

CONNECT @HYGIA

RESEARCH LIAISON OFFICE (RLO)

HYGIA

TRUST. PERSEVERANCE. GROWTH

ACTIVITY REPORT

HYGIA

CEM & ABC, Cluj-Napoca, România
office@hygia.ro | www.hygia.ro | Facebook Hygia



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

WHO WE ARE

3

PROJECTS DEVELOPED IN
2024

14

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

18

IMPACT OF THE ACTIVITIES

20

STAFF AND PERSONNEL

21

MAIN RESULTS

22

PLANS FOR 2025



Hygia, established in 2007, is a Romanian-based consulting company that has grown into a dynamic team of professionals committed to delivering high-quality, tailored services to its clients. In 2024, Hygia achieved accreditation as an Official Liaison Office for Research (OLC) under Ministerial Order 21779 of September 10, 2024. Recognized by the Ministry of Research, Innovation, and Digitalization, Hygia is now certified to facilitate innovation and technology transfer in key areas such as bioeconomy, advanced manufacturing, and functional advanced materials. This accreditation, valid for five years, highlights Hygia's leadership in connecting research providers with economic operators.

Connect@Hygia: Linking Innovative Market Players

As the Research Liaison Office, Connect@Hygia is dedicated to fostering relationships and partnerships between economic operators and providers of research-development-innovation outcomes. The office directly provides services to stakeholders to stimulate innovation and facilitate the transfer of technology, knowledge, and solutions to meet market demands.

From OLI@Hygia to Connect@Hygia

Hygia has long recognized the needs of the private sector, and for over 17 years, it has made its mission to address the real challenges faced by businesses. In 2021, Hygia achieved its first accreditation as a Liaison Office with the Industry (OLI@Hygia). Following legislative changes, the office evolved into its current identity: Connect@Hygia = Research Liaison Office. Through this updated framework, Hygia continues its journey of empowering businesses by providing access to knowledge, innovation, and technology transfer.

Thus, through the Research Liaison Office – Connect@Hygia, Hygia is officially recognized as a "research and knowledge dissemination organization" in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 of the European Commission of June 17, 2014, on declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market under Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty.

HYGIA'S EXPERTISE



CLUSTER INNOVATION SERVICES

Hygia offers expertise in supporting clusters and innovation initiatives, focusing on the development and consolidation of cluster organizations. The services include designing cluster strategies, managing innovation projects, and providing access to resources and best practices. Hygia facilitates collaboration between businesses, research institutions, and public authorities, driving economic growth and regional competitiveness.



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING

Hygia assists clients in transforming ideas into actionable projects by identifying appropriate funding sources and securing necessary financial resources. This includes comprehensive support in preparing project proposals, managing application processes, and aligning projects with funding requirements. The team ensures clients maximize their chances of securing national and international funding.



PROJECT AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Hygia provides end-to-end project management services, ensuring the effective planning, execution, and monitoring of projects. The company emphasizes achieving milestones, managing risks, and delivering results aligned with clients' objectives. Additionally, Hygia offers business management consulting services, helping organizations optimize processes, increase efficiency, and build resilient operational frameworks.



VISION & MISSION

Hygia generates prosperity by contributing to the development of the entrepreneurial spirit, wherever its people and projects reach.

The company supports entrepreneurs through dedicated services, generating development based on openness and long-term collaboration.

Present on four continents through its projects and actions, Hygia invites everyone to get to know it better.

MANIFESTO

Hygia is a creator of things done differently, a pioneer in the way it approaches challenges, with its own recipes and a high level of ambition.

The company accepts risk, values valuable experiences, sees beyond obstacles, and embraces mistakes to continuously improve.

Hygia develops ideas, shares beliefs, provides support, and creates value through its work, always with care for and towards people.

PROJECTS DEVELOPED IN 2024



In 2024, Hygia SRL continued its mission to foster innovation, collaboration, and sustainable growth through a diverse portfolio of projects. These initiatives were carried out in partnership with international organizations, governmental bodies, and private entities, emphasizing Hygia's role as a reliable and impactful project development partner.

As a key player in fostering innovation, collaboration, and sustainable growth through a wide range of impactful projects. These initiatives were carried out in partnership with international organizations, governmental bodies, and private entities, reflecting Hygia's dedication to creating long-term value for the communities and sectors it serves.

A part of Hygia's success lies in the comprehensive services it offers through Connect@Hygia, its accredited Research Liaison Office. These services are tailored to bridge the gap between research providers and economic operators, ensuring that innovative solutions, technology transfer, and knowledge-sharing drive measurable outcomes for SMEs, clusters, and other stakeholders.



Innovation Consulting and Technology Transfer

Hygia connects businesses with research providers to foster partnerships and facilitate the adoption of innovative technologies, helping companies gain a competitive edge.

2

Assistance In Developing New Products And Services

By assessing current capabilities, Hygia helps businesses develop tailored strategies to integrate advanced technologies like AI, IoT, and blockchain into their operations.

4

Intellectual Property Management

Hygia ensures businesses protect and maximize the value of their innovations through effective intellectual property management strategies.



1

Assistance In Developing New Products And Services

Hygia supports the design and implementation of new market-ready products and services, ensuring alignment with industry needs and future trends.

3

Cluster Development And Capacity Building

Hygia provides customized services to enhance clusters' research and innovation capacities, equipping them to thrive in competitive and dynamic markets.

5



These services form the backbone of Hygia's project development efforts, empowering businesses and clusters to achieve their goals, drive growth, and adopt sustainable practices.

Hygia's projects are supported by funding from prestigious European programs, including the Competitiveness Operational Program (COP), Digital Europe, the Program for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (COSME), the Single Market Program (SMP), and Horizon Europe, among others.

