

# Report of the Online Launch Event of the Climate–Energy Risk Index (CERI)

## D.1.2.2

**Project: Climasafe**

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## 1. Introduction to the CLIMASAFE Project

### 1.1 Project Context and Rationale

The **CLIMASAFE – Extreme Climate Events Management and Resilience: Strategies and Tools for Energy-Intensive SMEs** project was developed to address an increasingly structural challenge for the cross-border production system: the interaction between climate change, energy systems, and the vulnerability of energy-intensive small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

In recent years, the increasing intensity and frequency of extreme climate events—such as heatwaves, intense precipitation, floods, and peaks in electricity demand—have highlighted the need to integrate climate risk into routine business management. In particular, energy-intensive SMEs are exposed to significant operational and financial risks stemming from their dependence on electricity continuity, the sensitivity of production processes to climatic variations, and their limited capacity to absorb shocks.

CLIMASAFE addresses this scenario by developing an integrated methodological approach and operational tools aimed at:

- analysing climate–energy risk at both territorial and company level;
- supporting SMEs in understanding their exposure profile;
- strengthening energy resilience and adaptive capacity;
- promoting a replicable and transferable model within the cooperation area and beyond.

The project is structured around three main pillars:

1. **Development of an integrated knowledge base** (territorial, climatic, and energy database);
2. **Development of the Climate–Energy Risk Index (CERI);**
3. **Operational testing and development of digital decision-support tools.**

The launch event described in this report takes place at the concluding stage of **WP1** and represents the public presentation of the **CERI Index**, as well as the transition toward the application phase foreseen in **WP2**.

The **CLIMASAFE** project is co-funded by the European Union under the **Interreg VI-A Italy–Slovenia Programme**.

## 2. Objectives of Deliverable D.1.2.2

This document constitutes the **Report of the online launch event of the Climate–Energy Risk Index (CERI)**, held on **25 February 2026**.

The deliverable has the following objectives:

- to document the **organisation, preparation, and implementation** of the event;
- to provide a **structured description of the contents presented**;
- to analyse the **profile of participants** (section under update);
- to summarise the **main outcomes of the event**;
- to formulate **operational and methodological recommendations** for the development of the dashboard in **WP2** and for the subsequent pilot phase.

The report is therefore not intended merely as a chronicle of the initiative, but rather as a **linking document between the analytical–methodological phase of WP1 and the application and digital phase of WP2**.

## 3. Purpose and Objectives of the Event

### 3.1 Rationale of the Initiative

The launch event was conceived as a moment for:

- the **official presentation of the CERI Index**;
- **raising awareness** among the production system and intermediary stakeholders;
- initiating a **preliminary dialogue with potential beneficiaries** of the subsequent project phases.

Starting from the premise that **extreme climate events are no longer exceptional but increasingly recurrent**, the event aimed to convey a key message:

**Climate risk is not only environmental, but already today economic, operational, and financial.**

### 3.2 Specific Objectives

The objectives of the event were to:

- explain in a **clear and operational way the logic behind the CERI Index**;
- illustrate its **three core dimensions** (*Hazard, Exposure, Adaptive Capacity*);
- demonstrate the **readability and replicability of the tool**;
- present **opportunities for involvement in the pilot actions**;

- collect **initial qualitative feedback** useful for the development of the dashboard.

The event also represented a **first communication test of the ability to translate the technical-scientific framework into an accessible language for SMEs and intermediary stakeholders.**

## 4. Event Preparation

### 4.1 Co-design Process

The event was the result of a **coordinated working process among the Project Partners (PP)**, initiated during the **Kick-off Meeting** and progressively consolidated through:

- the **in-person meeting on 20 November 2025**;
- the **online meeting on 14 January 2026**;
- the **online meeting on 23 February 2026**.

During these meetings, the main elements of the following aspects were shared and aligned:

- the **narrative structure of the event**;
- the **technical contents of the presentations**;
- the **alignment between the Italian and Slovenian components**;
- the **communication objectives and priority target groups**.

The initiative is also coherent with the **preparatory activities of WP2**, as it anticipated key elements of the future **dashboard**.

### 4.2 Promotion Campaign

The promotion of the event was carried out through:

- the publication of a **“Save the Date”** in December;
- dedicated **social media posts by project partners** during January and February;
- dissemination of the announcement through **newsletters, mailing lists, and institutional networks**.

