



# Manual of good practices

**Where  
clusters, regions  
and national  
authorities meet and  
explore innovation  
strategies for the future**





**Experience shows that new technological fields emerge in the interface between existing industries**



**How do we design better cluster policies?**

# CLUSTERS FOR EUROPEAN INNOVATION CROSS-LINKING

GOOD PRACTICES EXCHANGED BETWEEN 9 PARTNERS ACROSS EUROPE

What is new?

What is different?

What are the learnings?

How can the acquired experiences contribute to a policy improvement in the regions?

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## INTRODUCTION

### What role do clusters play in the regional development and in the context of the Smart Specialization Strategy? Developments in various initiatives of the European Commission

European cluster policies already look back at a history of more than 15 years of continuous development and this enables to see in retrospective the various shifts of the focus put on different issues – whether this was the building of the network, the initiation of the cooperation among regional actors along the value chain, up to the internationalisation, smart specialization and cross-sectoral approaches. However, one issue remains at the core of the cluster philosophy and this is the key role cluster policies play in sustainably (further) developing the innovation and competitiveness abilities of the companies, particularly the SMEs.

A fundamental pan-European document on the development of cluster policies, the European Cluster Memorandum<sup>1</sup>, stated that “clusters (organisations) in their role of executing agencies of clusters policies are committed to strengthen their own efforts to support the emergence and growth of dynamic clusters and knowledge concentration areas driven by co-competition, internally, as well as across regions”. One of the recommendations of the Memorandum was to consider the overlaps between clusters and the changing needs over their lifecycle when developing portfolio approaches aiming to mobilise existing clusters, facilitate the emergence of new clusters from existing capabilities, and promote structural change where clusters have lost their competitive advantages.

In 2010 the European Cluster Policy Group produced a set of recommendations<sup>2</sup> where it is stated “the profiles (...) of cluster programmes need to support Europe’s efforts to better achieve its innovation and competitiveness potential (a key objective of the Europe 2020 strategy). Cluster programmes will have the highest return if they are targeted at clusters that show the strongest ability and willingness to renew and upgrade. Ability is reflected by the success that clusters have already achieved in their line of activities, or by capabilities to move into a new field.”

In 2012 the TACTICS project (Transnational Alliance of Clusters Towards Improved Cooperation Support) under the PRO-INNO Europe Initiative presented a series of materials, including key messages and practical recommendations<sup>3</sup>: “Being most often problem-driven and involving complementary skills and different backgrounds, the evolution of economic activities occurs to take advantage of new opportunities and address global challenges. One feature of emerging versus established industries is shifting the industrial base from offering simply products and/or services

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1 [http://www.mralur.si/fileadmin/user\\_upload/projekti/Clunet/European\\_Cluster\\_Memorandum\\_Final\\_January\\_2008.pdf](http://www.mralur.si/fileadmin/user_upload/projekti/Clunet/European_Cluster_Memorandum_Final_January_2008.pdf)

2 [http://wbc-inco.net/object/document/7861/attach/ECPG\\_Final\\_Report\\_web-low1.pdf](http://wbc-inco.net/object/document/7861/attach/ECPG_Final_Report_web-low1.pdf)

3 [http://www.vinnova.se/upload/EPIStorePDF/Tactics\\_KeyMessages.pdf](http://www.vinnova.se/upload/EPIStorePDF/Tactics_KeyMessages.pdf)

towards provision of more comprehensive solutions. Special focus should be given to new services since in some industries service innovations drive transformation of whole sectors.

There is a growing consensus that clusters can have an important role to play in the renewal of European industries and strengthening value chains through bridging research and business, capturing new demands, pursuing new business models, combining manufacturing with services, enabling consumers, etc. By fostering interactions and cross-fertilization between different innovation actors (including users/customers) in a region and promoting cross-sector and cross-cluster activities, clusters offer a favourable ecosystem in which new industries can flourish and grow stronger.”

The report published in 2013 by the Directorate-General Research and Innovation on “The role of clusters in the smart specialization”<sup>4</sup> brings out the key message that “clusters and cluster policies are for many regions likely to be among the key building blocks in developing and implementing smart specialisation strategies.” But in order to reach their full potential, it would be necessary to:

- Integrate cluster policies into a broader transformation agenda for the entire regional economy and complement cluster policies with other cross-cutting and technology/knowledge-domain-specific activities
- Move the cluster-analysis and the type of policies implemented in the smart specialisation strategies beyond the current policy practice, that is, adapting them to the regional environment, to the level of maturity of the cluster and making them comply with a list of good practice rules, including the capacity to address emerging new domains cutting across sectors.

ClusteriX aims to address exactly these last two issues by looking into the methodologies and good practices developed and implemented in the participating regions that are related to:

- The analytical processes applied to identify new cross-sector technological developments and market trends with high potential for competitive regional development
- The funding of cluster support while pushing emerging industries (e.g. by using public procurement)
- The creation of a positive framework for cross-linked cluster cooperation between the partner regions through internationalisation processes.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/regions/documents/publications/clusters\\_smart\\_spec2013.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/regions/documents/publications/clusters_smart_spec2013.pdf)

# 1 ClusteriX

## Cooperation across Europe at regional level for cluster policy improvement by cross-linking regional strengths and technologies

Innovation not only means creating totally new technologies, but also cross-linking existing industries in the hopes of creating new paths of development – within regions and beyond national boundaries.

The overall objective of ClusteriX is to help increase the competitiveness of European regions and their innovation potential through the improvement and strategic re-orientation of cluster policies - cluster policies that enable and foster new paths of development as part of the regions' smart specialization strategies.

Through the knowledge shared by the partners, ClusteriX helps policy makers to look at this challenge through three perspectives:

- Identification of new cross-sector technological developments and market trends with high potential for boosting the regional economic growth (**Cluster strategic analysis**)
- Design of smart financial support instruments for cross-sector innovation, e.g. using public procurement (**Financing instruments**)
- Exploration of the opportunities for cross-linking existing technologies between different, European regions (**International and inter-regional cluster cooperation**)

## Creating frameworks for interregional cluster cooperation

How do we design better cluster policies? Clusters provide a positive environment for new industries and they support the interaction and cooperation between different innovation actors (policy makers, companies, research facilities, investors and other bodies) in the region.

Up until recently cluster programmes have looked on ways to develop existing strengths, now ClusteriX takes on a new perspective by focusing not only on the role of clusters in support of emerging industries, but also on how to create frameworks for interregional cluster cooperation.

The ClusteriX partners use peer group discussions, staff exchanges, study tours and conferences to explore ways of cooperation between regions and technologies. As a result, the learnings and good practices will be integrated into the regional implementation plans and also shared with stakeholders through a published manual and through policy recommendations for cross-cluster linking.

## The Partnership for Cross-Linked Cluster Innovation

The project is carried out in collaboration between

ecoplus. The Business Agency of Lower Austria (Austria)

Cluster 55/Lund University (Sweden)

Region of Southern Denmark (Denmark)

ERAI - Entreprise Rhone-Alpes International (France)

Economic Development Karlsruhe (Germany)

West-Pannon Regional and Economic Development Non-profit Ltd (Hungary)

TIS, Techno Innovation South Tyrol SpcA (Italy)

INMA - National Institute of Research Development for Machines and Installations Designed to Agriculture and Food Industry (Romania)

Tillväxtverket Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Sweden)

## 2 CLUSTER STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

### Methodologies for analysis of competences/mapping based on existing clusters or fields of strength

Experience shows that new technological fields emerge in the interface between existing industries. As such the regional authorities who initially set up and developed clusters in certain sectors need also to reflect on the future strategic orientation of the cluster policy.

Considering in particular the efforts towards a regional smart specialisation the policy makers face the challenge of identifying new technological developments and trends at an early stage with a high potential for boosting the regional economic growth. Innovation means not only creating totally new technologies, but increasingly cross-linking existing ones towards new developments. It is therefore of high importance to enable regional authorities to identify, analyse and explore the potential of strategic future cluster development through the exchange of experience and best practices between partners. This potential lies in the cross-linking of existing industrial fields of strength – within the region and between the regions.

The ClusteriX partners identified and described 15 good practices of tools and methodologies for detecting cross-cluster collaboration potentials and emerging industries in the partner regions (Lower Austria -2, Rhône-Alpes - 5, South Tyrol - 3, Karlsruhe - 1 and Romania - 4).

The good practice cases were presented and discussed in detail in order to enable mutual learning and to look for transferability. Here are some of the learning effects from this process:

*“The Competence Mapping from ecoplus (Lower Austria) is a good example of a cluster policy tool supporting cluster management. It is a way for cluster managers to gain profound knowledge on their members. The methodology of the practice was presented in detail during the staff exchange in Lower Austria. We also had the chance to meet companies and research centres which have participated in the mapping. It was very beneficial to see how cluster members viewed the practice. The practice helps to identify the key competences of the companies. It has also been used to improve marketing and to develop new business strategies by the cluster members.”*



Xiaodan Li, European project manager, Plastipolis (Rhône-Alpes)

*“The Romanian cluster landscape sees nowadays around 45 clusters in various domains and finding themselves mostly in the development phase where strategic approaches are to be considered. In order to support clusters cope with main challenges they are facing, i.e. financing, internationalization and innovative development embedded into regional smart specialization strategies, the Association finds itself in the process of developing 2 thematic cross-sectorial cluster networks: “technical textiles/creative industries” and “green technologies”. The method used in bringing together various clusters from different sectors is the competence mapping as shown in the Lower Austrian best practice, which due to its logical approach, flexible orientation and participatory character allows the optimum matching between technology offer and demand and eases the cooperation process both at the level of cluster management and members: enterprises, research entities etc.”*



Comelia Muraru, Coordinator of the Technological and Business Incubator INMA-ITA, INMA - National Institute of Research Development for Machines and Installations Designed to Agriculture and Food Industry and Vice-President of the Romanian National Cluster Association (Romania)

*“Probably the most convincing statement about the effectiveness of a good practice is the ability to demonstrate its transferability from one region to another.*

*Tillväxtverket made substantial efforts to promote the ClusteriX project at national level and also directly to the regions, succeeding to attract the interest and actively involve the region of Värmland in the project’s activities. Representatives of Region Värmland and the Steel&Engineering cluster (Stål & Verkstad) participated in the Peer Group meeting in Malmö in June 2012. As the region was thereafter highly interested in the Lower Austrian good practice “Competence Mapping”, they also participated in the staff exchange in Lower Austria (04/2013) and co-organized with Tillväxtverket a staff exchange in Sweden (06/2013). The Competence Map tool was discussed in detail in both meetings with the Lower Austrian Mechatronics Cluster Manager and the Austrian external expert. In Karlstad the tool was also presented to potential beneficiaries in Sweden. As a result the Steel&Engineering Cluster (Stål & Verkstad) in Värmland included the Competence Mapping tool in a collaborative project with Swedish and Norwegian clusters.*

*The project proposal was approved and will now (2013/09/01—2016/01/01) be financially supported by the National Cluster Programme of Tillväxtverket. The exchange of experience between the Swedish and Austrian partners will be continued along the implementation process. Should the pilot be successful in Värmland, it could be extended it to a broader range of clusters.”*



Ewa Andersson, Project Leader International Affairs, Tillväxtverket, Sweden



Camilla Karlsson, Programme officer, the National programme of Innovation, regional Leadership and Sustainable clusters, Tillväxtverket, Sweden

## 2.1.1 Competence Mapping of companies in the Mechatronics-Cluster in Lower Austria by ecoplus/Lower Austria

### Location of the Practice

Österreich (Austria), Niederösterreich (Province of Lower Austria), Sankt Pölten

### Start date and end date

Date	Milestone	Activities carried out
May – June 2010	Go / No-Go decision of the implementation of a Competence Mapping	Compilation of an idea sketch (goals, benefits, expected results) Collection of feedback from cluster members (focus group)
July – October 2010	Go / No-Go decision: Detailed Concept	Development of a detailed concept Elaboration of alternative approaches / concepts Deciding upon a specific approach Securing financial means
November 2010 – January 2011	Instruments / Design of Workshop	Literature study Development of guidelines Compilation of documents for the workshop
January 2011	Pilot Workshop	Carrying out a pilot workshop Evaluation and summary of the workshop
February – October 2011	Carrying out Workshops with Enterprises	Contacting interested companies Carrying out the workshops Evaluation and summary of the workshops Summary of lessons learned
2012 - ongoing	Roll-out of the tool	Carrying out competence mapping workshops with further companies in the Mechatronics-Cluster in Lower Austria and with research institutions in the region

### Practice Executive Summary

The good practice example “Competence Map” describes a systematic approach to identify strategically significant innovation potentials and to develop emerging regional economic fields of strength.

In intensive workshops companies learn to change their view from product related development to a clear definition of their competences and identification of completely new applications and markets.

The tool “Competence Map” was tested in a pilot action with 10 companies in the Mechatronics Cluster Lower Austria resulting in the identification of new markets. The tool will be rolled out to further companies and R&D institutions in Lower Austria.

## Detailed description of Practice

### *(Starting point/challenge)*

The Mechatronics-Cluster in Lower Austria started its activities in 2010. The main challenge in this new cluster initiative was to identify common fields for research, development and innovation for the rather traditional companies in the metal and electronics sector with impact on the regional added-value.

### *(What has been done?)*

#### a) Concept phase

The cluster management team developed an initial idea to identify unique competences available in the Mechatronics-Cluster companies and to visualize these competences in a map. The idea sketch was sent to companies actively involved in the cluster development (the so called cluster focus group), who were asked to provide feedback on whether they would be interested in the idea (or not). Based on the positive feedback the next step was to begin with the preparation of a detailed concept.

### *(Lessons learned)*

It makes sense to collect feedback regarding the potential use of a cluster instrument with a high degree of novelty at a very early stage, in order to be able to better estimate possible risks and questions regarding relevance and acceptance. In this case, the feedback was very helpful to the cluster management, enabling it to better estimate the interest of the companies. Five of the companies that provided feedback also went on to actively participate in the pilot phase.

#### b) Detailed concept phase

The positive feedback of the members of the focus group encouraged the cluster management to further develop the cluster instrument "Competence Mapping". Two different options for further developing the instrument were elaborated.

Option 1 entailed the quick involvement of a large number of companies, which would then be interviewed telephonically (high-speed processing) to capture their respective competencies; afterwards, workshops delving deeper would then be held with selected companies.

Option 2 was to carry out in-depth workshops with selected companies to identify their competencies and skills in a first step and to roll-out this methodology to a large number of companies afterwards (i.e. first DEEP then BROAD).

In the end, having discussed both options, option 2 was decided upon because of the instrument's high degree of novelty – it makes more sense to first examine and discuss the method of capture and presentation in-depth rather than to quickly involve a large number of companies.

Parallel to this, a financing concept regarding the development of the instrument was elaborated. Due to financial contributions from the Chamber of Commerce (professional group of the machines & metal ware industry of Lower

Austria), the Federal State of Lower Austria as well as the INTERREG SEE project ASVILOC+, it could be ensured that no additional costs arose for the companies participating in the pilot phase.

*(Lessons learned)*

Intense discussions regarding the approach to be followed were necessary, to sufficiently clarify the pros and cons of the two options among the various groups of interest. Although it was very time-consuming to reach a decision, the chosen approach was accepted and followed by all participants.

c) Instrument development phase

Once the financing was secured, the consulting firm IMG was assigned with the specific instrument development. As a first step and in preparation to the workshop, guidelines and a self-assessment tool for participating companies enabling an initial self-analysis of technological and organizational strengths were compiled based on current literature and the consultant's experiences.

In addition to the description of the overall concept, the guidelines include the following aspects:

- How to prepare the workshop?
- How to implement the workshop?
- Definition of key words / concepts
- Description of the analysis grid to identify the competences and skills available in the company
- How to use the self-assessment tool?
- How to interpret the results / the competence portfolio?

The self-assessment tool is based on the capture of individual strengths along the value chain as defined by Michael Porter. In a first step companies were asked to describe both technological as well as non-technological strengths and in a second step to evaluate these in view of the relevant criteria for core competencies (high customer relevancy, sustainable differentiation potential, company specificity, transferability onto new products/markets/services) and to rate the level of competency with regard to the industry. As a result the competences, market effect and transferability of strengths were visualized in a portfolio presentation. All participating companies filled in this self assessment tool before the workshop which ensured an in-depth preparation of the company and served as a baseline for the discussion.

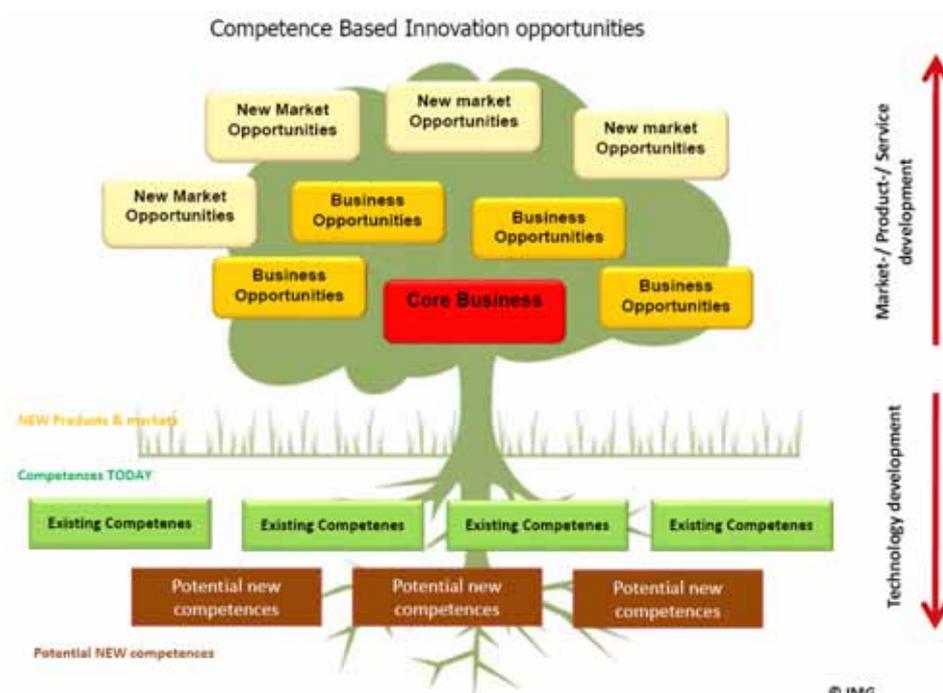
*(Lessons learned)*

The suggestion regarding company strengths according to the value chain was taken up seriously only by a few companies, thus the quality of companies' descriptions of their strengths varied greatly and/or many competences were described very generally. The specialized skills behind these competences only became visible later on during the workshops.

The evaluation according to the core competencies criteria and the visualization using the above described portfolio provided a good base of discussion for the workshops.

## d) Pilot-Workshop

As a pilot a first Competence Mapping workshop was organized with the company GW St. Pölten on 18/01/2011. Based on the self-assessment the company representatives discussed these competences as well as underlying skills with the cluster management team and the external expert. The discussion resulted in recommendations for the future presentation of these competencies. This part of the workshop was very time consuming but allowed the cluster management team a deep insight into the special competencies of the company and provided the company representatives with a very valuable external view. In a second part of the workshop, potential future technologies and markets for the company were sampled. During the wrap-up, the consultants presented the competences as roots of a tree, in the style of the tree-model of core competencies, and new potentials arising from the use of the competencies were visualized as extensions of the tree crown. On the basis of the experiences of the pilot workshop the method of presentation was adapted for the following workshops, whilst the agenda and time schedule were revised.

*(Lessons learned)*

The discussion in the workshop was very much influenced by the current portfolio of products and services, the “going in-depth” was a very time-consuming process which demanded a lot from the external consultants during the interview, i.e. a strong technical background is required to carry out these workshops.

During the pilot workshop and the wrap-up thereafter, it became evident - based on the abundance of different competencies - how difficult it is to present these in such a way that an external person is able to quickly obtain a detailed impression of the company’s competencies. This resulted in the presentation of companies’ competencies in

the form of a Competencies Map; the Competencies Map entails a brief description of the competencies and the underlying abilities, supported by strong graphics.

#### e) Workshop phase

During the months February – September 2011, eight further companies participated in Competence Mapping workshops.

The companies were represented by the 1st and 2nd level of management (usually 3-5 persons). The inputs from the workshops were documented and in a second step structured und analysed by the consultants from an external point of view. This feedback to the participating company included the following parts:

- Presentation of the competencies and underlying abilities including visualization (Competencies Map)
- Ideas regarding new business development opportunities / directions of technology development including the description of innovation opportunities
- Summary of competencies - based on innovation potentials

#### *(Lessons learned)*

All workshop participants to date have positively commented on the Competence Mapping cost/benefit ratio, though the time spent with regard to the preparatory analyses as well as with participation in a full working day workshop with 3-5 company representatives is significant.

- It was discovered that many companies have a clear picture of their specific competences. Only 2 out of 9 companies showed - in their analysis of strengths in the course of the workshop preparation - that they had a clear understanding of their competences.
- Many companies had a very narrow view on their own products and/or services as well as core markets, which was only broadened after intense discussions with external participants (Mechatronics-Cluster management team and the consultants) during the workshop. This allows for the observation that a pure company-internal analysis of competences only leads to inadequate results and/or that the compilation of the competences requires trained and experienced persons with relevant technical background.
- It is worth to think of splitting the workshop into 2 half working day sessions. Workshop 1 could focus on the competencies analysis part. In a second workshop 1-2 weeks later a more effective search for innovation potentials and directions of technology development based on the results of the first workshop could be carried out.
- During the workshops, the cluster management team gained a very deep insight into the competences of the companies, which is not really possible in the "normal" course of business (interviews, company visits, company documents, questionnaires).
- For some companies, the identified competences and innovation potentials served as a direct input for strategic work.
- Two companies posted the results of the workshops directly onto their website.

#### *(Costs and Resources)*

The costs of the pilot action involving 10 companies were 30.000€. One third was born by the province of Lower Austria, one third was financed by the INTERREG IVB SEE project ASVILOC plus, one third was financed by the Chamber of Commerce.

*(Next steps)*

The Mechatronics-Cluster management team organized B2B meetings, where the participating companies presented their competences to potential customers. Posters visualizing the competences and potential applications ("Competence Map") helped to structure this B2B meeting in a very efficient way.



© ecoplus

A working group was formed to further develop one of the technologies identified in several companies in the pilot action: LED technology. The tool "Competence Map" will be rolled out to other companies in Lower Austria in different sectors and in an adapted way to R&D institutions in the region.

#### Evidence of success

Impact at the company level: The participating companies have a clear picture of their competences and changed their presentation to potential customers and partners. They gained insights on potential new applications and markets for their competences.

Impact on regional level: 2 topics for further development were identified: e-mobility solutions and LED-technology applications, which will be developed further in order to create a critical mass in the region with the help of the cluster management. The regional policy makers benefitted through further insights in the regional mechatronics sector, which helps the evidence-based creation of political initiatives that address future challenges in „mapped“ industries.

Challenges faced: Motivating the first companies to participate in the workshops. Once the benefits are visible it easier to involve more companies.

Challenge for the future: define a leaner workshop concept in order to decrease the efforts.

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### Public information on the Practice

Website	<a href="http://www.mechatronics-cluster.at">www.mechatronics-cluster.at</a> <a href="http://www.ecoplus.at/en/ecoplus/cluster/mechatronics-cluster-lower-austria">www.ecoplus.at/en/ecoplus/cluster/mechatronics-cluster-lower-austria</a> <a href="http://www.ecoplus.at/en/node/11133">www.ecoplus.at/en/node/11133</a>
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## 2.1.2 Bioplastics Initiative Lower Austria by ecoplus/Lower Austria

### Location of the Practice

Austria, Lower Austria, St. Pölten

### Start date and end date

The initiating phase took place in 2005 by conducting a study exploring the regional economic potential and probable problematic challenges in bioplastics and its applications. After the Go-decision the Plastics-Cluster in Lower Austria engaged in an international R&D project on bioplastics (2007-2010), which resulted in a series of product development projects and a platform called "Biopolymer team", i.e. a network of companies and researchers in the region continuing the collaboration in this field.



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### Practice Executive Summary

This good practice example showcasing the Bioplastics Initiative Lower Austria describes the policy mechanisms used to identify and support an emerging industry with high added value for the region as well as the involvement of stakeholders from different administrative departments and economic sectors. Furthermore it shows how this initiative spans its wings for further partnerships and co-operations at international and regional level on the topic of bioplastics.

## Detailed description of Practice

### *(Starting point/challenge)*

Due to decreasing crude oil resources and an increasing need for renewable alternatives bioplastics started to boom. Especially the US is heavily investing in biopolymers. In 2005 the Lower Austrian Regional Government was confronted with the question of raising awareness for products from renewable resources and promoting the use of bioplastics products. Although there is strong plastics industry in Lower Austria, there was hardly any technological know-how on biopolymers in the region and no bioplastics products available. The Plastics-Cluster in Lower Austria reacted to this discussion and convinced the Regional government to not only promote and import bioplastics but to also to help build up know-how and added value in the region as well.