Building on this strong foundation, Hygia implemented a diverse range of projects in 2024, each aligned with its mission to strengthen regional economic ecosystems, support SMEs, and promote collaboration within clusters and networks. The projects spanned various fields, including innovation, environmental sustainability, entrepreneurship, and community development.

Below is a detailed presentation of the projects developed in 2024:

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR FURNITURE – TRANSYLVANIAN FURNITURE CLUSTER

In 2024, Hygia SRL continued its commitment to innovation and development by actively supporting the Centre of Excellence for Furniture (CEM), an integral part of the Transylvanian Furniture Cluster. This strategic initiative aims to elevate Romania's furniture industry by fostering sustainability, innovation, and global competitiveness. The CEM plays a critical role in empowering cluster members and driving transformative change across the sector.

General Objective

The project seeks to strengthen the position of the Transylvanian Furniture Cluster as an innovative and European-interest cluster by establishing Romania's first Centre of Excellence for Furniture.

Budget

- Total Project Value: 59,488,155.79 RON



HYGIA'S CONTRIBUTIONS

- Conducting the initial feasibility study and preparing technical documentation.
- Overseeing construction and ensuring operational readiness of the center for training, research, and development.
- Facilitating international economic missions and promotional campaigns to maximize the project's impact.

KEY ACTIVITIES

- The construction of the center was complemented by state-of-the-art equipment to facilitate advanced R&D activities.
- Creating a marketplace, virtual showroom, and solutions for virtual participation in trade fairs and events using Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), and Mixed Reality (MR) technologies.
- Engaging in over 78 events to promote the cluster and foster new business relationships for its members.
- Conducting at least four economic missions to help cluster members access international markets, including the US, Canada, Egypt, and South Africa.

TRANSILVANIA DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB (TDIH)

The Transylvania Digital Innovation Hub (TDIH) is a flagship initiative that drives the digital and green transformation of businesses and public administration in the Transylvania region. Recognized as Romania's first fully operational Digital Innovation Hub, TDIH is a cornerstone of regional innovation, and Hygia SRL has been a key contributor to its success and ongoing impact.

Services of TDIH

- Hygia enables SMEs and public entities to trial advanced digital technologies, minimizing risks and optimizing investments.
- Hygia delivers specialized training to enhance digital and managerial skills among regional stakeholders.
- Hygia assists businesses in securing funding for implementing digital solutions that boost competitiveness and sustainability.
- Hygia promotes partnerships and knowledge exchange between businesses, academia, and public institutions, strengthening the innovation ecosystem.



HYGIA'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Hygia has been instrumental in the development and execution of TDIH, leveraging its extensive expertise in consulting, project management, and business development. The company's contributions include:

- Hygia played a pivotal role in conceptualizing and structuring the project, ensuring alignment with regional and European goals for digital transformation.
- Hygia actively designs and delivers tailored services to businesses and public institutions, including business modeling, funding acquisition, and digital transformation strategies.
- As a partner, Hygia oversees critical aspects of the hub's operations, contributing to its long-term strategic direction and ensuring the delivery of impactful outcomes.
- Hygia facilitates access to national and European funding opportunities, empowering businesses to adopt advanced digital technologies and grow sustainably.

MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024

- Hygia contributed to obtaining 12,524,421.83 RON in funding from the Romanian Authority for Digitalization, expanding TDIH's capacity to support SMEs and public administration in Northwestern Romania.
- The European Digital Innovation Hub in Transylvania (TEDIHT) was featured in the 2024 Industrial Development Report by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), showcasing the hub's impact on digitalization and sustainability.
- Hygia has played a key role in delivering services to regional stakeholders, enabling them to embrace digital transformation and strengthen their market positions.

FURNITURE GO INTERNATIONAL (FGOI)



FGOI

Furniture Go International

The Furniture Go International (FGOI) project is a strategic initiative launched in September 2021, spanning three years, with the primary aim of establishing a European Strategic Cluster Partnership. This partnership seeks to enhance inter-regional cooperation within the furniture and related industries across the European Union and extend its reach to four target countries: the United States, Canada, South Africa, and Egypt.

General Objective

The FGOI project aims to create a European Strategic Partnership for Clusters to intensify inter-regional cooperation in the furniture and related industries within the EU and towards four third-party countries: the USA, Canada, South Africa, and Egypt. The partnership will promote industrial growth and business expansion, supporting excellence, entrepreneurship, transferability, and mutual trust between partners and associated SMEs.

1

Hygia's Involvement

Hygia was instrumental in the FGOI project, leading the development of its concept, establishing a strong consortium, and securing funding. The company conducted a feasibility study for an international office to support the furniture industry and organized economic missions in South Africa to foster collaboration and expand markets. Hygia managed project execution, maintained quality, mitigated risks, and led communication efforts to promote the project's objectives and outcomes effectively.

2

Activities and Achievements

Hygia facilitated key activities in the FGOI project, including the development of a Market Insights Report to guide SMEs in internationalization and exploratory visits to target countries such as South Africa, the USA, Canada, and Egypt to identify market opportunities. Business matchmaking missions in New York City and Toronto strengthened alliances between European SMEs and North American partners. Additionally, Hygia played a central role in launching the GO Furniture META-CLUSTER, a strategic alliance of eight European clusters to promote collaboration and innovation in the furniture industry.

Future Outlook

The FGOI project has significantly contributed to the internationalization of European SMEs in the furniture sector by providing them with the tools, knowledge, and networks necessary to enter and thrive in new markets. Hygia's active involvement have been important in achieving the project's objectives and ensuring its ongoing success. As the project progresses, it continues to foster industrial growth, support excellence, and promote sustainable business practices within the furniture industry.