Overall, the event reached **more than 600 invited contacts**, including **SMEs, business associations, clusters, public authorities, and consultants**.

## 5. Agenda and Format of the Event

### 5.1 Format

The event took place **online via the Zoom platform on 25 February 2026**, with two mirrored sessions:

- **09:00 – Slovenian-language session**
- **10:00 – Italian-language session**

Both sessions followed the **same structure and content**, ensuring **cross-border consistency**.

### 5.2 Agenda Structure

1. Welcome and opening remarks
2. Why discussing climate risk for SMEs today
3. From climate risk to business risk
4. The CERI Index: what it is and how it supports decision-making
5. Next steps of the project
6. Q&A

The event was **recorded** to allow access for stakeholders who were unable to participate live. The **full recording of both sessions (Slovenian and Italian)** is available upon request from the project partners.

## 6. Session Contents

The event was structured according to a **logical and methodological progression**, designed to guide participants through a path of **increasing awareness**:

1. Framing of the project and its context;
2. Understanding climate risk as an integral component of business management;
3. Linking environmental risk with economic and financial risk;
4. Presentation of the **CERI tool**;
5. Operational and application-oriented perspectives.

Both sessions (**Slovenian and Italian**) maintained the **same content structure**, ensuring cross-border coherence.

### 6.1 Presentation of the CLIMASAFE Project

The session opened with an **institutional introduction to the CLIMASAFE project**, highlighting:

- the **programme framework of reference** (Interreg VI-A Italy–Slovenia);
- the **cross-border nature** of the initiative;

- the **multidisciplinary partnership**.

It was emphasised that the project is positioned within **Specific Objective SO 2.4 of the Interreg Italy–Slovenia Programme** (“Promoting climate change adaptation, disaster risk prevention and resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches”), placing the project at the intersection of:

- **climate change,**
- **energy systems,**
- **resilience of energy-intensive SMEs.**

Particular emphasis was placed on the fact that **CLIMASAFE combines environmental attention with climate risk management and business competitiveness.**

## 6.2 Why Discuss Climate Risk for SMEs Today

This section aimed to frame **climate risk not as an abstract environmental issue, but as a structural component of business management.**

The presentation opened with a clear parallel: every company routinely manages risks related to **market dynamics, price volatility, raw material availability, or access to credit.** Climate risk should be interpreted in the same way—as a variable affecting **operational and economic stability.**

The **methodological framework adopted by the project** was therefore introduced, according to which risk results from the interaction between:

- **hazard** (external climate event),
- **exposure** (the company’s production and energy structure),
- **adaptive capacity** (technical and organisational measures adopted).

This framework was presented not as a theoretical model but as a **practical interpretative tool for SMEs.**

### Increase in Extreme Events and Direct Impacts

It was highlighted that the **climate data analysed in the project**, derived from recognised European sources and integrated with **IPCC scenarios**, show:

- an increase in the **frequency and intensity of heatwaves;**
- a rise in **intense precipitation events;**
- greater **climate variability.**

Translated into business terms, this implies:

- increased **cooling-related energy consumption during summer months;**

- **peaks in electricity demand;**
- a higher probability of **grid stress or interruptions;**
- **logistical difficulties** during intense rainfall;
- potential **flooding or restricted access to production sites.**

A key point was emphasised: **even short-duration events can generate cascading effects**, such as:

- plant shutdowns,
- delivery delays,
- contractual penalties,
- cash flow tensions.

In this sense, **climate risk is already an operational and financial risk.**

### **Focus on Energy-Intensive SMEs**

Particular attention was given to **energy-intensive companies**, defined in the project as those where the ratio between **energy costs and gross value added is equal to or greater than 20%**.

It was explained that such companies:

- rely heavily on **continuous electricity supply;**
- operate in **controlled environmental conditions;**
- often have **limited margins;**
- have a **reduced capacity to absorb external shocks.**

In these contexts, **even a short interruption lasting only a few minutes may generate significant losses.**

The central message of this section was therefore:

**For energy-intensive SMEs, climate risk is already a concrete economic risk.**

This part prepared the transition to the broader reflection developed in the following section.