### *(What has been done?)*

First steps (start in 2005 – 2006)

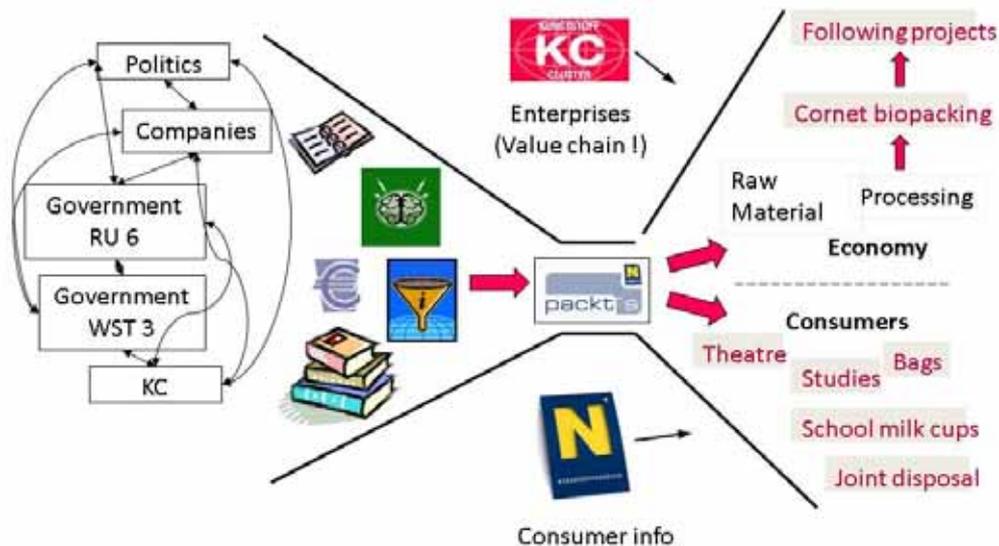
- Creating a common understanding between politicians, government (departments economy – agriculture), cluster and enterprises
- Raising start-up capital for a feasibility study on regional potentials of bioplastics (public-private partnership: 75% from the regional government, 25% company contributions)
- Involvement of non-profit organizations and public through round-tables, info-tours, etc.

Critical success factors

- Taking the risk: Securing the start capital from the regional government and companies without knowing an exact return of investment at the beginning
- Financial participation of the leading/interested companies. (about 5000€ per company)
- Precise definition of roles, responsibilities and targets. (Main areas: economy / agriculture)

## Process Illustration

### Illustration of the process:



© ecoplus

### Implementation of the Lower Austrian Bioplastics Initiative

- Set-up of a regional coordination platform "N packt's" involving policy makers and intermediaries from the economic and the agricultural sector
- Coordination by a dedicated person (Plastics-Cluster manager)
- Step-by-step involvement of companies along the value chain - close cooperation of Plastics-Cluster in Lower Austria and Food Cluster Lower Austria.
- International collaboration: Linking to know-how in other European countries: development of an international collective research project named "Bio-Packing" managed by cluster organizations and business associations, involving companies as so-called "user groups" (companies in the "driving seat" of the research project), subcontracting research institutions. The project was funded by the ERA-Net CORNET ([www.cornet-era.net](http://www.cornet-era.net)). The international partners were identified through existing contacts of the involved research institutions and with the help of the CORNET platform.

- Roll-out of research results in regional product development projects of companies: co-funded by regional sources for cooperation projects -> flexible coordination between Regional Government Department for Economy (plastics sector) and Department for Agriculture (food sector)

*(Costs and Resources)*

The starting phase (feasibility study, coordination of interests & involvement of companies, awareness rising activities) was funded at the regional level by 2 different regional government departments and private funding.

The international research project "Bio-Packing" (being the back-bone of the Bio Packing Initiative in Lower Austria) was financed by the ERA-Net CORNET (national resources) and co-financed by the participating companies (10.000 – 20.000 € each).

*(Key success factors)*

A clear and transparent project management ensured by the cluster organization enables the involvement of also small companies with weak project management skills. Companies were able to concentrate on their development activities without having to put a lot of efforts on administration.

*(Lessons learned)*

It was crucial to involve companies of the whole value chain in order to be able to present a sample ("something to touch") at the end of the project. It was also crucial to have a full time project manager provided by the cluster organization. (this is a critical factor for potential transfer of best practice case to other regions)

Follow-up projects on joint product development (e.g. special packaging for vegetables) were financed by Lower Austrian regional funds (Programme "Funding for Cooperation": collaboration of minimum 3 companies, max. 50% of external costs) and the involved companies.

*(Next steps)*

Ongoing and following projects dealing with biopolymers: currently more than 27 projects with over 149 companies as project partners.

Further exchange of experience and R&D project development in the "Biopolymer team" platform

Critical Success Factors

- Expertise in technology and economics in the project start phase combined in one person. (ideally: the project manager)
- The project manager shall be accepted as an expert and well-known by the leading companies.
- International collaboration to overcome local obstacles & sceptics.
- Project Partners participating along the entire value chain of the process / product.

### Evidence of success

- 27 follow-up projects (joint product development)
- Establishment of a platform called "Biopolymer team", consisting of a group of researchers and company representatives, who meet and exchange their knowledge twice a year and develop new projects.
- 1 spin-off (NAKU) existing for 5 years
- New bioplastics products made in Lower Austria on the market: ca. 100
- The economic impact on the involved companies cannot be evaluated yet.

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### Public information on the Practice

Website	<a href="http://www.ecoplus.at/en/ecoplus/cluster/plastics-cluster-lower-austria">www.ecoplus.at/en/ecoplus/cluster/plastics-cluster-lower-austria</a> <a href="http://www.kunststoff-cluster.at">www.kunststoff-cluster.at</a>
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### 2.1.3 Integrated management system of quality and environment – ISO and EFQM certification, by ERAI/Rhône-Alpes

#### Location of the Practice

France, Region of Rhone-Alpes and Franche-Comté

#### Start date and end date

From January 2011, for a duration of 1 year and a half

#### Practice Executive Summary

The Integrated Management System of quality and environment aims to improve the organizational efficiency of Plastipolis. It also helps us to enhance recognition for performance excellence on both national and international level. Two management methods of continuous improvement (PDCA and EFQM) are applied. Different processes and procedures within the cluster are defined and structuralized. The final output is to acquire the ISO certification 9001/14001, and the European labelling EFQM for commitment to excellence. Such a system will also serve for the sustainable development and the social management of the cluster.

#### Detailed description of Practice

##### *(Starting point/challenge)*

The EFQM program was launched in response to the increasing internal and external requirement for performance excellence. Through structuralizing and standardizing the cluster management processes, the project aims:

- To continually enhance organizational efficiency and improve the performance of cluster.
- To improve the satisfaction of our stakeholders (companies, R&D centres, universities, financiers, public authority, etc.) through more transparent and standardized service offering, and thus to increase the number of members.
- To enhance recognition for organizational excellence through the acquisition of ISO certification and European labelling.

##### *(What has been done?)*

For the moment, the preparation stage has been completed, and the system is underimplementation. A Quality Planning Manuel, as well as various other documents, is completed. We have defined the different processes in the cluster. These are: 1. Direction processes (innovation piloting and management of integrated system), 2. Operation processes (customer satisfaction, project management, and procurement), 3. Support processes (Human Resources, and Infrastructure & environment). Different axes of continuous improvement are defined and corresponding actions are taken for each process.

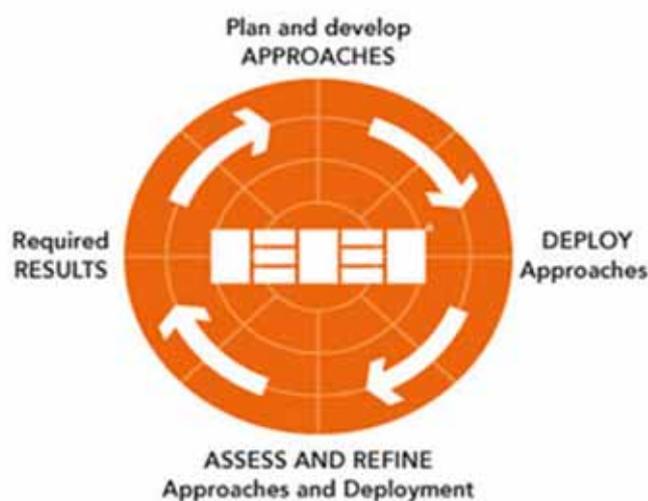
*(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

All the committees, departments and the general direction of Plastipolis are involved in the implementation of this project. An external Quality Manager pilots the planning and following-up of the project. The French Agency of Normalization (AFNOR) and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) are involved in the auditing and the certification.

The project will benefit both internal and external stakeholders of the cluster through a more standardized and efficient management system. Our members benefit from better services. The cluster itself will achieve a better image and a wider membership.

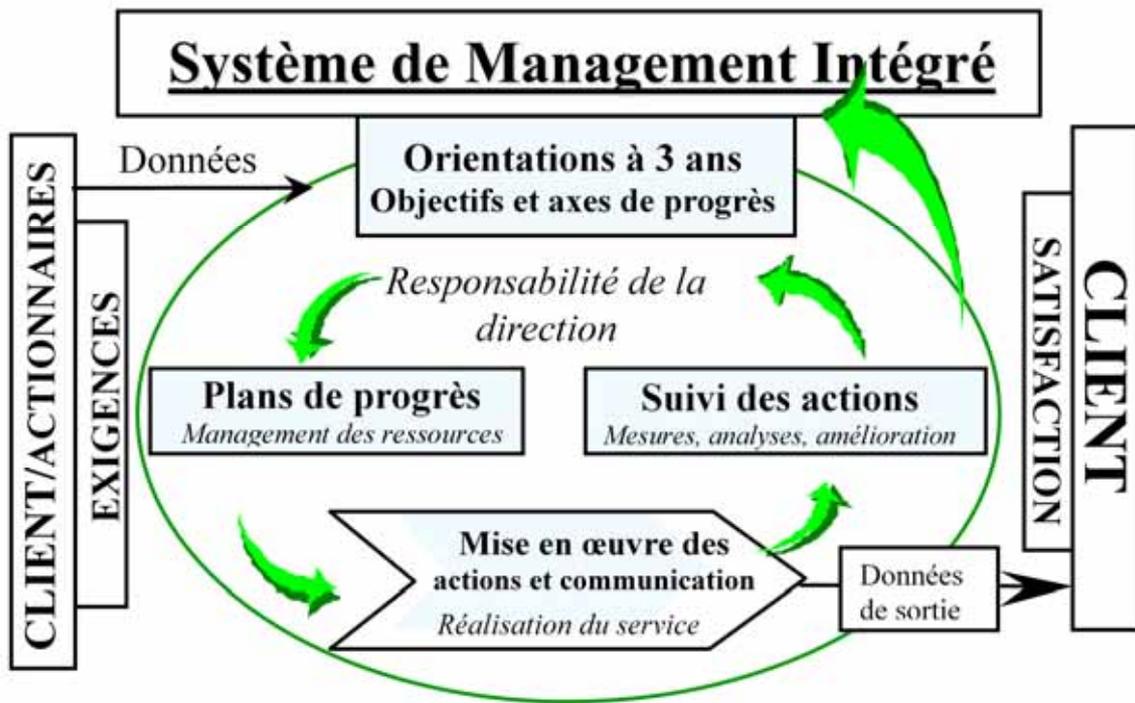
*(Methodology)*

Two methods of continuous improvement are used in the project:



PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act): This implies progress planning, actions implementation, actions following-up and strategy adjusting.

- The EFQM Excellence Model: The model is a non-prescriptive framework for organizational management system, promoted by EFQM.



*(Output)*

- An efficient and effective quality management system (through a series of processes, procedures and documents)
- The certification ISO 9001/14001
- The recognition of EFQM for commitment to excellence

*(Costs and resources)*

The project has an overall budget of around 30 000 euros. From internal budget of the cluster.

*(Key success factors)*

- The commitment of the General Direction and the personnel to the project.
- The implementation of the management strategies.

*(Lessons learned)*

The integrated management system as a whole is a good tool which can be deployed in other organizations who want to improve organizational efficiency.

*(Next steps)*

- The implementation of the system
- Responding to Action filling cards
- External auditing and certification completion

## Evidence of success

*(Measure of results/impact)*

Different indicators are used to measure the results of the practice. For example, the indicators of performance may include the respect of timing, the number of members, the conformity to processes, etc.

Other indicators may come from: System effectiveness, measured through management system review; Industrial performance indicators, tracked in monthly IPI report; Customer performance report, through performance information taken from customer website.

*(Results/impact)*

The practice helps to structuralize and standardize the organization in the cluster. It enhances the efficiency and the performance of the cluster, and thus improves customer satisfaction.

*(Advantages of practice)*

The integrated management system is an existing international norm. It targets the fundamental processes and activities in our cluster's management. The effectiveness of such a system has been proved through the experiences of numerous other organizations.

*(Potential improvements)*

The commitment of the people in the project can be improved.

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## 2.1.4 France Green Plastics – a cross-sector and cross-cluster innovation initiative, by ERAI/Rhône Alpes

### Location of the Practice

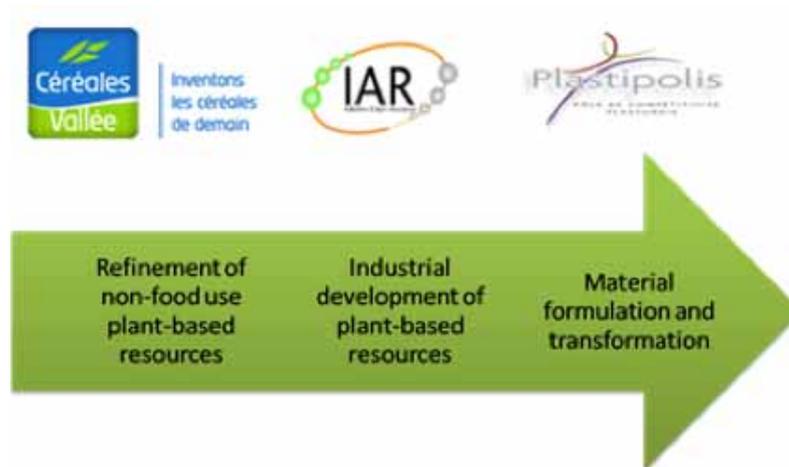
France

### Start date and end date

From 2005, ongoing

### Practice Executive Summary

France Green Plastics (FGP) is an association created by three French clusters: Plastipolis, IAR and Céréales Vallée. As is shown in the following graph, the three clusters are situated in different positions in the value chain of the bio-plastics industry, going from plant-based resources up to finished plastic products. FGP is designed to combine the competencies of the clusters and thus to facilitate innovation in the development of bio-based materials and their industrial application. This is achieved through regular meetings, a common communication platform and collaborative R&D projects. So far, the association gathers around 150 members and has labelled 19 R&D projects.



### Detailed description of Practice

#### *(Starting point/challenge)*

Bio-based plastics represent a strategic development axis for PLASTIPOLIS. Since most of its members are plastics processors, Plastipolis in itself does not have sufficient competences to cover all the links of the value chain. That is why

it purposefully chose to work with two other clusters that possess important expertise in the development of plant-based materials. The idea is to combine the competences of the three clusters in order to cover the whole value chain of bio-plastics development.

In other words, the issue is of facing a theme, which is too large for each cluster. And that is where cross-sector collaboration becomes absolutely necessary.

*(What has been done?)*

Within FGP, various activities were initiated and carried out:

#### Roadmapping

A strategic roadmap was developed for FGP. The roadmap is a combined understanding of the clusters and of scientific experts about the development of bio-plastics. FGP tries to establish a global long-term vision for 3 to 5 years, but each year the roadmap is adjusted according to the latest developments of the sector. The directors of each cluster have a joint telephone meeting each month to exchange ideas on the subject. The roadmap is communicated to external people through FGP's website.

#### Intranet

A common information exchange platform for FGP was established.

#### Conference

An annual assembly of industry people and academics (about 100 people) is organized with a focus on a specific theme defined in the strategic development of bio-plastics. 2012 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year such a conference was organized. The theme is how to transform public regulations (e.g. REACH) from a constraint to an opportunity for development.

#### Meetings

2 staff meetings per year take place, assembling the directors, project managers and communication managers of the three clusters.

#### Projects

Every 2 to 3 months, the Project Group meets to discuss about potential project initiatives. The initiatives are valued by the Scientific Guidance Committee of FGP which meets twice a year. R&D projects can also be initiated by companies and then labelled by the clusters for public funding.

Up to the moment, 19 collaborative R&D projects have been labelled within the FGP (3 projects per year).

#### Newsletters



Newsletters are being distributed to the members of the three clusters on a quarterly basis. The newsletters include latest information about the technology and markets evolvments, actors' activities as well as upcoming events concerning bio-plastics.

*(Promotors, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

Stakeholders

Scientific and industrial experts

Companies from each cluster

3 French clusters:

- Céréales Vallée : cereals for agro-materials
- IAR : industrial development of agro-materials
- Plastipolis : plastic processing

Beneficiaries

Member companies of the three clusters and the clusters themselves.

*(Methodology)*

The Green France Plastics assumes the role of developing bio-plastics through:

- Regular meetings
- A common brand "FGP" for public communication, instead of using the name of each individual cluster (to increase recognition)
- An intranet as joint information exchange platform
- A common procedure of project labelling: clusters exchange on project themes; In unified presentation formats.

*(Output)*

Strategic roadmap; newsletters; regular meetings, 3 to 4 R&D projects per year.

*(Costs and resources)*

About 30 000 €/year for PLASTIPOLIS, secured from the Plastipolis' own operational budget.

*(Key success factors)*

The willingness and the cohesion of the partner clusters. There should be long lasting, visible benefits for each cluster to enable this partnership to continue to exist. Regular meetings, especially physical meetings, are necessary. What is

more important, an open and dynamic atmosphere to make people exchange their ideas freely is needed. Participants must be aware that the more information they give, the more information they are going to get in return.

There has to be a central coordinator for the activities of FGP. This can be ensured through a rotating system: one person from each partner cluster coordinates and they rotate on yearly bases. If the partnership enlarges, it might be wise to have a permanent organizational entity for FGP. Each cluster dedicates then a permanent representative to work with this entity.

*(Lessons learned)*

The region can be a facilitating intermediary of such a practice by supporting the growth of its public exposure and by facilitating exchange. The region can also play a funding role of technology transfer partnerships.

*(Next steps)*

To enlarge the partnership by including more partners who are working on bio-plastics, first in France and then in Europe. And to initiate more projects within FGP.

**Evidence of success**

*(Measure of results/impact)*

The impacts can be measured by the number of projects labelled, the number of companies involved in projects and the number of participants in joint events. It is planned to include a members' satisfaction analysis as a measurement in the following steps.

*(Results/impact)*

For the cluster

- To know more about other clusters, to combine competencies
- To have a larger access to information
- To achieve more public recognition

For companies

- To have easier access to information and to projects relating to bio-plastics
- Networking and new business opportunities

*(Advantages of practice)*

Cross-sector collaboration is essential in the case of bio-plastics, since a single cluster does not dispose of all the expertise throughout the value chain.

For Plastipolis, the practice allows strengthening its position in the bio-plastics development and at the same time to increase the number of projects.

*(Potential improvements)*

Improvement can be looked at from different perspectives:

Communication

Better communication towards member companies and the public, with an emphasis on the results of the projects. Communication programs in English to increase international exposure.

Organization

To have one coordinator in charge of the functioning of the association; improve the effectiveness of meetings by face-to-face communication and by creating a free and dynamic atmosphere.

Networking

To enlarge the network; to be present in European conferences

Financing

Try to get public financial support, especially from the region, for the operation of FGP and for the participation in conferences.

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## 2.1.5 International development Plans (IDP), by ERAI/Rhône-Alpes

Location of the Practice

Foreign countries

Start date and end date of the Practice

This practice has been launched in 2005. IDPs are applicable 1 year long.

Practice Executive Summary



The Rhone-Alps Region supports the internationalization of Rhône-Alpes' clusters and competitiveness clusters by financing actions (fairs, inter-clustering, exploratory missions, B2B meetings, international watches, export training sessions, etc.) that will strengthen the international visibility of both the clusters themselves and their members. ERAI was commissioned by the Rhône-Alpes Region to support clusters in setting-up their International Development Plans (IDPs).

*IDPs have multiple goals:*

- To increase the number of companies involved in an international development process
- To encourage the competitiveness of companies within international markets
- To strengthen the international visibility of the industry and the whole region

## Detailed description of Practice

### *(Starting point/challenge)*

The challenge was to help companies and clusters in their international development on sectoral markets, by providing them a regional financing support.

### *(What has been done?)*

Each year the Rhone-Alps clusters set up their International Development Plans (IDPs). They are composed of a list of international collective activities involving the clusters themselves and/or their SME members. Previously, the Rhône-Alpes Region draws up a set of eligible activities, which it is going to subsidize from 40 to maximum 80%.

For each cluster, an international committee is created. It is directed by the cluster's manager and gathers some SMEs member of the cluster as well as all the relevant regional and national stakeholders dealing with internationalisation (the Rhône-Alpes Region and other local authorities, UbiFrance, Chambers of Commerce and ERAI). This committee aims at selecting the list of activities that will be included in the IDPs. The selection takes into account several elements: the international strategy of the clusters, market and technology watches, sectoral information feedbacks and companies' expectations. Besides, the international committee elects a project coordinator institution for every activity. The latter will manage it, receive the public grant and then transfer it to the participants.

Several actions can be included in IDPs in order to emphasize the know-how and the sectors of excellence of the Rhône-Alpes Region: collective booths on tradeshow and events abroad, booths and technological showcases at Rhone-Alps international events, trade missions, market and technology watches, inter-clustering, training programs to support export, recruitment of an International Voluntary Worker, creation of specific communication tools in a foreign language (brochures, websites, etc.).

Companies, Rhône-Alpes clusters and competitiveness clusters benefit from these actions.

### *How (Methodology)?*

An IDP is defined by:

- The international strategy of the clusters,
- The market and technology watch
- Sectoral information feedback

Detailed methodology of IDPs:

Clusters' international committees work out the international strategy by suggesting actions that could be included in IDP (1<sup>st</sup> semester of the year N-1).



The Cluster's international Committee approves the actions + names 1 manager per action



Drafting of an IDP + Definition of the budget for every action



The IDP is handed in to the Rhône-Alpes Region (3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the year N-1) and voted by the assembly



Setting up of the different projects throughout the year (each action has to be fulfilled within 24 months)

*(Key success factors and lessons learned)*

There are several key success factors such as:

- Cooperation, active involvement of every actor during the procedure
- Synergy of actions and actors
- Perceptible outcome
- Companies reputation on international markets
- Pooling of inter-clustering activities

The creation of synergies between actors has been a real lesson. Every stakeholder dealing with internationalization and companies have to be involved in the decision making process.

*(Next steps)*

The next steps would be to develop a long-lasting strategy (2013-2015) for all the Clusters and Competitiveness Clusters from Rhône-Alpes in order to have a more strategic and structured view

Evidence of success

*(Results/impact)*

By aiming at increasing clusters' and companies' competitiveness, IDPs contribute to promote the dynamism of the regional authority and the whole territory. More and more clusters ask for an IDP. Currently, there are 17 of them. IDPs



enhance the creation of a collective dynamics: companies of the same sector are encouraged to exchange and share experience and best practices.

We can measure the results by quoting the missions that are actually led and the number of participants. Before the drafting of each IDP, clusters and competitiveness clusters provide a sum-up of their past IDP to show the results and emphasize the effectiveness of such actions.

IDPs have consequences on several levels.

At the policy level, the influence of the Rhone-Alps Region benefits from this practice. The IDPs contribute to promote the dynamism of the Region through the local companies' activity.

In addition, the success of defined actions encourages the setting-up of similar actions.

*(Advantages of practice)*

Clusters and companies benefit from a significant financial support. This approach is quiet rare. Furthermore, IDPs aim at structuring the international strategy of a cluster.

*(Potential improvements)*

To improve the practice, it would be interesting to obtain a more significant involvement from SMEs in the selection of the activities included in IDPs. Anticipating further more defined actions would be also a good improvement because companies could write them down in their priorities.

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#### Public information on the practice

Website	<a href="http://www.eraï.org/front/109-47-1-Our-expertise">http://www.eraï.org/front/109-47-1-Our-expertise</a>
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## 2.1.6 Think tank – a permanent thinking group in the cluster of Lyon Urban Truck & Bus (LUTB), by ERAI/Rhône-Alpes

### Location of the Practice

France, region of Rhône-Alpes

### Start date and end date

From 2007, ongoing

### Practice Executive Summary

This practice was developed in the cluster Lyon Urban Truck & Bus (LUTB), which is the only competitive cluster in Europe with a focus on the performance of urban public transportation systems.

The initiative of the Think Tank is represented by the set up of a group of people coordinated by LUTB on a regular basis (16 sessions/year and 40 participants/session in average). It assembles the members of LUTB to discuss about important issues regarding the development of public transportation systems. All members predefine the topics and new innovative projects are launched within the program. From its setting-up in 2007, about 70 sessions of the Think Tank have been organized, with more than 10 projects initiated. The program has well succeeded among the members and has become the core of the cluster's activities.

