European Cluster Policy – using clusters to support European SMEs

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Why clusters?

... Offer a favourable eco-system

... Host innovative companies

... Reach out to groups of related SMEs

... Well positioned as facilitators & bridge-builders

... Create strategic partnerships at the level of policy-makers & intermediaries

... Channel customised business support services to specific groups of SMEs
Clusters are accelerators of growth & industrial change

3043 strong regional clusters in related industries

Clusters matter because they...

• account for **54 million jobs**
• are **represented in all parts of Europe**
• have shown **resilience** during economic crises
• **nurture growth and jobs**
• Well positioned as **facilitators & bridge-builders**

Source: European Commission, European Cluster Panorama 2016, star rating for size, specialisation, productivity and growth
EU Cluster Policy
Building bridges across Europe's ecosystems through 50 European Cluster Partnerships

Clusters as accelerators for innovation & industrial change

Inter-regional & international cluster cooperation

Capacity-building

Cluster Excellence Programme
Cluster facilitated projects for new industrial value chains INNOSUP-1
Supporting cross-sectoral & cross-regional innovation in SMEs

€ 26.2 million allocated to SMEs in funding and services

1,747 SMEs supported
plus 149 SME-led consortiums

across 36 countries
covering 27 out of 28 EU member states
and 9 out of 16 H2020 associated countries

1,457 SMEs received innovation support services
591 SMEs received innovation vouchers
174 SMEs received funding for innovation
Figure 2 – Networks of INNOSUP-1 partners (red lines) and SMEs supported by INNOSUP-1 projects by country (blue circles), May 2019

Source: KATANA, NEPTUNE, PERMIDES, SuperBIO, ACTIVAtie, <IMPACT> Connected Car, INCluSilver, Cross4Health, IoT4Industry, C-VoUCHER
Figure 3 - SMEs supported by INNOSUP-1 and partners delivering INNOSUP-1, by country, May 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>SMEs</th>
<th>Partners</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>200</td>
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Source: KATANA, NEPTUNE, PERMIDES, SuperBIO, ACTIVaTe, IMPACT, Connected Car, INCLUSilver, Cross4Health, IoT4Industry, C-VoUCHER

Figure 1 - Countries where SMEs have received INNOSUP-1 innovation support, May 2019
Clusters support SMEs Access to Global Value Chains

• 25 EU Cluster Partnerships Going International (COSME, 7,24 M€)
• 134 cluster organisations representing over 19,000 SME
• Implement joint international strategies and support SMEs collaboration with partners in third Countries
• International cluster matchmaking events
  4 events in 2019:
  • Lyon, March (Taiwan)
  • Casablanca, April (South MED)
  • Bucharest, May (Europe)
  • Toronto, June (Canada)
The future of EU Cluster Policy
Council conclusions on the EU industrial policy strategy

call for the further development of the European cluster policy, with the aim of linking-up and scaling-up regional clusters into cross-European world-class clusters, based on smart specialisation principles, in order to support the emergence of new value chains across Europe.

12.03.2018

Discussions at the European Cluster Policy Forum

Dialogue with policy-makers from Member States, European Commission & experts about modern cluster policies

Peer review + policy learning

22 February 2018
26 April 2018
15 November 2018
14 March 2019

Check the video
https://youtu.be/hoAtGU1casQ
Awareness-raising campaign across Europe on the role of clusters & their impact

**46** events under #EUClusterWeeks November 2018 – April 2019

**22** countries, **5,600+** participants

Feedback on common challenges + what needs to be done in the next generation of regional, national + EU cluster initiatives.

[https://www.clustercolloboration.eu/event-calendar/eu-cluster-weeks](https://www.clustercolloboration.eu/event-calendar/eu-cluster-weeks)
Event themes

- Innovation and creativity: 56%
- Cross-sectoral collaboration: 49%
- Smart specialisation: 38%
- Inter-regional EU collaboration: 36%
- Industrial modernisation: 36%
- Digitalisation: 33%
- Scaling-up SMEs: 27%
- Internationalisation/Global value chains: 24%
- Entrepreneurship: 22%
- Resource efficiency/ Eco-innovation/ Circular economy: 22%
- Advanced technologies/ manufacturing: 22%
- Skills: 18%
- Social impact/shared value: 7%
- Other: 11%
The Lithuanian Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology gathered all parties interested in creating international partnerships with clusters and companies in the Baltic region.

