



ClusterCOOP Project

Innovation is a crucial driving force for economic growth, relevant to every economic sector. Europe needs to improve its performance in innovation to withstand comparison with competing global partners. Clusters provide conditions conducive to innovation, specifically "open innovation" promoting new ideas. They can leverage this potential and increase their excellence if they create linkages with other clusters exploiting complementarities.

Creating and enhancing framework conditions for the effective cross-regional and cross-border cooperation of clusters in CE requires joint actions by the policy makers. In many cases, the regulatory level is exactly the area which CE cluster experts see as the major bottleneck for successful cluster cooperation. Partner countries/regions identified similar CHALLENGES regarding transnational inter-cluster cooperation:

1. There are little or no synergies among national/regional cluster policies, and the current framework does not solicit cooperation.
2. There is a need to identify industries which, through cluster-cooperation, could become a driving force for national/regional economies.
3. The current level of support for transnational cooperation is much lower than desired.

ClusterCOOP partners have set the GENERAL AIM to create and enhance the framework conditions of efficient transnational cooperation between clusters in the countries of CE. Their aim is to help clusters better exploit their innovation capacities, improve their competitiveness so that in the long term, their development and effective cooperation improves the position of the CE Region in the European Economic Area. Taking into the considerations and common challenges described above, PPs defined 3 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

1. Enhance existing and create new synergies among national/regional cluster policies and funding frameworks.
2. Facilitate emerging industry development through cross regional cluster cooperation.
3. Promote the flow of information between clusters their associations or networks and provide a common knowledge base for clusters of CE to facilitate their networking and cooperation.

The outputs of the actions of the 3 thematic work packages will directly contribute to the achievement of these objectives through the MAIN PROJECT RESULTS:

- An integrated collection of POLICY MEASURES AND SOLUTIONS (regulatory, legislative and institutional), which can effectively support the cross-regional and transnational cooperation of clusters.
- ACTION PLANS, which will be an effective set of policy measures tailored to the different policy environment of PPs, and which can be incorporated in national/regional/local decision making, hence contributing to the sustainability of project results.
- An implementation-oriented proposal for the alignment and integration of different FUNDING SCHEMES, including measures and modifications which lead to more innovative and efficient practices.
- A clear view on the potential for the development of NEW INDUSTRIES in the different regions and sectors of partner countries, and policy tools for boosting the EMERGENCE of these industries through cross-regional cluster cooperation.
- Extended knowledge of clusters on the possibilities and framework of transnational cooperation with the help of CLUSTER CONTACT POINTS and the VIRTUAL INTERACTIVE PLATFORM.

The Cluster COOP PARTNERSHIP includes 10 CE partners in 5 new & 2 old member states. The core partnership is composed of national, regional and local public authorities, national public agencies, as well as public national knowledge providers. Complementary to PPs, three national ministries (Germany, Poland and Slovenia) are involved as associated institutions. Thus the project involves all relevant policy makers in all partner countries competent in cluster cooperation and development. The partnership represents a horizontal and vertical mix that can best address project aims, achieve and maintain project results.

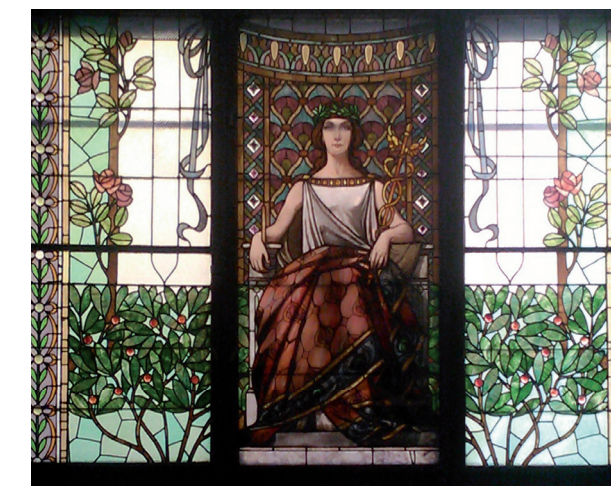


ClusterCOOP Lead Partner

The Ministry for National Economy is responsible for the general planning of Hungarian economic policy and the implementation of strategy for the national economy. The Ministry deals with such vital fields related to the national economy as job creation, the creation of the tax system, improving competitiveness, budget preparation, reducing the national debt and stimulation of economic growth.