### Detailed description of Practice

#### *(Starting point/challenge)*

The Think Tank was set up in order to deal with important issues in the development of public transportation systems. It is a platform where members meet regularly and exchange ideas. Through collective reflection, the cluster and its members are able to have a better vision of the sector's development as well as to initiate new collaborative projects.

#### *(What has been done?)*

From its creation in 2007, about 70 (16 per year) sessions of Think Tanks have been organized by LUTB, with an average of 40 participants for each session. Each session is based on a specific theme that LUTB has defined with its members. More than 10 projects have so far been initiated within the Think Tank. And surveys are launched from time to time among the members to evaluate their satisfaction level and identify new fields of interest.

As a complementary activity of the program Think Tank, LUTB has also set up a strategic roadmap for the development of the transportation system, with quantified objectives. The roadmap is updated regularly.

#### *(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*



The cluster LUTB, its members (researchers, laboratories and industry representatives), users and managers of public transportation systems, as well as communes (e.g. Lyon city) are involved in the program.

The beneficiaries are mainly the members of LUTB. But other actors such as local authorities/municipalities can also benefit from the program.

*(Methodology)*

The development of the program Think Tank is based on 3 steps.

Step 1

Definition of key themes. Almost all the themes of the Think Tanks were predefined at the very beginning of the program in 2007. All the members gathered together and five main themes were identified: motorization, security, architecture, system of transport and mobility management. For each theme, several sub-themes were defined.

Step 2

Organize Think Tanks according to each sub-theme defined in step 1. All the members of LUTB are invited to actively participate. The number of attendants varies from 20 to 70 according to the theme, with 40 in average. Participants are required to sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of the session.

Each meeting of the Think Tank is divided into two parts: a presentation of the subject and workshops for sub-groups. The idea is to develop a collective reflection and to see the possibility for new R&D projects.

Step 3

Edit executive summaries based on the results of the discussions and of the projects. These are then being distributed among the members involved.



*(Output)*

Projects; summaries either for a further series of Think Tanks or for one theme of specific importance.

*(Costs and resources)*

The program does not cause any financial cost for LUTB, since LUTB does not need to pay for the lecturers or the conference room. The speakers contribute voluntarily and the events take place in the premises either of LUTB or of one of its members. LUTB does not generate any income either, since no participation fees are charged. Nevertheless, the program requires a certain level of human input.

*(Key success factors)*

The design of the themes: To what extent do the proposed themes attract the members?

The possibility to gather different actors on the same theme, to build contacts and to initiate projects.

The level of exchange among participants depends largely on the willingness to get involved in an open dialogue and on the quality of the information.

*(Lessons learned)*

LUTB has already organized certain Think Tanks with other clusters in the region, for example, Plastipolis and Axelera. It is possible for other clusters to organize similar programs.

The region can also intervene in the program according to the themes, but with limited influence.

*(Next steps)*

To continue the organization of Think Tanks.

To initiate more projects within the program.

To follow the deployment of projects till their maturity.

To update the themes of Think Tanks when needed.

*Evidence of success**(Measure of results/impact)*

The indicators of measurement include:

The number of sessions organized;

The number of participants;

The number of publications;

The number of projects initiated.

Level of satisfaction of the cluster members.

*(Results/impact)*

For LUTB, the Think Tank program lies at the core of the cluster's activities. It allows the cluster to activate the network and to initiate new R&D projects.

For the members of LUTB, it is an opportunity to get more information, to participate in new projects and to enlarge the networks. It also allows companies to confront their ideas with others and thus to improve their strategies.

On the politic level, local authorities/municipalities can be involved although no major impacts are envisaged.

Spill-overs come into place when the public sees better efficiency and less green house gas emission in the public transportation systems.

*(Advantages of practice)*

As it has been described before, the practice has many positive impacts on the cluster and its members. It is a great facilitator of information exchange and innovation.

*(Potential improvements)*

The follow up of projects. After the projects are defined and launched, efforts are still needed to follow-up the development of the projects till their maturity.

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### Public information on the Practice

Website	<a href="http://www.lutb.fr/les-actions/innover">www.lutb.fr/les-actions/innover</a>
Publications	Summary of 10 session of Think Tank of the programme system of Transport The Transport system quality White book

## 2.1.7 Cluster Strategic Diagnostics – Strategy Roadmap of Plastipolis – by ERAI/Rhône-Alpes

### Location of the Practice

France, Region of Rhone-Alpes, Oyonnax

### Start date and end date

Every three years. The current strategic roadmap is designed for the period 2013 – 2015

### Practice Executive Summary

Every three years, Plastipolis elaborates a Strategic Roadmap for the development of the cluster and of the sector. The roadmap that we are currently designing will be deployed for a three-year period, i.e. from 2013 to 2015.

The purpose of such a practice is to achieve a fair and constructive vision of the industry's development and ensures that the cluster's policies are well designed to improve the competitiveness of the sector. We also aim to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our services through better cluster-internal collaboration.

In order to elaborate such a roadmap, a collective reflection is needed and is being achieved through surveys, workshops and seminars, etc. By the end a roadmap and action plans, on both the cluster level and the activity level, are designed. They will serve as the guideline of the cluster's activities in the next three years.

### Detailed description of Practice

#### *(Starting point/challenge)*

As an industrial cluster, the final objective or challenge is to increase the competitiveness of the industry. To achieve this, it is important to make companies, R&D centres and universities work together to innovate, to encourage the development of cooperation projects and to anticipate the needs of the industry. It is thus essential for Plastipolis to have a global vision of the industry's development. Inputs from different stakeholders and partners are also valuable assets in the strategy making process.

On the other hand, another aim is to improve the internal collaboration. The different committees in the cluster need to cooperate in order to propose services with more added value for the members.

A strategy roadmap is a solution to all these challenges.

#### *(What has been done?)*

A global vision of the cluster is defined. SWOT analyses for each committee and corresponding action plans are elaborated. For instance, in the scientific committee, a technology roadmap is designed with 6 axes of research & development.

For the internationalisation committee, a questionnaire is designed and distributed to the members, in order to know which countries and markets each member is interested in. This enables the cluster management to propose services tailored to the real interests of the companies.

*(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

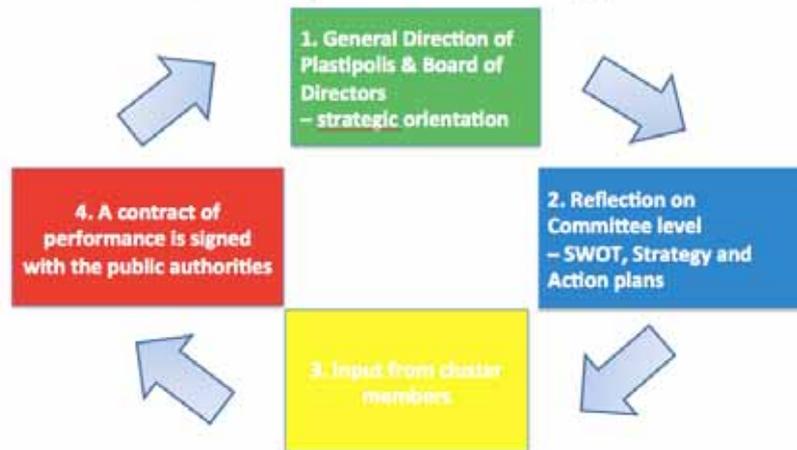
Plastipolis initiated the elaboration of the roadmap. The General Direction and all the committees of Plastipolis are the main participants in the program. Plastipolis keeps the independence in terms of decision-making. At the same time, it is important to have a fair representation of different stakeholders (companies, R&D centres, universities, financing bodies and public authorities) in the committees. These parties largely contribute with their ideas in the design of the strategic roadmap.

The roadmap serves for the development of the plastics industry and especially for the SMEs.

*(Methodology)*

The strategic roadmap of Plastipolis is a result of a collective reflection and collaboration. The General Direction of the cluster defines first the general orientation of the cluster strategy. Four axes of development were determined: innovation development, innovation diffusion, innovation industrialization and innovation commercialization.

### How is the roadmap built : methodology



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Then reflection at the committee level takes place: a summary of past actions, SWOT workshops and seminar presentations are organized. Strategies and actions plans at the committee level are then elaborated.

The members involved in the three committees (science, training and internationalization) are required to give their recommendations for the strategic roadmap. Once finished, the roadmap is submitted to the public national services in charge of cluster development (DGCIS). The DGCIS verifies if the cluster's

activities are consistent to the defined strategy. The roadmap will be implemented for a period of three years.

*(Output)*

A strategic roadmap for the cluster, SWOT analysis and specific action plans for each committee in the cluster.

*(Costs and resources)*

The financial costs of such a practice are limited. On the contrary, time and human resources are the main inputs.

*(Key success factors)*

- Commitment of the people, especially the key staff who serves as an engine of the project.
- Transparency of the information circulated among different parties.
- Collective reasoning to ensure that every party understands and shares the global vision of the cluster's strategy.

*(Lessons learned)*

For a cluster, the needs of its members should always be the starting point for any strategy.

*(Next steps)*

A complete version of the roadmap is to be distributed to all stakeholders and its implementation shall follow.

**Evidence of success**

*(Measure of results/impact)*

The strategy of a cluster and its implementation are subject to a national audit. DIRECCTE is assigned to measure the impacts of the cluster on the sector. The latest audit took place in February 2012.

*(Results/impact)*

On the policy level, policy makers as well as financing bodies are involved in the decision-making of the cluster. They feel more assured about its activities.

On the beneficiary level, companies' expectations are better met and more added-valued is created.

*(Advantages of practice)*

The practice implies a collective reflection on the strategic orientation of the cluster. This ensures a fair and constructive vision of the industry's development. The so designed policies of the cluster will better serve to improve the competitiveness of the industry. The roadmap together with action plans is a good tool for cluster strategy planning.

*(Potential improvements)*

We can improve the representation of different stakeholders and members in the committees. The goal is to have a global and unbiased view upon the needs of various stakeholders. Up to the moment, the representation of R&D centres and universities is satisfactory. But more companies could be involved.

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## 2.1.8 Enertour: Technical guided tours of climate houses, renewable energy plants, energy communities by TIS/South Tyrol

### Location of the Practice

South Tyrol (province of Bolzano/ Bozen), Italy

### Start date and end date

2007 - ongoing

### Practice Executive Summary

Enertour is an initiative that consists in organizing technical visits to CasaClima buildings, visiting installations of renewable energy systems and municipal systems. During an Enertour, the planners and managers of the systems and buildings give directly at the location explanations on the technical and economic aspects.

### Detailed description of Practice

Enertour is a project within the Area of Energy & Environment at TIS innovation park, a technology park of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano. Since 2007 Enertour is part of the Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign coordinated nationally by the Ministry of the Environment.



*(Starting point/challenge)*

South Tyrol is one of the most advanced areas in Italy when it comes to sustainable energy. Thanks to several solar, hydro, biomass and wind plants, which use local resources, South Tyrol covers 56% of the thermal and electric needs of its 500.000 inhabitants with renewable sources. The goal for 2020 is to increase this share up to 75%. In addition, South Tyrol is home to CasaClima, the first system of energy certification of buildings in Italy which has now thousands of buildings with low energy consumption in the whole region.

*(Promoters, stakeholders and beneficiaries)*

Enertour collaborates with partner institutions, e.g. KlimaHaus agency, Kyoto Club, the provincial agency for environment, and gathers several experts and organizations such as local companies, urban development planners, system/buildings managers the chamber of commerce and municipalities.

The visits address engineers, entrepreneurs, employees of public administration and all students with an interest in renewable energy and sustainable construction.

*(Methodology)*

Throughout the year, there are excursions to which individuals can enrol in, while extra visits for groups of interested people are organized as well.

*(Output, benefit and key success factors)*

The purpose of Enertour is to disseminate knowledge and new practical technological solutions towards a more sustainable energy development. The goal of the division Area Energy & Environment TIS, to which Enertour belongs, is to increase renewable energy and energy efficiency, particularly in the territory of South Tyrol. This department promotes the use of renewable sources, supports the industry by promoting the competitive growth and by organizing awareness campaigns for producers and consumers. It also promotes the application of new technologies by importing new technology trends that are under development nationally and internationally. Finally, the department Energy & Environment spreads the South Tyrolean experience in the field of renewable energies.

The key success factors are the following:

- Neutrality and supervising role thanks to the institutional nature of the TIS innovation park
- Consolidated network of contacts with companies, institutions, universities and the world of research
- Collaboration with national institutions dealing with renewable energy
- Constant updates on industry news from the technological and normative point of view (approvals and incentives) and business opportunities

*(Costs and resources)*

The participants have to pay a fee to participate in such an excursion and there is a local foundation (Sparkasse Foundation) that financially supports the initiative. A few Enertour were also organized thanks to the support of the Sustainable Energy Europe program.

*(Lessons learned)*

South Tyrol has already become a source of inspiration for the entire sector in Italy. The South Tyrolean model is now being adopted, in whole or in part, throughout the country. However the regional government is planning to increase its energy demand by an even higher amount of renewable sources in the years to come and it is eager to know which kind of measures other regions take to become even greener.

There is still more ground to make up with the leading countries in Europe in the use of wind power, the production capacity in the photovoltaic sector by means of renewable energy.

**Evidence of success**

Around 50 Enertour have already been organized with approximately 1.800 participants; the initiative sparked international interest. Renewable energy and the preservation of our precious resources are top priorities in South Tyrol, therefore we invest more in sustainable energy such as photovoltaic and hydroelectric power than any other region in Italy: the rewards we reap as a result are both of financial and ecological nature. Today South Tyrol covers 56% of its total electricity and heat consumption (excluding transportation) with renewable energy sources and it produces nearly twice more electricity using hydroelectric power than the province actually needs. These results are not simply a by-product of a favourable geographical location and many hours of sunshine. Rather, they are the result of South Tyrol's targeted political measures and economic instruments designed to improve energy efficiency. More than 100 companies have already begun operating in South Tyrol, working in various industrial and research branches of the renewable energy sector. From 1992 to 2008, South Tyrol invested € 245 million in the support of energy conservation and energy use; the resulting investments amounted to € 1.61 billion.

A model for Italy: South Tyrol's Commitment to Renewable Energy<sup>5</sup>

- 930 hydroelectric plants
- 63 district heating power stations based on biomass
- 3 mega-watt class wind turbines, 7 smaller turbines
- 31 biogas plants
- 0.40 m<sup>2</sup> solar power panels per inhabitant
- 61 watts per inhabitant of energy generated from photovoltaic panels
- 291 private geothermal energy plants, total output 4,900 kW
- 7 large-scale deep geothermal energy plants down to 5,000 m planned
- 2,500 certified Climate Houses
- Building of a hydrogen-producing plant

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<sup>5</sup> 2009 statistics. Source: Department for Electricity Supply, Department for Energy Saving, GSE

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## Public information on the Practice

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## 2.1.9 Free Software Center- support to SME's ICT innovation through Free software & Open Technologies, by TIS/South Tyrol

### Location of the Practice

South Tyrol

### Start date and end date

At the end of the 90's a group of GNU/ Linux users met regularly in South Tyrol and in 2011 the LUGBZ (Linux User Group Bolzano) was founded as an NGO in order to foster the Free Software culture and represent the South Tyrolean Free Software users. From 2005-2008 an Interreg IT-CH project called Competence Center Open Source named Cocos was carried out and the main result was the creation of the Free Software Center South Tyrol.

### Practice Executive Summary

The department for Free Software & Open Technologies of TIS innovation park targets primarily the local government and companies, those interested in using innovative information technology to increase efficiency and competitiveness. The centre aims to be a facilitator for R&D initiatives in the field of ICT that involve public and private sectors, with the collaboration of research institutions. Other initiatives, such as conferences and seminars are dedicated to a wider audience.

### Detailed description of Practice



The Free Software Centre's (FSC) aim is to gather and to coordinate competences provided by various local, national and international enterprises and institutions that are highly specialized in Free Software. Lately FSC was involved in commercial innovation projects such as telemedicine, mobility, e-learning, testing & measurement and cloud computing. FSC supports enterprises with their research and development, helps them turn ideas into real products and provides them the necessary links to other players in the sector.

The Free Software Center gathers and connects excellent competences in the Free Software sector by centralizing knowledge and experiences altogether, by means of its specialized services. This permits the centre to strengthen the already existing know-how in South Tyrol and consequently to become the reference point for enterprises, public authorities, citizens, research facilities and for the Free Software community. Already in 1993 the public transport company of South Tyrol migrated to GNU/Linux. The provincial administration of South Tyrol adopted

an IT strategy that encouraged public administrations to use free software and to structure their data in a free and open format in 2005. That year OpenOffice was implemented on all desktops at the regional government. The government then also began switching all computers in the Italian schools in the region to the Debian and Ubuntu Linux distributions. Schools of the other two language groups, Ladin and German have not yet introduced free software on a larger scale, though a few schools have now begun some tests.

*(Starting point/challenge)*

The goal of the department Free Software & Open Technologies is to increase competitiveness and efficiency of the industry and that of public administration through the use of innovative information technology. The Free Software Center coordinates the activities of numerous Free Software experts and is able to offer them a wide spectrum of services and to set on a great number of actions. Furthermore, the centre supports a great variety of the South Tyrolean economic system's sectors and tries to foster through the action plan e-Suedtiro - supported by the provincial government - the use of Free Software and Free and Open Data Formats.



### Goals

The department for Free Software & Open Technologies is aimed primarily at local governments and companies, at all players interested in using innovative information technology to increase efficiency and competitiveness.

### Services

The services include knowledge transfer (trainings, conferences, education, information and PR), certification, research and access to a broad network, support of local, national and international cooperation projects.

### Strengths

- Neutrality and supervising role thanks to the institutional nature of the TIS innovation park
- Consolidated network of contacts with companies, institutions, universities and the world of research
- Collaboration with an international community of experts
- Up-to-date overview of international industry and research projects state-of-art
- Constant updates on industry news from the technological and normative point of view (approvals and incentives) and business opportunities

## Evidence of success

There are several topics and projects the Free Software Center is currently working on. Some milestones are:

2009 Würth Phoenix, an important industry player, started with their own Free Software department and products

2009 mixare.org: local companies start free software projects as support to their internal R&D strategy (free software augmented reality engine for Smart Phones (Android and iPhone)

2010 Round Table Free Software in E-Government

2010 new Interreg IT\_CH project FreeGIS.net to create opportunities for local companies to work in international, interregional projects

2011 Bolzano traffic: improve seasonal traffic and mobility management in the city by means of real time traffic and travel information platform

2011 eSchool Tablets in education

2011 Intergreen: integration of traffic and environmental data for improving green policies in the city of Bolzano

Every year in Bolzano the South Tyrol Free Software Conference takes place [www.SFScon.it](http://www.SFScon.it)

Regular developer meetings [www.freesoftwareweek.org](http://www.freesoftwareweek.org)

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## Detailed description of Practice

### *(Starting point/challenge)*

Alpine Technologies represent a core competence of the South Tyrolean industry. Companies from South Tyrol are among market leaders in this sector. Their products, solutions and systems, define standards that are recognized and accepted worldwide.

The challenge was to develop a strategy paper as foundation for a medium/long-term positioning as innovative leader in the South Tyrol area of Alpine Technologies. The main goals were:

- To understand the status quo as well as the identification and description of conditions and potential for innovation in the field of Alpine Technologies  
Development of a system concept for Alpine Technologies  
Identification of market potential and profitable businesses for the future  
Elaboration of a medium-to long-term strategy for the area of Alpine Technologies

### *(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

TIS innovation park- Area Alpine Technologies  
Export Organisation South Tyrol (EOS)  
Business Location South Tyrol (BLS)  
Companies from the sector Alpine Technologies  
Public administration  
University and other public institutions

### *(Methodology)*

Research & Analysis  
Development of the system concept  
Developing the overall strategy and identifying measures

### *(Output)*

The main results of the project are:

**Status Determination:** Analysis of initial conditions and actors, companies and institutions, analysis of regional and global frameworks and innovation potential

**System design** "Alpine Technologies": basics and perspectives

**Strategy paper** "Alpine Technologies" for the positioning of South Tyrol as an innovation leader in this area

**Recommendations** for specific target groups and stakeholders

*(Costs and resources)*

The system concept was elaborated by "Innovationsmanufaktur", a specialized company for development of innovation (analysis & strategy) in territorial field strength and Area "Alpine Technologies" in TIS innovation Park.

External costs: Euro 25.000

**Evidence of success**

To succeed in the market, innovations often have to meet complex goals and have to fit perfectly into their respective surroundings. The system concept "Alpine Technologies" is based on the approach of Holistic Innovation, which helps to design precise concepts for products, services or other developments.

The successful components:

- Developing systemic visions of relevant domains of the future
- Monitoring the future, scouting for innovations, marketing, trend and use-of-potential analysis and assessment
- Identifying areas of innovation, formulating strategies and defining procedures and projects
- Through these innovative methods we are able to open a window into the future, to guide innovation policy in the right direction.
- The method proved its feasibility over numerous successful projects for well-known clients, among others BMW, Bosch, BASF, Daimler, Landeshauptstadt München, ISPO, Volkswagen and others.

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## 2.1.11 SmarterCity Karlsruhe Initiative, Wifo Karlsruhe/Baden Württemberg

### Location of the Practice

City of Karlsruhe, Region Baden-Württemberg / Germany

### Start date and end date

Start date: June 2009 – End date: none (the program is now part of the Cities Development Strategy 2020)

### Practice Executive Summary

In close cooperation with partners from research and economy, the City of Karlsruhe launched the “SmarterCity Karlsruhe” initiative.

The main goal of “SmarterCity Karlsruhe” is to use the latest standards, methods and technologies to raise the quality of life for people living in Karlsruhe and to help enterprises to be more competitive and innovative.

Karlsruhe is a proving ground for advanced innovative products, solutions and services.

### Detailed description of Practice



The initiative “SmarterCity Karlsruhe” emerged during the project proposal phase of the Software-Cluster project in 2009: Most of the partners involved in the project proposal writing had a large variety of innovative ideas and they wanted to contribute to get these ideas implemented – independently of any government aid. Their willingness to innovate was the first basis for the initiative. Approximately thirty actors from research, economy, members of innovative (business) networks and public administration worked intensely

together in order to develop the best possible and affordable solutions for a smarter town. Future scenarios for efficient and sustainable public services in a future-oriented town were elaborated by several workgroups. A couple of Living Labs were already installed in order to evaluate new approaches as well as applications and products supporting the everyday life of all age groups.

SmarterCity Karlsruhe aims first and foremost at ameliorating the quality of life for its citizens as well as at increasing the capacity for innovation of companies by employing newest technologies. The coalescence of digital, physical and service infrastructures as well as the active involvement of citizens are of key importance for the success of the initiative. Therefore, it is essential that it does not consist only of a single project, but that it covers a broad variety of research fields like e.g. public transport, ambient assisted living as well as different kinds of mobile business solutions. In order to achieve this goal, the Economic Development Department Karlsruhe coordinates the initiative, providing a platform for information exchange and the identification of new, innovative ideas. Additionally, the city council is seen as a keystone and is a significant influencing factor for the quality of the initiative and its solutions. Therefore it is involved closely in all SmarterCity projects.

### Uniqueness of the initiative

The SmarterCity Karlsruhe initiative is a unique project in Germany for several reasons:

First, SmarterCity Karlsruhe has a leading position in terms of its strategic positioning and the theme-driven approaches: There is no other city in Germany that puts not only one single smarter city project on its strategic agenda, but also targets to become itself a holistic smarter city and thus improving its territorial competitiveness.

In order to achieve this goal, a broad variety of smart services based on intelligent IT solutions will be developed within the next few years. Secondly, defining further ambitious strategic innovation projects for the city means also to intensify the collaboration between municipality and the SMEs. But it means also exploring new conditions for cooperation models within the knowledge triangle of research, business and policy. This is a unique feature of SmarterCity Karlsruhe, too.