SILEO – SUPPORTING RECOVERY AND BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION OF LIGHTING & FURNITURE SMES FOR THE EUROPE INDUSTRY OF TOMORROW

The SILEO project is a key initiative under the European Union’s Single Market Programme (SMP), designed to help lighting and furniture SMEs adopt advanced technologies and circular business models to boost resilience, sustainability, and competitiveness. Running from September 2022 to August 2025, this project represents a critical effort to support industry recovery and prepare SMEs for the challenges of tomorrow.



Hygia’s Contribution

As a key partner in the SILEO project, Hygia drives its success through several impactful activities. The company gathers data from Romanian furniture SMEs to shape project strategies and tailor solutions. It creates implementation guides to help SMEs adopt new technologies effectively, ensuring tangible results. Hygia also manages the distribution of Digital Transformation Vouchers, enabling businesses to access resources for integrating advanced tools and improving operations. Additionally, Hygia organizes innovation-driven hackathons to foster collaboration between SMEs and technology providers. Finally, it leads communication and dissemination efforts, promoting project achievements and encouraging stakeholder engagement.

Key Activities Under SILEO

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Hygia’s Vision

Through its leadership and active involvement in SILEO, Hygia is driving meaningful change in the Romanian furniture and lighting sectors. The company’s commitment to innovation, sustainability, and industry resilience underscores its role as a trusted partner for SMEs navigating digital and green transformations.

By aligning its expertise with the project’s goals, Hygia not only supports the growth of local businesses but also contributes to strengthening Europe’s industrial landscape for the future.

JOB SHADOWING INITIATIVE FOR UKRAINIAN CLUSTER PRACTITIONERS (EU4BUSINESS PROGRAM)

In 2024, Hygia continued its strategic commitment to fostering cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange through the Job Shadowing Initiative for Ukrainian Cluster Practitioners. This program was implemented within the framework of the “EU4Business: SME Recovery, Competitiveness and Internationalisation” initiative, co-financed by the European Union and the German Government and implemented by GIZ.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

1. Hosting Andrii Liudvichuk – Cluster Manager of Rivne Furniture Cluster

- Hygia facilitated a two-week job shadowing program for the Ukrainian cluster manager, offering insights into cluster management, innovation, and business development.

2. Experience Exchange & Industry Engagement

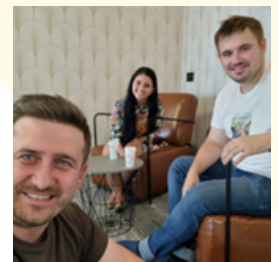
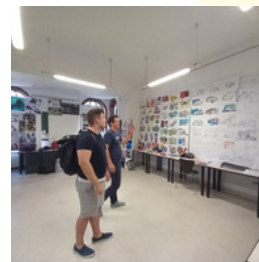
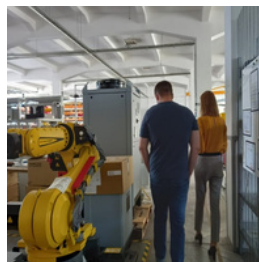
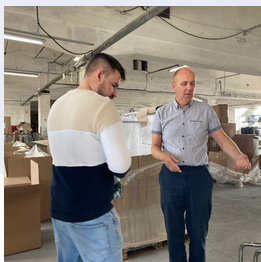
- Visits to leading Romanian companies (Antares Romania, Napochim, Salice Comprod, Kadra, Inno Robotics) to explore supplier opportunities and partnerships.
- Collaboration with CEM (Centre of Excellence for Furniture) and the University of Art and Design Cluj-Napoca (UAD) on skills development and innovation exchange.

3. Strengthening EU-Ukraine Cluster Cooperation

- Established direct connections between Ukrainian and Romanian clusters, setting the foundation for long-term business partnerships.
- Recognized by EU4Business and GIZ for supporting Ukraine’s SME integration into the EU market.

4. Follow-up and Next Steps

- Hygia participated in the EU-Ukraine Cluster Exchange event to assess the program’s impact and outline future collaboration initiatives.



IMPACT AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

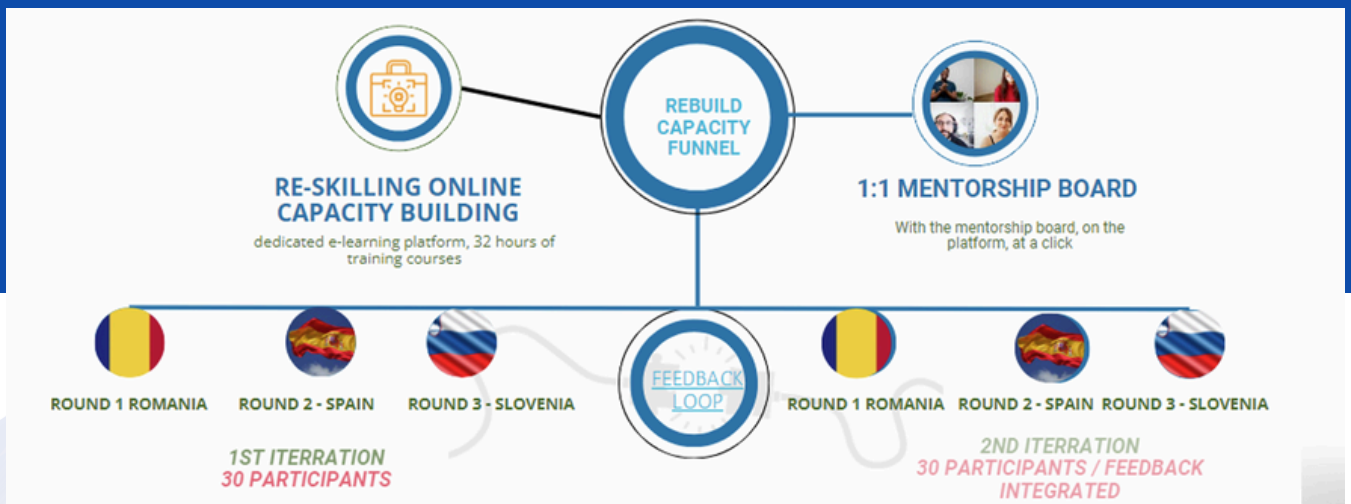
Hygia’s involvement in this initiative demonstrated its commitment to knowledge exchange, international collaboration, and SME empowerment. By integrating Ukrainian businesses into EU cluster networks, the program strengthened cross-border cooperation, laying the groundwork for future projects, including the reBUILD initiative.