The goal of the Ministry for National Economy is to promote – through the efficient use of available economic policy measures and European Union funds – the development of an innovative, knowledge-based economy which is competitive both within the single European market and the globalising world economy, which lends itself to rapid growth and which creates high added value.

Within the framework of formulating economic strategy, the Ministry for National Economy prepares short-, medium- and long-range plans for the stimulation of economic growth and increased competitiveness. It oversees public finances, plans the Budget and Appropriation Accounts, and cooperates in regulatory activities related to public finance. It develops financial policy strategy and frames the Hungarian tax system in order to ensure financial stability. In addition to this it prepares plans aimed at promoting job creation and employment, prepares plans related to questions of income, and liaises with various groups in society. The Ministry for National Economy prepares climate and energy policy plans with a view to sustainable development, and it supervises and directs Hungary's international economic relations on the basis of a strategy for foreign economic affairs.



ClusterCOOP Project Partner 3

Ministry of Industry and Trade CR is the central body of the government administration for industrial policy, export policy, energy and trade.

Ministry of Industry and Trade CR is also the central body for the support of entrepreneurs, small and medium enterprises, industrial research and development and the national innovation and competitiveness policy.

Ministry of Industry and Trade CR is furthermore responsible for the administration of European funds in these areas. It fulfills the role of managing authority for the Operational programme Enterprise and Innovation 2007-2013, which includes the programme Cooperation providing support for the formation and development of clusters.



ClusterCOOP Project Partner 4

Business Development and Investment Agency – CzechInvest: CzechInvest was established in 1992 by the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The main objective is to advise and support both existing and new entrepreneurs and foreign investors in the Czech Republic.

The Agency significantly contributes to attracting foreign investment and promoting the Czech Republic abroad. Further it provides professional assistance in development of domestic companies and acts as an intermediary between the EU and small and medium-sized enterprises in implementing structural funds in the Czech Republic.

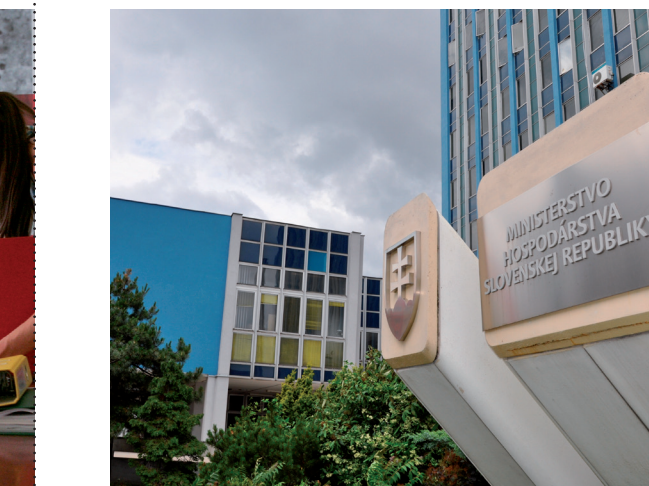
Since 2002 CzechInvest has been one of the key institutions that are involved in the long-term support of clusters in the Czech Republic. Department for Clusters and Business Cooperation is responsible for carrying out promotional activities in this area. The crucial tasks include the implementation of governmental strategies associated with clusters, providing consultancy services in the field of establishment and development of clusters, mediation grants from the EU and strengthening international cooperation among clusters.



ClusterCOOP Project Partner 5

The Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic contributes to creation of the unified state policy of the Slovak Republic, to the extent of its responsibilities and competences it exercises state administration and fulfils further tasks stipulated in laws and other generally binding legal regulations. To the extent of its defined responsibilities and competences, the Ministry is also liable for defence issues and formation of conditions favourable for implementation of requirements for ensuring the preparations for defence and security.