## **6.3 From Climate Risk to Business Risk**

This section represented the **core of the methodological reasoning** and marked the transition from a **descriptive level to a managerial perspective.**

### **Risk Does Not Coincide with the Event**

A fundamental conceptual point was clarified:

**The climate event represents the hazard; risk arises when the event interacts with a specific production structure.**

Through a concrete example—**two metalworking companies located in the same industrial district**, therefore exposed to the same climatic hazard—it was shown how the **economic impact may differ significantly** depending on factors such as:

- the presence of **efficient cooling systems**;
- the structure of the **energy supply contract**;
- **emergency management procedures**;
- possible **backup systems**.

This example clearly demonstrated that **risk is neither uniform nor purely territorial or sectoral**.

### **The Role of Energy Exposure**

The concept of **energy exposure** was further explored, highlighting how it depends on:

- dependence on **electricity continuity**;
- **rigidity of production processes**;
- **temperature sensitivity** of production systems;
- the **structure of energy costs**.

A company with **continuous processes and temperature-sensitive equipment** presents a much higher level of exposure than a company with **limited energy consumption or flexible processes**.

### **Broadening the Perspective: Economic and Systemic Context**

The discussion was subsequently broadened to show how **climate risk is increasingly embedded within a wider economic and regulatory framework**.

Reference was made to the **European policy context**, including:

- the **European Green Deal**;
- the strengthening of **climate adaptation policies**;
- growing attention to the **resilience of production systems**.

Several already observable effects were highlighted:

- the **integration of climate risk into credit assessments**;
- revisions of **insurance conditions**;
- increasing **transparency requirements along supply chains** from large companies.

For SMEs, this evolving scenario may represent:

- **an additional constraint,**
- but also **an opportunity for competitive positioning.**

A company that demonstrates **awareness of its risk profile and the existence of a risk management plan** may:

- negotiate **more favourable financial conditions;**
- strengthen its **credibility;**
- improve its **medium-term stability.**

### **Why Anticipation Is Beneficial**

The section concluded with an operational reflection on four main reasons for adopting analytical tools:

1. Reducing operational uncertainty.
2. Limiting production interruptions.
3. Planning targeted investments.
4. Optimising energy costs in the medium term.

A broader cultural transition was emphasised:

- from **reaction to prevention,**
- from **post-event intervention to routine risk management.**

The final message of the section was fully consistent with the project's approach:

**Anticipating risk is not an additional cost, but a way to protect productivity and investments.**

It is precisely on this logic that the **CERI tool**, presented in the following section, is built.

### **6.4 Presentation of the CERI Index**

This section represented the **technical core of the event.**

The **CERI** was presented as:

- a **composite index;**
- **methodologically transparent;**
- **replicable;**
- **adaptable to other territorial contexts.**

## Structure of the Index

The integration of the **three core dimensions** was illustrated:

- **Hazard (territorial dimension)**
- **Exposure (company-level dimension)**
- **Adaptive Capacity (organisational and technological dimension)**

It was clarified that **risk**:

- **increases with hazard and exposure;**
- **can decrease with higher adaptive capacity.**

## Levels of Use

It was explained that **CERI can be used at multiple levels**:

### 1. Risk Classification

Division into classes (*low, medium, high*).

### 2. Identification of Critical Factors

Dimensional analysis to understand which component has the greatest weight.

### 3. Comparison Between Sites or Companies

Territorial and company-level benchmarking.

### 4. Development of a Resilience Roadmap

Definition of progressive objectives for **risk reduction**.

## Visualisation and Dashboard

It was anticipated that the index will be integrated into a **digital platform** (for which a **dashboard prototype** was presented) capable of:

- making the **results easily interpretable**;
- **monitoring changes over time**;
- **supporting operational decision-making**.

It was emphasised that **CERI is not a static number, but a starting point for strategic decisions**.

## 6.5 Transition Towards the Application Phase (WP2 and WP3)

The final part of the session illustrated the **future trajectory of the project**.

## Pilot Actions

The involvement of **at least 25 energy-intensive SMEs within the programme area** was announced.