REBUILD PROJECT

In 2024, Hygia became a key partner in the reBUILD project, an initiative aimed at fostering Ukraine-EU cluster partnerships for strategy, sustainable development, and innovation in the construction and furniture ecosystems. The project is implemented by four clusters from Romania, Ukraine, Spain, and Slovenia, each bringing complementary expertise in internationalization, skills development, professional training, and business growth.

KEY OBJECTIVES AND IMPACT

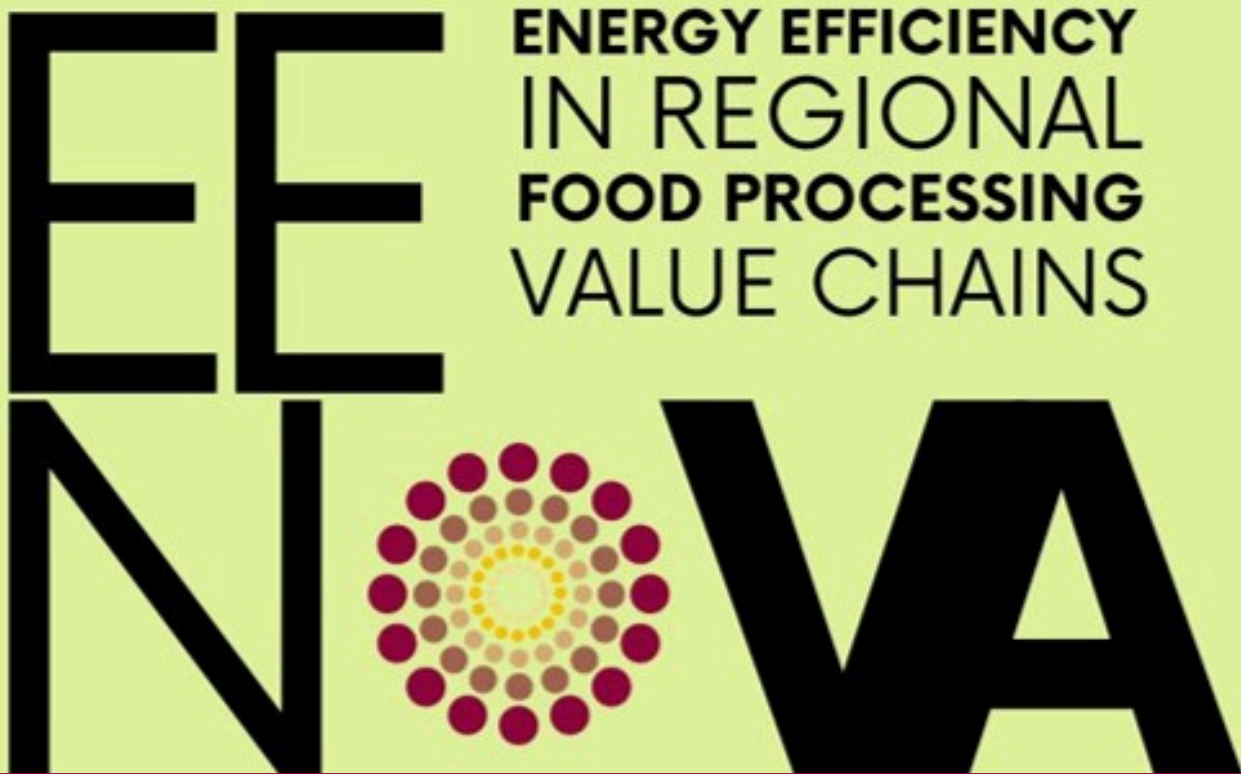
- Helping companies transition to digital and green business models while strengthening cross-border cooperation.
- Implementing upskilling and reskilling programs to enhance cluster management and SME competitiveness.
- Promoting sustainable business models that reduce waste and increase resource efficiency.
- Strengthening collaboration between Ukrainian and EU clusters, ensuring long-term policy alignment and resilience.



PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Creating a strategic collaboration framework between European and Ukrainian clusters to enhance market access and resilience.
- Organizing training programs and mobility exchanges in Romania, Slovenia, and Spain to equip SMEs with the necessary digital and technical skills.
- Developing a customized portfolio of business services to facilitate the integration of Ukrainian SMEs into the European market.
- Ensuring that the project delivers a lasting impact by strengthening partnerships and supporting SME adaptation to European regulations.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN REGIONAL FOOD PROCESSING VALUE CHAINS



ENERGY EFFICIENCY
IN REGIONAL
FOOD PROCESSING
VALUE CHAINS

In 2024, Hygia played a pivotal role in the ongoing EENOVA project, which aims to enhance energy efficiency in regional food processing value chains across Europe. Launched in October 2023 under the LIFE22-CET program, the project spans until October 2026 and focuses on guiding small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in adopting tailored energy efficiency improvements.

Hygia's Contributions

Hygia's expertise have been integral to EENOVA's progress and impact. Key contributions include:

- **Project Development and Management:**

Hygia has led the conceptualization and coordination of project activities, ensuring alignment with sustainability goals and energy efficiency objectives.