Strategy Section, Department of Industry and Innovation at the Ministry of Economy is engaged in the ClusterCOOP project. Department activities are concentrated mainly on: the development and implementation of Innovation policy and Strategy of the Slovak republic; elaborating a European industrial policy to conditions in Slovak republic; analyzing of innovation potential and promoting innovation activities - innovative tools for creating a suitable pro-innovative business environment; supporting of the SME's development and facilitating the growth of competitiveness of SME's, including supporting tools preparation and ensure continuity of support programs for SME; development and implementation of laws and government regulation of chemicals legislation.





ClusterCOOP Project Partner 6

The Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency (SIEA) was established in 1999 as a professional state allowance organisation directed by the Ministry of Economy. The SIEA strives to influence the increase of energy efficiency, the use of renewable sources of energy, and the support of innovations. It also acts as an implementation agency for Structural Funds of the EU.

Moreover, the Agency is a national body with a very good knowledge of relevant markets, decision makers, companies, professionals, and associations operating in the area of energy and innovations. As a professional authority, it conducts energy audits and analysis as well as provides counselling services in these fields.

Fulfilling tasks assigned by the Slovak Ministry of Economy, the SIEA takes part in the preparation of energy and innovation policies, relevant acts and decrees. It also follows and monitors the efficiency rate of the energy use in various areas. Concerning clusters, the Agency provides clusters with impulses for their development and offers them opportunities for the exchange of their experience.



ClusterCOOP Project Partner 8

Regione Piemonte is the regional governmental body of Piemonte, located in North-Western Italy. It has around 4,5 million inhabitants (7,4% of the Italian population), and a total GDP of 124 million € in 2010.

The region is dynamic in industry and in services, with a skilled, flexible and versatile workforce. It hosts research, education facilities and competence centres of international standing, that are contributing to the consolidation of an increasingly knowledge-based economy and society. The region has a network dedicated to R&D made up of 4 universities, more than 220 public and private research centres, 380 laboratories, 6 technology and science parks, 12 innovation clusters. The total R&D expenditure is 1,9% of the regional GDP (against a national average of 1,2%), with private investment in R&D accounting for the 75% (17% of total private investments nationwide). The territory has a strong financial and manufacturing structure, produces 8% of Italy's national wealth and hosts about 469.000 companies. Piemonte, internationally famous for being the cradle of the Italian car industry, also hosts top-class enterprises active in robotics, ICT, life sciences, energy and environment, aerospace, industrial design, logistics, pharmaceuticals, healthcare and agrofood.

The regional government is strongly committed in the promotion of innovation and research, fostering collaboration between research and businesses and implementing an active cluster policy in sectors of excellence (including renewable energies, ICT, biotechnologies, agrofood, creativity and multimedia, chemicals, new materials). Piemonte was the first Italian region to implement a cluster policy, supporting the creation of 12 Innovation clusters: a new policy tool to support the competitiveness of enterprises, promote the sharing of knowledge and foster innovations in products and services.



ClusterCOOP Project Partner 9

The University of Ljubljana (UL) is an institution with a very rich tradition, established in 1919. With its more than 56,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students; total of 22 faculties, 3 academies of art and 1 university college employ approx. 3500 teaching and research staff, and nearly 900 technical and administrative staff. Numerous research projects, coordinated or participated by University of Ljubljana, follow the latest world discoveries and trends.

The Faculty of Economics at the University of Ljubljana (FELU) is the University's largest faculty. FELU employs 157 teaching and research staff, and 90 administration staff. FELU has recently been re-awarded the global EQUIS quality accreditation which assures high international standards of quality. With this prestigious accreditation FELU joined the group of top 100 business schools around the world with the same premise: high academic achievements in teaching and research activities. FELU is the second EQUIS accredited school in the Central and Eastern Europe and serves as benchmark for other schools especially from Balkan area. The Faculty of Economics University of Ljubljana joined an elite group of institutions that have achieved business accreditation from AACSB International. Only 593 schools of business, or less than 5% worldwide, have earned this distinguished hallmark of excellence in management education. Moreover, combined with EQUIS accreditation, we are ranked among 45 best business schools.