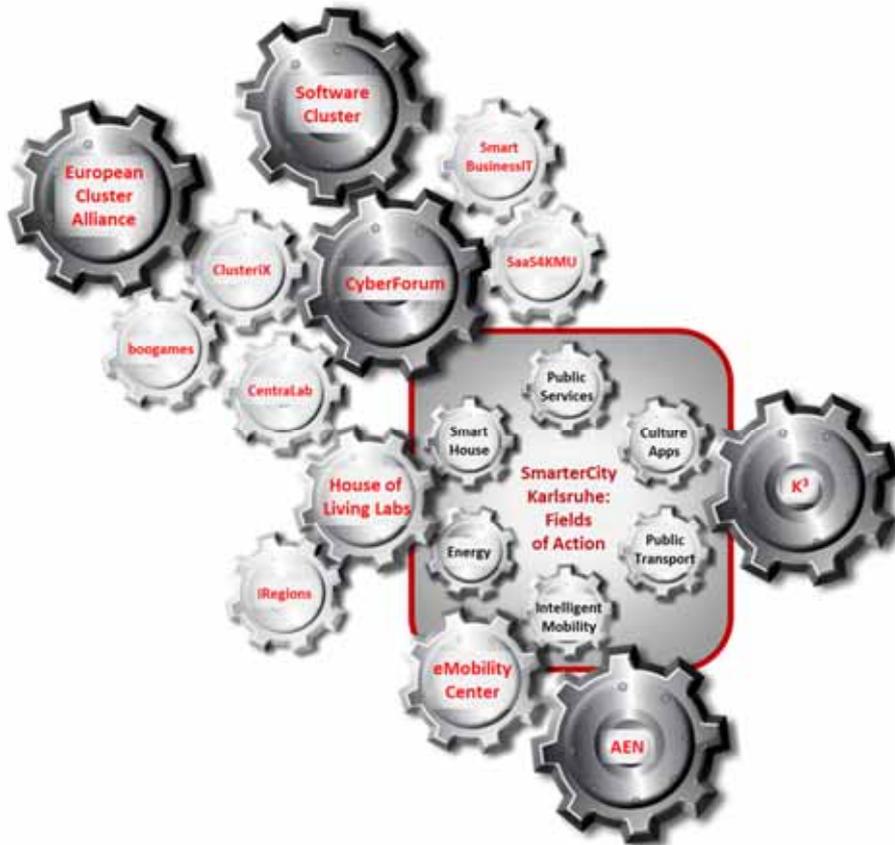
### A Conglomerate of Projects and Initiatives

SmarterCity Karlsruhe is not only an isolated project, but rather a conglomerate of various projects and initiatives. Most of them started as single actions, but as SmarterCity Karlsruhe evolved and got shape, it became clear that many of these projects and initiatives are linked together in several aspects. Within all projects and initiatives, future key technology areas are identified, enabling the development of new ecosystems for growth and thus amending the territorial competitiveness of the city of Karlsruhe.

During a pro-creative brainstorming process the actors of the SmarterCity Karlsruhe initiative identified six fields of action they wanted to focus on as a first step. "Smart house" projects focus on energy efficiency and ambient assisted living, whereas new and innovative concepts for mobility are researched within the field "Intelligent mobility". "Public services" will include e.g. a City-Wiki, solutions for intelligent eGovernment as well as for future internet. Lean management and information for citizens are crucial topics for the research field "New solutions for public transport". "Energy" aims at developing solutions for an energy autarkic town, employing e.g. ICT for wind-wheels. The latest field of action is "Smart Culture"; this field focuses on applications that are linked to cultural activities, e.g. events and exhibitions.

As far as possible and useful, the solutions will be linked together, so that the result will be a seamless, integrated solution – an approach that is unique, at least in Germany, perhaps even worldwide. In all fields of action, IT and security are cross-sectoral topics and play a key role: New IT-applications are expected to be used strongly and to be connected intelligently with existing technologies and processes.

The following sections will also describe the coherences and relationships between the most important projects, networks and initiatives and SmarterCity Karlsruhe. Figure 1 shows the linkage between the single mentioned projects and initiatives.



The initiative SmarterCity Karlsruhe and its connection to some important projects and initiatives.

#### The financial resources of the initiative

The manpower and the coordination of the initiative are driven by the Economic Development Karlsruhe. Until now there is no seed funding of the projects through the initiative. This means the projects have to be financed by the partners developing and implementing the idea (including federal and national research money). In the future, the initiative aims to have a small budget for projects.

## Evidence of success

In order to generate the maximum added value for all projects and participants and to support regional as well as territorial competitiveness, it is necessary to allow a transfer of knowledge and experiences between the various projects, initiatives, networks, clusters and all involved partners. This exchange is essential to capture pre-existing knowledge in a structured way and to incorporate it into the appropriate activities. An independent intermediary, who acts as a link between the actors and actively promotes the exchange of knowledge, is a major advantage of the concept: This actor has an overview of all activities, research questions and preliminary results and thus an overview of the knowledge that is already distributed between the partners. The implementation of a technical platform for structuring, processing and dissemination of knowledge is indeed a highly complex task, but to generate the maximum added value is not only needed but essential.

The aim of all these efforts is not only to have the single projects working successfully, but connect them in different ways and to support regional innovation activities. In order to achieve this, several actors of the SmarterCity Karlsruhe initiative play such a linking role: The embedded business network CyberForum (the biggest IT-Cluster in Germany) and the City of Karlsruhe (Department for Economic Development) are involved in most of the projects. Not always as active participants or lead partners, but as a link between similar projects and initiatives and as a link between vendors, research institutions and potential customers. All projects can be seen as a testing environment and playground for new and innovative solutions that support the competitiveness of the Technology Region Karlsruhe. Additionally, experience is transferred between the national and international projects as shown in the following paragraphs.

The SmarterCity Karlsruhe initiative connects the physical world to the virtual one with a broad variety of projects and actors. It is a very complex, holistic approach that focuses not only on different research fields, but also aims at connecting knowledge gained in all linked projects in order to support the territorial competitiveness of the City of Karlsruhe in the described fields of research. This intense knowledge transfer is one of the major direct added-value of all actions that take place within or in the name of the initiative.

Stakeholders with different background, different targets and different possibilities work together to elaborate and to implement the best possible solutions for a sustainable town. They often use Living Labs that are a part of the SmarterCity initiative to facilitate the process of innovation and to involve end-users in this process already at an early stage. Thus, creating a Smarter City and employing Living Labs for innovation processes is useful because it integrates its citizens that can provide useful insights how to improve the quality of life in their city. A dense linkage of projects as well as of public administration, research institutes and other non-profits, business organizations, networks and all kinds of citizens is a key success factor for the sustainability of such an initiative; so is a central coordination point that has an overview on all activities and policies that are elaborated within the single projects. Without such an intermediary, respectively a driving force behind, the outcome of the initiative would not be as successful as it is. Thus the coordination point – in the case of SmarterCity Karlsruhe, the Department for Economic Development as well as CyberForum e.V. – has to trigger all involved players and to keep all wheels turning.

One of the main results is that the average growth rate of companies in the sectors engaged in the initiative is 2-3 % above average.

*(Costs and resources)*

In the beginning the initiative offered neither financial incentives nor special programme money for projects. All projects have been financed with the resources of the partners or other research funding programmes.

Actually a regional programme with seed funding for 1-2 pilot project in any of the fields of action had been launched. The city of Karlsruhe offers a co-funding for projects, studies leading to the launch of projects and the application in different funding schemes. The annual budget for the smarter city is 100.000 € besides the workforce. The financial support for projects offers an added-value for active partners of the initiative beside the marketing and the networking.

*(Measure of results/impact)*

The initiative is based on a broad variety of different projects that are to be measured each in a different way. For the apps, the number of downloads & partners using the application to publish their services are an indicator (this is relevant for the SmartCulture App, the KA-Feedback app). As the apps are tests for commercial versions it could also be an option to measure the success in the numbers of costumers acquired by the partners in a certain period. As the projects are carried out by different organisations it is very hard at the moment to follow them up in a scientific proper way.

The result of the initiative as such is that the stakeholders of the region come together regularly to interact about latest developments - ClusteriX will help to put the process to a new level by guiding the process with scientific help.

The numbers of projects carried out by partners within the region is an indicator for the engagement of all partners and the commitment of the region.

The marketing effect of the initiative is enormous - the interest of international delegations is above average.

*(Results/impact)*

The policy level is actually realising the potential of the approach to acquire other public funding and to create unique selling points - for the whole region. The city of Karlsruhe was present at the Eurocities Mayor debate in Ghent, Oct. 2013 as one best practice for a smarter city approach. The Economic Development Department is part of the EC SmartCity working group and actively works on future programmes for SmarterCities in Europe.

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## 2.1.12 Cluster Generation Methodology, by INMA Bucharest/Romania

### Location of the Practice

Romania Region Center, NUTS2

### Start date and end date

May 2008 – April 2010

### Practice Executive Summary

The wood and furniture sector plays a major role in the Romanian economy (300.000 employees in 2008), but with rather low productivity (only 3% of the GDP). Coming closer to Transylvania, literally meaning “land beneath the woods”, the University of Brasov hosts the only Faculty for Wood Processing in the country. In order to better face competitiveness, innovation and internationalisation issues, the wood & furniture producers in the county of Covasna have founded a regional association (ASIMCOV-KOFA). The next step undertaken by the association was the generation of an innovative cluster, Pro Wood, which represents nowadays the Romanian cluster model, recognized as such by the Romanian Ministry of Economy.

### Detailed description of Practice

#### *(Starting point/challenge)*

Traditionally wood plays a major role in the Romanian economy. It is the second largest employer, as over 300.000 people are working in the wood and furniture industry (including the paper industry). Still, the productivity is rather low, as it accounts for only 3% of the GDP. Coming closer to our focus region, “Transylvania” literally means “the land beneath the forests”. One of the major cities of Transylvania is Brasov, a university city with over 300.000 inhabitants where one can find the only Faculty of Wood Processing in Romania within the University “Transylvania” of Brasov.

Covasna is the only county in Romania where enterprises acting in the wood and furniture industry have gathered together and founded an association on a regional basis: KO-FA, as a department of the Association of SMEs in the county of Covasna (ASIMCOV).

Still serious problems affect the wood and furniture industry in the selected region: low productivity, old fashioned processing techniques leading to waste of material and pollution, lack of an integrated marketing concept, production concentrated mainly on low value products as round wood and timber, insufficient cooperation with the university in Brasov.

#### *(What has been done?)*

The project started with the analysis of the current situation and especially of the problems that wood & furniture SMEs in the region encompassed. 4 main problems have been identified: Insufficient use of IT solutions in the enterprises, lack of marketing strategy, Quasi-zero research cooperation between enterprises and university, Low qualification of undergraduate specialists

In the second step, peer review workshops have been organized in order to find suitable solutions and implement pilot actions, as seen in the table below

Problem	Solution	Pilot action
IT & MK	Joint Marketing department at cluster level	Seminars on MK and use of IT in enterprises
Cooperation SMEs - University	Research nuclei made out of professors and entrepreneurs	Visits of university professors in enterprises: technology audits
Low qualification of specialists	Change of curricula in vocational high schools	Visits of enterprises in schools "Best carpenter" award

Next, best practice exchange visits to France, Germany and Finland have been organized in order to transfer and adapt appropriate models.

Finally, a cluster memorandum has been signed, including SMEs, public authorities, the University of Brasov, the National Research Institute for Wood, other catalyst institutions.

*(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

The consortium was coordinated by ZENIT (Center for Technology and Innovation of the land of North Rhine Westphalia) and included also ASIMCOV (the SME Association in the County of Covasna), University "Transylvania" in Brasov, the Covasna County Council, Inno Consult (RO consultancy enterprise), CritBois (the French wood pole of competitiveness in Lorena), TTS (Finnish Research Institute of labour processes) and the Fraunhofer Institute for Wood Sciences in Germany.

*(Methodology)*

Romanian experience showed that the 3 actors of the triple helix (public bodies – industry – academia) do not cooperate with each other without an external input coming from a catalyst institution: chambers of commerce, technology transfer centre, consultants. The Four clover model was successfully applied in the field of wood processing and furniture in the case of the „Pro Wood Cluster”, in the region Brasov-Covasna ([www.prowood.ro](http://www.prowood.ro)). The four categories of actors are represented as follows:

The establishment of the Pro Wood cluster, financed in the framework of an FP7 project (2008-2010) followed a specific procedure which may be considered as exemplary for other cluster generation process as well:

- Identification of partners
- Analysis of current situation
- International best practice exchange
- Elaboration of an action plan and cluster memorandum

*(Output)*

Following outputs can be traced back as a result of Pro Wood:

- Establishment of the innovative “Pro Wood” cluster
- A cluster generation methodology
- Validation of the “four clover” cluster model

*(Costs and resources)*

The total costs of Pro Wood were of 120.000 EUR, financed 100% by FP7 – Regions of Knowledge

*(Key success factors)*

Commitment of regional stakeholders and valid methodological approach

*(Lessons learned)*

- Foreign models shall always be adapted to regional conditions and not copied.
- Cluster generation should not skip any step. Of highest importance is the first phase, the analysis of regional problems. In the case of Pro Wood, their correct identification led to the further commitment of all partners and to the success of the cluster generation procedure

*(Next steps)*

Access to national cluster financial schemes in order to continue the application of pilot collaborative instruments developed under Pro Wood and of new ones

*Evidence of success**(Results/impact)*

The “Pro Wood” generation methodology used in other cases: Textile NE, ICT West (cross border cluster RO-HU), Tourism and Agro SE (cross border clusters RO-BG)

The cluster memorandum of Pro Wood became the national standard. Thus, in order to be recognized at the level of the Ministry of Economy, clusters must provide at least a cluster partnership agreement a la Pro Wood

Development and validation of a new theoretical model of 4 partners (Four clover); demonstration of the importance of the role played by catalyst institutions in the cluster generation process.

*(Advantages of practice)*

The Pro Wood cluster generation methodology is a bottom-up approach based on the implication of cluster stakeholders in the regions. Instruments (questionnaire analysis, interviews, peer review workshops, technology audits) are used in an innovative, user-friendly manner.

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### 2.1.13 Innovative Cluster Guide, by INMA Bucharest/Romania

#### Location of the Practice

Romania

#### Start date and end date

October 2008 – August 2010

#### Practice Executive Summary

Clusters are seen as a driving force for an innovative development of a competitive economy. However, reluctance towards cooperation at the level of cluster members (SME-SME, SME-university), confusion about the cluster concept fed to a large extent by the abundance of terms used in programmatic documents (poles of competitiveness, cluster, poles of excellence, poles of urban growth etc.) were burdens which the Ministry of Economy has taken on in the frame of the national project "INOV CLUSTER I" aiming at fostering the cluster generation potential, raising awareness about the clustering process and elaborating an Innovative Cluster Guide, as an useful tool for cluster stakeholders at all levels.

#### Detailed description of Practice

##### *(Starting point/challenge)*

Having just recovered from the dramatic restructuring process of its economy in the 90's, beginning with the mid 2000's Romania faced new challenges: delocalization of productive capacities eastwards as a result of a gradual loss of the competitive advantage of low wages (especially in the textile sector); joining of the European Union with a rather unprepared economy in terms of competitiveness etc.. Against this background, in 2008, the Romanian Ministry of Economy started a national project "INOV CLUSTER I" meant to:

- Raise awareness about clusters as instruments of regional economic development and available financing instruments;
- Identify the clustering potential in Romania;
- Elaborate an useful tool for cluster stakeholders, i.e. the Innovative Cluster Guide

##### *(What has been done?)*

The project started with the analysis of the European situation: cluster models, political and financial frameworks, financing schemes etc. Next, a deep analysis of the Romanian situation has been performed via a very comprehensive questionnaire inquiring regional concentration, membership, economic data, infrastructure, labour force, and management performance, level of innovation and cooperation willingness. 263 questionnaires have been sent out. A series of 8 regional workshops identified the concrete needs of cluster stakeholders, finetuning thus the questionnaire analysis.

Consequently, the Guide was drafted as a useful tool for all actors involved in the clustering process. It provides useful information about cluster concept and models, European and national status quo, cluster generation methodology,

available financing schemes etc. In addition to that a second round of regional workshops was held meant to validate the relevance of the Innovative Cluster Guide for the envisaged target group.

*(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

In running the project, the Ministry of Economy resorted to external consultants, i.e. a consortium led by INMA (National Institute for Agricultural Machinery, including Cidaf (Center for Innovation and Business Development), IRECSON (Institute for Social and Economic Research and Survey), Economix News (Media company) and Inno Consult (RO consultancy enterprise).

*(Methodology)*

The project pursued a funnel approach: starting from a analysis of the European and Romanian situation, defining thus the general challenges, it went further to a deep analysis of the cluster needs and of its members both via questionnaires (including qualitative and quantitative questions) as well by 2 series of regional workshops meant to validate and fine tune the main result, i.e. the Guide as an useful instrument for cluster managers, cluster members, political stakeholders etc.



*(Output)*

Following outputs can be traced back as a result of the cluster mapping exercise:

An Innovative Cluster Guide

A dedicated website with a discussion forum attached

Dissemination of relevant information about clusters to all relevant Romanian stakeholders

*(Costs and resources)*

The total costs of the mapping exercise were of about 100.000 EUR from the National Research Programme for Industrial Development of the Ministry of Economy.

*(Key success factors)*

- Commitment of the Ministry of Economy
- Participative approach: implication of all relevant stakeholders at national and regional level
- Valid methodology

*(Lessons learned)*

- Elaboration of economic development tools (including those for clusters) should follow a bottom up approach, involving all relevant stakeholders
- Success depends on the commitment of stakeholders on all levels

*(Next steps)*

Follow up project INOV CLUSTER II (in process) meant to describe the role of clusters against the innovative development of economic sectors, including foresight analyses

Follow up project "CLUSTINOVA" meant to add relevant international best practices in order to adapt them to Romanian realities

Evidence of success

*(Results and impact)*

Generation of the textile clusters NE

Triggering concentration effects at national level: founding of the Romanian Cluster Association.

Triggering innovative approaches: several national and international projects on topics discussed in the frame of the project.

*(Why is this a good practice?)*

The Guide is a useful tool based on a participative approach, including a cluster generation methodology. It clarifies concepts and contains useful information both for beginners as well as for advanced users.

*(Potential for improvements)*

Using an electronic portal should raise the degree of interactivity.

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Public information on the Practice

Website	<a href="http://www.fabricadebani.ro/userfiles/Ghid_ita_2010.pdf">www.fabricadebani.ro/userfiles/Ghid_ita_2010.pdf</a>
Publications	Muraru Ionel C. et al, Innovative Cluster Guide, Irecson, Bucharest, 2010

## 2.1.14 Cluster Mapping Methodology, by INMA Bucharest/Romania

### Location of the Practice

Romania

### Start date and end date

October 2009 – April 2011

### Practice Executive Summary

In order to correctly dimension its support policy towards emerging clusters, the Romanian Ministry of Economy started in 2008 an ample mapping process of existing cluster initiatives in Romania. The process was divided in 2 phases: a qualitative analysis (Oct. 2009-mar. 2010) resulting in the identification of around 22 clusters followed by a quantitative analysis (Mar.-Apr. 2011), validating around 33 competitiveness poles and clusters.

### Detailed description of Practice

#### *(Starting point/challenge)*

Although a couple of studies starting in the mid 90s had identified cluster initiatives in Romania in various fields and several EU financed projects have been run, no coherent national cluster support policy existed until 2008.. In addition to that, several concepts circulated like poles of competitiveness, clusters, poles of excellence and urban growth poles, all mentioned in programmatic documents with allocated budgets, leading to a certain degree of confusion. Against this background, in 2008, the Romanian Ministry of Economy started an ample mapping process of existing cluster initiatives in Romania aiming at: Raising awareness about clusters as instruments of regional economic development and available financing instruments; getting an overview of existing cluster initiatives in Romania; analysing their importance for the national economy (contribution to GDP, exports, employment).

#### *(What has been done?)*

The mapping process was divided in 2 phases: a qualitative analysis (Oct. 2009-Mar. 2010) resulting in the identification of around 22 clusters followed by a quantitative analysis (Mar.-Apr. 2011) validating around 33 competitiveness poles and clusters. The qualitative mapping was based on the "peer workshop methodology", 8 such events gathering all relevant cluster actors (regional and local authorities, large enterprises, SMEs, professional associations, R&D institutes, universities, chambers of commerce, technology transfer centres, consultants) being organized in the Development Regions of Romania, one in each region. The quantitative approach was based on hard figures provided either by the National Institute of Statistics or the clusters themselves, allowing thus a relative analysis against the national background.

*(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

In performing the mapping process, the Ministry of Economy resorted to external consultants: GTZ (now GIZ – German Agency for Technical Assistance), ZENIT (Center for Innovation and Technology of the land of North Rhine Westphalia), Inno Consult (RO consultancy enterprise) and INMA (National Institute for Agricultural Machinery).

The mapping process has been run under a participative approach including most relevant stakeholders on national and regional level.

*(Methodology)*

The process started with the *qualitative assessment*, based on the peer review methodology.

Eight workshops were implemented between October 2009 and January 2010. Each event was organised in one major location in the respective NUTS 2 region. The identified cluster initiatives were assessed following the main vectors of the herewith proposed Romanian cluster model:

**Concentration** (which firm, where in the region)

**R&D units** (which research centre, which university, where)

**Labour Force**; in this vector the issues of quantity, quality and quantification (3Qs) were evaluated. For each issue the peers could dedicate between 1 (low) and 5 (high) points

**Cooperation** (existing or planned projects, other types of cooperation e.g. joint curricula)

**Third party service suppliers/Catalyst institutions** (who provide additional services relevant for the cluster)

The *quantitative analysis* was conducted both on the national (sectors of the national economy) and regional level (cluster level) allowing thus the assessment of each sector/cluster relevance. Following analysis vectors have been assessed:

Indicator	National Level	Regional (Cluster) Level
Importance	Contribution of the industrial sector to GDP	Cluster Turnover
Size	(No. Employees in the industrial sector / (No. Employees national level)	
Concentration		(No. Employees cluster/ No. Employees national level)
Specialisation		(No. Employees cluster)/ (No. Employees industrial sector)
Innovation <sup>6</sup>		
Export	(Value X industrial sector)/ (Value X national level)	(Value X cluster)/ (Value X industrial sector)

Furthermore, 2 methods have been used, i.e. “stars” and index method. The “star” method awards 1 star for each analysis vector scoring over a certain threshold (e.g. 10% at national level, 10% out of the manufacturing industry). The index method is a classical composite index method awarding different weights to vectors. At national level, an index of competitiveness (P and its normalised value P\*) can be calculated, while at regional level, the cluster index speaks for the cluster itself (C).

#### *(Output)*

Following outputs can be traced back as a result of the cluster mapping exercise: A map of Romanian clusters (47, status Jan 2014); an evaluation methodology – The P\* index/ stars to be used as a bonus/malus systems in financing poles of competitiveness under the according scheme; concept clarification

#### *(Costs and resources)*

The total costs of the mapping exercise were of about 65.000 EUR, i.e. the qualitative analysis: 50.000 EUR (gtz) & 5.000 (RO Ministry of Economy) and the quantitative analysis: 10.000 (Technical Assistance, ERDF Operational Programme Competitiveness)

#### *(Key success factors)*

Among the key success factors we count: the commitment of the Ministry of Economy; the participative approach: implication of all relevant stakeholders at national and regional level; the implication and readiness to answer of final beneficiaries (clusters) due to the interest in the financial support schemes to be launched as a result of the analysis

#### *(Lessons learned)*

Clusters are a qualitative approach in the first place: level of trust among members, commitment of partners are hardly quantifiable. Therefore, all mapping exercises should start with a qualitative analysis. The role of the quantitative analysis

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<sup>6</sup> Innovation represents a complex vector including subvectors, dimensions and indicators and has been calculated according to the Innovation Scoreboard Methodology: [www.proinno-europe.eu/inno-metrics/page/methodology-report](http://www.proinno-europe.eu/inno-metrics/page/methodology-report)

is to validate the findings of the qualitative exercise and it is of high importance at the level of policy makers (national/regional) in order to correctly dimension the financing support schemes.

The implication of regional stakeholders is crucial, as they are the ones best knowing their region and feeling themselves part of a cluster or not, so is the commitment of the policy making/financing authority, as stakeholders participating in the exercise need to see the result of their implication.

Although the methodology is mostly appropriate as an initial cluster mapping in a region, it can be used also in regions with mature cluster landscapes due to its bottom up approach as it easily identifies new initiatives which might otherwise skip to a very well structured top down cluster system.

The mapping methodology can be easily transferred to the mapping of cluster competences itself.

#### *(Next steps)*

- Renewed mapping is performed each year by the Romanian Cluster Association (reduced version: qualitative analysis based on questionnaire methodology)
- Recommendation to the Ministry of Economy and the National Statistics should be made to include in their surveys relevant cluster indicators (mostly concerning innovation)

#### Evidence of success

##### *(Results and impact)*

Among the results of the developed methodology, we can count: the launching of 2 financing schemes for clusters/poles of competitiveness in total value of 60 mil EUR (public contribution); the axis for excellence poles foreseen initially under the Operational Programme "Competitiveness" was cancelled, as the analysis proved it irrelevant, funds have been transferred; the Romanian Cluster Association was founded. As the analysis proved the relevance of clusters to Romanian Exports, the association was immediately invited to become full member of the Romanian Export Council – consultative body on the promotion of Romanian exports.

##### *(Advantages of practice)*

The mapping methodology is a bottom-up approach based on the assessment of cluster stakeholders in the regions. Quantitative data (always out of date) are used only to validate the qualitative results giving a hint about macroeconomic trends. The peer review methodology ensures a high degree of representativeness of results.