- **Data Collection and Analysis:**

Hygia has spearheaded the collection of energy usage data from regional food processing SMEs, translating findings into actionable and replicable models for improvement.

- **Implementation Oversight:**

Hygia has coordinated the testing and validation of energy efficiency solutions to ensure they are effective, scalable, and adaptable to diverse operational contexts.

- **Communication and Dissemination:**

Hygia has actively promoted the project's goals and achievements, raising awareness about the benefits of energy efficiency and engaging stakeholders in adopting sustainable practices.

Vision

Hygia's participation in the EENOVA project drives transformative change in the European food processing industry by helping SMEs reduce their energy footprint while improving efficiency. It establishes replicable, region-specific energy models to support long-term sustainability and strengthens collaboration between industry players and technology innovators. By delivering tailored solutions and practical implementations, Hygia ensures lasting value for businesses and contributes to a greener, more efficient future.

ADVANCED DIGITAL SKILLS ON BLOCKCHAIN FOR TRUSTED FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS

The Advanced Digital Skills on Blockchain for Trusted Food Supply Chains project, abbreviated as TRUST-FOOD, is an initiative funded by the Digital Europe Program, running from May 2022 to December 2025. The project aims to enhance the advanced digital skills of employed individuals, particularly within small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as job seekers. It focuses on providing access to specialized training courses reflecting the latest developments in blockchain technologies applied holistically to the food supply chain.

Hygia's Involvement

Hygia plays a role in the TRUST-FOOD project by contributing to project proposal development, aligning objectives with SME needs and blockchain trends. It actively manages the project to ensure effective execution and goal achievement. Key contributions include conducting a comprehensive literature review to inform training material development, creating a learning ecosystem to support knowledge sharing, and leading pilot courses on blockchain applications in the food supply chain. Hygia also drives communication efforts to promote project activities and disseminate results for widespread engagement.

Hygia's Vision and Contribution

Through its active involvement, Hygia demonstrates its commitment to advancing digital competencies in the food supply sector. By leveraging blockchain technology, the project enhances transparency, traceability, and trust within supply chains. Focusing on education and practical application, Hygia empowers SMEs and job seekers to navigate and excel in the evolving digital landscape effectively.



SYSTEMIC INNOVATIONS TOWARDS A ZERO FOOD WASTE SUPPLY CHAIN

The Systemic Innovations Towards a Zero Food Waste Supply Chain project, known as ZeroW, is a comprehensive initiative funded under the Horizon 2020 program, running from January 2022 to December 2026. The project aims to develop and implement innovative solutions to significantly reduce food loss and waste (FLW) across the entire food supply chain, promoting a transition to a sustainable and circular food system.

Hygia's Involvement

As an active partner in the ZeroW project, Hygia contributes to both management and implementation activities:

- **Project Management:** Hygia is involved in coordinating project activities, ensuring effective collaboration among partners and adherence to project timelines.
- **Implementation Activities:**
 - a. **Data Collection Platform Development:** Hygia contributes to developing a platform for collecting data on food loss and waste in the Cluj area, providing valuable insights to inform strategies for FLW reduction.
 - b. **Community Engagement:** Participating in events organized within the Food Waste community, Hygia shares ideas and supports the implementation of innovative solutions to reduce FLW in the Cluj ecosystem.

Through these efforts, Hygia demonstrates its commitment to promoting sustainable practices and reducing food waste within the local community and beyond.

ZERO W

EUROPEAN NETWORK TO PROMOTE GRAZING AND TO SUPPORT GRAZING-BASED FARMS ON THEIR ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGIC PERFORMANCES AS WELL AS ON ANIMAL WELFARE

The Grazing4AgroEcology project, officially titled "European Network to Promote Grazing and to Support Grazing-Based Farms on Their Economic and Ecologic Performances as Well as on Animal Welfare," is an initiative funded under the Horizon Europe program, running from September 2022 to February 2026. The project aims to support farmers in implementing grazing-based systems that benefit the environment, animal welfare, and human health, ultimately leading to the production of healthier food with a reduced impact on natural resources.



Hygia's Involvement

As a partner in the Grazing4AgroEcology project, Hygia plays a significant role in both management and implementation activities:

- **Project Management:** Hygia is actively involved in coordinating project activities, ensuring that objectives are met within the established timelines and facilitating effective collaboration among partners.
- **Network Development:** Hygia is responsible for creating a network of partner farmers and young farmers, fostering a community committed to adopting sustainable grazing practices.
- **Support for Innovation Adoption:** The company supports farmers in adopting new solutions and innovative practices, providing guidance and resources to facilitate the transition to grazing-based systems.
- **Partnerships with Publishers:** Hygia is involved in establishing partnerships with publishers specializing in grazing and organic farming, aiming to disseminate knowledge and best practices to a broader audience.

Through these efforts, Hygia demonstrates its commitment to promoting sustainable agriculture and enhancing the economic and ecological performance of grazing-based farms. By actively engaging with farmers, researchers, and industry stakeholders, Hygia contributes to the project's goal of producing healthier food while minimizing environmental impact.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

GO Furniture Meta-Cluster Project

In 2024, Hygia led the GO Furniture Meta-Cluster, a European initiative uniting eight organizations from six countries to foster collaboration in the furniture industry. Hygia promoted sustainability and digital innovation by integrating green practices and advanced technologies. The meta-cluster launched at ORGATEC Germany, positioning it as a hub for innovation and partnerships. Under Hygia's leadership, the cluster expanded global market reach, initiating dialogues with stakeholders in North America and Asia, while mentoring young professionals to address industry skill gaps. This leadership underscores Hygia's commitment to innovation and sustainability in Europe's furniture sector.