ClusterCOOP Project Partner 10

The City of Rzeszów - is the capital of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship, situated at the eastern EU border. The city is the economic, scientific and cultural center of south-eastern Poland. It is the seat of many clusters: Aviation Valley, Podkarpacka Informatics (IT) and Poligen (plastic) just to mention a few of them. With 60 thousand students and modern education - including Poland's only specialization for "civil pilots' aviation" at the Rzeszów University of Technology and "aviation management studies" at the University of Information Technology and Management, Rzeszów is the regional center of education. There is also an ultramodern laboratory of criminology at the School of Law and Administration and innovative courses at the Center of Innovation and Knowledge Transfer of Technology and Nature at University of Rzeszów.

Rzeszów increased its budget by 0.8 billion PLN in the last 9 years and is among the cities with the highest volume of EU funds obtained per 1 inhabitant: approx. 1300€¹. During the last 5 years, Rzeszów has been enlarging its area by incorporating adjacent villages. From the city of 54 sq km., Rzeszów has increased to 116 sq km. As a result, the city's population has grown to 200,000. Another expansions are planned within the next years.

EU funding has enabled a number of important municipal projects, in fact Rzeszów is one of Poland's main EU-funding beneficiaries. Total value of projects implemented with financial support from the European Union (on the basis of agreements and decisions): 250.000.000€.

Rzeszów is a member of the Eurocities, an international association of cities which affiliates Europe's largest metropolises. Rankings in leading Polish periodicals place Rzeszów in top positions regarding wealth, investment outlays, living standards and safety. For 8 years the City of Rzeszów holds the Fair Play Commune title and in 2011 Rzeszów was awarded the "Poland NOW" national promotional emblem. In 2012 Newsweek qualified Rzeszów as a Business-Friendly City².



ClusterCOOP Project Partner 11

MAG - Hungarian Economic Development Centre (MAG) is Hungary's implementing agency for economic development programmes financed out of ERDF and national programmes.

The primary goal of MAG is to provide service for development policy planners and managers, the beneficiaries of the grant programmes and the enterprises at large.

From April 2011, a division called Cluster Development Office has been set up within the organisation of MAG, which performs the tasks related to cluster policies, professional assistance of clusters and management of cluster calls.

Three particularly important activities of the Office are:

- participation in the development and implementation of the national cluster policy,
- elaboration of different kinds of cluster performance analyses,
- participation in transnational cluster projects.



ClusterCOOP Project Partner 12

Inno AG is a strategic management consultancy with 25 years experience of innovation processes and technology transfer. The company was set-up in 1991 as a spin-off from the Technical University of Karlsruhe and the Fraunhofer Institute of Systems Technology. The main office is located in Karlsruhe Germany with daughter companies subsidiaries and representations in Germany, France, Sweden and the US.

Inno's key competence lies in the design and implementation of innovation strategies for clusters, regions, nation states and public organisations, but what makes us unique is linking these activities to our expertise in developing and implementing models for valorisation of research and consequently our capacity to generate revenue streams from public R&D investments for all stakeholders. Our clients are regions, ministries, leading research and technology institutions as well as companies across Europe.

Inno AG delivers its services from two interrelated, but in fact mutually supporting, platforms: inno Consulting and inno Valorisation. Consulting business areas include the development and implementation of regional and national innovation strategies, development and evaluation of innovation programmes, strategic development and management of high-tech clusters and coordination of large scale research projects. Valorisation services are primarily offered to research institutions hereby supporting the commercialisation of result stemming from publicly funded research.



¹ Gazeta Prawna Newspaper, 2009

² Newsweek Polska Magazine, 2012