##### *(Potential for improvements)*

The current mapping process included only 8 regional workshops (budget and time constraints etc.). The process should be extended to all important cities in the regions (given the role of cities in the economic development)

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Website	<a href="http://www.clustero.eu.ro">www.clustero.eu.ro</a> <a href="http://www.amposcc.minind.ro">www.amposcc.minind.ro</a>
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Publications	Guth M, Cosnita D, Clusters and Potential Clusters in Romania, Ministry of Economy and gtz, Bucharest, February 2010
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Cosnita D, Analysis of the current situation and of the development potential of Romanian competitiveness poles, Ministry of Economy, Bucharest, May 2011

## 2.1.15 IndAgro Competitiveness Pole, by INMA/Romania

### Location of the Practice

Romania, NUTS1

### Start date and end date

Ongoing

### Practice Executive Summary

The Best Practice deals with the main generation of the national pole of competitiveness in the field of agricultural machinery cross cutting value chains in agriculture, food industry, agricultural tractors and machineries industry, biotechnologies and mechatronics.

### Detailed description of Practice

#### *(Starting point/challenge)*

Agriculture has always played a very important role in the Romanian economy. In 2009 it contributed by 7,16% to the Gross Value Added (GVA), but only by 4,95% to the exports (2010) and employed only 4,89% of the labour force (2010) while a study conducted by the National Commission of Prognosis on Employment shows that 35% of the active population is “involved” in agriculture. This significant difference can be explained by the “subsistence agriculture”. Over 65% of Romanian farms have less than 2 ha, and over 90% less than 5 ha. 81% of farms produce more than 50% for self-consumption. In absolute values, out of 3859 farms, only 31 had the status of a legal entity.

Regarding the link between agriculture and the agricultural machinery, it is worth mentioning that one of the main problems lies in the equipping Romanian farms with tractors and agricultural machinery. Until adjusting the structure of the farms, in order to allow the equipment with high performance machines, suitable for all farm sizes, the way of providing the necessary tractors was by keeping old tractors in service: in 2011, 73.6% of tractors were fully amortized. In addition, out of the imported tractors (17.016 units at the end of 2011), the number of second-hand tractors (9.903) exceeded that of the new ones (7.113). As a manifestation of inertia, but also as an adaptation to the small size of farms, in 2011 the share of 65 HP tractors was 60.4% (followed by 45 HP tractors, with 24.3%, an increasing share compared to 2010). The share of very small Romanian farms using a tractor (under 5 ha) was of 68.6% in 2005, less than those of France (83.6%) and Poland (89.4%). As for medium sized Romanian farms, the situation was similar, with 75.1% of these farms using a tractor, compared to 99.1% in France and 99.6% in Poland. Large Romanian farms had an even smaller share of tractors in use, compared to those of France and Poland, only 71.5%.

In order to increase the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, Romania has to take several steps, mainly: (1) merging the agricultural land into large scale farms; (2) reindustrialization in the field of tractors and agricultural machinery and modernization its tractors and agricultural machineries park.

*(What has been done?)*

INMA has undertaken the role of generating the national pole of competitiveness in the field of agricultural machinery, joining actors from cross-cutting sectors and value chains such as: manufacturing of machinery for food, beverage and tobacco, metallic construction and metal products, plastics and composites, biotechnology, agro-textiles, renewable energy, mechatronics, eco-technologies.

*(Output)*



As a result, IndAgro Pole Partnership agreement was signed by 51 organisations from all 8 Romanian development regions, out of which 24 enterprises, 15 R&D providers and universities, 2 public bodies and 10 catalyst institutions. To be noticed that the structure of the pole reflects the Romanian "four leaves clover" cluster model.

Main objective of the pole is to stimulate the innovation and collaboration in the sector of technical equipment constructions for agriculture and food industry and in related sectors, in order to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainable development of these sectors, of regional development and intelligent growth, sustainable and favourable to social inclusion. It gathers 23% of the employees in the agricultural tractors and machineries industry in Romania with a 163 mio. EUR turnover in 2011.

*(Costs and resources)*

Until this stage, costs are to be considered mainly as "in kind" contribution of the participants. The elaboration of the pole strategy, externalized to a specialized consultant cost 25.000 EUR.

*(Success factors)*

Three success factors can be traced back: implication of the pole driver, INMA and the existing collaboration between INMA and all members of the pole; mobilization ONLY of the most relevant actors in the field, from 8 all Romanian development regions; optimum use of resources and know how (specific know how in the sector, management, external consultancy).

*(Lessons learned)*

4 major lessons can be drawn out of the generation of IndAgro Pole:

- Successful cooperation under the roof of a cluster is only possible when different interests have been harmonized under a coherent and well-structured strategy
- The importance of the cluster driver is to be highlighted, an institution undertaking all necessary steps and carrying out the cluster generation process, in this case INMA
- The importance of a “triggering factor „must not be neglected, in this case the existence of the financing scheme for poles of competitiveness and the launching of the first call in 2012 IndAgro Pole submitted its projects proposal
- The involvement of IndAgro Pole staff in staff exchanges and study visits organized under CLUSTERIX project had a significant contribution to the pole generation

*(Transfer potential)*

The most important transfer potential lies in the cluster generation methodology and especially in the elaboration of the cluster strategy based on a large participatory process and harmonization of often divergent interests. The strategy is broken down in several action pillars: marketing, inter cluster collaboration, internationalization and development of B2B activities, management of the pole.

*Evidence of success**(Results and impact)*

As a result of the activities run so far 12 projects in total value of 14 mio. EUR have been jointly developed: 4 for infrastructure (in the field of tractor manufacturing), 5 RDI (mainly technology transfer) and 3 soft projects (management of the pole, branding, internationalization, market research). 9 project ideas have been included into the SWG “Clusters of excellence” – the Danube Strategy. The cooperation between enterprises and R&D providers inside the cluster is to be quantified in terms of the innovation vouchers (500,000 EUR) financed by the Ministry of Research.

Last but not least, management of IndAgro Pole has participated to the cluster management qualification training by France Clusters (2012), to the Adriatic Danubian Clustering Initiative and holds the vice-presidency of the Romanian Cluster Association.

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### 3 Financing instruments

#### Design of smart financial support instruments for cross-sector innovation (e.g. using public procurement)

Another objective of the ClusteriX project is to improve the efficiency of public money spending through the cluster technological cross-linking, by avoiding duplications of technological developments. At the time when public money is a scarce resource, it is of vital importance to understand the success stories of other regions in using financial instruments for cluster development and/or funding cluster programmes.

According to the “Business Innovation Observatory / Public Private Partnerships – Public Procurement Innovation” (a study coordinated by the Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry<sup>7</sup>), “public procurement of innovation can articulate and increase demand for innovations, and improve conditions for the uptake of innovations in order to spur innovation and their diffusion into the marketplace, triggering and accelerating the production and diffusion of innovation throughout the innovation chain.

The main objective of public procurement of innovation is to direct government purchasing power towards innovations. An analytical difference is made between public procurement that is responsive to existing innovation, and procurement that is proactive. In the latter case, innovations are triggered when a new need has been made apparent, to which a specific solution needs to be found. Pre-commercial procurement is seen as a variant of public procurement, which can include purchasing of R&D to benefit technological developments still in a demonstrator phase”.

On the other hand, public procurement has not yet reached its full potential at the level of SMEs. Thanks to ERAI, ClusteriX benefited from the experiences made by this partner in the Interreg IVC project EuroPROC<sup>8</sup>. According to its good practices guide, “SMEs are reluctant to participate in public procurement most of the time. They generally have limited in-house expertise to follow and prospect calls for tenders; they feel there is a lack of transparency in the adjudication procedures; they fear long term payment delays; they believe they have insufficient financial capacity to invest in this type of market and basically consider private contracts easier and faster to win”. Therefore business support organizations like cluster organizations can play an important role in bridging the gap between the public procurers and the SME tenderers, by informing them about the calls, translating them in an appropriate language, providing advice to prepare competitive bids and offering their networks for the building of successful consortia. 8 good practices related to the design of smart financial support instruments for cross-sectoral innovation were shared

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<sup>7</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/business-innovation-observatory/files/case-studies/07-ppp-public-procurement-of-innovation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/business-innovation-observatory/files/case-studies/07-ppp-public-procurement-of-innovation_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.euro-proc.eu/en/deliverables/guides-on-public-procurement/4/>

between partners coming from Region Skåne (2), from Sweden (national level) (2), from Hungary (2), from Denmark (1) and from Rhône-Alpes (1).

Some partners share below their views on the shared experienced from which they got new insights for their own further development:

*"Having the chance to participate in the Värmland staff exchange, provided me with a hands –on expertise, skills and expertise of building networks of cluster. The good practice case the two complementary clusters Packaging Arena and Printed Electronics Arena went through from 2009 onwards, could be in some way an illustrative model for our Alpine Technologies concept we are establishing in South Tyrol. Although there are differences (industry v. policy driven clusters, territorial distance v. proximity, research based v. market driven...) I understood that only the openness and willingness of approaching new competencies and sectors between all actors can lead to a fast commercialization of new products or services in the Alpine Technologies Area (currently consisting in four clusters: sports & winter TECH, Wood & Technology, Construction and Civil Protection and Alpine Safety). Boosting innovation trough cross cluster collaboration is truly THE challenge for the future."*



Andreas Winkler, Area Manager of Alpine Technologies, TIS innovation park (South Tyrol Italy)

*"For the Region of Southern Denmark it has been interesting to learn about smart specialisation strategies in other regions in Europe. In particular the approach of the Region Rhône-Alpes has been of great interest. The Region Rhône-Alpes has established long terms contracts between the clusters and the national and regional authorities. These contracts are, however, adjusted each year to ensure development and expectations of the parties. Also, national authorities are participating in the Steering Committee or the board of the clusters to ensure co-ordination with national guidelines. Finally, it has been interesting to hear that the Region is financing the technological facilities and machinery and that the Region is credited for providing companies with these facilities."*



Olav Sønderskov, Chief Consultant for Cluster Development, Region of Southern Denmark

### 3.1.1 The Hungarian Cluster Accreditation System, by West-Pannon Regional and Economic Development Non-profit Ltd (Hungary)

#### Location of the Practice

Country, NUTS 1, NUTS 2, City

Hungary, national level

#### Start date and end date

05.2008 – ongoing

#### Practice Executive Summary

In the past 10-12 years several programmes and support measures were launched to develop clusters in Hungary. As a result, a relatively large number of small and fragmented cluster initiatives emerged as well as some relatively large and strong ones. A decision was taken in 2007 that cluster development should be continued with a systematic approach, putting focus on the most promising initiatives. After studying several international best practices (e.g. the French Poles de Compétitivité Programme and the German Spitzencluster Programme) a unique tool has been developed, tailor-made for the Hungarian economical situation, named the cluster accreditation.

The most important goal of cluster accreditation is to select networks with intense innovation development and export activities, whose co-operation effectiveness can help implement major development projects and which can perform significantly in a regional scenario.

#### Detailed description of Practice

##### General introduction of the accreditation system

The cluster accreditation scheme is embedded in the framework of the New Széchenyi Plan which is in line with the government programme 2010-2014 entitled 'The Programme of National Co-operation.'

Clusters can apply for the accreditation through a standard call for proposals in order to acquire the 'Accredited Innovation Cluster' title. The call is published by the National Development Agency and available on its website until the end of 2013. The complete handling of the tenders and the preparation of the decision proposals is made by MAG - Cluster Development Office. Assigned by the National Development Agency, MAG performs the following tasks in relation to this call:

- It carries out the admission of the proposals based on the check of the eligibility criteria
- It performs the check of the selection criteria
- It acts as secretariat for the Accreditation Committee

The most important difference between the accreditation and the other standard tender calls for cluster development is that no direct financial support is granted to the cluster when being awarded the 'Accredited Innovation Cluster' title.

The main advantage of holding the accreditation title is that the accredited cluster and its members are exclusively entitled to submit project proposals for calls in the frame of the New Széchenyi Plan and also they can apply with preferential conditions on certain other calls.

#### The decision process

The proposals are evaluated in batches every quarter of the year.

The proposals are submitted by the cluster management organisations.

The main steps of the accreditation procedure after the submission of the proposal are as follows:

- Check of eligibility criteria
- Check of selection criteria
- Decision on the accreditation title made by the Accreditation Committee

#### Check of eligibility criteria

The two most important eligibility criteria are:

- The management organisation should be a domestic company
- The cluster as a whole should dispose of a track-record of at least two years.

#### Check of selection criteria

The selection system of the accreditation contains two different parts:

- A. Data-based evaluation of the performance of the cluster members through the following subgroups:
- I. Evaluation of the effect (impact) of the cluster on employment
  - II. Evaluation of the business performance of SME members
  - III. Evaluation of the export potential of member companies
  - IV. Evaluation of the framework and content of the co-operations in the cluster
  - V. Analysis of R&D and innovation activities in the cluster

B. Qualitative assessment through the evaluation of the complex cluster strategy

A maximum of 100 points can be reached through the data-based evaluation.

The accreditation cannot be received by those clusters:

- Whose strategy does not comply with the policy objectives of the call or
- That do not reach the 50 points minimum threshold or
- That do not reach min. 8 points in the subcategory IV (cooperation) or
- Do not reach min. 5 points in subcategory V (innovation)

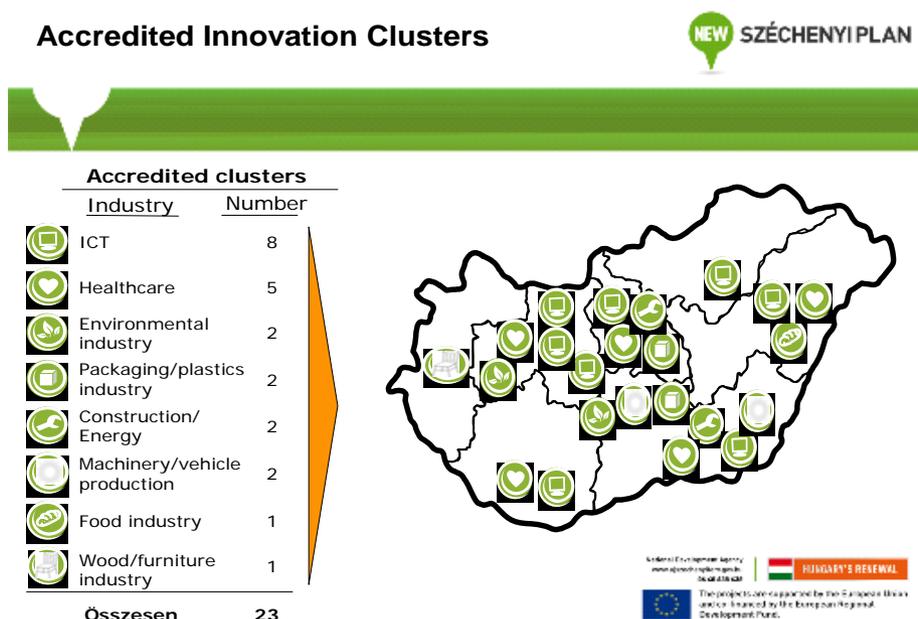
### The Accreditation Committee

Reaching 50 points in the scoring does not automatically mean winning the accreditation title - the Accreditation Committee takes the final decision.

The Committee comprises governmental decision-makers and private sector experts and it bases its decision on the MAG proposal, however the authorization of the Committee is unrestricted.

*(Results and impact)*

Currently 23 clusters hold the Accreditation title.



Basic statistical data of these accredited clusters:

- Total number of cluster members: 947 (out of which SME members: 790);
- Total revenue of cluster members (in 2011): EUR 30.9 billion;
- Total export revenue of SMEs (2011): EUR 416 million
- Total employment of cluster member companies: 77,267;

The members of the accredited clusters launched more than 200 joint R&D and innovation projects financed by the Economic Development Operational Programme. The total granted support exceeds EUR 126 million.

*(Lessons learned and success factors)*

- In the past 5 years the Cluster Accreditation System became a significant incentive for economic development
- The accreditation of clusters can be flexibly used to „pre-filter“ a large scale of companies applying for grants in the field of innovation and technology development
- The „Accredited Innovation Cluster“ title had become a well-known brand in Hungary
- The Cluster Accreditation System is recognised as a good-practice by the European Commission

*(Next steps)*

As the planning of the Operational Programmes of the new period is going on, currently there is no clear future vision for the cluster development policy in Hungary. However the decision makers agree that focused support of clusters is necessary, thus probably the accreditation process will continue in the 2014-20 period.

The MAG - Cluster Development Office elaborated its proposals for the modification of the evaluation system that was already agreed by the Accreditation Committee.

#### Evidence of success

As the proposals submitted within the accreditation call are processed through the national web-based interface system for Structural Funds-financed projects, primary data about Hungarian clusters and their members are continuously available and up-to-date.

As a large database is available now new measures can be tested and simulated in a relatively short time, providing the accreditation scheme flexibility for new policy needs.

The MAG - Cluster Development Office publishes various analyses and reports about the economic performance of these accredited clusters.

The screening of clusters can be useful for any other countries where cluster development policies were launched in the past. It should be stated that the administration needs of the creation and operation of such a system is relatively high.

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### Public information on the Practice

Website [www.nfu.hu/doc/2921](http://www.nfu.hu/doc/2921)



### 3.1.2 Cross Cluster Business Trips, by Cluster 55/Lund University

#### Location of the Practice

Business trips to different locations outside Europe:

June 2012: USA – Washington DC, Raleigh and NYC

September 2012: South America – Brazil and Argentina

November 2012: China – Shanghai, Dezhou, Zuhai, Macao and Hong Kong

#### Start date and end date

2012-01-01 – 2012-12-31

#### Practice Executive Summary

Cross Cluster Business Trips aim to facilitate internationalization for SME's from the two Swedish cluster: Cluster 55° (C55) and Future Position X (FPX).

32 companies have the opportunity to initiate business in USA, South America and China. C55 and FPX arrange the trips and assist with booking meetings with relevant companies and organizations in the host countries. The Swedish companies chosen should be mature enough to be able to establish their business in these locations.

#### Detailed description of Practice

The concept for Cross Culture Business Trips derives from a successful project run by C55, Cluster 55° Business Trips, where for a couple of years, we successfully have taken SME's to different locations in Europe to do business. All trips have so far brought deals to at least one company per trip, as direct result of the trip.

The idea behind the concept is that for a small company it may be necessary to expand the business internationally, but this can be difficult without the right network or the necessary financing. For going outside Europe to do business these two resources can be even more needed and therefore, together with partners at the positioning cluster in Gävle, FPX, the Cross Culture Business Trips were developed. With the combined knowledge on successful internationalization an application was written and approved by Tillväxtverket in Sweden.



Three locations were chosen to be visited in the project; USA, South America and China. The first trip will take place in June where 10 companies from the two regions (Skane and Gävle) were chosen to join, based on their maturity level for internationalization and relevance for the market. The project arranges and covers the costs of travel, accommodation and some joint activities such as dinners and matchmaking events. Some joint meetings will be arranged as well, but each company going is required to book some individual meetings as well. The locations have been chosen based on two requirements; where there are good possibilities for the companies to make business and where C55 and FPX already have a good network to use.

The idea is not only to do international networking, but also to network within the group that is travelling as well, offering the opportunity to form regional and national partnerships or generate new business ideas as positive side effects of the trips. Particularly because having different backgrounds and experiences the participants can contribute to a new type of business development.

#### Evidence of success

The companies participating in the trips have no obligation to report back the result of their meetings. Therefore it is difficult to really measure their impact and output. However many of the companies usually do give feedback that proves that the trips lead to new business opportunities. By collaborating with another cluster on the trips we feel that the trips will improve even more thanks to the combined experiences and networks.

Internationalization is key in a globalized world and with this project even small companies can get the opportunity and the fuel needed to succeed outside their home environment. An advantage is that it is possible to do continuously improvements by learning from the good and from the bad aspects from each trip.

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### 3.1.3 Copenhagen Finance IT Region (CFIR), by Cluster 55/Lund University

#### Location of the Practice

Capital Region of Denmark

#### Start date and end date

October 2009 – August 2013

#### Practice Executive Summary

Copenhagen Finance IT Region is a long-term cluster initiative with the purpose of promoting innovative interactions between knowledge institutions, the public sector and companies across sectors and contributing to the creation of more high value jobs and better framework conditions for business development.

#### Detailed description of Practice

*(Starting point/challenge)*



CFIR was founded on the idea of a joint commitment to strengthen the Copenhagen and the Øresund Region as a strong Finance IT centre. This idea stems from a long triple helix cooperation on Danish service innovation, which revealed the great importance of Finance-IT for innovation, growth and employment. At the same time it was evident that the Finance Sector and the IT sector individually were strong sectors with huge concentrations in the Copenhagen area. The purpose of CFIR has been to create a permanent base for further development of the Danish and Øresund regional financial sector with particular focus on the opportunities that lie in the interplay

between the two sectors. The project puts a special attention on the interaction between them, because one of the central keys to help make happen the innovative potentials of this cluster is found in this intersection. Enhanced triple-helix interaction (between vocational training and public actors) among key actors in the cluster will lead to increased innovation activity for the benefit of the cluster's long-term competitiveness compared to other metropolises. The goal is to create more innovation, more growth and jobs in the Capital Region Finance IT cluster.

*(What has been done?)*

From the very beginning of the project 2 main activities were launched:

5 thematic working groups were established. Their role was to look into each theme, identify problems and develop solutions/suggestions. The 5 different themes were:

- Technology, Innovation and R&D
- Education and competence building
- Workforce: attraction and retention
- Visibility & Branding
- General framework conditions.

An extensive competence analysis of key factors of the Finance & IT sector was published in the report "Analysis of the future competences needed in the intersection between Finance & IT", June 2010. Since 2010 CFIR has been generating several sub-projects based on the analysis and the work accomplished in the 5 thematic working groups.

These sub-projects are:

- "The Future of Money", aiming to make Denmark the first cash-free country in the world. The project's deliverables are reports targeted at stakeholders in Denmark for payment and cash handling, research analysis related to a number of international and national findings, and the set up of a laboratory where various future payment options in different scenarios can be set up. Behind the project there is a number of strong partners from the private sector, universities and a non-profit organization.
- "Get F'IT" is a project creating meeting places for companies, universities and the public sector, focusing on current issues concerning Finance-IT. The purpose was twofold. First to exchange knowledge between actors in the region and second to bridge the gap between triple helix stakeholders. Since 2010 these meetings have been taking place once a month.
- "Standard business reporting" intends to demonstrate how collection of credit data for credit analysis can be achieved by means of structured data in XBRL.
- "HiperFit" aims at developing computer systems for managing complex financial markets and the growing data requirements for transparency, capital adequacy and risk management. Partners from the private sector as well as universities including several international academic partners participate in this project.
- "Conferences": CFIR organizes 2 main conferences each year; Finance IT-day and Remaking Finance. Stakeholders from both the IT-sector as well as the Finance-sector sponsor each conference.
- "BusinessForum" is a meeting place for companies, universities and organisations interested in Finance & IT. The BusinessForum provides the setting for seminars, research workshops and other events.
- "Education and Competency forum" is a meeting place with the purpose to ensure consistency between the skills and competencies offered by educational institutions and the ones the financial sector demands. The Forum consists of representatives from businesses and education institute and together they identify and address challenges as well as provide targeted solutions.

*(Promotors, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

The CFIR-project was developed and implemented by a broad partnership of different stakeholders from the financial sector and from the IT sector including, business federations, unions, universities and the public sector, with Financial Services Union as Lead Partner. The CFIR consists of a total of 13 partners.

*(Methodology)*

- Implementing a common brand and profile for the cluster
- Regular meetings
- Thematic working groups
- Analysis/reports/benchmarking
- Dynamic website with regular updates
- Establishment of meeting spaces
- Clear focus through sub-projects
- Newsletters
- Workshops related to the identification of new projects

*(Output)*

Since the CFIR project is running until august 2013, no real evaluation of the project has been yet done, thus we do not have any real measureable output figures yet. We can however present a list of results that presumably would not have been achieved had it not been for CFIR:

- Raised awareness of the potential of Finance and IT (local, regional and national level)
- New collaborations between public sector, private sector and academics, both in the organizations of the CFIR project as well as in the sub-projects
- Several new projects within areas like talent visibility and technology
- New meeting spaces

*(Costs and resources)*

The total budget of the project is 5 mill €. The project is partly financed from the Danish regional funds and EU regional funds. The companies participating do not receive any funding. Cluster 55 was involved until 2010.

*(Key success factors)*

The key success factor of the CFIR project is whether or not at the end of 2013 there is a demand from stakeholders and it is financially possible to keep CFIR as a permanent cluster in the region.

*(Lessons learned)*

The methods used to launch CFIR could be transferred to other cross-industrial initiatives. CFIR distinguishes itself from most other clusters by having partners such as unions and other interest organizations involved and not only traditional

triple-helix partners. The portfolio of activities is well thought and builds on the knowledge from the partners involved and a thorough analysis of the competencies in the region.

### Evidence of success

*(Measure of results/impact)*

The results of the practice and the impact can be measured by

- The number of projects within each theme
- Participants in meeting/at conferences/in projects
- Subscriptions to newsletters
- Results from sub-projects

*(Results/impact)*

CFIR managed in a very short time span to get many regional actors (businesses, researchers) involved in their activities.

*(Advantage of practice)*

CFIR is a great example of how to combine two industries in an organized and efficient way by focusing on regional strengths and technologies.