SILEO Project

In 2024, Hygia continued its active role in the SILEO project, driving digital and circular transformations in the furniture and lighting industries. Key achievements included organizing the Advanced Technology Adoption Call, providing SMEs with up to 10,500 EUR per project to implement innovative solutions. Hygia also led the SILEO Hack Days in Padova, fostering collaboration through B2B networking and workshops focused on digital optimization and sustainability.

Hygia facilitated the deployment of Digital Transformation Vouchers, enabling SMEs to adopt advanced technologies and improve efficiency. The company actively contributed to knowledge sharing and dissemination, raising awareness about digital solutions and resilient business models. Additionally, as a cluster management expert, Hygia guided SMEs in aligning their projects with SILEO's objectives, promoting connections with technology providers.



EXCELIVING Project

In 2024, Hygia built on the outcomes of the EXCELIVING – Excellent Living Environments project, which concluded in December 2023. This initiative, aimed at creating sustainable and eco-friendly living spaces, united five European clusters from sectors like construction materials, furniture, housing automation, and wellness technologies.

Hygia supported local and regional SMEs by utilizing tools and resources developed during the project to align with sustainability requirements. The company facilitated best practice networks, enabling knowledge sharing and fostering innovation across industries. Workshops focused on digital transformation and eco-friendly practices equipped businesses with strategies to adapt to market demands while reducing environmental impact.

As a leading member of the Transylvanian Furniture Cluster, Hygia leveraged its cluster management expertise to promote sustainable solutions and drive innovation in modern living environments.



In 2024, Hygia continued its active involvement in key European projects aimed at sustainability, innovation, and digital transformation across agriculture, food, and waste management sectors.

Below are the key highlights:



Grazing4AgroEcology

In 2024, Hygia actively contributed to the Grazing4AgroEcology project under Horizon Europe, promoting sustainable grazing practices that benefit the environment, animal welfare, and human health. Hygia facilitated collaborations between Romanian farmers, European researchers, and technology providers to exchange best practices. It also organized specialized training sessions to enhance ecological and economic performance on grazing-based farms and supported communication efforts to raise awareness about responsible grazing systems, emphasizing environmental restoration and resource efficiency.



ZeroWaste

In 2024, Hygia contributed significantly to the ZeroWaste project under Horizon 2020, focusing on reducing food loss and waste across the supply chain to promote a circular food system. Hygia collaborated on monitoring systems to analyze food waste in the Cluj region and developed targeted intervention strategies. The company supported the implementation of innovative waste-reduction measures at key stages of the supply chain and organized awareness campaigns to educate local stakeholders and businesses on practical solutions for minimizing food waste.



TrustFood

In 2024, Hygia made significant contributions to the TRUST-FOOD project, which focuses on enhancing digital skills in blockchain technology for SMEs and job seekers in the food supply chain. Hygia organized pilot training sessions to demonstrate blockchain applications for improving transparency and traceability in food production. It also contributed to developing training materials tailored to the agri-food sector and played a key role in connecting technology providers with food supply companies to ensure the practical adoption of blockchain solutions.



EENOVA

In 2024, Hygia played a role in the EENOVA project, which promotes energy efficiency and sustainability in regional food value chains. Hygia conducted detailed energy audits across food processing chains, identifying opportunities to reduce energy consumption and transition to renewable sources. It developed actionable plans to help companies adopt sustainable energy solutions, collaborated with industry stakeholders to align operations with green practices, and actively raised awareness about sustainability initiatives, reinforcing its leadership in energy innovation.

Highlights for Hygia's Activities in Republic of Moldova, Chişinău

2024 marked a significant milestone for Hygia as the company expanded its footprint to the Republic of Moldova and strengthened its engagement with local and international stakeholders through impactful initiatives.

Inauguration of Hygia's Office in Chişinău

Hygia officially opened its new office in Chişinău, reinforcing its commitment to fostering regional collaboration and supporting local entrepreneurs. The new office aims to:

- Provide tailored solutions in funding, innovation, and digital transformation to Moldovan businesses.
- Support SMEs in accessing European funds and implementing sustainable business practices.
- Foster long-term partnerships with local clusters and institutions to drive economic growth and innovation.



Participation in Clusters Meet Regions Conference

In October 2024, Hygia participated in the Clusters Meet Regions conference in Chişinău, a platform for discussing regional development and innovation. Key activities included:

- Presenting successful initiatives like the Centre of Excellence for Furniture (CEM) and the GO Furniture Meta-Cluster, highlighting their strategic impact on the furniture and design industries.
- Engaging in discussions on how clusters can accelerate regional economic development through collaboration with public institutions, universities, and research centers.
- Sharing 12 years of expertise in managing clusters, including the Transylvanian Furniture Cluster and the AgroTransilvania Cluster, showcasing Hygia's leadership in fostering cross-border partnerships and supporting regional growth.



Highlights for Hygia's Activities in TEDIHT

In 2024, Hygia continued its impactful contributions to the TEDIHT (Transylvania European Digital Innovation Hub in Transylvania) initiative, focusing on fostering innovation, digitalization, and collaboration for SMEs and public institutions.

TEDIHT Community Engagement Event – April 24, 2024



Hygia organized and actively participated in a major event at the Centre of Excellence for Furniture (CEM) in Cluj Innovation Park. The event brought together businesses, technology providers, and stakeholders to explore the benefits of TEDIHT and its services. Highlights included:

- Showcasing digital solutions and services aimed at supporting SMEs in adopting innovative technologies.
- Facilitating networking opportunities and connecting participants with potential collaborators and partners.
- Promoting the integration of digital tools to enhance business performance and market reach.

Strategic Networking and Partnerships



Hygia strengthened its collaboration with regional and international partners, focusing on expanding TEDIHT's services. Efforts included:

- Establishing links with technology providers to create tailored solutions for SMEs.
- Developing long-term strategies to enhance the hub's capacity to support digital transformation in Northwestern Romania.