The pilot actions will aim to:

- **apply the index in real operational contexts;**
- **validate its readability and usability;**
- **collect feedback;**
- **identify priority intervention measures.**

### **Digital Dashboard**

The development of a **digital decision-support tool** was anticipated, which will allow:

- **scenario simulation;**
- **visualisation of risk components;**
- **monitoring of improvements;**
- **support for investment planning.**

### **From Measured Risk to Managed Risk**

A key concept summarising the **CLIMASAFE approach** was introduced:

#### **From measured risk to managed risk.**

The pathway foreseen for SMEs includes:

1. **assessment of the initial risk positioning;**
2. **guided interpretation of results;**
3. **identification of adaptation measures;**
4. **monitoring over time.**

The session concluded by reiterating that the **ultimate objective is not only analytical but transformative:**

- strengthening **energy resilience;**
- improving **competitiveness in the medium to long term;**
- building a **replicable cross-border model.**

## 7. Participant Analysis

### 7.1 General Quantitative Data

A total of **55 participants registered for the event**, representing **50 different organisations**, indicating a broad diversification of the audience involved.

The **actual number of participants (excluding representatives of the project partners)** was **40**. The linguistic distribution was as follows:

- **20 participants** in the **Slovenian-language session (09:00)**
- **20 participants** in the **Italian-language session (10:00)**

These figures highlight a **balanced cross-border participation**. The fact that the number of organisations (**50**) is very close to the total number of participants (**55**) indicates that, in most cases, **each organisation or company was represented by a single participant**, with a few exceptions where multiple representatives from the same organisation attended.

### 7.2 Types of Organisations Represented

The analysis of company and institutional names reveals a **diversified composition of the audience**, which can be grouped into **three main categories**.

#### 1. Private Companies (including SMEs)

Several companies operating in different sectors were represented, including **manufacturing firms and businesses with formal corporate structures** (e.g., *Ltd.*, *s.r.l.*, *d.o.o.*).

This is particularly relevant, as it confirms the **direct interest of the project's primary target group—SMEs—in the topic of climate–energy risk**.

#### 2. Intermediary Bodies and Territorial Development Organisations

A significant share of participants came from:

- **regional development agencies,**
- **business associations,**
- **enterprise support centres,**
- **economic representation organisations.**

The presence of these actors is **strategically important**, as they function as **territorial multipliers** and can facilitate the **dissemination of the CERI tool to a wider number of companies**.

#### 3. Other Institutions and Organisations

Additional participants included **public bodies and organisations with institutional or technical support functions**, demonstrating broader interest in **integrating climate risk into territorial planning and economic development strategies**.

### 7.3 Sectors and Audience Profile

Although a detailed sectoral breakdown was not required, the analysis of organisational names indicates:

- a **significant presence of regional development agencies and territorial clusters**;
- participation of **business representation organisations**;
- involvement of **private companies potentially belonging to the target group of energy-intensive SMEs**.

This profile confirms that the event reached both the operational level (companies) and the intermediate level (support organisations), positioning the initiative not only as an informational event but also as a first step towards building a territorial network interested in the application of CERi.

### 7.4 Qualitative Assessment of the Level of Engagement

The composition of the audience appears **consistent with the objectives of the initiative**, as it:

- involved **potential direct beneficiaries of the pilot actions (SMEs)**;
- activated **stakeholders capable of supporting the pilot phase (WP3)**;
- strengthened the **positioning of the project as a tool of systemic relevance, rather than one limited to individual companies**.

The participation of **50 organisations** represents a **positive indicator in terms of territorial outreach and the potential transferability of the tool**.

Indicator	Value
Total registered participants	55
Total participants attending	40
Slovenian-language session (09:00–09:45)	20
Italian-language session (10:00–10:45)	20
Private companies	15
Intermediary bodies / associations / development agencies	8
Other institutions and organisations	17

## 8. Event Outcomes and Recommendations for WP2 and WP3

### 8.1 Main Results

The event produced a number of **qualitative outcomes relevant for the further development of the project**.

Validation of the Communicative Clarity of CERI

The narrative structure adopted during the event demonstrated that the conceptual model underlying CERI can be translated into language understandable even for a non-technical audience.

The logical progression—from climate risk to business risk, and finally to the operational tool—proved coherent and easily understandable, confirming the robustness of the methodological framework developed in WP1.

#### Confirmation of SME Interest in Practical Tools

Based on the participation and interactions observed, it became clear that **SMEs are not interested in purely descriptive tools**, but rather in **operational solutions that support concrete decision-making**.

CERI was therefore perceived **not as a theoretical exercise but as a potential managerial lever**, particularly when accompanied by **practical implementation guidance**.

#### Need for Strong Simplicity of Use in the Future Dashboard

A clear need emerged for the future dashboard to avoid excessive technical complexity.