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### Public information on the Practice

Website	<a href="http://www.cfir.dk/en-GB/Pages/default.aspx">www.cfir.dk/en-GB/Pages/default.aspx</a>
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### 3.1.4 SYNEA – the inter-cluster network in the Region of Rhône-Alpes, by ERAI/Region Rhône-Alpes

#### Location of the Practice

France, Region of Rhône-Alpes

#### Start date and end date

From 2008 onwards

#### Practice Executive Summary

SYNEA is an inter-cluster network initiated by the region of Rhône-Alpes. It gathers 25 clusters with the aim to inform cluster managers upon the latest economic and political developments. It is also a networking opportunity for these. The region anticipates through this program to help clusters improve their organizational efficiency. This can in turn increase the competitiveness of the region.

The network is organized around regular meetings between cluster managers and public authorities. So far, more than 10 meetings have taken place approaching various subjects such as new financing tools, cluster policies and economic tendencies, etc.



## Detailed description of Practice

### *(Starting point/challenge)*

The region of Rhône-Alpes is known for its economic dynamism with 25 industrial clusters (13 national clusters and 12 regional clusters). It is definitely a challenging task to coordinate these clusters. That is why the region decided to set up the network SYNEA. The network consists of the managers of the 25 clusters who meet on a regular basis and inform each other about the latest regional/national public policies, particularly policies for innovation. This helps them to stay up-to-date without spending too much time on collecting information. It is also a networking opportunity between the cluster managers and helps to stimulate inter-cluster cooperation projects.

### *(What has been done?)*

The network SYNEA has mainly two types of actions: inter-cluster meetings and training programs.

The region of Rhône-Alpes initiated inter-cluster meetings at a frequency of 3 times per year. Up-to-date issues are presented and discussed between invited speakers and cluster representatives. For the moment, more than 10 meetings have been organized around topics such as public funding and cluster international development, etc.

Apart from this, the region also co-organizes inter-cluster meetings with national authorities around themes concerning purely cluster policies.

The region also co-sponsors training programs with the France-Clusters association and the Economic Development Actors' Network of France. The training programs aim to provide cluster managers a wide range of knowledge about legal or financial issues related to clusters' activities, for example.

### *(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

The program is organized by the region of Rhône-Alpes, with the participation of representatives of all clusters and sometimes also of national authorities.

The 25 industrial clusters in Rhône-Alpes are the main beneficiaries of the program.

### *(Methodology)*

As has been described earlier, the network SYNEA assembles clusters in Rhône-Alpes through inter-cluster meetings and training programs.

Here is an example of one of the SYNEA inter-cluster meetings that took place on 26 April 2012:

All the 25 clusters were invited, each cluster being represented by its cluster manager. The meeting took place at the location of the regional authority and lasted for about three hours. Four different subjects were approached: the ICT funding program for technological innovation, the INOVIZI financing tool for young innovative companies, the RTD technology platform and the TCI international cluster network. Each subject was presented by one invited speaker followed by open discussion sessions. A company was also invited to present its experience in initiating a collaborative

project through the RTD platform. The meeting minutes, as well as all the supporting documents, were sent to cluster managers afterwards.

*(Output)*

The documentation of the meetings.

*(Costs and resources)*

The cost is relatively low, not more than €10 000/year. The region finances this program.

*(Key success factors)*

The impact of the program depends on:

- The quality of the content proposed.
- The level and intensity of the information exchange between the cluster representatives.
- The main difficulty is to attract and to mobilize clusters managers since they are often too occupied.

*(Lessons learned)*

The whole practice can be repeated in other regions under the condition that the regional or national authorities are ready to take the initiative.

*(Next steps)*

No major evolution is envisaged in the short term. Adjustment will be made to the themes of each meeting according to the latest economic and political developments.

*Evidence of success*

*(Measure of results/impact)*

The main tools to measure the impact are the number of participants and the feedback of cluster representatives.

The project aims to improve the performance of clusters and to facilitate information exchange among different clusters. So the improvement at the level of the cluster organization, the relationship between clusters and the number of co-labelled projects also serve to measure the impact.

*(Results/impact)*

Through participation in such a network, clusters are more informed on the latest economic and political developments. It is also a networking opportunity among clusters and to initiate inter-cluster collaboration.

For the regional and/or national authorities, it is a way to distribute information on new policies and to follow-up the development of clusters.

*(Advantages of practice)*

As it was stated earlier, the network SYNEA has many positive impacts for both the clusters and the region. It allows different partners to know each other better and thus to work together better. For a region with such a wide range of industrial clusters as Rhône-Alpes, a common network assembling all the major actors is highly important.

*(Potential improvements)*

The participation level of clusters, especially of the world-class clusters, can be intensified. These clusters are often absent possibly due to a lack of interest on the proposed subjects. More targeted communication efforts with these clusters shall be done to improve the situation.

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### 3.1.5 Networks of clusters, by Tillväxtverket/Sweden

#### Location of the Practice

Sweden: The Region of Värmland and Region of Östergötland and two National Agencies: Tillväxtverket and Vinnova

#### Start date and end date of the Practice

2009, ongoing

#### Practice Executive Summary

The fact that the two clusters The Packaging Arena and The Printed Electronics Arena were complementary to each other was of great importance for the outcome of the cooperation (a market driven cluster initiative and a research based cluster). Based on their competences, the cluster members complemented each other and they were able to use each other's test facilities in a more efficient way. One reason why this was possible was probably the fact that they filled-in the gaps in their respective value chain and in doing so, they could speed up time-to-market. They could also offer each other new and different competences, since they are not in the exactly same sector (packing and printing electronics).



The cluster management is essential for the “networks of clusters” in terms of substantial outcome and persistence. And one lesson to learn is that this kind of co-operation is vulnerable to changes in cluster management if happening at an early phase in the cluster development.

#### Detailed description of Practice

Cluster cooperation and cluster networking are pressing issues. The national and transnational cluster cooperation is frequently discussed in Europe as a way to strengthen the critical mass in terms of actors and competences, increasing the conditions for innovation between different business and research fields (the so-called white spaces) as well as to strengthen the existing companies within the clusters. There is a need for a deeper learning and understanding of cluster collaboration.

VINNOVA and Tillväxtverket (The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth) launched a pilot project in order to learn more about the advantages of cluster cooperation. Preliminary results have been presented at the TCI Conference in Jyväskylä 2009.

The pilot project involved two complementary clusters in Sweden; one within the field of consumer-driven packaging and another within printed electronics: The Packaging Arena (TPA) from the Mid-East of Sweden and Printed Electronics Arena (PEA) mainly operating in the South-East. The clusters organisations showed an interest for each other's activities from the beginning and displayed a convincing willingness for cooperation once the project started.

VINNOVA and Tillväxtverket started to look into the following main questions:

- What is the added-value of cluster cooperation? Should the focus be on efforts within the network or on links to other innovation systems?
- What are the key factors for a successful collaboration (for instance cluster management, development steps, financial and competence resources, critical mass, etc.)?
- What are the methods of mobilizing and implementing linking activities?

The two clusters received a minor grant (national funding) for one year for an intense cooperation. The cluster organisations involved cluster actors in a number of meetings, conducted surveys among the actors and matched expressed needs to existing competences through individual dialogues at different levels.

## Results from the Pilot Project

Extended contacts for *research cooperation* between the regional universities

*Training and competence building* is decided upon

Extended *cross-link activities* encourage Triple Helix cooperation

*Test beds* are very important for the renewal - exchanging competence between research and the industry sector. Speeds up the process from research to market and vice versa

Possibility to improve the attractiveness (offer) for both clusters



The positive effects of the cluster networking became visible in less than a year. Thanks to this pilot we found some general success factors and important pre-conditions. The fact that the clusters in question were complementary to each other was of great importance for the outcome of the cooperation. Since TPA is very close to the market, they could offer market knowledge, contacts and a great experience about market needs. PEA, on the other hand, is more research-based and has a cutting edge competence in printed electronics. Furthermore, the project had a considerable advantage in that the clusters were able to use each other's test facilities in order to get the proper expertise as well as infrastructure. TPA and PEA supported each other to fill-in the gaps in their respective value chain and in doing so they

could speed up the time-to-market. They could also offer each other new and different competences since they are not in the exactly same sector.

Another critical pre-condition was that the companies on both sides were engaged, had a positive attitude and were willing to cooperate with other companies while being able to see the benefits of it. This shows that cluster networking has to be both a bottom up and a market-driven process.

The main conclusion of this pilot is that cluster networking can lead to a faster commercialization as long as the clusters are complementary and willing to cooperate. The pilot project shows that openness between different actors within and outside the core of the cluster is of big importance. Blind competition is not the only way to economic growth – if we are struggling to speed up the emergence of new opportunities in the business sectors we have to open up and exchange knowledge and experiences.

Two years later the cluster managers who were involved at the beginning of co-operation between the clusters were left, but the created market contacts of the companies are still there, the test facilities are still being used. The contacts between some of the test facilities and researchers are also there. But there are no common research projects.

#### Evidence of success

The program was evaluated by an external team in 2011. The evaluation team pointed out the importance of coordination at both programme level as well as at cluster level. They identified several co-operations that started between the cluster initiatives within the program. The evaluation team pointed out that these co-operations were directed towards complementary assets (competences) rather than specialization.

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#### Public information on the Practice

Publications	Newsletter TCI 2010 and in Swedish Reports
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### 3.1.6 Innovation procurement, by Tillväxtverket/Sweden

#### Location of the Practice

Region of Skåne (Sweden)

#### Start date and end date

This was a project that started in 2009 within the cluster initiative Sustainable Business Hub in Skåne

#### Practice Executive Summary

The role of the of the cluster initiative The Sustainable Business Hub in the region of Skane has been to facilitate meetings between clean-tech companies dealing with new clean and green technology and the City of Malmö. It is very difficult for a single SME to arrange a meeting like this. The cluster enabled such meetings where several SMEs participated. Another very important role of the cluster was to identify key employees within the local authority for the meetings with SME's. These key persons must be interested, have a good knowledge about the purchasing area and the right to make decisions for a purchase. The cluster can do this identification of such key persons.

#### Detailed description of the Practice

## City, Region – Key Player; Demanding Customer of Innovative Green Solutions



The public sector has often high objectives regarding environmental issues as climate, clean-tech etc., but also sometimes difficulties regarding how to approach new environmental techniques. Tillväxtverket supported a concept that may increase the contacts between the public sector and the private sector where innovation happens. The concept called “Testbed Skåne” was developed by the cluster initiative Sustainable Business Hub. The idea of the tool is to get the public sector interested in innovations in the

field of clean-tech. “Testbed Skåne” works as a speed-dating system where the suppliers get a limited time to present their innovation/product/service while the public customer gets a broader range of knowledge about different solutions in an efficient way (in a short period of time). For the SMEs this approach proved to be a useful tool to enter new markets (the public markets) and at the same time they are able to get in contact with similar companies in forthcoming procurements. During the last years this tool was used in different segments.

The idea came from one of the member companies of the cluster initiative Sustainable Business Hub and the cluster management understood the potential in using the method at an extended scale. A substantial market survey was carried out in the first development phase in order to draw conclusions about guidelines for an extended use.

The first “testbed” meeting was arranged with the City of Malmö (in the Skåne region). This first “testbed” resulted in the placement of an order for three driers, highly energy efficient, for the city’s nursery schools (pre-schools). As the city (local authority) was one of the company’s first customer, the public body became an important reference. This first procurement led to other public customers meaning that the company has been winning other public procurements as an additional output.

As mentioned above, the cluster organisation took over the facilitating role, bringing together the cleantech companies with the responsible people from the public authorities. The most critical part in using the tool is that it requires persons with good insight and knowledge of the public bodies’ situation and operations. That knowledge is essential, explains the cluster management.

The match-making is based on the cluster organisation’s knowledge of the market.

6 procurements have been realized during the last years and the cluster initiative Sustainable Business Hub has contributed with the help of this tool to developments in environmental constructions in Malmö (Västra Hamnen), solar energy (Hyllie), clean-tech in the health-care sector, to the European Spallation Source. New projects are in the pipeline.

#### Evidence of success

##### *(Measure of results/impact)*

The indicators used for measurement of the results/impact of the practice are:

- Following-up on the number of purchased test products
- Number of leads to sales for the companies participating in the testbed
- Number of satisfied participating companies

##### *(Results/impact)*

The City of Malmö developed and implemented a specially related policy and an organization scheme for the testbed activities within the city.

##### *(Advantages of practice)*

You need to organize/ institutionalize the testbed concept to make it run smooth and fast and to make it visible for companies. That will in itself attract more companies to testbeds events that will also raise the knowledge within the city administration regarding available products with high environmental and energy performance.

*(Potential improvements)*

It is important to create partnerships with potential customers (for example cities, regional authorities, large companies). Another opportunity is to involve entrepreneurs as early as possible in the process, so that they can give input of what is possible, how it shall be done and by whom. This will strengthen the communication with the clean-tech companies.

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### 3.1.7 The Hungarian multi-stage cluster development model, by West-Pannon Regional and Economic Development Non-profit Ltd.

#### Location of the Practice

Hungary, national level

#### Start date and end date

February 2008 - ongoing

#### Practice Executive Summary

Cluster development was part of the Hungarian economic policy from the early 2000s. At the beginning, domestic funds and after 2004 EU funds were available for the support of cluster organisations. However, no consistent, long term cluster development policy existed until 2008 when the government launched the so-called Pole Programme with its multi-stage cluster development model that more or less constantly forms the frame of cluster development in Hungary.

From 2010 slight changes were made to the model and - in line with the new governmental policies - the cluster development programme continued in the framework of the New Széchenyi Plan.

#### Detailed description of Practice

##### *(Starting point/challenge)*

The following challenges and problems were identified during the design of the Pole Programme in 2007:

- General lack of trust among business actors resulting in an inadequate number of business co-operations
- Existing and successful business co-operations could not count on stable policies
- Mixed experiences and results of cluster support programmes
- No consistent national policy on clustering
- Imbalance of the tradable and non-tradable sectors (overweight of non-tradable sectors):
  - Decreasing export and competitiveness
  - Growth rate lags behind potential rate
  - Low and stagnating level of employment

Challenges of economic development in the field of R&D&I:

- Macroeconomic aspect:
  - R&D expenses over GDP is well below EU average
  - Overweight of state R&D both in research staff and in financing
- Propensity of enterprises for R&D:
  - Low propensity for risk and entrepreneurship
  - Lack of trust and co-operation
- Education:
  - Moderate number of professionals in science and technology
- Research
  - Brain-drain
  - Gap between science and business, inadequate number of patents
  - Universities oriented at basic research
- Financing:
  - Enterprises face slow, expensive and bureaucratic procedures to get loans
  - Lack of risk capital and business angels networks

#### Complex cluster development programmes in Hungary

- Pole Programme (2008-2010)
- New Széchenyi Plan - Cluster Development Programme (2010- ongoing)

#### Pole Programme (2008-2010)

The Hungarian Pole Programme was formed to provide solutions to the challenges above. The programme was part of the New Hungary Development Plan (NHDP) as the comprehensive Hungarian development plan for 2007-2013 addressing the most important challenges in the Hungarian society and economy. The Pole Programme was designed to overarch the separate (regional) operational programmes and coordinating them with a strong focus on cluster development and pole cities' development. The programme directly targeted clusters and the pole cities (the 8 major Hungarian towns). The programme's final target group was the innovative SMEs.

The total sum of the grants available in the Pole Program between 2007-2013 amounted to close to 1.7 billion Euros, however this sum is allocated in the concerned Operational Programmes of the NHDP (mainly Economic Development OP, 7 Regional OPs, Social Infrastructure OP and Social Renewal OP). The Pole Programme ensured a coordination mechanism between the different measures of the different OPs related to the development of pole cities and clusters. Roughly EUR 1.1 billion was allocated for the horizontal economic development pillar (the pole cities) of the programme and approx. EUR 0.6 billion to the cluster development pillar. By mid-2010 (when a new government came to power) approx. EUR 1 billion has been committed under the framework of the Pole Programme.

The expected results of the Programme:

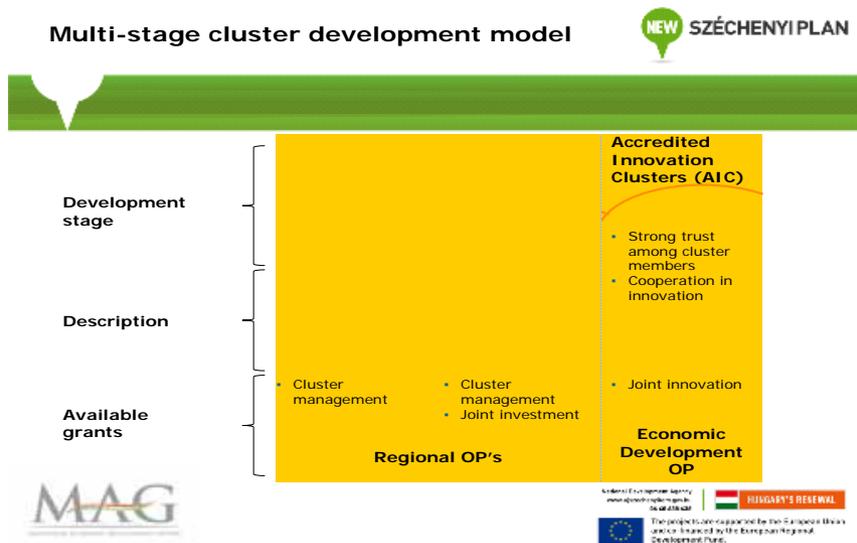
- By 2013-2015 between 5-10 successful pole innovation clusters will operate in Hungary. Parameters of a successful pole innovation cluster are defined as follows:
  - It consists of 30-35 SMEs and has multinational members
  - It exports to several countries in the world
  - It contributes to the employment growth primarily by the creation of highly qualified jobs
  - It operates in one of the most profitable segments of the industrial value chain
  - It has strong international relations with foreign business and academia
- All of the successful pole innovation clusters will reach a significant market share in their respective markets in Europe

All of the successful pole innovation clusters will be organic parts of the global industrial value chain

#### Establishment and operation of the Pole Programme Office (PPO)

As a small non-profit organization owned by MAG - Hungarian Economic Development Centre - the intermediary body responsible for economic development measures and calls for proposals - the PPO was the main coordination body of the Pole Programme. It mediated between the involved national level authorities and agencies and the cluster actors and the pole cities. In doing this it relied on 7 regional network brokers covering the 7 regions of Hungary and facilitating direct contact to local actors. The PPO was involved in initiating and consulting on various calls related to clusters or pole cities. The Office managed the accreditation process. The regional network brokers assisted local actors in setting up new cluster initiatives and developing them based on specific information, methodology, etc.

#### Launching the multi-stage cluster development model



The core idea behind the model was that clusters at different level of their maturity need different kinds of support.

At the first stage of the model grant support was provided for start-up initiatives to initiate co-operation and to set up and operate a cluster management organisation. The subsidy for the projects was relatively low at this stage as compared to the later ones, but it was sufficient for a two-year-long project focusing on cluster management.

During the second stage, besides giving support to cluster management, the focus was more on joint investments of the cluster members.

The first two stages of the model were financed from the Regional Operational Programmes.

After the second stage the accreditation of clusters represents entry to the third one. Here the focus was on joint innovation investments of clusters. It is important to note that support was available only to joint innovation investments not just joint investments, so it was a must to have a strong innovation element in the projects. Support for projects could reach EUR 6 million at this stage. Support was provided from the Economic Development OP.

The highest stage of the model was the Pole Innovation Clusters. This level would have been open only for those clusters that had been successful in a further accreditation. This stage did not come effective under the Pole Programme.

#### Launching the cluster accreditation scheme (see more information in the good practice no. 3.1.1)

The PPO elaborated an accreditation system of clusters, a fact-based evaluation system aiming to selecting the best-performing and/or most promising clusters. The accreditation model is based on levers that were determined by experts and have been tested on operating clusters (level of co-operation, economic performance, R&D performance, etc.). Obtaining the accreditation title did not mean any financial support but it brought special rights for the cluster to apply for certain dedicated sources and earning plus points in various calls.

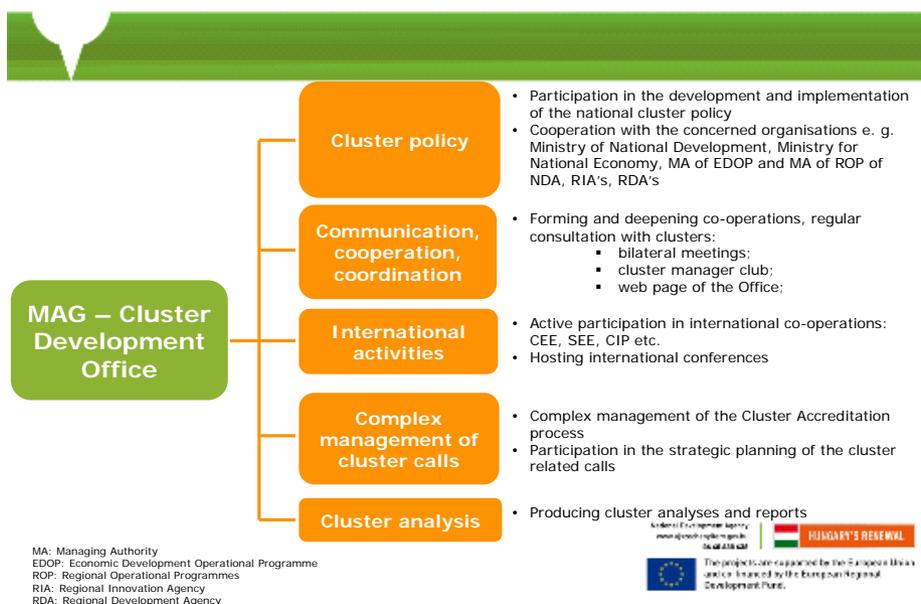
#### New Széchenyi Plan - Cluster Development Programme (2010- ongoing):

From 2010, the new Hungarian government launched the New Széchenyi Plan (NSZP) which is in line with the government program 2010-2014 entitled 'The Programme of National Co-operation.' The overall objective of the NSZP is dynamic enlargement of employment. The NSZP sets the target of the creation of 1 million new jobs by 2020.

#### Organisational changes – Cluster Development Office

The Cluster Development Office is the successor of the Pole Programme Office. The Cluster Development Office is a small dedicated unit of MAG - Hungarian Economic Development Centre. Its tasks have remained basically the same as they were those of the Pole Programme Office. Most importantly it serves as a coordinator for all cluster related calls and activities of the NSZP empowered to initiate new calls and give its opinion on calls that are related to cluster development. The Office is responsible for the management of the renewed cluster accreditation scheme and is in direct contact with the Hungarian clusters being therefore able to map their needs and forward these to the concerned national level decision-makers.

## MAG – Cluster Development Office performs the following tasks in relation to clusters



### Operation of the multi-stage cluster development model

Due adjustments were carried out in the cluster development model used in the Pole Programme to reflect the employment focus of the NSZP, but the core idea of the model remained the same, i.e. clusters at different level of their maturity need different kinds support.

### Operating the renewed cluster accreditation scheme

The Cluster Development Office manages the accreditation system of clusters which is a fact-based evaluation system with the aim of selecting the best-performing and/or most promising clusters. The accreditation system has been renewed to reflect the priorities of the NSzP. In the new scheme the following aspects of the clusters are examined: (1) Employment; (2) Role of SMEs; (3) Export performance; (4) Co-operation of cluster members; (5) Innovation. The previous accreditation system has been streamlined and simplified: at the current system only 14 criteria are used instead of the former 35.

*(Measures of practice)*

### Measures for start-up cooperations

Grants are available for the set-up and operation of the cluster management organisations and for limited joint investments. Cluster management organisations are eligible to apply for the call. In the cluster there should be at least 10 companies members to make the cluster management organisation eligible for application. It can be seen that this

minimum eligibility criterion is still fairly loose and the applicants can represent rather start-up co-operations than clusters. The grant amount per project is of approx. EUR 200,000. The rate of support is 80% for the cluster management and max 50% for the joint investments. (The grant value and rate of support vary in the different Hungarian regions.)

#### Measures for developing clusters

Grants are available for the operation of the cluster management organisations for deepening the business relations of the cluster members and for joint investments. In this call, compared to the call for the start-up cooperations (above) the joint investment is in the focus. The cluster needs to have at least a 1-year-long track record so that the cluster management organisation can apply. The grant amount reaches EUR 800,000, from which the support to the cluster management organisation is limited to EUR 200,000; the rest of the grant amount has to serve the joint investment of the cluster members. The rate of support is 80% for the cluster management and max 50% for the joint investments. (The grant value and rate of support vary in the different Hungarian regions.)

#### Measures for the joint innovation activities of accredited cluster member companies

Grants are available for member companies of accredited clusters for joint innovation projects (EDOP-1.3.1/B). Only those innovation projects are eligible in which companies co-operate towards the innovation of a new product/service. The grant amount per project is between EUR 0.05-1.7 million. The rate of support is max 55%. Eligible costs are R&D staff costs, purchase of know-how and services, investment in infrastructure, machinery and marketing.