Support for Digital Transformation

TEDIHT provided practical resources and advisory services to SMEs, helping them implement advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), and Big Data analytics. Hygia played a role in coordinating these activities, ensuring alignment with the needs of regional businesses.

Training and Workshops



Hygia facilitated several training sessions and workshops under TEDIHT, focusing on:

- Building digital competencies for entrepreneurs and professionals.
- Raising awareness of the benefits of adopting cutting-edge digital tools and practices.

IMPACT OF THE ACTIVITIES

In 2024, Hygia's diverse projects and initiatives delivered significant and measurable impacts across key areas, including regional development, sustainability, innovation, and international collaboration. The activities not only empowered SMEs but also contributed to advancing digital and green transformations, benefiting industries and communities alike.

1. REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CLUSTER EMPOWERMENT

- **GO Furniture Meta-Cluster:**

Hygia strengthened the European furniture industry through its leadership of this meta-cluster, which united eight partners from six countries. The cluster facilitated market access to North America, Africa, and Asia, while promoting sustainable practices and digital transformation among SMEs.

- **Centre of Excellence for Furniture (CEM):**

Activities at the CEM, such as training sessions on digital prototyping and sustainable manufacturing, enhanced the technical and managerial capacities of local businesses, setting a benchmark for innovation and collaboration.

- **Office in Chişinău:**

The inauguration of Hygia's office in Chişinău marked a significant milestone in regional expansion. This office:

- Strengthened cross-border collaboration, particularly between Moldova and Romania.
- Provided a platform for fostering entrepreneurial growth and supporting local clusters.

2. SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- **SILEO Project:**

Hygia supported SMEs in reducing their carbon footprint by offering digital transformation vouchers and organizing hackathons to explore sustainable solutions in the furniture and lighting industries.

- **EENOVA Project:**

By conducting energy audits in regional food chains, Hygia identified actionable opportunities for reducing energy consumption and transitioning to renewable sources. This laid the groundwork for implementing sustainable practices in year two of the project.

- **Grazing4AgroEcology:**

Hygia empowered farmers to adopt sustainable grazing systems that improved ecological performance and ensured healthier food production, aligning with environmental goals.

- **ZeroW Project:**

Efforts to minimize food waste across the supply chain supported the transition to a circular food economy, benefiting both the environment and local communities.

3. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND INNOVATION

- **TEDIHT:**

Through the Transilvania Digital Innovation Hub, Hygia provided SMEs with access to cutting-edge technologies such as AI, IoT, and Big Data, enabling them to modernize their operations and improve efficiency.

The TEDIHT event at the CEM in April 2024 brought together businesses and technology providers, creating a community focused on innovation and collaboration.

- **TRUST-FOOD Project:**

Hygia facilitated blockchain training programs, empowering food supply chain actors to enhance transparency, traceability, and trust using digital solutions.

- **Hackathons for Innovation:**

Events under the SILEO and TEDIHT projects connected SMEs with technology providers, fostering collaborative solutions for specific industry challenges.

4. KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Workshops and Training Programs:

Targeted programs under EXCELIVING and TEDIHT enhanced the digital and managerial skills of participants, equipping them to adapt to evolving market demands.

- Support for Young Professionals:

Through the GO Furniture Meta-Cluster and hackathon initiatives, Hygia provided opportunities for young professionals to engage in hands-on innovation, addressing skill gaps in the workforce.

5. INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION AND MARKET EXPANSION

- Furniture Go International (FGOI):

Hygia facilitated matchmaking missions in North America and Africa, helping European SMEs expand their reach and build strategic alliances.

- Clusters Meet Regions Conference:

At the Chişinău conference, Hygia showcased its expertise in cluster management and highlighted successful initiatives like the CEM and GO Furniture Meta-Cluster, strengthening its role as a connector between regional and global markets.

6. IMPACT OF OLC ACCREDITATION

- Strengthened Position as a Strategic Partner:

This accreditation solidifies Hygia's role as a critical connector between research institutions and the private sector, bridging the gap between innovation and practical application.

- Enhanced Support for Innovation:

With dedicated services under Connect@Hygia, the company is better equipped to address the challenges of integrating advanced technologies and driving sustainable development.

- Long-Term Commitment to R&D and Digitalization:

Accredited for a period of five years, Hygia continues to align its operations with the goals of advancing research, fostering economic growth, and supporting sustainable innovation in Romania and beyond.



STAFF AND PERSONNEL



CIPRIAN MORCAN



LUCIAN MAIER



GABRIEL URAM



SONIA LUPU



DIANA CHIFOR



LEVENTE MIKO



CAMELIA POP



FLORINA BARDEA



DIANA MORCAN



MIRA NICULESCU



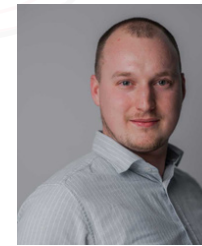
SILVIU FAUR



ANDREEA TOMA



ANDREEA MELIAN-URS



ERIC TOTH



MADALINA TANTANA



CRISTINA DOBRESCU



POP ANCUTA



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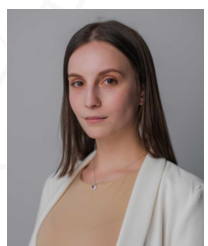
ANA-MARIA LUPU MARUT



FLAVIU BOGDAN



ANDREEA MARIA LASZLO



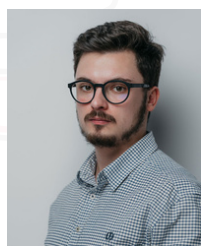
VIORELIA ROSCA



CATALINA GILTAN



DAVID SZASZ



VICTOR BAIAS



SORINA URAM



MIHAELA BESLEAGA



OTILIA TOMA



CATALIN-FLORIN FERTEA



PAULA-MIHAI GABRIELA



ANDREEA-CORINA POP



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MAIN RESULTS

In 2024, Hygia's projects and initiatives delivered transformative results across regional development, sustainability, digital transformation, and international collaboration. These outcomes underscore Hygia's commitment to empowering businesses, fostering innovation, and creating sustainable economic growth.