SMEs require a concise, immediate, and intuitive visualisation of the level of risk, while still maintaining the possibility to explore individual components in greater detail.

This represents a key orientation for the development activities foreseen in WP2.

## 8.2 Recommendations for WP2 – Platform

### 1. Synthetic but Decomposable Visualisation

The platform should provide an **immediate overview of the overall risk level**, through clear visual indicators (e.g., colour scales or simplified risk classes). At the same time, it should allow users to **break down the three dimensions (Hazard, Exposure, Adaptive Capacity)** in order to understand which component has the greatest influence on the final result.

This **dual reading—synthetic and analytical—is essential to transform the index into a decision-support tool.**

## 2. Clear Risk Classes (Low / Medium / High)

Risk classification should be expressed through **intuitive categories** (e.g., low, medium, high), avoiding excessive technical complexity.

The language should be **decision-oriented rather than purely descriptive**, facilitating interpretation by **entrepreneurs and managers who are not specialists in climate analysis.**

## 3. Territorial and Corporate Comparability

The platform could integrate a **benchmarking function** enabling consistent comparisons between:

- production sites,
- companies within the same sector,
- territorial clusters.

This would allow not only an **individual reading of risk**, but also a **comparative perspective useful for intermediary organisations and policy makers.**

## 4. Integrated Roadmap

The result of the index should be linked to **operational recommendations or lines of intervention** consistent with the dimension identified as most critical.

In this way, the dashboard would **not only measure risk but also help guide the planning of adaptation and resilience measures.**

## 5. Temporal Monitoring Function

The integration of a feature allowing users to **monitor the evolution of risk over time** should be considered, highlighting potential improvements resulting from the implementation of corrective measures.

This element reinforces the **dynamic nature of CERI** and strengthens its use as a **continuous risk management tool.**

## 8.3 Recommendations for WP3 – Pilot Phase

### 1. Segmentation of Pilot SMEs by Sector and Energy Intensity

The selection of SMEs involved in the pilot actions should ensure **sectoral representativeness and an adequate level of energy intensity.**

This will allow the tool to be **tested in different contexts and verify its adaptability to various production models.**

## 2. Guided Support in Interpreting Results

The pilot phase should include **dedicated support sessions to assist SMEs in interpreting CERI results.**

Such guidance is essential to **avoid superficial interpretations of the index and to facilitate its effective integration into corporate decision-making processes.**

## 3. Systematic Feedback Collection for Index Calibration

A structured feedback collection system should be implemented during the pilot phase in order to identify potential interpretative or operational issues.

These insights will contribute to the calibration of the index and the improvement of the dashboard.

## 4. Integration with Financial Instruments and Investment Opportunities

The pilot phase could explore—also with a view to **potential post-project developments**—possible links between the **identified risk profile and financial instruments dedicated to energy resilience.**

This would strengthen the **positioning of CERI as an enabling tool for accessing targeted investments.**

## 5. Development of Replicable Case Studies

The pilot phase should produce **documented and replicable case studies**, demonstrating the **practical applicability of the CLIMASAFE model** and facilitating its **transferability to other territories.**

### 8.4 Strategic Value of the Event

The event represented a **key milestone in the project trajectory.**

#### From Methodological Development to Social Validation of the Tool

With the public presentation of **CERI**, the project moved from the **technical development phase to a phase of engagement with the production system.**

This moment made it possible to **verify the comprehensibility and acceptability of the tool among potential users.**

## **From Technical Analysis to Territorial Consensus Building**

The initiative contributed to raising awareness among territorial stakeholders and intermediary actors, fostering the development of initial consensus around the need to integrate climate risk into business management.

## **From Risk Measurement to Adaptation Planning**

Finally, the event marked the conceptual transition from the simple measurement of risk to the definition of structured adaptation pathways.

In this sense, the launch of CERI does not represent a final step, but the beginning of an application-oriented phase aimed at achieving tangible impact.

## **9. Conclusions**

The launch of the CERI Index marked the conclusion of the analytical phase of WP1 and the beginning of the operational phase of the project.

The pathway outlined—measure, interpret, decide, support—constitutes the core structure of the CLIMASAFE model.

The event demonstrated that climate–energy risk can be transformed from a source of uncertainty into a lever for organisational innovation and competitive strengthening.

The next phase of the project will be crucial in translating the methodological potential into concrete impact on the cross-border production system.