#### Measures for innovation companies jointly established by members of accredited cluster

Grants are available for member companies of accredited clusters if they decided to set-up jointly a company implementing an innovation project (EDOP-1.2.1). The beneficiary is the jointly established company. The grant amount per project is between EUR 0,3 - 3,3 million. The rate of support is maximum 60%. Eligible costs are R&D staff costs, purchase of know-how and services, investment in infrastructure, machinery and marketing.

#### Measures for the utilisation of innovation results for SMEs

The grants are available for SMEs for innovation projects (EDOP-1.3.1C). This call is open for all SMEs that satisfy at least 3 innovation-type eligibility criteria from a set of 15. Being the member of an accredited cluster is such an eligibility criterion – this way accredited cluster member companies are preferred in the call. The grant amount per project is EUR 17,000 – 83,000 whereas the rate of support is maximum 65%. Eligible costs are R&D staff costs, purchase of machinery and costs related to the intellectual property rights.

#### Transnational projects

The Cluster Development Office at MAG actively participates in transnational projects, like ClusterCOOP, CluStrat, CENTRAMO. These projects bring added value in terms of exchanging experience with professionals from other countries, providing new services to clusters and cluster managers and striving for an enhanced co-operation in the field of cluster policies.

## Evidence of success

### *(Results and impact)*

During the past 5 years, different schemes under the umbrella of Regional Operational Programmes provided assistance for around 200 start-up and developing clusters worth EUR 26 million. These funds were primarily allocated for the establishment of a structural framework for co-operation and joint investments.

Currently 23 accredited clusters operate in Hungary. The members of the accredited clusters launched more than 200 joint R&D and innovation projects financed by the Economic Development OP. The total granted support exceeds EUR 126 million.

Other relevant but not quantifiable result is that there is a significant increase in the cooperation of willingness in Hungary, clustering become a widely-used tool in business co-operations.

After consulting and collecting feedbacks from cluster managers, it can be stated that the most important success factor of cluster development are consistency and predictability. Another important factor is that the Cluster Development Office as a dedicated unit is responsible for the coordination of the large number of stakeholders.

### *(Lessons learned, next steps)*

- The support and development of clusters and cluster organisations should be continued in the next programming period, however, more emphasis should be given to help clusters become more self-sustainable.
- When supporting clusters, priority should be on those clusters which already have a significant track-record. New initiatives should be supported only in well-justified cases.
- The cluster accreditation system is capable to filter and qualify clusters, but the recent experiences should be channeled into a qualification system.
- The cluster phenomena should be embedded into the general business environment (taxation, accounting etc. issues)
- Clusters can have a leading role in the utilization of the available EU funds in 2014-20

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## Public information on the Practice

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### 3.1.8 Welfare Tech, by the Region of Southern Denmark

#### Location of the Practice

Denmark, Region of Southern Denmark, Odense

#### Start date and end date of the Practice

January 2010, ongoing

#### Practice Executive Summary

Welfare Tech is a national market driven cluster for health care, home care and social services in Denmark. Welfare Tech promotes business growth through innovation, dissemination and implementation of welfare technologies by private-public business development, knowledge sharing and interdisciplinary collaboration. Its vision is to create a welfare industry that ensures growth and jobs in the private corporate sector by producing intelligent products and services with a beneficial impact on the services provided in health care, home care and social services. The aim is to promote business opportunities and collaboration between members and business partners from the private industry, public organisations and research and educational institutions.

#### Detailed description of Practice

##### *(Starting point/challenge)*

The starting point was that the Region wanted to

- Boost and optimize the efficiency of its health and social sector
- Create jobs and growth
- Provide citizens with improved quality of life

The challenge is that Southern Denmark has a low level of growth and a low level of education, as well as a decreasing work force. Companies' investments in research and development are lower than in the rest of the country and fewer new companies are established, companies create fewer jobs and export is decreasing.

##### *(What has been done?)*

The Regions has set up a growth model as follows:





In the field of health and social innovation there are a number of actors, public institutions and private companies. Welfare Tech has been set up to meet the demands for growth and for creation of jobs in an emerging market.

*(Promotors, stakeholders, beneficiaries, methodology and output)*

The core of the cluster Welfare Tech comprises innovative Danish companies and public institutions. The coherence between the members makes Welfare Tech a national entry point and test bed for companies who want to enter the Danish and European market. Welfare Tech conveys new ideas and insights into demands and requirements pertaining to hospitals and municipalities. The cluster facilitates active networks, dialogue between companies and links between companies and public sector stakeholders. Member organisations get contact to decision makers, leaders and specialists in the area. The intention is to utilise built-in synergies to create new business opportunities with extensive user focus and involvement. The cluster serves as the Danish entry point to a co-operation environment that helps companies and public bodies generate new welfare solutions.

*(Lessons learned and key success factors)*

The challenge has mainly been to set up a strategic partnership in an emerging industry. It has been difficult to involve a critical mass of companies to develop the cluster and for the field of business to become sufficiently attractive for investors and research.

Also it was difficult to get valid data on this emerging industry in a cross cutting sector that is not included in common statistics.

*(Costs and resources)*

192 M DKK – around 25.7 M € have so far been invested in the projects from regional, national and EU funding.

*(Next steps)*

Welfare Tech maintains the expectation of establishing 500 jobs in a long term perspective.

## Evidence of success

### *(Measure of results/impact)*

Welfare Tech has 152 members from the whole country, out of which 89 are private companies, 30 municipalities and 16 educational and research institutions. Welfare Tech has contributed to the development of 56 new welfare technological products, 54 companies have found business partners or interested buyers and 46 companies have been - by side-stepping - involved in the welfare technological field. Also, Welfare Tech has contributed to the establishment of 8 new enterprises.

### *(Results/impact)*

The result is that Welfare Tech now is consolidated as one of three main business development fields in the Regional Business Development Strategy. This means that investments and research in the region are focused on this field in the regional smart specialization strategy. At the same time, Welfare Tech benefits from the other regional initiatives that are launched to promote entrepreneurship, internationalisation, exports and other cross sector initiatives.

### *(Advantages of practice)*

Collaboration between private and public sector in the field of health and welfare services is not very common. The experiences might be interesting for other regional or local authorities wishing to set up Public-Private Partnerships or Public-Private Innovation in this (or even other) field.

Next time there should be much more focus on export possibilities when setting up the collaboration. Most enterprises are focused on developing devices for the use of the specific customers more than thinking of international market possibilities when starting up.

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## 4 International and interregional cluster cooperation

### Exploration of the opportunities for cross-linking existing technologies between different European regions

Considering the approach of European smart specialisation policies, it is not enough to identify the potential of cross-linking technologies within the region, but also between the regions. Here a better political support for international cluster collaboration—a second recommendation of European Cluster Policy Group – is needed. The process of supporting cluster organisations to go international targets primarily SMEs in order to improve their competitiveness and to maximize their presence in global value chains. According to the TACTICS Handbook on Cluster Internationalisation<sup>9</sup>, “the internationalisation of cluster organisations covers a range of activities that will produce benefits for the businesses in the cluster, especially SMEs, and for the region and country in which the cluster is located:

- Access to Knowledge, to use in new products & services
- Access to new Markets
- Access to key Infrastructure
- Access to new Partners for collaboration
- To raise Profile
- To attract mobile Foreign Direct Investment

One of the goals of CLUSTERIX is related to the support of the SME internationalization from a cross-sectorial perspective.

7 good practices were identified and discussed, coming from Rhône-Alpes – 2, from Region Skane-1, Sweden (national level)-1, Romania - 1, South Tyrol - 1 and Karlsruhe - 1.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.czechinvest.org/data/files/cluster-internationalisation-3926-cz.pdf>

Some concrete follow-ups of the experienced exchanged and lessons learned that are presented by the partners:

*"The Good Practice Case "France Green Plastics" provided by ERAI and Plastipolis (Rhône-Alpes) inspired us to approach internationalisation in a new way. It widened the view from sector-to-sector activities to addressing a new market trend that combines know-how from several sectors. Benefits of this joint initiative of Plastipolis, IAR and Céréales Vallée are the holistic innovation approach along the value chain of bio-plastics, the combination of different kinds of competences and joint efforts to manage internationalisation, which is too large for each cluster alone. Learning from the experiences in the "France Green Plastics" initiative, ecoplus helped to set-up a strategic collaboration project of three clusters in the fields of Plastics, Mechatronics and Textiles aiming at a common roadmap for Smart textiles and international B2B meetings at a later stage."*



Simone Hagenauer, project manager Clusters, ecoplus. The Business Agency of Lower Austria

*"The Economic Development Department Karlsruhe presented the good practice "Business Roaming Agreement (BRA)" developed by Cluster55 to cluster managers in Karlsruhe on occasion of the regional reflection meetings and face to face meetings.*

*The practice convinced the High.Tech.Entrepreneur.Network CyberForum to become part of the network and to sign the agreement. Through the BRA Network, the collaboration between more than 40 involved parties are expected to be intensified. The aim is to strengthen the cross-border relations between the involved Networks and to support the Internationalisation ambitions of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The signing of the BRA Agreement between CyberForum and the Swedish Cluster 55 has not only facilitated an access to infrastructure to all the involved members and Partner of BRA (for e.g. for office or conference rooms) but has also gained their support. The BRA, in a way, acts as a kind of exchange program where the companies worldwide are able to draw on the existing network and premises based on the (local) knowledge of the industry. Member companies of CyberForum obtain an access to exhibitions, meeting points and office spaces from Malmö over London to Hong Kong.*

*“The long-lasting collaboration between CyberForum, Cluster 55 and numerous other international Members facilitates one-of-its-kind support to companies, which intend to expand their activities internationally. In the forthcoming weeks many organisations worldwide would become a part of the BRA: In this way, they would be a part of an international network and with that a centre for innovation”, said David Hermanns, Director of CyberForum.”*



Steffen Buhl, Cluster Expert & Trend scout, Economic Development Karlsruhe

*“The West Transdanubian cluster scene is highly varied both sector and experience-wise. Smart specialisation, harmonising the strategic activities of the full scope to focus on key objectives will therefore present a new kind of challenge for the region. Using a mixture of a series of moderated co-operation workshops and a systematic follow-up of the competence mapping the clusters can start co-ordinating in a much tighter, strategically focused network.*

*Another key dimension of development of the regional clusters is a more intensive promotion of internationalisation. Many of the clusters tend to focus exclusively on the domestic market and rarely utilise the synergic opportunities for network-building and market presence abroad. In order for the key regional clusters to compete in the European arena the well-structured cluster internationalisation initiatives from ERAI and the Cluster study tours from Cluster 55 are key good practices to use.”*



Gál Körmendy, Project Manager at West-Pannon Regional and Economic Development Non-profit Ltd (Hungary)

*“For Cluster 55 the ClusteriX project has provided many new ideas as to how to further develop the cluster i.e. the methodological internationalization approach in Rhône Alpes and the competence mapping in Lower Austria are tools that could add value to the cluster and its members. ClusteriX has also underlined the potential of cross-clustering across sectors motivating Cluster 55 to i.e. enter into collaboration with Plastipolis (French plastics cluster), building a European strategic cluster partnership around Smart Textiles and organizing the cluster’s first match-making event between media, ICT and the packaging industry.”*



Camilla Krogh Christensen, Project Manager, Cluster 55/LUND University (Sweden)

#### 4.1.1 Business Roaming Agreement, by Cluster 55/Lund University/Region Skane

##### Location of the Practice

Practice involving regions and cities.

##### Start date and end date

2011 - no end date.

##### Practice Executive Summary

The Business Roaming Agreement is a network of organizations and institutions sharing office facilities and business networks while acting as ambassadors for Cluster 55. The activity is based on a network of clusters, science parks and incubators in Europe and abroad.

##### Detailed description of Practice

###### *(Starting point/challenge)*

In an increasingly global world internationalization is of utmost importance for companies, even more so when it comes to ICT companies whose market is usually global rather than local, even at market entry.

Start-ups and SMEs' efforts to enter new international markets meet a whole range of barriers. How can we as a cluster organization try to minimize these obstacles? At the outset one of the main challenges for companies is that they need a base, a network and an understanding of the business culture when trying to enter the market in a new country.

The Business Roaming Agreement model is based on reciprocal assistance. The key goal is to help SMEs in their quest for international expansion. When an ambassador in collaboration with the Cluster 55° team plans for a delegation visit, his/her role is to act as host and be a door opener in their local environment. The ambassador thus has an important role in describing the local business culture and etiquette to in-coming companies and delegations.

###### *(What has been done?)*

Cluster 55 thought out the project in 2011, as an extra activity to offer the members of the organization. The project is still in the developing phase. Since the beginning several organizations have been approached and several have given positive replies.

The guidelines for ambassadors are under development. One of the deliverables is to have each ambassador record a short (2 min) presentation with information of their own region including the business culture and etiquette. This presentation is to be made public online and serve as an online tool as an added marketing window for both Cluster 55 and the ambassador's own organisation.

A partner agreement is also under development.

*(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

The project has been developed and launched by Cluster 55. Several cluster organizations and science parks/incubators participate in it. The beneficiaries are the SMEs.

*(Methodology)*

We are using our own cluster network around Europe and in central locations in other parts of the world to get people involved in the project.

*(Output?)*

So far the network consists of approx. 15 offices around Europe and abroad.

*(Costs and resources)*

BRA is not funded. No costs for the project itself.

*(Key success factors)*

Increase the number of clusters participating.

Get SMEs to know about it and start using it.

*(Lessons learned)*

This practice could easily be transferred to other regions and other sectors. It requires a good amount of international networking. It is important that the ambassadors in the network know the industry the companies are involved in.

As stated, the project is still in the development phase since it was hard to find time to work with a non-funded project. Most regions though have started to focus more and more on internationalization, so it could be possible and recommendable to find regional/national funding for this.

*(Next steps)*

- To finish guidelines and agreements
- Set up information on website
- Get more clusters involved
- Brand the project at regional, national and international level.

Evidence of success

*(Measure of results/impact)*

No results yet, however 9 out of 10 people from different organizations have been positive towards participating in the project.

*(Results/impact)*

This activity is aligned with the Skåne Region's new international innovation strategy.

*(Advantage of practice)*

The small amount of time and effort that is required from the participants makes it easy to build a network quite fast. It is a very concrete activity, which is what most business members of cluster organizations, business associations and more are looking for.

Innovation policies are more and more focused on internationalization processes. The Business Roaming Agreement model tries to transform these policies into a concrete activity that benefits SMEs.

*(Potential improvements)*

Dedicate more time to get the project launched faster. Get funding for the project in terms of staff-costs.

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Public information on the Practice

Website	<a href="http://www.businessroamingagreement.com">www.businessroamingagreement.com</a>
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## 4.1.2 Clusters Mobility Program: welcoming international experts in Rhône-Alpes, by ERAI/Rhône-Alpes

### Location of the Practice

Rhône-Alpes Region (FRANCE)

### Start date and end date

Start date: June 2008 – End date: ongoing (the program is renewed every year)

### Practice Executive Summary

The “Clusters Mobility Program”, financed by the regional government of Rhône-Alpes and managed by ERAI, was launched to promote regional clusters internationally and to develop cooperation with partner regions in Europe and worldwide. The program is attended every year by around 15 foreign highly qualified experts, “heads of networks” in their countries in the sectors covered by the clusters in Rhône-Alpes. During their visit in the region (3 to 5 days depending on the projects), they have the opportunity to meet representatives from clusters, companies, research centres, universities and institutions, to cover the varied competitive aspects of the respective industry. This program enhances the clusters’ reputation, by encouraging exchanges, partnerships and inter-clustering between the expert’s organization and the French clusters.

### Detailed description of Practice

#### *(Starting point/challenge)*

The Clusters Mobility program was developed with the aim to encourage economic and scientific exchange with some targeted areas in order to develop and contribute to the Rhône-Alpes attractiveness and to enhance the reputation of Rhône-Alpes at European and international scale.

#### *(What has been done)*

The French government (in 2005-2006) and the Regional Council of Rhône-Alpes (in 2004) defined a new policy aiming at the creation of clusters on their territory. Once created, these institutions had to face an important issue related to the international development of their members and the creation of links with their European and international counterparts. So, it was decided to make clusters benefit from exchanges with recognized international experts who were able to provide them a state-of-the-art of the respective sector in their country and contacts within their networks.

#### *(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries)*

The program was launched by the Department of Europe, International Relations and Cooperation of the Rhône-Alpes Region. They commissioned ERAI to closely coordinate the program with the regional clusters and the other departments of the Region Rhône-Alpes (economy, environment, agriculture, higher education and training). The beneficiaries are regional and competitiveness clusters and their members.



*(Methodology)*

The international experts could be identified through the ERAI offices worldwide (27 in 21 countries on 4 continents), by the clusters themselves and by the departments of the Rhône-Alpes Region. Their application is submitted to the Region, ERAI and/or the cluster (depending on the case). Once accepted by all the stakeholders, the experts are asked to participate in the program and to keep long-lasting and sustainable relations with Rhône-Alpes. Their agenda of meetings is drawn up by ERAI in close agreement with clusters and the regional authorities. Then, ERAI provides a report of the expert's mission in Rhône-Alpes and the follow-up phase begins. The objective is to define the important collaborative projects and to start them.

*(Output)*

Input: Selection of experts and preparation of contacts.

Output: Common projects and partnerships; exchange of information and contacts.

*(Costs and resources)*

The budget related to the expert (travel expenses, board and lodging, transportation costs in Rhône-Alpes) is entirely covered by the Rhône-Alpes Region. Therefore, each year, a special committee of the regional council votes the annual budget, corresponding to about € 2.800,- per expert. On its side, ERAI makes available working time of one project manager who is in charge of the preparation of the agenda, the accompaniment of the expert during his/her stay in Rhône-Alpes and the follow-up of the meetings.

*(Key success factors)*

Until nowadays, 68 experts have been invited in Rhône-Alpes in the framework of this program. They initiated win-win relations with Rhône-Alpes and they facilitated many kinds of cooperation, such as inter-clustering, exchange of experiences / best practices in cluster management and regional development programs, exchange of sectorial information, scientific and commercial partnerships, identification of investment projects in Rhône-Alpes, training partnerships (university cooperation, professional training exchanges, invitation to seminars and conferences in both countries).

*(Lessons learned and transfer potential)*

The methodology of the practice could be transferred to other countries. A fundamental aspect for the functioning of this program is the fund-raising; in the case of Rhône-Alpes, it is the regional authority that finances the program.

The success of each expert's mission depends on the selection of the right person, on the quality of meetings he/she has (match-making perspective) and the regularity of the follow-up.

*(Next steps)*

One result of this program is the set-up and management of the "Rhône-Alpes Clusters Ambassadors" network composed of the experts invited in Rhône-Alpes in the framework of the Clusters Mobility program who gave valuable contribution for the development of successful cooperation projects with the regional and competitiveness clusters of Rhône-Alpes and their members.

Evidence of success

*(Measure of results/impact)*

We measured the number of contacts generated by the intervention of each expert and the number of projects issued from the meetings / seminars / sites' visits organized for the expert. The annual average corresponds to about 200 contacts generated in Rhône-Alpes and 7 major projects launched (ex. collective missions in the country of the expert, signature of an MOU, exchange of interns between universities, collaborative projects between research centres, etc.).

*(Results/impact)*

The clusters benefited from the information and contacts provided by the experts. Thanks to them, they are able to create some technological and business links for their members in the countries of the experts.

*(Advantages of practice)*

It is an inter-clustering facilitator tool because it aims at promoting the exchange of best practices and partnerships between regional clusters and their international counterparts. It is also an excellent territorial marketing tool, all the more so because most of these experts did not know Rhône-Alpes and its economic and scientific potential.

*(Potential improvements)*

We are constantly improving the program: functioning, marketing and communication aspects, criteria of selection of the experts. At the present time, we are trying to respond more and more to the clusters' needs and expectations.

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### 4.1.3 Implantis®, by ERAI/Rhône-Alpes

#### Location of the Practice

Opportunity for international development Rhône-Alpes and its businesses in ERAI's 27 locations abroad:

Implantis® is an incubator solution within the ERAI's locations abroad:

Argentina	Brazil	BurkinaFaso	Canada	China	Germany	Vietnam
India	Italy	Japan	Morocco	Poland	Russia	
Spain	Turkey	Ukraine	United Arab Emirates	USA		

#### Start date and end date

Since 1997

#### Practice Executive Summary

Through the Implantis® business incubators, ERAI's aim is to facilitate and accelerate the establishment of companies and clusters foreign representative offices abroad, by assisting them in developing their business environment in the targeted country.

According to clusters and companies needs, ERAI's offices worldwide offer an adapted and tailor-made solution:

- Business and mailing addresses
- Equipped offices and common spaces
- Administrative and commercial support
- Recruitment
- Follow up and support for the hosted employee (coaching and advice)



#### Detailed description of Practice

##### *(Starting point/challenge)*

To let a company to be immediately operational in the process of setting-up its representation office abroad. This was the main challenge that ERAI had to face at the beginning. Therefore, in 1997, ERAI created some "export commercial platforms" within its foreign offices thanks to its ten-year experience.

##### *(What has been done?)*

This solution provided companies and clusters a local address and an office for their own sales employees established abroad. Based on this successful experience, Implantis® label was imagined in 2002.

The objectives for the company/cluster are the following:

- Being present and active on a foreign market in a secure environment
- Having its local sales forces coached by bicultural team with a long-lasting experience in the market
- Making its local sales forces benefit of ERAI's network in their field of activity

The Implantis® solution was later adopted by some Rhône-Alpes competitiveness clusters. Two of them recruited an International Voluntary Worker (*Volontariat International en Entreprise* in French) who was hosted in the ERAI Shanghai Implantis® space.

Their mentoring, coaching and supervision was provided by ERAI Shanghai team in order to guarantee the achievement of the defined objectives. Their objectives were:

- To develop a local business, academic, institutional and scientific network
- To better understand the market (assets, opportunities, weaknesses, threats etc.)
- To conduct market and technology surveys
- To promote the Rhône-Alpes potential in their fields of activity and attract investors and official delegations
- To support Rhône-Alpes companies interested by the Chinese market, by providing their advice and the matured knowledge of this country.

*(Promoters, stakeholders, beneficiaries and methodology)*

The Implantis® solution is based on a partnership process:

- The cluster or the company brings its strategy and objectives
- The representative brings his competencies
- ERAI's team brings its experience on the market and its commitment to support and accompany the cluster or the company

There are 3 different Implantis® programs:

#### IMPLANTIS® "light"

Having a local mailing address and/or a dedicated phone line. The aim is to materialize companies' presence abroad and acquire the necessary credibility in the eyes of the potential customers.

#### IMPLANTIS® "V.I.E."

Hosting of a young professional (trainee, International Voluntary Worker) on ERAI premises and supervision by ERAI in order to guarantee the achievement of the defined objectives. For the company, it represents a first step to develop its activity abroad.

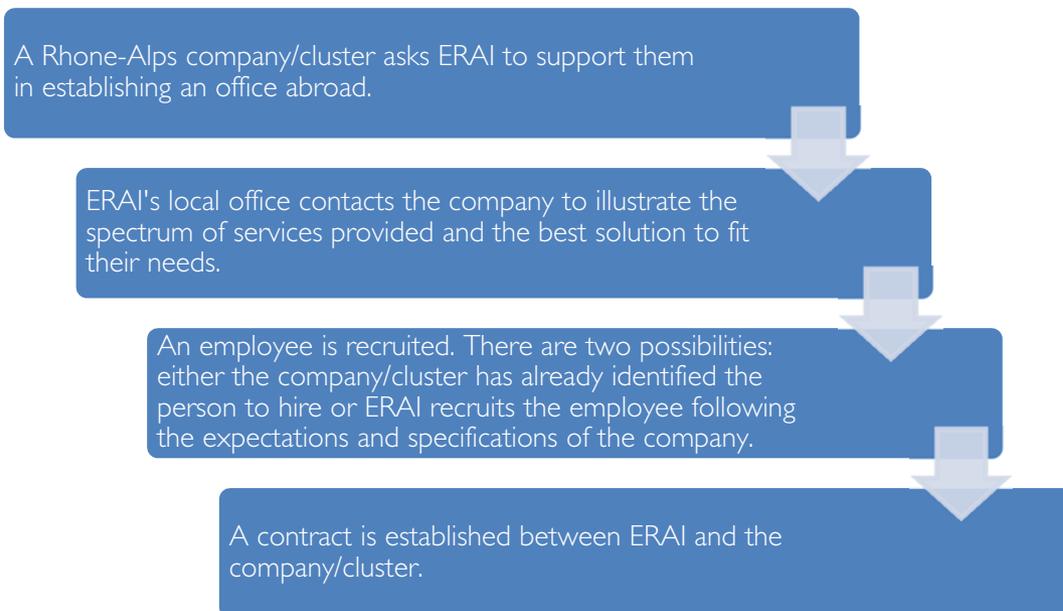
A (V.I.E) is a person under 28 years who applies for a commercial or technical mission abroad during a period lasting 6 to 24 months (the volunteer can sign one contract extension, but cannot stay longer than 24 months). The volunteer must be from European Union, he/she must be between 18 and 28 years old, he/she must be a student or a job-seeking

graduate. The V.I.E is paid by Ubifrance (while the company pays Ubifrance through an agreement. The contract is established between Ubifrance and the volunteer (no contract link with the company). Ubifrance covers the volunteer's expenses and medical insurance. The company runs the operational mission of the volunteer.

