

KEY ROLES AND MAIN ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL CONTACT POINTS IN CLUSTER 3 SUPPORTED BY SEREN5



SEREN5 is a project funded by the European Union under Horizon Europe, supporting the network of National Contact Points (NCPs) for Cluster 3 – Civil Security for Society.

Its main goal is to strengthen cooperation, exchange of experience, and capacity building among NCPs to enhance the participation and success of applicants in security-related research and innovation.

YOU CAN DISCOVER MORE HERE!



WHAT ARE NATIONAL CONTACT POINTS (NCPs)?

DEFINITION AND ROLE

- National Contact Points (NCPs) are national structures appointed by the relevant authorities in each EU Member State and associated country to represent the Horizon Europe programme within their local research and innovation (R&I) communities.
- They act as the main interface between the European Commission (EC) and potential applicants, connecting European programmes with national stakeholders.

ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

- NCPs are established and funded by national governments, and can operate through various institutions such as ministries, universities, research centres, or specialised agencies.
- The NCP systems differ across countries – some are centralised, others decentralised, depending on national priorities and resources.



MISSION AND PRINCIPLES

- All NCPs share a common mission: to provide professional information, guidance, and support that facilitates participation in Horizon Europe.
- Their operation follows the NCP Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles, which define:
 - Core services to be provided to applicants
 - Cooperation mechanisms with the European Commission
 - Key values: transparency, confidentiality, and impartiality

PURPOSE AND IMPACT

- NCPs ensure that Horizon Europe is accessible to all potential participants – regardless of sector, discipline, or experience level.
- They contribute directly to achieving the programme's objectives and impacts by supporting broader participation and strengthening the quality of proposals.



MAIN ACTIVITIES OF NCPs IN CLUSTER 3



1 INFORMATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

- Disseminate up-to-date information on Horizon Europe funding opportunities, participation conditions, and policy priorities.
- Organise information and promotional activities such as info days, webinars, and partnering events.
- Strengthen links between science and society, and promote gender balance and inclusiveness.

2 ASSISTANCE, ADVICE AND TRAINING

- Provide on-the-ground advice and guidance to researchers, organisations, SMEs, and newcomers.
- Support applicants in understanding rules, procedures, and types of actions within Horizon Europe.
- Offer training sessions, workshops, and capacity-building activities.



3 PARTNER SEARCH AND NETWORKING SUPPORT

- Assist stakeholders in finding suitable partners for Horizon Europe projects.
- Facilitate cooperation among research institutions, companies, and public bodies at the European level.
- Participate in SEREN5 and other brokerage events to promote collaboration and exchange of experience.



4 SIGNPOSTING AND COOPERATION

- Direct potential participants to other relevant national or regional support services when appropriate.
- Ensure smooth cooperation among NCPs by promoting joint activities and sharing best practices.
- Provide access to complementary funding opportunities, European Partnerships, and Missions.



5 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

- Actively engage within the SEREN5 network and other thematic NCP initiatives.
- Exchange experiences, provide mentoring, and contribute to strengthening the NCP community.
- Maintain strong cooperation with the European Commission and other Horizon Europe stakeholders.



PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF THE CL3 NCPs DAILY WORK



COMMUNICATION WITH THE EC

- Regular contact with DG HOME – Unit F.2: Innovation & Security Research
- Use of [CIRCABC](#) platform (via EU Login) for updates and documentation



INFORMATION SUPPORT

- Use of:
- [Research Enquiry Service](#) – dedicated support channel for NCPs
 - [Funding & Tenders Portal \(FAQ\)](#) – official answers and updates



COORDINATION AND MEETINGS

- Annual CL3 NCP Meeting (Brussels or online)
- Sharing of latest info, statistics, and policies
- Participation costs for one delegate per country covered by the European Commission



KEY SECURITY RESEARCH EVENTS

- [Cluster 3 Infoday & Brokerage Event](#)
- [SMI2G Brokerage Event](#)
- [Security Research Event](#)
- [CERIS](#) – knowledge-sharing community on security research



WORKING WITH DATA AND TOOLS

- [CORDIS](#) – database of EU-funded projects
- [Horizon Dashboard](#) – interactive participation and funding statistics
- Tools used for identifying partners



COOPERATION WITH NCP NETWORK

- Active participation in the [SEREN5](#) network
- Collaboration with [Horizon Academy](#), [IDEAL-IST](#), [GREENET](#), [CARE4BIO](#) and others
- Exchange of knowledge of support services



COLLABORATION WITH MEMBERS

- Close cooperation with national Programme Committee delegates
- Alignment with national priorities
- Contribution to shaping future Horizon Europe work programmes

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