director of VodaAI regarding detection of water leaks in water utility systems using space technology</p>	
<p><b>17 October 2019</b>, Participation at the stakeholder presentations of regarding the 6 Centres of Excellence through the H2020 project</p>	



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<p><b>16 October 2019</b>, Meeting with the Lands and Surveys Department of the Cyprus Republic</p>	
<p><b>15 October 2019</b>, Presentation of EXCELSIOR to MSc students in Geo informatics and Geospatial Technologies , Department of Civil Engineering and Geomatic, Cyprus University of Technology</p>	
<p><b>8 October 2019</b>, presentation at the SilviLaser 2019 conference in Brazil</p>	
<p><b>2 October 2019</b>, presentation at the IUFRO 2019 conference in Brazil</p>	



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## APPENDIX II – FUTURE EVENTS

Targeted workshops to stakeholders

Dedicated seminars to end-users

Public events, such as Researcher's Night

Organisation of Annual Career Days

Dedicated ECoE Workshops

Participation at conferences such as

- RSCy2020,
- SPIE Remote Sensing 2020,
- ISPRS46,
- IGARSS47,
- GEOVIA,
- International Astronautical Congress 2020
- EGU

Dissemination in peer-reviewed journals such as

- Remote Sensing of Environment,
- Remote Sensing Access Journal,
- ACP &AMT Open Access Copernicus Journals,