Themes:
Innovation + creativity,
Cross-sectoral collaboration and Inter-regional EU collaboration

19 March 2019
Kaunas, Lithuania
200 participants across 12 countries
The event - organised by the National Contact Point for Research Programmes of the EU, Polish Agency for Enterprise Development, Industrial Development Agency and the Mazovia Development Agency - gathered cluster members and representatives, Horizon 2020 project implementers and representatives of business environment institutions.

Themes:
available funding programs, development of cooperation opportunities (also international), principles of national cluster policy, thematic platforms S3 and increasing the clusters’ involvement, presentation of good practices, pitching and networking sessions.
This event, organised by the Regional Council of Lapland/East and North Finland, launched the new strategy with clusters and ecosystems supporting instrument.

Themes:
- Industrial modernisation,
- Innovation and creativity,
- Digitalisation, Resource Efficiency / Eco-innovation / Circular economy, Smart specialisation,
- Scaling-up SMEs, Cross-sectoral collaboration.

Biggest event
26-30 Nov 2018
35 activities across Denmark
2,500 participants

Danish clusters and innovation networks dedicated one week to future solutions with cross-disciplinary events showing the way to the future innovative Denmark.

Themes:
Circular economy, digitalisation, biomarkers, drones, 3D print, robots, cyber security, blockchain, millennials, music and IoT

http://www.futureweek.dk
Testimonials

“Future Week Denmark / EU Cluster Weeks can serve as an important function for companies to find new knowledge, contexts, networks and opportunities. It is also a chance for cluster organisations to show their abilities and to become an important knowledge resource for companies’ needs in their future development. The week was an excellent opportunity for Danish cluster organisations to showcase their activities, both for existing and potential member companies, as well as for local and regional politicians and civil servants.” Mats Williams, rapporteur of the event

“Our company (Wevecare APS, Denmark (Welfare Tech Cluster)) is usually engaged in both short and long-term research projects. We understand how to benefit out of cooperative activities both with research organisations and with other companies, especially with crosslinks between companies and organisations. We arrange meetings between companies in our own cluster with an open give and take climate. We try to benefit from the force that cooperative development processes are creating opportunities both for ourselves as for other companies in the cluster organization”. Björn Wennerwald, Founder Wevecare APS, Denmark (Welfare Tech Cluster)
Selected questions explored at the TCI Cluster Evaluation Working Group Meeting, hosted by region Skåne:

How can regional policy-makers find evidence of the roles clusters play in smart specialisation strategies and broad-based regional socioeconomic development?

What are the new approaches for monitoring regional cluster portfolios in different regions?

How are cluster organisations and policy-makers using big data to evaluate their activities?
Towards Joint Cluster Initiatives

Industry-focused actions guided by joint strategies of clusters+other associated specialised SME support actors

Thematically targeted for 10-20 industrial specialisations, with cross-regional+cross-sectoral outreach to SMEs

Creating business opportunities + accelerating growth by channelling direct scaling-up support to groups of SMEs for:

- **Shaping European strategic value chains** through connecting specialised ecosystems
- **Boosting internationalisation** and access to global value chains
- **Facilitating industrial transformation** towards uptake of advanced technologies and services, digitalisation, new business models, resource-efficient solutions towards decarbonisation and the Circular Economy, creativity and design, upskilling, talent attraction and entrepreneurship acceleration

Recital 28 of the draft Regulation for the Single Market Programme COM(2028)441
European cluster conference with 450 participants 'connecting ecosystems'
Published on: 20/05/2019

The 6th edition of the European cluster conference took place during 14-16 May 2019 in the palace of Parliament in Bucharest, hosted by the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU. The event theme was 'Connecting ecosystems: bridge, inspire, change.'

The conference was organised by the European Commission’s Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs in cooperation with the Romanian Ministry of Economy. It gathered 450 national and regional cluster policy-makers and practitioners from industry, research and academia.

In one word, what “change” are you tackling as a priority in your cluster?
Bucharest Declaration

10 national cluster associations team up in European Alliance of National Cluster Associations
European Cluster Collaboration Platform
connecting 1.000 cluster organisations

Boosting collaboration and connecting enterprises by using clusters as multipliers

Reaching out to over 100.000 SMEs, some 8.000 large firms and 11.000 universities/research organisations.

http://www.clustercollaboration.eu/
https://youtu.be/3G0_EJ5SFlg
Thank you

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/cluster
http://www.clustercolaboration.eu/

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