#### IMPLANTIS® with/without coaching

Hosting the sales force of the company on ERAI premises and support from ERAI staff to achieve a commercial development goal.

IMPLANTIS® incubators are custom-made services to assist companies in their international development.



The contract duration is minimum 12 months. It can be renewed.

The contract pivots around:

- The administrative and financial management of the company/cluster's representative
- The physical hosting (type of workspace, permanent and individual access to the office, joint amenities, phone, wifi, office supplies, making available of a fax, a copying machine, a scanner, a secured server)
- The supervision of the representative (day-to-day coaching, support in the settlement, monthly meetings and reports, making available tools and network of ERAI, back-office service during its representative's absence, strategic meeting with the company/cluster)
- The duration of the contract
- The country of the setting-up

Regarding the VIE, there can be some national grants with an export tax credit (50% of the volunteer's wage on condition that the company's turnover does not exceed 50 million euros).

*(Costs and resources)*

The costs depend on the type of contracts. Regarding the VIE, there can be some national grants with an export tax credit (50% of the volunteer's wage on condition that the company's turnover does not exceed EUR 50 million).

*(Key success factors)*

Several key success factors can be identified.

This solution can be easily adapted to the companies/clusters needs. ERAI's network and expertise allow companies and clusters to benefit from direct access to potential partners (worldwide network of ERAI). The market knowledge of ERAI's team is also a real opportunity for a company's establishment.

Furthermore, Implantis® can be regarded as a limited-risk market penetration:

- Coaching (local know-how)
- Fitted offices
- Connection to an international network
- Local immersion thanks to ERAI country experts
- Integration of an employee in a dynamic business atmosphere

The actors are complementary. ERAI provides a bi-weekly report for the company to control its employee's results and work.

The connection between the company and the host structure is efficient. The biculturalism of ERAI's team is a great advantage for the Rhone-Alps companies. In 2011, ERAI received the European Enterprise Award in the category "Support of trade internationalisation" for its Implantis® incubators.

*(Lessons learned)*

Through Implantis® incubators, companies and clusters have the opportunity to gain a foothold in a market with reduced risks. This program is transferable: partnership with some incubators programs.

*(Next steps)*

The next steps would be to offer new locations through the development of new agreements with other foreign partners.

## Evidence of success

### *(Results/impact)*

To measure the results, statistics are provided by ERAI's export service. For instance in 2012, 224 companies benefited from the Implantis® incubators.

This program fosters the international promotion of the skills and know-how of Rhône-Alpes sectors of excellence.

For companies/clusters: the project enables their presence abroad and increases their credibility with potential partners. They can develop their business by a growth of their turnover. They benefit from the experience, networks and coaching from ERAI country experts.

For the Rhône-Alpes Region: Implantis® supports the development of international cooperation and the region's dynamics.

### *(Advantages of practice)*

The added value of the practice is based on the relation between ERAI's team and the sales forces of the company. They can share their experience and they work together. This practice is very flexible that is an advantage for a cluster/company.

Companies and clusters limit their investment and their risk.

### *(Potential improvements)*

It would be interesting to develop partnerships between regions like the one with Expansion Quebec. This non-profit organization was created by the Quebec Government to support custom made services for exporters from Quebec. An agreement was signed. It focuses on the sharing of networks. Thus, companies and clusters from Rhone-Alps (or francophone clusters/companies) can use incubators from Quebec. Vice-versa, companies and clusters from Quebec can also establish themselves in Implantis® offices all around the world.

Furthermore, ERAI signed an agreement with UBIFRANCE (the national export agency) that gives the opportunity for French companies/clusters to use Implantis® incubators.

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## Public information on the practice

Website	<a href="http://www.implantis.com">www.implantis.com</a>
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#### 4.1.4 snowTOUR South Tyrol - exploring excellence in winter technologies, by TIS/South Tyrol

##### Location of the Practice

South Tyrol

##### Start date and end date

First edition snowTOUR South Tyrol:

15th to 17th December 2011

Target: Sports Journalists

Tour of 3 days: emotion, know-how transfer and best praxis in ski resorts

Language: German/Italian

Second edition snowTOUR South Tyrol:

3rd – 5th February 2012

Target: Italian delegation

Tour of 3 days: emotion, know-how transfer and best praxis in ski resorts

Language: Italian

Third edition snowTOUR South Tyrol:

15th – 17th March 2012

Target: delegation Canada / USA

Tour of 3 days: emotion, know-how transfer and best praxis in ski resorts

Language: English

##### Practice Executive Summary

snowTOUR South Tyrol is an innovative concept for presenting snow and winter sports technologies that were developed in South Tyrol. snowTOUR is an event spanning several days providing information as well as best-practice examples for an international audience of trade experts from the winter sports sector. It is aimed at ski resort operators, resort managers, trade experts and investors.

Using examples drawn from real life and tailored to specific markets and target groups, we offer an insight into the knowledge and expertise that lie behind South Tyrol's leading snow and winter sports technologies. We additionally facilitate an exchange of ideas with entrepreneurs and, wherever possible, we illustrate South Tyrol's expertise with concrete examples – and all this can be done in the short space of three days.

#### Detailed description of Practice

##### *(Starting point/challenge)*

Here in the heart of the Alps, winter sports have for many years been the motor of the local economy. Entrepreneurs from South Tyrol rank amongst the market leaders in this line of business and as a result their benchmarking products, solutions and systems are in demand throughout the world. In addition to belonging to the global players, South Tyrol also boasts about countless small and medium enterprises that thanks to their innovative approach and highest possible standards, are successful players in their particular segment of the market. The competencies of this commercial sector are concentrated in the Cluster sports & winterTECH which is hosted by the TIS innovation park. Leading South Tyrol enterprises joined this business network that was founded in 2006.

Thus the challenge was to present and promote winter sports technology and expertise of the highest competency levels.



##### *(Promoters, stakeholders)*

The TIS innovation park "Cluster Sports and winterTECH" is responsible for the organisation of the snowTOUR South Tyrol, in collaboration with the following partner organisations: Export Organisation South Tyrol (EOS), Business Location South Tyrol (BLS), South Tyrol Marketing Company (SMG), Bolzano Trade Fair and the "ProNeve" Expert Network. Companies from winter sports sector are important partner (Leitner Ropeways, Prinoth, Technoalpin, Skipp, etc.).

*(Methodology and beneficiaries)*

snowTOUR is an event spanning several days which provides information as well as best-practice examples for an international audience of trade experts from the winter sports sector and is aimed at ski resort operators, resort managers, trade experts and investors. Using examples drawn from real life and tailored to specific markets and target groups, we will give an insight into the knowledge and expertise that lie behind South Tyrol's leading snow and winter sports technologies. We will additionally facilitate an exchange of ideas with entrepreneurs and, wherever possible, we will illustrate South Tyrol expertise with concrete examples – and all this will be achieved in the short space of three days.

*(Output, benefit, key success factors and lessons learned)*

SnowTOUR communicates valuable know-how for the core topics of planning & development of ski resorts, snow- and winter technologies, energy efficiency in ski resorts, as well as cost-effective ski resort management. Investors obtain through best practice examples a strong input for future projects. Ski area managers and engineers of ski resorts get targeted responses to their questions, to set the right measures for making their ski area more attractive and for improving the quality of services and infrastructure.

*(Costs and resources)*

Snow Tour is funded through participation fees and support payments from the Promoters.

**Evidence of success***(Advantages of practice)*

SnowTOUR is a very special way of disseminating expertise and marketing an area. Subsequent snowTOURS are specifically aimed at markets where winter sports are still growing, above all, in China, Russia, Korea and other areas overseas. Participating at snowTOUR South Tyrol will not be free of charge to the target audience.

Media impact about snowTOUR visit [www.snowtour-suedtirol.com/en/snowtour/snowpress](http://www.snowtour-suedtirol.com/en/snowtour/snowpress)

Business impact: Know-how-Transfer to clients & market, new contacts, etc.

SnowTOUR South Tyrol is the best practice to present innovative and sustainable solutions for winter sports resorts created with South Tyrolean know-how.

Feedback from participants after three snowTOURS:

- Attractive range of products with guaranteed quality.
- Good expertise to build winter sports centres as turnkey solutions
- Valuable business contacts

## Contact details

Cluster sports & winterTECH by TIS innovation park

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## Public information on the practice

Website	<a href="http://www.snowtour-suedtirol.com">www.snowtour-suedtirol.com</a>
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#### 4.1.5 Scan Off Grid – transnational cluster co-operation in energy-efficiency by Tillväxtverket/Sweden

##### Location of the Practice

Cluster initiatives in the Northern Middle Sweden (Värmland and Dalarna) and Norway (the region of Akershus)

##### Start date and end date

The work described in the practice starts now and will continue for 12 months

##### Practice Executive Summary

Transnational co-operation of clusters between Sweden and Norway involving member companies from the very beginning from four different cluster initiatives (both from Sweden and Norway).

##### Detailed description of Practice

The background is given by a transnational program Sweden-Norway 2005-2010 focusing on increasing the competitiveness in SMEs and a possibility to continue this process through trans-national cluster co-operation. The two countries prioritized two fields of strategic importance: health/well-being and clean-tech/energy efficiency. A common framework was formulated at the end of 2011 stipulating the objectives, the funding and the involvement of the national cluster programs in both countries.

The purpose of the transnational co-operation is primarily to create value for SMEs within the cluster initiatives in terms of concrete activities (for renewal/innovation) and internationalization (new markets). But the joint action is also a way of extending the on-going co-operation between the cluster programs in Norway and Sweden (in all four programs).

A simple questionnaire was emailed to all cluster managers being part of the regional cluster program at Tillväxtverket, the Vinnväxt-program (VINNOVA) and the two Norwegian cluster programs NCE and ARENA. We asked for the existing relations to clusters (business networks, R&D projects etc.) across the national border. By this, we could identify clusters with some kind of already established contacts – and not only within the two strategic areas.

The questionnaire gave pretty good information about current co-operations, joint applications to different European framework programs, but also about future areas of interest, especially regarding innovation processes and new markets.

The project Scan Off Grid started out of this approach and with national support from both Sweden and Norway. The transnational cluster co-operation concerns the field of energy efficiency and involves three Swedish cluster initiatives and one in Norway. The cluster Steel and Engineering is lead partner. 18 enterprises specialized in renewal energy are involved from the very beginning and from the 4 clusters. The project focuses on product development and service innovation by standardization of off-grid systems. The use of testbed facilities (within the clusters), universities and other institutions plays an important role. The cluster initiative Triple Steelix (Foundation Teknikdalen) is responsible for the extended match-making activities. One reason why this transnational cluster co-operation could get so close to

member companies directly is due to an inter-regional project where some of the actors were involved. The project received a grant (governmental funding) and the member companies contributed with in kind funding. The lead partner (the cluster Steel and Engineering) is compensated for the administrative costs.

At the same time the region of Värmland approached Tillväxtverket in order to discuss how the region and their cluster initiatives may evolve as platforms for increased export and attracting foreign investments (Norway). This was a starting point of a pilot project aiming to identify how the regional clusters may contribute to increased export and internationalization in SMEs (with ability and interest to grow) and to contribute to the regional strategy for internationalization regarding Norway. The first match-making event took place in Oslo (Norway) with approx. 80 people/companies. Integrating the pilot with the transnational project may get a regional back-up to the clusters.

Discussions, meetings and resources in order to get a common agenda are time-consuming, but yet important. By using a simple but basic questionnaire directed to the process leaders without talking about a program or funding made us find cluster initiatives with different kind of relations already built with clusters across the border. In this way the agencies could identify interesting co-operation activities that involve not only cluster managers but also member companies.

In January 2013 Norway will take the lead in a joint cluster manager meeting (including the four cluster programs) where one of the main topics will be transnational co-operation.

#### Evidence of success

The national agencies have not made an external evaluation to measure results and impact due to the fact that the project just started. But what we noticed even at this stage of development is that it is easier to find action plans for transnational cluster co-operations once the member companies are involved. "Business opportunities" are crucial and a trigger in this project was an identified new market. The testbed facilities and the University of Karlstad seem also to be of great importance, so far.

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## 4.1.6 InterCluster Cooperation Tools, by INMA/Romania

### Location of the Practice

Romania

### Start date and end date

November 2012 - November.2013

### Practice Executive Summary

The Best Practice deals with the main challenges Romanian clusters, moving slowly out of the emerging phase, are currently facing,: integration of rather scattered thematic clusters into larger cross-thematic ones, jointly dealing with strategic positioning and other cross cutting issues like internationalization, HR development, ICT, marketing against the background of the smart specialisation strategies.

### Detailed description of Practice

#### *(Starting point/challenge)*

Currently, Romania accounts for 40 clusters officially recognized by the Ministry of Economy, most of them in an emerging phase, and lacking consistent financing support. The fields they are acting in are rather diverse: textile, shipbuilding, automotive, ICT, energy etc.

#### *(What has been done?)*

A mapping of current projects and project initiatives of existing clusters was performed. Clusters have been asked to fill in a "fiche" indicating relevant information about projects: type (infrastructure, R&D, soft), volume, partners, major objectives, activities and results. In a second phase, projects were fine-tuned and "clustered" around main cross-thematic topics in dedicated peer review workshops.

#### *(Output)*

As an output, 60 project fiches have been collected, 350 partners and with a total value of 75 Mil. EUR for an average duration of 2 years/project. According to the type, 75% were R&D oriented against 18% for soft and only 6% for infrastructure.

#### *(Costs and resources)*

The cost of the analysis was of about EUR 12.000 and was supported by the Ministry of Economy in the frame of a larger support project for the elaboration of sustainable financial and non-financial cluster support policy and instruments.

*(Key success factors)*

The support of the exercise lies in the good collaboration and commitment of both the Ministry of Economy and of the Romanian Cluster Association as well as on the cluster competence of consultants (including INMA).

*(Lessons learned)*

As a result, 2 major cross-thematic industrial sectors show an important development and clustering potential: "technical textiles" including textiles, automotive, agro-food and health and green technologies, including energy, wood, agro-food, mechatronics, electrical engineering and electronics, agricultural engineering.

*(Transfer potential)*

The most important transfer potential lies in the applied methodology based on a two steps approach: questionnaire (I) and workshop (II) based and also in the specific importance granted to the R&D component of cluster development.

**Evidence of success***(Results and impact)*

The results of the exercise have been documented and transmitted to the Ministry of Economy for further consideration in the elaboration of the cluster financial and non-financial support schemes for the next programming period.

At its turn, the Romanian Cluster Association will concentrate its plan of activities in 2013 in achieving the integration of the RO clusters into the 2 above mentioned networks: technical textiles and green technologies, including creating of joint working groups and dedicated events.

The number of peer review workshops was limited to three with strong R&D participation. More workshops, including remote regions which currently can be seen as white spots on the map as far as clustering is concerned would have given more information on cluster development potential.

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#### 4.1.7 Internationalisation of the Games Industry, by Wirtschaftsförderung Karlsruhe (Economic Department Karlsruhe)

##### Location of the Practice

City of Karlsruhe, Region Baden-Württemberg / Germany

##### Start date and end date

Start date: June 2010 – End date: the first cooperation agreement expires February 2016

##### Practice Executive Summary

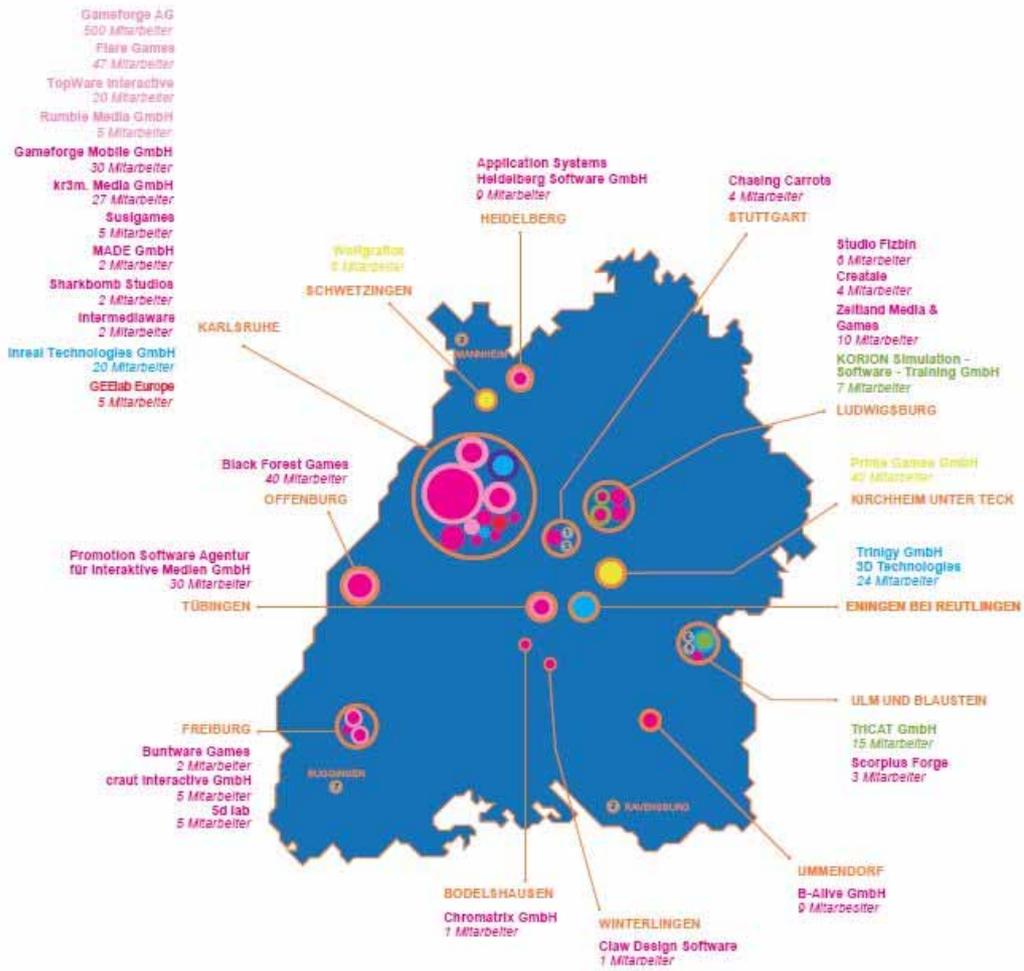
The purpose of the research and development agreement consists in the establishment and operation of the Games and Experimental Entertainment Laboratory Europe (GEElab Europe) of RMIT University. The cooperation serves not only to support the active internationalization of Karlsruhe game development companies, but moreover creates a basis for the cooperation between Karlsruhe based universities and RMIT University.

Both parties aim to expand the research and development cooperation as well as the economic relations between the parties. With the establishment of the GEElab Europe located at the main site of game developers in Baden-Wuerttemberg, a beacon for the industry shall be established in a field which ensures the long-term competitiveness through close interaction between research and industry thus contributing to a process of innovation of products and services.

##### Detailed description of Practice

Over the last few years, Karlsruhe became the centre of the games industry in Baden-Württemberg (see graphic below). Germany's biggest games producer, Gameforge, is based in Karlsruhe, with some 450 people working alone in its headquarters. The business location has brought forth other highly promising companies in recent years. kr3m.media and the new company of the ex-Gameforge founder Hening Kersting, flaregames, are two agencies at once that presented highly acclaimed new developments in spring 2012 and ones that are on a steady course for growth.

# Die Gamesunternehmen in Baden-Württemberg



Just how varied the opportunities for action are in the games sector is shown that the Australian elite university RMIT Melbourne chose Karlsruhe as the location for its European research laboratory "GEElab Europe", asserting itself against several well-known cities in Germany and abroad.

"We don't develop games here. For us, it's more about finding out what other segments of business, science, and society can learn from the games sector," said games researcher and project manager Dr Steffen Walz, describing the focus of GEElab Europe.

By signing the research and development agreement, RMIT University committed to make the following contributions:

- Provision of the operational budget for the operation of the games labs for the duration of the agreement. This includes the payment of salaries and related RMIT staff costs (one leader and up to three PhD positions).
- Creation of preconditions for effective research and exchange of talent between Australia and Europe.
- Office presence of the GEElab staff in the offices at Durlacher Alee 53 (incubator) for a minimum of two days per week until the office is moved to the "Kreativpark", pending availability of GEElab Europe staff. Subsequently, headquarters and the key areas of activity of GEElab will be shifted to the facilities at the "Kreativpark Alter Schlachthof" (Karlsruhe). The PhD students shall have their German residency in Karlsruhe.
- Promotion of the City of Karlsruhe as seat of the GEElab Europe and location for creative industries and games development in the context of speeches and public presentations made by the GEElab Europe.

By signing this research and development agreement, the City of Karlsruhe committed to make the following contributions:

- Establishment of a Special Interest Group on the subject of "Game Thinking" in collaboration with RMIT and the CyberForum cluster.
- Provision of support and assistance in setting up GEElab Europe, with a special focus on creating a substantial partner network and on external communications.
- As part of its contribution to GEElab Europe, the provision of the necessary office-infrastructure (excluding office equipment), rent-free - initially in form of office space at the incubator Dulacher Allee 53 and after its completion at the creative industry incubator located at the "Kreativpark". Note: It is understood that upon the launch of the City's creative industry incubator at the "Alte Schlachthof", the GEElab Europe offices will relocate there and receive office space in the building. The rent-free provision of up to three containers at the creative industry incubator by the City of Karlsruhe entitles GEElab Europe to make use of all the services provided to tenants such as: use of the meeting room and conference room including the infrastructure for project work as provided in the concept of the incubator, the use of shared lounges and social areas, use of Co-working workstations, use of exhibition space, design of the exterior of the container, use of sanitary facilities, use of janitorial and cleaning services, electricity and internet access.

In order to intensify the contacts, to establish and to expand the research and development cooperation as well as for the image of cooperation, the exchange of ideas and the transfer of research results are an essential and indispensable prerequisite. Therefore, the parties agree to organize a joint event in the form of a symposium once a year:

- The GEElab Europe shall be responsible for assisting in planning and executing the event, the acquisition and allocation of lecturers, content and conceptual design, marketing support and realization on site.
- The Economic Development Karlsruhe (association for the promotion of business development) shall assume responsibility for conceptual and planning tasks, the acquisition of further sponsors and partners, financing the event, marketing and network information.
- Bizplay 2013 will be held on October 1st and 2nd 2013. In the symposium, national and international experts will jointly develop concepts with specialists from industry, politics, and science on how expertise from the games world can be used to redesign mundane products and make them more user-friendly or to create new approaches to company management and city government. For details, program and concept please refer to [www.bizplay.org](http://www.bizplay.org).

Moreover, GEElab Europe will provide two lecturers per year free of charge to present the latest research results at events organized by K3. An exchange of students and staff is desired and shall be locally supported by both parties.

#### Evidence of success

All the signatories of this research and development agreement are aware of the fact that the success of the cooperation they agreed upon will depend to a large extent on the personal commitment shown by the persons involved. Therefore it will be essential that from the beginning of the cooperation they make every effort to reach the common goals and to provide every possible support to each other. The parties realize that in spite of all efforts it may take a certain time before success is achieved.

Beside this the GeeLab already contributes actively to the Karlsruhe Smarter City Initiative as a partner in one of the fields of action being identified in the Roadmapping process 2025 (see other Best practice from Karlsruhe). The GeeLab is actually in negotiations with a big company about a 3 years research project which would double the number of post docs at the laboratory.

There is evidence of the cooperation's success which has not been foreseen:

Meanwhile Bizplay is an established event of the games sector for the Regional and national companies. The event has been developed into a two days event with conference & workshops and will be organised for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time from Sept. 31<sup>st</sup> – Oct 1<sup>st</sup> 2014.

The Games sector raised a lot of awareness by the regional stakeholders. Even a common stand of the Land Baden-Württemberg could be realised together with the Media and Film agency of the land at the world's biggest games fare, the Gamescom in 2013. Due to the success the presentation at the Gamescom shall be repeated in 2014.

The RMIT University in Melbourne is now client of a Karlsruhe Company in the nanotechnology sector.

The financial investment was planned for a period of four years and includes staff costs and infrastructure for the PhDs and professors of the GeeLab.

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### Public information on the practice

Website [www.karlsruhe.de/b1/kultur/themen/kreativwirtschaft/ansprechpartner/k3](http://www.karlsruhe.de/b1/kultur/themen/kreativwirtschaft/ansprechpartner/k3)  
[www.geelab.rmit.edu.au/](http://www.geelab.rmit.edu.au/)



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ecoplus. The Business Agency of Lower Austria



For more information about the Clusterix project please contact

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Or take a look at our website

**www.clusterix.info**

Clusterix is also active on LinkedIn.

Join the group here:

**<http://bit.ly/Clusterix>**