1. Empowering Clusters and Regional Economies

GO Furniture Meta-Cluster:

- Facilitated exploratory partnerships in North America, Africa, and Asia, creating new business opportunities for European SMEs.
- Promoted green and circular economy principles, enabling SMEs to align with global environmental standards.

Centre of Excellence for Furniture (CEM):

- Hosted 12 training workshops, focusing on sustainable manufacturing and digital prototyping.
- Supported over 30 SMEs in leveraging advanced design and testing tools to enhance their market competitiveness.

Chişinău Office Expansion:

- Opened Hygia's new office in Moldova, delivering tailored business support to Moldovan SMEs.
- Facilitated cross-border collaboration, strengthening ties between Moldova and Romania, and fostering local economic growth.

reBUILD Project:

- Built strategic EU-Ukrainian cluster partnerships, supporting SME integration into the European market.
- Promoted sustainability through training programs, circular economy models, and waste reduction in construction and furniture.

Job Shadowing Initiative for Ukrainian Cluster Practitioners

- Hosted Andrii Liudvichuk for a two-week exchange, fostering direct collaboration with Romanian companies, universities, and clusters.
- Strengthened EU-Ukraine ties in cluster development, earning recognition from EU4Business and GIZ.

2. Advancing Sustainability and Green Innovation

SILEO Project:

- Distributed digital transformation vouchers worth €10,500 per SME, helping businesses integrate green technologies.
- Organized SILEO Hack Days, which generated actionable solutions for sustainability challenges in furniture and lighting sectors.

EENOVA Project:

- Completed energy audits in multiple food value chains, identifying opportunities to reduce energy consumption by up to 30%.
- Designed customized action plans to help businesses transition to renewable energy.

Grazing4AgroEcology:

- Supported sustainable grazing practices for 50+ farms, improving both ecological performance and profitability.

ZeroW Project:

- Piloted food waste reduction strategies in the Cluj region, enabling circular practices across the supply chain.

3. Driving Digital Transformation and Innovation

- TEDIHT – Digital Transformation Hub:

Delivered advanced training sessions in AI, IoT, and Big Data to over 100 SMEs in Northwestern Romania. Hosted a high-profile event at CEM, connecting businesses with technology providers to foster collaboration and digital innovation.

- **TRUST-FOOD Project:**

Delivered blockchain training programs for 20+ SMEs, focusing on enhancing supply chain transparency and food traceability.

Developed tailored educational modules for food industry stakeholders, addressing key gaps in digital competencies.

- **Hackathons for Innovation:**

Participated at 3 hackathons, facilitating collaboration between SMEs and tech providers to address sector-specific challenges.

4. Expanding International Collaboration

- **Furniture Go International:**

Successfully conducted matchmaking missions in North America and Africa, enabling European SMEs to forge strategic partnerships.

- **Clusters Meet Regions Conference:**

At the Chişinău conference, Hygia showcased its expertise in cluster management and highlighted success stories from projects like CEM and GO Furniture.

The results of Hygia's 2024 activities illustrate the organization's strategic focus on fostering innovation, driving sustainability, and enabling SMEs to thrive in a competitive global landscape. Hygia's leadership in transformative projects has delivered lasting value for regional economies, industries, and communities, setting the stage for continued success in the years ahead.

PLANS FOR 2025

1. Strengthening the National Business Model

- **Raising Service Quality Standards:**

Delivering services that consistently align with agreed-upon decisions, procedures, and work processes to ensure client satisfaction and operational excellence.

- **Enhancing Service Delivery:**

Streamlining workflows, implementing best practices, and adopting new tools and methodologies to improve efficiency and impact.

- **Supporting Regional Growth:**

Continuing to empower SMEs through tailored solutions, training programs, and access to funding opportunities, particularly in sectors such as furniture, agro-food, and digital innovation.

2. Identifying International Market Niches

- **European Union:**

Strengthening collaborations with European clusters and consortia to provide services such as project management, digital transformation support, and sustainability consulting.

- **Republic of Moldova:**

Leveraging the newly established Chişinău office to deepen ties with local businesses and clusters, providing expertise in accessing EU funds, adopting advanced technologies, and building regional competitiveness.

- **South Africa:**

Exploring opportunities to support the furniture, lighting, and agro-food industries by offering solutions tailored to the region's unique challenges, including sustainability and market access.

3. Fostering Innovation and Sustainability

- Digital Transformation Projects:
Expanding initiatives like TEDIHT, TRUST-FOOD, and SILEO to help SMEs integrate advanced technologies and improve operational efficiency.
- Sustainability Programs:
Scaling up efforts in energy efficiency, circular economy practices, and food waste reduction through projects like EENOVA and ZeroW.
- Workforce Development:
Organizing additional training programs and mentorship opportunities to empower young professionals and address skill gaps in key industries.

4. Enhancing International Collaboration

- Build new partnerships with international stakeholders in target markets.
- Facilitate knowledge exchange through conferences, workshops, and innovation-focused events.
- Support SMEs in accessing global markets by leveraging strategic alliances formed through projects like GO Furniture and SILEO.

VISION FOR 2025

Hygia envisions a year of growth, innovation, and impact, marked by the successful consolidation of its business model domestically and the expansion of its services into new international markets. By maintaining high-quality standards, embracing innovation, and fostering cross-border collaboration, Hygia aims to empower industries and communities to thrive in a rapidly evolving global economy.